

anarchist fortnightly Freedom

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FIFTY PENCE

"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety"

Benjamin Franklin

THE SCOTT ENQUIRY

GUN RUNNERS EXPOSED

The Public Inquiry into gun-running to Iraq is back. Hearings were resumed on 13th September, after the summer break.

Like most Public Inquiries, it was set up to divert attention from a government scandal. In November 1992, three directors of Matrix Churchill, a Coventry engineering firm, were prosecuted for selling bomb-making equipment to Iraq, contrary to government guidelines. The defence wanted to put various letters and minutes of meetings in evidence. On the advice of the Attorney General Sir Patrick Mayhew (now Minister for Northern Ireland), Michael Heseltine and various Foreign Office ministers signed 'public interest immunity' certificates against revealing these documents, and assured the judge that they were irrelevant to the case.

Prompted by defence lawyers, the judge rules that the documents should be read by himself in private, as it was for him to decide whether they were relevant. They were allowed in evidence, and they proved that Matrix Churchill had in fact co-operated fully with the government, not only in helping the export drive but also supplying the security services with information about Iraqi bases they had visited.

Matrix Churchill had been told by the government itself to ignore government guidelines, and Parliamentary answers to the effect that the government would not condone the supply of arms to Saddam Hussein, as these were not part of government policy but mere soothing words to calm criticism. Yet if the government had succeeded in withholding the documents, the Matrix Churchill directors might have got ten years.

(continued on page 2)

TEAR DOWN THE PRISONS

RIOT AT WYMOTT

The riot at Wymott prison started at one o'clock on Monday morning, 6th September, and went on for most of the day. One prisoner was accidentally injured by broken glass, and a few by smoke inhalation, but there have been no reports of prisoners attacking each other, and they surrendered without violence. Damage is estimated at more than £30 million, and the prison will be unusable until it is repaired. Prisoners were taken in buses to other prisons, and press and television photographs all show them looking exhilarated and pleased with themselves.

Wymott was not one of the nastier prisons. It was full, but not overcrowded, as the architecture would not permit overcrowding. Accommodation consisted of 34 dormitories, each with 24 sleeping cubicles to which the prisoners had keys. The horrors of Strangeways - three to a cell built for one in the nineteenth century, banging-up for 23 hours a day, shit-buckets and slopping-out - did not occur at Wymott.

But the particular nastiness of Strangeways just augmented the general nastiness of all prisons. The precise trigger of the riot at Wymott is the subject of an enquiry by HM Inspector of Prisons, who will report at the end of the month. But there is no need for an enquiry into why prisoners, woken by the rioting, joined in and made it a joyful, prison-wide event. Anyone who is mystified lacks the imagination to think what prison life is like.

Last report on the prison reports that when the inspectors went into the dormitories at night the prisoners were shocked that their space had been invaded. It seems that prison

staff kept out of dormitories during the night, and bullying and intimidation were rife among the prisoners. Anarchists are against all bullying and intimidation (that is almost a definition of anarchism), but only the victim knows whether being bullied by a fellow prisoner is worse than being bullied by a screw.

The law and order party

It is said by some that the Wymott Prison riot will be an embarrassment to the Home Secretary, Mr Michael Howard, when he addresses the Conservative Party conference next month. Tories like to think of themselves as the 'law and order' party, yet the crime rate has increased all the time the Tory government has been in power. And this new prison riot just emphasises the inability of Mr Howard to stop it.

But Mr Howard has little to worry about. There is not much to choose between the actual policies of the political parties with a chance of getting into power. The leaders are all pragmatists, trying to attract the floating voters without offending the bankers. But there is a clear difference in the character of the delegates at the different party conferences. Labourites tend towards earnestness, Tories towards vindictiveness.

The people who bay for 'law and order' at Tory Party conferences are not so much interested in reducing the crime rate as in dealing vindictively with criminals. Mr Howard already has a speech written about how prisons have become holiday camps and should be made tougher. The too-easy life at Wymott, which was opened in the last year of the last Labour government, should get him a standing ovation.

GUN RUNNERS EXPOSED TRADING IN DEATH AND LIES

(continued from page 1)

The arms trade is described as 'sensitive', which means the people who deal in it have to be hypocrites and liars. The feeling among ordinary people is that arms should not be sold to nasty people, and government have to make concessions to this feeling. Hence the pretended ban on the supply of arms to Saddam Hussein, the false claims that arms supplied to Indonesia and Saudi Arabia cannot be used for nasty purposes, and the rumour that some very nasty arms buyers are not at all nasty.

Protesters against the arms trade in Britain, say, are told that Britain needs the jobs and the money and if Britain did not supply the arms then France or another country would. The arms trade, we are told, is necessary to 'economic survival'. But everyone can see, if they look, that armaments are a sheer waste of the world's resources and that destroying things is the way to economic ruin. To

keep the arms trade going, it is necessary to stop people seeing what it is really about, which is why government spokespersons always call it the 'defence' industry.

Anyway, the Matrix Churchill case revealed more of the truth than was desirable, and urgent action was needed to get the case forgotten. So John Major urgently set up a Public Inquiry and made a show of telling civil servants and ministers to hold nothing back. It could be the great political mistake of his career.

The man chosen to conduct the Inquiry is Lord Justice Scott, a conservative establishment figure who goes foxhunting, apparently just the man to do a good cover-up job on the government's behalf. But it appears Lord Justice Scott is too naive. He actually believes all the guff about the will of Parliament, and took Major seriously about getting to the bottom of the affair. His eventual report may well be a whitewash, but his conduct

of the Inquiry, with the help of counsel he appointed Presily Baxendale, has revealed a contempt for truth among civil servants which, if it were fiction, would be taken as preposterous satire.

According to Simon Freeman, a journalist who has sat through all the proceedings so far, ministers are complaining of Lord Justice Scott's 'naivete and other-worldliness'. One Foreign Office man, now the ambassador to Greece, snapped back at Scott that he was asking trick questions and did not understand the Foreign Office.

Freeman says only one former Foreign Office man, Mark Higson, has emerged with credit. He told how he had drafted Parliamentary answers about Iraq which he knew, and the minister who read them out knew, to be deliberate lies. Higson resigned in disgust in 1990, and is now unemployed. He told Freeman, "I do not want to rubbish my colleagues. I just thought I should tell the truth. But they all think I am a complete and utter shit".

One Foreign Office minister who knowingly gave false information to Parliament was William Waldegrave, now Minister for Open Government. He will be appearing before the Inquiry in late September, and he should be entertaining.

The Inquiry is taking place at 1 Palace Street, London SW1 in Room 2G4. Go in by the side entrance in Palace Place. Sessions start at 10am.

March Against Militarism

Early in August there was a march in London, several hundred strong, organised by the Campaign Against Militarism - a front organisation for the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). I attended, although aware of this connection, feeling that it was outweighed by the fact that resurgent militarism is becoming an increasingly critical issue.

The march turned out to be a pretty gruesome experience. Right from the start, stewards were continually trying to keep the marchers in lines of four. Their explanation to protests about this regimentation was that it was for 'security' (against possible fascist attack) and to show that we were 'organised'. In addition, slogan sheets (!), were handed out. Evidently these gems, such as 'Irish freedom fighters are not British criminals', were the only permitted thoughts for the day. (No slogans on former-Yugoslavia though, curiously enough.) Thus spontaneous words or actions faced great intimidation.

Indeed, I've never been part of a march that felt so drilled. Many of the participants, urged on by those same stewards who spent the rest of the time trying to keep us in ranks, chanted the same few slogans over and over in a quite mind-numbing fashion. It led to worrying reflections about the internal regimen and mentality of the RCP. Perhaps an ex-member could contribute on this?

Owing to a foresight of a comrade who brought an anarchist flag, half a dozen anarchists were drawn together by this political pole of attraction. Yet I had expected a sizeable presence, given the letter urging attendance from the Anarchist Communist Federation in *Freedom*. I certainly feel that there should have been such a presence to give some clear sign of a truly anti-militarist outlook. For if people are not made aware of the anarchist alternative at every opportunity, how can we hope to attract those who feel themselves opposed to such phenomena as wars and recognise the uselessness of politicians, rather than have them drawn into the iron jaws of such as the RCP?

Adrian Janes

The Hypocrisy of Western Concern

At the time of writing, Western governments are expressing a great deal of concern over the war in Bosnia. Some have flown out a few victims for medical treatment whilst others are threatening air-strikes. All in all this war may well be drawing to a close as the Serbians and Croats have gained much territory and expelled unwanted ethnic groups. During the last few weeks there has been a flurry of activity by the governments of the West who suddenly did not seem content with just contributing to the long standing UN operations. Airlifts took place to get injured children out and negotiators talked hard to Serbian representatives as air-strikes by the US were threatened but never became more than distant sabre-rattling. But this all happened a year and a half into the war after some 170,000 Bosnians are estimated to have died whilst the country was carved up to the advantage of the aggressors, and what is left of Bosnia is reduced largely to a shattered ruin.

Words are cheap and so are a few airlifts to a people left to the mercy of a vicious enemy. But Western powers decried the brutality of the Serb forces but did not allow the Bosnians' arms to adequately defend themselves. Then we are expected to believe they are shocked as towns and cities starved and thousands of people were butchered. The recent activity by some Western powers seems to be nothing

more than cynical opportunism, as exercise in trying to get good PR from the plight of a victim they couldn't care less about. If Major and the Tory government were so concerned about the suffering to initiate an airlift, where were they eighteen months ago when the assault on Bosnia first began? In that time images of sick and dying children have not been unknown on television, but there was no similar expression of 'emotion' followed by action by the British government. The recent efforts have come at a time when the war is reaching its climax and Bosnia will have to accept a fraction of its former territory and the death of so many people. The recent airlifts are a drop in the ocean against a backdrop of such carnage, when the Bosnian economy is shattered and basic necessities like water, electricity and food are severely disrupted. Suddenly there is action to fly out a few children after all this?

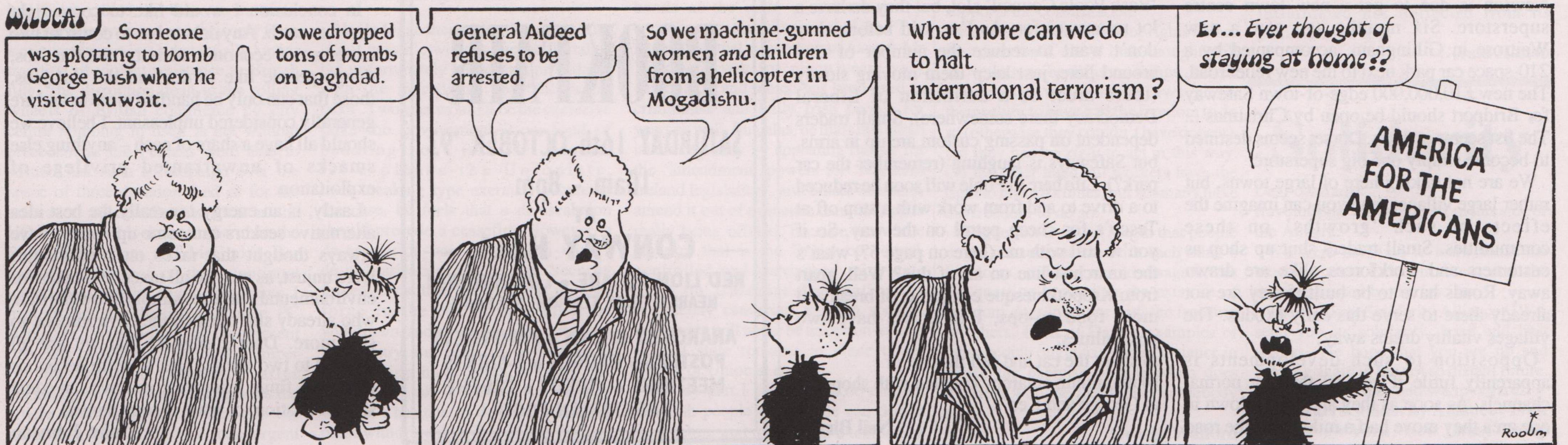
What can be seen from this is the cynicism of Western governments for clearly moral concerns are not the issue, though Major, Clinton, et al, would have us all believe they are. If their concern were genuine we could ask where are the airlifts to get the sick and injured out of Haiti as the military regime tortures and murders the people. Or what about East Timor, Aceh and West Papua whose populations endure the truly horrific

rule of Indonesian tyranny. And if Major wants child victims, what about Ramzi Mansour, 15, shot through the abdomen by an Israeli sniper in Bureij camp in the Gaza Strip whilst another boy, this one no more than 10 years old, lay with a bullet wound in his hip in the same UN health centre (*Guardian*, 29th April 1993). And then there are the Israeli assaults recently on the Lebanon in which 200,000 people had to flee as refugees to escape the onslaught. None of these cases elicited the anger and concern of Western leaders. There has been no embargo on Israel and no intervention against Indonesia, and there won't be action against the Haitian regime because Washington itself supports them and returns fleeing boat people to this horror.

Talk is easy and governments set the agenda most of the time and we are expected to dutifully follow as they lead. So whilst a child is gunned down by Israeli death squads we are told the Serb's forces are vile (but, shucks, there is nothing we can do anyway). The dominance of economic interest at the expense of people was illustrated in June when Finland and Sweden refused asylum to seven Timorese men trying to flee Indonesian tyranny. Despite Indonesia's long-proven record of torture and massacre, asylum was

refused despite the obvious danger to the men who had to leave the embassies. Both Sweden and Finland have large business interests in Indonesia (*TAPOL Bulletin*, August 1993). When the Haitian military kills 20,000 people we are told Saddam Hussein is Hitler incarnate and expected to wave the flag as Iraqi civilians are expected to drink sewage because the war destroyed water distribution. There is no concern for human rights, for the fate of children and civilians. How can there be when Western industries benefit from arms sales and trade with the very people who create so much harm, or when Western governments themselves generate suffering.

Ian Borrows



More Notes for an Anarchist Economics

In 'Notes for an Anarchist Economics' (*Freedom*, 24th July), JPS asks for contributions to a new economic blueprint. He (sorry if this is a sexist assumption – why not use your name?) also offered the opinion that an approach to anarchist economics involved the resolution of 'important questions'. These concerned the role of planning the use of currency, and the desire to envisage such an economics.

The difficulty is that unless the underlying assumptions are examined, we are carried too far down the existing economic river to allow any but the most minor deviations from the present state of affairs to arise in the debate. If we are planning, what, or who, are we planning for? What is the nature of currency? Does our vision have universal applicability?

If we are to produce an anarchist economics we have to start our agenda as far upstream as we can get. This poses problems, not least of which is that most people, including anarchists, who discuss economics rely upon their education in the present orthodoxy to do so. The difficulty is further compounded, in my limited experience, by such contradictions as comrades either dependent on the state ('It's my personal act of revolution') or

supported by institutions in close symbiosis with the state ('I'm changing the system from the inside').

This may in some measure account for the recession anomaly. This is, that at times when they system is at its weakest and most vulnerable, so are those who profess to oppose it. Note the decline in general green interest and activity over the past few years, when by all logic alternatives of all kinds should be burgeoning.

I must confess to a total lack of education, especially in economics, but it seems to me that the questions an anarchist economics should be addressing are much larger than those of the style or technique of achieving particular ends. After all, the people involved should be free to resolve such matters for themselves, should they not?

Rather, we should concern ourselves with the structure within which economic

processes occur. In this context the most important question to ask is: Is whatever is proposed sustainable? That is, can this form of economic activity support those involved indefinitely? If not, the short-term nature and environmental questions arising have to be addressed and resolved as a matter of urgency.

Since the economy serves social as well as individual needs, the economic and social systems have to be compatible. Before summarising the implications for this for a sustainable economy, I have to note the following assumptions: that anarchists want a sustainable future, and that future is concerned with quality values, of life and goods, rather than the present quantitative obsessions. And that economic and social life should involve the minimum of exploitation.

To meet the above requirements and assumptions, a fundamental change is necessary. The present economic system of flow must be replaced by one based on stock. As we know, flow economics consists in extracting finite resources and converting them to short-life goods before returning them to the environment as waste. This is obviously unsustainable. A stock economy would seek to maximise the life of manufactured goods, and design in repair, re-use and recycling – in that order.

To the question of sustainability. The truth of the present economy is that, since most of economic activity is not necessary, it would be better to 'pay' 90% of people not to do what they currently do and conserve the resources they waste. But that is, of course, impossible. That is the nature of the trap of the present system. How do we escape into a viable future? Less people, making less demands, minimising the exploitation of finite resources. Any other route is an illusion leading back into the trap; at best a short-term palliative which will allow the Impossible

Party of global consumption a little more time before the last hangover.

This is the context we have to plan for: a complete change of economic mindset and scaling down human resource demand.

What is the role of currency? ("Money in actual use in a country" – *Concise Oxford Dictionary*). There are many sorts of currency: swap values, cash, electronic data streams, etc. The important thing to grasp is that they are all basically forms of information. If the information is compatible, a transaction can take place.

If we focus on the reality of compatible information, the possibilities of 'currency' based on the inherent value of goods and services become endless. Systems so based are also both local and universal. This avoids the parasitic money changer / bank trap. It also rejects systems of worth based upon assumptive values such as that given to gold, and means of resource control such as that currently vested in institutions. Such possibilities do assume predominantly local economic bases and a producer, as opposed to consumer or investor, ethic. That is to say, people would have to live by the direct use of their abilities. The LETS concept is a good start.

As for our vision of an anarchist universal economy, what can we say? Let us anticipate critics; it will be messy and inefficient. Natural sustainable processes tend to be messy. As for efficiency, along with competition, gods of terminal economics, they only serve to cut corners, to remove the pieces of processes that support life. Beyond that it would be planned and sustainable; based on community need fulfilment and upon stock rather than flow; on information currency based exchanges; and on individuals as free-standing producers in concert with the consensus of their community. More than that it would be difficult to say without becoming authoritarily prescriptive.

Except for one thing: the vision of an anarchist universal economy. Any economy fulfilling the criteria above would have to be globally centred rather than human centred. If we make decisions which take us beyond the realms of the simply biological, then we have to take account of the totality of the effects of those decisions. (Perhaps we would have to anyway.) Enter questions of life rights and human responsibilities. Enter also concepts of value/worth. Current linear accounting knows the cost of a carefully limited number of 'factors of production', but ignores the value of everything else. Global accounting (there must be a better word?) would have to consider carrying capacities of bio-regions; we will have to rationalise our numbers and demands within these limits. We either learn to live within or we fail without.

To develop a dynamic picture of how such an economic structure would operate is impossible without some vision of its complementary social structure. It would be testing the editors' generosity to launch into that now, but, as JPS noted, others have not been slow in offering interpretations of their ideas; nor should we be, particularly as we have more to offer.

In conclusion I would like to come right down to earth. Any debate has to confront two extremes of economic activity: the fun jobs, things people like to do, and the shit jobs, those that can only be handled close to and are generally considered unpleasant. I believe we should all have a share of each – anything else smacks of unwarranted privilege of exploitation.

Lastly, is an energy tax really the best idea alternative seekers can come up with? I have always thought that taxes on commodities were unjust, as may be all taxes. But taxes for environmental purposes simply allow the rich, who already shit most on the environment, to shit more. Dare I suggest that we are all entitled to two things: one, a say in decisions to exploit finite resources; and two, an equal share, or ration, of what is so exploited.

Colin Johnson

Dorset Diary

Having moaned in March about the weather, I must say it's been pretty well blue skies all the way for the last month down here on the south coast (due apologies to those of you with grey skies). Ashley Road, the main shopping street around here, stretches East to West and enjoys all-day sunshine for shoppers and traders alike.

I'm aware from the outset that Dorset Diary threatens to turn into a geography lesson this month and where the editors stick their 'turn to page 5' I'll lose those of you who have come this far if I'm not careful. However, stick with me if you will and I'll try not to lose you up some backstreet.

It seems as though you can't get out of bed these days without discovering that someone has opened a new supermarket. Within a mile radius of here over the last few years we've seen Safeways (a paltry affair of one floor with underground parking), Tesco's (ongoing but well positioned to decimate the few shops left by the recession in Westbourne), and Sainsbury's. This latter not only takes up about half a square mile but conveniently removed the top of a local hill my bike and I used to avoid to make way for its approach road. Some good news perhaps, but all this is nothing if we take the country as a whole.

A few examples. One new superstore has just received the go-ahead on the outskirts of Blandford, a small town of perhaps some 5,000 inhabitants. It will take up 38 acres, the supermarket to have 25,000 square feet, and will include a 50-bed hotel. An application for a second supermarket for the same town was turned down. Dorchester has two supermarket developments pending, in addition to the new Tesco's that opened last year. Sturminster Newton is due to get a new town centre superstore. Six months ago saw a new Waitrose in Gillingham, accompanied by a 210-space car park next to the new relief road. The new £10,000,000 edge-of-town Safeway for Bridport should be open by Christmas ... The list seems endless. Dorset seems destined to become simply one big superstore.

We are not talking here of large towns, but rather large villages, and you can imagine the effects of such 'growths' on these communities. Small traders shut up shop as customers and workforces alike are drawn away. Roads have to be built if they are not already there to serve this daily exodus. The villages vitality drains away.

Opposition to such developments is apparently futile if you go through normal channels. As soon as they are turned down in one area they move half a mile down the road

to where the next council is more amenable to their sweeteners and still draw the same clientele.

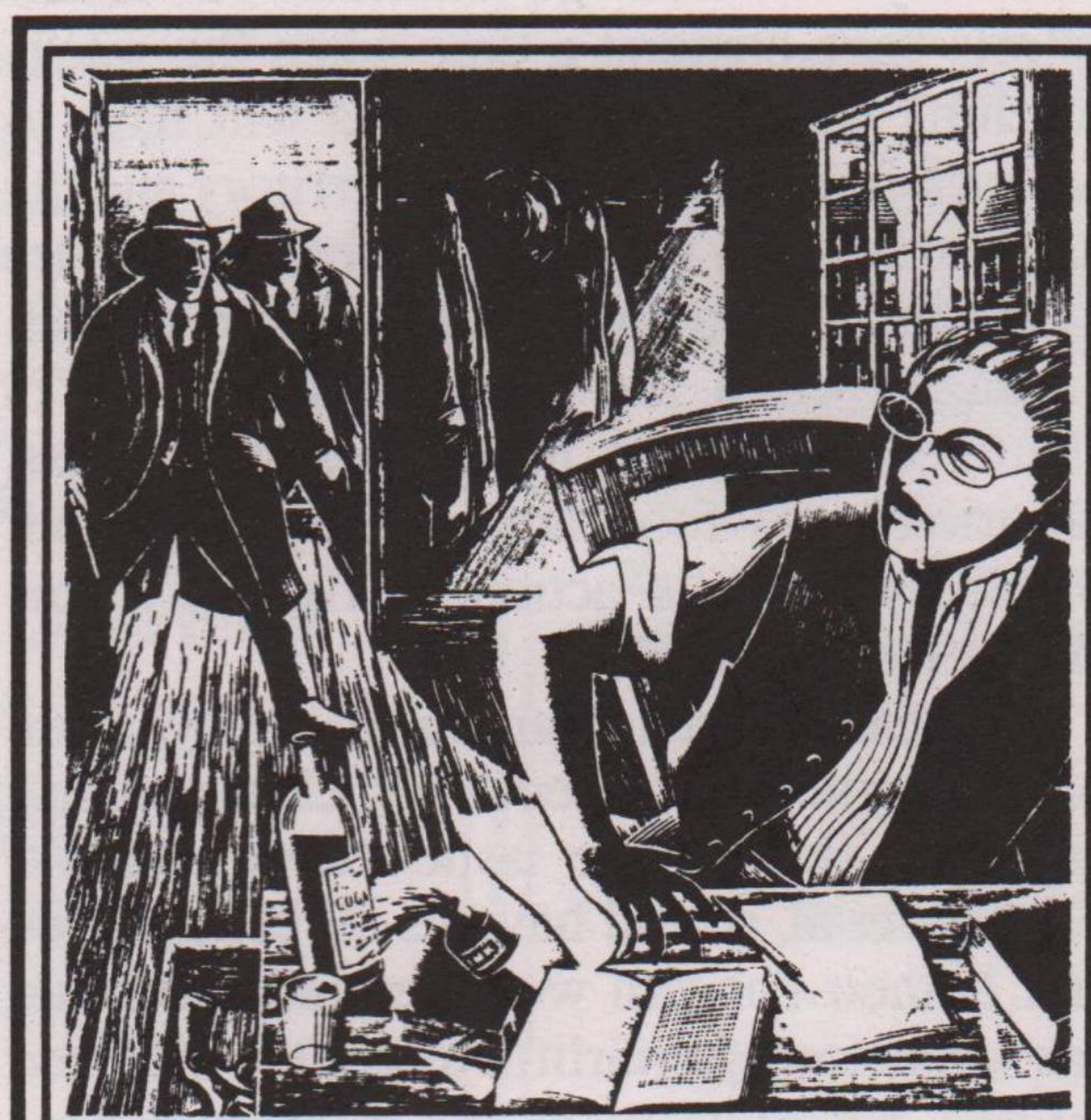
More practical as always is to take matters into your own hands. I try not to shop in supermarkets, objecting to the idea of ferrying in from distant quarters at environmental cost that which could be locally produced. Dorset was and still largely is, apart from the conurbations, an agricultural county and should largely be able to feed itself. So what is the advantage of the superstores who sell from around the globe? I've heard it argued that supermarkets are cheap, economics of scale, blah, blah, bullshit. George, our local fishmonger, today sold me fishcakes at 10p each (no packaging) which I think is a good example of the knock-out punch in the context of the much-reported supermarket price war we are all supposed to be benefiting from. And when I've filled my basket with what I can't or don't grow myself I'm amazed at the change Ken, the local greengrocer, gives me for a fiver.

Unfortunately there are still two dangers. The first being cats. A friend of mine tried to put his on a carrot diet but its hair fell out and it had to go back to the meat. Now our Pud is no mouser nor is he one of the 8 out of 10 Whiskas fanatics and you can't feed Pud down here unless you go to a supermarket. Nobody sells cat food. The Tories would be appalled at the monopoly. But it's not just cats, it's cars as well.

Not that I want to buy one, but if you're a car owner the supermarkets have got you by the short and curlies. The council are to cover Ashley Road with yellow lines. Of course I don't want Dorset Diary to become a monthly 'Bash Poole Council' slot, but they do have a lot to answer for. As I've said before, they don't want to reduce the number of cars around here, just keep them moving slowly (there must be a definition of Liberal Democracy there somewhere). Small traders dependent on passing custom are up in arms, but Safeways is laughing (remember the car park?). Life here in Poole will soon be reduced to a drive to and from work with a stop off at Tesco's for cheap petrol on the way. So if you're still with me (here on page 5?) what's the anarchist line on all of this? Well, apart from Kropotkinesque conquests of bread and more food co-ops, I think we have two possibilities:

- shoot the cat and sell the car, or
- maximum anarchy coupled with shopping at George and Ken's.

Neil Birrell



ANARCHIST BOOK FAIR

SATURDAY 16th OCTOBER '93

10am - 8pm

AT

CONWAY HALL

RED LION SQUARE • LONDON WC1
NEAREST TUBE STATION: HOLBORN

ANARCHIST BOOKS • PAMPHLETS
POSTERS • BADGES • T-SHIRTS
MEETINGS • VIDEOS • CRECHE
VEGETARIAN FOOD

Some weeks before the congress of the Committee of Peasant Unity (CUC), which took place in April 1993, Daniel told us of the working principles of this union. Founded in 1978, the CUC, which signifies in the Quiché language 'quetzal', the symbolic bird of the Mayas, made a noted reappearance on the international scene with the award of the Nobel Peace prize in 1992 to its activist Rigoberta Menchú. The CUC was born of the genocide which hit the Ipdian people in Guatemala and it was one of its main victims. It drew international public opinion when, in protesting against repression and the theft of local land, 28 Ixile and Quiché Indians, members of the CUC, had occupied in a peaceful fashion the Spanish Embassy in 1980. The Guatemalan army attacked the embassy with chemical weapons, killing all the Indians and all the international civil servants, with the exception of the ambassador who had to flee the country. Marking the beginning of the decline of the CUC, whose activists were pitilessly decimated, and a symbol of the barbarism which had invaded the country, the massacre of the Spanish Embassy forged Indian unity, as stated by the Iximché declaration of 1981, and the alliance between the organisations of the Indian world and the Ladinos (those of mixed race) along with the whites who had shown solidarity. From 1985, the apparition of political institutions with a civil facade has allowed the rebirth of the CUC and seen it take on the army ...

Xavier Merville: Daniel, can you tell us briefly what the CUC is?

Daniel: As its name suggests, it's an organisation of Indian and poor Ladino peasants who are aware of the current reality and the suffering we have to tolerate in Guatemala. The CUC is linked with other organisations: the International Council of Indian Treaties and Popular Unionist Action (UASP).

Xavier: What campaigns is the CUC currently involved in?

Daniel: There is a very important campaign taking place at the moment concerning the 'Civil Self-defence Patrols' which are currently referred to as 'Voluntary Committees of Civil Defence' which constitutes the right hand of the Guatemalan

— GUATEMALA — Syndicalist peasants against genocide

army. The army has used them as a military force. The soldiers conduct counter-insurrectionary campaigns and hit out at those who do not wish to take part in the patrols.

Xavier: Is service in these patrols obligatory?

Daniel: Under the constitution of the Republic of Guatemala article 34 says that nobody is obliged to participate in self-defence or associated groups. We have been pinning our hopes on this law to denounce the civil patrols as illegal due to their being obligatory because of the army.

Xavier: What do the patrols do?

Daniel: As I was saying, they are like the right hand of the army, which uses them to control zones of conflict, to feed the military, to put into effect forced labour to construct strategic routes and military installations, all of which is obligatory.

Xavier: How many people are involved in these patrols?

Daniel: I don't know how many at this moment in time, but in the 1980s the army claimed to have enrolled one million in these patrols. Things have changed since then because so many organisations are opposed to them and many peasants have deserted.

Xavier: In which regions today can one find patrols and forced enrolment?

Daniel: It continued in Quiché where the army has counter-insurrectionary plans, in the regions of Huehuetenango and Totonicapan and other regions that I don't know so well.

Xavier: How old are those who make up the patrols?

Daniel: Joining the patrols carries its own dangers: if a family only has one young member it is he who must go, if the father is ill the son must replace him for his 24-hour duty.

Xavier: For how long and how often does the tour of duty last?

Daniel: There are communities where the patrols are not numerous: a tour of 24 hours is repeated every week. If you don't want to do it you have to pay someone to do it in your stead - it's a little like employing someone.

Xavier: It sounds like slavery in so far as it is not paid work.

Daniel: Yes, pretty nearly. As we say in our campaign, millions of hours lost to these patrols, and if we pay someone in our place it is virtually impossible for us, peasant earning about £1 a day in our communities to pay more than that sum! ...

Xavier: How does the campaign manifest itself today?

Daniel: The campaign began in October '92 and seeks to put its message across in the media, to distribute leaflets to members and non-members of the CUC: all part of the struggle. We also give information and discuss problems with those who have experienced the Civil Patrols.

Xavier: Can the work of the CUC be conducted openly without threat?

Daniel: ... We have survived thanks to our own security measures as the army has always tried to portray us as having links with the guerrilla movement. When we made our first radio broadcasts (we make short broadcasts in Spanish) the army responded in a brutal and inhuman fashion. When we spoke of the patrols the army accused us of blackmail and that we had sold out to the guerrilla movement. It tried to squash the

movement because it valued the work of the patrols. The army and the defence ministry accused us more than fifteen times of being members of the guerrilla movement because of our opposition to the patrols.

Xavier: What about the strike action recently in the big farms?

Daniel: It is very difficult to organise but our fellow peasants do not always let us know what they are doing; they carry out their own struggles. Last year we initiated some strikes and as always when the army heard that the CUC was involved it sent in the tanks and lorry loads of soldiers to encircle the farms. Last year there was cholera. When the land-owners saw the people were ill, they sacked them and sent them home without medical attention. This epidemic, the army and other factors have prevented us from struggling effectively in the south.

Xavier: Can you tell us something about the Indian problem in Guatemala?

Daniel: Yes, we take the Indian question into account. Many popular and Indian organisations, of which the CUC is but one, have set up a co-ordinating body called New Dawn (Mayawil q'ij en mam) to defend as far as possible Indian rights. The Indian co-ordinating body Mayawil q'ij en mam co-ordinates various Indian organisations and wants to work for human rights as well as dealing with specifically Indian problems.

Xavier: What level of repression faces the CUC today?

Daniel: One could say it's about 50%. The army, as I have said, still seeks to intimidate and frighten us. It still accuses us of supporting guerrillas. Some of our comrades have been imprisoned for having been a member of the CUC. We therefore take measures to ensure it won't happen again. We are accused of being an underground organisation, but this isn't true. We appeal to constitutional laws which clearly state that all citizens have the right to organise freely ... And with all the security measures that we take we have all the same instigated struggles within communities without being able to say that we were involved. We have to operate differently so that the army cannot hit us as they did in the '80s.

Xavier: With regard to the future, if the peace negotiations between the military and the guerrillas are taken up again, would the CUC wish to be involved?

Daniel: Yes, as I was saying earlier, the CUC is part of the UASP which is calling for peace negotiations between the government and guerrilla forces. As a syndicalist and popular movement, the CUC takes part in discussions on this issue, in particular those comrades who take part in discussions with the UASP, and we say we are in favour of negotiations on a basis of human rights because up until now the negotiations have been global whilst the issues which are important to us are human and Indian rights ... The UASP has demanded recognition at the negotiating table as a civil organisation.

Translated from *Le Monde Libertaire* no. 917, 3rd June 1993

— CANADA —

From working class caterpillar to capitalist butterfly?

Every so often a *Freedom* correspondent will question the utility of the notion of the 'working class'. As a warehouse worker and someone whose anarchist roots lie in syndicalism, I have always been a staunch defender of the concept. Recently, however, some information has passed my way leading me to wonder.

Gallup Inc. did a survey on retirement savings intentions which shows the sources of this potential income. For those workers who are already retired, by far the largest source of income is investment - Registered Retirement Savings Plans, Canada/Quebec Pension Plan, company pension plans, proceeds from house sales, savings accounts and 'other investments'. Only 22% depend primarily upon Old Age Security, which unlike the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan is not based upon worker-employer contributions invested in share ownership, bonds or T-bills, but like welfare payments, comes out of taxes. A further 11% will have part-time work as the major income source. What this all boils down to is that two-thirds of the retired depend primarily upon invested income. When you look at the group closest to retirement (50-64 years) the non-invested sector drops even more - to 25%. Nor does size of income have a great deal of bearing upon this factor, for 12% of people making more than \$70,000 a year will rely on non-investment based income such as part-time work while in the \$30-40,000 range (i.e., union rate of pay) the figure is 23%, which still leaves more than three-quarters of this group counting primarily on some investment source.

In roughly fifteen years time my wife and I will be collecting our pension cheques (oh joyous day, no more wage slavery!) and upon sitting down and calculating it all out, lo and behold, most of our income will also originate with investments. Checking with my mother, who never made more than the minimum wage, I discover that she too depends mostly upon the Canada Pension Plan and her term deposits.

One has to point out how new all of this is. Back in the 1950s the cliché of the old age pensioner living on dog food was a reality, for all they got was \$50 a month on the Old Age Security. Few workers had company or trade union pension funds. The Canada Pension Plan was not created until 1966 and the Registered Retirement Savings Plan was invented in 1972. And since the bulk of the boomer generation is just now entering the magic age of 40 (the time when people become concerned about future retirement income) such things as pension plans will become even more important. Since they already own half the stock market, these institutions may swallow the economy whole.

Now there is a word which describes the kind of people whose primary source of income is derived from investment and that is *capitalist*. Do we in fact live in a world where the working class caterpillar becomes a capitalist butterfly at the age of 65? Workers now have something to lose other than their chains - their annuities, pension plans and term deposits!

Larry Gambone

Inside India

Freedom's editorial 'The Tokyo G7 Summit - much ado about nothing' (24th July 1993) was timely. It is clear that as we move towards the 21st century the G7 countries are desperate to export their recession to the southern hemisphere. By opening up fresh markets and establishing new manufacturing bases in the South and the former Soviet bloc, the intention is to alleviate discomfort at home at the expense of countries already facing economic disaster.

India is a new jewel for the North. Second in world population figures only to China, it has a potential market of approximately three hundred million for fashionable consumer items. Further, it has a readily available supply of cheap labour. Better still, it has huge international debt problems which make it vulnerable to the arms of G7 imperialism, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Currently Western and Japanese trans-nationals are capturing huge sections of India's domestic market and pouring capital into joint economic ventures in which they have a controlling share largely as a result of the terms of an IMF loan and World Bank structural adjustment loan (SAL) signed in December 1991.

These terms required India to liberalise its import and export policies built up over forty years to try and stimulate domestic manufacturing industry,

allow the free entry of foreign capital into the country, abolish minimum wage legislation; as well as demands to cut spending on social programmes and infrastructure and eliminate state subsidies and price support programmes (including food subsidies).

The effects of these terms presently being implemented by India's Congress government are already hitting the majority of the population hard - that is the six hundred million the North is only interested in as a supply of labour. For example, Bata, the multinational shoe manufacturer, used to pay its unionised factory workers 80 Rupees (approximately £2 sterling) a day. Recently it has been able to lay off its workers and sub-contract to independent cobblers at 25 Rupees a day. Similarly, since the beginning of 1992 there has been a 50% rise in the price of rice as a direct result of the removal of food and fertiliser subsidies.

Here, then, we have the shape of things to come. This column will try and keep readers of *Freedom* informed about the recolonisation of India and also, as the country prepares to culminate its year of celebrating the golden jubilee of the Quit India movement, of the struggles that are developing to resist the new imperialism engineered by the G7 countries and ruthlessly implemented by the Indian elite.

John Shotton

Walking and Talking



Forbidden Britain Day – Hannifield Reservoir Point of Trespass

Photo Ramblers' Association

Freedom to Roam

by Harold Sculthorpe

Freedom Press, 80 pages, £3.50

What the access campaigner wants can be stated quite briefly: with a few obvious concessions, the freedom to walk anywhere on all more or less uncultivated land; some means of following, off the road, all self-defining routes like river systems and coastlines; and a reasonable degree of access by pathway through the nearest fields, woods and parkland to every household in the land. The movement began not much more than a hundred years ago when the first of some twenty attempts to get an Access to Mountains Bill through Parliament was made, and when local societies protecting footpaths and commons combined into national organisations. Following the Attlee Government's countryside legislation there was some abatement in militancy as attempts were made to use the new powers. These met with limited success. Since the 60s the campaign has been re-energised following huge pressures on the countryside from aggressive market forces and from agencies of government, together with the desperate need of the rich to retain one symbol of wealth and privilege that can't easily be stolen, vandalised or imitated by the envious or the poor.

This rising temper is clearly shown in the titles of some recent publications: *Forbidden Land* and *Our Forbidden Land*; *The Theft of the Countryside* and *The Theft of the Hills*; *Whose Land is it Anyway?*, *This Land is Our Land* and *Them's Our Hills*. At risk of confusion, Harold Sculthorpe's *Freedom to Roam* hijacks Howard Hill's 1980 title.

The background to this struggle is immensely complex and most writers have tried to organise their material in historical or geographical schemes. Sculthorpe has another idea and approaches his subject on foot. About a third of his two dozen essays are built around his own excursions and somehow these communicate a sense of presence to the whole book so that its commentary on the condition of Britain comes across like a faint and dismaying modern echo of *Rural Rides*. After introductory preambles there's no discernible plan and the chapters might be read in any order. Still, for less than a hundred pages the coverage is extremely wide and the solid factual back-up supports a good general picture.

A note of some of his topics will show this range: history of land tenure; who owns Britain today; continuing losses of access; threats from privatisation; struggles with the

MoD; crossed purposes in the National Trust; the destruction of the remembered countryside by the new agriculture; and there's a round-up of celebrated battles or sieges – Kinder Scout, Greenham Common, Faslane, Rhu Spit, Stonehenge – at which non-political access campaigners, if any such breed exists, found themselves led or heavily outnumbered by communists, nuclear disarmers or hippies. (And who could have predicted, a few years ago, the arrival of such startling reinforcements as the Panzer Divisions of the New Age Travellers or the warlike Dongas of Twyford Down?)

Freedom to Roam is sometimes entertaining and is always easy to read. The author's forthright, sceptical, disenchanted voice grumbles along at walking pace. (That's not a criticism. George Steiner has asserted that the central current of Western humanist thought stems from the pulse and movement of walking.) For its brief length and at its modest price the book offers an excellent introduction to the subject for the casual walker or for the urban activist who's curious about what's going on outside the city walls.

One opportunity, I think, was missed. Sculthorpe interjects anarchist views from time to time but I felt these might have been better expressed in a single chapter devoted to all likely future strategies. This could have surveyed the whole range between two extremes. At one end, the constitutionalist attempt to make a felt moral right into a legal right, so introducing anarchist ideas on property and law. At the other, the direct action tactics promoted in *Ecodefence* and in that deep and knowing comic thriller *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. These tactics need urgent reconsideration for different circumstances but invite anarchist comment on organisations, hierarchies and leaderless groups. (By what strange route did Earth First! assimilate some anarchist attitudes?) And, centrally, it might have looked at various other possibilities including the styles of trespass. The outdoor movement is now enormous in number and might be strong enough to meet the state head-on in mass trespass. On the other hand, continuous widespread unannounced small group trespass can't be resisted and it's one of those happy activities in which the end is nothing but the means. Lands at risk of privatisation make an obvious soft target. Forgive us our trespasses.

Harold Sculthorpe is, I think, needlessly diffident about the importance of the access struggle ("it may not even be a minor revolt") when set beside other social aims. The enjoyment of walking has often been

The desire and the enjoyment to feed off the reputations of the dear departed has in your lifetime become a major cottage industry, for it gives needed pleasure to the reader and cash in hand to the publishers and the researcher. I am of that unfortunate generation spawned too early to enjoy the vicarious pleasures of reading 'the truth' concerning some public character who took their reputation into the grave but yesterday, beating the worms to the dinner gong, for our literary diet of necrophiliaism had to be no more than the Freethinkers gen about the breeding Pope's amusing moments behind the altar, Robert Graves' *double entendre* of Caesarian orgies with wine, grapes and male Greek au pairs, or the demolition of 'Eminent Victorians' by Lytton Strachey, all Bloomsbury drawing room giggles, sneers, hair and corsets, whose own reputations faded like farts in a steam bath. I am fortunate in that I have twice been threatened with libel: two comrades have threatened to expose me, in death and in the USA, and I am informed that a learned townsman sharing space with one of our noblest universities refuses to interview me because "I am a scoundrel" and for those small mercies many thanks that the blunted arrows never left the sealed quivers. All those incompetent generals and politicians responsible for the death of millions in 1914 and in your lifetime, junior, are our creation so to blame them not, but ask why are you in the faceless crowd and they are on the platform.

A 'taste for

As I said to the Queen Mother as she steadied me across the threshold of the White Hart pub (get well Danny), "Don't worry about them taking the urine, Ma'am, when the charge hand or the acting head clerk barks they stand to attention, not you". Over the last few years we have been fortunate to have a glut of exposés from minor poets such as Larkin to king-of-the-pile political piss artists such as My Lord George Brown, and it ranged from racism to rapping on The Cause. Yet so much has been leaked over the years that the question whether the 84 year old poet passé Steven Spender maintained gay contacts in Japan in the '50s is passed off with but a shrug of the aged shoulder by Britain's rhyming OAP.

Fortunately no one is safe from the muck-dredging sewer scavengers of our contemporaries in high office, for with Wodehouse dead what can there be worthy of bedtime reading but the Final Truth as revealed. It is the great and the good that make the most enjoyable reading and the latest corpse for the knife is little 'Bert Einstein whose $E = MC^2$ had the A Level intelligentsia cheering in the aisles in the paperback departments. For while Einstein played his three-card trick of how to produce a DIY atom bomb and love God, his home life was unworthy of public morality as spelt out in the

— OBITUARY —

The Libertarian History Man

A man who is a wartime cavalry officer and Communist Party member at 18 shows obvious independence but seems an unlikely subject for anarchist enthusiasm. Yet on Christmas Day 1963 I was standing in a cold phone booth with a pile of coins, reading from this man's 800-page book to my girlfriend in Wales. I was studying economic history and on Christmas Eve bought E.P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class*. It started a love affair that has continued to the present. (It also ended one because, unsurprisingly, I lost the girl.) Here was a book that gave scholarly articulation to all my inchoate feelings about the inadequacy and bias of our recommended texts, that gave an active role to those normally treated as objects of history, that recognised the importance of

dismissed as an innocent form of escapism. But what are we to suppose Kropotkin was thinking about as he lay by his campfires, what occupied the mind of Reclus when he paused for a rest? "Happy is the land, my young friend, where one need not seek peace in the wilderness; but where is that country?" asked Rousseau, a surprising cry from the pastoral Europe of two hundred years ago. No escapist fails to take a long hard look at what he's left behind. On Thoreau's release from the town jail of Concord he walked up the highest nearby hill: "and then the state was nowhere to be seen". His reflections upon it were quick to follow.

There's another way of seeing the access struggle. That is, to set freedom of movement beside freedom of speech as the two basic liberties. (Question: What are the two skills human beings struggle to master in the first years of life? What are the names we use to describe attempts to circumscribe these skills?) There remain hills in Britain from which the state can't yet be seen but it's drawing closer and stirring times lie ahead. It would be a strange irony if the strongest challenge to the will of the government and to Right of Property were to be made in the name of leisure. In the meantime, it's a pleasure to read Sculthorpe's contribution and to congratulate Freedom Press on this initiative.

Harold Drasdo

agency, "the working class did not rise like the sun at an appointed time. It was present at its own making..." that was totally different from anything I had read before, or since.

It is difficult thirty years on to properly indicate the vivid excitement this book caused. We've become blasé about the revelations of 'history from below'. This was the period when T.S. Ashton's *The Industrial Revolution* (much praised by *The Economist* and a recommended GCE text) could attribute a delay in introducing the flying shuttle to "the poor quality and shiftless habits of the workers". When a few pages later Ashton writes of miners going to a seam by simply clinging to a rope with hands and feet, he remarks "accidents were not infrequent". Nothing about the short-sighted cupidity of the owners. Thompson changed all that while at the same time indulging in neat side swipes at determinist ideas of class and false consciousness derived from simplistic Marxism.

One of the earliest Communist Party opponents of Stalin, he moved after Hungary to a sort of libertarian socialism. He never described himself as an anarchist but shared many of our primary concerns. The continuing increment in the power and presence of the state was one, and few can have done as much to highlight *The Secret State* (the title of one of his polemical essays) as he did. Few did quite as much to get up the noses of governments either. His contribution, through the peace movement and END, to a 'detente from below' brought considerable pressure on Eastern bloc governments, how much we don't yet know. Certainly enough to warrant denunciation by the Warsaw Pact, as well as Western establishments.

His main focus was with individual liberty of a universal type – 'freedom from' as well as 'freedom to'. Throughout his work runs a bias in favour of localism, a vehement hostility to the growth of centralisation, a particular concern with ordinary people submerged by historical change. He insisted on allowing significance to those who didn't fit the patterns discerned by 20/20 hindsight, and who had thus been ignored by establishment historians of the Right and of the Left.

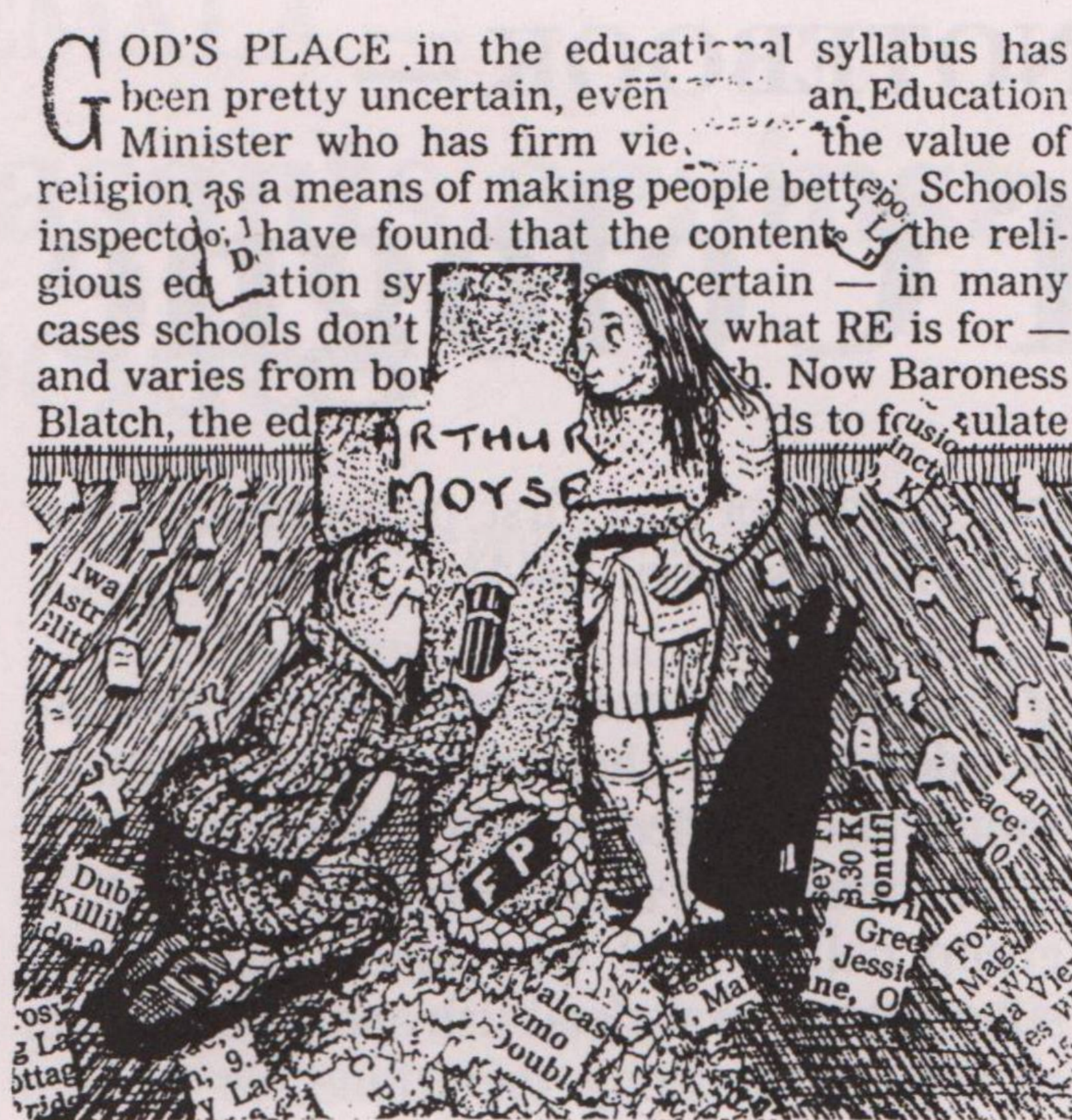
coprophilia'

leader columns of the daily bloods. It is a curious public morality that can imprison a young woman for months for leaving her small child alone in her flat while she went out to daily work, yet answer the question posed by Paul Johnson concerning Einstein's baby child: "The baby vanished from the records: died perhaps, or was adopted" and Johnson answers his own question with "So what? Many great men have had bastards ..." and it is my underlining. That we are a society with a public and a private morality is no earth-shattering revelation and one accepts it with a shrug, but when those who control public information markets, by reason of wealth, demand in the name of a free society the right to publish whatever they deem of interest to a paying readership yet cynically suppress news that had already gone through the legal courts, as with Driberg and the national *Daily Express*. The hounding of the unemployed or any small-time picket, the support of corrupt authorities abroad, the open propaganda support of government economic measures that can only hurt a section of the population least able to protect themselves, be it in the Courts of Law or at private well-heeled dinner parties.

But all in all, gutter revelations make good reading and I am among those first in the

queue within my public library to put in my reserve card, for though cruel time dictates that I can no longer be a voyager in God's name I can enjoy the autumnal fruits of being a voyeur. I doubt if we will ever know who was the headless man in the polaroid photograph enjoying fellatio from the knees-bending Duchess of Argyll, but I would dearly love to know who clicked the camera; or been a guest at the Bayswater party, rumoured, given by a MP wearing only a bow tie and a mask, where roast peacock was served; or who were the Right High Court judges, rumoured, enjoying an orgy in Macmillan's term of office. Sight me for being envious of those who dare to play with dangerous toys, be they secular or erotic, for theirs is not the offence. The offence lies with those with power, contacts or wealth who suppress the names when the private pleasures become public and do it at the expense of victims too young or too stupid to protect themselves.

My Lord Goodman, the 'most noble Roman of them all', has published his memoirs, via Chapmans, at £20 for 464 rather dull pages. As a lawyer breathing 80 years, he has been the expensive Mister Fixit for many in high office or high table, and in a small way the darling of the bleeding hearts, and when he defended Aneurin Bevan, Philips and Crossman against *The Spectator's* statement that they were pissed at an international conference he was doing but his paid job. But



they were pissed and they lied and they almost destroyed a magazine and out of the High Court mire Bevan's reputation with the militant Left became that little bit less. These are the professional politicians and they exist on all social levels in and out of politics and they are parasitical scum who feed off a society wherein people have other things to occupy themselves with besides saving the

world. It was Arnold Goodman's defence of the artist Francis Bacon that sours me, for the line of defence was a demand for a rejection of the charge of smoking 'grass' because Bacon was a famous artist who would not be involved in things like that. I know, we know, you know, comrade, that people walk out of Law Courts and out of open prisons ... cough, cough, cough ... because they are Important People, but when this happens platonic justice is indeed a sour joke. Bacon is not a great artist but an important artist in relation to altering the style of figurative painting, and he walked out of court a free man. And Francis could be seen at the Krays' Esmerelda's Barn 'up west' with the rest of that social strata, and pride of the ball was My Lord Boothby, solidly involved with the Krays' lifestyle and their mouthpiece with the House of Lords, for that was dear old 'Bob', toast of the middle-brow Tories in the shires who "indulged his taste for coprophilis" along with curling tongs, crackers and plastic beads, and if you feel as a romantic pseudo-anarchist from the sticks you must march to demand the release of the twins after 24 years 'inside' then the date is the 9th October, but for me "turn down an empty glass".

Arthur Moyse

He showed that the eighteenth century 'food riot' was not a simple reaction to hunger but a demonstration of a set of traditional moral values based on ideas of localism and a just price. The idea of "the moral economy of the crowd" as a basis for resistance may be a cliché but it is a cliché that E.P. Thompson invented. In a couple of books and a series of scintillating papers he transformed professional and amateur history. Only the British Academy stood apart, until shamed into accepting him last year. He only briefly held a British university post and, at a time when so many academics migrated to America, he was never offered one there either. Yet he was one of the best selling history authors of the half-century and his most famous title was much in demand in third world countries.

Throughout his work, however pessimistic the moment, is an optimism deriving from his study of eighteenth and nineteenth century history. He believed in the ability of ordinary people to influence and change the course of events. In 1980 he thought he discerned a new insurgency "which would turn its back on the old statist norms and bureaucratic forms to be found in the orthodox traditions of both communism and social democracy" and went on to note that even if it was too much to hope for it was still worth working for.

"It is not foreclosed and prescribed that ordinary people will lose every contest with power" he wrote in *The Secret State*. Believing this he was always active as well as academic. How far END and Thompson contributed to the ending of the Cold War will doubtless be argued, but there is little doubt that the clarity and force of his reasoning did much to get the peace movement heard. His linking of peace, European unity and human rights became the clichés of politicians from East and West a few years later. It is easy to miss how original it was at the time. He foresaw this. "If we succeed the little politicians will move in and take it from us" he once said. He recognised that ordinary people may make history but the actions of politicians and the changing nature of states is what goes into most books.

Other concerns were the loss of liberty and the manufacture and suppression of opinions. "For two decades the state, whether under Conservative or Labour administrations, has been taking liberties, and these liberties were once ours" he wrote in 1980, and his lucid hostility to the growing power of the state is exemplified in his political commentaries.

The best of these, collected in *Writing by Candlelight*, includes the devastating *The Secret State*. It also contains the marvellous eponymous satire on outraged *Times* letter writers at the time of Heath's three-day week.

He was always conscious of the massive inequalities of our society and he made historians in general more conscious than usual. "The average working man's ... share in the benefits of economic progress ..." he once wrote, "consists of more potatoes, a few articles of cotton clothing ... soap, candles, tea and sugar, and a great many articles in the *Economic History Review*". The Tory emphasis on changing the history curriculum is a tribute to E.P. Thompson's influence.

His first book was on William Morris. The final posthumous publication will be a study of William Blake. Through everything runs the conviction that ordinary people do successfully influence events. *Customs in Common* shows just how much he had come to share the general anarchist position. His political essays articulated the dangers of our society, and the arrogance of state officials and police. *The Poverty of Theory* successfully attacked that part of the New Left "whose ideas, attitudes and practices were inimical to rational, libertarian and egalitarian principles".

The introduction to *The Making of the English Working Class* will be set one day with the classic words of other spokesmen for freedom. Mandela from the dock at Rivonia, Luther King's *I Have a Dream*, Mill's *On Liberty*, Vanzetti's death cell declaration ... "I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the 'obsolete' handloom weaver, the 'utopian' artisan, and even the deluded follower of Joanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of posterity. Their crafts and traditions may have been dying. Their communitarian ideals may have been fantasies. Their insurrectionary conspiracies may have been foolhardy. But they lived through these times of acute social disturbance, and we did not. Their aspirations were valid in terms of their own experience and, if they were casualties of history, they remain, condemned in their own lives, as casualties."

Thompson moved from a personal non-determinist Marxism to libertarian socialism. His work will interest any who care about history, or about today. Little he wrote can or should be ignored. *The Making of the English Working Class* is the place to begin.

John Pilgrim

Food for Thought ... and Action

— FASCISM/ANTI-FASCISM SPECIAL —

A Lie Too Far: 'Searchlight', *Hepple and the Left* by Larry O'Hara with 'Green Anarchist' and Tim Scargill, Mina Enterprises. This hastily written pamphlet is a detailed exposé of the ostensibly anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight*. Although *Searchlight's* links to the (secret) state are — or should be — well known, this pamphlet gives a vivid picture of the depth the magazine will sink to in order to please its masters. Focusing on the activities of one Tim Hepple, and reproducing self-incriminating evidence written by him, a sordid tale of disinformation, infiltration and attempts to set anarchists up for violent attack (*Green Anarchist* magazine unsuccessfully, Tim Scargill, of the Class War organisation, successfully) by fascists is told. All this falls within the context of a whole series of smears, emitting from the pages of *Searchlight*, directed against Anarchists, Greens, Animal Liberationists, squatters, the *Jewish Socialist* magazine and 'rival' anti-fascists — the authors of the pamphlet have been the victims of a sustained, and even more absurd, smear campaign over the past years or so. Also raised is the question of *Searchlight's* relationship with the fascist goon-squad Combat 18 (interesting to note that *Searchlight* failed to directly mention the C18 attack on Freedom Bookshop). This pamphlet should be widely read! 55 pages, A5, illustrated, £1.80.

Germany Calling: a short history of British Fascism by Ross Bradshaw, Mushroom Bookshop. A very short history of the small, but not insignificant, Fascist tradition in Britain. Not particularly good, but worth reading as an introduction to the subject — although contemporary Fascism is covered in only one page and claims like "there is nothing patriotic about [Fascist] beliefs" take a lot of swallowing. 16 pages, A5 pamphlet, illustrated, £1.00.

Fascism/Anti-Fascism by Jean Barrot, Pirate Press (reprint). An all-out attack on Anti-Fascist ideology and practice. The author, writing from a 'left-communist' perspective, attacks Anti-Fascism — "the worst product of Fascism" — as a leftist political racket that is not only useless in the fight against fascism when it takes power, but that also plays straight into the hands of the State and Capital. "The leftists seek to authenticate this extremism with this hue and cry about fascism, while neglecting the critique of the State". 36 pages, A5 pamphlet, £1.20.

The Struggle Against Fascism Begins with the Struggle Against Bolshevism by Otto Rühle, Elephant Editions (reprint). A good, concise attack on Leninism as a form of fascism. Hand this pamphlet to the next Leninoid zombie who accosts you on the streets. 22 pages, £1.00.

Stefano Delle Chiaie: portrait of a black terrorist* by Stuart Christie, Refract. This informative book takes a look at the activities of an Italian fascist (hence 'black') terrorist within the context of the 'Strategy of tension' played out — and still being played out? — in Italy; under cover of 'black' terrorism the State attempted to manipulate public opinion. New information emerging since the end of the Cold War has confirmed the existence of secret networks across western Europe (called 'Gladio'), set up by NATO, ostensibly to go into action in the event of the Communists gaining power, that were involved in carrying out acts of terrorism against the public in order to create a climate of fear and confusion. 182 pages, illustrated, £4.95.

On Terrorism and the State: the theory and practice of terrorism divulged for the first time by Gianfranco Sanguinetti, Chronos. This interesting, and at times eccentric, analysis of terrorism as it emerged in Italy during the late '60s and '70s covers the same events as the Christie book, but using a totally different approach. Although failing to live up to its sub-title, the author convincingly argues that the 'Red Brigades' were controlled by the State, and that the 'terrorist' phenomenon, both 'red' and 'black', was used as an instrument of statecraft. The Italian Community Party is also exposed as an obstacle to any radical change, let alone revolution. 101 pages, £3.50.

Lobster #25 edited by Robin Ramsay. Biannual magazine dealing with para-political themes. This issue included a well informed article (the third of a series of four) on aspects of British Fascism over the past two decades. Also articles on Bill Clinton and the Anglo-American Establishment, 'electronic warfare' and mind-control, book reviews and more. Worth a read despite increasing forays into the wilder areas of conspiracy research. A4 magazine, 26 pages, £2.00.

Covert Action Quarterly #45, CA Publications. Slightly changed name of magazine previously called 'Covert Action Information Bulletin' this magazine, from the USA, contains consistently high quality articles on para-political themes. In this issue: global links to South Africa's race wars (on the assassination of Chris Hani), resurgent Nazism in Germany, an exposé of the Anti-Defamation league (a private, pro-Zionist spy network), the American Gulag, and more. 68 pages, A4 magazine, illustrated, £4.50.

Jez

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— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

A Whiff of Cologne

The visitor's first impression of Cologne is of a smug and very prosperous city with an enviable, fully-integrated public transport system. A second look reveals a city seething with counter-cultures and alternative propagandist groups of every kind. And a glance at the *Stadt-Review*, the local *Time Out*, confirms this. One listing, for example, says "Blacks and anarchists meet weekly. Contact them at The Other Bookshop" (1 Wahlenstrasse, Köln 30).

Big issues unite a wide political spectrum. For example, in response to racist atrocities in other German cities, at least a hundred thousand people attended a protest demonstration in Cologne. My own hosts, choral musicians who usually perform the standard Bach-Haydn repertoire, commemorated the anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* with a performance of Michael Tippett's oratorio *A Child of Our Time*, in which the three sections were linked with a plain narrative of what happened in 1938. (An official of the German embassy in Paris was shot by a 17 year old refugee, Herschel Grynszpan. It was the signal for carefully orchestrated looting of Jewish shops and homes all over Germany, in what *The Times* correspondent called "scenes of systematic plunder and destruction which have seldom had their equal in a civilised country since the Middle Ages".)

Tippett's work is about the symbolic figure of Grynszpan. Written in 1940, it did not get a performance (with Peter Pears and Joan Cross) for several years. I gave my hosts a copy of the moving report by Jack Wade in

this journal of that first performance (*War Commentary*, April 1944).

Cologne has several key activists who are determined that every fellow citizen should be reminded of today's big issues. One is an anonymous artist belonging to a radical group called X99 who made large metal silhouettes of a skeletal fish and erected them at key points along the Rhine, as a mute reminder of the heavy pollution of the river. Others have followed the idea and stencilled the same sign in graffiti around the city.

Another is Walter Hermann, a former teacher who, three years ago, initiated the *Klagemauer für Frieden*, the Wailing Wall for Peace, on the paved forecourt of the Cathedral. He was outraged by the fact that there was no place where citizens and visitors could express the shame and foreboding they felt when, in the name of the 'free' world, the whole arsenal of sophisticated weaponry was used to retrieve the territory of a tribal ruling family from a neighbouring megalomaniac. Messages for peace in every language were suspended on bits of cardboard. Since then, successive catastrophes – the tragedy of the Kurds, the Sudanese and the Somalis, racial ferment in the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet empire, and above all the terrorist attacks on immigrants in Germany and the rise of a neo-Nazi undercurrent – have brought over 20,000 messages from all over the world, now fixed on frames outside the Cathedral.

Walter Hermann has taken up residence in a

niche, and in January a Catholic paper asked "Must we tolerate a cardboard city on the very steps of the Cathedral?" The Dean said that the City Council must act. The Council says it is a matter for the Church. Last month Walter had a visit from an elderly survivor of Hiroshima who is touring the world with his particular testimony. He invited the Lord Mayor to come and meet his guest, and it would have been impolitic for the Lord Mayor to refuse to visit the Wall. But Hermann has twice been physically attacked.

On the second anniversary of the Wall, another local activist, Klaus the Fiddler, issued a manifesto with an impressive list of supporters, pointing out that there was nothing to celebrate except the fact that, while the press, radio and television are full of the most detailed revelations about the money market or the sexual lives of the famous, the *Klagemauer* is a mute testimony to those popular aspirations for peace and reconciliation which are not thought worth reporting.

Klaus the Fiddler (*Klaus der Geiger*), who is actually Klaus von Wrochem, belongs to a family of professional musicians who decided to evolve into street performers, as they met more interesting people that way. He became a well-known figure through using busking as a vehicle for making political statements on local issues. Municipal ordinances were invoked against him. On one occasion the crowd moved in to prevent him from being bundled into a police van. Then, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, he won even greater notoriety for his activities in the Mainzerstrasse.

This is an inner city street of tall turn-of-the-century apartment houses with a central space with trees in the middle. Once fashionable, it had become a street occupied by the old and poor who have lived there for years at low rents, by immigrants and by

young members of the counter-culture. Then it became interesting to property speculators as a 'prime, central living area' and the usual tactics were employed to drive out old tenants and squatters. The city has a tenancy law that if occupation is unchallenged within a certain time, and if what the rent tribunal judges to be a reasonable rent is offered, the tenancy must be accepted. One particular 'property shark', who was neither in court or in prison himself, was in no position to challenge Klaus, who formed a charitable trust called ALFONS, an acronym for Society for the Joy of Living, and obtained loans to buy several flats.

But because of its location, the Mainzerstrasse had become a 'rat run' or through-traffic route for out-of-town motorists avoiding the centre. So Klaus instigated with the neighbouring residents a plan to make humps in the roadway of the kind known as 'sleeping policemen' and to turn the central space, which motorists had colonised as a car park, into a garden. He was brought before the City Court, and charged with digging up public property. Rejoicing in the publicity for the issue, he delivered a passionate defence of excluding traffic, and was discharged. The City Council then formalised the unofficial measures he had initiated and adopted traffic-calming measures in that street. The humps in the roadway that now deter motorists are now official humps. Drivers now avoid that street.

If I had stayed longer in Cologne I would have found more evidence of the unofficial culture of anarchy. What I did see and hear in a covered walkway down to the river, between the Museum of Roman Antiquities and the Philharmonic Hall booking office, was yet another musician, accompanied on bass and guitar, playing the opening movement of Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* by striking 21 bottles of varying sizes. It was a performance of hilarious virtuosity.

Colin Ward

Conceptual Confusion and Revolutionary Rhetoric

Dear Editors,

As a very minor part of a tradition that runs from Kropotkin through Alex Comfort to Colin Ward (and not claiming the intellectual acumen of any of them) I am surprised to be the primary target of Seamas Cain's inchoate outburst (26th June). Hitting out in all directions he manages to associate me with Maoists, meliorists, non-resistance, elite organisation, Leninism, liberal pragmatism, post modernist thought police and the nuttier fringes of the 'Marx was wrong about everything' tradition. No one person, however incoherent, could hold all these positions and I am prepared to let the back issues of *Freedom* serve as my defence for most of them. Mr Cain does make some cogent points, yet associates me with opposition to the very points where I might agree. I suppose that is one way to make enemies, but it hardly does much for the ideas he advocates.

Alex Comfort years ago pointed out that the enemy of revolution was the necessity to modify cultural patterns as a whole. I don't think the history of any area, anywhere in the world, shows developments that falsify that observation. The uprisings of which Cain speaks, however necessary, however admirable, were not revolutions. Resistance, however heroic and however effective, is not revolution. The people who conduct that resistance, who carry out the rebellions, will act from a variety of motives, but I suspect that hunger, oppression, anger and despair loom larger than the idea of the free society.

This is where Mr Cain is particularly tendentious. I have never opposed resistance at all. Nor did I oppose revolution *per se*. What I said was that the evidence suggested that a society operating along anarchist lines wouldn't

develop that way. The "young insurgents of Los Angeles" about whom Mr Cain writes so lyrically were far from damned by me. They were, and are, the victims of the inherent instability of capitalism which Marx had correctly diagnosed. The inflation caused by the Vietnam War and general American paranoia about communism was ultimately responsible for the abandonment of Keynesian policies. Resources to the cities were denied just as they were hit by the growing problems of AIDS, homelessness, drug wars, disinvestment and deindustrialisation, while the survival economy of the poor was systematically repressed and criminalised. It is hardly surprising that hunger, deprivation and oppression should result in explosions of anger and despair. But spare us the Nechaevian claptrap about "self-definition and self-development through rebellion". The poor of Los Angeles are caught up in an enormous web of exploitation, many of them trapped between the Police Department and the gangs, paying protection to both. I have no 'prefabricated solutions' to offer and my understanding of the situation suggests that further uprisings are inevitable. I don't expect them to usher in a libertarian society or a revolution in the way America organises itself though. Chance would be a fine thing. Insurgency and rebellion are usually the only options in

a bleak and narrowing field, but a glance at central Europe will show they cannot be equated with anarchism.

I must perhaps plead guilty to a degree of ethnocentrism. The letter Mr Cain used as a launching platform for his polemic was a defence of the content of *Raven 18*. I was writing against a background where a Tory government has just won a fourth term with the support of the very people who had been screwed by the transfer of resources to the wealthy. I was writing against a background of rising xenophobia, and the growth of possessive individualism among the very people who stood to lose by it. The nearest we came to an insurrectionary situation were the poll tax riots, and these were caused by a combination of police tactics and provocateurs, by growing poverty, by desperation. The resistance to the poll tax, heartening though it was, was not revolutionary. It was an attempt to shift the weight. It was an attempt to make an autocratic government listen to affected people instead of relying on their own rigged and phoney statistics. In some areas it was the resistance of despair and destitution. It may perhaps properly be termed a rebellion, but the freedom the rebels were concerned with was freedom from want.

Finally, I am not a person who opposes the use of concepts like class or society. If Mr Cain read the paper instead of fulminating against its contents he would know that I do maintain that human beings are culture bearing animals whose behaviour is learned. Because we live in a society which maximises competition we have to learn to operate co-operatively and, as Colin Ward recently pointed out in these pages, it doesn't come easily. In an uprising there may be inspirational examples of improvised co-operative organisation. They are suitable growing points perhaps. So are the self-build housing projects Colin Ward describes. A rebellion though, however inevitable,

however satisfying, however motivated, will ultimately result in repression of one kind or another. Look at Mr Cain's list. Look at the results in those places. Even if rebellion becomes a revolution, outside pressures will tend to ensure that the post-revolutionary institutions will end up adopting the patterns they set out to replace. The best we can do is lay foundations for the future. That involves doing what we can in Los Angeles, or Brixton, but doing it without the illusion that we are introducing an anarchist millennium.

This may be a bleak message for the *enrages* of Los Angeles, but I am not sitting in Suffolk (or in Minnesota) inviting them to die for a theory of revolutionary change either.

John Pilgrim

Dear Editors,

I read with approval your editorial piece 'All Politicians are Bastards' (7th August), until the last sentence, which reads "Otherwise, with due respect to the many anarchists who are political pacifists, without the use of a superior force there will be no social revolution, no change".

If your 'superior force' depends on the use of violence, of course pacifists will have good grounds for objection, both morally and pragmatically. If on the other hand that force is committed to non-violence, we would heartily agree with you.

Anarcho-pacifists prefer precise argument to 'due respect' and patronising comments.

Ernie Crosswell

London

Anarchist Forum

Meets Fridays at about 8.00pm at the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square (via Cosmo Street off Southampton Row), London WC1N 3AQ (tel: 071-831 7711).

AUTUMN TERM

24th September – Introduction to Anarchism (speaker: John Griffin)
1st October – Discussion on Talk versus Action
9th October – Anarchist Communism (speaker: Dave Dane)
15th October – Discussion on Anarchism in the Community
22nd October – Anarchist Individualism (speaker: Donald Room)
29th October – Discussion on Anarchism and Responsibility
5th November – Anarcho-Syndicalism (speaker: Pete Turner)
12th November – General discussion on Anarchist Economics
19th November – Pacifism and/or Violence Today (speaker: Tony Smythe)

26th November – Discussion on Progressive Social Change

3rd December – Anarchism and Feminism (speaker: Lisa Bendall)

10th December – Discussion on Equal Opportunity

17th December – Social Anarchism: Music, Poetry, Stories, Humour

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 have vacancies for speakers on the 3rd and 24th June 1994, and could put speakers in general discussion slots, although these are popular in their own right as overflows of previous discussions or as a place people can introduce things they feel we should discuss, for instance contemporary issues.

The Mary Ward Centre is available for hire for other meetings or conferences Monday to Saturday. Details from the principal Patrick Freestone at the Mary Ward Centre (address and phone number above).

Peter Neville / Dave Dane
for London Anarchist Forum

Please keep
sending in your
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Replies to Peter Cadogan on Greens, Ireland, Bosnia

Dear Editors,
My friend, Peter Cadogan, has a unique gift for making sweeping and arresting generalisations, but all too often they rest on shaky foundations and simply fail to stand up.

In his 'Green Party to Green Campaign' (*Freedom*, 24th July), he informs us: "The future belongs to decentralised extra-parliamentary democracy in a Confederal Europe of the Regions" (the capitals are his own). He goes on to declare for "Sovereign regions of N. Ireland, Scotland and Wales" and different parts of England. The English regions will, it seems, work out their own boundaries in consultation with each other - "... they will not be fixed by London or Brussels".

On this basis the Green Party is to boycott British general elections but not, it would seem, Euro elections because by then, one assumes he assumes, 'Europe' will be so democratic that his sovereign regions will be able safely to invest it with power to run its (unspecified) functions.

The trouble here is that the attractions of some part of this prescript it really amounts to little more than extremely dangerous twaddle.

We are in a highly explosive state of crisis; any proposals we make to resolve it will need to win the consent of 51% of the electorate (and of we are genuine democrats we ought to be thinking and talking of generating a really *general* consensus of support). However deep and desperate its defects the British people are not going to be persuaded to abandon a seven hundred year tradition of parliamentary government simply because one member of the Green Party

suddenly has the bright wheeze that they should.

And if the prospect of democratising our parliamentary system so that it really does become government *by* the people, rather than of or for the people, strikes him as so remote as not to be worth bothering about, why then does he suppose all his theorising about a European democratic federation of the regions stands any more chance of success?

Westminster has never been a truly representative and democratic parliament simply because the power of money has hijacked the democratic electoral process and marginalised the significance of the individual voter. In so doing it has demonstrated that democracy on such a basis is impossible and that a mass democracy is simply a contradiction in terms. The expansion of the franchise progressively to women and those of 18 years of age has simply meant that more people are getting less.

In these circumstances we need to see any talk of 'Europe' as though this government by the multinationals is remotely capable of being made responsive to democratic intent is sheer moonshine. Politics is about power; the current global crisis arises from the essential powerlessness of the people. If this essential empowerment cannot be achieved in Westminster, where some levers of national identity, public opinion and some shared assumptions about values and procedure prevail, how is it to be supposed it can be achieved in Brussels?

We cannot exercise effective democratic control over Westminster mainly because the controlling agencies of money and power are centralised there and because as an institution it was

evolved to oversee some limited functions (taxation, defence, currency, foreign affairs and law administration) for a population of about four million.

Today government prescript is so vast and so varied (for a population fourteen times bigger) that half the time even a government minister has no idea what is going on in his own department. As a result the individual citizen is virtually powerless to influence the course of events.

The answer to the problem of citizen powerlessness is not to engage in fantasies about 'Europe', a concept concocted by money, promoted by money, engineered by money and which will always be dominated by money, rather it is to help a process already in motion of creating new forms of power in our multitudinous local neighbourhoods. As the centralised giant state machine shows itself more and more incapable of solving problems of work, homes, health, schooling, crime control, welfare or currency stability, we will all of us have to start creating our own answers anyway. So let us get on with it.

In the long run, as we do more things for ourselves we may find we need to co-operate with other countries on a strictly fundamental basis, as we currently co-operate on postal arrangements, lighthouses, air traffic rules and so on.

There is nothing specifically 'European' in any of this and to engage in any kind of Euro rhetoric today is simply a free gift to the Europlotters and their outrageously presumptuous schemes to emasculate such powers as we have in our national parliament.

Keep your eye on the ball, Peter.

John Papworth

Dear comrades,
Peter Cadogan's commitment to the causes he takes up cannot be doubted. He gave up a well-paid job for Biafra.

In 1968 he was a professional organiser of peace campaigns, paid a manager's salary by the pacifist millionaire Howard Chaney. His title was 'Secretary of the Committee of 100', although the Committee of 100 had disbanded before he was appointed. He lost the job when Chaney learned that the Save Biafra Campaign he was organising was not a peace campaign, but a drive to collect funds to supply armaments to the Biafran army.

Britain left Nigeria with three states. In 1968 the Nigerian federal government decided to reorganise the country as twelve smaller states. Voters in Nigeria tend to vote along tribal lines and more than half the voters in Eastern Nigeria were Ibo, so whoever won the Ibo vote got to control the riches of the state as Prime Minister. The break-up of Eastern Nigeria into three smaller states would remove the oil field and Port Harcourt from Ibo control, as the inhabitants of those areas were mostly of other tribes.

Colonel Ojukwu, the Prime Minister of Eastern Nigeria, tried to keep control of the wealth by proclaiming Eastern Nigeria the independent republic of Biafra, with himself as President. He hired the Swiss public relations firm, Markpress, to put it about that the federal government intended not just to break the Ibo hegemony but to massacre the Ibo people. For evidence, Markpress circulated harrowing photographs, supplied by Ojukwu, of starving Ibo women and children.

People should have smelt a rat when the Biafran government asked Oxfam and the international aid agencies not to bring

food into Biafra, but to bring money and purchase the food locally. As the federal army took over the territory, they relieved the starvation (and presumably fed themselves too) by breaking open the Biafran warehouses.

The wealthy owners of the warehouses had abandoned them and cleared off to Cameroon, leaving the starving poor to fend for themselves. Ojukwu, making the usual noises about fighting to the last drop of blood, had flown to join his family in Gabon some days before the last Biafran enclave was overrun. He now lives quietly on the income from his Swiss bank account.

Poor old Peter Cadogan was completely taken in by the Markpress campaign, and worked hard raising funds to supply the villainous General Ojukwu with weaponry. After such an appalling error, one might have expected that he would be very cautious about supporting another war.

But here he comes again ('Action over Bosnia', *Freedom*, 21st August), calling Milosevic "a little Hitler" and Tudman "no better than Milosevic", but characterising the activities of Izetbegovich's army as "a just war of authentic self defence". Izetbegovich, like Ojukwu, is identified as the good guy because he is losing.

'Ethnic cleansing' is a horrible offence. So is the Bosnian army preventing the evacuation of Moslem civilians, for fear of losing territory. All three factions in the Bosnian war are bastards, and the humane priority is to stop the war, not to make sure the armies are evenly matched.

Peter Cadogan's commitment cannot be doubted. It is his judgement which is in doubt.

Donald Room

Dear *Freedom*,

I noted with interest that *Freedom* once again has chosen to nestle snugly in the feathers of British parliamentarians, by their recent coverage of the views of Peter Cadogan and the Gandhi Foundation ('Crisis to Convergence', *Freedom*, 7th August 1993). For the views of that group and others such as New Consensus almost certainly tally nicely with those of Ireland's colonial masters.

However, it is the content in Peter Cadogan's article 'Crisis to Convergence' that causes me particular concern and, it must be admitted, not a little hilarity.

Mr Cadogan begins naturally very blackly by stating that "the IRA has taken the bit between its teeth and is out to drive the British Army out of Ireland by major city centre assaults to which there appear to be no answer. The response of the UDA is to take the law into its own hands in its counter-offensive - and if that means fighting the RUC and the Army then so be it. This is a situation without precedent."

Alas though, this is not a situation without precedent at all. For the IRA has had the so-called 'bit between its teeth' for over twenty years, and they only form a minuscule part in a substantially longer tradition of violent resistance to British rule. The disruption dealt to the rolling wheels of British commerce by city centre bombing in itself is not without precedent as the Fenians were able to sustain just such a campaign over the space of three decades. And as for the retaliation of neo-fascists such as the UDA, one need look no further than the Shankill Butchers and McGurk's Bar episodes for proof of their continual intentional brutality against innocents. I may just add that the first RUC man, PC Arbuckle, to be killed in the present 'troubles' was shot by a Loyalist sniper on the Shankill. Naturally, after beginning on such basic inaccuracies the article could only go further into the mire, and Mr Cadogan's 'convergent

remedies' hastened us on such a journey.

I would like to take this opportunity to challenge each of Mr Cadogan's 'remedies' in turn. He begins with 'Talks' saying where there's a Dick, there's hope, and that the initiative lies firmly at the moment with Mr Spring. He further feels that there is a need for new ideas, or should that be concoctions, such as that for making the North an autonomous region of the EC, within the UK of course, and then the punchline: "The British Army can then leave Northern Ireland".

The facts, however, are that Mr Spring is part and parcel of the Dublin branch of the British civil service, and most Republicans wouldn't trust him to break up a fight in the playground, never mind the demolition of a colonial regime that has lasted centuries. The further idea of the North of Ireland being an autonomous region of the EC is in itself a complete contradiction in terms, because autonomy does not exist within that haven for every shade of political criminal Europe can throw up. And Mr Cadogan's final assertion that the British Army would then depart is so ridiculous it doesn't even merit an answer.

Mr Cadogan then states that a ceasefire is not possible without successful talks, but unfortunately he doesn't provide us with the ingredients for 'successful talks'. I wonder would it be the exclusive talks the government is so fond of peddling or just a general let's-please-the-Unionists, back-breaking type exercise. Whatever the case, he feels that a de-escalation should precede a ceasefire. However, a de-escalation can only begin with a de-militarisation and as the 'security forces' constitute the strongest military force in the North they must be withdrawn, and not to barracks but out of the country. But there can be no deals as the British have already used one ceasefire to take a firmer grip and they wouldn't hesitate to do so again. They must withdraw their forces and disband

their sectarian police force, and only then will we have a platform to work from.

In his third remedy Mr Cadogan tackles public opinion saying that there is a need for widespread 'Peace Now' type organisations such as Mrs McHugh's Dublin organisation, which was nowhere to be seen when John Boyle was executed by the SAS, or countless other Irish children. If such groups openly call themselves 'anti-republican' then their motivation could be better understood, but currently they masquerade as champions of peace and yet are completely blind to Loyalist violence.

Remedy number four includes seeing that pressure is put upon Westminster to force through and generate some kind of debate, but when Sir Patrick Mayhew is talking about 'deals' one can see that little has really changed over twenty-odd years. British politicians are still of the conniving and dishonest character they have long been famed for. And the Conservatives, as one of the most right-wing reactionary parties in Europe, are particularly untrustworthy.

Peter Cadogan, however, cleans his hands at the ends of his article by appealing for the withdrawal of the PTA, legislation that a gentleman named Mr Verwoerd was for many years very envious of, and which has been used to criminalise and bully Irish people for years as well. But, alas, he mars this small island of sanity by appealing further for the 'amendment' powers for 'Northern Ireland legislation', and unless he means amend it out of existence then nothing is really being offered, because the whole creation that is the British-conceived, controlled and garrisoned mini-state built on Unionist domination, is completely cancerous to Irish society. And peace will never be an option as long as that state remains in place under British or Unionist control.

For my part I believe that no-one but the Irish people as a whole can decide their future and to that end a temporary

Constituent Assembly needs to be established, but only after a British declaration of intent seeing as it has "no selfish strategic or economic interest" to withdraw both forces and establishment from Ireland completely. As a third step, the release of *all* political prisoners must be guaranteed, and carried out.

It is impossible to say what decisions will finally be taken, but when they are there will only be two outcomes: peace or 'war to the knife'.

Máirtín O Catháin

Freedom's

Dear Editors,
While welcoming Dave Bird's confirmation (*Freedom*, 21st August 1993) that in social affairs no freedom can be exercised without interfering with the freedom of others (though he misquotes it), I am puzzled why he should also describe it as nonsense. Fortunately it is clear which we should take more seriously; the 'nonsense' stands alone, while the bulk of his letter supports the confirmation.

Part of his letter is about rights rather than freedoms, and a little thought will show these to be different things. All the anarchists who break laws show themselves to have had the freedom to do so (otherwise they couldn't have done it), but they had no *right* to act in this way. On the other hand, all workers have the right to make fortunes, but not many have the freedom to do so.

He goes on to say at length that people ought not to interfere with each other's freedoms, and few would disagree, but the question is whether the exercise of freedom *does* interfere with the freedom of others. Each of Dave's examples of what people ought to do is an instance in which the exercise of a freedom does interfere with the freedom of somebody else.

George Walford

'Platform'

Dear *Freedom*,
Congratulations on your attempt to communicate with your attackers. It would be nice to know their motivation, if nothing else.

I disagree with the ACF that you are offering a 'platform'. This surely is a Leftist notion, where a vanguard or leadership attempts to control and stifle debate by using their position within the organisation. This is obviously not going to happen in *Freedom*.

And surely we are not so uncertain of our ideas that we cannot afford to debate with opponents. In fact anarchist ideas are so difficult to counter that it is difficult to get people to debate. The media deals with us, for instance, by a tactic which I would call 'benign neglect'. When anarchism is mentioned it is always in a context more accurately described as chaos and produced by warring authoritarians.

If *Freedom's* attackers fail to respond, it suggests they have little to offer human society except violence. Meanwhile, *Freedom* has shown it will neither be intimidated nor deflected from its humanitarian task.

Gerald Hatton

Solidarity

Dear comrades,
Revolutionary greetings from this side of the Atlantic.

We were horrified to learn about the attack against *Freedom Press* and the damage caused by the fascists.

The Workers Solidarity Alliance/IWA send you its solidarity, hope and best wishes. We hope that you are up and running again in the not so distant future.

With best wishes and warm regards,
Workers Solidarity Alliance / IWA
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The NARG meets about four times a year to
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should contact **John Purkis on 0484 847764**.

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