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# Freedom

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FIFTY PENCE

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*"Government is not reason. It is not eloquence. It is FORCE."*  
George Washington

## THE BUDGET: THEIR PRIORITIES ARE NOT OUR PRIORITIES

**W**e write these lines two weeks before the Chancellor releases his budget to a 'hushed nation expecting the worst'. For months the inspired 'leaks' have sought to make clear that every nook and cranny of public expenditure is vulnerable in the Chancellor's determination to

reduce the estimated £50,000 million overspend in 1993.

We need not postpone commenting on the budget until it has been delivered. Our beer-swilling cigar-smoking Chancellor (no criticism intended) will inevitably produce the kind of budget which will rob Peter to pay Paul, and will therefore manage to please some and disappoint others. Thus has divide-and-rule kept the people **jealous and envious of each other and the ruling clique solidly entrenched over the centuries.** So

long as the victims of this system cannot see how the 10% at the top are controlling the 90% on whom they depend for their wealth and power by dividing them among themselves, nothing will change for the 90% except that conditions for those at the bottom half have been, and will go on, getting worse.

### WORK-SHARING NOT FOR US BRITS!

**W**hile the rest of Europe, right and left, believes that unemployment can only be eased - let alone solved, as that would need another world war surely? - by work-sharing or a shorter working week. (The Germans are talking of the 35-hour working week and even the right-wing French government is prepared to accept a 'voluntary' 32-hour week), needless to say Major's government is absolutely opposed to such revolutionary suggestions.

That's not surprising. Major and his stooges are also opposed to the Social Chapter which, at least *in theory*, guarantees a minimum wage for labour. In practice we all know it isn't applied here or anywhere else so long as there are twenty million unemployed in the twelve nations of the Common Market. Desperate people will accept slave labour conditions so long as those who are at present in work think that they are doing very nicely, thank you! But for how long?

**A**narchists and other thinking, decent people must concentrate on awakening a sense of justice and fair shares among their friends and neighbours in a world which is controlled, brainwashed, conned and divided by the exploitative minority.

This is not rhetoric, it is the reality of our times. We are living in a desperate age.

#### in this issue

#### THE FACTORY VISION OF WILLIAM MORRIS

### STRIPPING THE EXPERTS SINGLE PARENTS AND MICHAEL HOWARD

**W**hile our last issue was in press, the truth came out about the government's onslaught on single parents, especially teenage mothers. A Cabinet briefing paper, which had been circulated in late September, was obtained by the Labour Party and passed to *The Guardian*.

The menace of single parenthood has been exercising ministers for about a year, and after a Cabinet meeting in July Peter Lilley, the Social Services Minister, commissioned a Cabinet briefing paper. The questions asked, and the facts ascertained from the records, were as follows.

**To what extent do higher benefits for one-parent families encourage women to have children on their own?** There is "little clear evidence" that they do at all. Higher benefits "do not necessarily mean that lone parents are at a financial advantage compared with other young people".

Lone parent benefit currently stands at £6.50 per week.

**How many teenage women get pregnant in order to get council housing?** "It is clearly possible to work the system in this way," but there is "no evidence" that it ever happens. "Such research as there is on teenage mothers suggests that they have little or no idea of the benefits they are entitled to on becoming pregnant". More than 80% of teenage pregnancies are unplanned, and in cases where the expectant mother is homeless, perhaps nearly all are unplanned.

**How does the absence of a father cause people to grow up as criminals?** Children of lone parents frequently take to crime, but absence of a father does not seem to be the main cause. Associated factors like poverty, and the stress and discord of

(continued on page 2)



# THE BUDGET: THEIR PRIORITIES ARE NOT OUR PRIORITIES

(continued from page 1)

society, no-one goes hungry or without a roof over their heads, no children are denied free schooling and a free medical and dental service, and last but not least, everyone has a free National Health Service and a job!

Over the past fourteen years of Tory governments these services have been slowly and cunningly eroded. In the 1980s the slogans were for 'a property-owning democracy', for private health schemes and insurances, private education, the running down of public transport thus obliging more and more people to rely on their own transport. And all accompanied by massive loans by the banks and other money lenders.

In the 1990s millions of suckers taken in by this blatant, fraudulent campaign are paying the price with repossessions of houses by the money lenders at record levels. Private medical insurance is running into trouble for the customers. Apparently "BUPA, the largest private health care insurer, rejects 27,000 claims a month either completely or in part" (*The Independent*, 13th November). And last but not least, the unemployed - some four million (nobody believes the official figures of just under three million - which is bad enough anyway).

What will the Chancellor have to offer? Nothing. In fact because his main concern is the £50 billion deficit, those basic services we all need at some time or other will be further eroded. He will probably offer financial sops to British industry, but will not stop the flow of capital to the cheap-labour Far East nor prevent the

unrestricted imports from these countries which make a farce of arguments about 'level playing fields' in industrial production.

'Free trade', which Major et alia proclaim from the rooftops with the same dogmatic fervour as they do that of privatisation of everything except their own jobs, is a complete misnomer in an industrialist capitalist world. Anarchists pointed this out years ago. What is for us amusing and even significant is to have capitalists such as Sir James Goldsmith writing in the capitalist press as he did in *The Sunday Telegraph* (14th November): "Why global free trade is bad for Britain" and why a "GATT agreement would impoverish us all". His article deserves more space than we can afford, but it is - for he as a millionaire capitalist has a split personality in that he is known to finance his brother's enterprises including the prestigious magazine *The Ecologist* - significant for anarchists to observe the serious doubts among the capitalists themselves, as opposed to the political mafia who matter less as the multinationals grow larger and more powerful worldwide.

Our priorities above all demand that the majority must realise that they are living in a fool's paradise and are failing to learn the lessons of the '80s and '90s. In a capitalist society nothing is given away by the ruling class out of the goodness of their hearts. The so-called 'welfare state' owes so much to the pioneers: individuals and unions going back a long time and at a cost of effort and even sacrifice. Plus, of course, two

## STRIPPING THE EXPERTS

(continued from page 1)

parental separation or divorce, are much more likely causes. Statistically, the best predictor of future criminality is a criminal father living at home.

The report was circulated to ministers before the end of September. Yet at the Tory Party conference two weeks later, Peter Lilley spoke of "young ladies who get pregnant just to jump the housing list", Michael Howard spoke of one-parent families producing criminals, and no speaker said anything which might be interpreted as polite disagreement. All ministers ignored the research they had commissioned, and their unity shows that the decision to ignore it was collective.

This was probably for the benefit of the conference. Tory activists have been getting depressed of late, because Tory policies have brought financial ruin and rising fear, and Thatcher is no longer there to deny the truth with real conviction. The conference needed cheering up, and since Tory delegates hold some of the most unpleasant opinions you could ever hope not to encounter, they would enjoy a series of bloodthirsty, sneering, vindictive, xenophobic and generally anti-social speeches.

Governments need not keep promises, and this is as true for nasty promises as for humane ones. Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has already spoken out against the attack on single mothers, so it seems they are not to have their piddling benefits reduced after all.

Cynical decisions to go against experts are most taken by the wealthy and powerful. Brian Martin's *Strip the Experts*\* uses the example of the tobacco corporations, who spent millions denying the fact that their product was harmful,

and when that failed switched the argument to one about civil liberties; and the example of the nuclear industry who first denied that nuclear war might cause 'nuclear winter' and then said the proliferation of nuclear weapons would prevent 'nuclear winter' by preventing war.

Individuals also 'strip the experts', but they are more likely to do so intuitively than cynically. People embrace dogmas, or convictions not dependent on evidence. When they hear expert opinions against their convictions, they know intuitively that the experts are wrong and use the techniques of denying the facts, abusing the experts as persons, looking up counter-opinions, changing the basis of argument and the rest, without much conscious planning.

Anti-expert dogmatists do little harm, unless they get into power when they can do a great deal of damage. The classical example is Stalin, who embraced Lysenko's doctrine that genetics and statistics are false sciences and so did a lot of damage to Soviet agriculture.

A more recent and closer example is Judge Alwyn-Davies of Southwark Crown Court. Earlier this year a man called Alastair Mitchell was convicted by magistrates of biting a policeman's hand at a poll tax demonstration three years ago and, sentenced to 44 days in prison. Judge Alwyn-Davies heard his appeal against conviction. A photograph had been taken of the bite marks on the policeman's hand, and two dental experts testified that they could not have been made by Mitchell's teeth. Judge Alwyn-Davies simply said "I am not deceived by the experts" and confirmed the sentence. (A higher court declared the verdict unsafe, on the ground that when the experts were giving evidence the judge was reading a book instead of listening. But by that time Mitchell had spent some time in jail.)

But perhaps the most menacing of current dogmatists is the present Home Secretary Michael Howard, with his

capitalist world wars when the politicians promised utopia in return for the human sacrifice of millions of lives.

Today it would appear that the underprivileged accept their fate without a struggle. Yes, some take matter into their own hands and 'expropriate', mainly the old and the non-rich. But surely what is important today as ever before is that **solidarity is the only weapon that the underprivileged have to change society.**

As it is they have a hard life. Can they not see that by joining hands with their fellow sufferers they will be strong? **Government is directed to dividing them to keep them weak and helpless. Solidarity is a force that no government can resist.**

Voting is a waste of time, and seeing what the parties spend to win votes it's also a waste of money. (Incidentally, whereas the Tories insist that we the citizens should live within our means, they have admitted that the party owes £19 million to the banks!)

Unlike the politicians, anarchists don't ask you to vote for them and they will then look after you - till death do us part. The capitalist system looks after a privileged

minority. Parliament is an overpaid quango (and they have just voted themselves another thousand pounds or two for good luck).

The government's authority rests not on laws that are universally recognised, but on force - violence of the military, the police, the judiciary and the prisons. What hypocrisy when the government declares that it will talk with Sinn Fein only when the IRA renounce violence. Government is violence! It's not a discovery in 1993. It's an all-time reality: *government is violence.*

The only valid response is that of *solidarity*: a massive response by the workers, in the first place, by non-violent action - that is the withdrawal of labour. The first victims are the workers themselves. The bosses have their wealth, their second homes out of reach. So however much we may like to change this unequal, unjust, privileged society for an egalitarian one, it will never be brought about unless we are prepared to dispossess the rich and the politically powerful and the capitalist system which preserves their privilege and divides the real producers of our wealth. And this writer for one does not think that it will be brought about by the Chancellor with his budget next week!

Brian Martin  
**STRIP THE EXPERTS**

You can't do much in modern Western societies without coming into contact with (it's usually against) experts. Since anarchists are typically engaged in activities which deny or bring them in opposition with the system, they need to know how to handle its agents ...

... *Strip the Experts* is a useful, well-written pamphlet in practical anarchism. Mostly experts continue to play the role of wicked magicians. They have done their bit for the many miscarriages of justice now littering the British legal system ... So read Brian Martin's book and add to your self-confidence and drink to a never-ending Christmas story in which every anarchist is a Don Quixote tilting at tower blocks full of experts.

Denis Pym  
(from a review of *Strip the Experts*)

dogmas that "prison works" and "socio-economic explanations for crime have no merit". As a logical consequence of these doctrines, Mr Howard attributes the increase in crime during the past fifteen years to penal reforms and demands more prison sentences for longer terms. Prisons, in his opinion, should be more 'austere', so temporary overcrowding of the system, pending the provision of extra prison space in new buildings, disused army camps and boats, is acceptable.

Squatting, camping on unauthorised sites and interfering with fox hunting are, in his opinion, crimes which happen not to be illegal at the moment. So they are to be criminalised and subject to imprisonment like other crimes. Single motherhood, on the other hand, is merely denounced.

Experts do not entirely disagree that prison works in preventing crime. Home Office people have produced an estimate that if the prison population were increased by 25% then, other things being equal, crime would fall by 1%, which Mr Howard says is "an absurd comparison".

Another expert calculation is that if the prison population were multiplied by three, crime would fall by 4%.

There are actual statistics, such as that first-time criminals sent to prison usually re-offend whereas first-time criminals let off with a formal warning usually do not re-offend. But Mr Howard dismissed them all in favour of his vindictive doctrine.

One effect, if his plans are carried through, will be to put the government to great expense at a time when it is trying to cut down on public spending. Kenneth Clarke, besides being apparently more humane than Howard (as evidenced by his attitude to single mothers), has always been keen on saving public expenditure. When he was Home Secretary himself he reversed the Thatcher policy of trying to cut crime by throwing money at the police. Howard is beloved of the Tory right, but Clarke has the support of the Tory rich, which puts him in a more powerful position.

Expect a putsch against Howard. Our prediction is that he will not be in the Home Office long enough to act as vindictively as he hopes.

\* Brian Martin, *Strip the Experts*, Freedom Press, £1.95 post free inland (add 25p when ordering from elsewhere).



## OUR 'GOOD NEWS' COLUMN

### Doctors for the People

In general the medical profession is reactionary. After all, they have unlimited power over their sick clients, as well as earning a lot more money (if they are NHS GPs) than their victims. But there are also exceptions, to name just three that come to mind: three London East End doctors Harry Roberts, David Widgery and John Hewetson. But they are exceptions. So two reminders of this minority of rebel doctors is surely good news for everybody, and in particular those of us who are trying to convince our non-anarchist readers that there are a lot of good people doing positive things in a socially and politically rotten world.

The *Guardian* supplement (26th October) which, apart from all the adverts which understandably finance all the interesting obituaries and other worthwhile items, had a piece on "slum doctor saves a poisoned people" and which was commemorating the centenary of the birth of Dr Alice Hamilton. An American born into a wealthy family, she began work as a doctor in the slums of Boston. The *Guardian* feature points out that "she was so shocked by the living conditions of her patients that she decided to dedicate her life to helping the poor". So four years later she moved to one of Chicago's "most deprived areas". And we quote:

"She lived at Hull House, which offered a home for people willing to give their free time to helping the local community.

She began teaching adult education classes at Hull House, but also provided free medical treatment for local people. While working with her patients, she noticed that people in certain industries tended to have similar health problems. She discovered, for example, that those making bathtubs in one Chicago factory were suffering from paralysis, indigestion, constipation and rheumatic pains. Some showed signs of premature ageing and senility.

Dr Hamilton concluded that her patients were suffering from lead poisoning. At first the company concerned denied it was using lead. But after careful analysis, Dr Hamilton showed that the powder used in the enamelling process had a high lead content.

She began investigating other local industries which she believed were poisoning workers. By visiting factories, analysing substances used in manufacturing, examining hospital records and studying trades union sickness benefit lists, Dr Hamilton gathered data to show that workers from a wide range of industries were being poisoned.

She wrote a report on her findings and in 1911 presented it to the Illinois authorities. A few months later Illinois passed an occupational disease law which required employers to provide safety measures and monthly medical examinations for

## More of Big Brother

The mentality of control and observation is steadily spreading to every corner of society it seems. Who we are and where we are going, what we want or are doing is more than ever subject to regulation whilst watchful eyes spy on us to ensure obedience. Of course the insidious expansion of cameras and security systems of various sorts is not seen by many people, certainly not the press, as anything Orwellian. The irony is that through the newspeak of the state and corporations the obvious dangers are ignored and discussion limited to how a new technological device will help fight crime or stop dole fraud or suchlike. (Needless to say these are crimes and unwanted behaviour which those in power say must be controlled and do not include the crimes of the rich and powerful.)

The dangers are, to libertarians at least, not so hidden. Several months ago I moved to Leeds and on my second night here I was disturbed by the droning of a police helicopter at about midnight. It buzzed around for some time quite low with its searchlight fixed on some point hidden from my view. Later it was back slowly flying around, as it did intermittently in the following weeks. Needless to say this plod in the sky is justified by the need to stop joyriders (one of the media's current scare-mongering frenzies) whilst other implications are not discussed. The other uses for a police helicopter are obvious to those of us who fear the increasing

rather than lessening presence of the state. This was made clear when someone related an incident to me where some friends of his had gone outside to watch the helicopter on its late night prow over their rooftops. As they watched a voice from above told everyone to go back inside their homes. Wanting to watch what goes on in your neighbourhood is not allowed it seems.

When I questioned the use of the helicopter I was told it has been useful in combating joyriders. I pointed out it was worrying that people were watched from above and told to go back indoors (what is this if not social control by the state?), to which he concurred after a moment's thought. The obvious dangers are sadly not so obvious to everyone because many people in society surely trust the media as being objective so that when it says something is a worrying problem it goes on to the agenda of public concerns whilst other aspects of the problem, and other problems, are to be ignored. Joyriding is without doubt dangerous at times but more police, security devices in cars, etc., won't get to the root of the problem - that of a society where many young people see no hope or purpose for themselves nor perhaps a future for the planet. Considering that general road accidents killed 308 children under 15 on the roads last year along with 44,000 injured (figures from *Guardian*, 29th April) we can see that the selective focus on joyriding is crass and shallow given the amount of attention dedicated to this minor level of danger compared to the non-existent mainstream debate about how to protect children from roads in general. Of course, interest in this minor social problem is to do with the government's need to focus on individuals, preferably the disenfranchised and powerless, as the cause of social ills rather than admit structural failings are responsible. It also allows them to extend their control. (Point out a problem, generate fear then offer a solution.)

As usual the 'solutions' on offer are Draconian, vengeful and without humanity as force and coercion come to be used to try and deal with the problems those in power create or allow to go on. Caring about the human race is, it seems, just 'political correctness' in the parlance of those who defend the existing order, radical ideas are the danger not the existing norm which some would have us believe is apolitical, normal, not extreme. You have to hurt people to get them into line, no need to deal with the roots of problems.

The danger of course is that with the myopic vision on issues the government and media frequently give the public dangerous developments in state/corporate power can be justified or ignored. Sp when closed circuit cameras appear in ever more places, crime is the catchword. Other dimensions are not mentioned, such as if we continue to increase their presence people will feel there must be

more reasons than ever to stop trusting strangers, that crime is omnipresent and so we have much to fear 'out there'. And what are the psychological dangers of thinking you may be under observation so much, of having someone unseen, someone you don't know, watching you? And given that many cameras are used to spy on staff also, what will the effect be on them knowing any little misdemeanour or act not approved by some boss will be seen?

Similarly the Prevention of Terrorism Act has not stopped the war with the IRA and bombs still go off whilst hundreds of Irish people on the mainland have been terrorised by armed gangs of police ransacking their homes and pointing guns to their heads. The latter has, however, enabled the state to extend paramilitary police power. It may be suspected Irish 'terrorists' this time but as it is the government gets to say who is a terrorist in the first place anyone can be so labelled and seized regardless of what they have done.

We are becoming more isolated in this atomised culture where people are spending longer periods in the home with televisions and videos. The more we retreat into the home the more we fear the outside which becomes something less familiar to us, making us uncomfortable. I have actually heard one old woman telling of how her elderly brother was scared witless when in a park in Hull. A group of young people were messing around nearby and he thought at any moment they were going to set about him. She did not at any point say that they had spoken to or threatened him nor directed any attention at all towards him, it was enough it seems that they were noisy and young; by default dangerous in this reactionary culture of hate and distrust.

But with the way things are people have come to fear and distrust striking miners, travellers, those on the dole, single mothers, the homeless, black people, radicals, protesters, etc. And with each addition to the list comes new laws and regulations to pin us down into obedient, controlled lives. So it comes as no surprise, with dole fraud back in the news, to read a small article in *The Guardian* about the dole cards being issued with bar codes on them (27th September). The DSS wants to continue fighting fraud in every way, it says, and so it is the technology of control to the rescue. There is no doubt this is only the thin end of the wedge for they are also considering identity cards for claimants along with other techniques in use in the USA such as fingerprinting, voice recognition and, believe it or not, retina identification. What if you fail, do they send a bladerunner after you? Of course we won't see such steps taken in the City to fight corruption and fraud by big business or those in government.

It's all just a tightening of the screws to hold people in place, to keep us controlled for the benefit of the rich and powerful. 1984 it is not, that was too obvious and crass a system for capitalist authoritarianism to use; it is worse than that for many can't see it at all.

I. Borrows



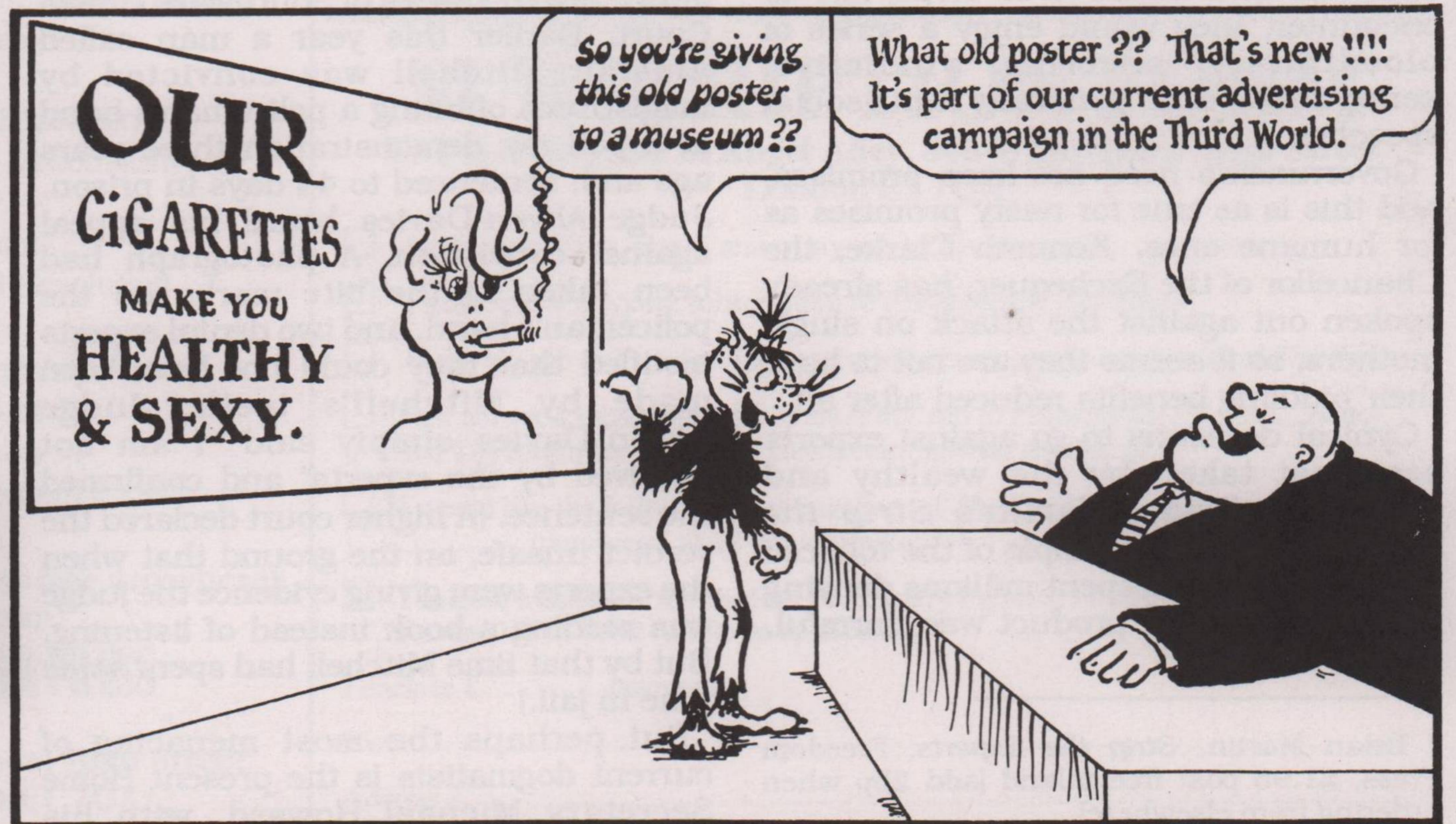
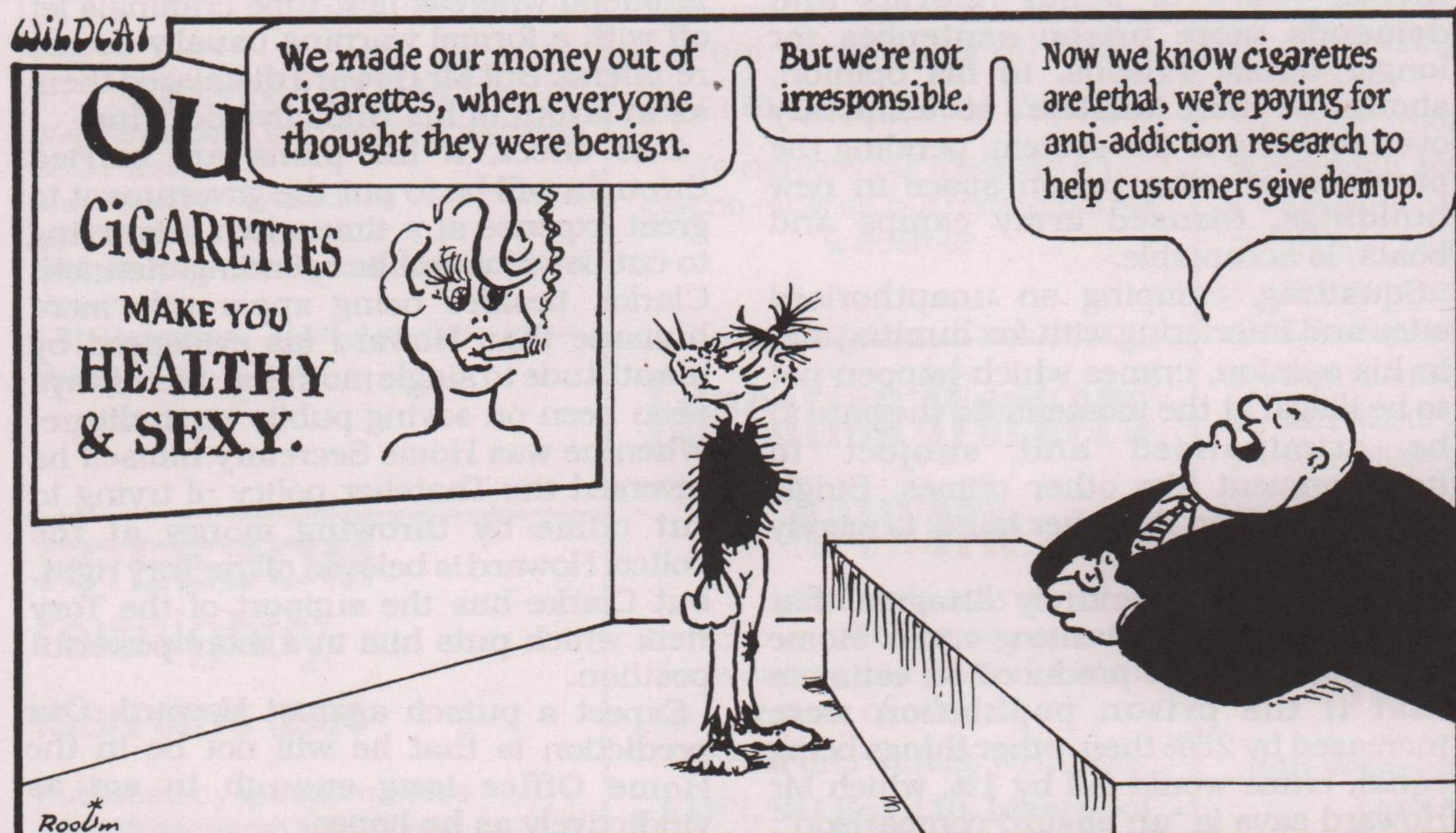
Alice Hamilton

staff who worked with lead. When Dr Hamilton's report was published nationally, other US states started passing similar laws.

Her books, *Industrial Poisons* (1925) and *Industrial Toxicology* (1934), established Alice Hamilton as the world's leading authority on the subject. Her research eventually led to the introduction of safety measures all over the world."

Safety measures which the Major government is intent on scrapping wherever it can: on the railways, the mines and in industry generally, with the idea that services and industry can be made more 'competitive' if a free-for-all is allowed so far as safety is concerned. All it means is that there will be more 'customers' (we are now all 'customers' whether we travel on trains or are ferried to hospitals and presumably to the cemetery) for the doctors.

For space reasons our second 'good news' doctor must be held over to the next issue.





## GUATEMALA

- One the same day as a conference of heads of state in 1990 'committed to free market economics' took place in Antigua, 33 bullet-ridden bodies were found in Guatemala.
- 125 bodies were found that same month.
- After four years of civilian rule the population living in extreme poverty has gone from 45% to 76%.
- INCAP estimates that 50% live in extreme poverty.
- In rural areas 13% of the under-fives die of malnutrition.
- 20,000 Guatemalans die of hunger every year.
- 1,000 died of measles in the first quarter of 1990.
- Per capita income has fallen to 1971 levels.

With some 10,000,000 inhabitants, Guatemala is the most populated country in central America. It is situated between Mexico to the north, El Salvador and Honduras to the south, Belize to the north-east and in the east of the Caribbean with the Pacific to the west.

55% of the population is Indian, 42% Latino and 3% black. Spanish is the official language, but there are over twenty Indian dialects of which Quiché is the most significant. Some 60% of the population is illiterate. In 1991 the average per capita income was \$850, although this is very unevenly distributed. Infant mortality rates stand at about 6.4%. The only city with a population in excess of 1,000,000 is Guatemala City, the capital. More than 60% of the population is rurally based, which doesn't prevent high population density for this part of the world: 84 persons per kilometre.

Colonised in the sixteenth century by the Spanish, Guatemala achieve independence in 1821. This was relative in so far as it was dominated by the US and in particular its economy was virtually under the control of the United Fruit Company, whose political interests were mainly served by a series of dictators. One president who was elected democratically, Jacobo Arbenz, set out on a programme of agrarian reform. He was liquidated by the CIA in 1954. Thirty years of dictatorship and civil war followed, from which Guatemala is now struggling to emerge. However, it is an uphill climb for even though western style elections are now held and an appearance of normality has been achieved, the underlying reality is still one of military control with all its attendant barbarity. Since 1st January last year Guatemala has witnessed some 1,199 violations of human rights amongst which number 80 cases of torture, 57 disappearances of prisoners and 408 summary executions. All this in the year of celebrating the conquista.

**Human rights and civilian government**

When Cerezo's civilian government came to office in 1986, hope was expressed that human rights violations would cease. This was not to be. Although there was an improvement for about eighteen months, things then started once again to deteriorate as the 1989 Amnesty International report for that year demonstrates.

Reading reports of human rights violations in countries like Guatemala requires a strong stomach as one reads at first hand of the willingness of military and security forces to mete out unspeakable forms of violence against unarmed civilians. Indeed it is the latter rather than the armed guerrilla groups (the main one in Guatemala being the URNG, also accused of violations though not on the same scale as the military and security forces) who are targeted.

During the period January 1986 to January 1989 Amnesty International reported 222 unresolved disappearances, although the figure may be much higher. Trade unionists, academics, students, clergy and peasants being the main targets. Peasants seeking exemption from 'voluntary' civil defence

## The Benefits of Democracy to Latin America

This feature is the second in a series giving an anarchist perspective on the various countries of Central and South America, following 'Focus on Latin America' in our previous issue.

patrols (see *Freedom*, 18th September 1993), or involved in movements calling for land redistribution or attempting to return to their villages after military attack have been prime victims. For example, in mid '87 Abel Enrique Recinos, a peasant active in the land reform movement, was killed and German Chicay, a peasant who was petitioning for land, was machine-gunned by heavily armed men in plain clothes. Government institutions set up to investigate abuses have been criticised by Amnesty International for being either 'unable or unwilling' to carry out their duties.

**Recent political background**

1988 saw a series of unsuccessful coups in Guatemala. After the first on 11th May there was an increase in action by the military against those it considered 'subversive'. This in turn followed Cerezo's 'social pact' with the trade unions in March and various other reforms. The offices of *La Epoca* were firebombed and the paper was forced to close after it had released details from a secret document which set out conditions that the military had forced the government to concede to if it was to continue to receive the support of the military. It required that former action be taken against dissident groupings, that a commission which had been set up to look into 'disappearances' should not report, and that a political amnesty should be given to protect those who had been involved in the coup attempts. Civilian government was clearly finding the going rough if it wished to challenge the military.

**Recent events**

Indeed dependence on the military continues

to be the reality in Guatemala. Here we have a good example of the fragile nature of the liberal democracies the US wishes to set up for exploitation in the area. One which, despite the reports in the western media, is repeated throughout the region.

Jorge Serrano's coup earlier this year which saw the closure of newspapers and the suspension of political activity was a copycat version of Fujimori's Peruvian coup some thirteen months earlier, and Brazil and Venezuela have also seen establishment figures removed to face corruption charges. The superficial nature of political reform has been exposed. The western press repeated the usual rubbish about using the military to "stiffen the region's resolve to defend its fledgeling democracies" (*Guardian*, 27th May 1993).

If it was felt that the crisis was averted when De León took power in June such dreams are proving premature. With popularity declining at the beginning of September he attempted to take on the congress in order to regain some popularity. The congress is riddled with corruption, with estimated of about one third of them selling their votes (*Guardian*, 2nd September 1993). Meanwhile human rights abuses continue.

This political chaotic situation invites the military to do the usual: a coup or to provide De León with the backing he needs. Indeed the failure to resume peace talks with the URNG also swings the situation towards the military. The advantage for them is that if they can use De León as their political front the regime will be acceptable to the western establishment ... and the sufferings of the people of Guatemala can continue.

## Cholera, Malnutrition and Infant Mortality

## ARGENTINA

- In 1900 was one of the ten richest countries in the world.
- Per capita income has gone from \$1990 in 1980 to \$1630 in 1988.
- Education spending: 1972 20%, 1986 6%.
- 33% live below the poverty line.
- 18,000 die before their first birthday each year.
- Cholera deaths from an epidemic were reported at 134 in February 1992

To say that there are no poor people in Argentina, and that if there are it's their own fault caused by their laziness, is a refrain to which the Argentinian people are now accustomed. For President Menem, cholera has nothing to do with poverty but rather is a result of "the lack of care taken by people who do not follow the advice of the health authorities, and a lack of hygiene in certain areas of the community".

The epidemiologist José Escudera emphasises that cholera is "a typically social disease which spreads generally in places where there is malnutrition".

During a scientific conference in Mar de la Plata last year, experts from all over the country recognised the fact that some nine million people were consuming water not fit for consumption and that seventeen million were living without sewage facilities.

Over the last 25 years 81,500 people have died of infectious intestinal illnesses.

The UNICEF researcher Pablo Vinocur has confirmed that "70% of child deaths in Argentina could have been avoided". The Centre for Latin American Studies has stated that "Argentina is a country where over the last fifteen years poverty has increased in a systematic and persistent fashion". It claims also that in 1980 seven million of the population were suffering from poverty. In 1988, in agreement with a study made by the World Bank, this figure reached nine million, and in August 1991 the figure stood at around eleven million. According to these figures one third of the total population is living in a situation of extreme poverty, whereas the government claims that "there has been much improvement since the revolution in productivity".

Poverty, according to the Centre, has three fundamental causes: the drop in real salaries, which have reached their lowest level for fifteen years; the drop in taxation due to governmental policy; and the appalling drop in job vacancies.

In that country, as well as here, as well as throughout the whole world, social revolution and economic equality are burning necessities.

Y.J. Béziers

Translated from *Le Monde Libertaire* (16th and 22nd July 1993)

## CHILE

- Seven-twelfths of the population live in poverty.
- Pollution levels in Santiago exceed tolerable norms.
- One in three children in the capital have parasites.

## Birthday Present

General Pinochet, the author of the bloody coup of 11th September 1973, has been awarded by the Menem government the honour of the cross of the 'Order of May', one of the highest Argentinian honours reserved for foreign personalities.

Jean-Paul II has also taken the occasion of the Pinochets Golden Wedding Anniversary to send them his congratulations. He has sent his 'Special Apostolic Benediction' to the ex-Chilean dictator, assuring him of the moving memory he has of their meeting during his pastoral visit to Chile.

On either side of the Andes the military seized, tortured and engineered the disappearance of generations of opponents. Today these criminals receive honours.

Y.Z. Béziers

translated from *Le Monde Libertaire*, 16th & 22nd September 1993

## Forked Tongue on Chile

A recent *Guardian* article (11th September 1993) tells us that Chile is "widely seen as a model ... praised as the world's most recent transition from dictatorship to democracy", despite the "still powerful military". It speaks of the Chilean "booming free market economy" and the "happy marriage of General Pinochet's radicalism [sic] and later social democratic sensibility" and we are told "US plotting and destabilisation was far less important than was believed at the time". History is being rewritten by all concerned, given that "Allende's socialists now govern in partnership with their old enemies, the PDC" and support "economic policies widely seen as a continuation of General Pinochet's harsh neo-liberalism".

However, the military still enjoys "autonomy over financing and promotions". Also in May and June we learn the military successfully moved to protect its members in the courts for human rights abuse. Victims of the military see the negotiated impunity as a 'fraud'. Sola Sierra, president of the association of relatives of disappeared detainees, said it was "shameful that people who once fought the dictatorship with us should now betray basic principles of justice necessary to keep society healthy".

In another article in the same paper (13th September 1993) we learn that Pinochet, the new darling, has no illusions about the 3,500 who died or 'disappeared' during his regime who, although arrested 'unarmed', were 'bandits' removed by their own comrades.

Demonstrations calling for the criminals to be brought to justice this year were met with violence (two killed, thirty injured). On the 20th anniversary Pinochet admitted that 'excesses' had been committed but that they were due to 'mental loss of control' and had 'justification'. "Pardon" he said, "is asked of God and not of men".

In this article the *Guardian* still talks of the "transition to democracy" where the army still enjoys "significant power" just as it did ... in the first article. A fine example of newspeak. Perhaps if they say it often enough some will be tempted to believe it.





## An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness (1793)

by William Godwin

Woodstock Books (a Woodstock Facsimile), two volumes, 978 pages, £150.

Two hundred years ago, William Godwin's magnificent theory for natural justice was seen and glorified. It was written between 1791 and 1793 in the light and hope shed by the French Revolution.

In 1792 Burke had published *Thoughts on the French Revolution*, and Thomas Paine *The Rights of Man*. William Blake heard of the plan to arraign Paine and warned him to flee for his life. Meanwhile, Godwin pressed on with his intention to publish his great work – in two quarto volumes, each 275mm x 210mm, very big and heavy with candle-lit sized type, weighing over 7 lbs. With his concentration of mental energy intensified it was impossible for him not to have it published, even at such a dangerous time for free expression.

In 1793, on 21st January, Louis XVI was guillotined. On 11th February England went to war with France, and on 14th February *Political Justice* appeared in print.

Contrary to Paine, Godwin believed that man has no 'rights' as such, but that morality should prevail whereby man would be ruled by "the dictates of his conscience". In other words, truth. People would become naturally self-possessed and social, knowing who they really were, and not having to act "as if they were rational and intelligent", but being so. Had Godwin's theories been taken to heart, people today would not be so continuously false to themselves and each other; the prevalence of lying without a second thought, which could be attributed to following televised examples of mendacity *ad nauseam* by members of government, would not be possible. (Vide literature pertaining to the Peckham Experiment, where theories proposed by Godwin were proved in practice.)

We should consciously remind ourselves that Godwin's idea of democracy was purest anarchy, whereas today's distorted meaning of anarchy is what our so-called democracy has become. Which really means that the relevance of *Political Justice* has come full circle, after two hundred years of being first exalted and then ignored. The given reason why Godwin himself was not carted off to the gallows was because of William Pitt's assurance that "a three guinea book could never do much harm among those who had not three shillings to spare". Three guineas, well afforded by people with vested interests and closed minds. Another reason could have been because the revolution Godwin proposed was not to be an immediate and violent insurrection but a modification of behaviour towards a harmonious and peaceful

# Political Justice



resolution.

The price of these facsimile volumes today suggests the same argument, except that there is the likelihood of some/several/many university libraries buying them, once their pertinence has been appreciated. This first edition is especially important because of what it retains; that which did not appear in the subsequent two editions. The third edition of 1798 is the one invariably referred to by scholars: the F.E.L. Priestley text. The 1793 edition has not been reprinted, until this edition. When *Political Justice* was brought out in a cheaper Octavo edition in 1796, Godwin said in his Preface that five of the eight books of the first edition had been rewritten. In other words, the whole of volume I and the last book of volume II ('Of Property').

In volume I, book I, its chapter 4 does not appear at all in subsequent editions. It is where Godwin's "all comprehensive scheme" appears in its splendour. It is a joy to read, but saddening that its vision has never come to pass, though it can still act as an inspiration for the time which cannot be far off when exploitative capitalism's demise will come as surely as Russia's communism has. Blake's wonderful image of "mind-forged manacles" inspired Godwin to write: "The genuine and wholesome state of mind is to be unloosed from shackles, and to expand every fibre of its frame according to the independent and individual impressions of truth upon that mind".

Godwin's scheme is dependent upon an inter-relationship between *Literature* with its full meaning of spread of moral ideas, and *Education* with its full meaning to enable the child to face the vicissitudes of life with resilience and sound resistance to the state being able to manacle his/her mind. (The 'Free School' principle has established that to be possible.) And between *Political Justice*, with "the adoption of any principle of morality and truth into the practice of a community".

Such an "all comprehensive scheme" was anathema in Godwin's time, two hundred years ago, and remains anathema in our own time. In terms of freedom we can say nothing has really changed. The limited expatriation which follows is of probably the most altruistic scheme ever proposed. Certainly the most far-reaching, if put into practice.

Godwin's *Literature* introduces the thoroughly disarming idea of literature being a lead to discussion. To read Godwin aloud in company is not to be obfuscated by the f for s, but to understand the force of the enunciated word and be taken over by it, and appreciate spontaneous discussion which arises. The practice of reading aloud was a natural feature of life two hundred years ago, and indeed much more recently until the advent of radio and television. 24-hour television, of course, has effectively put paid to such a liberating

concept. So, Godwin restores the meaning of literature: "Discussion has ascertained with tolerable perspicuity the preferences of liberty over slavery".

Godwin addresses our present crisis in *Education* and balances our current practice with the possible: "If an erroneous and vicious education be, as it has been shown to be, the source of all our depravity, an education deprived of these errors seems to present itself as the most natural exchange and must render its subject virtuous and pure," which leads into: "... the task is much easier to plant right and virtuous dispositions in an unprejudiced understanding, than to root up the errors that have already become as it were a part of ourselves". What is suggested in our own time is the need for greater parental understanding of a child's needs in the first half-dozen years of life, at least. Godwin asks: "Where must the preceptor himself have been education, who shall thus elevate his pupil above all the errors of mankind?" And he admits that: "No task, which is not in its own nature impracticable, can easily be supposed more difficult than that of counteracting universal error and arming the youthful mind against contagion of general example". Then he asks: "Where can a remedy be found for this fundamental disadvantage? Where but in political justice ...

that immediately applies to the removal of counteraction and contagion, that embraces millions in its grasp, and that educates in one school the preceptor and the pupil?"

*Political Justice*, Godwin says, "... political institution is particularly strong in that very point in which the efficacy of education was deficient, the extent of its operation." (Now no longer true. With our imposed national curriculum, it would be appropriate to refer as well to "political superintendence of national education" in volume II, book VI, chapter III; not to mention Godwin's further thinking in 1797 in *The Enquirer*.)

"An additional argument in favour of the efficacy of political institutions arises from the extensive influence which certain false principles, engendered by an imperfect system in society, have been found to exert ... What more horribly immoral than the mistaken idea which leads multitudes in commercial countries to regard fraud, falsehood and circumvention as the truest policy? But, however powerful these errors may be, the empire of truth, if once established, would be incomparably greater ... No mind can be so far alienated from truth, as not in the midst of its degeneracy to have incessant returns of a better principle. No system of society can be so thoroughly pervaded with mistake, as not frequently to suggest to us sentiments of virtue, liberty and justice. But truth is in all its branches harmonious and consistent."

Finally, he says of government that it "gives substance and permanence to our errors". And

## Food for Thought ... and Action!

Recent additions to Freedom Press bookshop stock.

**Carry on Recruiting! Why the Socialist Workers Party dumped the 'downturn' in a 'dash for growth'.**\* Trotwatch/AK Press. A useful and informative analysis of the bizarre and often risible antics of the SWP. Whilst not a definitive study, it documents "the miserably cynical behaviour of party apparachiks," using as examples the recent struggles over pit closures and the poll tax, and the experience of the last Labour government in the 1970s, drawing on the party's own publications as evidence. A timely critique of the 'indispensable role' of the SWP, now the largest left-wing party outside Labour. A5 pamphlet, 50 pages, £2.95.

**Syndicalists in the Russian Revolution\*** by Gregori Maximoff, DAM. With the resurgence of anarchist activity in Russia and the periodic information received from groups over there – including the encouraging news published in *Freedom* (16th October) – it's nice to be able to announce the reappearance of this pamphlet, which has been out of stock for a long time. The text is taken from his book *The Guillotine at Work*, a fully-documented history of 20 years Bolshevik terror in Russia (£8.95 plus p&p) and describes the great struggle against feudalism and Red Fascism from the viewpoint of an active participant. There is a short biographical note by Rudolf Rocker and a quote from Emma Goldman on Kropotkin's views on anarcho-syndicalism: "He had come to think that syndicalism was likely to furnish what Russia most lacked: the channel through which the industrial and economic reconstruction of the country may flow ... [anarcho-syndicalism] and the co-operatives would save other countries some of the blunders and suffering Russia was going through." A5, 16 pages, 45p.

**Enter a World That is Truly Surreal: President Clinton's sudden use of international violence** by Noam Chomsky, Special Broadside, Open Magazine Pamphlet. In an earlier pamphlet in the series, *The New World Order*, Chomsky correctly argued that the result of the end of the Cold War would merely be increased and unfettered arbitrary aggression by the US against (much weaker) recalcitrant peoples anywhere it chose. After precisely that in Panama, Iraq and Somalia, this is surely self-evident now, even to the most short-sighted supporter of 'democracy'. President Clinton, however, decided on 26th June to press the message home by launching 23 cruise missiles at Baghdad to punish Iraq for an alleged conspiracy to assassinate George Bush during a

visit to Kuwait in April. The fact that not a shred of hard evidence has ever been produced, that Washington has since admitted there is none, and that the 'punishment' was inflicted before the 'trial' in Kuwait had even started, doesn't bother the Democrat Clinton, on whom the irony of his own statement that the missile attack was ordered "to affirm the expectation of civilised behaviour among nations" is entirely lost. Chomsky cites the US press rushing to support their president with self-righteous declarations about one head of state trying to murder another being an act of war, and this is where things start to get truly surreal because, of course, this is something the US has never done. In his analysis of why Iraq was attacked again Chomsky launches a merciless exocet of an attack on the state and its press lackeys – a broadside indeed. A5, 12 pages, £1.95.

**Dario Fo and Franca Rame: theatre workshops at Riverside Studios, London.\*** Limited numbers of these transcribed workshop sessions are available by these two outstanding Italian political playwrights. Included with them are the texts of four of their plays. The book is in English but the Italian text of *La Madre* is also included. *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* is not included, but if you enjoyed that you'll probably like this work. At the end of the book 'A Political Interview' with Fo and Rame spans 12 pages, followed by several pages of biographical notes and press cuttings about them. There are ten pages of photographs in this large format book of 75 pages. Previously £2.95, now £1.50.

**Errico Malatesta: his life and ideas\*** compiled and edited by Vernon Richards, Freedom Press. First the bad news: we have now come to the end of the 1977 printing of this work, first published in 1965. The good news is that we're having it reprinted and it *should* be ready by the end of the year. Even better news is that it is being restored to its original larger format – so at least the text on the back cover will fit again. The price goes up to £5.

**Mutual Aid: a factor of evolution\*** by Peter Kropotkin, Freedom Press. The 1987 printing of the 1902 gem is also now down to zero, but it is being reprinted as *I write*. Old Piotr's price goes up to £6.

KM

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— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

# The factory we never had

As the decades roll by it becomes more and more evident that the truly creative socialist thinker of the nineteenth century was not Karl Marx, but William Morris. His most eminent Marxist biographer, the late E.P. Thompson, virtually admitted this when he came to revise his massive volume *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*. When it first appeared in 1955, critics complained that it was a great Stalinist steamroller, flattening Morris into a cardboard cut-out of a carry-carrying Communist Party member.

Maybe his book was that, but it was a great deal more besides, and in his postscript to the later version Thompson explained that: "Morris, by 1955, had claimed me. My book was then, I suppose, already a work of muffled 'revisionism'. The Morris/Marx argument has worked inside me ever since. When, in 1956, my disagreements with orthodox Marxism became fully articulate, I fell back on modes of perception which I'd learned in those years of close company with Morris, and I found, perhaps, the will to go on arguing from the pressure of Morris behind me."

It was a namesake of his, Paul Thompson, who wrote the best of all accounts of Morris, *The Work of William Morris*, first published

one further quote for the spirit of our time: "If there be any government which must be indebted for its perpetuity to ignorance, that government is the curse of mankind."

The Introduction by Jonathan Wordsworth is a gem, and relates Godwin to his contemporary poets and other writers.

In 1825 Hazlitt said of Godwin in *Spirit of the Age* that he had "blazed as a sun in the firmament of reputation" but had "sunk below the horizon". In 1845 De Quincey was to declare the second edition to be "a travesty of the first ... all but a palinode" (or recantation).

Coleridge's passionate belief, through Southey's enthusiasm, in pantocracy (a community where all are equal and all rule, i.e. with consensus, which Godwin advocated for its inclusiveness) inspired him to contemplate writing a book, *Book of Pantocracy*. However, on discovering Godwin's atheism, his Christian determinism (Hartley) put him implacably against Godwin and made him regard the core of pantocracy to be flawed.

Wordsworth, however, declared himself to be amongst "that odious class of men called democrats" and in 1794 was planning to start a magazine to spread "the rules of political justice". But it was just at a time when leading radicals were being sent to the Tower. The following year, between February and August, Wordsworth and Godwin met on nine occasions. But the magazine did not materialise. In his *Prelude* of 1805, he said of the first edition:

"There was the time when, all things tending fast To deprivation, the philosophy That promised to abstract the hopes of man Out of his feelings, to be fixed henceforth For ever in a purer element Found ready welcome."

Finally, William Godwin. This passage also does not appear in subsequent editions: "Let the true friend of man be incessant in the propagation of truth, and vigilant to counteract all the causes that might disturb the regularity of her progress, and he will have every reason to hope an early and favourable event". A non-violent revolution. Isn't that what is needed?

Rodney Aitchey

If you cannot afford £150 for the edition reviewed by Rodney Aitchey, a reprint of the third edition of 1798 is available in the Penguin Classics for £8.99 (please add postage), while Freedom Press publishes *The Anarchist Writings of William Godwin* (extracts from *Political Justice* and others of his books, with a long and erudite introduction by Peter Marshall for a mere £3.50, post free).

in 1967 and reprinted several times since then. What does it matter, he asks, whether Morris was a romantic, an anarchist, a Marxist, or even a crypto-Fabian? The important thing is that he had a world view of extraordinary richness which again and again foreshadows our own preoccupations: "the destruction by the international economy, not just of ancient cultures, but of the natural resources and ecology of the earth itself; the crippling of local independence by spreading centralisation and bureaucracy, the stifling of the natural creativity and zest for learning of children by institutionalised schooling; the cramming of working people into barrack-like housing ..."

But behind this relevance, for Paul Thompson there is a special reason for Morris's importance for us: his remarkable anticipation of the problems posed to socialists within a late twentieth century consumer society:

"Socialism was originally the product of the age of the factory, and it bears that mark in its primary focus upon work. This is a major reason why socialism has always had a more direct appeal to men than to women, and equally why, with the growth of leisure and a home-centred way of life, its significance to ordinary life has become less and less obvious. But Morris stands alone among major socialist thinkers in being as concerned with housework and the home as with work in the factory. The transformation of both factory and home was equally necessary for the future fulfilment of men and women. Morris wanted everyday life as a whole to become the basic form of creativity, or art: 'For a socialist, a house, a knife, a cup, a steam engine, must be either a work of art, or a denial of art'."

Morris's account of *A Factory as it Might Be* comes from 1884, one of the busiest years of an endlessly busy life. He was writing week by week in *Justice*, the organ of the Social Democratic Federation, founded in January that year, and in December had resigned, with a majority of the executive, to form the Socialist League. But all through that year he was also lecturing in English and Scottish cities and towns with a series of topics, some of which became famous. E.P. Thompson records that the main themes he was offering at this time were 'Useful Work versus Useless Toil', 'Art and Labour', 'Misery and the Way Out' and 'How We Live and How We Might Live'. He explains that:

"These lectures, with great variety of illustration and vigour of expression, followed a similar pattern. First Morris examined in some fresh and striking manner the reality of life and of labour in capitalist society. Next, he presented by contrast the vision of true society, creative and responsive to beauty, and called his listeners to action in the struggle to achieve this vision."

The factory of his vision is a handsome group of buildings, surrounded by gardens, cultivated co-operatively "for beauty's sake, which beauty would by no means exclude the raising of useful produce for the sake of livelihood". And he notes that "the Nottingham factory hands could give many a hint to professional gardeners". He is right. The rose-grower Harry Wheatcroft recalls how in the nineteenth century Dean Hole "the man who really transformed rose-growing in Britain" estimated that every third family in Nottingham had an allotment garden.

Morris's factory would combine work and leisure with technical education, would have its nursery, school, restaurant and concert hall. It would be adorned with painting and sculpture. It would be the neighbourhood's

social centre and the place where children learned by doing. His account of the factory also refutes those critics who, a century after his death, still dismiss Morris as a medievalist dreamer, an anachronism in the machine age. For he argues that "machines of the most ingenious and best-approved kinds will be used when necessary, but will be used simply



WILLIAM MORRIS

to save human labour," so that working hours will be reduced to about four hours a day.

As for the tedium of repetitive work, he observes that "the machine-tending ought not to require a very long apprenticeship, therefore in no case should any one person be set to run up and down after a machine through all his working hours every day" since, apart from the reduction of working time, "whatever us burdensome about the factory would be taken turn and turn about, and so distributed, would cease to be a burden — would be, in fact, a kind of rest from the more exciting or artistic work".

Here Morris is anticipating the findings of highly-paid industrial psychologists a century later. Plenty of us find a repetitive task restful, provided that everyone else shares it and providing that it occupies a short amount of our working day. The whole tragedy of monotonous jobs on the assembly line, whether it is actually a line or a draughty shed where women gut chickens all day for the food-processing industry, is that the more hours they can get the happier they are simply for the sake of a pathetically small pay packet.

So what became of Morris's factory vision? Several industrialists set about creating 'model' factories. Eleven years after Morris's essay, George Cadbury moved his chocolate factory to Bournville outside Birmingham, where, the historian Gillian Darley explains, "the factory was surrounded by gardens, where the white-gowned workers could idle by the rose bushes in their lunch breaks; another palliative for the tedium of assembly line work". And even earlier, in 1888, when William Hesketh Lever moved his factory to Port Sunlight, he explained that he wanted his workers to "learn that there is more enjoyment in life than the mere going to and returning from work and looking forward to Saturday night to draw their wages". But Gillian Darley quotes a trade unionist's comment that "no man of an independent turn of mind could breathe for long in the atmosphere of Port

Sunlight".

The tradition of the model factory persisted. Studying the lives of two tragic Lancashire sisters, Alexandra Artley found that their happiest days were the ten years they worked for Courtauld's Red Scar rayon works outside Preston from 1970 to 1980. "Going to Courtauld's was like a holiday camp to us". In her book *Murder in the Heart* (Hamish Hamilton, 1993), Alexandra Artley drew upon their Morris-like recollections of breakfast at Courtauld's:

"... here, from the largesse of a good employer, they could choose and choose and eat and eat the most delicious hot subsidised things they were denied at home ... the warmth of the vast room with windows steamy against a frosty northern day, committed cooks in absolutely spotless white aprons and caps, and the long, under-heated chrome counters, subtly lighting trays of crisply fried bacon, big round sausages, glistening fried eggs, kidneys, golden triangles of fried bread, hot buttery toast, well-grilled tomatoes so sweetly squidgy in the middle, and gallons and gallons of hot, sweet tea. 'Oh', said June, looking back on the vast hungers of youth, 'the breakfasts at Courtauld's were lovely!'"

This sensual account is a reminder that what made factory work acceptable to millions, apart from the pay packet, were incidentals like the company of fellow workers, not a concern with the product. But if you travel in Morris's footsteps through industrial Britain in the 1990s you are overwhelmed by dereliction. Statistically, through the shift of manufacture from Europe and North America to the countries of the Pacific Rim or Latin America, where labour costs are cheaper, the owners of capital have shifted production, while automation and a change in the materials used have made the factory itself obsolete. Capital has achieved its object, which was to eliminate labour. When Alexandra Artley sought out the site of those mammoth breakfasts, she found that "what had once been the Courtauld's rayon mill now seemed to be something very different and a huge board at the foot of the drive stated the names of 'companies on site'. They seemed to be very 1980s-sounding company names, such as Assembly Line Recording Studio, Windowland North-West and Bodycare Toiletries Ltd ... there was no rayon works any more — just smart new, grey metal factories."

A handful of socially conscious capitalists may have taken notice of Morris's industrial idea, but have gradually abandoned it because industrial welfare added to the cost of production, by comparison with that of poor countries. And yet another of Morris's demands has been completely lost. He thought that "the factory could supply another educational want by showing the general public how its goods are made". This comment anticipated the principle that, generations later, the American anarchist Paul Goodman called 'transparency of operation', the idea that we should all be able to understand the functioning of the industrial products we use every day. But every item of electronic equipment in our homes has a label that warns: 'No user serviceable parts inside'.

It was Morris's contemporary and friend Peter Kropotkin who added some thoroughly modern contributions to his comments on industrial production. In his study of *Fields, Factories and Workshops* of 1899, he gathered a mass of statistical evidence to show that ideologists of both right and left had exaggerated the scale of factory production. Most of our ordinary daily needs were produced in a small workshop economy. And he anticipated the changes in sources of motive power that in the 20th and 21st centuries would make the large factory obsolete. We see this obsolescence all around us today.

This does not mean that Morris's vision of a factory as it might be has no significance for the future. It simply means that we have failed to achieve the humanisation of work that was at the heart of his life's ambition to separate useful work from useless toil.

Colin Ward



— INSIDE INDIA —

## Rise of the Far Right

December 6th 1992 may well prove to some sort of watershed in Indian history, for although one can celebrate the emergence in recent years of local popular movements, this was the day that the world saw another face of India. The forces of the Far Right – a frighteningly powerful group comprising of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) – tested their combined muscle and destroyed a mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, northern India. It was an event that had a complex history and far-reaching consequences.

The BJP have become the official opposition in Indian politics. They have done so by building a Hindu fundamentalist movement, Hindutva, based on the Ayodhya issue. The destruction of the mosque was the inevitable consequence of their developing strength. The response of Congress was to ban the VHP, the theoretical 'think tank' behind the BJP, and dissolve the state governments where the BJP held power. Elections for new assemblies in those states are about to take place and by the new year it is probable that the BJP will have consolidated its power-base. Hindu fundamentalism really is on the march in northern India and in the absence of a genuinely secular opposition it is becoming increasingly likely that the BJP will form a government after the next general election.

Currently amidst the frenzied jockeying for position and search for the snappiest rhetoric that the impending elections have spawned amongst the main contenders for power, it is all too easy to lose sight of the substance of the different political creeds. This is especially the case in relation to the BJP and the pernicious nationalism, racism and totalitarianism that lie behind its quest for power.

In the context of the latter I am reminded of

an image that Shelley had whilst he was in Switzerland in 1816, as his fears grew of everything egalitarian that the French Revolution had heralded in its infancy being sacrificed on the altar of reaction whilst the forces of progress slept. He wrote of:

"The awful shadow of some unseen power floating, though unseen – visiting this various world"

Shelley's anxieties were substantiated by subsequent events in nineteenth century Europe and they rang true again in the 1930s in Spain, Italy and Germany, as indeed they appear to ring once more today in Europe where fascism has raised its ugly head for another foray. My feeling is, though, that they have an even greater relevance in relation to the continuing rise of, and response to, the Far Right in India today.

It is not only that there is a consensual slumber taking place in the face of the emergence of a threat to liberty, just as there was in Europe in the early 1930s, it is also that there is a silent, indeed almost unconscious, conspiracy to ignore what it actually is that the Far Right represents, where its appeal has come from and what the implications are for an India influenced by Hindutva.

Nationalism, racism and totalitarianism underpin the Far Right design and although it is difficult to isolate a single and essential strain of fascism, these tendencies have been common to fascist regimes. The concentration, however, of critiques of Hindu fundamentalism on the threat to secularism and the mere bandying around of the word 'fascist' only as a smear, is contributing to

underestimating the dangers. There has to be deeper and broader analysis.

As far as nationalism is concerned, consider some of the statements that Ashok Singhal made recently at the Hindu Rashtra, Saffron Brigade Show in Washington, advertised as 'Global Vision 2000'. Singhal, general secretary of the VHP, claimed that the Hindu Rashtra movement, and the founding, growth and orientation of the RSS and the VHP, were all attempts to realise Swami Vivekananda's alleged dream of establishing the world ascendancy of Hinduism. This is nothing less than a bellicose nationalism which compares to the chauvinistic supremacy that Franco, Mussolini and Hitler preached in the 1930s. It is also the same grotesque doctrine that recently carried the British National Party (BNP) to local government representation in East London.

Singhal similarly gave voice to the racism that underpins the Far Right blueprint. Casting poisonous aspersions on the Muslim population of India and, again, inducing comparison with the insidious racial prejudice of European fascism, he hammered home the central canon of VHP, RSS and BJP propaganda:

"The day Indian Muslims consider themselves as Hindus first, there would be no difficulty in drawing them into the mainstream of Hindu society."

The implication is that unless India's Muslims openly acknowledge their alleged 'Hindu

ancestry' and fall in line with 'Hindu sentiments', they will remain beyond the pale of Indian society.

For those who might doubt the totalitarian nature of the BJP, as if the events of 6th December 1992 were not enough, then we need only to examine the way in which the party is bent on the remoulding of India in its own image, with total disregard for democratic traditions. Its response to Hum Sab Ayodhya, a secular exhibition which it managed to get censored, is a case in point. So too is the imposition in the BJP-ruled states of school textbooks which propagate the Aryan homeland theory and which circumscribe the mental horizons of children in such a way that it becomes difficult to accept not only the fact of Aryans arriving from 'outside', but also bringing the Vedas and the early Sanskrit language with them. In this context one is reminded of the crass censorship that was such a feature of the European dictatorships of the 1930s.

However, to understand the fascist nature of the forces of Hindutva there is a need to go further than examining the expression of nationalism, racism and totalitarianism. This can be done by considering the reasons behind their rise to prominence. Of course at one level they are providing a religious base upon which a united India can be built, and given the failure of Congress to do the same via socialism, secularism and democracy, one can locate a certain appeal there. This explanation is, though, shallow on its own.

Fascism represents a politically organised contempt for the mind, it is an irrational ideology, as its expression above indicates. Here, though, in the very contradictions of the doctrine and their irrational resolution, is the core of its functional effectiveness as a mobiliser of support in India today. Fascism is proving attractive to those sectors of society in crisis which feel most under threat. The primary appeal is to essentially conservative elements seeking a radical but simple solution to a wide range of perceived ills. There is no obvious intellectual or simple class basis for such a constituency, the appeal is to those who feel themselves disadvantaged, a broad church.

The implications for India of an unstoppable BJP are frightening. One can anticipate a hostile foreign policy with all its potential horrors. I cannot believe that Indians relish the prospect of another war with Pakistan, but the BJP has already made clear their ability, if necessary, to "... wipe the country off the map".

Similarly ethnic cleansing will become a reality, what else can one expect for the Muslim population who are as likely to openly acknowledge a 'Hindu ancestry' as I am. Further it is clear that the country will wave goodbye to its democratic tradition, for although apologists for the BJP will constantly allude to the party's clear commitment to seek power through democratic means, democracy is about far more than representative government. Also, German and Italian fascism were themselves constructed on democratic bases.

However, the Far Right is not unstoppable. It has risen in a vacuum created by the failure of Indian governments to sincerely embrace and seek to implement the principles of socialism, secularism and democracy. A commitment to building a just and equal society, however, remains the basis for real unity and defeating fascism. The only question is, from where will it come? The need is for an appeal to India in the name of freedom and equality similar to that which Shelley made to the English working class after he had recovered from his blues of 1816. The concluding lines to his 'Mask of Anarchy' of 1819 are so, so relevant:

"Rise like lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number –  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you –  
Ye are many – they are few"

John Shotton

## CUBAN ANARCHISM TODAY

The current standing of libertarian ideas amongst the Cuban people couldn't be more depressing. The terrible persecution which we endured at the hands of Castroism during the first years of the Cuban revolution led by Fidel Castro stopped in its tracks a current of ideas which had existed in Cuba as far back as the mid nineteenth century, and which witnessed a history rich in the sacrifice of the lives and struggles of three generations of Cubans.

My interest is not to record the history of a popular or syndicalist movement, which was no doubt the precursor of the Cuban working class, but rather I feel it is imperative to inform our European comrades in general, and Spanish in particular, of the transformations that have been forced upon us by the longest and most bloody dictatorship in our history.

In 1961 the Cuban Liberation Movement in Exile (MLCE) was founded with the aim of fighting Castro, and thus giving support to the prisoners and the forgotten. For a whole decade, a superhuman effort was mounted to persuade those in the global libertarian movement of the justice of our cause. Indifference, silence or bare-faced hostility was the outcome, ending up in disputes and bitter arguments.

Now, after thirty years, an overview of solidarity offered leaves the same impression. The Cuban revolution and Castroism still enjoy, in some inexplicable way, the critical support of the 'left'. It seems as though anarchists have suffered the same fate as the Bourbons. As we have said elsewhere, 'critical support' is a policy for consumption abroad, never at home. 'Critical support' is based on a strictly totalitarian or manipulative way of thinking. Those who don't support us are pro-America, and consequently are considered reactionary. This way of thinking is, in reverse, the same as that of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco when they spoke of the 'international conspiracy' or the 'Red

Frank Fernandez of the Cuban Liberation Movement wrote the following article in May 1992 for distribution to the International Anarchist Press.

Taking advantage of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the Americas, he denounces the Castro régime's oppression of anarchists and the Cuban people in general, at the time when Castro was preparing his visit to Spain to participate in the celebrations to celebrate the 500 years.

menace'. Castroist propaganda has repeated this refrain on an international level with all the strength of its dollars and free invitations to visit Cuba. There has never been a lack of apologists capable of obscuring the Cuban reality with their parables and sermons. All of which brings us to a need to look at Cuba's current situation objectively. Cuba is an island which has been morally, physically and economically decimated, whose people will run any risk to escape from it and where, ironically, funerals are free ... a vast tyranny weighs on our people; and should anyone denounce a crime they are immediately accused of complicity with capitalism.

Cuba today is an immense property in the hands of a cruel and bloodthirsty master, who will not hesitate to tighten the noose of oppression if what is what his survival requires. There is no individual or collective freedom in Cuba. The economy, since the collapse of the Soviet regime, is in a catastrophic situation. The food supply is frugal. Poverty is common. Oil driven transport is a rarity and production has fallen to disastrous levels. The working class has lost all its rights, all trade unions are state controlled. Protest is an offence and striking a crime. All this could seem an exaggeration, but it is the reality.

The greatest threat of Castro, who is to visit Spain to celebrate the 500th anniversary of genocide with the rest of the corrupt American governments, is his efficient and imaginative propaganda machine. We await with interest to see how Castro, on his trip to Spain, can justify, by his presence, the celebration of 500 years of ignominious crimes committed against South America by the 'Mother Country'. We will be able to see as well how far hypocrisy has tunnelled into the heart of the 'left' when it is necessary to repudiate all the governments who have participated in this 'celebration' and have passed over in silence this Castroist support.

This same propaganda, capable of converting night into day, repeats ad infinitum the three 'theological' virtues of the Cuban State: its progress in the fields of health, education and employment. During these last three years, after the drying up of Russian aid, unemployment has taken off; the free national health service suffers from a lack of modern technology, the lack of medication is alarming; education, perverted by the system of 'voluntary agricultural work', lacks any spirit of criticism and humanism' students are not allowed to think for themselves, nor criticise the education system.

It will be left to the Cuban anarchists who were deported many years ago, the sole representatives of the libertarian ideas of our people, slandered, misunderstood and even betrayed by our own comrades, and to ourselves, to carry out the sad mission of being the last representatives of the ideal on the island. We are responsible for the future and we feel ourselves to be worthy of our destiny. We cannot work miracles but we can claim with resolution and patience that we resisted exile and that we will sow the seeds of Cuba that 'Tree of Liberty' which, over a century ago, the Cuban anarchist Enrique Roig San Martin wrote of.

Le Monde Libertaire, December 1992



# Emma Goldman

Dear Comrades,  
Now that Donna Farmer's study on Emma Goldman has appeared in *The Raven* number 23, let me comment on it briefly here. Donna Farmer admits that Emma Goldman rejected the label 'feminist' and then proceeds to sell us the idea that in spite of this fact Emma Goldman was a feminist of a special kind. This is rubbish. Why does everything have to be manipulated towards feminism? Why can't people just take things for what they are?

Having read Leopold Schwarzschild's *The Red Prussian: the Life and Legend of Karl Marx*, and Alice Wexler's *Emma Goldman in Exile: from the Russian Revolution to the Spanish Civil War*, I find my conclusions that there are very definitive parallels between Marxism and feminism (see my article in *The Raven* number 21) only confirmed. Acknowledging that there are different strands of feminism as well as of Marxism, they all nevertheless base their thought solely on male domination and the economic situation respectively.

This simply is not true, for these are only one aspect among others. There is no single factor to be blamed for everything, on the contrary, there is a complex network of interrelated aspects at work. If Wexler complained of Emma Goldman's anti-feminism in her first book, *Emma Goldman: an Intimate Life*, it is only too logical that she now complains of Emma's anti-Marxism in the above-mentioned sequel.

I think it is high time for us anarchists to seriously question the dogma underlying feminism. I strongly feel that feminism's latest trick is to simply wave aside its anti-men component and to deflect again from the central issue, namely that of *hierarchy*, of which both male and female domination are parts.

Being a freethinker, I don't need to be turned into the subject of feminist 'education' - I can think for myself, and

this should apply to all other males too, just as it should apply to all females. This is the essence of anarchism and it is precisely what Emma Goldman stood for. By contrast, our mainstream feminist-influenced society wants to distract from the central concerns by throwing mass-produced cheap literature like Marilyn French's *The War Against Women* onto the market. In the meantime, the rulers continue their politics, the only difference being that they have, thanks to feminism, 'humanised' their corrupt politics and authoritarianism. Thus, men can still be thrown onto the battlefield, this time in the name of humanity, as is done by the

UN forces. As Alexander Berkman recognised: "War is bad, of our civilisation. But - abolish it? Oh no! He wants to 'reform' it ... to 'limit armaments'. With less armaments, he says, we'll kill fewer people. He wants to 'humanise' war, to make slaughter more decent, so to speak" (from *What is Communist Anarchism?*, page 53).

It is high time that we men start emancipating ourselves by learning to give voice to our true feelings and emotions and to reject the traditional gender roles imposed on us. This must be in harmony with those women who also work for their liberation (they are not feminists). Emma Goldman stood for this liberation, let us continue with this and we will come closer to our anarchist ideal.

Peter Geiger

## Dangers of Unreason

Dear Friends,

In some respects I agree with George Walford's sentiments as expressed in his letter in 16th October issue of *Freedom*. However, I do feel that many people are beginning to see behind the facade of government and the state. So far the current government has alienated many people through its policies, not that this is anything new, but most recently many of those who have taken up some protest with today's government's ideas have felt more dissatisfied at the government's deafness. As a result these people became disillusioned with the whole process, but reluctant to turn to alternatives such as anarchism. This I believe comes from a fear of the unknown and a degree of dependence on the state system.

The reasons for this are twofold. First is simply that for many anarchism is an unknown quantity, nobody has understanding of what an anarchist society would be like, basically because there isn't one, excluding a few experiments that largely fail because the remainder of the population have not taken on board these new ideas and also because there is a need to survive in a capitalist system.

The other reason is of propaganda. Those in power have for a long time so successfully convinced the population that there is a need for a state system and this is seen as the only way of doing things, despite its obvious flaws this draws on the idea that people are somehow compelled into behaving in the way those in power wish them to do so, it is a bit like being hypnotised. The length of time the people have been convinced that the state system is the

only way to run things so it becomes more entrenched and to contradict this becomes more difficult. Nevertheless with the increased feelings of dissatisfaction and disgruntlement many are beginning to become aware of the illusion.

For anarchists the dilemma is putting across their ideas without being overtly prescriptive, but being aware of people's natural fears of what is, to them, an alien set up. We need to be aware of peoples dissatisfaction with the current crazy politics and assist in and support those in considering anarchism as an alternative to the current mess, using whatever method we feel comfortable with, but offering each other the mutual support to each other.

How to achieve this and how to encourage others to consider anarchism as a serious alternative has not been cracked. But we need to be careful that we do not fall into the ways of the state and authoritarian systems that freely abound throughout the world, and that means using violence and being prescriptive. Any ideas?

Chris Platts

## More on organisation

Dear Editors,

As I assume I am the "anglo-catholic, pacifist anarchist" to whom Nick Heath (*Freedom*, 13th November) refers (though in point of fact I was by no means the only such to be a founder-member of ORA) may I comment both on his letter and Peter Neville's earlier piece (*Freedom*, 2nd October).

As Nick says, the original intention was to be an AFB ginger group, an acceptance of the fact that there were widely differing views within the AFB, and proposing a structure which would respect this - allowing for full external debate - while increasing the activity and external propaganda of the federation.

Far from wishing to split and purify the AFB, we in fact, then, believed it to be possible to bring into the AFB a number of groups that had never previously belonged.

Then, at the official launch, the majority embraced the platformist position and a minority of us, who regarded this as vanguardist, resigned. I only know from hearsay what happened thereafter, but Nick's account would appear a little abbreviated.

I understand that before Keith Nathan led a faction into the Workers' Socialist League (a breakaway from the SLL, not the SLL itself) that the majority had voted to join an alternative Leninist body, 'Big Flame'.

We did however believe that there were limits beyond which the term anarchist could not be extended, and that the AFB was in danger, e.g:

*Freedom* had had occasion to condemn one local group and an individual publisher, Paul Pawlowski (later the founder of the 'English Republican Party') for publishing racist material under an AFB imprint;

Also rampantly sexist-pornographic material had been published in the name of the AFB;

Two groups which had in fact joined the IS Trots and others who were Maoists

were also claiming the right to publish their vanguardist-statist material under the AFB label;

And, not to put too fine a point on it, Peter Neville had used the same label to state that it is impossible to teach without the possibility of resort to corporal punishment.

Obviously anarchists are not out to censor opinions, but as all these were views that were incompatible with the basic statement of the AFB, and were repudiated by the majority of its members; as also most members of the AFB supported (or indeed were active within) campaigns arguing diametrically opposed views; we did feel that if such statements were to be voiced in material purporting to be published by AFB groups, that some way should be found whereby it should be stated that these are minority views and not those of the AFB.

We raised this only at a discussion level as something desirable, we had not evolved any hard and fast proposals as to how it should be implemented. Though as the AFB had an agreed statement, it would have been possible to insist that these be included in all AFB publications, leaving readers to judge the compatibility or otherwise of views expressed with the statement.

Laurens

## No offence

Dear Editors,

I would just like to point out that in the letter I wrote which you have printed under the heading 'Racism in East London' (*Freedom*, 13th November) there is a typing error in the penultimate paragraph: 'socialist' should read 'socialised' - the "socialised in-built fascism of this society". I would not wish to cause offence where it is not deserved.

MB, East London

## News from Angel Alley

We can't believe it ourselves: three months without News from the Alley, but all kinds of things have been happening, apart from the fact that *Freedom* appears on time and *The Raven* more than a month late. All subscribers copies have been dispatched, so let us know if you haven't received your copy.

The next issue of *Freedom* is number 24 and complete this year's publication of our journal. The first issue of 1994 will carry the date of 8th January.

We shall be sending out subscription renewals with the next issue of *Freedom*, but you will, as Donald pointed out in his 'plea to *Freedom* subscribers', be saving him a lot of extra work by renewing your subs before then.

In spite of the increase in inland postage we have maintained the old subscription rate for *Freedom* and *The Raven* inland, but we are obliged to increase rates on *surface* and *air mail* subs because of a dramatically high increase in postal charges.

Harold (Sculthorpe) who has been so diligently dealing with subscriptions, writer of the 'News and Views' feature in *Freedom* and author of *Freedom to Roam* (Freedom Press, £3.50), has moved out of London to Sowerby Bridge. Donald ('Wildcat') Room has stepped into the (subscription) breach and we hope readers will not ignore his *cris de coeur* to save him labour with the next issue in having

to sent out masses of renewal notices!

Our publishing programme for December will include a volume of Alex Comfort's anarchist writings and another on the occasion of the centenary of Herbert Read. Both volumes have been edited by David Goodway. More details in the next issue.

As old readers of *Freedom* know, almost subscribers renew now or in January. We cannot hide the fact that the renewals response in December/January is crucial to our general finances in the year ahead. There is no question but that your responses, and donations if you can afford it, are more than encouraging for those of us responsible for the regular publication of *Freedom*.

Following the arson attack, and as a result of having to introduce fire-doors and other mainstays, we have paid out more than £5,000 not covered by insurance. Thanks to you our readers, and two donations not yet included in our acknowledgement lists, we have been able to meet these charges, as well as paying all our trade creditors. Thank you again those dear readers who have solved our immediate financial problems.

We have more on the horizon. Our printers have moved to new premises within yards of the building. Though we didn't charge rent either to them or to other groups who use 84b, Aldgate Press *did* pay the rates (now £3,000 a year) and the water rates (nearly £500). Now we are saddled with those charges, though we have the whole building for our own use. So another £3,500 to find! Who's going to help us?

Number 24 of *The Raven* will be Non 'Science and Anarchism' and is edited by our comrade John Pilgrim. All the indications are that it will be dispatched by the end of December - on time!

On the subject of *The Raven*, we invite suggestions from readers for topics for the four issues due to appear in 1994. Surely we don't have to emphasise that the suggested topics should be *more than relevant* to anarchist propaganda!

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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) 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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