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FIFTY PENCE

Arson attack on *Freedom* building

LAMONT HAS GONE - SO WHAT?

Lamont has gone. A victory for the media? Perhaps - but that's about all. Recession hasn't gone away in spite of the media joining in the chorus of those who are seeing the 'green shoots' for the umpteenth time. The trouble is that no sooner do the 'green shoots' appear than it is followed by a 'drought' and they shrivel! Unemployment isn't going away in spite of cooked-up figures in the past three months showing a monthly decline of a thousand or two. The deficit balance of trade isn't going away either, even though all kinds of 'reports' from unnamed industrial sources are that export orders are 'looking healthier than for some time', and so on and so on.

In a *Freedom* editorial last October ('John the Evangelist - Norman the Scapegoat', 17th October 1992) which cast a jaundiced eye on the Tories annual bun-feast in Britain, we concluded:

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

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

The anarchist alternative society has been expounded in a rich literature available to all who may be interested (see *Freedom* Press literature list of some sixty titles). In *Freedom* our editorial pages are concerned to reach readers who still cherish illusions as to the possibilities of a prosperous future for all in a capitalist system. The Labour Party and the Fabians

have been talking about the redistribution of wealth for a hundred years (the first Labour members, Keir Hardie and John Burns, were elected to the House of Commons in 1892!) and nobody can deny that under Labour Party governments the rich get richer and the poor poorer. Tory governments *make sure* that the poor are 'mugged' to provide all the extra perks for the rich, which is understandable.

Obviously anarchism will not come about so long as 70% of the adult population are still content to put their crosses every four or five years for somebody to 'represent' them, while most of the 30% who don't are in the main apathetic or don't think the results will affect them one way or the other. We salute the non-voting anarchists, but there are not many of us are there?

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THE INCREDIBLE MEDIA

The sacking of Chancellor Lamont was interpreted in all kinds of ways depending on one's ability to see through the media bombardment. Obviously some people, such as Mr Roger Hayward described as "a past chairman of the Chartered Institute of Marketing" (what pompous titles they give themselves to add value to their views/prejudices!), not surprisingly saw the media as the innocent victim! In his letter to the *Independent* headed 'The Incredible Lamont' he maintains that:

"The real reason Norman Lamont had to go was not that he was 'brought down by the media' but that the media reflected general public opinion and much private advice to Mr Major that Mr Lamont had ceased to be credible - certainly after the ERM débâcle."

For goodness sake, who forms so-called 'public opinion' if not the mass media? The British public bombarded by fifteen million tabloid daily newspapers and hours of television all geared to the *status quo* has no opinion. The public is brainwashed and all that anarchist propaganda can attempt to do is to convince them by argument that it is a fact.

MAJOR'S 'CLASSLESS BRITAIN'

When John Major professes to represent a classless British society and in the same breath congratulate himself with having opted out of the Social Chapter, the only important clause in the Maastricht Treaty concerned with the rights and conditions of all working people in the Common Market, one is not surprised that the hypocrisy of Perfidious Albion is a well-deserved label to describe the government and only too many of the idle rich who support it.

Last week the new Employment Secretary David Hunt (on the right-wing of the Tories - apparently there is now a left-wing in the Tory camp!) denounced the EC directive imposing a 48-hour minimum ceiling on a working week and is proposing to appeal to the European Court on the grounds that it has no bearing on health and safety.

First of all, let's face the facts that

the proposed 48-hour maximum is to establish in the community what they call a 'level playing field'. And the British, who are always accusing the others of cheating (e.g. the Scottish fishermen opposing the 80-day fishing limits in order to conserve fish stocks declare that no conditions are applied to the other countries, which is not true) are now in the situation of being the only country out of twelve refusing to implement not only the maximum 48-hour week but also the Social Chapter which includes all kinds of social and economic rights for all employed people - not least that of a minimum wage. The government's opposition is not surprising. One must see it in the context of their massive assault on the trades unions over the last fourteen years.

To condemn the union leadership for the quite disastrous situation so
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Arson attack on Freedom building

Apologies for the late dispatch of this issue of *Freedom*. The Freedom Press building, which we share with our printers Aldgate Press, was subject to an arson attack which put us out of action for a time.

On Friday 4th June our comrades the printers locked up the building at 7.15pm. An hour later some of them were in the local pub when they were attracted by fire engines in the street, and came out to find that their own place was alight. All the buildings overlooking Angel Alley were empty for the night. It was a lucky accident that some passer-by raised the alarm soon after the fire started. Another couple of hours and the building might have been gutted.

Somebody put something inflammable, perhaps a small quantity of inflammable liquid, through a broken window on the ground floor. The pile of paper near the window flared up, burning the window frame and the ceiling above. Heat melted all the plastic in the print-room (which is about twelve metres long), including all the insulation on the electric cables. We were without electricity for three days, extensive repairs are needed to the big printing machine, and the guillotine is a write-off.

Fire spread up the stairs to the first floor loo, where the cistern melted and the porcelain pan exploded with the heat. Our neighbours the Whitechapel Art Gallery, who have been very helpful, are kindly letting us use their public toilets until our toilet is repaired.

There is little or no structural damage to the building, and the bookshop and all the Freedom Press stocks are intact. We had to close the shop for a time because of the mess and the sealed-off doorway downstairs, but this should be re-opened by the time you receive this.

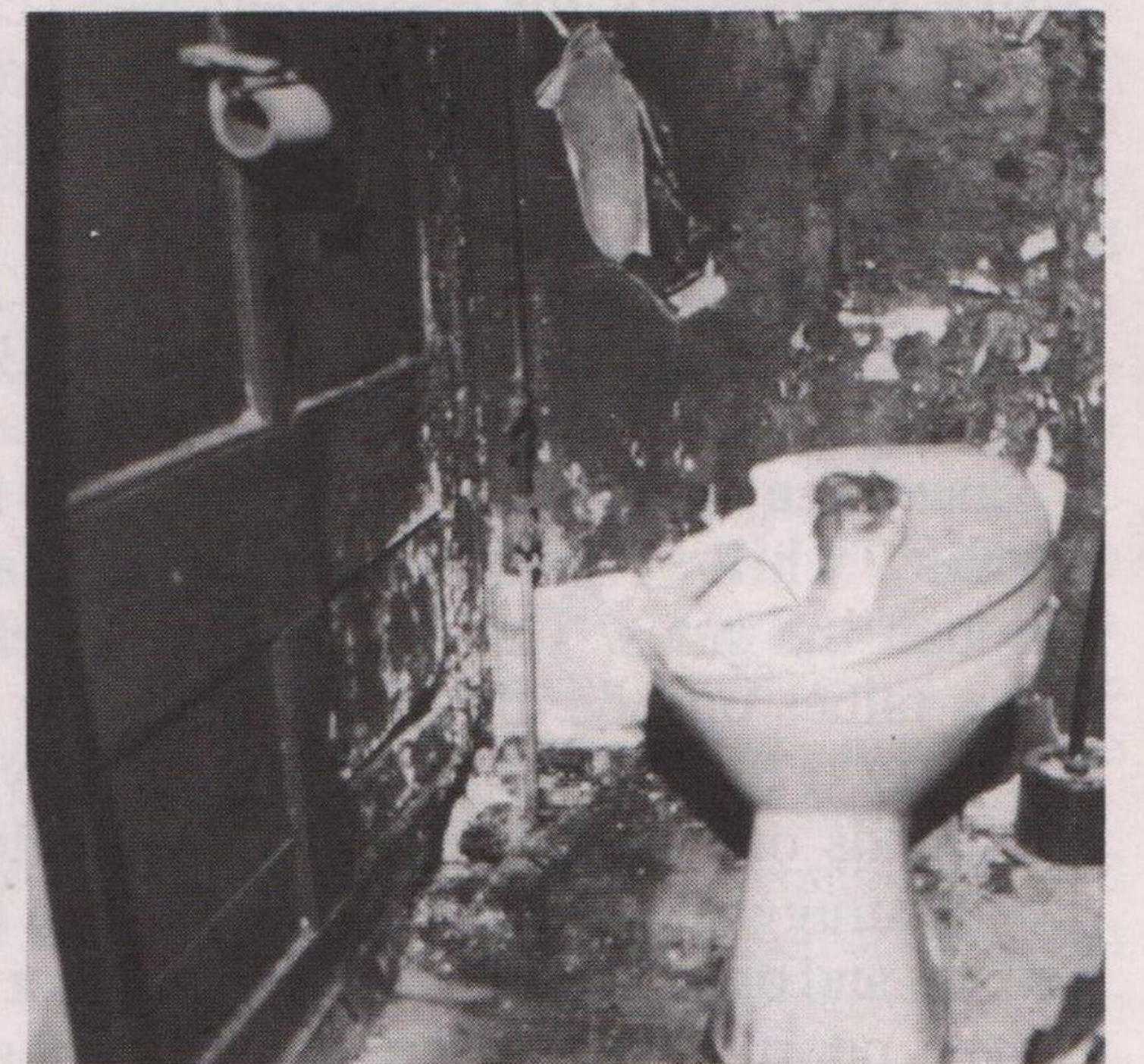
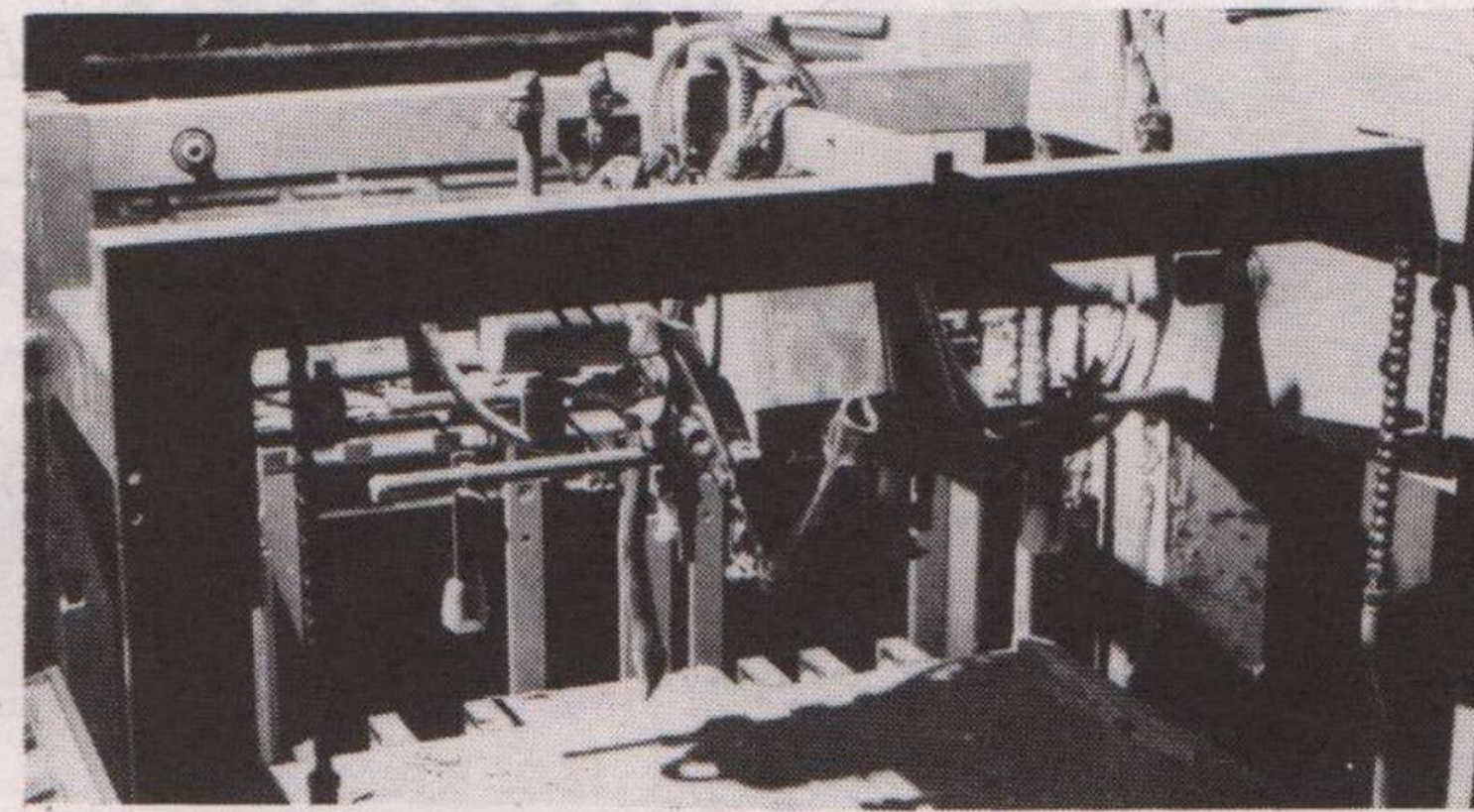
Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack, but it seems reasonable to connect it with the attack on our office and bookshop by the fascist group Combat 18 on 27th March. The attackers on that occasion left behind a bottle of petrol.

Our local television show 'London Today' at 5pm on Saturday linked the arson attack with both the 27th March attack and an anti-racist demo in Hackney. The attack was reported briefly in *The Observer*, the Muslim

newspaper *The Daily Awaz*, and *Scotland on Sunday*. A longer report appears in our local weekly, the *East London Advertiser*.

Our comrades at the 121 Anarchist Centre in Brixton have been subject to two arson attacks this year – not much damage as they are in a residential street and neighbours raise the alarm promptly.

On Wednesday 2nd June extensive damage was done to the Cable Street Mural, a huge outdoor painting commemorating the 'Battle of Cable Street' in 1936, when residents prevented the British Union of Fascists from marching through the East End of London.



LAMONT HAS GONE – SO WHAT?

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The reason, in our opinion, is that most people still believe in capitalism (just as they still believe in God even if they don't go to church or observe its moral teachings). The reasons are the same: Capitalism and God are part of the culture – just as for the last 75 years anti-capitalism and anti-God were in the ex-Soviet Union.

For most hard-working Russians the 'conversion' to the capitalist market economy is proving that they have jumped out of the state-controlled frying pan into the free-for-all capitalist fire. Certainly they haven't chosen the right moment so far as capitalism is concerned! Already they are experiencing all the evil by-products of capitalism: more crime (there is even talk of a mafia with international connections), drugs and arms rackets, millionaires and inflation, and escalating unemployment.

The Russians have jumped on the capitalist bandwagon when it is on the verge of bankruptcy.* All the G7 nations (that is the seven largest industrial countries) are experiencing a massive recession in industrial production and services. As we are always repeating, the capitalist system will survive so long as it is the only system simply because it has a captured market of billions of people who need food, clothing and shelter to survive even at the lowest levels of health and comfort. Surely it is significant that in this recession the Sainsburys, Tescos and M&S are recording increased profits while the car producers worldwide are declaring massive losses.

Even at the risk of being accused of being 'simplistic' we repeat that there is a limit to the gadgetry of this technological madhouse in which we in the 'prosperous' West live which we can handle or need in the course of a lifetime.

The bankruptcy of capitalism is the greed of its operators in ignoring that the 'health' of capitalism depends on production never exceeding demand.

Today, thanks to our patriotic industrialists investing in the Far East where labour is still cheap (for how long?), there is no way that new industrial investment in this country could compete without in effect imposing massive tariffs on imports. Why not?

After all, the government is proposing to make drastic cuts in all the services that make life less arduous for the sick, handicapped, under-privileged and unemployed in our society on the grounds that we cannot afford it. Every day we are reminded that we shall be £50 billion in

the red. And presumably unless something is done about it there will be another £50 or £60 billion in the next year.

As we are always reminding our critics, far from *Freedom* offering advice as to how the capitalist system could be made to flourish, we know that our practical suggestions, if adopted, would contribute to the undermining of the system. In an anarchist society we would look forward to the free exchange of surplus production in agriculture, horticulture and industry, but in a capitalist society which condemns millions of wage earners to depend on state charity we defend the idea of concentrating on producing as much of our needs as we reasonably can. Obviously we do not suggest growing bananas in the Scillies, but is it not silly to be buying in Colchester onions from Tasmania and carrots from the USA?

And of course, as the Law Lords decree that another twelve coal pits can be sealed forever and thousands of miners join the dole queue, nobody is apparently concerned with the 'balance of payments' protests that we shall be importing coal from Australia, Colombia and Poland and that miners will be sacked (NEWS ITEM: 1,200 miners who refused voluntary redundancy have been sacked – the first sackings since 1948) and this will add to the £50 billion deficit?

At the same time some million acres of agricultural land that up to now were producing cereals are being 'set aside', that is to say will produce weeds and the farmers will be compensated about £80 an acre to just let the weeds grow. (Incidentally, that's at a time when millions of human beings are dying of malnutrition in Africa and South America.) At the same time we import into this country £6,000 million more in produce than we export through our non-friends the supermarkets – we maintain that we could produce £4,000

million of that £6,000 million deficit if we wanted to!

If we did all these things then more people, we suggest, would be in jobs. But does the government suggest the obvious? It would almost seem that it will do anything but make it possible for people to produce what we need. There are a million acres being subsidised to produce nothing – and we import onions from Tasmania and carrots from the USA! How crazy can you get?

Anarchists surely must believe basically in autarky (that is self-sufficiency) and an exchange of surpluses (this obviously applies especially to produce of the land). Where industrial production is concerned, only in an anarchist society (or world?) can production be geared to needs.

Today we have an agricultural industry out of control and industry in general far in advance of its markets. Capitalism is on the rocks and it can only delay its bankruptcy order by, as we have been saying for years, direct taxing of the over-£20,000 a year until the 'pips squeak'. The indications are that top people are reading *Freedom*! Of course they aren't,* but unlike them we are not wanting to salvage capitalism. We want the people to realise that nothing will change for the good until capitalism is destroyed and replaced by a society based on mutual aid, equality and diversity with production for need and the accent on fruitful leisure for everybody!

* Nevertheless, the Liberal Democrats are now hesitatingly suggesting that increased income tax should not be ignored and, goodness gracious, even some rank-and-file Tories are joining the Liberal chorus. At the time of writing, not a whisper from the Labour Party in spite of the fact that they profess to believe in the redistribution of wealth. How else, other than by taxation, can they bring it about? Surely not by revolution and expropriation. Perish the thought!

MAJOR'S 'CLASSLESS BRITAIN'

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quite disastrous situation so far as the workers are concerned is only partly true. The unions, just like the Labour Party, are as strong as their memberships are active. The stronger the membership the more listening is the leadership. At the present time with unemployment escalating, you cannot expect members to put their jobs at risk. After all, the unions are not political. They exist to further the material interests of their members. As Malatesta wisely commented so long ago:*

"All movements founded on material and immediate interests (and a mass working class movement cannot be founded on anything else) if the ferment, the drive and the unremitting efforts of men of ideas struggling and making sacrifices for an ideal future are lacking, tend to adapt themselves to circumstances, foster a conservative spirit, and the fear of change in those who manage to improve their conditions, and often end up by creating new privileged classes and serving to support and consolidate the system which one would want to destroy."

* Malatesta: *Life and Ideas*, 310 pages, ISBN 9 900384 15 8, £4.00.

* A year ago, 27th June 1992, *Freedom's* front page editorial asked 'Capitalism on the Brink of Bankruptcy?'

Colin Ward

is the author of

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Workers at Timex in Dundee have been on strike for four months after being sacked by boss Peter Hall. The dispute began at the end of last year when workers refused a management demand to lay off 170 workers for six months; the workers wanted to rotate the lay-off across the whole workforce. The workers' demand was refused, and at the end of January this year the factory came out on strike. In February, the bosses demanded cuts in benefits and conditions. The workers refused but voted to return to work under protest. However, when they turned up for work they were locked out. On the 17th February the management sacked all 340 workers.

Since then the workers have picketed the factory while Timex have bussed scabs through the gates. There have been weekly mass rallies outside the factory. The one on Monday 17th May was the biggest, with thousands of people attending. Six hundred police struggled to let scab buses through the crowd, and only half the scabs actually got in. Some people have been moaning about 'outsiders' getting involved, but several points need to be made in response to this kind of comment.

In the first place, Dundee has only a small number of major employers, Timex being one of them. It is therefore quite understandable that other people in the town should be wondering if they might be next in line for attacks on their working conditions; if the

— ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL — TIMEX AND ARROWSMITH'S

Timex bosses get away with this then other bosses will feel tempted. Many people therefore perceive that the Timex workers' struggle is their struggle. More importantly, perhaps, we cannot limit the issue to the people of Dundee; it is important to all of us that the bosses are defeated in struggles like this. The battle is not simply a moral one over the ethics of the Timex bosses' behaviour; it is a dispute having implications for other workplaces in other areas.

The second point is that Timex workers and their local supporters have welcomed support from outside the community and have called for more of it. A physical presence on the picket line undoubtedly boosts morale and gives people courage to continue. But there are other ways people can help. The Dundee Timex Support Group, a combination of trade unionists, local activists, unemployed and clergymen, have called for various actions to keep the 'strike' in the public eye. Such actions include extending strike action into areas that can affect the company directly and a boycott of all Timex watches.

Meanwhile, here in the sunny South West we are having our own 'Timex', though it has so far been shielded from the glare of publicity. At Arrowsmith's in Bristol, management used an overtime ban which workers were carrying out as part of action in support of a national £6.50 wage claim as an excuse to lock out and sack 121 printworkers. Two of the sacked workers came to my local university to speak at the student union general meeting about the dispute. They wanted to stress the distinctness of their case from the one at Timex. The Arrowsmith's management action was, they said, well planned and deliberate union busting. What is happening now is that the management have offered the sacked workers their jobs back but on individual contracts which de-recognise the union the workers belong to. Moreover, the management are refusing to meet the sacked workers except on an individual basis; meeting more than one of them at once is too close to having a meeting with a union, and the overriding aim of the bosses is to eliminate all union organisation from the workplace at

Arrowsmith's. Almost all of the workforce have so far stood firm against this attack; only three have gone back to work, the others have received massive support from local people. The dispute is not much heard about outside Bristol, however. The two Arrowsmith's (ex-)workers called for support in the form of donations and, importantly, publicity so that others hear what's happening there.

No less that Timex, the Arrowsmith's dispute is one which not only needs our support but is important for all of us that the management is defeated. Of course, the trade unions' only functions is to negotiate the rate of exploitation (see the excellent *Wildcat* pamphlet *Outside and Against the Unions* for examples of anti-worker action by unions in regard to the miners' strikes); they only 'lead' struggles when forced to by workers. And it is quite clear from the words of Bill Jordan in grumbling about the presence of others at Timex and his concern with presenting a moderate image to the media that he is way behind his own members in terms of understanding what is necessary in their struggle; objectively, he is in the enemy camp. But it is important not to confuse the anti-worker nature of trade unions with the necessity of organisation in the workplace; clearly, if you're in a job you need to combine with others in some way, even if it is through an existing union. This is why the moves at

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That's the Law ... that was!

The rule of law is something in a 'democracy' which everybody will expect but only a few dissidents will dare to question. But once you start questioning the so-called 'sanctity of the law' you realise that all governments – be they dictatorships, military, religious or political – impose laws to suit their ambitions and, having the so-called 'legal authority' by reason of their office, can modify, change and abolish them at will.

The Tory government's main success since 1979 has been to bash the trade unions so successfully that, so far as being able to assert themselves politically, they might as well not exist. We have no love for the trade union bosses, but we lament the fact that workers are so disorganised as to be, apparently, unable to resist not only the obvious problems created by the recession and unemployment but also the government's assaults on the unions' only weapons against the bosses: namely that of the strike, and the right to organise.

Thanks to Hugo Young in the *Guardian* (27th May), one has learned of the most extraordinary piece of legal jiggery-pokery which would have otherwise gone without media notice.

Briefly: in 1989 the *Mail on Sunday* decided to refuse recognition to the NUJ (National

Union of Journalists) and offered personal contracts instead of a collective agreement to their employees. (Apparently, according to Hugo Young, "not even the Labour Party any longer seems to dispute an employers right to withdraw union recognition"!) But the problem was that the *Mail on Sunday* added the condition that "only those who signed a personal contract would receive a pay rise". As a result fifteen employees who on principle refused to sign found themselves 'punished' by a reduction of 4.5% off their pay.

One of them went to court to argue that this was against the law. Apparently his was not an isolated case. And as Hugo Young puts it, "on this growing practice, the Court of Appeal made a clear judgement. It found that the "douceur as it became sweetly known" had only one purpose:

"to penalise people for being members of a union or deter them from remaining there. The overall object, the judges venture, was so to reduce the power of the union as to negate it totally. As such, the anti-union discrimination was plainly against the law, which said – and had said ever since 1975, undisturbed by the smallest amendment in all six ferocious statutes from 1980-1992 – that individuals were protected against this abuse of employers' power."

However, this was neither to the liking of the *Daily Mail*, the CBI nor the government. One cannot do better than quote Hugo Young in full:

"We were to learn this remarkably soon, and with the kind of candour only available from one of the over-promoted chumps who pass for junior ministers in the House of Lords. It chanced that one such, the Viscount Ullswater, was on his feet at the very time the Appeal Court gave judgement, and, as luck would have it, with the very instrument in his hand that could lay to waste, on the instant, this judicial excrescence that had dared affirm the right to meaningful union membership: The TU and ER Bill 1993.

There was one problem. The Bill had passed the Commons and very nearly passed the Lords. It had approached its eighth and final stage of legislative passage, third reading in the Lords. Any amendment to overrule the judges, a dubious expedient at any time, would have to be set down without a moment for deliberative thought. But Ullswater wasn't deterred. On 30th April the court gave its unanimous judgement. On 6th May he said the amendment would be coming. On 20th May, with the weekend beckoning, it was published. On 24th May, Monday last, it was passed."

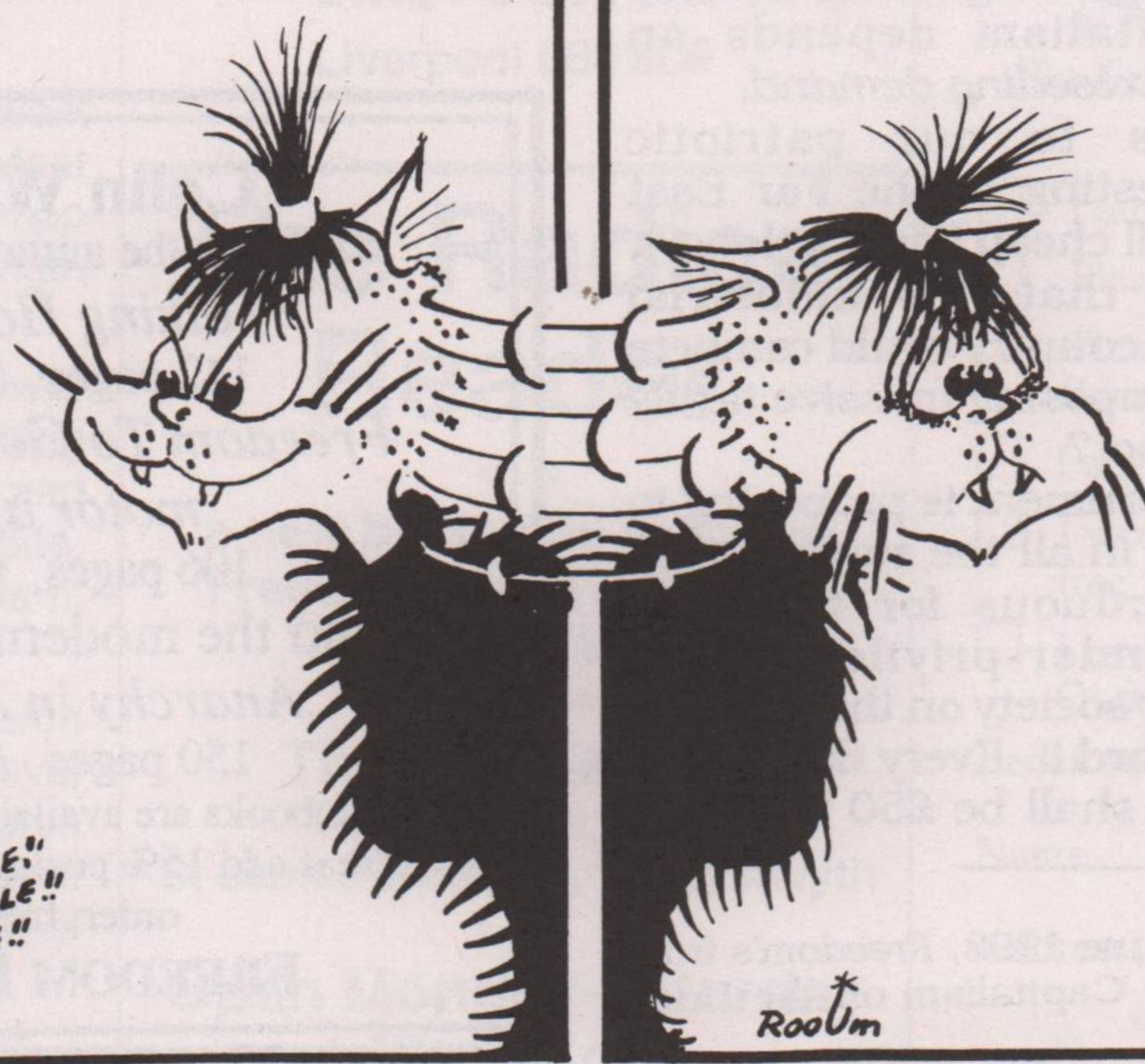
And so the sacrosanct law was, by an amendment, made null and void in a matter of minutes. Hugo Young concludes:

"This is a saga from a sick political society. Any chance of the Commons, to whom the amended Bill

soon returns, standing up for due process? To do so, it might need a little pushing from outside. But here, perhaps, is the nub of the story. These events occurred on Monday afternoon. The deed was done by 5.15, in time for every first edition. There had been brief forewarnings in a Sunday paper. Channel Four News did a proper job. But in my editions of the *Times*, the *Independent*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Financial Times* and even our own paper, not a single line appeared. This new law, and the scandal that lies behind it, did not rate a mention. Somehow, neither the removal of basic rights nor the blithe crookery by which politicians are prepared to overturn the courts, any longer thrust their way onto the agenda. They also die who only stand and sleep."

Hugo Young's conclusions as to the role the media play in virtually suppressing such cases needs to be emphasised. Another topical example is the two-day Commons debate on rail privatisation. Both the *Guardian* and the *Independent* limited their reports to the fact that the government won the vote by assuring the Tory 'rebels' that the pensioners, the young and the handicapped would still enjoy special rates. But nothing about the future of the railway system!

WILD CAT
An employment contract is two-sided. You can't be sacked for insisting your employer keeps his side.....



— AN ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —
**Co-operation doesn't
 come easy**

Forty-five years ago the American writer Mary McCarthy wrote a short novel, or long short story, published here as *The Oasis* as an issue of the magazine *Horizon*, and in the US, I think, in her book *The Company She Keeps*. It was about a group of sophisticated New Yorkers who decided to get away from it all and form a community in a cheap empty hotel with a lot of land at, maybe, Provincetown. I've a feeling that the book had a slight notoriety as it included malicious profiles of various friends like Dwight Macdonald.

But what I remember about it was that one reluctantly accepted member of the group was a working man who had come up the hard way in the garment industry, was a disciple of Kropotkin and a supporter of dozens of support groups organised around journals like the *Daily Forward* and the *Fraye Arbayer Stimme*. The others didn't really want him along as he had nothing interesting to say about Freud and Reich, Trotsky or Fromm.

Down on the Oasis they stayed up late arguing about Socialism in One Country and the authoritarian personality, but this particular member was the one who got up early, fixed the boiler, fed the chickens and located the faults in the electric wiring. Naturally the community fell apart in mutual acrimony, but this guy wasn't disillusioned. He'd had a great summer. I was reminded of that story when I once met the veteran of a building co-operative in Leicestershire. He said that the whole tragedy of the producer co-op movement was that the people who felt strongest about co-op ideology were those least fitted to practise it, while the kind of person who could make any organisation work hadn't the time to think about principles.

A further reminder of Mary McCarthy's fable was the recent airing in these pages of the LETS idea (Local Exchange and Trading Systems). Drawing on the handful of examples of local schemes for the use of chequebooks for mutual exchange of goods and services in a notional currency, taking advantage of the simplification of

book-keeping brought about by computerisation, Denis Pym urged us to think seriously about the concept since we are faced with large-scale joblessness as a permanent feature of the British economy. For as Sarah Strong of the group in Totnes, Devon, notes: "poor communities are full of people with skills and energy to sell, and no one is buying".

I think that Denis Pym is right. An American anarchist, the late George Benello, had a similar view in an essay on 'Growing a Local Economy' (C. George Benello, *From the Ground Up: Essays on Grassroots and Workplace Democracy*, Boston, South End Press, 1992, \$12). He was addressing the problems of communities hit by the collapse of local employment, and reminded his readers that during the great depression of the 1930s when banks closed all over the US "many cities printed their own currency. This works to the extent that a community is able to maintain a viable internal economy which provides the necessities of life, independent of transactions with the outside". And he went on to suggest a range of local services and facilities a community could develop within this local money supply. "Poverty could be the means of building a better life, from the ground up".

Similarly Denis Pym was grasping at the LETS idea as a way which people with a very small cash income could improve their access to goods and services by trading their own time and skills. He was immediately shot down by a letter (17th April) from a reader who claimed that a LETS network would not really be outside the capitalist economy, merely a "self-managed grassroots arm of capitalism". Believing that "the motive for participants is still individual profit and accumulation, even of this is in the form of

material goods and services rather than cash". He concluded that:

"I have no intention of volunteering my effort so I can become a dogsbody for small traders, local spivs and petty capitalist shopkeeper types. The real alternative for the unemployed and those in crap jobs is to practise material support and solidarity in struggles around housing, free time, against slave labour and paying bills, etc. Seizing and sharing goods and space should be our response to our current situation and this should be done on a communal basis."

A chastened Pym returned to the topic (15th May), claiming in a different context that "anarchists, who want organisation located in people's heads rather than in some external authority, are frequently hopeless co-operators", and explaining, incidentally, that this was the reason for his advocacy of LETS, "based on an administrative system which does not assume people can co-operate easily. Ideally the administrative bit can be abandoned when mutual aid takes over and this, apparently, has happened".

Pym seems to me to be realistic on the need to learn co-operation, as we live in a culture that surrounds us with exploitative values, but it isn't apparent to me that in those LETS systems we know about the administrative bit can be abandoned. I think his critic is wrong about the motives of the people who initiate LETS systems. They are people just like him and me with a vision of practical changes to make life better. If there were the slightest sign in our society of anyone other than big-time capitalists "seizing and sharing goods and space", these pathetic little local attempts to by-pass capitalist exploitation would be overtaken by events.

Pym and his critic, like you and me, are involved in trying to win fellow citizens to a radically different view of the world in a climate where the imposition of capitalist values has made huge inroads in the last fifteen years. Note the way in which the railways, the health service, and even the supply of water is governed by the notion of delivering a *product* to the *customer*, not a mutual exchange of services to the community.

I often wish that anarchists took anarchist ideology more seriously. Ideas like LETS are based on the concept of 'contract' as free agreement between individual, whether that contract is implicit or specific. This was developed by the most unreadable of anarchist philosophers, Proudhon, and was well described by Robert Graham in the chapter called 'The role of contract in anarchist ideology' in the History Workshop book edited by David Goodway, *For Anarchism: History, Theory and Practice* (Routledge, 1989). Graham notes that Proudhon "envisaged a society in which all social relationships, save those within the family, were to be based on voluntary contracts between free and equal individuals". This was the foundation of his criticism of both capitalism and the state:

"Proudhon argues that only equals can form a free association. The capitalist is not the worker's associate, but an enemy who exploits him. Through his labour the worker provides his employer with the means of independence and security for the future, while obtaining for himself only the daily subsistence. The worker is in a precarious position, with no guarantee of wages for the morrow, holding 'his labour by the condescension and necessities of the master and proprietor'. Any contract between such unequal parties is necessarily null and void."

But the contractual obligations of members of a LETS system is simply a mutually recognised currency. I have family members in Totnes where the unit of exchange is called Acorns. There is a local *Small Ads Magazine* and a year ago I read in it a complaint that a user was demanding more in Acorns than in cash. The local LETS group stressed that this devaluation is extremely destructive of the system and had caused the failure of an earlier scheme in Totnes. I went back this spring and found that, although membership had risen from 100 to about 150, goods and services were still on offer with a higher Acorn than sterling price. People had still not learned that to co-operate on anything wider than an inter-personal level, you have to play fair.

I don't know whether the same problems afflict the LETS group in Gloucestershire with their Strouds, or in West Wiltshire with their Links. Some people are born co-operators, like that New Yorker in Mary McCarthy's story. Others, and their number is increasing in the current climate, have been seduced by the notion that in an entrepreneurial society we all have to become entrepreneurs. There was an example of the learning process when Channel 4 television recently devoted a week to the exploration of homelessness under the title *Gimme Shelter*. The bright spot every day was the visits to various self-build sites where ordinary, often unemployed, people were building their own houses. Most said that the worst thing was the two years of negotiation before they could get out of the ground. The actual physical task was almost a relief. But one Tyneside self-builder said: "It was the best education I could ever have. I could do nothing on my own, and then I found that with the others I could do anything I wanted to".

Colin Ward

[George Benello's essay *Wasteland Culture* formed issue no. 88 of *Anarchy* magazine, which Colin Ward edited in June 1968. We still have six copies of the original issue, with cover by Rufus Segar, for £2.00 each post free - Editors]

Machines Culture

A great capability of humans is their ability to produce devices which could in theory serve our needs and benefit society, could help us create and produce in our labour, enabling difficult and strenuous tasks to be reduced. Machines could be seen as the tools of people, an aid to tasks to reduce effort and dangers giving us time for other things. But this dream has never been fulfilled for a different attitude is dominant in which people are not too liberated by machines but become part of them, service them. Accumulation of goods, a higher turnover could create a surplus of greater proportions and could be sold to accrue vast profits. So the logic goes. The process has long been accepted, that of profit for profit's sake, for power and control over others. In this process humans have lost purpose other than as consumers or workers. We are here to generate profits, for ourselves or others, and the machine culture comes to worship the mechanical and forget the human.

In this machine culture people could not work at machines at a pace they choose, allowing for personal ability, their bio-rhythms, their health, and so on. We work to a rate set according to the needs and maximum efficiency of production. The same process is true for that paper machine called bureaucracy.

We have come to endure a culture that Erich Fromm termed as 'cybernetic' where people regard human life (their own included) as a commodity (*To Have or To Be*, Abacus, 1976, pages 145-146). For many people our identities relate to what we *do*, how we are employed, not who we *are*. As someone

enduring the bureaucracy of the dole it is obvious a person is seen as functionless, a commodity that has to be sold, and as such we are expected to market and 'sell' ourselves, search for a place of work and so gain a function. True human needs and morality are not the primary consideration of the way we live whilst the workplace and production are.

People learn to fit the process of work and consumption, to make our lives subject to their requirements, we are expected to wake at a time suitable to the job not us. We are given a set number of hours in which to produce/process/serve and no let-up is tolerated as a rule, the pace is set. You eat not when your body requires food but in a time allotted for this. You may well have to wear clothes according to a dress code. So we have to ignore many of our bodies/minds needs, our bio-rhythms, need for rest, loss of concentration, boredom, emotional problems and desires, our own wishes, etc. The list could go on. By working we find ourselves slaves to the process which consumes our individuality, demands control of us and our obedience and even denies aspects of our biology.

The result is surely the chaos we see all around, people tired and worn out, alienated from their families they do not see enough of (the cliché of a shouting father whose children see him as a stranger they fear is not unrealistic), the unemployed made to feel they are not contributing and have to endure poverty (they are after all surplus cogs and as such get no reasonable income or status).

This way of life with its fast, set, dehumanised pace is surely insane and cruel, robbing us of the chance for meaningful existences based on care for others, enjoyment of humanity, producing for needs and taking time to think about what we do rather than just obeying commands. The difficulty is to resist, but it is the only sane thing to do if we can for this madness is destroying lives, allowing some to become rich off the suffering and poverty of others. It will certainly destroy the environment in the long term. The reason people can blithely continue to serve the mechanism that is destroying the planet is because relations to the rationale of production and needless consumption are strong. Relations to humans, the community and the environment are thin and secondary, something we have learnt to put aside. The planet has come to be seen in the cybernetic culture as a commodity and something we are not affected by but merely exploit. Even now as the ruin and destruction being caused has been correctly identified in mass culture as life-threatening to the planet and therefore us, the process of destruction continues.

A way of life that robs us of time to enjoy life and the company of others, takes our freedom and time, ignores our personal needs unless we have power or wealth, creates and perpetuates suffering, considers money as more important than people, sees people as commodities to use and destroys the environment that sustained life is immoral and as insane as you can get. And those in control of all this who demand conformity and obedience are not 'great' and 'successful' business people and politicians but the insane, sick and twisted.

Ian Borrows

Feminism, Anarchism, Women

The Raven Anarchist Quarterly number 21 on 'Feminism, Anarchism, Women' Freedom Press, 96 pages including 8 pages of illustrations, £3.00 (post free anywhere)

Charlotte Wilson, *Freedom's* first editor, "signed herself austerely" as C.M. Wilson and the same, it may be added, is true of others of *Freedom's* nineteenth century women contributors, of whom there were many. Men may have called each other by their surnames; but was it an assumption of equality on the part of the women, or a fear that the intended readership might be prejudiced against women writers?

A century ago equality might have been taken for granted in the tiny circles around 'progressive' magazines, but those redoubtable women who attained to it had had to fight against the odds – witness the early life of Lilian Wolfe as told here; and in the case of Charlotte, from a well-to-do background, the point is made that in spite of her having an education "at that time women couldn't take university examinations or degrees".

A modern anarchist and feminist, Lisa Bendall, although critical of traditional feminism, writes in *The Raven*:

"It is true that much of feminism has been concerned with gaining access for women to the fruits of public society – wealth, power, education – often without attempting to change that society significantly. I find it difficult to criticise these efforts too strenuously because I myself have benefited enormously from them – only fifty years ago, for instance, it would have been very difficult for me to go to university."

Lisa Bendall's 'Anarchism and Feminism' is the text of a talk given at a meeting in London earlier this year. Its freshness and clarity of

expression contrast most forcibly with the mish-mash of reprinted stale clichés from *Zero* of 1970, described in a footnote as "unfortunately" short-lived (mercifully might be better); what we lack is the substance of the discussion which one imagines to have followed at the meeting; here is where some feedback from *The Raven's* readers would be welcome.

There is much else here besides: Emily Johns writes on non-violent action by women in the peace movement. *Freedom's* readers will recall Peter Geiger crossing swords with Ernie Crosswell; here we have the article *Peace News* refused to print, and I for one found it enjoyable reading even though I was not sure after the first few pages what it is all about.

There are reviews of Mary Mellor's *Breaking the Boundaries*, of Martha Ackelsberg's *Free Women of Spain* (Indiana University Press, £12.99 – the price has gone up) and our old comrade David Wieck's memoir of his mother Agnes Burns Wieck, *Woman from Spillertown*.

All this is in the first half of the magazine. The second half, more polished though less controversial, has essays on a number of individual anarchist women – and on Mary Wollstonecraft who wasn't an anarchist and whose book was called *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (not 'Women') à la Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*. There is an interesting article on Louise Michel, reprinted from elsewhere although it doesn't say so, and the silly final paragraph should have been edited out. Nicolas Walter updates and expands earlier essays on Charlotte Wilson, and he might have added that her famous essay *Anarchism and Outrage* was recently

Fear of close relationships

This is a wholly rational fear. The majority of violent crime, including murder, occurs within close relationships. The majority of people becoming patients in psychiatric hospitals see their own problems in terms of their close relationships. When a close relationship goes seriously wrong, both parties experience a severe shock that reduces their ability to respond emotionally to others. In some cases they became unable to form or maintain such links. This experience is like the numbness of a limb bereft of feeling. The person is numbed by fear, rooted to the spot, unable to act.

People who suffer in this way appear damaged; they have a vulnerability that is attractive to people who are sensitive, caring and open to close relationships. But the close relationship that results is more likely to end in disaster than the average relationship. This is a central reason for the failure of many utopian community and co-operative ventures, as they attract large numbers of people who have already been damaged by past close relationships.

Of course we can evade the problem by concentrating our propaganda on criticising the existing society, attacking the oppression of the state and its institutions; and that is very valuable. But, are we really confident that a better world would emerge, after the revolution; or more realistically, that more co-operative, non-hierarchical structures can emerge whilst state and multi-national powers decline. Of course, many of us lack such confidence, but feel that we must continue to oppose injustice even when success seems impossible.

Criticising the old and experimenting with the new should be complimentary activities. Where anarchists tend to disagree is in their assessment of books as useful sources of

knowledge, when it comes to setting up close co-operative relationships. Thus the continuing dialogue in *Freedom* on the value of sociology and psychology. (The works of academics can be valuable, as long as we are clear about the non-anarchist justifications, lying covertly hidden within their writings. The works of intellectuals are less likely to deceive us, but the ideas may appear too demanding or impractical.)

Co-operative relationships are most effective when they develop to resist the power, corruption or interference of the state or its institutions. When people no longer feel oppressed, they cease to co-operate effectively and become corrupted by materialism. When that co-operation is forced upon people by ideology or fear, it fails utterly. Similar conclusions may be reached from reading *The Raven* number 21, with regard to co-operation amongst feminists and lack of involvement of feminists in the anarchist movement. Co-operation works for those who feel they share a specific oppression. Anarchism should be the political movement that unites this diversity of co-ops, but we have a long way to go.

The Conservative Party wishes to absorb the feminists by handing out tougher sentences (scapegoating) men accused of violence to women. The Labour Party plan to offer equal pay has proven far less effective, as it is cynically disbelieved, whereas the punishment of individuals provides a focus for man-hating vengeance. How can our idealism compete with this opportunity to inflict pain upon the 'enemy', as seen in the present BBC2 series on 'Crime and Punishment'? can we persuade feminists and other militant groups to federate as anarchists?

John Myhill

The Function of the Political Myth

The Function of the Political Myth

by George Woodcock

The Owl Press, Belper, Derbyshire, in Anarchist Essays Series Number 1, 40p (plus 18p postage inland, 35p overseas)

This is a very useful pamphlet on the nature of myth-making. The page to turn to straight away is page 6, where George Woodcock sets out a number of points concerning the myth and the best thing is to quote the entire passage:

"1. [The myth] is not concerned with the present and is laid, usually in the future, but always, even if in the past, at some period outside history.

2. Not being dependent on ascertainable facts, [the myth] cannot be proved true or untrue.

3. If not immediately fulfilled, it can be projected farther into the future. Human hope and patience make the successful myth a long-term asset.

4. It is rooted in the desires of the people. It may be contrived by an individual, but unless it represents the satisfaction of some popular yearning, it will never make good.

5. It is subject to decay in time. People will not wait indefinitely for fulfilment, and the discredited myth has to be replaced by something new.

6. The more nearly related to actual circumstances, the less hardy is a political myth. If linked too closely to events, its achievement may be made impossible by the course of history."

Whereas I agree with and admire George Woodcock's demolition of myth-making it would have also been useful to supply some detailed defence of 'Utopian' ideas. The only quote in the pamphlet is from page 11:

"Without the existence of myths, according to

reprinted and is available in *What Is Anarchism?* (Freedom Press, £1.95). The issue ends with eloquent tributes to two of the most notable anarchist women in living memory – Lilian Wolfe and Marie Louise Bernéri.

CC

Sorel, it is useless to expect any widespread action on the part of the workers. He claims that Utopian ideas, based on a discussion of practical realities, have no such motive power as myths."

This is a stimulating pamphlet, hopefully the first of many.

John Rety

New FREEDOM PRESS titles — MAY 1993 —

Freedom to Roam Harold Sculthorpe

Short, witty essays by a rambler on the problems encountered in walking in the countryside as the military, large landowners, factory farmers and, more recently, water companies try to exclude walkers from the land.

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79 pages ISBN 0 900384 70 0 £2.50

ALSO TO BE PUBLISHED DURING 1993
The first volume of the Freedom Centenary Series covering the years 1886 to 1932, and a volume on the life and work of Emma Goldman. Details to be announced.

Print and Publications

Are anarchist ideas worth presenting well? By this I mean is it a good idea for our magazines, papers, books and pamphlets to be well designed, printed in readable typefaces on good quality paper, in a style of layout that keeps the interest of the reader? There is certainly much of dubious quality currently produced, and whatever the quality and interest of the writing itself in these journals/pamphlets/books, the efforts of writers are wasted if what is produced languishes unread on bookshop shelves or is rapidly thrown into the waste-paper bin.

Aside from the admirable efforts of groups such as ASP, Elephant Editions, Freedom Press, the late Larry Law and others in this country, there is now more than ever before the means to produce quality printed materials such as stickers, magazines, papers and pamphlets at the local and individual level. This need not be beyond individual or group financial resources. There are a variety of approaches available.

The 'Old Tech' Approach

This really refers to Letterpress printing machines of the hand platen or treadle operated variety. I have seen these offered for sale at anything between £150 and £400, often complete with accessories such as fonts of type, composing stick, etc. The use of Letterpress is time-consuming but it is suitable for self-adhesive stickers, small posters, even pamphlets and leaflets. Time-consuming typesetting can be avoided by using polymer plates set on type-high blocks to print from. Some comrades may remember *Anarchism Lancastrium* which was produced by Peter Good using Letterpress. Adana of London still make machines, type, etc., and a good source for secondhand equipment is found in *Exchange & Mart*. The advantage of Letterpress is that it is fairly cheap,

independent of electricity, is not wasteful of paper or ink and can have a high standard of 'finish'.

The 'Low Tech' Approach

Perhaps the ultimate version of this was the RSG6 pamphlet of the Spies for Peace, as described in *The Raven* number 5. But today the ready availability of Letraset, text set on typewriter or word processor, 'cut and paste' origination methods and photocopier reproduction creates leaflets, etc., of a very acceptable quality.

The Desk Top Publishing Approach

This was strictly for the well-heeled up to very recently. However, it is now possible to purchase DTP systems complete with laser-like quality bubblejet printers for £750. These allow the 'origination' of artwork for posters, pamphlets and books. Combined with the use of photocopiers, DTP is a powerful tool for the individual or group wishing to produce anarchist literature for local use. There are now many DTP systems available (the one I use combines Amstrad's PCW 9512+ with a Canon bubblejet and Microdesign 3 software). It is not as good as an Apple Mac with laser printer, but it is adequate for my use.

There are many uses which could be made of the above methods, for example *Freedom's* subscribers could produce and distribute a leaflet in their locality at election times, or perhaps at other times could attempt to attract new subscribers to Freedom Press literature, we might then begin to reach out beyond the narrow confines of our movement. Local level publishing is not difficult, anyone can do it, and most people have never heard of anarchist ideas. It is time that they did. With a little time, imagination and effort we can see that they do.

JPS

Letter to a violent anarchist

From birth, the state citizen is subjected to a barrage of propaganda and environmental influences which implant beliefs that uphold the state. Consequently, unless the individual has unlearned the conventional thought, he or she believes that a government is necessary and that to do violence in certain circumstances is good. For this reason, although there is word for a person who advocates non-violence (a pacifist), there is no word for a person who advocates violence (and I have to entitle this article as above). All state citizens are expected to accept and support violence.

Those of us who realise that the state pattern of society can bring only misery, drop the beliefs that support it so that they fall like autumnal leaves from a tree. Most anarchists discard all the conventional social ideas, but they fail to take the final step. They realise that a central government is unnecessary but they fail to realise that violence is unnecessary also. The ambience of state violence seems to be too much for them. The final leaf refuses to fall.

The justification for the use of violence was reiterated by Stephen Booth in his article 'Letter to a Pacifist'. The argument is simple. Because governments rule with violence over every aspect of society, and because they are completely immoral, they will always use their violence to quash any non-violent opposition. Turning the other cheek is futile. Therefore, the only effective opposition is by violence. This appears to be true, but it is not.

To judge the effectiveness of violence, we must first be clear about what we want it to achieve. There are three main uses of violence, and because anarchists do not recognise this they can destroy the case for non-violence.

We can use violence to protect ourselves and our families. I am a pacifist, but I would not hesitate to use force were I or my family attacked. Turning the other cheek is not for me. Some pacifists believe that such saintly behaviour would be effective during a personal confrontation, but none, as far as I know, believe that it would bring about a social revolution.

The second use of violence takes place during a riot, a violent demonstration or even a rebellion. The state can always deal with such mass violence, and it has no use

whatsoever except as a propaganda exercise or as a means to vent personal anger and frustration.

Finally, we can use violence in an attempt to bring about some form of social revolution. If we wish merely to change one government for another then, depending on the support we have from the army, violence may or may not be successful. But if we wish to abolish governments altogether and introduce an anarchistic society, then it is an entirely different ball game.

For the reasons I am about to give, organised violence can never produce our social ideals. Because of this and because I would never help a government fight any war of theirs, I am a pacifist.

To defeat a government, the anarchist army would have to match or be stronger than the state army. Clearly this would be impossible because the anarchists would be destroyed long before they had time to gather such a force. And even suppose, by some miracle, they had such a force then it would have to be directed and controlled by a central government. Their whole set-up would be a replica of the state pattern they intended to destroy. So they would fail to produce their anarchistic society.

There is only one way to produce our ideals. We must realise that our society will be for everyone. We must convince other people that the state does not serve them but that an anarchist society will. We must convert the very people the government would set against us.

Everyone must realise that if they want a free and just society they must, as far as possible, behave now as if they were already in it. In that way the revolution will come about non-violently from what the politicians would call the grass roots.

People will have difficulty in accepting our ideas as long as their living depends on the state environment. So besides spreading our propaganda, we must now start to build our own communities where people govern themselves. If we are always peaceful, governments will find it difficult to persuade the public that we are dangerous.

Derrick A. Pike

Little Johnnie is Watching You

We live in a world where a child writing on the wall of a car park is watched by television, radios tell a policeman patrolling in the nearby shopping centre, and the child is intercepted and made to clean off the writing. What sort of world is this, where everybody is being watched?

The Jamie Bolger murder, and the picture of the Harrods bombers have brought television cameras into public attention. Now, with the Warrington bombing and high levels of street crime, many towns are rushing to install high street cameras.

CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) cameras have been around for many years in off licences and supermarkets. The expansion of the cameras into the streets has been less obvious. Television cameras have also been installed overlooking traffic lights and main road junctions and on motorways, especially heavily used inter-motorway junctions.

For the newly set-up security companies, the recession and increasing crime figures have been good for business. According to one figure trade has increased by 130% in four years. Technology is becoming increasingly cheaper, and the costs of installation can be offset against reduced insurance premiums.

The town of Kings Lynn is cited as an example. Since 1986 the three cameras installed overlooking an industrial estate have been expanded to 45 through the town centre. It is said that over two years crime dropped from 58 incidents to six during the initial trial on the estate.

Camera signals are fed to a central control room in the council offices and are monitored 24 hours a day by security staff. If anything suspicious is seen, then a direct line can be used to alert police. The picture can also be relayed to the police station. This reduces the police reaction time. Frequently offenders can be followed by the cameras, and the police directed to intercept them.

This is 'real time' television. The problem here, as always, is the human factor. The more television cameras there are to watch, the more information overload on the staff in the monitoring room. With fewer monitor screens than cameras, the pictures must switch between them, and there is always the chance that something vital will be missed.

Parallel to the shopping centre cameras, traffic on the motorways is also being watched. Plessey have been given a contract to develop a fibre-optic cable system, the desire is to install at least one camera overlooking every mile of motorway by the year 2000. Cameras have also been installed which can automatically read car number plates. Thus,

individuals could be tracked on their journeys through the road system and records kept for later analysis, just as they are with British Telecom's system X computerised exchanges. Some indication of the sinister potential of the number plate reader is given by their use in 1984. At this time an early version of the system could only read stationary vehicles' plates. It was installed overlooking the toll booths of the Dartford tunnel, and used to track Kent miners' vehicles.

There is a tendency towards overkill in all of this. The cameras only need to overlook the slip roads of interchanges, or choke points in the road networks or pedestrian walkways. In the monitor rooms, watchers will be overcome by the number of screens. Again, technology will provide solutions. Already computer systems are being developed to recognise certain types of event on the small screen (for example, cars parked on double yellow lines). This will free the watching carbon units for the more complex and interesting visual tasks. Security systems overlooking empty areas such as factory units by night only start transmitting the pictures back to the control room when the areas are broken into, or people moving around inside are detected. We can see how this technology is dependent on communications – either telephone links or even satellites. Humans are there only to interpret and react to events, the technology itself is the driving force.

Perhaps more significantly, in complex crimes or terrorist acts, the authorities have the 'playback' facility. Tapes of what the camera saw can be analysed after the event. The problem at the moment is that the pictures are usually of low quality, and need to be visually 'enhanced' by computer programmes originally developed to spot Soviet missile silos from space. It won't be long before better cameras are available, and picture quality improves.

All of these developments are sinister. The surprising thing is that despite the warning in Orwell's 1984, very little has been said or done to oppose these developments. Few voices have been raised against Little Johnnie and his video cameras. Of course, 'only the guilty have any need to fear being watched'. The positive aspects of the technology have been played up in the state's propaganda, the negative hardly mentioned at all.

Believers in sympathetic magic had a point when they thought that to take the image of a person is to

(continued on page 7)

Task

After five long months and no income from the sheep (save for £350 in subsidies) the end of May brings the first potential buyers to Botch-Up Farm. Mostly they just come and look, but a few take animals home with them.

In a culture which equates 'doing' with being a housewife or a coolie and manufacture is confused with the production of abstractions – words and numbers – selling something real you've produced and nurtured is akin to exposing your naked body. Most artists and craftsfolk know the feeling. As there aren't too many coolies in Britain, doers in the economic system are a pretty harassed mob.

My first two customers this year were both women – very different people. The very first, accompanied by silent husband most surely 'into banking or insurance', was a know-all and missed no opportunity to put me or my animals down. The hoggetts were 'uneven', one 'looked like a ram'. 'I see you haven't trimmed their feet!' 'The ewes are awfully thin' (not surprising after giving their all to a pair of lambs), etc. She also told me my asking price was ridiculous. All part of her buying strategy, no doubt. She made an offer and I conveniently forgot Fred Bugg's law on selling – 'first offer is best offer' – but not before engaging in my own bit of wickedness. I indicated I might be prepared to accept her lousy offer. It depended on which animals she wanted. I could see she was already

celebrating a successful campaign. She even condescended to compliment me on the dog's sheep-handling skills. She then chose my best sheep, whereupon I sent the two of them, green wellies and all, packing. I don't sell my sheep to arseholes.

The next customer, again accompanied by an apparently disinterested husband and daughter, was a totally different person. She knew her sheep. I could tell by the way she handled and examined them, saying little as she looked and worked them over. At the same time this large, jovial lady kept up a pleasant banter about everything and nothing. Unlike men, women seem to be able to do several things at once. These people were small farmers, true grafters who, even on a bank holiday, could only find time to come in the evening. She chided her silent husband with a 'we could do with pens like these'. I liked the way this silent party leapt into the pen to hold the animals while I marked them and didn't even comment when he saw I was wrong in my description of one sheep. Over the two hours of our transactions, sorting and marking, I saw him smile several times but I can't recall him saying anything. This was not his scene. Mrs made all the decisions and the daughter acted as clerk.

The price was fixed suddenly and with little discussion. I 'gave them away' for not much more than the previous woman had offered, but I felt good about the deal. I can negotiate with the next buyer from a more comfortable position. As they were driving off with their

booty, dad still silent at the wheel, the daughter, face beaming, shouted through the vehicle window "Poor dad, he hates sheep you know". Mum and daughter had scored more than one victory – and I slept well on it.

I don't know how anarchists can make their views on organisation work unless we come together around task collectively acknowledged, i.e. elevate our more significant activities. Through capitalism and the misuse of technology, industrial man denigrates task. There are precious few significant tasks in employment, that's one reason why the material rewards for 'top employees' are so great. While tasks which matter, like raising kids, building a home or growing our own food, are mostly outside the system and too often trivialised for being so.

I agree with John Rodger's view (Freedom, 9th January 1993). He questions our faith in technology as an essential element in an anarchist leisure society. The revival and elevation of task is central to personal well-being, social organisation and the more appropriate use of tools and technologies. If survival becomes our central task, as many believe it will again, both capitalism and technology will have to take a back seat and the myth of progress give way to that of resourcefulness.

We're going through a mini-crisis at Botch-Up Farm right now. The sheep are definitely on the way out – not totally but

to a subsidiary place. We're no longer 'living the sheep' and there's a fair bit of confusion and conflict over priorities and direction. We're not always pulling together.

It's all trees, timber and fashioning wood now. John sculpts in great chunks of trees, mostly in Bristol but his influence remains. Dylan and Jude, having forsaken sheep for welding, car repairs, etc., are now collecting fine timber and making furniture. Paule and I, like others approaching senility, have gone barmy on planting and nurturing trees. The sheep are being pushed out, the sheds filling with maturing timbers.

Symbolically Dylan has just demolished a shed which had a dual purpose as workshop and housing sheep. It wasn't an elegant shed, but when I commented on his zeal for the job in terms of 'the new order' he pointed out that he'd helped me build the old shed. But that is the point – in those days I was the master and he the boy. Now in the construction of the new building to be devoted to making fine furniture, he'd clearly the mast and I'm 'the boy'.

There are still a few problems in our transition from sheep to wood – the latter doesn't yet bring much income, not enough for it to become the primary task around which we organise our socio-economic lives. When it does a lot of our petty differences and disputes will go and we'll start arguing about more important things.

Denis Pym

A major political row is fast developing on Tameside Council over the Council's links with a private care company which managed twelve elderly persons homes on behalf of the Council. This past week, three Labour Councillors were suspended from the controlling Labour group after calling for an independent inquiry into the way the 'arms-length' company (TEL) has been run and for the dismissal of its senior management. Four other Councillors received disciplinary warnings. The disciplinary action is seen by many as a way of 'gagging' dissident Councillors and preventing discussion about TEL. Both major town hall unions, i.e. NUPE and NALGO, have also demanded an independent inquiry into the Council's dealings with TEL.

Tameside is one of the borough councils which together make up Greater Manchester. It has been Labour controlled under its leader Roy Oldham since 1979. In February 1990 the Council transferred its twelve elderly persons homes to Tameside Enterprises Ltd (TEL). The decision to transfer the homes was made in order to circumvent Tory legislation resulting from the Griffiths report which many believed penalised local authority-run old folks homes in favour of privatised care for the elderly. In reality, Tameside Council owns all the homes and has a 16% share in TEL. The bulk of TEL's shareholding (66%) is held by Tameside Community Care Trust under its trustees, i.e. Tom Pendry MP, Andrew Bennett MP, Euro-MP Glyn Ford and a local solicitor Jack Thornley.

At the beginning of April the local free newsheet *The Advertiser* reported that TEL had been losing money for two years and had incurred a staggering £1.5 million debt. It was also revealed that TEL had been insolvent since March 1992 but had not been aware of their cash crisis until February of this year. Although Tameside Council's Chairman of Housing, Councillor Simon Walker, is employed by TEL on a reputed salary of £35,000 p.a. as the assistant company secretary in charge of finance, the company secretary Paul Stonier had been unable to confirm whether Councillor Walker had any financial qualifications when questioned by *The Advertiser*. It was later revealed that TEL boss Paul Stonier had received a 43% pay rise in the same year that TEL lost £1 million, giving him an annual salary of £67,317. It also became apparent from accounts drafted by accountants Ernst & Young that twelve TEL employees had received loans from TEL amounting to £25,275. Amongst

— ALL ABOARD THE TAMESIDE GRAVY TRAIN — Tameside Cares! — For Who?

the recipients were a loan of £16,000 to Paul Stonier (later repaid with 5% interest), a loan of £1,744 to Councillor Walker and a loan of £5,833 to Councillor Neil Howard's wife.

Political incest

Apart from the growing evidence of appalling incompetence in the way TEL has been mismanaged by its senior management, many also find the incestuous relationship between TEL and the Council to be deeply worrying. Readers of *Freedom* may recall that back in February 1991 we wrote about Tameside's intimate political scene and the way Labour Party careerists appeared to be cashing in. Paul Stonier had been Tameside Council's Director of Policy and Resources until being offered the position of paid company secretary of TEL in 1989. The public sector union NUPE was given sole negotiating rights within the company. We revealed at the time that Mr Stonier was on NUPE's Parliamentary Panel and that his wife Shirley Stonier (who always declares an interest) was the then Chair of Tameside Social Services. Similarly the then Chair of Tameside estates and Development Committee, Councillor Simon Walker (who always declares an interest), was offered the post of TEL's assistant company secretary in a part-time salary of £10,000 p.a. and was the only applicant in what appeared to have been a one-horse race. At the time of his appointment, the leader of the Council Ray Oldham was a director of TEL and was on the interviewing panel which grilled Councillor Walker for the job.

More recent revelations about TEL have now shown that four Councillors' wives are employed by TEL and that at one period Roy Oldham's wife Margaret had been employed by TEL through NWA Associates of Penistone, Yorkshire, as a management consultant. Councillor Oldham, as leader of the Council, refuses to answer press inquiries about TEL because he also declares an interest. Although the Council took a recent decision to cut TEL's rent by £250,000 and give the company a grant of £45,000 to renovate their

homes, he refuses to comment publicly on matters relating to TEL.

There is little doubt that the TEL revelations have led to growing disillusionment within the ranks of Tameside's Labour Party. There have been accusations that TEL's 'watchdogs', its trustees, have 'failed to bark' and Ashton Labour Party who have a 16% share in TEL have demanded both the immediate dismissal of TEL's senior management and an independent investigation. TEL's employees have been forced into accepting pay cuts aimed at saving the company money rather than face the sack. They have also expressed no confidence in TEL's management and are presently working to rule. And yet, despite bungling incompetence, the majority of the Labour group have continued to reaffirm their confidence in TEL's management. Speaking against a motion to sack Stonier and Walker and to bring in independent investigators, Councillor Wareing said at a recent Council meeting that all creditors would be paid and that TEL had experienced accountancy problems — this must surely rank as one of the biggest understatements of 1993.

Cronyism

Anarchists are well aware that all power is potentially corrupting. For Bakunin, even the best of men were rendered corruptible by the temptations of power and the absence of a serious consistent opposition. As he observed: "Everyone, even the best of men, carries within himself the germs of this accursed affliction and every germ must necessarily quicken and grow if it finds even the slightest favourable conditions".

Timex and Arrowsmith's

(continued from page 3)

Arrowsmith's are so disturbing. The only strength and freedom we have is in combination. As Bakunin said: "No man [sic] can achieve his own emancipation without at the same time working for the emancipation of all men around him. My freedom is the freedom of all since I am not truly free in thought and in fact, except when my freedom and my rights are approved in the freedom and rights of all men who are my equals". The arguments by bosses' lackeys against 'outside support' for the Timex struggle is an attempt to isolate the workers there and make us all individually or only locally reliant and therefore more vulnerable to attacks by the bosses. The management of Arrowsmith's are taking the logic of capitalism to its natural conclusion by trying to disempower and isolate workers on the shopfloor. Ford and Lenin tried such tactics in the early part of the century with Taylor's scientific management. The only solution to it is solidarity and mass resistance.

Johnny Yen

Donations and messages of support to:
Timex Strike Committee, c/o AEEU, 2 Union Street, Dundee
Dundee Timex Support Group, c/o Dundee Trades Council, Rattray Street, Dundee
Mike Vine, Arrowsmith's Dispute, 45 Leinster Avenue, Knowle West, Bristol BS4 1NJ

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Little Johnnie is Watching You

(continued from page 6)

take their soul. The shopping mall (overlooked by cameras) has no soul. The motorway has no soul. The industrial estate has no soul. The home already has its television set, now the three other areas of modern life are also covered. It all seems so predictable, so utterly obvious and programmatic, yet nobody speaks out against it.

It seems obvious that the *intention* of most of the people rushing into Little Johnnie's video store are quite honourable. They want to be rid of crime, they want to prevent Warrington style bomb outrages. The cameras on motorways spot tailbacks. It seems clear, though, that once the technology is installed it *will* be used for good or ill. The Kent miners tracked through the Dartford tunnel will become whatever political activists tracked from their act of protest back to their homes. The availability of the cameras and associated computer systems is the important fact, not the benign intentions of the people who installed them.

In a newspaper comment, the civil liberties pressure group Liberty claimed that this technology could be used to harass people on demonstrations. It already is. Protesters are being videoed at Twyford Down and the information thus gained used to seek injunctions against them. If the state is prepared to use this amount of technology against environmental protesters, imagine what any future major conflict like the '84 miners' strike or a poll tax rebellion will draw?

Perhaps the civil liberties aspects are small beer. Nobody is prepared to defend them, nobody is speaking out against Little Johnnie and his cameras. Freedom which people are not prepared to defend is freedom lost. The civil liberty angle is a distraction from the main thrust of these developments which are directed primarily at commerce. Using computer programmes aimed at monitoring financial transactions between banks, together with detailed information from computer-based invoicing and accounting systems, and cross-comparing with what is actually delivered along the motorways, a greater degree of control over the economic sphere will be possible.

Don't even think about falsifying your tax returns or cheating the VAT-man because Big Johnnie will know. That, at any rate, is the dream.

Much of this works in the domain of deterrence. With the cameras looking over our shoulders, with computers monitoring our actions, we police ourselves. If you know you are being watched, you are not going to filch that Mars bar, written on a grand scale across all aspects of society. Cameras everywhere will have an inhibitory, stultifying effect on human behaviour.

'The watched world is a conformist world'. The more talk about privacy bills to protect the toe-sucking rights of MPs, the less privacy there is. The presence of the camera itself is an invasion. It doesn't really matter whether it is switched on or not, whether anybody is watching, or just that we are being taped, the mere fact that the cameras are there is the all-important thing.

The presence of these cameras is indicative of the electronic 'ring fence' mentality. It is far easier to install a camera than to address the questions of social and economic justice. The existence of the camera is in itself a confession of failure. The haves are watching the have-nots. In all the comments about the cameras, few have pointed out the reasons why pointless vandalism, crimes, murders and terrorism takes place. Property relations are to be enforced at all costs, questions of justice and human value are secondary. 'We must understand less ...'

It is easier to control people by building up technologies of surveillance than it is to address the reasons *why* they attack the consumer nightmare. It is easier to make people into robots, images on a glass screen, than it is to give them back their value and identity. Before, people were controlled by making them believe that God was watching their every action, but now the plastic theme-park has no use for God, and so must put the omniscient grey camera in his place. Who can stand such tyranny? Will they not go mad? With cameras in every high street, how much longer will it be before the machine has to put electronic thought monitors in their brains?

Steve

What is clear is that when some individuals are in positions of influence and have the power to dispense privileges to others, then political cliques will emerge in order to safeguard these privileges. This in our view is no exception. It is the inevitable result of working within an hierarchical political system which is geared to maintaining the status quo. As many of us are aware, those socialists who have argued that capitalism could be abolished from within the existing political system have invariably finished up defending it or have become its apologists. This is no less the case as regards Tameside's intimate political scene. What we are witnessing is cronyism and incompetence and the disgusting spectacle of Labour councillors seeking to jail people for not paying their Tory poll tax and threatening to sack their employees if they don't agree to pay cuts. Moreover, it is also ironical that at a time when the Council are threatening to sack their staff for refusing to accept pay cuts, they have just erected a plaque to commemorate the first General Strike of 1842, which began locally when cotton workers defiantly refused to accept the imposition of pay cuts. Clearly there is no mileage to be gained these days in appealing for traditional Labour loyalties within the Labour Party, but as the Romanians say: "Only fools exult when governments change".

BB and JM

H-E-L-P!

"A new generation of computers that will dwarf our present supercomputers is about to be born. Known as ultracomputers, they have been designed to compute more than one million million instructions per second.

This increase in power represents staggering progress over the past four years: in 1988 the most powerful computers were capable of operating at no more than 2,000 million instructions per second. However, the development brings with it hard questions which, if answered wrongly, may cost tens of billions of dollars.

The ultracomputer will consist of thousands of separate processors, loosely coupled by sophisticated switches. Current supercomputer technology has traditionally depended on processors tightly coupled on the same slice of silicon. At today's prices, a loosely coupled network may cost as much as £200 million."

Darrel Ince in *The Independent*, 17th May 1993.

Needless to say, the brainstorm comes from the USA, probably to replace another scientist's mega-madness scheme: the Star War, which the Clinton lot have ditched but not until it has cost the American taxpayer many billions of dollars.

Darrel Ince suggests that the USA, which is as the "leading edge of hardware technology", seems to be "rushing headlong into its High Performance Computing and Communications Program in the hope that it will lead to ultracomputers". And he concludes with the comforting assurance for the British taxpayer that:

"For once, the United Kingdom's relative poverty may be an advantage. It at least allows us to sit back and watch the potential loss of billions of dollars in a hardware technology that could be obsolete within three years."

The admission by one of "the leaders of the American supercomputer community, Gordon Bell," that "such networks are capable of solving only a narrow range of problems" convinces this writer that he should go on relying on his head which not only has managed to cope, for better or for worse, with the daily problems in a long life but has in between stored up apparently without conscious effort a mini encyclopaedia and a musical repertoire which can be turned on at any time, *all for free!* And last but not least, that old head can still fantasise, which we doubt the ultracomputer will ever do if it has to "compute more than one million million instructions per second". Can you imagine what it would be like feeding the brute?

Up with some freedoms

Dear Freedom,

In reply to George Walford and his 'some freedoms' (15th May 1993), might I direct him to Bakunin's *The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State*. The relevant, if lengthy, passages I quote below:

"I am not speaking of that freedom which is purely formal, doled out, measured, and regulated by the State, an everlasting lie which in reality never represents anything but the privilege of a few based on the enslavement of everyone else."

i.e. the 'freedom' of the stockbroker which George avidly defends.

"Nor do I mean that individualistic, egotistical, malicious and illusory freedom extolled by the school of J-J Rousseau, as by all the other schools of bourgeois liberalism, which considers the so-called rights of everyone, represented by the State as the limit of the rights of each individual, and which in fact leads of necessity and without exception to the reduction of the rights of the individual to zero. No, I mean only the freedom which is truly worthy of that name, the freedom which consists in the full development of all the material, intellectual, and moral powers which are found in the form of latent capabilities in every individual. I mean that freedom which recognises only those restrictions which are laid down for us by the laws of our own nature; so, properly speaking, there are no restrictions, since these laws are not imposed by some outside legislator situated maybe beside us or maybe above us, they are immanent in us and inherent in us and constitute the very basis of all our being, as much material

as intellectual and moral. Thus, instead of trying to find a limit for them, we should consider them as the real conditions of the real reason for our freedom."

The 'freedom' George talks of is achieved on an atomised individual level which ultimately means that total freedom could only be achieved by a world dictator at the expense of everyone else. The alternative view of what freedom exactly is, which Bakunin puts forward, is not exclusive to anarchism and is also to be found in Marxism (his *Paris Manuscripts* for example) and even in the lighter pages of Lenin's *State and Revolution*. However, to the belief in atomistic freedom this communal freedom has few answers – being based on a totally different idea of what human nature is (i.e. a social being rather than a naturally self-seeking being). The trap of being drawn into the discussion of 'individualistic' freedoms as distinct from 'freedom for all individuals' is, in short, a capitalist blind alley which can only lead to the conclusion that humankind needs (at least) a minimal state to avoid chaos and the rule of the fittest – and thus disallows anarchy as a possibility before the discussion begins! If, however, we believe that it is possible for men and women to live in society without the need for hierarchies of any kind then we should avoid being limited by the parameters of 'egoistic freedom' and instead should redirect debate towards freedom for all equitably and how to achieve it.

In case this is not a sufficient reply – regarding George's practical examples, for instance that of one person's reading a book inhibiting anybody else's 'freedom' in that they cannot also read it. Here I believe George is confusing two distinct concepts: freedom and possibility. If we take this argument away from capitalist property ownership (if we did not then George's example holds true), then if there is one book held in common by a community then it is more correct to talk of their freedom being increased by the existence of that one book and all are free to read it (although obviously not at the same time – but is this really a likely incursion of freedom?). The only solution in which it would be correct to talk of the community being unfree in any way is that of their being prevented by another

person or persons from producing enough books for everyone – which they otherwise had the materials, knowledge and ability to produce. But to talk of someone being unfree to do something which is not humanly possible is nonsense – it is the same as saying that we are not free to fly because we don't have wings, i.e. with Bakunin this is simply a misuse of the word 'freedom' where clearly we are talking of 'possibility'.

If we were to follow George's argument and his definition of freedom on an individual level, we very soon reach the point where we can say that we are unfree because we do not own our own airline company, £3 million mansion and a holiday home in Barbados!

To finish then, 'freedom' in any real sense can only be as Bakunin states: "Freedom which, far from stopping as if before a boundary in face of the freedom of others, on the contrary finds in that freedom its own confirmation and extension to infinity; the unlimited freedom of each in the freedom of all, freedom in solidarity, freedom in equality."

Piers J Hale

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The value of local papers

Dear Editors,

What Ernie Crosswell tells us (15th May) about his local papers publishing letters expressing anarchist opinions is encouraging. I have to admit that I read the local papers very little and have never thought of writing to them. I suppose I ought to do both. (It is *discouraging*, though, that Ernie seems to be one in a million, at least as far as public expression is concerned.)

What I would like to ask Ernie is whether he ever mentions the dreaded word 'anarchism' in his letters. Doesn't writing letters to local papers bring up the common anarchist dilemma in an acute form? I'm sure I'm very far from the only person who experiences how one can put forward ideas that often gain sympathetic consent until someone suddenly thinks they sense something familiar and says "But what you're talking about is anarchism, isn't it?" whereupon most of the minds taking part in the discussion become more or less closed.

Amorey Gethin

Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures

Dear Editors,

A couple of points arising from Andrea Kinty's 'Rescuing the Revolution from Prudes' (29th May).

Since men are overwhelmingly sexist, avaricious, irresponsible and conscriptable for war, why is it assumed that feminists opposed to sexual relations with such men are anti-sex on principle?

Since pornography is overwhelmingly based on the profit motive, why does Andrea appear to defend it?

While anarchists are rightly opposed to official censorship, this does not mean that they should be opposed to personal censorship.

Ernie Crosswell

Reply to Laurens Otter

Dear Editors,

I think that Laurens Otter's reply (29th May) to my 'Letter to a Pacifist' (15th May) fails to connect with the things I said there.

1. Nowhere in my article did I say that anarchists ought to capture the state's apparatus of violence.

2. Nowhere did I say that anarchists ought to rival the state's apparatus of violence.

3. I said nothing at all about "abolishing capitalism" nor did I write about "attaining anarchism". My concern was not utopia but the present system of oppression and nullification, and whether in principle it can be ethical to commit acts of violence against it.

Against these types of misinterpretation of my article I would like to point out that I did say *we should not seek to impose our will on others*. I also quoted Albert Camus – that we should not "join forces with the pestilence".

The examples of state oppression I quoted demonstrate the need for the abolition of power. I can't see how Laurens' Trotskyists could twist the examples to support their idea of capturing the power of the state. What makes the Trots so certain they will not become oppressors in their turn when they wield this power? At least we agree

that power is not the answer.

I have seen what power does to nice people and know that seeking power is not the answer. However, what is so oppressive about the concentration camp inmates' revolt? It is not power seeking.

I completely reject the implicit comparison of myself and my views with the Trotskyists. I differ from Laurens Otter in an important way. He admits that he is "not concerned with the ethics of a particular act". I by contrast *am* concerned with the ethical. The main question I was trying to answer was "can violence against the oppressor be moral?"

We the resisters are not responsible for bringing the oppression about, but we are responsible for how we react to it. I firmly acknowledge the importance of the ethical when I say "None of this means we can separate ourselves from the ethical". A little further on I say "morality is important".

Rightly or wrongly, my whole article rests on a description of the present situation (which could be challenged) and a value judgement, that revolt is to be preferred to doing nothing, or collaboration (which might also be challenged). I can't see how anything in Laurens Otter's letter engages with these.

Stephen Booth

Anarchism: prospects for the modern world

Dear Freedom,

D. Dane pointed out in *Freedom* (15th May 1993) that hierarchical society produces psychological conservatism. It is also true that this is only one side of the coin; I am continually amazed at how rebellious people can be, whether towards an imposed or whether towards their own authority.

Hedging our bets, or whatever ways we try to avoid constraining our freedom, can make sense. But we all have ideas of where we are going and it can actually constrict our freedom if we don't see ourselves making concrete advances along the way.

In a place not far from Florida they speak of Gueguense. It means smiling at the master when they're looking, and taking and doing whatever you want when they're not.

This may not be believed, but people involved in libertarian movements are not stupid. They know damn well that in many ways the new boss is the same as the old boss.

Neil Birrell reminded us in *Freedom* (15th May 1993) that the FMLN is quickly breaking its promises to its "old supporters ... as their leaders turn to the more important task of achieving power". This is nothing new and many of those supporters knew this would happen.

I doesn't take much of a knowledge of history to work out that Marxists are Marxists because the Lord God ordained that this permits them to make whatever unholy alliances they can which help them grab onto power (while, of course, the fundamentalists piously refuse to until the second coming).

The crucial point, however, is that if the pursuit of the most basic of human freedoms is met with state terrorism, then any activities, or the lack of them, which cause the state to back off are rational.

I know it's academic, but I can see why people in El Salvador put down their guns as soon as they could. The 'total

war' brigade there was small because, if nothing else does, experience teaches that there is nothing more damaging to the human spirit than unnecessary violence.

If it gains power, the new boss in Peru will be a bit short on superpower support. Authoritarian parasite on that same need for basic freedoms, it will not trust a people which it will have to work to the bone. If it's possible that any good might come out of this, perhaps that might be that it will cause people elsewhere to have second thoughts about this spontaneity-hating creed based on the martyrdom of others, and pursue a more profound life-loving liberation instead.

It is the building of community and self-reliance, the generation of social and economic relations independent of the rich (and the reclaiming of wealth controlled by the rich) which allow us the benefit of other freedoms and provide a guarantee from tyranny.

Mutual aid between individuals and communities would seem the best way to undermine parasitism by classes, parties, armies, nations, religions or, for that matter, psychoanalysts.

Yes, Denis Pym, you're probably right that we should be philosophical enough to admit that we all consider violence, but are we not capable of being rational enough to put our energies to more constructive less self-damaging purposes?

Is it beyond our powers of co-operation for us to agree that we should only express such urges as violence if our most basic freedoms are threatened, if our non-violent efforts to stop them making us fight each other are met with force? If we did we'd all be in a stronger position and put them, the war-mongers, in a weaker one.

S. Iks

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The Root of Violence

Dear Editors,

In answer to Stephen Booth (*Freedom*, 15th May 1993), I'm not a pacifist but I don't believe in violence either. A pacifist is a moralist, and moral imperatives such as Kant's are a form of violence. Pacifists are generally very violent people. Idealists are hypocrites and ideologists are idiotic. Wisdom is to see everything clearly, and clear perception is intelligence which tells you what to do in all circumstances.

So, if a madman is running loose with an axe, intelligence will deal with him, provided it is not obstructed by ideals and ideologies.

Let's take a good look at the world. It is full of madmen with axes. Practically everybody is out for himself and ready to use whatever weapon comes to hand to get what he wants. There is no law, no order, no justice anywhere. The so-called criminal justice system is merely part of the madness.

So if we are to follow Stephen's maxim – "When attacked by a madman with an axe, shoot the madman" – we must all shoot each other. Surely that's not the way of intelligence. It's what we are actually doing, in Bosnia for example.

The intelligent way, surely, is to find out the very root of violence, the root cause of all this chaos and misery, and put an end to it. That requires a great deal of investigation into the depths of oneself, where the root of violence lies. To see that root clearly is to live intelligently.

Francis Ellingham

MEETINGS

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

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)

9th July - Last meeting: planning the 1993/94 programme

The next academic year's term dates have not yet been decided, but one can presume a similarity to other years. If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, overseas or out-of-town speakers especially, please contact either Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (Tel: 081-847 0203), not too early in the day please, giving subject matter and prospective dates and we will do our best to accommodate. We are particularly interested in having more women speakers and those from ethnic minorities. After the meetings we go to a pub where, some say, the real discussions begin. Please note the Mary Ward Centre is available for hire for other meetings Monday to Saturday. Details from Patrick Freestone at the Mary Ward Centre.

PN for London Anarchist Forum

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Anarchist Communist Federation

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Sunday 8th August - Ladybower Reservoir and Lost Lad Walk. Bring strong boots, waterproofs, food and drink. Meet at Ladybower Picnic Site, map reference 173 894, at 10.30am. Length 8 miles.

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