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FIFTY PENCE

"For what can war but endless war still breed?"

Milton

WHAT WAR AIMS?

The problem in a world bombarded by the media night and day is that virtually nothing is retained in the human mind from one week to the next. And of course this suits the ruling class to perfection. Think back to those distant days of last August (after all the media tells us that a week is a long time in politics) when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The pro-American rulers of Saudi Arabia were apparently fearful that they would also be invaded. They 'invited' the United States to send their armed forces to protect them (just as the pro-Russian government of Afghanistan invited the Russians to protect them from the American

armed and financed Mujahidin rebels). President Bush didn't wait to be asked a second time. The Yankees and their armour descended in their tens of thousands.

The next step was to use that army to drive out the Iraqis from Kuwait, but nothing so crude could be suggested in the United Nations. Sanctions it was to be and for once, since Iraq relied essentially on its exports of oil for the big money to pay for the supplies of arms from the West, sanctions might work. One should mention that Iraq was also the world's largest exporter of dates and since more than 50% of the workforce are engaged on the land they will not

starve. We include this aside for the benefit of the war-mongering media for whom Iraq means Saddam Hussein (*Evening Standard* headline on 17th January: "This man kills people for telling a joke") and a people thirsting for blood. The United Nations then agreed to the Americans' further proposals which put a time limit on sanctions but did not sanction war on Iraq.

The Americans obviously welcomed the fact that the Iraqi forces were not withdrawn from Kuwait for it gave them the excuse to declare an undeclared war on Iraq which is what the thousands of bombing raids mean to everybody except the politicians. The British Prime Minister has actually said that Britain is not at war with Iraq! Come back Thatcher — all is forgiven — and wave the Union Jack over Baghdad!

Come off it, Bush!

President Bush and poodle are 'outraged' by the scuds, by the Iraqi treatment of prisoners of war, by the dead cormorants in the Gulf and anything else they can invent to present the enemy in the most lurid colours. And needless to say our tabloid gutter press cannot think of anything better than to embellish it with their own imaginations. For them 10,000 sorties by the 'allied' air force on Baghdad resulted in pin-pointed hits on military targets only, while sparing the lives of civilians. We were told that the first 2,000 sorties dropped 18,000 tons of bombs — equivalent to one and a half Hiroshimas. So 10,000 sorties means seven and a half Hiroshimas and we the public are not told how many civilians have been killed or maimed!

Obviously both the Iraq and our 'allied' governments fear public reaction if the civilian toll in these 'carpet bombing raids' were to be revealed. The Iraqis know that the people would revolt, and the 'allies' that world public opinion would condemn what was in fact a policy of genocide. Not to 'liberate' Kuwait but to destroy Iraq.

Both *The Guardian* and *The Independent* splash their front pages (30th January) with the news of the death of one captured allied airman. It's based on an Iraq news item which says that he was a victim in a bombing by the 'allies'. Compare these two front page headlines: in *The Independent* "Human Shield PoW 'killed'" and in *The Guardian* "PoW killed in allied raid". The latter says that the announcement confirms the

"worst fears of the allies that President Saddam Hussein is keeping the prisoners as human shields on sites likely to be attacked by the multinational forces".

The 'site' was in fact the building of the Industry Ministry. If you accept the Iraqi statement about the death then you must also accept their statement as to where it took place.

Our reaction is to say what an extraordinary place to keep a prisoner of war. Luxury! But also to ask our warmongers whether they would consider the Ministry of Industry in Baghdad a strategic target for the liberation of Kuwait — quite apart from the fact that they say they are not at war with Iraq.

So surely that airman is a victim of Anglo/American/allied carpet bombing?

Postscript: Just a reminder to Bush & co over the concern for cormorants in the Gulf of what he and his buddies did in Vietnam. The following letter from a Mr H. Evershed of Solihull appeared in *The Guardian*:

"I am as sickened as anyone by the television pictures of oil-coated cormorants in the Gulf. How could anyone not be appalled at such an ecological disaster? A callous and irresponsible act, say our politicians. How could anyone do such a thing?"

Thinking back to the Vietnam war I remember the Americans destroyed vast areas of forest with chemical defoliants. What a job they must have had evacuating all the animals and birds and insects before the helicopters commenced their devastating spraying operations!"

Slowly but surely the arguments of the original objectors to American intervention (with the British poodle on the lead) in the Middle East — we said that if Kuwait was only sand and no oil — others said if they only grew carrots — are being accepted by the media. All that talk of defending small nations is bunk!

Thatcher's recently knighted Peregrine Worsthorne, a kind of 19th century fop, groomed, perfumed and manicured, who edits a section of *The Sunday Telegraph*, produced an editorial (27th January) which was summed up in its three column heading "It's right to fight for oil". His argument is incontrovertible:

"If this war really were being fought as a kind of high-principled gesture against aggression, then the advanced world would be in danger of having bitten off far

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"The first casualty when war comes is the truth."

Hiram Johnson to the United States Senate, 1917

GOD HELP US!

Four-fifths of the people asked in a Sky News poll "Do you support a nuclear strike against Baghdad to end the Gulf War?" replied yes. There were 81% (3,669) in favour, 18% (834) against.

(*The Guardian*, 28th January '91)

SURVEY OF THE BRITISH OPPOSITION

The opposition to the Gulf War is smaller and weaker in Britain than in any other member of the Alliance against Iraq. At a time when there is a growing international anti-war movement, taking the form of serious dissent among leading politicians and intellectuals and in the media and also mass demonstrations, not only in the United States but in many parts of Continental Europe and the Middle East, this country has so far seen little more than an uncertain series of isolated protests and confused activities organised by a sectarian coalition, damaged by internal quarrels and external pressures.

One factor is the war fever which has infected the main political parties and the mass media, so that open opposition has come from only a handful of Labour and Nationalist MPs and from only one national newspaper (*The Guardian*). Another factor is the dramatic decline in opposition to the war in the general population (falling from 45 to 15 per cent in public opinion surveys during January) and the growing acceptance of a long campaign. But another factor is the disarray in the organisations trying to mobilise what opposition there is — an anti-militarist disarray which reflects that in the military alliance.

After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2nd August 1990, three main organisations emerged to resist the drift to war. The Gulf Crisis Working Group has been coordinating the work of peace organisations all over the country, and

has also held regular vigils in London. The Campaign Against War in the Gulf, dominated by Marxists, gradually declined and eventually disappeared, presumably to infiltrate other organisations. The Committee to Stop War in the Gulf, a coalition of peace organisations (especially CND) and leftist groups (including Labour MPs and representatives of the Nationalist parties and the Greens but again dominated by Marxists), managed to obtain and retain the largest numbers and the most publicity as war approached; it held a series of increasingly impressive national demonstrations, culminating in the one on 12th January 1991 (though this wasn't nearly as large as it claimed), and it eventually became the umbrella organisation of the movement.

Other more specialist organisations also appeared. The Gulf Peace Team sent small groups of peace activists into war zones (inside Iraq and on the Jordanian and Saudi-Arabian frontiers) to bear personal witness against the war. The Internationalist Committee (a mixture of Communists and Maoists) organised a permanent picket at the American Embassy in London. Women Against War in the Gulf organised women's actions of various kinds. Media Workers Against the War in the Gulf (which held a packed inaugural meeting at Conway Hall in London on 28th January) plan to expose censorship of sensitive stories in the press and on radio and television.

The rank and file of the opposition may

be roughly divided into two sections, though they overlap to some extent. The first section are mainly supporters of the broad peace movement — especially CND, which has been morally disarmed by the end of the Cold War (rather as it was by the end of the Vietnam War nearly 20 years ago), and has been seeking another role. Several leading CND activists are involved in the CSWG, and the CND national membership has provided the bulk of support on the demonstrations, but the peace activists have been increasingly out-manoeuvred by the leftists (partly because CND is itself deeply penetrated by them). Few pacifists are involved, and the old peace organisations have been able to do little more than produce papers and sell badges, while observing and deploring the fragmentation of the opposition.

The second section are mainly supporters of leftist sects — Labour factions (most of which are penetrated by or fronts for Trotskyists) or openly Trotskyist groupuscules (especially the Socialist Workers Party, the Revolutionary Communist Group, Militant, and so on). They oppose not so much the war as the United States, the British Government, the Labour Party, the capitalist system, the police, and one another, and they spend most of their time and energy showing their posters, selling their papers, shouting their slogans, and pushing their particular variety of class war — and in some cases actually calling for an Iraqi victory.

In between are shifting groups of non-attached protesters, including survivors of the various protest movements of the Thatcher age and before (trade union and strike supporters, women's and gay liberationists, anti-racists and anti-Zionists, city-stoppers and poll-tax refusers, students and unemployed). And there is also the cluster of exile groups from various dictatorships in the Middle East and elsewhere.

In the opposition to previous wars, a broad non-sectarian movement has been developed and then gradually dominated and destroyed by sectarian divisions. The opposition to the Gulf War has begun in a state of sectional strife. All the meetings and marches have been accompanied by leftist parasites, more concerned to advance their own interests than to give their support to the wider movement. Some peace activists have accused the leftists of trying to 'hi-jack' or 'piggy-back' the opposition to the war. Some leftists have accused CND in particular of having peace aims not far from the war aims of the Alliance. Many ordinary oppositionists have lost heart and stayed at home rather than feel themselves being exploited and exhausted by pointless in-fighting at meetings and demonstrations.

The anarchists have been playing a much quieter part in all this than at any time for nearly thirty years. On the demonstrations there have been a few small and well-behaved contingents from the Direct Action Movement, the Anarchist Communist Federation, and the Anarchist Workers Group, but Class War have been inaudible, *Freedom* and *Black Flag* have been invisible, and most of the anarchists present have joined the other non-sectarian demonstrators

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WHAT WAR AIMS?

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more than it could ever hope to chew. For the costs of the war are already proving astronomical, and if they were to be repeated every time some Third World country invaded another Third World country, then the First World would soon be bankrupt."

But says Thatcher's favourite: "this war in the Gulf is special" and has nothing to do with "some universal principle". So goodbye to the defence of defenceless small nations, for according to Perry (to his friends) "down that primrose path would lie an endless vista of vast and fruitless expenditure" (no wonder Thatcher included him in her resignation 'honours'). Face up to it readers of *The Sunday Telegraph*:

"It is being fought — as all worthwhile wars should be — as a result of statesmanlike discrimination: not so much a war to end all war as a war to end oil war."

To emphasise that he is a lover of freedom, in his concluding paragraph he sums up his philosophy with the mind-shattering conclusion: "The war is about oil, certainly. But a war for Western oil is, for that reason, also about freedom and democracy".

But it is important to digest the next sentence: "What it is not is a new crusade which will take American troops to the four corners of the earth".

We are back to square one: small countries that only grow carrots, no crusade for them! But where there is oil the Americans will defend it!

But more serious commentators are becoming round to the "Economic causes of war in the Gulf" — the title of an important article in the right-wing *The Independent* (21st January) by Bill Robinson in his Economic Commentary. Mr Robinson has to respect his bosses pro-war line, hence the ambivalent opening paragraph:

"We are fighting in the Gulf to uphold the international rule of law. We are fighting to stop Saddam before he acquires nuclear weapons. But we are also fighting to stop him dominating the Middle East oil supplies. Most important conflicts have an economic cause and this one is no exception."

But *The Independent* has allowed its contributor to recognise that had the neighbouring State been in some other part of the world "it is doubtful that it would have

been resisted" — we are back to the carrots, the sand and the oil! Mr Robinson underlines this good capitalist war 'common sense' when he writes:

"It has been possible to mobilise world opinion and go to war because the Kuwait *Anschluss* would have made Greater Iraq the second largest producer in the region and the second largest exporter in the world."

The United States with 5% of the world's population consumes 25% of the world's oil production and is obviously concerned not only with price but also with oil reserves for the future — the more so if the third world has the 'impertinence' to demand its share of the planet's resources. No wonder the alacrity with which its armed forces were deployed in Saudi Arabia. As Mr Robinson points out:

"There are two other salient facts about Saudi Arabia. One is that it has by far the largest oil reserves of any country in the world — a quarter of the world total no less."

It thus has a long-term interest in the preservation of an orderly market in oil. A sharp rise in the oil price today benefits those who are pumping today, but the oil in the ground is worth less in the longer term if the price increase causes oil consumers to find alternative sources of energy.

The other relevant fact about the Saudis follows from the first: they are a very small and exceedingly wealthy nation surrounded by many larger and poorer nations. They have thus struck an implicit bargain with the West: they will use their immense power over the oil price in a responsible fashion in return for Western protection of their independence.

Kuwait, with 10% of the world oil reserves, and an even smaller population, was in a similar position to Saudi Arabia. As long as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were both prepared to co-operate with the West, there was every prospect of preserving a stable oil market for the indefinite future. But if Kuwait were assimilated into the Iraqi camp, giving Greater Iraq an output potential to match that of the Saudis, this stability would be lost. And if the Iraqis were allowed to get away with the Kuwait *Anschluss*, the Saudis would be next in line. We especially like Mr Robinson's concluding paragraph:

"Mr Bush, who is an oil man, was quick to see the implications of this, which is why he acted with a decisiveness that surprised many. This is a just war, but it is also a war that it is in our economic interest to win."

Surely he has put the last sentence the wrong way round. It is a war that is "in our economic interest to win". It might

have been a "just war" but only if the prize had been carrots and not oil!

Of the 'quality' press *The Guardian* has been publishing by far the most important critical articles, not to mention its correspondence columns, which include stimulating contributions. A recent feature by Richard Gott on "Villains and victims in a colonial war" (*Guardian*, 28th January) says all the kinds of things that have already appeared in *Freedom* and a few more.

He laments that the Labour and Liberal leaders, "forgetful of historical tradition have lined themselves up to rally British opinion in favour of this colonial war thereby depriving anti-colonial sentiment of political leadership". Forgetful of historical tradition indeed! The Labour Party has capitulated to the war-mongers on every occasion: 1914, 1939, the Falklands adventure, and now the Middle East. We are sure a majority of the members of the party and even the Parliamentary Party are opposed to the Gulf war. The voting racket does not favour minority public opinions.

We anarchists must face up to the fact that the general public not only in Russia and the third world is brainwashed. Perhaps the most brainwashed are to be found in the first world where the propaganda bombardment by the media is relentless and all one-sided — on the side of capital and privilege. The Labour Party is voiceless so far as the general public is concerned (assuming it has anything to say other than that it can run the capitalist system better than the Tories). *The Daily Mirror* is, in the present crisis, useless in view of Maxwell's support of Israel.

We believe that the vocal opposition to the Gulf war in this country is larger than the polls would suggest. They include the 'don't knows'. They should include in our society, the 'don't cares' which so far as the Gulf is concerned we suggest represent a much larger proportion of the population. Anarchists lament the public apathy. If we are to change society it will only be if, and when, enough people refuse to allow governments to engage in political adventures which may well benefit a few but which inevitably result in disaster for the many and not least for the future of mankind. Surely such are the lessons of all the wars in our century?



THE PRESS: "I AM THE TRUTH"

Bruised, but not battered

Captured airmen who broadcast on Iraqi television all appeared with bruised faces, and some popular newspapers have remarked that it is "fairly obvious how they got the bruises".

Indeed it is, according to one of our science correspondents. An airman ejecting from a moving military aircraft has a combined airspeed of more than 150 metres per second. A fine dust particle, travelling at that speed, would hit a face with about the force of a pebble shot from a catapult. There is always a fine dust above the desert.

To suggest that the Iraqi military would hit captives in the face, before showing them on television, is to demean the Iraqi military. They have professional torturers in their ranks, and they know how to hit where it won't show.

Labour's moral decline: 'Tameside Cares' — are careerists cashing-in?

WHY DO folk vote Labour?

Surely not to give a leg-up to careerists and climbers!

Surely not to create a new privileged class of professional men and women!

All politics may involve some self-deception. Yet any party, such as the Labour Party, which has to give up its ideals, or illusions, is in danger of ceasing to believe in itself.

Recently Ian Aitken, in *The Guardian*, has said that for what good they are most of the Parliamentary Labour Party in the House of Commons may as well stop at home. The Labour Party is bankrupt of ideas, and Mr Aitken says "socialism ... became a term of comic abuse" in the Labour Party, even before the collapse of communist Eastern Europe.

Mr Aitken claims: "The virus has spread even to the constituency management committees ... who now find it difficult to attract a quorum".

More than a decade of Margaret Thatcher has left its mark on Labour! But the public are suspicious of the well paid jobs which come to some of those involved in local party politics.

TEL on Tameside

Some are saying that Thatcher's ideas have rubbed off on Tameside — that Labour there has abandoned old beliefs and principles.

One Tameside, one of the borough councils in Greater Manchester, most people vote Labour. There the Labour Party, under Roy Oldham (council leader), has had the run of the borough all through the Thatcher years, since 1979.

Now the Tameside Labour Party has created TEL (Tameside Enterprises Ltd), which comes close to privatisation Labour style. Started in 1985, TEL was a council controlled non-profit making business which had the aim of acquiring, and developing land and building homes for sale.

To begin with the directorships of TEL and the shareholdings seem to have been divided up between the council and the constituency Labour Parties in Tameside. Now most of the council's shares are being transferred to TCCL (Tameside Community Care Trust) which will run twelve old people's homes and Tameside Hospital. TEL's property deals will in future be performed by TEDL (Tameside Enterprise Development Ltd). TEDL is a profit making body, but for TEL profit is counted as income.

Paul Stonier was unpaid company secretary of TEL from 1985. Mr Stonier was also, until March 1990, Tameside Council's Director of Policy Services.

In late 1989 it was agreed in principle by Tameside Social Services Committee that twelve old people's homes, previously run by the council, be turned over to TEL. TEL would employ all the staff, and run the homes.

The chair of the Social Services Committee is Councillor Shirly Stonier, Paul Stonier's wife. A report in *City Life* (the Manchester listings magazine) claims Mrs Stonier "always declares an interest and took no part in the relevant decisions".

Mr Paul Stonier, as Tameside Council's Director of Policy Services, was the author of the plan to transfer the council's twelve old people's homes to TEL. In late 1989, Mr Stonier sent a memo to the senior members of his Policy Services Department telling them that he had been offered a permanent job with TEL (salary now £35,000 a year according to *City Life*). Readers must judge for themselves if there was any conflict of interest in Mr Stonier being both Director of Policy Services, and unpaid Company Secretary of TEL from 1985.

In a letter sent by Mick Rawcliffe (local area officer of the National Union of Public Employees) to Paul Stonier (Company Secretary of TEL) in November 1989, the scene was set for the transfer of the old people's homes. In this letter the union boss called for "an attitude of 'teamwork'" and expressed the hope that "TEL will expand beyond that which we are presently discussing".

Mr Rawcliffe's union, NUPE, was given sole negotiating rights in the deal which followed. Mr Stonier, it should be said, is being sponsored by NUPE as a Labour parliamentary candidate — rumour has it he's after Robert Sheldon's seat in Ashton, when he retires.

One horse race?

The final transfer of the twelve old people's homes to TEL by Tameside Estates & Economic Development Committee took place on 28th February 1990. The chairman of this committee is Councillor Simon Walker, who *City Life* says is "being groomed by Roy Oldham as his heir".

Mr Walker has also been Assistant Company Secretary of TEL since 1987. He was not at the 28th February meeting which OK'd the leases of the old people's homes to TEL. *City Life* also claims that he "has always declared an interest and took no part in the relevant decisions".

Yet, it is claimed, Councillor Walker had a rough ride in his bid to get the £10,000 a year part-time job as Assistant Company Secretary of TEL.

Councillor Roy Oldham, as a director of TEL, was one of the interviewing panel which grilled him for the post. We had been told that Councillor Walker gave two references in his application — Roy Oldham and Glyn Ford MEP. But when *Freedom* asked him about it, Councillor Walker said he had "difficulty remembering so far back", and while he "couldn't categorically deny putting Roy Oldham down", he said: "I wouldn't have thought I would have put any of the directors down as a reference".

Freedom has been told that, at the time, the General Management Committee of the Ashton-under-Lyne Labour Party queried the method of appointment of Councillor Walker. This body also made representations to the directors of TEL.

Later the job was re-advertised within the three Tameside Constituency Labour Parties. Councillor

Walker was the only applicant in what appears to have been a one horse race.

In the first few months of his employment it seems Councillor Walker did not draw his salary, while the directors of TEL took legal advice. Later it was decided there was nothing unlawful in him drawing a salary from TEL, while remaining a Councillor.

Topsy turvy politics

Mick Rawcliffe, NUPE area officer, has tried to justify his union's support for TEL, by saying that the NUPE policy on TEL is that it represents an attempt to get round the worst effects of government policy. But other unions are worried about what they call the council's 'lack of consultation', and that the Labour Council's response to government pressure has amounted to 'pre-emptive privatisation' of the services of the elderly.

Is this privatisation by a Labour Party officially opposed to privatisation? How can the Labour Party's attempt to ape the Tories answer the long-term problems of the people of Tameside?

The Labour Party likes to be known as the party of equal opportunities. In what way the principle of 'equal opportunities' applied to the appointments of Mr Stonier and Mr Walker is not clear. Though there was nothing unlawful about the appointments, the people of Tameside may see it as an extension of the 'old pals act' to certain top card-carrying members of the Labour Party. Even within the Tameside Labour Party there is anxiety — *City Life* quotes one Labour councillor as saying "It's not even jobs for the boys, but for the family".

Tameside Council "declares that its employment policy is one of full and equal opportunity for all". TEL is a council inspired body! But perhaps it is a case of official policies not being reflected in practical commitment.

BB and JM

Voting your life away

At the age of eighteen, you are entitled to vote and thus take part in the 'democratic' process of your country. Of course, since the average lifetime of a British Parliament is something like three to four years, you could have to wait until you are twenty four before the opportunity to use your vote arises. Provided you do not become disillusioned or deceased, you can look forward to stamping your authority on the political scene at least a dozen times in your life. Twelve crosses! That's three pints of Castlemaine or a line on Littlewoods — and you stand to get more return on them than putting twelve crosses on a ballot sheet, because if your chosen politician, or rather a politician you had chosen for you, makes it into Parliament, his Party Whips have a little chat with him about the facts of life which, in a nutshell, is that no matter what you put him into Parliament, he must never vote against the Party line. On the Labour side, Tony Benn is a bit of an enigma. Having been a Minister in the Wilson government, and therefore a Privy Counsellor, he must have no end of secret information in his head that he has sworn on oath not to speak about to those trusting souls who gave him their vote. He has written at least two books so far about his Commons experience, but if he included half the secret information he knows, he'd still be writing the first one, and it would take half a Brazilian rainforest to supply the paper. Tam Dalyell is a bit more like it, perhaps. He asks so many questions. He would save himself and everyone else a lot of bother if he had a quiet word with Tony Benn. Kinnock must wonder how on earth he let the Old Etonian get through the Labour Party vetting system. Can't see old Tam sticking it much longer. He must know he will never get a top job in Parliament.

Democracy is a wonderful thing. It's so flexible. Germany had a real democratic dictatorship once. None of your minority government stuff like our Tories. Adolph pulled in over 90% of the voters more than once. It all became possible through an Enabling Act of the German Parliament, like the one Ted Short, Lord President of the Council in the Wilson government, once suggested so that Labour could rule by decree. Mind you, his suggestion wasn't acted upon, probably because our governments manage to

get what they want anyway without Enabling Acts. So you see, Left or Right, they all believe in might.

Lord Hailsham, when his party was in opposition, which really means opposed to the people, just like the Labour Party is, called the British system of government an elective dictatorship (which was a misprint for selective dictatorship). Old Quintin is only one of many to have let the cat out of the bag in fits of pique, or due to the onset of Alzheimer's disease. Well, if that is what we want, if we keep on voting we will get it.

When you come to think about it, the issue is not between Left and Right, Labour and Tory, Fascism or Communism, or Capitalism and Socialism. It is really a choice between Authoritarianism and Liberalism. Perhaps it is essentially a choice between male attitudes and female attitudes, because women, by their very nature, are bound to feel the need for co-operation, whereas males, once they have left the nest, have more opportunity to avoid commitments if they wish.

EFC

The risk business

Capitalists, we are told, are adventurers. They put their money where they calculate it will make more money. If they are right they may become rich, but if they are mistaken they lose everything.

Sir Ralph Halpern is a case in point. As Chief Executive of Burtons the Tailors, he increased company profits enormously by sacking all the tailors and buying the clothes from countries where labour is cheap. In 1986 he was knighted for services to industry, and in 1987 he was the first man in Britain to be awarded a salary of a million pounds a year. Three years later his company's profits have slumped and he is forced into early retirement. Everybody say Aw.

He retires with a lump sum payment of two million pounds, plus a pension of £450,000 a year.

Managing the home front

When the possibility of war in the Gulf arose conservative defenders of the principle of the freedom of the press — the virtue supposedly unique to the 'Free Western World' — quickly came forward seeking to deny us this very freedom. All in the name of the efficient conduct of the war.

Thus Peregrine Worsthorpe, eulogising the beauty of dying for one's country, likened it to sex — both should be done in private. In other words, he wanted censorship of news and images from the war.

Paul Johnson, apparently the scourge of the leftist establishment and staunch defender of the freedom of speech, chipped in with this statement in *The Spectator*: "If, however, the war plans go wrong and a protracted conflict develops, then it will be a different story and the American networks will be seen at their worst. The British government will then have to watch very carefully to ensure that our networks are not infected with the poison. If they are, their crews should be sent home in short order. We have no First Amendment, thank God."

Too late according to Norman Stone in *The Sunday Times* (20th January) the BBC already having been infected with the trendy pacifism that has edged out truth from our television screens.

If it wasn't so serious it might be funny. The hot-bed of pacifist leftism, the BBC, has already issued 'guidelines' to radio stations on what records are presently unsuitable. 'Give Peace a Chance' and 'Imagine' are off the play-lists along with 65 others. 'Allo 'Allo is off our screens (thank god!) and one nature programme — about wild birds causing havoc with Israeli fighter planes — has also been cancelled — no doubt to stop Saddam stealing the idea.

Yet the real censorship is taking place in the news reports from the front lines. All news footage goes before military censors before being screened and journalists are prevented from wondering at will. Strict rules govern what we are eventually allowed to see — or rather not allowed to see. Blood, guts, terrible injuries, death — the realities of

Worsthorpe's 'beauty' — are not allowed.

The military men have also cleverly rationed what war footage we see too. Thus we've been shown cruise missiles hitting military target with pinpoint accuracy. However, despite the military's talk of 80% of missions being 'successfully completed' — i.e. dropping their bombs — only 50% of these have actually hit their intended targets. What of the other 30% of these bombs and missiles? What have they hit and destroyed? By the law of averages, some of these will have destroyed civilian buildings — no pictures of these 'mistakes' will grace our screens. The writers above knew very well that their appeals for censorship would be well received by the military — the Falklands proved this. What these writers are attempting to do is to limit debate about the war itself, about the cost/benefit analysis of the slaughter and its justification. By censoring the press they wish to restrict the flow of information to our senses, to prevent us from perceiving the realities of the conflict and hence to undermine our arguments. Hi-tech videos of the war do not convey the same message as body bags being loaded onto planes for dispatching home.

These writers haven't the strength of their own convictions. They dare not allow people to see the dreadful reality of their pronouncements. A sanitised war is a successful war is their motto.

Remember the Falklands. So again the maimed, mutilated, ugly survivors of the war will be sheepishly herded into Westminster Abbey for a private — censored — memorial service when it's all over. Their physically unscarred comrades will receive the full glare of publicity.

The visual truth of Wilfred Owen's poem 'Dulce Et Decorum Est':

"My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori."

— that unmask Worsthorpe's hideous 'beauty', must be suppressed.

EM

'Just' War versus Class War

1. Saddam Hussein must be stopped.

Yes ... but this has been true for about twenty years. The same objection applies to all ruthless dictators, and by extension to the ruling classes of every country, all of whom sacrifice the lives of their citizens in the interests of the state and capitalism when they think it expedient.

2. But petrol prices will go up if Saddam Hussein controls Kuwait. Most people in this country will suffer without cheap oil.

The best way to get cheap oil is to abolish the organisations that profit from it — in other words, capitalism must be abolished. Shell and BP don't do deals with the Kuwaiti royal family on *our* behalf, after all.

3. Now the war has started we must support our boys.

This objection is incoherent. 'Supporting our boys' seems to mean sponsoring their deaths in the interests of the ruling classes of Europe, America, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The best way to support them is to end the war.

4. We must stick together in this time of national crisis.

This is the kind of propaganda implicit in the Labour Party's complicity with Tory

warmongering. Anyone listening to the radio to the live 'debates' in Parliament would have found it hard to distinguish between the so-called 'opposition' and the government. The creation of the evil 'enemy without' seems to function to promote patriotism, even without jingoism from the contemptible tabloids. The objection's reference to 'we' is a confusion. The only 'us' and 'them' that matters is not the 'allies' and the Iraqis, but the

Objections to anarchist objections to the Gulf war

working class and the government. In terms of loss of lives and economic well-being, now is the *worst* time for us to side with our country's ruling class.

5. If you don't believe in the war you must go along with Tony Benn's argument that the dispute should be resolved through the diplomatic channels of the United Nations. The UN has in effect blessed the war — it acts on behalf of the nation states of this world always against the interest of their majority inhabitants, the working class. Tony Benn and others who support sanctions against Iraq ought to be ashamed. In the same way as the war itself is a way of using the working class as pawns in a game between power blocs, sanctions hurt the poorer majority most — the richer minority are cushioned from their effect. The idea of making the working class of Iraq suffer so that they put pressure on or

overthrow Saddam Hussein treats people as mere tools. War and economic sanctions are government/ruling class initiatives, and they solve nothing. By their nature, the government and the capitalist class generally will never solve the long-term problems of the working class.

6. If it is wrong for the 'allied' forces to attack Iraq we must take sides with the Iraqi people and back an Iraqi victory.

This objection, like those arguing in the opposite direction, naively (or wilfully?) assumes that the interests of the Iraqi working class are synonymous with those of the ruling class of that country. True, we must take sides in the war, but the same side that we as anarchists always take — that of the oppressed

majority of the world, the working class.

7. But popular protest is useless.

This objection assumed a sort of 'naturalness' or 'inevitability' to the status quo. If this was the case, the ruling class and their cronies wouldn't work so hard to maintain it! The reason that there is increased censorship, crude propaganda and jingoism in times of war is because governments simply don't have the physical power to bludgeon the population into obeying them and must try to engineer consent instead. That they are not completely successful in this is evidenced from the nationwide protests against the war. Over 100,000 marched in London the

Saturday before the war. On the day that war broke out, the students of my university marched into town, gathering others on the way. In the evening, there was another spontaneous march which ended at the local radio station where coverage of the protest was successfully demanded. Last Saturday (26th January) an even bigger demonstration took place in Brighton — more than 500 people marched through the town. On the same day, there were protest marches in many towns in Britain. In Bonn, 250,000 marched against the war. Similar protests took place in cities all over Europe and in Japan.

Protest is never useless. Public dissatisfaction was one of the reasons why the American government had to pull out of the war in Vietnam. The other reason, of course, was that American troops themselves were disillusioned. Throughout history, wars have been jeopardised by mutinies — no dominant ideology is strong enough to blind everyone to the true nature of war.

Freedom has a long and honourable history of opposition to war. In the Second World War, the editors went to jail over their anti-war propaganda. An article from that period exemplifies the anarchist approach to war. The headline read 'Axis Workers Show the Way Forward'; it referred to a strike by Axis workers. The best way to fight the so-called 'just' war, therefore, is to support the people in all countries involved in their struggles against their governments. Governments try to use war as an argument against us using the best weapons we have against them — strikes, protests, resisting the poll tax, encouraging mutinies, etc. Now is the best time to use these weapons.

Johnny Yen

The military dictatorship in Kenya

During last year an Amnesty International report was published about the military dictatorship in Kenya. In Nairobi it is very common for military police to beat up people on the streets and torture them in their cells.

Last year a Kenyan refugee, who also holds Norwegian citizenship, was kidnapped by Kenyan secret police from Norway, and smuggled back to Nairobi. This individual is (wrongly) being accused of arms dealing and faces certain torture and judicial execution. As a result of this kidnapping, diplomatic relations between Norway and Kenya have been cut.

In Denmark a debate has also developed about Kenya. Denmark gives a lot of aid to the country and worries exist that it is being used to hold up the military dictatorship.

In January, Danish television had a programme about Kenya in which many refugees gave many horrific accounts and many pictures of police violence on the streets of Nairobi were screened. The programme also featured an interview with the Kenyan Foreign Minister who took the line: "What right do these foreigners have to interfere with internal Kenyan affairs?" He also accused Amnesty International of producing a report which, he claims, is a "Distortion of the truth".

It will be interesting to see how the Scandinavian debate on Kenyan affairs develops, but what ever else, we in the UK should also be monitoring the situation.

Martyn Lowe

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A war for freedom?

A number of women are under arrest in Saudi Arabia, awaiting trial for driving cars in Riyadh last year. It is illegal for women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. It is illegal for a woman to sit in the front passenger seat, unless the driver is her husband. Of course, the law does not apply to American service personnel in military establishments.

Iraq does not restrict women to the same extent. There are women Members of Parliament in Iraq, and they even speak against the detail of Presidential suggestions (though never against the substance — that would be suicide).

Saudi Arabia does not have even a puppet Parliament. It makes no pretence of being other than an absolute monarchy. The Saudi chieftain led his tribe to fight alongside T.E. Lawrence against Turkey in the First World War. As a reward he was appointed hereditary monarch, and after oil was struck on his land, his successors became rich.

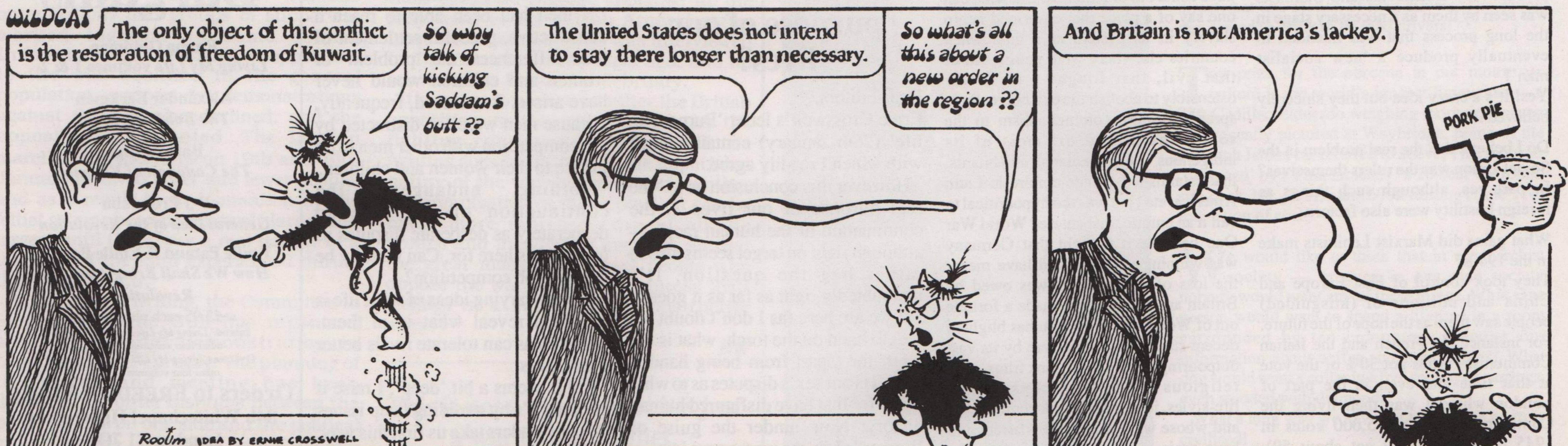
Kuwait was more of a constitutional monarchy. It had a Parliament, with votes for about one in four of the adult male population. Three or four years ago, the royal family dissolved Parliament with military assistance, and began work towards an absolute monarchy on Saudi lines. The United Nations

aim in the present conflict is "to restore the legitimate government of Kuwait", sometimes shortened by American and British commentators to "the liberation of Kuwait".

The American and British governments have not formally severed diplomatic relations with Iraq. After all, they are not at war with Iraq, but as they often tell us, merely pursuing the United Nations resolution. On the other hand, they have severed diplomatic relations with Syria, an ally in the conflict against Iraq. This is because the group who bombed the Pan Am flight which exploded over Lockerbie were harboured and financed by the Syrian government. (Before the Syrian connection was established, American bombers took off from British airfields and bombed Libya, killing a number of civilians.)

No dispute, the armies of the United States and its allies are fighting against a brutal dictatorship. But they cannot be fighting against something without fighting for something, and they appear to be fighting for various brutal dictatorships.

Many will be killed, injured, sickened or impoverished as a direct or indirect result of this war 'for freedom'. But it seems most unlikely that anybody will be freed.



A grim fairy tale called education

The 'New' Education Act is, essentially, a re-hash of the Tory policies that have driven all the changes to the original Act undertaken since 1979.

The original 1944 Act was quite novel for its time. The Bill which preceded it was constructed out of a nationwide sounding of opinion, during the war, on what should be done about education after the war. It therefore left it to the local education authorities to work out a system of education that particularly suited local needs and merely structured education in stages — primary, secondary and further.

Then, by threatening to wreck what had up to that moment been an all-Party Bill, the hard right forced in the religious instruction clauses and had them made compulsory. Anyone with an ear for language can hear the difference in the actual wording of the clauses, as compared with the wording in the rest of the Act.

Further, the composition of management committees and governing bodies, originally intended to contain one-third of parents elected by the parents of the school, was twisted to mean 'local big-wigs'. A reading of *Hansard* will show how the Act was manipulated. Then the Tories had a campaign to fill these bodies with their own people, preferably tough politicians who had the time and the experience to deal with the relatively uneducated and subservient Labour members.

Immediately after the war pressure was put on by the inspectorate, at the instigation of the old guard of senior civil servants, to re-establish the grammar school and the sixth form as desirable criteria for secondary schools. The oldies among us remember Harold Wilson's 'over my dead body!' refusal to sanction the abolition of the grammar schools.

The most devastatingly anti-working class measure was the establishment of the Burnham 'Agreement', the mechanism to control teachers' negotiations with the government and the levels of their salaries. The heart of this agreement that particularly handicapped working class children was the device that gave secondary pupils a number of 'Burnham Units' according to age, so that those aged eleven had one Unit, while those aged sixteen had ten Units each, with the intervening numbers between those extremes. The 'reason' for this bias was that older pupils need more expensive books and more expensive equipment for science, art and so on. True enough, but with what consequences?

The essential point is that the number of teachers and their salaries, the salaries of the head and deputy head, the number of 'special allowances' for heads of department and the amount of money for books, sports gear, equipment for science, art and workshops, was fixed *not* by the number of pupils in the school but by the number of Burnham Units the school accumulated. Now since it has always been obvious that most working class parents cannot afford to keep their children at school after the school leaving age, while middle class parents will strain every nerve to do just that to get their children professional-type jobs and avoid unemployment, schools in working class areas suffered. My own secondary modern school in Lowestoft, Suffolk, had almost exactly the

same number of pupils as the local grammar school, but because the grammar school had big fifth and sixth year classes it had 35 teachers against my 16, twelve special allowances against my three, an average teacher/pupil ratio of 14 to 1 against my 32 to 1 and an average salary of nearly 40% higher.

If I wanted to start a GCE class I had to cram the lower classes into groups of forty to a teacher in order to release two or three teachers to have smaller classes with some hope of success in exams. But this made it even more difficult for those teachers trying to give some personal attention to their pupils in the overcrowded classes.

Now, although the Burnham Scheme has been scrapped by this government in order to punish the teachers by denying them direct access to the DES, the system of awarding greater 'weighting' to older pupils still persists, so the advantage is still directed to the middle class pupils. The differences are easily seen between inner city comprehensives and comprehensives in the more affluent suburbs — or wherever there is a high proportion of middle class families in the catchment area of the school. Those in the inner city schools are always short of books, equipment and teachers. Conditions are so grotty that their teachers are always on the move in search of better conditions. Grammar schools and comprehensives in middle class areas have higher salaries and so more stable staffs, so the kids get more consistent teaching.

The Ministry (now the DES) recognised the dangers of one social class schools and published Circular 10/65 to ensure some degree of fairness. Ironically this Circular was published in the very year that Raisinghill was closed by a Labour government. Raisinghill, sited at the end of Chapel Market, a little way from Pentonville Road near Kings Cross, London, was a lower working class school with nineteen nationalities among its pupils from its catchment area that covered Islington and Finsbury.

Up to the early '70s the proportion of pupils in private (including 'Public') schools was roughly one-sixteenth of the total secondary school population. The bulk of sixth form pupils were in state schools. Now, of all fifth and sixth form pupils in London and the South East four out of ten attend private schools, while in the South West nearly five out of ten do so.

Policy quickly became clear: private education was being brought back but in such a way as to take over what remained of the local authority grammar schools and the 'better' comprehensives in areas with a high proportion of middle class families. So far we have seen a very few city colleges, with enormous government grants, at least eight times the size of those available to ordinary schools — and yet there seems to be great difficulty in persuading business and industry to fund more than a handful. Direct Grant grammar schools, with even bigger grants from the government, have been resurrected, and the 'opting out' scheme to entice the middle

classes into their own one-class grammar schools, has appeared. See how many one-class schools in the down-town areas of the big cities are given facilities to opt out! Like the old Burnham Scheme, opting out gives heads higher salaries but this time as a reward for going private. Then they will have to adapt to the 'market economy formula' and spend most of their efforts raising money from business or squeezing it out of parents, instead of making education exciting for kids.

Other elements of the policy included greater government control over the exam system to maintain the 'superiority' of the O Level over the CSE, and the provision of technical and vocational education and 'special courses for the bottom 40%' — the latter requirements to be forced on schools which had already had their funding drastically reduced. How effective they have been can be seen in the figures published by the National Institute for Economic and Social Research to compare the percentages of vocational qualifications in Britain, France and Holland. Of those in work, Britain has 17% with university degrees or professional qualifications, Holland has 18% and France has 14%. Of those with intermediate qualifications Britain has 20%, Holland has 43% and France has 32%. Of those without qualifications of any kind Britain has 62%, Holland has 38% and France has 53%.

In this little town of Teignmouth in Devon I know two primary schools. One on an estate where the average price of a house is between £100,000 and £250,000 and the head can raise £1,000 for books, school outings (12 in one year) or sports equipment, at the drop of a hat. In the other, sited in a working class estate, they are short of books, they have had only three school outings in two years and the head is reluctant to ask parents for money, not because they are mean but because so many of them are out of work. This school gets a special allowance for special need because so many are so poor that they qualify for free school meals.

Now all this is not the result of ignorance of the needs of children in a democracy: it is the deliberate result of a firm intention to return to Victorian values. This policy was finally put into words in 1985 under Sir Keith Joseph. The wording, unearthed by Stewart Ransom from an internal discussion document and published in *The Guardian* of 20th August 1985, reads:

"There has to be selection because we are beginning to create aspirations which society cannot match. In some ways this points to the success of education, in contrast to the public mythology which has been created ... The State can cope with that [i.e. the odd riot like Toxteth] ... [But] if we have a highly educated and idle population we may possibly anticipate more serious social conflict. People must be educated once more to know their place"

Note: 'Selection' was clearly shown by the mass of sociological research between 1950 and 1970, to result in favouring middle class children.

Michael Duane

The Relevance of Orwell

That part of my piece on Orwell which outlined the political background against which he lived and worked has mightily upset your correspondent Lynn Olsen. Some replies:

Do I believe that the policy of slaughter practised by Bolsheviks and Stalinists was seen by them as a necessary stage in the long process that was intended to eventually produce a 'new socialist man'?

Yes! It's a crazy idea but they sincerely believed it.

Do I believe that the real problem in the Soviet Union was the rulers themselves? In part yes, although such things as foreign hostility were also factors.

What gains did Marxist Leninists make in the 1940s?

They took control of East Europe and China and millions of (misguided) people saw them as the hope of the future. For instance the French and the Italian Communist Parties got 30% of the vote at that time and even in the part of London where I was then living the Communist Party got 5,000 votes in 1945 (nowadays they get about 50).

Olsen should try opening a few history books.

What has America ever done but worship the dollar, etc., etc.?

I was exaggerating for the sake of emphasis. Obviously a few good things have come out of America. But what can one say of a place that enshrined negro slavery in its system at a time when countries elsewhere were getting rid of that evil, that fought a civil war ostensibly to abolish the evil but really to spread northern commercialism to the south, that killed off most of its indigenous (Amerindians) inhabitants, that established a huge empire in Latin America, etc., but was too hypocritical to call it an empire, that entered World War One because it thought that Germany was winning which would have meant the loss of vast sums it was owed by Britain and France, that made a fortune out of World War Two, that has blighted decent standards everywhere by its vast outpouring of junk food, junk films, junk religious cults, junk consumerist life-styles, junk music, junk comics, etc., and whose wealthier citizens arrange to have their corpses deep frozen in the

hope that a future generation will revive them and tell them how wonderful they were?

This is not to say that there are not some good people in America. Of course there are.

Hywel Jones

What is the real purpose of our lives?

Dear Editors, Ernie Crosswell's letter 'Purpose in life' (26th January) contains much with which I readily agree.

However, his conclusion as to "the real purpose of our lives ... the continuation of the human race" — although right on target seems also to rather beg the question. It's undoubtedly right as far as it goes.

If we are here (as I don't doubt we are) to hand on the torch, what is the torch for (apart from being handed on)? It is our sex's disputes as to what life is for that have disfigured human history. Now, under the guise of Women's Lib, the women are joining

the endless male battle for jobs, the battle that underlies all battles.

The main event of all men's lives, compulsory job competition, has always been a problem. Intensifying this with liberated women is hardly likely to make men easier to deal with. After all, job competition is men's version of childbirth.

If men had been able to reach a constructive, peaceful settlement of their differences, the 'problem' of women and children would never have arisen. It occurred, frequently, because men were too distracted by job competition with other men to do justice to their women and children.

Nothing endangers the continuation of the race so desperately as desperate disputes as to what it's here for. Can it really be here for job competition?

In their varying ideas of what life is for, men reveal what is in them. Some ideas can tolerate rivals better than others.

If this seems a bit 'deep', I raise it because it's by avoiding deep issues that our leaders take us first this way,

then that. For example, first you support Iraq, then you favour Iran, etc.

Allan Bula
East Sussex

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Death of a Wobbly SAM DOLGOFF

We have only recently learnt of the death a few months ago of the leading American anarcho-syndicalist Sam Dolgoff.

Sholem Dolgopolsky was born in Ostrovsky, White Russia, on 10th October 1902. His father was a Jewish house-painter who took his family to the United States before the First World War. (His uncle, Tsadik Dolgopolsky was a leading Yiddish writer who later supported the Bolsheviks but was imprisoned during the Stalinist terror.)

Sam left school at eleven, though he continued to educate himself all his life, and followed his father's trade. He soon became a socialist — joining the Young People's Socialist League in 1917 — and then an anarchist — joining the Industrial Workers of the World in 1922. He worked as a travelling propagandist for anarchism and industrial unionism for several years, speaking all over the United States, and he took an active part in the campaigns for Mooney and Billings and for Sacco and Vanzetti.

In 1925 he settled in Chicago and joined the Free Society Group, which was dominated by the exiled Russian anarcho-syndicalist G.P. Maximoff. In 1930 he met Esther Miller, a young Jewish anarchist in Cleveland. They became lifelong companions and settled in New York, where he resumed his trade of house-painter and they brought up two sons.

During the 1930s he became a busy contributor to (and often editor of) various anarcho-syndicalist papers (using the name Sam Weiner), being especially concerned with the betrayal of the Russian and Spanish revolutions. During the 1940s he was one of the American anarchists who followed Rudolf Rocker in supporting the Second World War, which strained relations with several anarchist individuals and organisations in the international movement.

After the war he was a leading member of the Libertarian Book Club in New York, being especially concerned with the betrayal of the Cuban revolution. He continued to speak and write (and edit) to the end of his life (reverting to the name Sam Dolgoff), and he eventually became a guru of the libertarian left (rather



1902 Sam Dolgoff 1990

like Augustin Souchy in Germany). He and Esther welcomed many visitors to their New York apartment; they were good and generous companions, but could be obstinate and quarrelsome, usually but not always on the right side.

Several of his shorter writings were reprinted as pamphlets — especially *Ethics and American Unionism* (1958), *The Labor Party Illusion* (1961), *The Relevance of Anarchism to Modern Society* (1977), and *A Critique of Marxism* (1983). He also produced some books — editing *Bakunin on Anarchy* (1972) and *The Anarchist Collectives: Workers Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution* (1974), two valuable anthologies, and writing *The Cuban Revolution: A Critical Perspective* (1976) and *Fragments: A Memoir* (1986), a useful polemic and a disappointing autobiography.

Sam Dolgoff died in New York on 24th October 1990 (Esther had died a year earlier). A memorial meeting was held, and obituary articles appeared in a few papers.

FP

SURVEY OF THE BRITISH OPPOSITION

(continued from page 2)

without fuss, as they used to do before the noisy events from the 1960s to the 1980s. Whether this is a symptom of decline or of maturity remains to be seen, but it is clearly important for anarchists to do what they can to add a libertarian dimension to the situation which has developed since the beginning of the war.

Immediately after the Alliance attacked Iraq, on 17th January 1991, there were emergency demonstrations all over the country in which the various organisations and groups of supporters worked together to some extent. Unfortunately, if inevitably, as opposition to the war declined in the general population, support for demonstrations against the war also declined, and the opposition fragmented. The London marches and meetings on 19th and 26th January involved fewer and fewer people, and as a result their domination by the leftist groups became relatively larger and larger, until there was a real danger of a takeover of the kind experienced during the Vietnam War.

At the time of writing, the Committee to Stop War in the Gulf has organised another national demonstration in London on 2nd February. The planning of the march and meeting has been disrupted by bitter disputes between the peace groups on one side and the political groups on the other, but both CND and

the leftists have worked hard to bring out all their supporters. The double problem is that the leftists are as anxious as usual to gain control of a large movement and that it is relatively easy for them to do so with a small movement first. It is therefore important to increase both the size of the opposition and its resistance to sectarian control.

The march through central London on Saturday 2nd February 1991 to a rally in Hyde Park was a long one, with the anarchist contingent more in evidence than hitherto. Biggest applause at the rally went to the British Army deserter from West Germany who was interviewed in *The Guardian* a few days ago, and on television on Friday 1st February.

It remains to be seen whether the British opposition to the war recovers as the fighting continues (especially if the fighting goes badly) and as the imperialist nature of the war emerges, and whether the organisation of the opposition can be made more representative of all the groups and individuals involved, so that the great mass of ordinary people who oppose the war are able to express their feelings in a fraternal and constructive way.

NW

This is not a "just" war; it's just a war like any other.

Media Workers Against War

Media Workers Against the War in the Gulf held its inaugural meeting in London on the evening of Monday 28th January. Arriving at the Conway Hall just before the advertised time of 7pm I got a seat. When the meeting opened there was standing room only. The count of 800 people seems near the mark: a majority were young and had the air of working in journalism or television.

Chaired by Terry Bell, Central London Branch NUJ, the meeting opened with addresses by Paul Foot and Edward Pearce. Foot is well known both as a left wing journalist and as a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, and to those who have heard him speak, as a master of rhetoric who can produce an electrifying effect on an audience.

The purpose of the meeting, said Foot, was to unite all those in the media who are opposed to war in the Gulf, and who are disturbed by the attempts of those who control the media to present a one-sided view of the conflict by censoring reporting. But what about the man who says he objects to censorship and supports the war? Go and form your own organisation, said Foot, to some laughter.

Much of Foot's outline of the political issues would be agreed to by *Freedom* — the war is about oil, the Americans have supported dictators all over the world (Marcos in the Philippines, Pinochet in Chile, Noriega in Panama, then kicking them out when they no longer serve their purposes) yet the media has to present the war as one of ideology. Thus editors emphasise this aspect accordingly, while important stories are relegated to a column inch and the TV executives cancel programmes: and jingoism is the result.

Foot stressed the need to resist what he called 'self-censorship', the feeling among journalists that 'if what we write is going to be filed instead of published, then why bother to write it?'

Edward Pearce, in contrast to Foot, is of the political right. He currently writes a column in *The Guardian*. He denied being a pacifist, indeed he referred to the Second World War as "the one war worth fighting", but declared his complete opposition to the Gulf war.

Pearce noted a 'British attitude' to war, one of not being aware of realities. The British public bought *The Sun*, and editors promoted what he termed "the primitive wildfire of a common view" with 75% of the public as "the pack behind". He ended by urging us to read his column in *The Guardian*.

Tariq Ali, himself a media figure, and working in television, took the opportunity of making a political address. Since the collapse of the USSR as a world power we were seeing the fight for 'a new hegemony' in Europe and the third world. The USA supported Iraq for ten years with CIA influence in the Ba'ath party because of the strength of the Communist Party especially in the oil workers' union. Hussein wiped out the communists and all the dissidents in turn — having done that, once he started to go too far he was expendable. To those who ask, how do you topple dictators, he would say that people must topple their own dictators: as the new hegemony is created, new dictators will replace the old. Ali ended with a call for "an end to relativism in human rights".

Loudest applause went to the FOC from a national newspaper when he called on those present to 'make the sacrifice'. What would really scare editors would be if they thought an edition of a paper was not going to come out. If you don't like what's being printed, he said, then refuse to write. Risk your livelihoods, as printworkers have done from time to time, and call on printworkers for support.

Another speaker saw the weakness of the opposition in Britain as being due to the TUC and the Labour Party. He spoke of "the enemy within", journalists having been softened up for a long time over reporting on Ireland, the miners' strike, the Wapping dispute. Now, he said, the media has reached an *impasse*.

Calling the meeting back to basics, Foot called for the formation of workplace groups, even if they should be small ones. Let us do what we can do, he said, and look for the common ground that unites us.

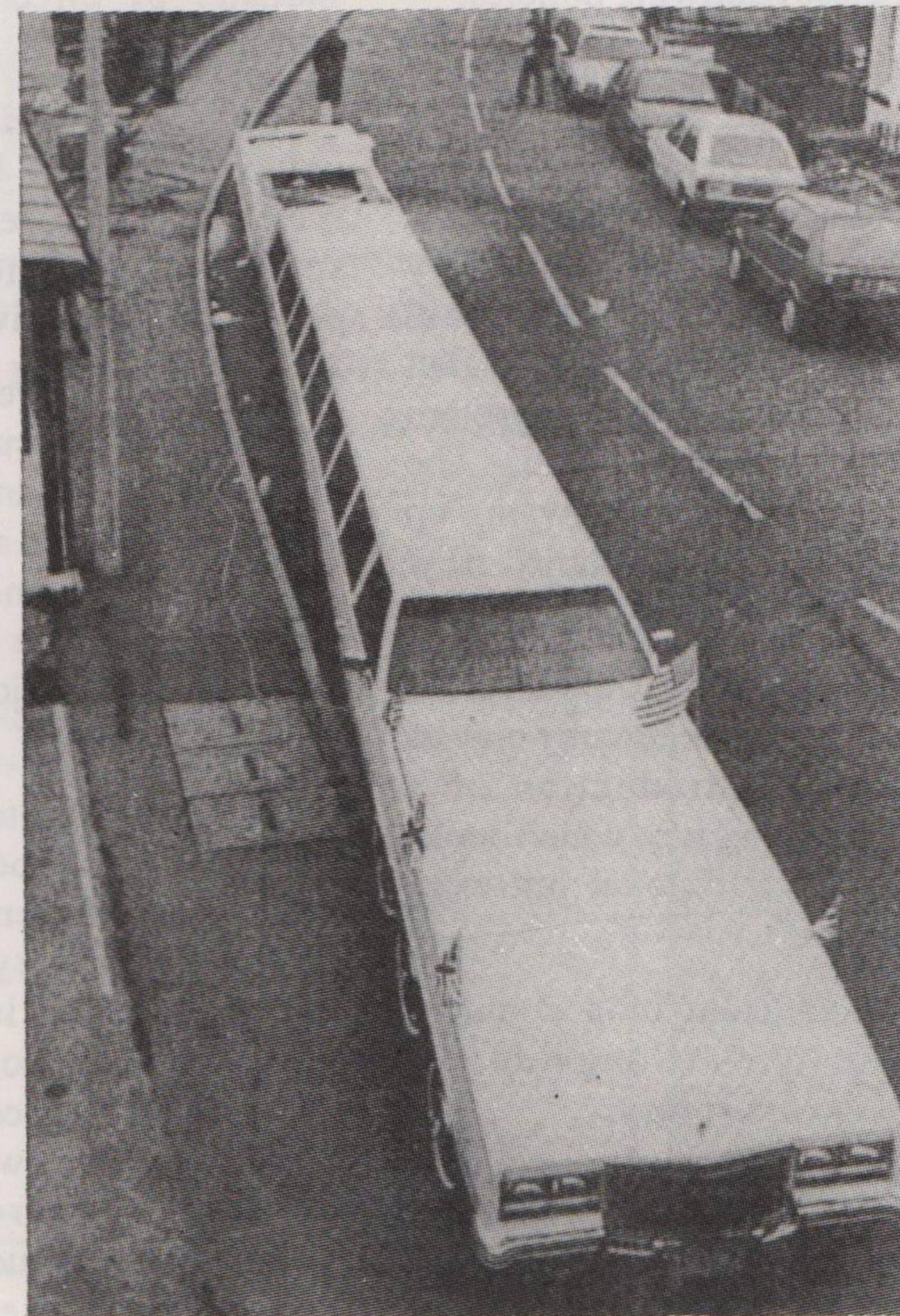
Announcing the proposed new independent bulletin *War Report*, Foot recalled the anti-Vietnam war movement when the Free Communication Group was formed, publishing the *Free Communication Bulletin*, though that hadn't dealt with a single issue.

Reading the leaflet announcing *War Report*, I see it is intended as a "quality tabloid newspaper concentrating on facts". We should certainly welcome such a paper, for before our arguments can persuade we need to create a climate in which the majority of our fellow citizens do not run as 'the pack' behind the editor of *The Sun* but in the opposite direction.

Freedom reporter

Lucky Dogs?

(continued from page 7)



An interesting philosophical comment by Andrew Jankel, the sales director and son of the maker:

"He rejected suggestions that a vehicle capable of three times the speed limit was irresponsible. 'That could be said about anything that goes over 70 mph. It's not an equation that figures in many people's minds'. He added: 'The faster the better'."

Young Andrew is only 23. The present campaign in favour of random drink-drive tests is only directed at one section of mad drivers. The young don't need to drink to be mad drivers!

Top prize for the obscene in our motor car culture is the world's longest limousine — a 72ft Cadillac Eldorado weighing more than seven tons recently pictured at Weybridge, home of the 200 mph Jankel car referred to above. This monster 'designed' by a Finn includes "a 20-seat TV room, sun-deck, bar, jacuzzi and 600ft turning circle". No indication of cost!

We would like to think that in an anarchist society — or even in any sane society nobody would want any of these things. What sane person would want to spend a lifetime in a room surrounded by ten computers spewing out information about coffee and soya futures? What dog would want a collar in a free society or earrings, even studded with diamonds?

What a long way we have yet to travel to be truly civilised!

I see James Anderton and Graham Gooch were in the New Year Honours list, Bert ... Naturally. Anderton was recommended by God, and Gooch for his services to apartheid ... Surprised Cecil Parkinson didn't get a knighthood ... He doesn't seem to know how to use one anyway, Daisy ... What do you think about funding the Arts? ... Bloody imposition. They don't ask us where we would like our money to go. I might want to subsidise bingo, for all they know. I don't mind subsidising the library. In fact I wouldn't object to a small charge on the books I borrow, but if they only had

education of rich kids who grow up to infest Parliament and find other ways to clobber the poor ... Why didn't the Labour Party put a stop to it when they were in power, Bert? ... They had the chance to when our MP, Joan Lestor, was a Junior Minister, but she let herself be talked out of it. No wonder she was beaten by the Tory, John Watts ... I thought you said women would make a better fist of things than men? ... Trouble is, she had to have the operation before she got into Parliament, Daisy, a real woman doesn't stand a chance of getting elected ... What

Waiting for the Bus

Shakespeare on the shelves, I'd be right miffed. Chacun son gout, I say, but let them pay for their own hobbies ... What was that you said, Bert? ... If you like it you pay for it. Sorry, Daisy, it's reading the quality newspapers ... Why do you buy them? They're expensive ... For the news, and the letters. Mind you, there's precious little else. No tits, but there's plenty of titillation all the same, especially in some of the book reviews. Last Sunday, one reviewer was on about how a famous couple used to send each other specimens of their pubic hair through the post. Beats all the tits in *The Sun*. And it's to do with literature ... It's to do with adolescence, if you ask me, Bert ... Don't know what you're missing, Daisy, for a few extra pence, you can learn all about what Eric Gill and Andre Gide and Oscar Wilde and Joe Orton got up to in their spare time. I'll have to stop taking the qualities and start looking at tits before I get an obsession ... What's up with them, Bert? ... They never left school, not the ones that write so much about them ... is that what they mean by academics? ... You've got it. They sit all day reading and scribbling while *Sun* readers build their cars and make their roads and put food in the shops for them. And make their bloody typewriters. Then they turn round and call everybody else philistines and peasants ... I see Eton College has notified their intention to build a housing estate on the only piece of land left on this side of Slough ... Yes, they'll get away with it and make a mint, what with no taxes to pay on their profits ... Money going to money as usual ... There's people struggling to pay their poll tax and having to subsidise the

on earth are you on about, Bert? ... I mean a brain op, not a sex change, to make them think like men ... What do men think about then? ... Power. Take Kalim Siddique, for example, who lives just down the road when he's not visiting the Ayatollahs. he's whipping up hatred all over the *Satanic Verses* because he wants to be noticed. Won't be a contest until he's behind bars or deported. I bet most of Slough's Muslims can't wait for him to be taken out of circulation. I bet he scares them as much as he does us ... Why are Muslims so aggressive, Bert? ... Well, whether you like Jesus or not, he did have this thing about forgiveness and turning the other cheek, but Mohammed didn't have that side to him ... If you ask me, our bishops don't seem to have it either ... You've noticed it too, but what can you expect if they are chosen by the Establishment. Mind you, the Roman Catholic bishops seem to be keeping their mouths shut over the Gulf crisis. And that's hardly any better than falling in behind the government. I know it's all bluff, anyway, but that's not the point ... Keep your voice down, Bert, there might be a bishop on the bus ... Pigs might fly ... I bet Bush is furious with the Germans for trying to have their own talks with Saddam ... Pull the other one, Daisy. He probably arranged for them to do it. Bush doesn't want a war. He's trying to find a way out if Saddam calls his bluff, so that it doesn't appear that he has climbed down ... Hope you're right. The Labour Party are playing a crafty old game over the crisis ... They've got their knickers in a right old twist. A Falklands war is what they like — all over before they have to commit themselves either way. This affair

Lucky dogs?

An eight-page piece of junk mail that added to the waste paper bin recently was to advertise a new paper for 'dog lovers' and being Christmas it gave samples, some illustrated, such as "a height adjustable feeding bowl" at £12.95, and a dog toothpaste and brush for a mere £5.99, a Fido fax for only £31.45, but for your classy dog — the kind Elizabeth Taylor would be photographed with in the Sunday tabloid supplements — is "a diamond-studded collar for £7,500, a personalised silver bowl for £600 or a pair of diamond earrings". And the blurb reassures the disbelievers: "No, this is not the contents of a dressing room in Dallas but just a few of the latest gift ideas for your pet".

Somebody else's pet is also doing very well. 29 year old Angelos Michalopoulos of New York makes £14,000 a day according to *The Sunday Times* (23rd December) "trading on the world's financial markets without leaving his New York apartment".

Surrounded by a bank of fifteen computers showing price movements for 45 world markets such as coffee and soya futures and treasury bonds,

is giving them the screaming ab-dabs because they want to go along with the crowd, and they don't know which way the crowd is going ... I don't think much of that ex-CND woman, Joan Ruddock, abstaining like she did in the vote on whether to back Bush. can't think why she didn't vote against it. I suppose you would say she's had the operation too. Where do they have it done? ... At university. Takes about three years ... Vaclav Havel seems a worried man. Reckons freedom is turning the Czechs against one another. Wants extra presidential powers. Perhaps he'll do a bunk soon, like you said ... Tell me the old, old story. Most people seem to think freedom is owning a motor car. And if they've only got a Trabant or a Skoda, they think freedom is having a Ford Escort. Lech Walesa thinks freedom is the Roman Catholic church ... Mrs Potts votes Conservative because she says they believe in freedom and the Socialists don't ... People do make a distinction between Tory and Socialist, and Communist and Fascist, and Left and Right, but what matters is whether you are authoritarian or liberal, and the real enemy is the authoritarians, whatever they call themselves ... Got the passes ready, Bert? Here it is ...

EFC

he apparently "commits huge sums and sells within moments so that his money rarely leaves his bank". May a simpleton ask: and what has he produced to account for the £14,000 he has made that day?

As a gambler — but one who studied ten years of market reports in back copies of the *Wall Street Journal* to devise his system — Angelos M. explains why nine out of ten people who trade in foreign exchange futures or commodities lose money. They are not hard-working and lack a good nervous system. You have to keep your cool. Angelos does this by changing shirts four times a day.

Angelos by now has arrived in London to open an office here. According to *The Sunday Times* "scores of London dealers have offered to work for him since insiders learned of his plans".

You certainly need the Angelos M's to afford diamond-studded dog collars and £5 million desirable residences, not to mention the latest "big boy's toy" from the Jankel Corporation of Weybridge, Surrey, illustrated in *The Independent* (20th December).

It's a 200 mph sports car which we are told "will project its exclusive owners to the legal maximum in under four seconds". The makers are aiming to make 72 of these lethal monsters a year. They will cost a mere £98,000 and most will be going to the United States and the Far East — thank goodness!

(continued on page 6)

Readin', ritin', 'rithmetic and religion

Church schools with local authority grants often attract pupils from non-religious families whose parents believe they supply a good education without ramming religion down kids' throats.

If the Roman Catholic bishops have their way, this will never be true in Catholic schools. A pastoral letter, read out in all the Catholic churches in Britain on 27th January, stipulates that at least 10% of all class time must be devoted to religious 'education'.

Pastoral letters on any subject are infrequent, and letters circulated simultaneously by all the bishops in the country are rare. According to Bishop David of Leeds, the bishops fear that schools might be tempted to improve GCSE results by giving more time to GCSE subjects.

I wish I could agree with Eddie May's 'Prediction' (*Freedom* 15th December 1990) because if he was to prove to be right the Labour Party would have no argument but to adopt in full a comprehensive left-wing charter probably under the able leadership of Mr Skinner. However, it is very unlikely that the controllers of the politicians will allow that to happen. So instead this is my prediction for the next general election. A shock overall majority Labour victory as a result of many Southern Tory seats exchanging directly to Labour. These seats will include Bath where Tory poll tax demon instigator Chris Pattern will be groomed for future part leadership by tasting the teeth of the other half of the nation for at least one term in Parliament. No doubt the 'fat cat' will return to win back the Bath seat but 'little Moscow' will be the unpalatable truth for Pattern at the next election. Other Labour gains will be aided by 'long-term unemployment blackspots' such as Stonehouse in Gloucestershire right in the heart of the 'Royal Tory homeland'. Unfortunately for anarchists, the Labour Party are extremely fit and organised, borne out by heavy media upsurge of old film footage to bash the communists. What is more the Labour Party are looking like the only credible government with their secret 10 manifesto to boot as well.

This manifesto ought to be critically examined by anarchists now because all

PREDICTION or FANTASY?

anarchists are aware of the dangers of seemingly coherent government having just lived through twelve years of coherent Tory-speak. The Labour Party intend to bribe the disenfranchised masses with these following policies:

1. Defence: Nuclear disarmament piecemeal multilateral initiatives in accord with an overall East-West negotiation framework. Leading to arms conversion of many British military hardware producers. Piecemeal withdrawal of troops from all conflict zones including Saudi Arabia, Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands. The Belize garrison looks likely to swamp-up some of the overflow and new artic-training initiatives look likely.
2. The Economy: Major objectives to reduce unemployment. Economy may be managed by the introduction of a new-fangled prices policy which looks set to disappoint traditional left-wing activists in its range.
3. The encouragement of a common European currency alongside the retention of a local currency.
4. Piecemeal initiatives intending to agendarise voting reform and with the long-term objective to introduce some form of proportional representation.

5. Retrogressive legislation to remove the poll tax and new legislation to officially introduce the new roof tax.

6. Encouragement of manufacturing industry by direct national and local investment.

7. Public spending increases on individual welfare benefit rates, overall NHS funding, education overall spending, and new investment in publicly-owned private housing.

8. Transport conversion as part of an overall environmental programme intended to switch investment from roads to tunnels towards a strengthening of an integrated rail and seaway network which will include building rail freight terminals at all major urban conurbation centres.

9. Civil liberty protection measures will include the introduction of special piecemeal women's initiatives and probably some type of 'press and publishing' reform intended to curtail the excesses of the tabloid media. In addition MI5 and MI6 procedures are likely to become subject to written law and given orthodox hierarchical structural strengthening. A judicial overview will also be instigated as an ongoing

procedure to investigate amongst other things the rising number of wrongful convictions for very serious crimes. As part of this review the Diplock Courts in Northern Ireland look likely to be removed.

10. Pricing: Three central initiatives will be able to price the government's policies.

- a) Increasing the tax burden on the top 10% of wealth and income earners.

- b) Transfusing direct investment expenditure from profits generated from currency exchanges and overseas investments.

- c) Using the proceeds in stock from privatisation.

Anarchists will be most concerned that the Labour Party have a coherent and priced secret manifesto and will be particularly concerned that the Labour Party intends exploiting the 'dirty money' gained from privatisation. It is essential that anarchists recognise the secret manifesto of the Labour Party before they come to power so that we are able to organise to subvert some of the intended excesses. For instance, the Labour Party are intending to appeal to women generally and especially young mothers whom they hope to bribe with

initiatives introduced by the back door of education by promising every child aged 3-5 a place in a state run nursery if desired by the child's parents, regardless of the free rights of the child. Moreover the Labour Party intend to appeal to votes of the racial minorities by initiating special ethnic investigation units within local police forces whose primary duties will be to investigate race-based attacks. These initiatives go directly against the widely-held anarchist belief that there is only one race — the human race. Anarchists may feel these initiatives are designed to disunite local communities into skin colour groups rather than unite the community by eradicating violence against the person. Moreover the Labour Party is committed to breaking up the police's male-based hierarchy and intend to further appeal to women by trying to instigate a police force which is 'led' by equal numbers of male/female black/white officers per ratio with the particular local community, and regardless of ability. This is a dangerous time for anarchists with a straight choice between the publicly-derided neo-fascists Tory Party and a surface-competent Labour Party intent upon exercising power. Opposition is bound to be subdued and quiet in these times as we as anarchists seek to slowly reaffirm our rightful beliefs once again that the only government worth having is *no government*.

AC

A Romantic View of the World?

For far too long anarchists have based their thinking upon a romantic view of the world. This was formed in the nineteenth century when the future of industrialism was in doubt. It looked back to some mythical golden age of self-sufficient, self-governing communes. It ignored the grindingly hard work, the poverty and bucolic ignorance which the majority of those living in such communes would have to endure. This romanticism ignored the realities of urbanisation, of technological, social and political change.

The thinking of many of the contributors to *Freedom* seems to be locked in the mid/late nineteenth century. We are on the threshold of the 21st century and we must open our eyes to the facts. The capitalist market industrial system has worked. It has given a standard of living to countless millions of people that could only be dreamt about a hundred years ago — or even fifty years ago. What was relevant when industrialism was in its youth, when citizen representation in government had to be fought for from the barricades, when we still lived in a mainly agricultural world, is not necessarily

relevant today.

We can say quite reasonably that we do not, as yet, have real democracy, that the system has impoverished thousands of millions of people, that it is in the process of destroying the planet. The question we have to answer, comrades, is what would we replace it with? Whatever system we come up with must be at least as efficient in producing the goods and services as the one we wish to replace. There are those who believe that our problems would be solved if we did away with money and the market system. Alright, do away with markets and money, but how will we distribute goods and services, how will we signal to the producers to tell them what our needs are? Money and the market system does this very efficiently — and no-one is in charge.

If we do not want anarchism to be the political equivalent of the flat earth theory, we must confront the realities of the late twentieth century. This is an age of urbanisation, of a global market, of almost instantaneous communication and information transfer, of travel. It is also the age in which we are likely to see the death of the nation state, in Europe at least, and its replacement by a

supra-national state. Where does this leave anarchist philosophy and political theory? We have to address the problems of our age in the terms of the last decade of the twentieth century, and not those of the nineteenth. The question has to be asked, can anarchism work in a technologically advanced urban society — if it can, how would it work, why should it work, and who should it work for? These are the questions we should be addressing in the columns of *Freedom*.

I believe that this movement has within it the answers to creating a truly human centred society. A society in which the people will be the masters of the machines, rather than their slaves. A society in which people are treated and become an end in themselves, rather than the means to another's profit. A society based upon co-operation and mutuality, rather than upon selfishness and competition. This movement is, I believe, the wave of the future. The future is now. Comrades, you can only take advantage of this moment if you step out of the fog of romanticism and into the cold hard light of reality.

Ken Atkinson
Birmingham

Natural Anarchist

Dear editors,

Readers may be interested in a recent experience of mine which occurred when baby-sitting with a friend.

We had dished up our Chinese take-away to ourselves and Nina, a toddler, and were eating off trays. Nina soon put down her bowl and came over to take food off my plate. I resisted an impulse to stop this. She then went back to her bowl and gave me food from it in return. My heart leapt — she wanted to share! We beamed at Nina and conjectured as to how some parents might react to this situation: probably stop it, we thought, before the child has time to show that he/she wants to offer food as well as take it. The child might also get a smack to drive home the lesson in 'manners'. On their return, Nina's parents confirmed that she had not been taught to share food. They were feeling rather embarrassed by the incident although we, of course, made it clear that we didn't mind in the least.

As an anarchist, it made me feel all warm inside, and confirmed to me that children learn from adults to be greedy and possessive; such traits are not examples of natural behaviour,

far from it. Not being a parent, I've had little chance to observe such things, and wonder what other anarchists have seen in the behaviour of their children.

JG

John Hewetson: a personal tribute

Let us now salute
The departure
Of that gentle anarchist
Of quiet resolution

Intimately attuned
To the human condition
He dispensed that precious balm,
Warm sympathy without
recrimination

In large jars.
Absorbed all foibles
Yet turned the other cheek

Walk then serenely, John
Unto that eternal silence
Your path strewn
With petals of gratitude
From all those
Upon whom you laid a gentle hand.

SF
Hailsham

White & Blue?

Why did Miles Smith ('What is crime and who commits it anyway?', *Freedom*, 12th January 1991) make that peculiar distinction between working class and middle class which is so often made by contributors? He uses that distinction to adulate the working class and sneer at the middle class. Does this distinction have any validity? Does it enable a wider understanding to be had or does it rather obscure issues and direct aggression, blame and envy towards white collar folk, whose only real distinguishing mark is the fact that they work in an office. This misapplied use of the class approach is anachronistic and should be consigned to the dump-site along with the rhetoric of the cold war.

To explain how I've arrived at this stance I will declare myself. Born and bred middle class, force fed its values and stereotypes, and educated to degree level. Inspired by the Cultural Revolution and Mao's exhortions to the young cadres to go out to the factories and fields in order to transfer society, I went off to work in a blue bib-and-brace overall with matching jacket (with

collar), I lasted the pace some ten years before meeting my original destiny and buying a nice white shirt with matching cabinet, chair and desk.

My view of the differences between white and blue? None, apart from any self-inflicted differences.

The white collar middle classes corporate crime "stealing from work anything from a pencil to false expenses" is equally matched by blue collar working class corporate crime — stealing from work anything that can't be nailed down. In fact the blues were far more adventurous and imaginative than the whites — examples are many: nicking electric cable off contractors, burning it, and weighing in the copper; visiting the site after office hours and pinching a steam cleaner; having a peculiar ability to rip off fluorescent jackets frequently and hence qualify for some more. I'm not kidding, going into some of the local pubs couldn't be attempted without sunglasses. Strangely enough there was an unwritten code: if anything was nicked which affected the people themselves it was frowned upon,

e.g. stealing a piece of plastic waste pipe from a washing machine, causing extra work to mop up the flooded floor; nicking toilet paper so no-one could wipe their arse.

As well as 'theft', fraud was embarked on with equal relish — fiddles with clock cards, time sheets and damage claims. Yet as soon as any individual's money was nicked it was a totally different ball game. Accusations flew and the culprit was keenly sought. On one occasion I remember, a collection was taken to replace some money that had disappeared.

But I digress from my main contention that the distinction between middle and working class is fallacious. After getting the office job I was intrigued to discover that there were the same types of people in the office as on the shop-floor. They were as much driven by the organisational system as those 'down below', as powerless to control it, and having no more influence.

It is really only when a manager has to show his mettle in, say, a disciplinary case that the distinction between middle and working class becomes apparent. But to blame the manager and not the system is ludicrous. To seek to set the working class against the middle class is only a recipe for internecine warfare — the system, the way of organising is at the root of the problem.

Ian Drayton

Re 'UCW and RM — a marriage'

Dear comrades,

As an ex-postman and former member of the old Union of Post Office Workers (UPW) which in recent years has been re-named to become the UCW, I wish to comment on the item under the above heading by PHE (*Freedom* no. 1, January 1991).

While I in no way disagree with PHE as to the nature of the present socio-economic system and its consequential influence on the structure and role of the UCW, which by definition can only function within the limitations of the "political, social, economic life at large", I do however have some reservations concerning PHE's advocacy of "building an alternative anarcho-union".

It seems to me that with the agreed "lack of anarcho-syndicalism in this land", the creation of an albeit propagandist anarcho-syndicalist union is not possible until substantial numbers of workers within and

outside of the existing unions actively seek to put an end to the present socio-economic system.

The growth of the will to change must come before the means to assist and/or effect such necessary change. The will to change arises from a perceived need assisted by the availability of ideas and information, which is essentially a propagandist function.

The current propagandist efforts of the advocates of anarchism and syndicalism need more active support than they are getting at the moment, from us frustrated anarcho-syndicalists. Premature creation of anarcho-unions within industry can only divert resources away from the essential concentration of effort on the task conducive of encouraging the growth of a climate of opinion demanding a change of "this sorry scheme of things entire".

Out of the shell of the old will come the new is equally true of the organisations/means needed to change and function in a better world.

Tom Carlile

More readers' letters on page 5

Max and Mia Lind in Sweden are working on a Nordisk Anarkist Net (Scandinavian anarchist network), a catalogue of anarchist groups, periodicals and individuals. Please send addresses to them at: Smassens Väg 17c, 811 51 Sandviken, Sweden.

IF YOUR SUB IS DUE FOR RENEWAL PLEASE DEAL WITH IT NOW!

News from Angel Alley

Subscription renewals have been coming in at a steady rate in January though there has been a noticeable slowing down in the last week of the month. In our last notes we said that pink reminders were going to be sent with this issue. Because of the extra work involved sorting out labels, etc., we won't be sending them out until the next issue of *Freedom*. Readers who want to save us the extra work next time will be sending their renewals now. Those in doubt about the state of their subs should consult the label on the envelope containing this issue. The numbers on the bottom line tell you everything! Ignore the first, record, number. If the next one is 96, that means your sub expired with the 12th December issue. January 12th is 97, 26th January is 98, 2nd February is 99 and 16th February is 100.

If there is a third number it refers to the issue of *The Raven* when your subscription runs out. If it is number 12 and you are expecting to receive number 13 on the Anarchists East and West, then renew your sub now because we just cannot be as easy-going with *The Raven* as we are with *Freedom*. That issue is making good progress. We are still hoping for publication by the end of February.

The Gulf war is provoking a number of anti-war demonstrations throughout the country — not just in London. *Freedom* should be on sale at all these demonstrations and meetings. Whatever ideological criticisms we can make of the Trotskyists, they have always been active propagandists in the streets creating the impression of a much larger following than was/is the case. In World War Two the anarchist street sellers easily matched the Trots. The most successful sellers at Hyde Park at one time were the breakaway pacifists of the Forward Movement, and the anarchists succeeded in 'seducing' them to anarchism. They included John Hewetson and Frederick Lohr, who for a number of

years were among our best propagandists, the latter as writer and public speaker and John as one of the editors of *Freedom* for some ten years. So what about selling *Freedom* at the demos and meetings and 'seducing' disillusioned socialists, communists, trotskysts for whom 'the god has failed'?

Another way you can help to get *Freedom* more widely read is to send us £1 to cover the postage and we will send you a selection of recent back numbers for distribution to sympathetic friends.

We print below another healthy donations list and thank all who have contributed. We also thank the growing number of our readers for whom even paying their subscription renewals is, as it were, a gesture of solidarity with *Freedom*, for they can ill-afford it on the dole or old age pension.

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1991 SEASON OF MEETINGS

- 15th February - 'The Thatcherite Phenomena and After: Anarchist Alternatives?' (Speaker Peter Neville)
- 22nd February - 'Building the Anarchist City' (speaker Andrew Lainton)
- 1st March - General discussion
- 8th March - 'Anarcho-Pacifism' (speaker Marten Low)
- 15th March - General discussion
- 22nd March - 'Anarchism in Spain: The '90s' (speaker J.M. Alventosa Ferri)
- 19th April - 'Anarchism and the National Curriculum' (speaker Chris Draper)
- 26th April - General discussion
- 3rd May - 'Race: The Problem for Libertarians' (speaker Peter Neville)
- 10th May - General discussion

Volunteer speakers or discussion group leaders are wanted for the 'To be arranged' and 'Discussion group' slots as above and from 17th May to 31st May 1991 — all at 8pm to 10pm. We hope to continue the meetings from 7th June to 14th July 1991 either at the same time or at the earlier time of 6pm to 8pm (however, if we are the only group using the Centre the staff may wish to close at 8pm). Anyone interested in leading a discussion to contact Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW.

FREEDOM fortnightly

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Many of these titles will be reviewed in due course.

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