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FIFTY PENCE

"If human beings are fundamentally good, no government is necessary. If they are fundamentally bad, any government, being composed of human beings, would be bad also."

Fred Woodworth

HYPOCRISY RULES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The latest horror stories from Northern Ireland can only be matched by the hypocrisy of the politicians and most of the media. Suddenly government, media and apparently the public are all seeking a solution to 'the Irish problem'.

But the government will have no truck with the 'terrorists' in spite of the fact that they are only now showing themselves concerned about the 'problem' because of the 'terrorists'! Government is violence: without its police and military might and its prisons it cannot impose its laws, good or bad, which in the main protect the economic interests and privileges of a minority.

in this issue

LEOPOLD KOHR AND THE LESSONS FROM ITALIAN HISTORY

So in the first place it is hypocrisy when Major declares that he will not speak with the 'terrorists'. It is hypocrisy when the Protestant Unionist MPs declare, in their Irish accents which could be cut with a

knife, that they are loyal British citizens! It is equally hypocrisy for the militant Catholic minority (who may soon be a majority) who are apparently dreaming of reunification with the priest-ridden and 25% unemployment Republic of Ireland.

Nobody nowadays thinks that Irish history goes back more than about twenty years! They haven't time and the politicians have no interest in going to the root of our present predicament not only in Ireland but in the Middle East and Southern Africa. *The British have been the major cause of today's problems!*

THE RAILWAY DEBATE GUILLOTINED

In spite of some 400 amendments to the Railways Privatisation Bill when it left the House of Lords for the third reading in the Commons, the government, having appeased the Tory 'rebels' and ensured the votes of the Irish Right, decided that five hours of debate was sufficient. Three hours was spent arguing about the proposed guillotine and with the time left just two issues got an airing.

First, that British Rail management will be allowed to bid for franchises but only if the private sector aren't interested. In other words, all the profitable routes for the City and what they don't want for BR management. And such an arrangement will surely guarantee the massive closing down of branch lines.

The second burning issue was the proposed takeover of the Railways Pension Fund by the government in return for an IOU and the solemn promise to railway pensioners that they would not do a 'Maxwell' on them. In fact the guarantors he said would be *the British taxpayers!* Do you get it? By the next elections the

pension fund will have disappeared into the general public finances without a trace and if the Labour lot win the elections they will be blamed for having to clobber the taxpayers for the railwaymen's pensions!

Both debates were won by 30 votes. Neither of them has anything to do with how successfully the railways can be operated once they are privatised. Yet as from Friday 5th November the Bill was given the Royal Assent. And the breaking up of the rail network will start on 1st April 1994.

Nothing can now stop the bureaucratic machine from grinding out this destruction of the railways called privatisation except public pressure. Recently a thousand people came to Westminster by special train, joining at stations all along the line from Scotland to London. This should not be the end but the beginning of a massive campaign by all users of the railways.

They may complain about services today, but they all know that privatisation will mean increased

In our opinion there is now no rational solution to the Irish problem until the British Raj declares that the colony of Northern Ireland will be liberated with the withdrawal of the fifteen to twenty thousand troops that are occupying the territory. Such a proposal may shock the gentry in Sussex and Surrey, but this is exactly what the inhabitants of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been demanding from Yeltsin about the Russian 'occupation' troops.

And just as when Hong Kong is returned to China those citizens of the colony who claim their British citizenship will be welcomed here, so be it for those citizens of Northern Ireland whose allegiance is to the Queen and who prefer to join us on this island. And we suggest with a £100,000 to help them settle in. It will be much cheaper than another fifty years of this tragic farce.

fares, fewer services and a less safe railway system. And this is also the verdict of people with a lifetime's experience on the permanent way. The Minister John McGregor is just repeating what he is told by the 'experts' he has surrounded himself with and who may know a lot about capitalist economics but nothing about running a railway network. You have been warned!

OUR 'GOOD NEWS' COLUMN

Way back in August *The Guardian* published a feature accompanied by an even larger picture of men at work – all about “anarchists’ build self-help empire”. Girescope Ltd (no connection with Girobank) is described as:

“selfless property developers cum landlords, plasterers, joiners, plumbers, electricians and much more ... hard at work near Hull’s old dockside renovating the latest house for the city’s homeless.”

Seven years ago they launched a housing co-operative to house themselves. As they put it, “we were jobless and living in squalid accommodation”. They managed to raise £7,000 collectively from banks by “telling a few white lies” with which they bought a small terraced house in Gee Street.

“Soon the jobless Girescope founders acquired two more houses, by persuading friends in work to take out mortgages on their behalf. With three properties as collateral, the co-op gradually expanded.”

They now have nineteen modernised houses,

some subdivided into flats. They also control a corner shop, ‘The People’s Trading Company’, and are now aiming to develop a small workshop complex to encourage small businesses.

Apart from the fact that it is surely good news to know that the six young ‘directors’ are not telling others what to do but are doing all the physical work on the properties, they attribute their success where others have failed to the fact that they insist on paying themselves only £50 weekly. In the words of Martin, a 29 year old ‘director’, “dole plus” and he points out that “any more and we’d fall

into the poverty trap – losing housing benefit and pay tax – so it’s not worth it.”

Since no self-respecting anarchist would wish to be a ‘landlord’ – who are their ‘tenants’? To quote *The Guardian* report:

“Young people leaving psychiatric care have been offered accommodation – along with the homeless and victims of domestic violence. ‘There seems to be a lot of wife beating around here’ Martin said. So far well over 300 tenants have passed through Girescope doors.”

Their latest fifteen-room property is being divided into flats, with one section already turned into “a separate, energy efficient house with solar panels” thus indicating a different and really practical approach to that of Environment Minister Gummer to the problem of energy conservation.

The Guardian’s feature writer must have described their whole approach to work and their way of life as ‘anarchist’ for Martin,

one of the co-op’s founders, replied: “Call us green, practical anarchists if you like ... just people organising themselves and achieving rather than bringing down capitalism first”.

And when we are told that:

“Mother of three Julia, the newest worker-director, is preparing to start a bricklaying and plastering course at a local college. ‘We live differently – okay, the kids don’t get new clothes, and we don’t either – but this is much preferable to a nine to five job’.”

We can only applaud and do everything to publicise these initiatives. What we lament is that *Freedom* has to learn about Girescope Ltd via *The Guardian* and not directly from these “practical anarchists”.

We at *Freedom* and *Freedom Press* are also ‘practical anarchists’. We may have to earn our livings elsewhere, but do they not see that the *raison d’être* of our propaganda is to persuade more and more people to see how they can ‘organise themselves’ within the hated capitalist system and at the same time mobilise more and more of us to ‘bringing it down’.

In a capitalist world non-conformist ‘success’ can be short-lived for a whole number of reasons. ‘Success’ can go to the head and the idealists end up as capitalists. That’s their business. But from an anarchist point of view any initiative that threatens even remotely the established mafia of the capitalist system can expect to be attacked and threatened, with no holds barred. For this reason we are convinced that the ‘practical anarchists’ must also have a public voice – which in our opinion means an anarchist propaganda voice that cannot be ignored. To establish that propaganda voice is as vital as, we imagine, Girescope Ltd has been for the non-conformist elements in Hull.

Off with their heads ... hands and balls!

The national press misses some of the juiciest pieces that get into the provincial dailies. The Ipswich *East Anglian Daily Times* (18th October) reported goings-on at the annual dinner of the Clacton Conservatives attended by Teresa Gorman, the notorious anti-Europe MP who is said to be one of the media’s pretenders for the Prime Ministership if and when Major is pushed out.

The branch chairman and a councillor, one Philip Vanner, unleashed onto the meeting all his *bêtes noires*. To savour the full flavour of this *monster’s* views one must quote the *East Anglian Daily Times* report in full. He told the

meeting that the government “should combat the ongoing redistribution of wealth”. Seeing the kind of views he later expressed one must interpret this to mean that the ‘redistribution’ is towards the poor whereas everybody, as well as official statistics, accepts that in the past fourteen years of Tory government, taxes have made the rich richer at the expense of the poor. But that’s a minor point so far as Tory Philip Vanner’s real objectives for saving us from ‘anarchy’!

“He said crime deterrents should include austere prison conditions.

Mr Vanner suggested the birch, the cat and the rope should be brought back to ‘reverse the gains made by our criminal society’.

“Cut off the hands of violent thugs and the appropriate anatomical part of rapists,” he added.”

The *East Anglian Daily Times* report does not include any criticism from Mrs Gorman. She probably shares his views as do those who voted for him. What a reflection on the ‘democracy’ the politicians are offering to the so-called lower human species!

A ‘Heaven Scent’ Xmas to All!

As Christmas approaches, so the Sunday nationals with their supplements and the advertisers’ throw-away inserts get heavier and heavier. The nine London-based nationals with circulations ranging from the ghastly *News of the World*’s 4.7 million copies down to *The Independent on Sunday*’s almost modest 400,000 (incidentally the 31st October issue had a lot of interesting material, especially about the Irish question) produced 16 million copies in all and we have calculated that in doing so at least 5,000 tons of paper were used, of which more than half were advertisements. Who has not seen Sainsbury’s double-page food bargains advert in some of the ‘quality’ Sundays – not luxuries, perish the thought! Tins of peeled tomatoes, carrots, sausages at 55p a pound, 80 tea bags for 59p etc ... Have Sainsbury’s suddenly a bad conscience at having made £1 billion profits last year? On the contrary, it’s probably because profits are slightly down in the first half of 1993 that they must promote these loss-leaders in the hope that those so attracted will also buy the not so cheap ones!

But not for *Sunday Times* readers. For them a 36-page ‘Heaven Scent’ catalogue from Harrods in full technicolour entirely of

perfumery! And for all pockets. But they give pride of place to ‘The Four Muses’, a 1994 creation “like a timeless ribbon of light”. For two ounces of this “connoisseur’s scent” you pay about £100, but it’s the ‘flacon’ that runs away with the cash: another £380 because it’s a Lalique limited edition:

“Once the limited production run is completed, the cast is broken making each bottle a precious collectors item.”

If you can’t afford that kind of money, what about l’Eau de Baccarat ‘Forever True to Beauty’? You get twice the quantity – a massive four ounces – but this is only eau de toilette. But again what matters is the empty Baccarat bottle “similar in design to an original 1912” such bottle. And the assurance that it is a genuine fake is a gem:

“... as collectors’ pieces, each mouth-blown bottle (and its hand-cut stopper) is numbered; and only one size has been created.”

And that little con-lot will set you back a mere £360!

It all stinks!

For some more anarchist ideas on the railway debate read ...

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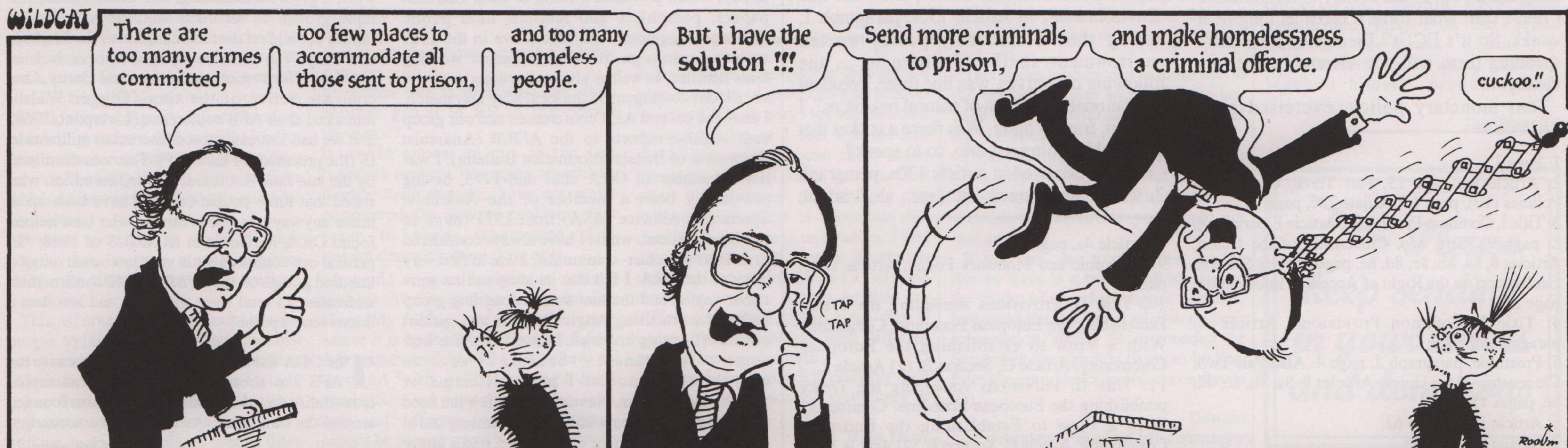
Ken Bowden

Our comrade Ken Bowden (or Ruan Bowden, as he signed his occasional contributions to *Freedom*) died on 30th October.

He requested ‘No flowers, but donations to Freedom Press’.

As we go to press, we have already received donations in his memory from: London, RP, £5; and £20.60 collected at a meeting of the London Anarchist Forum (where Ken was a regular until prevented by arthritis).

A full list will appear in our donations column on 27th November.



Treaty on European Union (aka the Maastricht Treaty)

published by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, paperback, 254 pages, price ECU 9 (UK, HMSO, £6.50)

Decidedly not a good read. Those who appreciate flow and pace with a good story line, or who seek vicarious exploration of the more extreme human emotions, or even straightforward sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, are best advised to look elsewhere.

What we have here is a modern optional ending mystery. By wading through the tail-end protocols and declarations, nationals of the twelve contributing states may find out which of the options or opt-outs make up their particular fate. But, sadly, it is all rather dull and mundane stuff.

Strange, then, that the content of this slim and frequently repetitious book – which has not, despite many governments giving it away wholesale, reached any bestseller list – is capable of raising passions to the point of insanity. The obvious question to ask is why does it have this effect – particularly, but not exclusively, on British Conservatives?

In seeking possible answers I shall avoid boring readers with the mass of detailed mechanisms, descriptions of means, or the plethora of housekeeping details the Treaty contains. These should delight bureaucrats of all nations in any language they may wish. Indeed, such delight could become almost orgasmic with detail such as a full page of *Corrigenda*,¹ each of the seventeen listed means 'change ecu/s to ECU/s'. Rather, I will concentrate on points of more general interest.

The Treaty does confirm free movement of people and capital;² it gives a framework of civil rights,³ and requires free trade across frontiers. But we all knew that, n'est-ce pas? More important, it establishes a European Union,⁴ of which we are all citizens,⁵ and, most novel for Brits, a mechanism for exerting rights. Heady stuff, hey? Anyway, we have an Ombudsperson⁶ and rights of petition,⁷ and presumably are no longer subjects of Her Majesty with duties, but citizens with rights. (Or could we be both? I am not sure.)

What has publicly upset our rulers is stated on page 3. After much preambulation noting "a new stage in the process of European integration ... within a single institutional framework", it is "resolved to achieve the strengthening and the convergence of their economies and to establish an economic and monetary union including, in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, a single stable currency."

The sexual mores and practices of the British are known to be well off-centre of the Euro-norm for such matters. Little wonder, then, that those who feel impotent without a pound in their pocket would be miffed. Even more so those pointless millions who devote their lives to endlessly changing one lot of money for another. And what will happen to those whose rocks are pumped up and down by regular currency fluctuations? The social implications are delightfully imaginable, but to me money is information; I don't care what form it takes as long as it works. So it's ECUs? Bienvenue à l'ECU – spending them will not adversely affect my virility.

That monetary policy, exercised by a

'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go

European System of Central Banks (ESCBs) under one ECB,⁸ will stop the fiscal chicanery practised by our jolly Chancellors, is also fine. No more billions given to currency speculators in vain attempts to preserve asset values for the rich. No more leaping interest rates to make those without money pay for the failure of the aforementioned vain attempts. Equally fine by me. Incidentally, the government might like to note that it is probably already in contravention of Article 104c, paragraph 1,⁹ "member states shall avoid excessive government deficits". But since 'excessive' is not defined a case might be difficult to prove.

There is another goody on page 4, where it is "resolved to continue the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as close as possible to the citizen in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity". Yes! It's the 'S' word! Subsidiarity. What effect does it have on you? Do you feel a) happy, b) relieved, c) nothing, d) guilty, e) utterly deprived? Never mind.

I may have a slightly twisted perspective on subsidiarity, but it seems like the promise of much needed fresh air to a foetid sock-pit. I live in Wales where we are ruled by QUANGOs whose thousand members are appointed directly by our Gauleiter, the Secretary of State for Wales, at present one Pinochio Redwood MP. He is appointed by grey figures in faraway Westminster, and has almost absolute power. The fact that Westminster believes that subsidiarity means Westminster (or its appointees) promises to be fertile ground for much fun and confusion in the new Euro-future.

There is another 'S' word of particular interest which keeps popping up in odd places. It is sustainable.¹⁰ The context is usually economic, but no doubt our government will do everything in their power to transfer it to themselves. The fact that the concept has penetrated thus far may be of greater significance than we presently realise.

Every book reviewer hopes for a little unexpected excitement as spice to the labour involved. I am no exception, but on this occasion I was prepared to forego adrenalin for duty. Imagine my surprise when ...

It begins when things like "a common policy in the sphere of transport"¹¹ swam into focus. I tried to think what this would mean for the road-mad train-haters in London. Well, one could hope for a rationalising influence at the very least, could one not? This strange way of thinking stayed with me. Was this why they were rushing to privatise British Rail? And what of other inexplicable lunacies; would there be any explanation in these increasingly torrid pages? What, for instance, of Tarzan's heart-jarring hasty swing from Coal to Dole?

Hands trembled as they struggled to hold pages 58 and 59 steady. There, under the title 'Environment', in Article 130r, paragraph 1, noting that Community policy on the environment shall contribute to ... the following objectives, was line three, "prudent and rational utilisation of natural resources". I read on, frankly agog. Was there a socket that this could be plugged into, so to speak?

Eureka! occurred in Article 130s, paragraph 2, where the Council, etc., etc., shall adopt,

8. Article 4a, page 14.

9. Economic and Monetary Policy, Article 104c, page 27.

10. Title II, Provisions Amending the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community With a View to establishing the European Community, Article G, Section B, (2) Article 2.

11. Title II, Provisions Amending the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community With a View to Establishing the European Community, Article G, Section B, (2) Article 3, (f).

line three, "measures significantly affecting a member state's choice between different energy sources and the general structure of its energy supply" – in pursuit of the above objectives. Unless I am a dyslexic weasel (it could happen), this means Tarzan's rope could be cut after 1st November (when, following Germany's ratification, the Treaty comes into effect). Hence, citizens, hurry hurry hurry, close the pits. While remembering that you read it here first, ask why Her Majesty's Loyal Oppositions or the media chattering classes, or even King Arthur,¹² haven't mentioned it.

What of the future? Hope and dreams seem to lie in the Committee of the Regions, "a committee consisting of regional and local bodies ... hereby established with advisory status".¹³ Anecdote time. This committee is already in being and a meeting caused much embarrassment for Gauleiter Hunt, then in charge of Wales. He sent a gang of toady placepersons on behalf of Wales. At the same time the elected Welsh local authorities sent their group. Much to Hunt's discomfort his lot were turned away as being unrepresentative. Hope, citizens, is found in such happenings in what used to be strange foreign lands.

It may not be too hopeful to see in this embryonic body a democratic second house for the Union. One which, with a little encouragement and active subsidiarity could become bio-regional rather than regional, and thus initiate sustainable local economic structures. Could it be community democracy and bio-regional economic independence which lies at the centre of Westminster's Europhobia?

The feared 'F' word, Federation, is not in the Treaty. Perhaps it does not need to be; most other member states, particularly the successful ones, are federations anyway. Let's play 'What If?' What if Britain were a federation of autonomous regions? Is it

12. Scargill, that is.

13. Article 198a, page 81.

possible to imagine that socio-economic problems would be worse for ordinary people. Perhaps I have limited imaginative powers, for I cannot conjure such a scenario.

One should not get carried away no matter how exciting a book turns out to be. The Brits will do their best to be at the heart of Europe, if only to attempt an early and fatal coronary. Looking resolutely backwards, Westminster will hang on to what is left of empire: Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Falklands, its pound coin and Trident submarine, despite Britain becoming a poor third world offshore sweatshop. The depth of commitment to Europe can perhaps best be seen in those MPs who resist cutting our armed forces because they fear 'Britain' will not be able to defend itself. Against whom, within a common European defence policy? East European nouveau capitalists seeking to exploit our docile workforce and Dickensian employment conditions perhaps?

Readings between the lines of this Treaty, if that is possible, only confirms that our present feudal political mechanisms have little place in, or relevance to, the sort of Europe the Treaty envisages. So major chaos and disruption inevitably lie ahead.

Revolutionary the Treaty is not, but it will cause much revolt among our ruling classes as its provisions grind into motion. It could force a much-needed institutional shake-up, as perfidious Albion is dragged against its will into the twentieth century. This seems the only route to profound and beneficial change for millions trapped against their wishes in the lingering economic nightmare of a demented grocer's daughter.

In the end the mystery laid before the British reader is the most puzzling of all. Why, why, with so much contradiction and phobia, with so many rooted imperial and patriotic illusions, and so little acknowledgement of the reality of the Treaty or the rest of Europe, why did Britain sign? It is a mystery which will endure to defy the most agile minds for centuries.

As I said, not a good read, but illuminating in parts. Don't buy, unless you have that sort of coffee table, rather save it for a rainy day in the reference library – if they haven't all been closed or privatised.

Colin Johnson

The Distortions of Disorganisers

May I reply to the grossly inaccurate and distorted account of the Anarchist Federation of Britain (AFB) and the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists (ORA) by Peter Neville in *Freedom* of 2nd October. I was involved in those days, from 1966 when I read works on anarchism in a local library, was convinced and then made contact with the movement through people in the Brighton Youth CND. From 1966 to 1972 I helped found and was active in the Brighton Anarchist Group, which produced a series of local anarchist papers, pamphlets and leaflets, held public meetings, fly-posted, and was active in the 1969 squatting campaign to house homeless working class families, as well as always having a large and vociferous contingent on the local May Day march. I attended several AFB conferences and our group sent regular reports to the *AFBIB* (Anarchist Federation of Britain Information Bulletin). I was not a member of ORA until mid-1973, having previously been a member of the Anarchist Syndicalist Alliance (ASA) from 1971 (more of this later). Indeed, whilst I have always considered myself an anarchist-communist, I was at first very wary of the ORA. I felt that its ideas at first were rather vague, and the fact that its founding group included a practising Anglo-Catholic and pacifist put me off getting involved. I joined the ASA with some reluctance, because as an anarchist-communist I had criticisms of anarcho-syndicalism. Nevertheless, I felt the need for more organisation within the movement, and at least the ASA, I thought at that stage, had a larger

component of workers than the ORA at its inception.

Neville makes out that the ORA was some sort of cancerous Militant-type body, destroying the AFB for its own gain. Nothing could be further from the truth. The ORA was originally set up as a ginger group within the AFB in order to improve its functioning and effectiveness. This was not until 1971 by the way, by which time the AFB had lost 30% of its membership. Now this was in a period when a great radicalisation was taking place. The rapid growth of the AFB augured well, but its failure to build on the radicalisation of the late '60s and early '70s must be put down to its lack of practical effectiveness and theoretical clarity. One comrade active at the time, Digger Walsh, remarked at an AFB conference (Liverpool, 1968) that we had lost many good libertarian militants to IS (the precursor of the SWP). This was dismissed by the late Jack Robinson, a *Freedom* editor, who stated that these people couldn't have been up to much anyway! As one comrade, who later helped found ORA, remarked in an *AFBIB* of 1968: "In general our commitment is very low when out of a hundred groups on the *AFBIB* list, 40 confirm their addresses, 23 send some money ... and less than a dozen sent reports."

The ORA did not destroy the AFB, because the AFB was already in decline. ORA attempted to revitalise the AFB, as did the ASA, also founded around the same time. As for the false accusation

(continued on page 7)

1. Page 1.

2. Article 8a, page 15. Part Three, Community Policies (10), page 17. Article 73c, page 18.

3. Title I, Common Provisions, Article F, paragraph 2, page 9. Party two, Citizenship of the Union, Articles 8, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e, pages 15-16. See also Declaration on the Right of Access to Information, page 229.

4. Title I, Common Provisions, Article A, paragraph 1, page 7.

5. Preamble, paragraph 2, page 4. Also Part Two, Citizenship of the Union, Articles 8, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e, pages 15-16.

6. Article 138e, page 63.

7. Article 8d, page 16.

— PART ONE —
Focus on Latin America

This feature is the first of a series which is intended to give an anarchist perspective on the various countries of Central and South America. It will be followed by features on individual countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Venezuela, Ecuador and Cuba. New to Latin America? Then start here ...

Central and South America's size largely accounts for its importance. Each country has its own history and to a certain extent issues that face it as a separate entity. However, an anarchist perspective needs to stand back somewhat in the first instance and try to seek out the threads that are common to the different countries and try to pull them together into some coherent whole. Such an analytical tool will need to bend when applied to different situations, but this does not preclude the importance of its introduction at the outset. What follows is not *the* anarchist analysis, instead it hopes to become the launch pad of debate about the region and indeed international affairs in general.

I wish to try to identify the main actors involved in the scene and to make some tentative analysis of how they interact with each other. I identify four principal actors:

- the USA;
- the political establishment;
- the opposition;
- the people.

I admit that this is somewhat arbitrary and that overlappings occur and that interests overlap, but I also feel that such an approach could prove useful.

Coincidence of interest can be overstated. For example, whereas the interests of a) and b) frequently overlap to the point sometimes of being indistinguishable, it is hard to find instances where the interests of a) and d) overlap. Up until recently it was rare to find instances where the interests of b) and c) overlapped, but the end of the cold war combined with the Machiavellian nature of c) has seen some change here. But let us start with a closer analysis of the four groups.

a) The USA

It is impossible to discuss Latin America without reference to Big Brother to the north. The history of the US is a colonial and expansionist one both domestically and within its own borders and also towards 'our little region over here'.¹ The detailed history of this is not the subject of this article. However, a brief explanation of how it has manifested itself in the past and the form it takes today is essential to an understanding of the region.

US foreign policy in the area has always been designed to maintain an area of economic

1. For full analysis of US foreign policy read Chomsky, for example *Language and Politics*

exploitation which will serve the interests of corporate capital to the north. Via the CIA and the FBI, and indeed whatever clandestine or questionable means were necessary, amenable political regimes were installed which then allowed American capital to lay the foundations for export-led economies providing cheap commodities to Big Brother whilst leaving the people to starve. If the client regime proved itself incapable of keeping the population in check, elements of the military would be used and if necessary the US would intervene directly.

b) The Political Establishment

As seen above, today the position of this grouping is ultimately dependent on US or US supported military force. However, certain characteristics define its power base and the areas of society from which it emanates. Going back to the colonial history of the past racially it is European, which explains why the official languages of the region are European (Spanish/Portuguese). Economically its power base is land rather than capital (the latter being generally represented today by the multinationals). It is perhaps the political grouping which gains the attention of the western media the most. It can be seen by them as a genuine political structure fluctuating between doves and hawks which allows the background power brokers (the US and the military) to escape somewhat the spotlight of attention.

c) The Opposition

A hotch-potch of Marxist groupings of various strains which is becoming less significant for various reasons. Firstly their resources were derived from various regimes (primarily the USSR) around the world which are now in political decline. This has resulted either in their marginalisation, military defeat or assimilation into the political process (see *Freedom*, 15th May 1993). As we shall demonstrate, the post cold war era has allowed the US (with notable exceptions) to pursue its policies economically rather than militarily due to the declining influence of these groupings whose aim was always to achieve political power with centralist and totalitarian overtones typical of Marxism in all its various shadings.

d) The People

Not surprisingly they come at the bottom of the pile. Historically deprived by colonialists of land, language and culture² they are the object of persecution and economic exploitation. Lacking resources (unlike the opposition) their resistance typically is based on mass direct action (i.e. seizure of land) mutual aid and autonomous forms of organisation. Their organisations tend to be anti-hierarchical if not for reasons of principle then for security reasons with the authorities unable to isolate individuals and thus weaken resistance. Their struggles do command some interest in the western media thanks to the political commitment of some individual journalists, but making their voices heard is an uphill struggle due to the range of interests that are stacked against them.

2. A good introduction to the colonial history of the region can be found in *Stolen Continents* by R. Wright (Pimlico).

As stated above, to analyse the interplay of these groupings to a certain extent requires analysis on the basis of individual countries, however given the importance of US policy in the region it is useful to analyse how this has changed in its current emphasis on economic rather than military control.

Post Sandinista and Grenada (with exceptions like Panama) the US now views the continent as more subservient militarily and looks happily on a block of states now intent on pursuing liberal capitalist policies. Bush's visit to the region in December '90 was the first by a US president for almost a decade and was mainly to push his Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. Eagleburger stated at the time: "The world is changing. The elimination of East-West tensions will allow us to focus more clearly on the problems of the continent".³ A more cynical reading will recall the immediate background of more failures in the GATT talks and the need therefore for the

3. *The Guardian*, 19th December 1990.

US to build a dollar controlled colonial hinterland to face the new economic power blocks (Japan and German dominated Europe) which are emerging. Ignoring the rhetoric, what Bush was looking for was "the largest free-trading partnership of sovereign nations in the world".

Of course this 'free' market will not help the landless peasants and small farmers of the region. By driving Peruvian peasants towards export oriented markets we encourage them to go for the commodity with the best return, but when they play the game by exporting coca the military are sent in and they are left with nothing, unable to compete against American subsidised exports and living under an economic regime which, based on private capital, provides next to nothing in the way of social services. The role of the opposition is as set out above: an acceptance of their failure in the '70s to achieve power has led to their colluding in most cases with the system which allows it to present itself as based on consensus to the outside world.

Clinton has pushed on with the same agenda, even though all would not appear to be hunky dory. For example, we learn from *The Guardian* (27th May 1993):

"The prospects look increasingly sour for Mr Clinton's reliance on Free Trade and the blithe assumption that it will bring inevitable progress towards 'a hemisphere of solidly democratic nations from the Arctic Circle to Argentina by the year 2000'.

This strategy largely inherited from the Bush administration and embodied in the way Mr Clinton has so far retained Bernard Aronson, Mr Bush's assistant secretary of state for the region, looks less and less tenable ..."

to be continued ...

Inside India

In their struggle against the liberalisation policies of Congress, representatives from popular movements, trade unionists, social activists and some members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are trying to establish a broad-based Southern Asian critique of and opposition to re-colonisation. Throughout October and November delegates have been attending the ongoing Third World Conference on Farmers' Rights and Sustainable Agriculture in Bangalore organised by the Malaysian-based Third World Network which has strong ties with India. Recently the conference adopted a series of eight resolutions proclaiming their sovereignty to formulate agricultural policies in the south.

This is a move aimed at influencing the outcome of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) negotiations, due to be concluded by the end of December. At the conference farmers' organisations from all over Southern Asia have made clear their opposition to any accession by their governments to the proposals envisaged in the draft final agreement (DFA).

The farmers of Karnataka, one of India's southern states, under the aegis of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS), have also resolved to establish an International Farmer-Scientist Co-operative Institute in Karnataka, to protect and develop community intellectual property rights. This is meant as a direct response against the possible enactment of the intellectual property rights laws as envisaged in the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) round of the GATT talks.

Announcing the resolutions to the press, Mukesh Nanjundaswamy of the KRRS said the farmers of India oppose the entry of multinational corporations not only in the agricultural sector but in all sectors of national activity. In this context the conference has demanded that the government of India reject the Dunkel draft

proposals totally.

The KRRS have also announced the setting up of community intellectual property rights over their bio-wealth and stated that it expects the world to respect them resolving to block the flow of bio-wealth out of the country through direct action.

The importance of these issues is enormous. As part of the broader imperial design of the West there is a subtle, invisible and dangerous genetic colonisation being spread across the south. It is based on a reworking of the word 'knowledge'. The deep knowledge of seeds and sustainable agriculture developed by southern communities is termed as 'folklore', while the scientific invention of multi-nationals, based on gene manipulation, is rewarded with a patent. This is a symptom of the continuing exploitation of the big powers over the weaker countries in an age of competition over biological resources.

Would that southern governments could find the resolution to oppose the Dunkel draft as well as the new bio-technologies which are destroying the ecology and the livelihoods of farmers across Asia, for as Martin Khor from Third World Network suggested at the opening session of the conference:

"The trap of external debt that the Third World countries have fallen into is the main cause for the advancing method of economic colonialism. It should be recognised that Third World governments have more or less surrendered to the rich countries, yet the signing of the Dunkel draft will mean signing away the sovereignty of the countries."

It is clear though that whilst the southern governments might have surrendered, the people have not. As long as conferences such as the one in Bangalore take place with their roots in the struggles of popular movements and their resolutions around taking action, pressure on governments to review their policies will increase.

John Shotton

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— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

Leopold Kohr and the Lessons from Italian History

In the 1950s, Leopold Kohr, an Austrian-born economist who had been a newspaperman on the losing side in the Spanish war and emigrated across the Atlantic, was Professor of Economics at the University of Puerto Rico. He was attending an international conference there, and complained at the dinner table that he had an important book to write, but couldn't interest a publisher as he was an anarchist.

Another guest was Herbert Read who instantly said: "I'm an anarchist and a publisher. Send me your book". This is how Kohr's book *The Breakdown of Nations* came to be published by Routledge & Kegan Paul in 1957. It was ignored at the time except by a handful of readers who saw its importance, and decades later was re-issued by a Welsh publisher Christopher Davies and subsequently as a paperback by Routledge. Kohr himself settled in Wales and now lives in Gloucester, aged 84, old and frail.

The *Independent* for 13th October 1993 published a heart-rending interview with him by David Nicholson-Lord, which revealed that his house had been burgled three or four times a year in the ten years he has been living there. The report says that: "Crime, according to Kohr, is the result of bigness; modern mass society creates the anonymity in which it flourishes. Smaller communities are less criminal because they are more 'translucent'. In pursuit of translucency, Professor Kohr stuck a piece of card with the name of his alleged persecutor in the front window of his house. The response was ferocious ..."

After the latest attack, Kohr told his interviewer that: "The reason why they target me is because I am old and deaf and I cannot see any more. I do not blame them particularly ... In my writings I have always pointed out that people behave only if they cannot misbehave." And the report concludes: "Professor Kohr believes the culprit comes from a nearby council housing estate - a place, he says, without any centre or a sense of identity and where male youth unemployment is widespread. 'There is no community here. We need translucent communities where everybody knows each other, where everybody knows the police, where thieves can be confronted. These crimes were committed in the darkness of mass society'."

This is a theme that permeates Leopold Kohr's writings, and it also arises continually in criticism of anarchism. The ideology of community self-organisation upon which anarchism depends is very beautiful, say the critics, but is simply not applicable to modern societies with their transient anonymous populations. But a new book, written from a far-from-anarchist standpoint, provides some thought-provoking evidence. This is *Making Democracy Work: civic traditions in modern Italy* by Robert Putnam, with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti (Princeton University Press, 1993, £18.95). Their book is a study based on a battery of surveys over twenty years, of regional governments in Italy. Why

should that interest us? The answer is in the evidence they gathered.

Italy, although it had plenty of ancient city states, came late in the European fashion for nation states. Putnam explains that, indeed:

"... when the Italian state was proclaimed in 1860, linguistic variation was so pronounced that no more than 10% of all 'Italians' (and perhaps as few as 2.5%) spoke the national language. For the Piedmontese monarchists who unified Italy, regional differentiation was the principle obstacle to national development. 'Having made Italy, we must now make Italians', was their slogan. The highly centralised Franco-Napoleonic model was the latest word in administrative science ... For local policymakers under the monarchy, under fascism, and for more than two decades under the post-fascist republic, all roads led to Rome."

Although the Constitution of 1948 provided for directly-elected regional governments, the Rome politicians of the dominant parties prevented regional reforms until 1970, as part of their own and of NATO's strategy of keeping Communism out of Western Europe. When they began, the new authorities had to take over the old bureaucracies and civil servants as they became responsible for such fields as urban affairs, agriculture, housing, hospitals and health services, public works, vocational education and economic development. There has been continuing pressure for the regions for further devolution, strongly fortified at the moment by daily revelations of bribery and corruption and of organised criminality in the form of the *Mafia* in Sicily, the *Camorra* in Campania and the *Ndrangheta* in Calabria.

Putnam's twenty years of study of the workings of regional government reveal that there are 'civic' and 'uncivic' regions. The civic regions display "an unusual concentration of overlapping networks of social solidarity, peopled by citizens with an unusually well developed public spirit - a web of civic communities". In these regions, he finds:

"Most citizens are engaged by public issues, but not by personalistic or patron-client politics. Inhabitants trust one another to act fairly and to obey the law. Leaders in these regions are relatively honest. They believe in popular government, and they are predisposed to compromise with their political adversaries. Both citizens and leaders here find equality congenial. The community values solidarity, civic engagement, co-operation and honesty ..."

In the 'uncivic' regions, on the other hand, public life is organised hierarchically rather than horizontally, and:

"The very concept of 'citizen' here is stunted. From the point of view of the individual inhabitant, public affairs is the business of somebody else - *i notabili*, the bosses, the politicians - but not me. Few people aspire to partake in deliberations about the commonweal, and few such opportunities present themselves. Political participation is triggered by personal dependency or private greed, not by collective purpose. Engagement in social and cultural associations is meagre. Private piety stands in for public purpose. Corruption is widely regarded as the norm, even by politicians themselves, and they are cynical about democratic principles. 'Compromise' has only negative overtones. Laws (almost everyone agrees) are made to be broken but fearing others' lawlessness, people demand sterner discipline. Trapped in these interlocking vicious circles, nearly everyone feels powerless, exploited and unhappy."

He moves on to another point relevant both to Leopold Kohr's views expressed in *The Breakdown of Nations* and in his comments on his own personal plight. Sociologists distinguish between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, "that is, between a traditional, small-scale, face-to-face community resting on a universal sense of solidarity and a modern, rationalistic, impersonal society resting on self-interest." This view leads to the

view that "civic community is an atavism destined to disappear. In its place arise large modern agglomerations, technologically advanced, but dehumanising, which induce civic passivity and self-seeking individualism."

The research of Putnam and his colleagues suggest a contrary conclusion. The least civic areas of Italy, he finds, are precisely the traditional southern villages, where life "is marked by hierarchy and exploitation, not by share-and-share-alike". The region of Emilia-Romagna is far from the traditional community. On the contrary, it is:

"... among the most modern, bustling, affluent, technologically advanced societies on the face of the earth. It is, however, the site of an unusual concentration of overlapping networks of social solidarity, peopled by citizens with an unusually well developed public spirit - a web of civic communities. Emilia-Romagna is not populated by angels, but within its borders (and those of neighbouring regions in north-central Italy) collective action of all sorts, including government, is facilitated by norms and networks of civic engagement ... Modernisation need not signal the demise of the civic community."

Now I myself have pondered on the lessons of that particular region of Italy. In my book *Welcome, Thinner City* and in *The Raven* No. 7, I observed:

"The economic life on Emilia-Romagna - where

more than a third of the workforce is self-employed and where *per capita* incomes are the highest in Italy - is based on accumulation of assumptions about capital and labour, and about the skill and autonomy of the individual worker that are scarcely grasped in our patronising British attitudes towards the needs of small businesses."

The hundreds of thousands of small entrepreneurs in towns like Modena or Carpi or Rimini are not remotely like the heroes of Thatcherite Britain. They support a high level of municipal activity, adequate nursery education and public transport. If they are voters, they vote for the former Communist Party or perhaps today for the new anti-corruption and anti-centralist groupings like *La Rete* or the Northern Leagues. They would agree with the diagnosis of Putnam and his colleagues that:

"... the most effective antibodies to the corruption of civic virtue, and the best hope in the near future ... lies in the further development of existing regionally based customs and networks of civic engagement. This would mean continuing the reforms that have begun to free the more advanced regions from the grip and grasp of Rome."

But this book has yet another finding that is arresting and disquieting in its implications. Putnam observes that:

"... the regions characterised by civic involvement in the late twentieth century are almost precisely the same regions where co-operatives and cultural associations and mutual aid societies were most abundant in the nineteenth century, and where neighbourhood associations and religious confraternities and guilds had contributed to the flourishing communal republics of the twelfth century. And although these civic regions were not especially advanced economically a century ago,

Food for Thought ... and Action

Anarchy: a journal of desire armed, no. 38, Autumn '93 edition of this always interesting magazine includes 'For a World Without Morality', 'In the Aftermath of the Spanish Civil War', 'Survival Sickness' (by Raoul Vaneigem, a reprint of part of his classic *Revolution of Everyday Life*) and 'A Critique of Half-Assed Radicalism' - an article attacking certain tendencies within the 'primitivist' current of libertarian thought that have adopted aspects of 'New Age' charlatanism and made a fetish of 'nature', i.e. those who turn 'nature' into something 'sacred'; a religious object. This is an interesting essay (translated from the original French) drawing on debates that have taken place, mainly in North America, within the pages of journals like *Fifth Estate* and *Anarchy* recently. Also reviews and lots of letters. 83 page A4 magazine, £2.50.

Britain, Maastricht and the Bomb: the foreign and security policy implications of the Treaty of European Union by Milan Rai, published by Drava Papers. This short essay is an eye-opening analysis of the foreign policy aspects of the developing European corporate-state. Although written from a parliamentary leftist perspective, this work is well worth reading as it demolishes the benevolent facade many try to erect around the emerging Euro-state - some 'anarchists' included! 32 page A5 pamphlet, 90p.

Certain Queries Propounded to the Consideration of Such as Were Intended for the Service of Ireland, anon., edited and introduced by Norah Caslin, Aporia Press. Reprint of a short tract first published in 1649, by Levellers opposed to Cromwell's campaign to conquer Ireland. Nicely produced, but the main text is only four pages long. Even with a longish introduction the cover price hardly seems justified. 18 page A5 pamphlet, £2.00.

The Declaration of John Robins and other writings edited and introduced by Andrew Hopton, Aporia Press. Reproduction of various contemporary accounts of the ranter John Robins, active between 1651 and 1652 in revolutionary England. Half this pamphlet contains a long introduction, while the rest is taken up with short, and not very revealing, accounts of Robins - a

seventeenth century David Koresh? Anyone interested in apocalyptic millenniumism and this period of English history may like this work. 36 page A5 pamphlet, £3.00.

Sexuality and Fascism by Big Flame, reprinted by 121 Bookshop. This pamphlet, originally published in 1978, deals with fascist attitudes towards sexuality and gender. Raising questions as much as answering them, this work at least goes beyond the usual platitudes (most of them anyway) and raises the question of why people have (and still do at times) support fascism. Unfortunately the photocopying is so poor that the text is illegible in places. 21 page A5 illustrated pamphlet, 25p.

Here and Now issue 14. Contains a timely and interesting article on the increasingly bizarre goings-on in the world of anti-fascism - including a useful chronology of events. Also articles on racism and spacism, the political correct media scare, 'radical' theorising, defending the commons, an interview with the Devil (!) and much more. Well worth a read ... most of the time. 63 page A4 magazine, £1.20.

George Bush: the super-spy drug-smuggling president by Bill Weinberg, Shadow Press. Over recent years, particularly since the 'Iran-Contra affair' in the USA, it has become clear that due to factors like the concentrations of power on a worldwide scale and the proliferation of 'communications' technologies, conspiracy has become an ever-increasing factor of statecraft. This essay takes a look at the conspiratorial aspects of US politics, both domestic and foreign, focusing on the cases of America's one-time Führer. An interesting work, unfortunately marred by an overuse of flimsy evidence and the classic failing of much conspiracy theory, linksmanship - the assertion that any link between X and Y, however tenuous, is evidence of complicity or control. 80 page illustrated A5 pamphlet, £2.99.

Jez

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they have steadily outpaced the less civic regions both in economic performance and (at least since the advent of regional government) in quality of government. The astonishing tensile strength of civic traditions testifies to the power of the past."

And he quotes Kropotkin's conclusion in *Mutual Aid* that the towns of northern and central Italy were "oases in the feudal forest", supporting this view with fascinating detail. In 1220 the town of Modena "provided a breadth of popular involvement in public decision making without parallel in the medieval world". In the 1980s, noting the "skill, responsibility, and artistry of its democratically organised workforces," the late George Benello observed that:

"Small cities, such as Modena, had created 'artisan villages' - working neighbourhoods where production facilities and living quarters were within walking or biking range, where technical schools for the unemployed fed directly into newly created businesses, and where small firms using computerised techniques banded together to produce complex products."

Here is a climate very different from that of the hopeless estates and empty factories on the fringe of British cities. And it has to do not with individuals but with social assumptions. One of Putnam's many footnotes tells us that more than 7% of the entire population of southern Italy moved to the north in just five years, 1958 to 1963. Were they adding to all the usual reasons for emigration, the desire to escape from history? The reason why I find this absorbing book disquietening is the implication that even our social assumptions are imprisoned by the past.

Colin Ward

Proudhon and Courbet

It would be hard to imagine an artist more sympathetic to Proudhon than Courbet. Both were of Comtois peasant stock, and their friendship was of long standing. From 1848 onwards, Courbet was a constant companion of Proudhon, and painted portraits of him, alone and *en famille*, as well as a frank, coarse portrait of Euphrasie which she is said to have regarded with displeasure.

Courbet's painting, *La Retour de la Conférence*, which represented the clergy very unfavourably, had been refused by the Salon and the artist, who was intending to hold an exhibition in London, asked Proudhon to write a brief essay to expound the theoretical basis of this picture.

Courbet continued to bombard the writer with his wordy, ill-spelt and ill-written letters, and in June Proudhon complained to Chaudey: "I have received an enormous letter from Courbet. I believe he went looking in the oldest grocer's shop in Ornans for the dirtiest, yellowest, coarsest schoolboy's exercise book in order to write to me. One would believe that letter belonged to a century of Gutenberg. Ink to match. Courbet does not write often, but when he sets himself to, beware! This time he covered no less than fourteen pages with the dregs of wine. It will be a business to answer all that!" But even such gargantuan prodding could not urge the tired Proudhon into completing the book, and on his death-bed he sent Courbet a message, by way of the Comtois novelist Max Buchon, regretting that

he had not been able to finish his task. It was finally made ready for publication after his death by Courbet himself.

Du Principe de l'Art, as this posthumous book was called, has some importance in the history of art criticism, since it was one of the first studies devoted exclusively to considering the social relevance of art. Proudhon's approach was as frankly didactic as Ruskin's; art must have a moral purpose, or it is devoid of meaning. At the same time, it would be wrong to rank him among the direct forebears of such doctrines as social realism, which see art as a form of partisan propaganda. Proudhon's view of art as a stimulant to man's intellectual and moral development was a good deal more subtle, though he claimed that it should be strictly contemporary and should respond to the aspirations of men in the society where it is produced.

Just as he had once seen the germ of poetry in all men, so he now sees the aesthetic faculty as a common human attribute which some are able to express more ably than others. It is the faculty of "perceiving or discovering the beautiful and the ugly, the agreeable and the ungraceful, the sublime and the trivial, in oneself and in things, and of making out of this perception a new means of delight". In practice, the object of this aesthetic faculty is "what is generally known as the ideal," and this is what makes the work of art superior to the purely naturalistic reproduction of actuality. "Art is nothing except through the

ideal. The greatest artist will therefore be the greatest idealist." Proudhon means idealism in the platonic sense; the ideal is what conforms to the idea, and "the idea is the typical, specific, generic notion which the intellect forms of a thing, setting aside all materiality". Such a conception rules out implicitly strict realism ("physical reality is only valuable because of the spirit and the ideal which breathe in it"), and at the same time reject explicitly the doctrine of 'art for art's sake' which "resting on nothing, is nothing". Art can only be justified if it exists within its social context, as art for man's sake. It "has for its object to lead us to the knowledge of ourselves, through the revelation of all our thoughts - even the most secret of them, of all our tendencies, all our virtues, vices and follies, and thence to contribute to the development of our dignity, to the perfection of our being". Proudhon saw Courbet and his school as the painters who in his time were most faithfully carrying out this aim, and in the historical perspective he was right, for Courbet represented a necessary revolution from the moribund art forms of the past. *The Principle of Art* should therefore be regarded as a healthy protest against the unrealities of the academicians, and a necessary recalling of artists to the fecund and inspiring actualities of the life around them.

From *Pierre-Joseph Proudhon: a biography* by George Woodcock FP price £9.95

Gustave Courbet 1819-1877

Peter Marshall's *Demanding the Impossible* is more a history of anarchist ideas than of anarchism. Coming to his subject from the liberal side, we thus get pages and pages on laissez-faire philosophers and anarcho-capitalists - people like Mill, Spencer and Ayn Rand who were by no stretch of the imagination anarchists. Inevitably, given this focus, revolutions and socialism tend to get marginalised - though they are there, and *Black Flag's* depiction of Peter as the "David Irving of Anarchism" is a little unfair.

It comes then as no surprise that Gustave Courbet barely gets a paragraph in Marshall's book - for Courbet was a revolutionary painter, a socialist, and a person who, it seems, wrote precious little for prosperity. He had throughout his life a complete distaste for any kind of intellectual work, and hated books. His friend and mentor, Proudhon, ten years his senior, described Courbet as nothing but a painter. "He can neither talk nor write," wrote Proudhon, and "though he is built like a Hercules, the pen is as heavy in his hand as a crowbar in the hand of a child". This did not stop him co-authoring with Proudhon a book on modern art, but most of it was written by Proudhon. It was published just after the latter's death in 1865, an event that profoundly affected Courbet. Shortly afterwards Courbet painted the famous portrait of Proudhon - as he was in 1853.

Gustave was born in the little town of Ornans in the alpine foothills of France, close to the Swiss border. The town is less than twenty miles from Besancon, Proudhon's birthplace. He spent most of his early adult life as an art student in Paris, but every year, usually in the late summer, he made a pilgrimage back to his native countryside around Ornans. Here he wandered through the hills, which were then teeming with wildlife, and through the cultivated fields. Here he spent his days painting landscapes and portraits of local peasants - all in a realistic style.

Around 1850, when he was thirty years old,

Gerstle Mack, *Gustave Courbet* (New York, Knopf, 1951).

Robert Fernier, *Gustave Courbet* (London, Pall Mall Press, 1969).



'Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and his Children' by Gustave Courbet, painting in the Petit Palais, Paris

two important events occurred in Courbet's life.

The first was that he suddenly found himself famous as a painter - almost overnight, as a lot of his early work had been rejected by the salon. He had exhibited in Paris a number of large paintings, such as 'Burial at Ornans' and 'The Stone Breakers', which had created a sensation in the art world. Instead of painting like the classical artists or the romantics airy mythical themes, such as angels or nymphs or knights in armour, Courbet painted earthy, realistic studies of contemporary French peasants working in the fields, engaged in everyday activities. He thus overnight, and almost single-handedly, created a new school of painting, realism, which was later to have an important influence on the impressionists. For Courbet, though, he only painted in the school of Courbet.

The other important event was his meeting with Proudhon. There is no doubt that Proudhon influenced Courbet profoundly. He introduced Courbet to socialist ideas, and to dissident political groups, and the two men spent a good deal of time together. They had much in common, coming from the same peasant background. Both at heart were peasants in outlook. But Courbet led a much more disordered life. He never married, though he had many casual relationships with women. He has been described as monumentally vain, ribald, huge in bulk and appetite, rustic and somewhat naive. Proudhon described him as like a spoilt child in many ways. But Courbet had a keen intelligence, was a great painter, and had a very clear sense of his own independence and individuality. He was also open and honest and loyal, and stuck by his friends.

There has been a tendency among his many biographers to see Courbet as politically muddled and naive, or as being led astray by his friend Proudhon. Neither is the case, for though he rarely expressed his ideas on paper - except in letters - Courbet throughout his life identified himself as a libertarian socialist.

It was inevitable then that Courbet should join the Paris Commune in March 1871, even though he was a pacifist. He was elected chairman of the Artists Federation, and was appointed to the committee on public education, and was active in the protection and re-organisation of the museums. In May the Commune was suppressed after protracted street-fighting in which some seven thousand men, women and children were killed. There followed in June the bloody repression ordered by the Versailles government under Thiers, when a further thirty thousand communards were summarily tried and executed. Courbet was arrested that same month for his part in the Commune, and was held responsible for the destruction of the Vendome column. He was found guilty and sentenced to six months imprisonment. The column, hated symbol of Napoleon's empire, had been toppled in May to the cheers of some twenty thousand Parisians. After his release, Courbet was again re-tried for the destruction of the column and, contrary to any sense of justice, was found guilty and ordered to pay the entire costs of rebuilding the Vendome column - half a million francs. Unable to do this, for it was way beyond his means, he chose exile instead of further imprisonment, and spent the rest of his days as an exile in Switzerland.

A year prior to the Commune, Courbet had been awarded the Legion of Honour. This he refused, and in his letter to the Minister he concluded:

"I am fifty years old and I have always lived in freedom. Allow me to end my days in freedom. When I die I would like it to be said of me: this man never belonged to any school, any church, any institution, any academy, and above all, any regime unless it is the regime of freedom."

He died on the last day of October 1877, aged 58.

Brian Morris

The American quarterly *Telos* in its Fall 1992 issue endorsed what it calls 'populist federalism' or 'integrist federalism' as a way of challenging the state (and all the other bureaucracies in our lives). They are well aware of the ambiguities within the present populist movements (such as the Lombardy League) but feel that in a choice between the people and the bureaucracy, they would choose the people. Like George Orwell, they believe in the innate decency of working people as compared to power-hungry leftists and bureaucrats. There is definitely something to be said for that position.

Modern populism tends to be based upon the growth of a regionalist sentiment and a hostility or suspicion of the centralising state. This regionalism can be linked to the development of individualism and a resulting desire to control one's situation and end domination by outside forces. Hence, no matter what the contradictions, the new populism contains certain radical or even libertarian aspects.

In Canada populism is represented by the 'Reform Party'. Leftist scare propaganda attacks them as racists and far-right (always the left's first course of action in attempting to destroy something it doesn't like). In reality, the party reflects the small town, small 'c' conservative views of its supporters and is not a Canadian version of the National Front. (The

Federalist Populism or Libertarianism?

reformers are conservative up to a point – just don't touch those farm subsidies.) How useless the labels 'left' and 'right' have become is evident from their platform which includes right of recall, direct legislation and referenda on all important matters, as well as a certain shift of federal powers to the western provinces. On these issues this 'right-wing' party is well to the 'left' of the other major parties.

The growth of populism is in part an indication of the failure of the libertarian movement. It is truly unfortunate when the only people attacking the state are 'rightists'. No one else seems serious about exploiting this alienation – certainly not the left, for whom the state is God. The average Joe or Jane shares many of our concerns, such as hostility to government, politicians, bureaucrats and big business, and a desire to have more say in running things, but what practical solutions does anarchism offer them? Counter-culturalism, technophobia and insurrectionism just don't make it. The point

is, do we really want to leave down-sizing the state to the populists? (Or the Friedmanite right wing libertarians?) Decentralisation may well occur without us and the short term result would be a lot of pain for government workers, welfare people, etc. We must quit playing and get serious about this issue.

Anarchist concentration upon small group activities can have positive results at the local level, but the problem of the state bureaucracy is left unchallenged. Try as you like, the state cannot be ignored. The only way deep structural changes can be made is through a mass movement. Building this movement does not mean giving up on local or small group activities, for such an organisation is most likely to succeed when based upon thousands of small autonomous groups.

Anarchism became a mass movement with the development of anarcho-syndicalism. We cannot duplicate the past, but we should at least try to involve ourselves with the discontented 'ordinary people' as a first step

in creating a mass libertarian movement. Note a *movement* and not a party, for there is no point in replicating the problems of the Green Party. Opposition to the political party isn't just an anarchist dogma, as we have seen by the Anti-Nuclear Movement, the recent Anti-Poll Tax struggle and the American Civil Rights Movement, real change can be made outside of parliament.

Success in building a movement entails not getting side-tracked by issues irrelevant to the main concern. The trade union movement is a good example to follow – as a union member, whatever your position on religion, the Iraq war, immigration, or bald-headed men, the important matter is supporting your workmates when they are on strike. In other words, it is necessary to find a fundamental common ground, which if supported by the majority of the population would radically change society. While federalism and decentralism could well be that focus, no movement is ever really a 'single issue movement'. An example – if you decrease the role of the state, of necessity, you must employ the former government workers to create mutual aid societies to replace government-run social services. I am certain that a consensus can be reached on this and other allied issues without doing damage to this 'broad church' perspective.

Larry Gambone

It is a strange cultural fact that though the Berlin Wall has fallen, and the Cold War is over, the culture of the West is strangely silent over the fact that the West is every bit as bankrupt, discredited, authoritarian and empty as the Communist world was. The newly 'liberated' peoples of Eastern Europe have escaped from one fire into another frying pan. The nature of the West, at least as far as most of its culture goes, and certainly in its media, is seen as good, perfect, a horn of plenty, able to deliver on its promises, and this is why it is thought of as having won. The gates of Disneyworld are open to all who can afford to pay the entrance fee.

In most of its culture, this idea of the bankruptcy of the West is suppressed. I have called this culture of denial 'the aesthetic of exclusion'. It is more than a fact of mere censorship, it is a matter of taste, an ideology of judgement which functions to deny, conceal and obscure this lack of difference between the two dying world systems. The aesthetic of exclusion is every bit as totalitarian and false as any of the deception of the Brezhnev era in the USSR.

It is true that the West does not seem to have the gulag for poets, writers and dissidents. Instead we have the gulag of silence, the refusal to recognise the truth they represent – the aesthetic of exclusion. In Czechoslovakia, dissident philosophers were made to sweep up the leaves in the park. In Major's Britain, dissident philosophers can't even get that job because they are 'too overqualified'.

A whole culture of denial is busy creating the impression that we are free, democratic, open, vibrant and alive. This is just not true – we are slaves, conformists, manipulated, listless, lifeless television-watching zombies who file through the same gulag of the job centre door. The aesthetic of exclusion is all the more deplorable because the very people who ought to draw our attention to this have been bought off and have become silent on the topic. They have their jobs, they have their Volvos, their jars of Gold Blend. They are safe in their lifeboats and don't want to rock the liner. In this way, the people who have joined the silence are much the same as those compromised East German intellectuals who became informers for the *Stasi*.

It doesn't look that way though. People who hold to the aesthetic of exclusion are 'passionately concerned' and shed crocodile tears over so much that is happening. They are part of the conscience of capitalism, and stick a TEAR fund badge in the back of their Volvo, and then press down hard on the accelerator pedal as they pull away from you.

To create the illusion of concern, diverse opinions are often put across. The occasional John Pilger exposé of Indo-China perhaps, or a Duncan Campbell investigation of the Secret Service. These tokenistic excursions into investigative journalism are no real threat to the aesthetic. Like the tedious letters in *The Guardian*, they are a sort of safety valve. They question the specifics of the issues, the way the mechanism worked in a particular case, but they never doubt the general framework, they never call into question the existence of The Machine itself.

In the aesthetic of exclusion, we have wall to wall reports on Bosnia, but we have to find out for

ourselves what is happening in our own backyards. The aesthetic of denial tries to distract us away from the total collapse of communities here, by looking all the time at the collapse of nation states elsewhere.

The Pilgerist, the holder of the aesthetic often looks far away, and sheds tears over little Irma perhaps, while a mile or so from where he or she lives, an old woman is in incredible pain because she needs a hip replacement. The privatisation of the hospital means no more operations for unprofitable old ladies. In that tower block, just around the corner from the Pilgerist's ghetto, a young mother is on the game to pay her food bill. The holders of the aesthetic of exclusion look the other way, Somalia or Bosnia or wherever, and do not lift a finger to deny, to repudiate and to strike against the system in their own neighbourhood which is causing these things.

Instead of plays and books and films and reports which expose the full truth of the awfulness of the situation in their own town, instead of things which point the way forward, instead of *action* which will improve matters, their culture has become a form of soporific, a palliative. Perhaps I should have written about the *anaesthetic* of exclusion.

An example of this type of bad thinking which goes with this is that in Bosnia people are dying because the world of the aesthetic denies them weapons to defend themselves. Does the Pilgerist break the terms of their embargo and send them arms? Certainly not. Instead the holders of the aesthetic are patting themselves on the back. What a jolly good idea to send them Susan Sontag with Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Perhaps this is a sly sort of piss-take. If the Bosnians are waiting for the non-existent 'World Community' to help them, this will probably be the same thing as waiting for Godot, but they do not need Sontag and her troupe of actors to rub their faces in it.

The modesty and minimalism of these so-called radicals is an embarrassment. For example, nothing less than the dismantling of the government and of the free market system it enforces will save the miners. What do we get as their demand? 'Just a few less closed pits please'. The moderate demands are no longer sufficient. We want, we need to take the whole fucking bakery. The old welfare state, consensus politics, things which were forever swept away in 1979 – hospitals and education for all (remember these?) are about as far as they go in their reformist thinking. It is all rather poverty stricken, pathetic, unimaginative and timid. 'Oh well, I don't really think, you know, that the free market is a very good way of doing these things'.

Susan Sontag taking Beckett to Bosnia invites a comparison with Spain in the 1930s. Did people

take, say, George Bernard Shaw plays to Guernica? No. They went and fought there. The radicals of the 1990s perform plays. Gesture politics. Flower arrangements against the genocide next.

Creating the *impression* that something significant is happening is more important to them than actually doing something. They maintain the pretence of consensus, that diverse opinions are tolerated, but only within the tightly stipulated range of the aesthetic. Ultimately they enhance the credibility of the aesthetic, but the barriers to dissent are still up.

When we exclude the culture of revolt, the culture

of choice, the culture of action, we end up by excluding *people*. It is no surprise that anarchists are outside, that anarchists are not part of the reformist aesthetic of exclusion because we refuse to subordinate ourselves to it. Anarchists refuse to believe the cultural commissar's lying whispered messages of 'all is well'.

The *aesthetic* of exclusion invariably leads to the *ethic* of exclusion. We regulate what we can say, we create a culture of silence, of bland conformity, and end by excluding the people who do not fit in with this, we end by denying them, we end by judging them defective, but in our silence ignoring them. Exclusion is a way of saying that they have no answers to the things we say and do. Exclusion is a way of admitting the truth. The real problem with the aesthetic and ethic of exclusion is that so many are deceived by this pseudo-dissent. For nothing less than the action that is required is an insult, and we have been insulted enough.

Steve Booth

The Aesthetic of Exclusion

The Distortions of Disorganisers

(continued from page 3)

that ORA was "all spittle and no real action", may I point out that it produced six pamphlets in its first year, was heavily involved in agitation among school students, for which one of its founder members, Keith Nathan, was arrested, and produced a monthly paper *Libertarian Struggle*. As to the accusation that the *AFBIB* was sabotaged by the ORA group, this is also untrue. As far as I recollect, the Birmingham comrades Pete and Mo LeMare produced the bulletin, with Keith Nathan and Ro Atkins travelling from York to help out. This was a long time before ORA was even thought of. Yes, the bulletin did get passed on to Oxford, who signally failed to do their job, but none of this group were remotely involved with the ORA group. An 'unofficial' *AFBIB* was produced by the LeMares, with little involvement from Neville. I have no recollection that the *AFBIB* ended up in Cambridge, but perhaps some other comrades might shed some light. I do know that no one in Cambridge was involved in ORA. Some evidence of Neville's inaccuracy was his failure to mention that comrades around the Libertaria Bookshop in North London were involved in producing *AFBIB* in 1971.

As to ORA being formed mainly of students, well this may have been true at its inception, but even then a number of workplace militants were involved, particularly in Glasgow, and as time went by this imbalance was corrected. One ORA militant was particularly active in the London health workers' strike, a leaflet was produced on the Pentonville Five, and ORA comrades were involved in solidarity work around several strikes and occupations, including the Fakenham factory occupation. ORA did not collapse when students left university and got jobs. Yes, some did leave at the beginning of 1974 to join the Trotskyist

Socialist Labour League, including Nathan, but ORA did not collapse. Those left were mainly workplace militants, and at the end of 1974 ORA changed its name to the Anarchist Workers Association (AWA). I know because I was heavily involved in discussions in the London ORA group about name change and reactivation of the organisation. Incidentally, Nathan rejoined the AWA and soldiered on in its avatar, the Libertarian Communist Group (LCG).

Neville goes on from these distortions to make wild accusations about sinister national organisations like the ACF, DAM and Class War taking over other anarchist bodies. What tosh! What has happened is that most people have got fed up with sitting in meetings with individualists, liberals and pacifists who go out of their way to sabotage any real activity and any effective organisation. Neville talks as if he was heavily involved in 'real action' over the last 25 years. Where are the papers, pamphlets, posters and stickers, etc., he has helped to produce? Where is his activity in the neighbourhood or workplace? When the great agitation against the Poll Tax was taking place, involving large numbers of libertarians, he spoke in favour of the Poll Tax. I have heard him advocating the use of corporal punishment as a teacher, and once at a meeting of the Federation of London Anarchist Groups in the '70s at *Freedom* offices, I heard him arguing in favour of immigration controls! Looking back through pages of old *AFBIBs*, I notice the destructive role he played even then. Let me quote various comrades' comments on Neville, which still seem relevant today: "Neville makes the wildest assertions, unimpeded by the need to give any evidence or sources of information" – Ron Marsden. "What a shit-stirrer Peter is getting to be! I am sorry I have had to write this letter, but felt that to ignore his remarks may be thought to condone them" – Dave Poulson.

Nick Heath

Racism in East London

A reply of outrage and horror to Mike Montrose (*Freedom*, 16th October 1993).

I refer in particular to point two of his letter, in which he reveals: blatant racism, the denial of freedom for individual families, whatever their race, creed, ideology, to choose how many children they would like, a hidden agenda, within which he calls for the reproduction of coloured people to be controlled, the acceptance of white 'western/european' social agenda, i.e. small families that aid the capitalist agenda in its financial decline (not able / not wanting to provide for its society), i.e. the enforced prescription of contraceptives to control 'undesirables', nuclear families - easier control, suburban cramped conditions, privileged education, 'white' rule and formulae in both the school and playground curricula, and so on.

If anarchism rejects theories of statism and nationalism, then it must reject racism. The Fijians' resentment and violence is *not* excusable, they were/are taken in by separatist ideologies. Everyone is a human being, no matter what their colour - colour prejudice is an excuse for blatant power and control policies and must be snuffed at every opportunity: racism is a hateful ideology. Enforcing birth control is yet more imperial genocide, totting up the numbers of those children with coloured skin and those with white in the school playground is sick, those middle class whites do resort to threat, open intolerance and violence - that is sick. Does Montrose think these people *should* vote BNP, riot, etc? The implication is that they should, and furthermore that they would be correct in doing so.

"Instead they'll move five miles up the road to Ruislip." Well lucky them. They can expound their white middle class crap from their cosy racist ghetto then. How cosy.

"Large areas of the world are grossly over-populated. Some communities practice birth control, some don't." Isn't it strange that those who don't are black and then viewed as over-populated?

MB
East London

Dangers of Unreason

Dear Friends,
I am grateful to George Walford for writing his letter (16th October 1993) which mentions an earlier article of mine (7th August 1993) because it allows me to further express my views and respond to some of his comments.

I think one of the problems which causes difficulties for the mainstream current of anarchism (which I consider to be 'class struggle' anarchism - both anarchist communism and anarcho-syndicalism) is that the ideas were really developed in the late nineteenth / early twentieth century with a much more limited understanding of power and domination than is available now.

Much anarchist writings dealt with the belief in a revolution which would bring in the free society. This has had an unfortunate legacy because, at its worst, some anarchists seem almost to worship a cult of incredible activism linked to rhetoric about a vaguely defined freedom which in practice could actually lead to very authoritarian behaviour - when they are confronted with real life situations which do not conform to simple either/or situations.

It does not seem to occur to these people that freedom means different things to different people in various situations.

This, of course, presents problems for people trying to create a mass anarchist movement in a pluralistic society such as Britain today. For these reasons I would argue that a much more gradualistic approach must be put into action.

If we look at the places where there

Montrose has got a problem. There is no such thing as over-population per se: stress, poverty, starvation, homelessness are caused by racist white economic practices. The western capitalist states are the cause of this poverty. The poor people of the world could easily be fed, housed, clothed, etc., if the dominating economies focused on need rather than profit and material control/power.

Enforced sterilisation takes place in much of China and India, thereby keeping women 'in their place' (for it is they who are sterilised) and keeping the power ideology in place, not only the respective governments but global capitalism, by limiting the numbers of so-called 'third world' peoples, keeping them in the paradigm of essential survival, the capitalist economy and racist politics is able to control those who might reject the system, fight back and ultimately overthrow it altogether. Note that in the 'UN' the white European power dominates, despite the fact that the majority percentage of members are of the 'third world'/southern hemisphere.

Genocide by birth control (whether physically enforced or through more subtle capitalist/racist propaganda) is a *nazi principle*. The thought of people wandering around the streets of London counting the ratio of coloured to white faces turns my stomach. It reveals the socialist in-built fascism of this society, and it must be outed at every turn in London, in Britain, in Europe and the world as a whole. And how patronising that at first the "local folk [of Hackney] welcomed the first Asians for bringing life and vitality". How sick that they are now so prejudiced because their lifestyle is now not quite as good as they would like it, that they blame it on the convenient scapegoat of black Britons, that they prefer their ghetto of conservatism and boredom and ignorance.

Diversity of personal politics and cultures should be approved and respected, not controlled for some white fascist ideal.

MB
East London

have been comparatively large anarchist movements, the anarchists involved have often been criticised for departures from anarchist principles. Spain in the Spanish Revolution is the obvious example but there have been others. The central questions seems to be what do anarchists do in a revolutionary situation when directly in competition (and also directly in the firing line) with authoritarian groups? Attempts to solve the problem of what a minority of anarchists can do in a revolutionary situation by having a more centralised organisation seem to lead to the danger of imposing their ideals on the masses which would not lead to an anarchist society but to a dictatorship. My own feeling is that revolutionary situations create a terrible dilemma for anarchist movements - it seems to be either:

- a) take political power creating another state, or
- b) remain true to principles but allow another group to fill in the power vacuum.

It would appear to me, in the late twentieth century, that many anarchists, despite their rhetoric, have not really considered the serious problems that seem to occur when and if a revolutionary situation does arise.

I would suggest applying a critical analysis to anarchist/libertarian socialist ideas. My feelings are that by its very nature it is an incomplete project. I feel that human society will always have to contend with problems regarding domination and power even if they take new and different forms. Anarchism cannot be seen as merely a closed utopia

Illusions

Dear Editors,

In answer to Stephen and Adrian ('Replies to the Pacifists', *Freedom*, 16th October) may I try and explain my position.

I'm not condemning reactions - or anything or anybody. Condemnation is itself a reaction. What I say is that reaction is not action. Reaction springs from conditioning; whereas action, with its initiative and originality, springs from intelligence. Intelligence is attention. When we pay undivided, choiceless attention to our reactions, they fade away. Action is revolutionary; reaction merely reactionary. Reaction is mechanical; action is living, vital.

I'm not denying that ethical questions are important; but ethics can't find the answers. The answers are found by intelligence. When we attend to a situation we understand it; then we know instantly what to do about it, and we act. It's only when we don't see a situation clearly that we are torn between conflicting desires. (As for moralists who "encourage alternatives choices of action": who do they think they are?)

In calling the world demonic, I'm not comparing it with some vision of an ideal one. I'm just observing the stark reality of it, the terrible human suffering. And I deny totally that without having ideals we wouldn't want to change it. On the contrary, if we merely have ideals we'll only pretend to want to change it. What really makes us want to do something about human suffering is the perception and understanding of the suffering itself.

So, what is the cause of all the suffering? Why is the world, after thousands of years of so-called civilisation (and after all the violent revolutions and all the moral idealism) in such an unholy mess? The usual answer is 'human nature never changes'; but

that's just an excuse for inaction. The usual anarchist answer is the blame governments, capitalists, warmongers, or some other group; but that, I'm afraid, doesn't get at the root of the problem.

My answer is that the mess in the world is a projection of the mess in the psyche, in human consciousness. The world is in turmoil, divided against itself, because so are we, psychologically. The essence of this psychological fragmentation is the illusion - on which the whole of our consciousness is based - that I am a thinker separate from my thinking, a controller separate from the reactions I try to control. We are conditioned to feel that we are separate selves having 'free will'; and isolated, not only from our own reactions, but from the rest of life. That's all an illusion.

As long as I think I'm a separate self, I shall feel lonely - insecure, psychologically; and my vain efforts to achieve psychological security will bring me into conflict with others who also want that security. Hence the struggle for power, and all the consequences of that: economic competition, class divisions, rival governments, wars, and all the horrors. The sense of separateness is the root cause of all violence and suffering - it is violence and suffering. It's a constant pain; from which we try to escape through drugs, and in countless other ways. (Don't we know all this?)

The only solution, then, is the ending of the illusion of separateness; which means the ending of consciousness as we know it. That sounds dreadful, but it's not. It happens when attention - pure attention, with neither condemnation nor justification but with understanding - is given to whatever is going on, in the world and in the psyche. The psyche, which is only a bundle of reactions, then dissolves; and then there is something utterly difference. Attention is love.

Francis Ellingham

Taking Liberties

Dear *Freedom*,

I have been following the recent correspondence (George Walford and others) on problems associated with the notion of freedom. My personal principles - those to which I aspire at least - are those of the French Revolution: freedom, brotherhood and equality. And I have found inspiration in anarchist writings (like Kropotkin's) where each of these three strands - libertarian, communitarian, egalitarian - are to be found working together. It is possible and arguable that each strand serves to constrain the other and to see the whole thing in terms of compromises which need to be made. But it is not necessary to look at it in this way. Take such a simple thing as engaging in conversation. My liberty to contribute my ideas is very much enhanced when the parties involved recognise one another as equals and against a background of warmth and mutual support - and likewise it is diminished when there is unequal status and hostility. At the same time the liberty to engage in antisocial behaviour (blowing cigarette smoke into people's faces and the like) or to gain unfair advantage from my privileged circumstances is of no interest to me: I probably do it, but I don't defend it and (I like to think) attempt to curb such behaviour if it is pointed out. It seems to me that George's preoccupations are exclusively with freedom - and not with equality and brotherhood, or else it is that he considers each in isolation. No doubt he will put me right. Anyway, by applying the three principles simultaneously instead of considering individual freedom by itself I find that I do not encounter the problems that George seems to.

Tim Francis

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Above your name and address, on the envelope in which *Freedom* is sent, is a four-figure number. If it is 5422, that means your subscription falls due with this issue, volume 54 number 22, and there should be a renewal notice enclosed.

This notice is addressed to those whose subscription expires with 5424, the last issue this year, who are more than half our subscribers.

Please consider renewing early, so that I don't have to stick renewal notices in quite so many envelopes. I would be very grateful, and of course you would not lose anything.

If you are also a subscriber to *The Raven*, there is a two-figure number to the right of the four-figure number, indicating the last *Raven* number on your subscription. *Raven* 24 is intended for December (though it is likely to be late, following production problems on *Raven* 23).


Donald
volunteer *Freedom* subs manager

Anarchy in Russia

Dear Comrades,
I was very interested to see the map showing anarchist activities in Russia (*Freedom*, 16th October 1993). I am surprised however at your Russian translator's comment: "The text is set in a pre-Revolutionary script". I don't know what the articles in the journal *Novyi Svet*, from which the map has been reproduced, look like, but the captions for the map are in the modern Russian orthography introduced by the Bolsheviks and accepted by almost all Russians except the most conservative Tsarist refugees.

Regarding pre-1918 place names, your translator is right: we have Samara for Kuibyshev, Nizhnii for Gor'kii, etc. However, Nestor Makhno's birthplace, Gulayi-Pole, should have been transliterated Hulayi-Pole. The Cyrillic letter G (the Greek 'gamma') is pronounced 'H' in Ukrainian. I am sure Makhno himself pronounced it Hulayi-Pole!

Jan Weryho

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keep sending
in your letters
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This year's History Workshop is to be held at **Leeds Metropolitan University** (Beckett Park site, Headingley) on **19th to 21st November**. The general theme is 'Nationalism and Regionalism' and this will be addressed by all the contributors in the now obligatory anarchism strand:

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London Anarchist Forum NOTE CHANGE OF MEETING PLACE

Following telephone threats, the principal of the Mary Ward Centre has asked the LAF to meet elsewhere.

For the time being we are meeting at **Conway Hall**, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn) on Fridays at 8pm. Contact Dave Dane or Peter Neville at a meeting, or contact Peter Neville, 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (telephone 081-847 0203).

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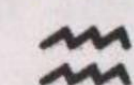
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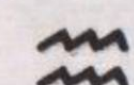
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