

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

Vol. 52 No. 7

6 APRIL 1991

FIFTY PENCE

"Government is not reason, it is not eloquence — it is force."

George Washington

Iraq threatened with famine and disease **END SANCTIONS NOW!**

The true extent of the devastation wrought by the American air force on Iraq can no longer be kept from the world. The media can no longer distract public attention from the facts by constant repetition of the crimes of Saddam Hussein's troops in gory detail as well as retailing all the rumours and unconfirmed accounts of napalm attacks on the growing opposition to the regime, and other war atrocities.

All the boasting and claims by General Schwarzkopf — lapped up by the media — that US modern weaponry plus the coalition concern to pinpoint military targets and spare the civilians ("We have nothing

against the Iraqi people") — have now been proved to be completely false.

The right wing daily *Independent* which has supported all along the war against Iraq, and all the propaganda about precision bombing "arcing infallibly towards the cross-wires of high-magnification sight" as "one of the most enduring of the second Gulf war", is at least honest enough to recognise now that after all it was just not true.

As was to be expected, the official video shown to the press of the bombings of large clearly defined targets — such as bunkers and bridges — was carefully selected. Now

according to a "senior Pentagon official" quoted in *The Washington Post* some of them missed and the majority of allied bombs were unguided. According to the official, of the 88,500 tons of bombs dropped on Iraq and occupied Kuwait, only 6,520 tons were precision guided and 70% of the 88,500 tons missed their targets.

A UN mission to Iraq led by the Under Secretary General since the ceasefire, has reported not on the destruction of that country's military potential which was, according to the Pentagon's updated estimate, almost total (3,700 out of 4,280 tanks, 2,400 out of 2,870 armoured fighting vehicles and 2,600 out of 3,110 artillery pieces) but of the effects on the infrastructure and people of Iraq of the 62,000 tons of bombs that 'missed their targets'.

The UN report described as "hard hitting and confidential" has, like all confidential documents these days,

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Arms Business Looking Up

Any blue-eyed political optimists who are by any chance thinking that the ending of the cold war and the convincing 'lesson' recently given to that third world 'upstart' Iraq will mean a drastic reduction in the arms business will be sorely disappointed.

The West may consider reducing their own respective budgets on so-called defence, if only to finance projects which it now cannot 'afford' but which electorally might win them votes. Obviously the British government is more concerned with the vote potential of poll tax 'sweeteners' than it is with the jobs lost with the closure of Barrow in Furness shipyard or the loss of orders at British Aerospace, where it reckons it hasn't all that number of votes to lose.

But the arms business for Britain, the United States, France, China and the Soviet Union — the pillars of the United Nations, for they alone have the veto which can scupper any decisions taken by the rest of the world — is big business. In 1987 they accounted for no less than 75% of total arms sales in the world. The Soviet Union with 25% followed by the United States with 18.3%, Britain a close third with 17.1% (and may

have overtaken the US since Mrs Thatcher spent some of her travelling time bullying third world countries to buy British), followed by France and China.*

It is surely ironic as well as disgusting that in April 1989 an arms fair was held in Baghdad to show the latest military hardware to Saddam Hussein and his high command and was attended by companies from 30 countries including thirteen from the UK. Less than two years later the would-be

* We quote from a valuable feature 'Merchants of Death' by an American journalist Richard Evans in the *Geographical Magazine*, January 1989. He explains that Britain's ascendancy "has been the government's willingness to assume a more active role in arms selling. A huge \$1.7 billion Saudi order for jet fighters, helicopters, airbase construction, mine-sweepers and training programmes was won last July after repeated visits to Riyadh by Defence Secretary George Younger. Government assistance in pushing the sale through is understandable; the agreement assures some 18,000 jobs at British Aerospace. Mrs Thatcher herself has often used her influence to try to win key arms deals while travelling abroad."

salesmen were able to give the Iraqi people a practical demonstration of that military hardware, with a vengeance.

If one accepts the fact that business is business whether it is in human flesh or in lethal weapons, then today one can expect that only a minority will protest against the merchants of death. According to the sub-heading to an article in the Business Section of *The Independent on Sunday* (3rd March): 'Now the battle begins in the arms business'.

"Just as the Cold War thaw has begun to melt the prospects of Britain's defence industry, spectacular successes in the Gulf have rescued the marketing men, stamping the 'combat-proven' seal on a variety of weapons. Manufacturers, desperate for exports, scent rich pickings

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End Sanctions Now!

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been leaked and a copy made available to *The Independent*. Even the Under Secretary General was shocked by the scale of Iraq's 'humanitarian' problem. "Nothing we had seen or read had quite prepared us for the particular form of devastation which has now befallen the country", he wrote, noting that the recent conflict "has wrought near-apocalyptic results upon the economic infrastructure of what was until last January a highly urban and mechanised society".

The report bluntly states that "sanctions decided upon by the Security Council ... seriously affected the country's ability to feed the people", since it appears that Iraq actually imported something like 70% of its food needs before the war.

"All evidence indicates that flour is now at a critically low level and that supplies of sugar, rice, tea, vegetable oil, powdered milk and pulses are currently at critical low levels or have been exhausted." So low are stocks of powdered milk that they are reserved exclusively for sick children on medical prescriptions.

The report describes the state of the infrastructure as a result of the carpet bombing by the 'coalition' air forces in the following terms: "Now most means of

modern life support have been destroyed to a pre-industrial age but with all the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on an intensive use of energy and technology"

With the coming of the hot season outbreaks of typhoid and cholera cannot be avoided, and if nothing is done to repair the sewage plants and the electric generators, and the fresh water plants, these horrific diseases will ravage the whole country. A Newsnight reports on TV2 showed raw sewage flowing down a street in Baghdad. Western doctors in the programme saw with their own eyes people drinking water contaminated with human faeces.

According to *The East Anglian Daily Times* (23rd March), "The White House last night vowed that American fighters would shoot down any more Iraqi planes that left the ground and insisted there was no remorse over the Gulf war devastation of Iraq" (our italics).

Surely the time has now come for the world to unite to halt the megalomaniacs in the White House. The first step is to remove the sanctions against Iraq on all essentials so that yet another 'holocaust' on an unprecedented scale can be averted.

Arms Business Looking Up

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in the Far East markets — but competition from the Americans will be tough."

Indeed the article in question opens with the statement that "The arms trade has never been for the faint-hearted, as visitors to the Baghdad arms fair in April 1989 will remember". And the article proceeds to go into detail as to the best-selling weapons more or less in the same vein as the publishers announce the ten top selling novels. One aspect of this disgusting trade in the weapons of death is that most of the clients are the countries of the third world which, apart from the oil-rich states, can ill-afford the 'luxury' of an army and weapons except to protect its ruling class from the masses.

Apart from the Big Five exporters, already referred to, it was interesting and significant to learn that Egypt is an exporter of arms and that 82% went to Iraq! And democratic Israel not only receives arms from its USA paymaster but also exported \$1,000 million to equally democratic countries: Taiwan, South Africa, Argentina, Colombo, Chile!

The arms business has a lobby as important as the road lobby. After all an estimated 20% of the industrial workforce in France, Britain, West Germany and Italy is employed either directly or indirectly in the so-called 'business of defence'. As we write these

lines, British Aerospace employees in their thousands are demonstrating at the threat to their well-paid skilled jobs. In Barrow in Furness more thousands of jobs are threatened because no more submarines are being commissioned.

Meanwhile in the United States we are told (*The Guardian*, 19th March) that "the Bush administration is seeking to boost the export prospects of its beleaguered defence industry by granting credit guarantees to arms manufacturers". Bush is going against the will of Congress and bowing to "strenuous lobbying" by the arms industry which:

"complains that the export-credit guarantees offered by other countries, in particular France and Italy, put US exporters at a disadvantage."

Let's face up to the realities of life. If scientists refused to work on research connected with weapons (as much as 80% of the R&D — Research and Development — is on 'defence'); if workers and management refused to work in industries connected directly or indirectly with the 'business of defence' (20% of the workforce), and if young men and women refused to become mercenaries — and if conscription were introduced, refused to be called up — then the politicians and the merchants of death would be out of work and we the people could start solving the real problem of our world: the equitable distribution of the wealth that is there for all to share.

Chomsky on the American view of the New World Order

Altruism about the New World Order is that it is economically tripolar and militarily unipolar. Recent events help one to understand the interplay of these factors.

As the glorious 'turkey shoot' began in the desert, *The New York Times* published a fragment of a national security review from the early days of the Bush administration, dealing with 'third world threats'. It reads: "In cases where the US confronts much weaker enemies, our challenge will be not simply to defeat them, but to defeat them decisively and rapidly". Any other outcome would be "embarrassing" and might "undercut political support".

"Much weaker enemies" pose only one threat to the US: the threat of independence, always intolerable. The US will support the most murderous tyrant as long as he plays along, and will labour to overthrow third world democrats if they depart from their service function. The documentary and

historical records are clear on this score.

The leaked fragment makes no reference to peaceful means. As understood on all sides, in its confrontation with third world threats the US is "politically weak"; its demands are not likely to gain public support, so diplomacy is a dangerous exercise. And a "much weaker" opponent must not merely be defeated but pulverised if the central lesson of World Order is to be learned: we are the masters, and you shine our shoes.

There are other useful lessons. The domestic population must appreciate "the stark and vivid definition of principle ... baked into [George Bush] during his years at Andover and Yale, that honour and duty compels you to punch the bully in the face". These are the admiring words of the reporter who released the policy review, then quoting the hero himself: "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all". No longer, the President exults, will we be troubled by "the sickly inhibitions against the use of military force", to borrow the terms of Reaganite intellectual Norman Podhoretz.

From an important article 'The weak shall inherit nothing' in *The Guardian*, 25th March 1991.

The Sunday Press

It's Election Fever for Some

The budget, plus the poll tax bonanza (which will not prove such a bonanza once the public pays for it in extra Value Added Tax and increases in petrol, beer, etc.) really got the Sunday press into a state of electoral frenzy.

The Observer considered that "Major fails to raise election fever" in spite of all kinds of promises to the party faithful including an end to inheritance taxes, at least in as much as it affected the passing on of homes.

The Sunday Times headline was that "Budget fails to prevent Tory slide" and on the strength of the Labour lead in the polls considered "June election prospects dampened".

The Sunday Express, more Thatcherite than Thatcher, splashed across the front page "Labour pulls six points ahead" and draws the same conclusion as *The Sunday Telegraph*.

That other Sunday Thatcher-worshipper *The Sunday Telegraph* leads with "local tax blow to Tory hopes" and reckons that "election plans hit as voters reject reforms".

The Mail on Sunday's readers are presented with an "exclusive NOP poll" which puts the Tories "back on top" and blazoned across the front page, the headline "Poll boost for Tories". No pessimism in the "newspaper not a snooze-paper".

"John Major's decision to abolish the poll tax has set him on course for election victory. It is overwhelmingly backed by voters and has revitalised the Tories chances in key seats they feared they could not hold."

The tabloids of course had more important things for their front pages.

The Sunday Mirror also has an 'exclusive' but it's "My romps with two-timing Rod", while its stable-mate *The People* exposes the money-grabbing women in the Mark Phillips affair "That's rich". While in *The News of the World* a

heart-jerking case of "I lost my lover to Di" sprawls all over the page.

So there it is. Yer pays yer money and yer takes yer choice.

The Loony Right Column

Bargains on the NHS

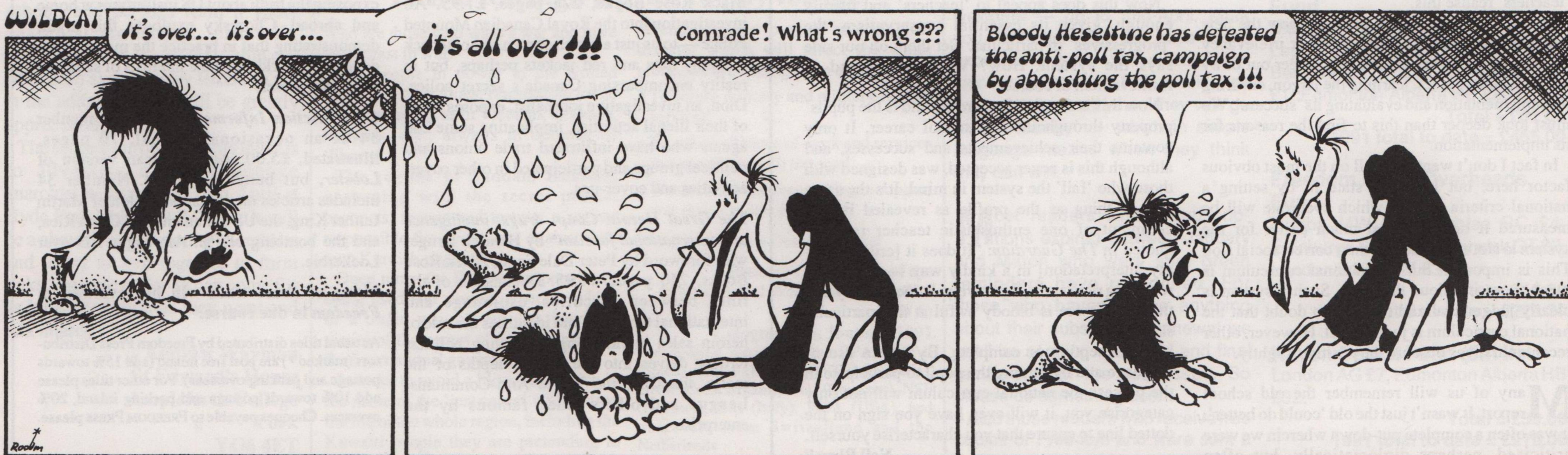
Sheffield's first self-governing hospital has appointed as its chairman one Bev Stokes, a very successful businessman and chairman of Basset Foods, known to young and old as manufacturers of liquorice allsorts. Critics claim that his medical knowledge does not extend beyond the purgative effects of liquorice.

Clearly Mr Stokes is the right man for the job since the government demands that all public services should be market-based. In this case the money a hospital receives will depend on the number of patients it has treated. Think of the way patients will be 'persuaded' to go home as soon as possible so as to have a bed available for another victim!

Jack O'Sullivan looking "at the hospital plans to attract more patients — and more money" writes in *The Independent*:

"This is the world of competition and business efficiency, new to public sector medicine in Britain. 'Let's just say we can do two hernias for the price of one down the road' says Neil Mackay, the chief executive of the Northern General. He brandishes a list of prices for operations, ranging from hysterectomies (£1,481) to varicose veins (£472). 'A typical contract is for, say, £1 million to treat 1,000 patients, with the money being paid gradually over the year', he says."

What next?



Anti Poll Tax Victory Parade, 23rd March 1991

This year's national poll tax demo began at Victoria Embankment by Cleopatra's Needle. Due to begin at 12.00, it didn't start moving until 1.00pm because so many people were still arriving. The route led us through Trafalgar Square and finally to Hyde Park where the All Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation (ABAPTF) had set up a platform for speeches.

As expected, there were a large number of cops. The papers said 5,000 though I expect there were plenty more only a short distance away in riot gear and on horseback. The cops' perception of the anti poll tax crowd is a rather contradictory one. Judging by their response to the demos of 31st March and 20th October last year, they seem to view large gatherings of people as intrinsically problematic. But at the same time as they try to combat density of numbers they also have an apparently irresistible tendency to hem people in and restrict their movements. On 31st March last year, they tried to disperse the crowd by trapping it in small spaces and charging it when people could not escape. On 20th October, they tried to move everyone away from the region of Brixton Prison but closed the nearby tube stations so people were compelled to move as one large body. I find it hard to believe that the cops want people to riot, but their repertoire of responses is so limited that they leave themselves no alternative to creating violent situations.

Only two people were arrested on this year's march, according to Dave Morris of the Trafalgar Square Defendants Campaign (TSDC), a low number given the history of these demos and the large number of people hemmed in quite tightly most of the way by police barriers (ABAPTF estimate of the numbers was 75,000, police estimate was 11,000). I for one found most of the march as much more claustrophobic than October last year because of these ridiculous barriers which were better suited to a herd of animals than to people (no doubt that's how most of the cops view us).

The carnival atmosphere was strong in this demo

which the ABAPTF were promoting as a victory parade. My experience was that it was largely good-humoured up to the end. We were addressed from the platform by a motley crew. Two Labour MPs, Dave Nellist and Jeremy Corbyn, said that the battle had been won on the streets and not in Parliament (so why don't they resign?). Corbyn claimed that the victory was due to the ABAPTF leadership structures; this is errant nonsense — it's people at the grass-roots who have been crucial; the Militant bureaucracy has contributed nothing except an atmosphere of distrust and hostility within the anti poll tax movement.

When Tommy Sheridan and Steve Nally, the Militant leaders of the ABAPTF, spoke, a section of the crowd made up largely of Class War comrades, noisily heckled and booed them (this despite Class War's own leaflet given out at the demo which argued "don't waste your breath heckling the Militant supergrasses. Look out for Class War's independent platform in the park" — the platform didn't materialise and Class War were not allowed to have speakers on the ABAPTF platform). Sheridan and Nally both lost their temper with the hecklers; Sheridan accused them of being paid (a hackneyed Stalinist smear against anarchists and others who don't toe the party line) and Nally decried them as not part of 'our' movement.

Dave Morris was generously allowed by the ABAPTF to speak from the platform. He refuted Sheridan's hysterical accusations, but conceded that the TSDC who had provided the legal support for the march had no complaints about the Fed's stewardship. Maybe not, but many in the anti poll

tax movement will simply not forget Sheridan and Nally's outbursts after the 31st March riot in which they said they would "name names".

Nally's argument against Class War that "you haven't done anything to defend our class" can be best answered by class struggle anarchists getting heavily involved in the less 'glamorous' and less well-publicised aspects of fighting the poll tax and fighting the state and capitalism generally. Here in Brighton and Hove, for example, while members of Sussex Poll Tax Resisters Support Fund (mostly anarchists) have been on all the bailiff pickets we have known about, Militant supporters have been more numerous and can be relied upon to turn up. Why, then, should we be surprised that working class people turn to Militant-style Labourism rather than anarchism to defend them against the state?

No doubt many people thought that Lamont's budget statement and Heseltine's historic announcement that the poll tax is abolished meant that the demo was rather superfluous. Not so. First, the switch from poll tax to VAT as a way of raising revenue is a complete con which will still hit the majority hardest and not make paying the poll tax any easier for most of us. Second, unless the fight

goes on, the Tories will leave the poll tax in place for a further two years. And finally, while dramatic announcements of abolition may serve the government's political interests, they do not impinge upon the economic interests of the local councils who, unless we succeed in preventing them, will persecute non-payers for years to come.

Major actually admitted that the poll tax is being abolished because people won't pay it (according to the 'Today' programme on Radio 4 on 19th March); in other words, through active non-payment we have made the thing unworkable. This, less than a year after the poll tax, the Tory 'flagship', was introduced, represents a staggering popular victory over a government that has been hammering us for 11 years. It is not simply that the tax is unfair. Most people will refuse to pay any bill to government or big business if they can get away with it; they see nothing morally wrong in this because they don't recognise the system itself as being fundamentally fair.

As I see it, the anti poll tax movement has three goals. First to support those being persecuted for past resistance to the poll tax (non-payers, rioters and those who disrupt council meetings, etc.). Second to make the remaining years of poll tax collection as disastrous for the councils as the first year so that the government are forced to abandon the tax even earlier than they have planned. And finally, where possible to extend these principles of organised non-payment to other areas of our lives, for non-cooperation with the authorities is a habit we don't want to break.

Johnny Yen

The New National Curriculum

As a delegate to the National Conference of the ANUT last year here in Bournemouth I was surprised at how little opposition there was to the national curriculum from the teaching profession. On the face of it any idea which suggests there is a curriculum to suit everyone is an absurdity in itself, so one would have expected the usual argument of 'well it's there, let's get involved so we can make the best of a bad job', etc. — but no, the NUT thinks it's a good idea, guaranteeing accessibility to the dizzy heights of academics, for one and all, from Tunbridge Wells to Hounslow.

This is strange. In the staff rooms little is said in its favour and almost none consider it a revolutionary breakthrough in educational terms. New national curriculum it may be, but nothing is new under the sun and at a time when we are just beginning to learn that GCSE has — surprise, surprise — failed to break down the educational apartheid for which we are famous throughout the world, few are looking to this new innovation as the answer to our problems.

In fact any 'teacher' who takes him or herself seriously in the state sector can only look forward to disappointment. The best that can realistically be hoped for is a human relationship with the kids which supersedes the institutional relationship which is demanded by the system, and such human relationships are rarely if ever of more than the most elementary superficiality. Schooling and education have nothing to do with each other and although loath to admit it (it's my job for crissakes) most 'teachers' realise this.

So from the educational point of view the new national curriculum is simply another irrelevancy which some teachers can make a career out of by attending the courses, learning the jargon, ensuring its implementation and evaluating its 'success'. We must look deeper than this to find the reasons for its implementation.

In fact I don't want to dwell on the most obvious factor here, but let's just state it: by setting a national criteria against which everyone will be measured it becomes that much easier for the system to slot everyone into their correct social slot. This is important but the national curriculum is much more insidious than this. Such a system is clearly judgmental and there is no doubt that the national curriculum is judgmental. However, other recent initiatives obscure the position slightly.

Many of us will remember the old school report. It wasn't just the old 'could do better', it was often a complete put-down wherein we were criticised, perhaps diplomatically, but often

dismissed all the same. Maybe we accepted it but happily such judgements are not always accepted and rebellion begins. Firstly the judgement is dismissed and then the judge himself and finally, in some cases, the system that put the judge in his place. Such a judgmental system is an enemy unto itself: it creates its own opposition and is divisive. The national curriculum is divisive in precisely this way: each and every child will be judged at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 against national criteria against which they will pass or fail ... or will they?

Well you see now it's not a question of failure, we are told. Such tests are diagnostic and are simply intended to highlight weaknesses which the system can then be called upon to correct. This is also the essence of the profiling system which supports the new curriculum. As teachers we no longer produce reports but rather 'negotiated statements'. No longer do we send home a statement saying 'you are no good at maths', instead we sit down with the pupil (or is it client?) and say 'well, you're having problems with maths (maths here in essence being a euphemism for the system) how are we going to improve the situation and what targets will you set yourself for the near future?'. In theory nothing can be written into this negotiated statement without the consent of the pupil, such consent being elicited through this system of negotiation. The profile becomes the pupil's property (yes, that's the word they use) and the diplomatic language generated by this process helps to dampen down rebellion to the system that produces it.

Now this does appeal to 'teachers' and funnily enough, given its essential conservatism, the 'progressives' in particular. Get them on our side says the system. How? With the Record of Achievement of course.

Now this is the glorified profile and is the pupils' property throughout their school career. It only contains their achievements and successes, and although this is never accepted, was designed with those who 'fail' the system in mind. It's the same sort of thing as the profile as revealed by the comment of one enthusiastic teacher recently quoted in *The Guardian*: "It does it [criticises — my interpretation] in a kindly way — simply by revealing omissions objectively. It does not say that the interviewee is bloody awful at this particular skill".

The deception is complete. By subtle use of language and by forcing the pupil to participate in the process the national curriculum will not only categorise you, it will even have you sign on the dotted line to ensure that you characterise yourself.

Neil Birrell

Food for Thought ... and Action!

Covert Operations Special

*The Iran-Contra Connection: secret teams and covert operations in the Reagan era** by Marshall, Scott and Hunter, Black Rose Books, 315 pages, £10.95. This explosive book delves into the details of CIA and extra-CIA operations — from drug trafficking and gun-running to government-toppling and assassinations. From the Bay of Pigs invasion to the National Security Council operational team, via Laos, Teheran and the Israeli connection to the State Department, this is the whole story.

Brought to Light — a graphic docu-drama in two parts: *Flashpoint — the La Penza bombing* by Joyce Brabner and Thomas Yeats (introduction by Jonathan Marshall), and *Shadowplay — the secret team* by Alan Moore and Bill Sienkiewicz (introduction by Daniel Shechan), published by Titan Books, 68 full colour pages including a world map of thirty years of covert action, £4.95. "Iran-Contra did not begin with Oliver North. Nor is the scandal just about Iran and Nicaragua. For 30 years, a secret team of US military and CIA officials, acting both officially and on their own, have waged wars, toppled governments, trafficked in drugs, assassinated political enemies ..." Not to mention the role of the mafia and Miami Cuban exiles.

*Crimes of the Secret Police** by Robert Dion, Black Rose Books, 228 pages, £7.95. An investigation into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police — to us just a bunch of men on horseback in funny hats and red jackets perhaps, but in reality encompassing Canada's secret police. Dion, an investigative journalist, exposes some of their illegal activities, implicating some 200 agents who have infiltrated trade unions and political groups and participated in other covert activities and cover-ups.

*The Great Heroin Coup: drugs, intelligence and international fascism** by Henrick Kruger with foreword by Peter Dale Scott, Black Rose Books, 240 pages, £7.95. Documents of the links between narcotics, espionage and international terrorism and identifies the role of heroin sales in financing right-wing politics. Kruger delves into the murky depths of the mafia, the CIA, the World Anti-Communist League and others made famous by the enterprise.

Lobster: a journal of para-politics, number 20, 'Calcutt Memorial Issue', 35 pages, £2.00. Occasional journal investigates state dirty tricks' departments and activities, mainly in the UK and US. This issue includes Peter Dale Scott on the US and Indonesia, and some of the lesser-known background to World War Two. (Back numbers from number 9 on request).

Lobster Special: a who's who of the British secret state, 111 pages, £5.00. This useful reference work lists well over a thousand names of some of those who make the real decisions from their placements high up in the politico-military-industrial complex of the green and pleasant land of Airstrip One. It includes career details and club membership, where known, of not just the usual businessmen, politicians and military figures, but civil servants, journalists and academics. As the compilers point out, not an exhaustive list by any means but a useful starting point for further investigation. (It's also a handy companion to *Written in Flames* by the way.)

*Written in Flames: naming the British ruling class**, Hooligan Press, 64 pages, illustrated, £1.50. This one includes addresses too.

Necessary Illusions: thought control in democratic societies by Noam Chomsky, Pluto Press, 422 pages, £9.95. The Watergate affair and the Indo-China wars fostered a belief that the media have a crusading role to play in exposing the truth about US institutions at home and abroad. Chomsky explodes this myth, demonstrating that in practice the media in the developed world serve the interests of state and corporate power.

Covert Action Information Bulletin, number 34 of an occasional journal, 70 pages, illustrated, £5.00. An American version of *Lobster*, but better-produced. Number 34 includes articles on the assassination of Martin Luther King, the US in Panama and Costa Rica, and the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie.

Many of these titles will be reviewed in *Freedom in due course*.

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Direct Action for Rural Housing

Sooner or later it had to happen. We all swing our hands at the enormity of the housing crisis, but though we have dreams most of us restrict any activity to the normal channels. They are blocked and we are frustrated. Now somebody has risked all in direct action, having seen that nothing will be done for them.

Local authorities who used to attempt to fulfil their housing responsibility by building and letting at a fair rent have been stopped in their tracks by central government. The housing associations which were to have taken over their function have not done so, being ill-organised, inexperienced and under-funded. Private builders have gone some way towards satisfying the market, but the market is composed only of that part of the population well off enough to be mortgage-worthy and prepared to accept the lamentable little brick-clad boxes provided. Usually this new housing catering for 'first-time buyers' is crammed into estates on the edges of towns and is anyway beyond the financial reach of most.

Luxury building for the wealthy has gone on unimpeded, often providing a second or holiday home in the country for the 'executive' class of city dwellers. Their affluence has forced house prices absurdly

high, and the cost of building land (i.e. that has planning permission for housing development) has rocketed accordingly. Market forces plus government controls have made affordable housing and even land unavailable, particularly in rural areas.

In response, some people have found a short-term solution by squatting in unoccupied property. Good, but impermanent. Others have formed themselves into self-build groups and sought low-cost land, financial subsidy from housing authorities and all the necessary permissions, seeking to emulate the Lewisham Self-Build Housing Association described in *The Raven* number 6. But sadly, over-cautious building societies and bureaucratic controls have so far balked them all.

Now, at last, a family with no prospect of being provided with a house has taken matters into its own hands and without subsidy or any official backing — indeed without even asking for permission, have built their own house. Direct action of the most elemental kind.

Their position was particularly desperate because they are fortunate enough to live in a National Park, which is beautiful and they love it, but of course bears the unfortunate

corollary that planning control is particularly tight.

They were also fortunate in owning land, obtained at an affordable price from a relative. It is woodland. They built out of sight in a secluded glade, the structure grew, and for a while their beautifully designed and constructed little timber house went undetected.

Alas, last year it was seen by officials of the National Park and they were requested to take the house down and restore the land to its original condition within one month.

They declined, as this was not only a practical impossibility but it would have left them homeless — nothing positive was suggested to help mother, father and the two young children find a home. Eventually an Enforcement Notice followed. They have

resorting to a lawyer. They are marshalling an impressive case. Beyond the simple facts of their native origins and love of their own birthplace, they are bringing forward many practical and cultural considerations.

Nobody is suggesting there is any alternative home available to them in the Park. But if they (and other young people in similar circumstances) are forced to leave, what becomes the essence of the Park, its locally employed indigenous community? The population is already over-balanced with incoming retired people and holiday cottage owners — the very people whose purchasing power has pushed the price of property out of the reach of local inhabitants. It was the latter who, with their ancestors, created the landscape we now recognise as so well worth preserving. Who will continue the work? A National Park is not a natural wilderness but a well-tended productive landscape peopled with farmers, foresters and all the attendant crafts-people who serve their activities.

The Park's character results from continued traditions, its buildings result naturally from the needs of local people making their livelihoods in it and those functional buildings, new and old, are a positive asset to it.

The holiday dwellings, on the other hand, unoccupied for much of the year cast a blight. Nor is the planners' attempt to confine new building within the town and village envelopes altogether in tune with local practice. The tradition in this area is for dwellings to be dispersed throughout the lush little valleys at the feet of the great bleak hills. Everywhere there is evidence of past habitation. In their own wood is a little stone ruin, occupied within living memory.

The Park cannot be frozen into an immobile snapshot taken at this, or any other point in history. Even its picturesque quality would soon become a sham and fade. For the Park to live, energetic, responsible, caring, creative young people need to live in it and make their own mark on it. They should be praised for their enterprise, not driven out.

BR



A New Class War

Conference Report:

South East Region Class War Federation at the Brighthelm Centre, Brighton
2nd March 1991

Class War, perhaps the most famous and most notorious image of present-day anarchism in Britain, are changing. About thirty people turned up to hear from Andy Murphy, the national treasurer, the reasons why Class War is now (since autumn last year) a membership organisation.

This is not the only important change occurring in Class War. There is also an attempt to modify their image (though no one would have guessed as much from reading the last issue of their paper!). Class War have concluded that they cannot compete with the mass media's propaganda machine; they no longer want to project a 'football hooligan' image, and would prefer to be represented (or personified, rather) by 'respected members' of working class communities and workplaces, i.e. people more likely to be able to persuade others of the validity of class struggle / anarchist communist ideas.

It is well known that such events as the Great Poll Tax Riot of 31st March boost Class War's paper sales prodigiously; but it seems that the gutter press write-ups they get (including the occasion when, on the 20th October anti-poll tax demo, someone looking and acting like a terrorist attached himself to them and had his picture taken with them by the press) mean that people who think that Class War are about nothing but gratuitous violence are attracted to them. It also seems that there was a problem with people turning up at conferences, voting and then never being seen again; people were influencing processes they were not going to be involved in.

But perhaps the most important reason for Class War becoming a membership organisation rather than a very loose federation of autonomous vaguely affiliated groups is to create the theoretical cohesion they regard as necessary for a revolutionary movement if it is to act as a 'leadership of ideas'. Joining Class War as a member means that a person now has certain obligations; these are basically to agree with the aims and principles of the federation, and to abide by the policies and constitutions of the federation. In other words, local groups, such as the Brighton Bomber group that used to exist here in Brighton, are no longer able to affiliate simply in spirit; you are either fully in the Class War Federation as a

paid-up member or you are not in at all. Hence you can now also be expelled.

Clearly, this is much more 'party-like' than the previous Class War set up. Decisions at conferences will be made by majority rule; those that disagree will submit to them in a spirit of collective responsibility, or leave the federation. Andy Murphy conceded that this was not a 'traditional anarchist' form of organisation, though I personally see no reason to apologise for abandoning traditions when they serve no useful purpose (and I'm not even clear what a 'traditional anarchist' form of organisation is!). But this development clearly makes Class War more similar to Trotskyite organisations such as the Socialist Workers Party. Like them, the aim will be to sell papers and recruit new members. I gather that the SWP currently have about 6,000 members nationally. Class War have nothing like this number, but believe that when they number hundreds of thousands people will take notice of their ideas. They accept, however, that many class struggle anarchists do not agree with all their views, so they also have a 'supporters' section which has none of the members' obligations and rights.

Class War now believe that without a revolutionary organisation, a working class revolution will inevitably fail because of the prevalence of capitalist ideas; people involved in class struggle have to know exactly what they're doing and why.

Some readers will be aware that the Anarchist Communist Federation is a membership organisation for similar reasons. Last year there was talk of them and Class War merging. In the light of Class War's recent changes there seems even less reason for Class War and the ACF to be separate organisations; if both aim to fulfil the same function yet fail to co-ordinate with each other, they might be wastefully duplicating each other's work (in recruiting members, etc.).

The pros and cons of a mass anarchist organisation are complex. Many of the issues have been aired in the interesting and articulate debate between Donald Room and Tom Jennings in these pages (22nd September, 20th October, 3rd November, 15th December, 12th January). One important bone of contention is whether anarchists should devote their energy to recruitment campaigns when they could be getting involved more directly in supporting class struggle and creating a free society. Another is whether a large anarchist organisation can avoid being hierarchical. I'd be interested to see the views of other *Freedom* readers and writers on this topic.

Johnny Yen

lodge an appeal against it (which amounts to a retrospective planning permission) which will be heard in June.

Meanwhile they have gamely continued work on the home, cultivating the garden and laid plans for the tree nursery which will be their main occupation alongside the husband's jobbing carpenter's work.

Beside all this, they have been preparing their case for the Inquiry. Characteristically they are conducting it themselves rather than

Resisting the war Machine

How do we challenge the war machine? The obvious solution is to get rid of the ruling classes. Unfortunately this is much easier said than done. We must first win the argument.

Most people are opposed to war and violence generally, at least at a gut level. We have to turn that into a conscious opposition. With the state's massive propaganda and media resources against us, we must be ingenious and resourceful in arguing our case. It is vital that we link the Gulf conflict with all the other wars going on, and that we have analysed them so as to offer an informal position. We must get this information distributed through papers and booklets, and also on the street — leaflets and posters, not just with empty slogans on them but informative ones. For example, a poster in a bus shelter can be loaded with information as people are standing around and will read them.

It is also vitally important that we show solidarity with the victims of war, be they soldier or civilian, and wherever they may be. This must include non-anarchist groups. Most people in the third world have probably never heard of libertarian theory. We must genuinely work with them if we are to offer them an alternative — the best argument for anarchism is to see it in action, and mutual aid with people is essential. I believe we should be setting up an International Anarchist Fund whereby we can offer practical solidarity with people around the world, even if it is only used as a donation towards food aid to a recognised charity. It could also be used to finance groups who are in desperate need of funds, especially fledgling organisations in the third world.

At home we must actively resist the war machine from blocking weapons convoys to war tax

resistance. We should be actively involved in anti-militarist/peace groups. The only reason the likes of CND are dominated by Labour/Marxists (ex-Marxists) is because we always seem happy sitting in our ghetto throwing vague insults at them such as 'middle class single issue politics'. Many people I have met in CND, etc., have strong libertarian views. If we really want to have some influence we must actively participate. It's apparently okay to be in a union who you disagree totally with and gives you little or no say, but no organisations where (especially at local level) you can create significant results. It is high time we ended this inverse snobbery, climbed out of our ghetto and got stuck in. If we cannot convince the politically aware what chance have we got? This needn't become a futile slanging match either. I am not advocating Trotskyite style entryism. I am suggesting genuine involvement, we accept differences, some will want to work with government, fair enough let them. We will work as anarchists and example will be our argument. Our local CND peace group works like this, and works well.

We have excellent ideas for the future society and also present action, but we need to be involved directly in the movement now. And let's all make sure that at every demonstration around the country we are there with a wide selection of anarchist literature offered in a non-imposing manner, unlike the Trot groups where demonstrators have to run a gauntlet of paper sellers. With the left in disarray, we have an ideal opportunity to seriously challenge the political system and finally create some real change.

Andrew McGingle

Work and Employment in a Green Society

Before the turn of this century, the industrial revolution in this country had so raised productivity per worker that several theorists of that time estimated that the material needs of Britain could be met from an average working day of only two to four hours.

Since then, and especially at the times of the two World Wars, when the brakes were released on production, productivity throughout the developed world has continued to rise.

At the end of the Second World War, American economists soon realised that the enormous expansion of productive capacity brought about by the demands of that war would soon 'saturate the market' if turned to meeting peacetime needs — in other words, the needs of all *who had the money to buy with* would be met, so they would stop buying. 'Depression' would set in.

They could, of course, have proposed that the markets be expanded by *creating and giving* the money to the needy, and this could be continued until all *their* needs had also been met — but this, from their capitalist viewpoint, would only postpone the 'problem': 'markets' would soon 'collapse', the ultimate catastrophe for a capitalist!

Instead, they persuaded their leading industrialists and designers of the 'benefits' of a deliberate policy of 'planned obsolescence' — producing short-life unrepairable goods — to ensure that needs were never all to be met.

At first found repugnant, this has now become the generally accepted policy, almost worldwide — so much so that most people fail to appreciate the extent to which modern production is of no real benefit to anyone.

The productive capacity of the world is now vastly greater even than in the '50s; people continue to work long hours, yet needs remain

unmet all around us: not only through the misdirection of effort into arms production and the ever-growing forces of repression, but also through ever-changing fashions and the production of shoddy, deliberately short-life, unrepairable 'throw-away' goods — and the mammoth efforts of the huge packaging and advertising 'industries' to persuade us to want them — and capitalism continues to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Meanwhile, anthropology has discovered — surprise, surprise — that 'primitive' societies do not, in most cases, spend all their waking hours striving to survive. They spend most of their time socially: relaxing, talking, singing and dancing. They also have time to listen and to be with their children, to share each others problems — time all too clearly lacking for most people in this society, except for the 'unemployed', for whom the problems created by society are overwhelming. It is *not* a human need to be enslaved to a 'job' to earn a living.

The major parties all seek 'economic growth' to 'create jobs' and keep people working (and to create wealth — for some!), but seem unable to appreciate that a productive and distributive system, using modern technology and geared to meeting real needs *economically* (in all its true sense) could 'saturate the market' very quickly indeed, using far less of raw materials than currently, and then could 'wind down' and release humankind from wage-slavery — if the incomes were provided without the jobs.

The idea that 'jobs', 'good' or otherwise, are in themselves in any way of benefit to people, other than, *under present arrangements*, as a means of claiming a share of the goods and services available, *must* be challenged outright. Advocating 'job creation' implies

acceptance of the lie that 'jobs' are what people *need*. The only truth in this arises because of psychological maladjustment through people's acceptance of the *work ethic*, and of society's attitude to the unemployed which is a result of this. There is also much confusion between 'jobs', meaning paid employment, and all the many possible activities, self-chosen or otherwise and regardless whether they command an income, which benefit society, raise self-esteem or avoid boredom or a feeling of worthlessness. Some of these may be 'jobs', but there are far more which attract no payment, while very many 'jobs' lack these attributes.

The Green Party has a policy to issue basic incomes. Let us imagine an established Green world based on this:

The basic income is enough to allow everyone to purchase enough food, warmth and shelter to maintain health and minimal comfort, with enough left over for modest travel, entertainment or other 'luxury'.

It replaces social security payments, pensions, etc., as well, in effect, as providing 'wages for housework'.

Industry has been reorganised to provide efficiently and sustainably, and distribute all that is required by the population.

With rational use of modern technology, this necessarily implies that far fewer people are employed in this, for far fewer hours, than now.

For some, the basic income will suffice. They are content to consume no more. A few are simply 'lazy' (though this implies a psychological maladjustment and will rarely be other than temporary). Some are unwell, or old — too lethargic or otherwise incapacitated to want or be able to do more. But for most people most of the time, their needs will be greater.

Some will satisfy these needs with little demand for more money. Gardening is an ever-popular pastime, and many will appreciate the quality and freshness of food they have grown themselves, individually or

in co-operatives, or exchanged with or bought from neighbours. (Community ground rent ensures that land for such purposes is generally available at reasonable cost.) Others will enjoy a variety of productive crafts which benefit themselves and their neighbours. Others will similarly produce works of art.

Community projects and neighbourly help undertaken without pay are likely to be common.

Probably large numbers will still be earning by working in industry and commerce, but hours will be far shorter and more flexible. Having the basic income will ensure that the workers can dictate the terms of their employment, even in those establishments which have not yet become workers' co-operatives.

And, of course, the structure of pay-differentials will have undergone drastic revision: unpleasant/dangerous jobs will no longer be accepted unless there is real social need for them; those that remain will attract very high pay levels, while other jobs, ones people positively enjoy doing, will only attract low pay.

There will, in fact, be a continuum of pay levels: from nothing for the entirely 'voluntary' (today's term — meaningless in this new society!), through very low, to moderate, to high levels.

Many jobs now commanding high wages — in armaments production, for example — will have disappeared, while the range and number of unpaid occupations will have increased vastly.

'Unemployment' would, of course, have become a meaningless term.

High tax on unrenovable or over-used resources, e.g. minerals, trees, applied at the point of initial extraction, will have made manufactured goods generally much more expensive, but far longer lasting, and cheaply repaired and maintained. Recycling of their raw materials will also be far more worthwhile.

To achieve the level of basic income for the above, all unearned, unjustified income will

Reason as Enemy

When asked to imagine the perfect society thinkers come up with many different models, one thing seems to be common though: *The perfect society is governed by reason.*

Even anarchists tend to subscribe to this belief. But what is reason, and why have such faith in it? The answer to the latter is probably given by history: it is a reaction to centuries of oppression by the clergy. Reason is considered as an antidote for religion. Only what can be proven is to be believed. And in fact, reason is a very sharp knife, or rather a double-edged sword. True, reason cuts away superstition based on ignorance, but it also tends to sterilise everything. Rationalist utopias are very, very dull places.

I think our present faith in the powers of the intellect, in reason, has its roots in a misunderstanding, or rather an over-simplification. This illegal simplification is based on a dualistic conception; reason, logic, is considered as the antithesis of (religious) belief. Thus, since religion is wrong/false, reason must be good/true. I am not religious, I believe in no gods, that is why I refuse to sacrifice my life and mind to a new god reason. Reason is necessarily dualistic, it is analytical, it dissects things, whereas I am more interested in a synthetic approach, considering opposites as complementary and not contradictory.

We tend to identify reason with thinking, thinking with intellectual processes as if the mind was only capable of thinking and believing and nothing else. Our mind, our psyche, is a very powerful 'object'. It is capable of many things between logical thinking; we also have perceptions, emotions, intuitions ... all 'irrational' since alogic. Dogmatic religious belief is dangerous precisely because it suppresses our other faculties, precisely because it is a 'sacrifice of the intellect', and not because it teaches men to believe in something they cannot see. Reason too has a tendency to become dogmatic (witness the many 'schools of thought'), to become a tyrant, in short to become a new religion.

We can think in at least two different ways: analytic or synthetic. The first is based on a division of the world into a set of opposites, these opposites are considered as logically contradictory, i.e. as mutually exclusive. Synthetic thinking is based on analogy, it connects what analysis has separated, it points out relationships. It is the 'logic' of dream and poetry,

whereas analytic logic is what we are used to calling 'logic', scientific 'logic'. These methods are not contradictory; both are needed. This can be seen, for instance, if we look at the history of science. First we have a period of purely analytic activity: classification, etc. In each class further analytic work is carried out, this leads to the discovery of certain 'laws' or 'rules'. The next step is synthetic: now we try to unify the laws, to find relations between the various classes, etc. This is the state many sciences find themselves in these days. Synthesis without analysis is futile, analysis without synthesis is sterile.

What I claim is that: *We must not worship our 'rational' sides and scorn our 'irrational' ones, but we must strive to unite the two complementary modes of thought.*

Society as it now is makes exactly this mistake (as well as countless others) of scorning irrationality. This dualism between 'rational' and 'irrational' is a basic component of our culture, from Aristotle via Aquinas, Descartes, Voltaire and Hegel to Marx and Hitler. If we want to make a profound change in society it is to the irrational forces we must turn also. We must constantly question the feeble castles in the clouds built by reason. We must question logic.

Actually logic is a weak god: any meaningful sentence is either a tautology (i.e. empty) or a contradiction. Furthermore, we can never give a complete, logical account of the world; a logical description presupposes the choice of some axioms, what can be accounted for is thus limited by which axioms one chooses. If you choose one axiom, you immediately exclude its opposite and everything that would have followed. Since logical descriptions are never complete, any rational thought must end in either an empty sentence, a tautology (like 'red is red'), or a paradox.

Let us try to develop the other sides of our psyche, and let us remove the tyrant reason.

But the irrational ('dark') impulses are primitive, animal, filthy ... dangerous I hear you say? Yes! Yes, they are primitive and dangerous, but that is only so because they have not been allowed to develop into something 'higher'. Our culture treats irrationality as the most powerful evil ('the doings of the devil' in religious parlance, 'childish, anti-social

egotistical tendencies' in the common rationalistic vocabulary). This force is opposed to reason, it threatens to destroy the hierarchical world of the (rational) intellect, i.e. it is a threat to the very existence of rational society, hence it must be fought, persecuted, killed. The result is well known: the 'unwanted' forces retreat to the 'underground', the unconscious, and since they are not allowed to develop freely they regress. Instead of becoming a creative force they turn into a destructive (and self-destructive) impulse. Also the 'victorious' reason is changed; the hidden impulses are in reality only un-acknowledged aspects of itself. By its very act of repression of instincts it itself becomes tainted by destructiveness, and in the fight it absorbs some of the hidden forces in itself. In short, it becomes similar to what it set out to fight. *There is, however, a way out.*

We must try to lift the hidden potentials into consciousness, and we must begin to develop our other sides (our feelings, our intuition, etc.). What we must under no circumstances do is to let the enthusiasm sparked by our new discoveries turn us into idolisers of yet another god.

It is common for revolutionaries (as well as for the bourgeoisie) to neglect the imagination and only concentrate on the rational aspects of our minds: imagination is not very 'practical' or 'reasonable'. Similarly, artists too often ignore their (rational) intellect and proclaim 'art for art's sake'. We must combine both aspects of our culture, art and politics.

What I want is not imbecile 'socialist realism' — it is hypocritical and empty; it doesn't challenge our conceptions of the world nor our position in it. Art must be truly revolutionary, it must revolutionise our way of thinking and feeling. Art must be a perpetual challenge to our rational intellect. What I want is a visionary political philosophy, not unimaginative, dead pragmatism or materialism and not silly utopias — all these are insults to the imagination and just expose the prejudices of the people who support them. *What I want is the 'marriage of opposites' imagination and reason, not the tyranny of the one over the other!*

Frank Antosen
Copenhagen

What sort of Class War?

have been taxed away or otherwise cut off. The main sources of funding would be community ground rent, levied at 100% on the full rental value for the permitted use of all land; resource taxes; community credit operated by community banks, passing back to the community the profits from any interest charged on loans, and displacing private capital in investment in socially worthwhile enterprises; while stabilised exchange rates between currencies would have ended the opportunities for huge speculative gain which exist in the present money markets.

The level of basic income will, of course, depend on the level of funds available to redistribute from such sources, and perhaps from direct taxes on production or even earned incomes; but it should be largely self-regulating — if too few opt to work on production and distribution, less will be available as basic income, causing more to supplement it by returning to productive work. If this is overdone, basic income will rise, but so will the level of unsold surplus goods, so pay will drop and the incentives to seek it will also become less attractive.

In the early years of a Green administration there would, of course, be plenty of work to be tackled, putting right all those things neglected in past decades — redesigning and reconstructing industry and its products for economy and durability, providing adequate and well-insulated housing, tackling pollution, transforming agriculture, rebuilding the sewers, and so on — and at first the basic income would be small, and would only supplement other 'benefits', but as work became needed less, the basic income should at the same time grow, steadily replacing those other benefits and allowing more and more people to reduce their hours of paid work, take more/longer holidays, take breaks from work for couples to raise children, retire earlier — and become more sociable, better citizens.

Brian Leslie

[We should like to point out that though we find much to agree with in the first part of our friend's interesting article, the last section in which he describes "the early years of a Green administration" — he is actually talking about government pure and simple and he obviously cannot expect us to agree with him! — Editors]

THE RAVEN

ANARCHIST QUARTERLY

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Comrades will have seen announcements of the creation of an alliance of revolutionary groups behind the slogan 'No war, but class war'. Few anarchists will not have sympathy for the slogan, but some may not feel the strategy so far pursued by the groups involved, is the best way either to wage class war or to oppose the present international one.

Anarchist appeals to class war, traditionally, have been of two sorts: class war can be seen as purely defensive action against the onslaughts of the bosses, or as a future struggle on the part of a revolutionary and united working class. This seems to be neither.

I would not want to see anarchists produce any hard and fast 'line' on the matter, but I would think that there are points that need to be considered generally, namely:

1. It is obvious that it is a necessary and fundamental part of class struggle that radicals oppose the militarism of the state, and particularly the brainwashing of the working class that the ruling class media performs during wars.
2. But it may not be a correct understanding of the class struggle to assume that the class war is best waged by yelling about it, and it does not necessarily follow that the best way to oppose war is to chant the rhetoric of class war.
3. Class struggle arises because each and every member of the ruling class, in order to retain his/her position in that class, attempts constantly to increase his/her power (monetary or otherwise) which can only be done by making inroads into the freedom, or living conditions, of the ruled.

4. If the rulers were able to do this without any limitations, they would so destroy the working class, that they — the rulers — then would no longer have anyone to exploit. As it is long periods of overwhelming ruling class unchallenged dominance usually produce slumps.

5. However, the ruling elite's freedom in this respect is limited by the need of the oppressed to survive. However conditioned by the ruling class's propagandas — whether through the media, education, general sociological conditioning, or some taught ideology — the working class may be, the need to survive is not yet overcome.

6. In consequence, however low the political consciousness of the working class, defensive class struggle is inevitable. But, while the working class is subject to the mental conditioning that capitalism imposes, its members cannot wage a successful class war. So to do would involve them in challenging all their imposed beliefs.

7. But in such circumstances (indeed in all normal circumstances) the ruling class is the aggressor in the class war, the ruling class rules precisely because its members are individually more competent at fighting to attain selfish interests and — until the exploited classes are united — class war can only be fought on the basis of protecting individual interests. Any class conflict which is fought, where the working class has not previously attained a very high level of unity and consciousness, is bound to lead to a ruling class victory.

8. Class war will be transformed when the exploited are conscious of their economic position and of the need to change the basis of society. It is therefore an essential element of any future successful class struggle that we now oppose the additional opportunity for conditioning that war presents.

9. It is however nonsense at a time when, at the very least 65% of the population supports war, to suggest that the working class is already sufficiently united and consciousness to wage the sort of class struggle that could stop the war.

10. It follows that we need to use those tactics best designed to raise consciousness and that premature calls to class war if they alienate other workers may well be counter-productive.

11. Moreover there is a danger of vanguardist elitism. Some raise the old slogan 'turn your guns on the bosses', but any successful struggle on that basis would have to be a guerrilla-terrorist campaign and could, at best, lead to a Lenin-type 'revolutionary' dictatorship.

12. No doubt chanting helps to raise the morale of the activists. It is not often that revolutionaries find themselves in large numbers and the desire on such occasions to boost our own feelings is natural, but we need to decide whether it is worth risking alienating potential supporters to get this morale boost.

Don't send the class militant minority out on suicide missions

Don't pave a road for Leninists to use

LO

Community Transport versus Private Transport

A Sunday Observer columnist on 2nd February 1991 tells the joke... "Scud missiles kill more people than British Rail"...but failed to add, but still British Rail kill less than the private car transport industry. Not only are road traffic accidents responsible for thousands of deaths of innocent people on British roads every year but also the oil-petroleum industry which exists primarily to serve the private car is now responsible for a geo-global war in which many more thousands of people are going to be killed. In terms of safety community transport including and excluding death due to warfare is then the most efficient means of travelling or of moving goods. In terms of environmental concerns community transport also excels over private car/road transport systems. Indeed community transport not only uses energy more efficiently and less of it, thereby minimising pollution damage, community transport also in the case of British Rail creates extra land space rather than uses up land space as in the case of roads. Indeed the laying of railroad tracks inside steep embankments because it creates extra land has to some extent been copied in design by motorway builders. However, in the case of motorways the banks were not built deep enough, or the roads not sunk deep enough, as to create extra land. Why then if in terms of safety and the environment has government chosen to invest in roads and private transport at a cost to the development of community transport systems? The simple answer is finance!

In the life-giving / life-taking game of geo-global monopoly, once termed capitalism, the rules of the game are profits and power. Indeed profits and power are the motivational aspirations of all agents sitting at the board of life. Governments are pawns of business and pay only lip-service to any pretence of accountability and representation. Business in control of governments now include the energy industry and the private motor car industry. Indeed these two industries are also interlinked and have compatible interests. Moreover, the 'first world' controls both through the mechanism of finance and where that fails, as in the case of a United Socialist Islam, war mechanisms are introduced to reassert the balance of financial power-control. If a cheap alternative energy supply was to become scientifically possible, as it probably in the combined case of aqua, solar, and wind turbine power, not to mention nuclear fusion, then such a discovery would tilt the geo-global economic order upside down. The financial interests in the old energies which serve to provide insurmountable

profits for a few select individuals would collapse as the consumer need would be provided from elsewhere. These old energies include oil, coal, and nuclear power, and not only produce massive profits for powerful individuals but also deplete human material at a faster rate than new energies would thereby providing a natural (sic) death mechanism which aids the exponential possibilities of a finite world planetary system. In short it is capital which seeks to profligate old energy for the aspirations of profit, power, and control, at the expense of human life, and at the expense of new energy systems. The motor car and the road industry is integral to both national policy and geo-global control retention. This is what might be described as being a matter of national security by its defenders of the faith.

This leads ultimately to the question of how individually and as a community do we benefit from being passive participants in the twin interlinked industries of energy and the private motor car. As the death statistics tell us we don't. How then do we allow our representatives to continue with this policy. One fallacy which supports this policy is the concept of the family car. This itself locks onto and breeds off the notion of patriarchy. The male leader of the family being the primary driver and/or controller of the family car. Indeed these concepts of a two-car family and/or two-driver family have been sociologically institutionalised contrary to the evidence which says there are no obvious increases in two-car families in Britain since the 1960s and the evidence where submitted by two-driver families also suggests in reality those families, except on holiday drives, are for all intents and purposes one-driver families because of the male domination of the family car. Moreover, most families still tend to be one-car-driver families and moreover still the number of actual two-car-driving families is automatically not only offset, but massively outnumbered by all those families who are still non-car-driving families, including an estimated five million families belonging to the ranks of the unemployed or long-term ill. Moreover, evidence also suggests that amongst the ranks of single people car drivers are also a minority. Further still, nobody under the age of seventeen and virtually no pensioners over the age of seventy are classified current car drivers. In fact when all figures are transduced into social basic percentages less than 25% of the population are car drivers. Some 75% of people rely for transport on old and antiquated

community transport systems run down for the purpose of building up the profit margins of the private car industry. And we know why!

Community transport means to most people two basic areas of interest: rail and bus networks. The bus network has been privatised to control services by increasing consumer cost. The rail network is planned for privatisation but is historically in fact untenable. It is with rail that a future community transport integrated system network has the biggest hope of a future. Electric powered rail networks have the advantage over individual private car component machines because rail networks once electrified can use at source any energy capability. The running choice of nuclear fission and fusion, oil-petroleum, fossil fuel, aqua, solar and wind turbine mean that the system network can by-pass energy crises that happen at any time periodically throughout the geo-global financial economy. This advantage at source means that electrified rail networks if properly designed could overnight switch to any fuel and thereby usurp market pressures by using at all times the cheapest and most available fuel. Extra profits would be generated which could be redirected directly to investment in people at the point of delivery increasing as a by-product the service given to the consumer. Such a community system of transport would serve every single urban district inside its network and as a result economies of scale would be made which would in time replace an ongoing community financial investment. An electrified system with a wide range of fuel sources has never ever been tried before. Such a system is unthinkable to dismiss.

However, it is the sad legacy that a nationalised rail system network was seen to fail in the past because of the market pressures which locked the system into the use of an energy whose price was controlled and manipulated by outside financial overseers who had an investment interest in seeing its failure. It is not only fuel-financial lessons that have needed to be learnt by the community with an interest in community transport but also lessons of locality. Services to and from terminals have traditionally been poor because of isolated locations of terminals because of planning decisions taken by local authority councils also with a vested interest in seeing the demise of a community transport system to the benefit of the

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Recycling — a strategy

In *Freedom*, volume 52, number 2, I offered an idea of what refuse collection and recycling would be like in an anarchist society. The question is how do we achieve it.

At an individual level there are many things we can do. In the first place each household, and within it each individual must assess exactly what waste they are producing. Separate rubbish into glass, paper, tin, plastic, etc. Try to reduce it by buying less packaged items. With food the tendency is for the more processed it is, the more packaging it will have. Buy fresh food and buy it unpacked, re-use bags. This inevitably takes time but the results can be startling.

Recycle as much waste as possible. Use the facilities where available — we may not support organisations (councils, supermarkets, etc.) who put them there, and their intentions are likely less than honourable (profit from a green image), but we need to create a recycling culture. The availability and use of these facilities will help to do this. If you have a garden/allotment or know somebody who does, use food scraps and other organic waste for composting. A few neighbours could get together for this and so widen the initiative into the community. If this is the case, the growing of some of your own food is a good idea. With organic and permaculture methods this needn't mean much work, either.

It's a good idea to set up local recycling schemes as they foster community spirit and action. They can be organised by anyone — neighbours, community groups, charities or environmental groups, for example. Recycling and the use of recycled products should be promoted in schools, hospitals, community centres, the workplace, and so on.

The use of recycled products is also important and can be taken into account when shopping. A number of companies producing recycled products are also co-operatives. We should support them. We can also take the opportunity to sell recycled products when holding stalls. An added advantage of this is that it may attract people who would otherwise not stop.

This is all very well, but if we seriously want to create a society which values resources we will have to take control of industry.

Recycling and re-use will provide far less employment than the packaging and waste industries currently do as it is so much more efficient. It is no use ignoring the fact. The bosses will be able to take their profits and run, but leaving workers on the scrap-heap in the cut-throat capitalist world is not acceptable. Less work is

obviously a good thing in a libertarian society, so recycling must go hand in hand with the advancement of that society.

Workplace organisation is vital! We need to set up an anarcho-syndicalist union whose aim is not just worker control of the industry, but its total overhaul. This takes on an immediate urgency as many councils are privatising their refuse services. This gives workers an ideal opportunity to form co-operatives and take control. Councils may well support recycling initiatives as it's good for their image. If this means financial backing, all well and good. Recycling rubbish will provide a source of income too.

Obviously, new facilities will be needed. For example, compartmentalised bins. It will also require households to sort rubbish. This is not a major problem where it has been tried (some areas of Japan sort their rubbish into over twenty different varieties).

The privatisation/nationalisation alternatives will solve nothing. Only worker and community control will bring the desired effect. The free society and the ecological society are one and the same — they are the anarchist society!

AG

'Democracy' in Action

Offenders, like poll tax non-payers, who find themselves facing Magistrates and JPs, might be interested to know whom these purveyors of justice represent. The answer is that they are being tried by the Crown via a Lord Lieutenant, of whom there are forty-eight, two of them women. Quite likely, your particular Lord Lieutenant is the Senior Magistrate of your county, who usually chairs the committee which recommended the appointment of the JP who told you to pay up, or else.

Another affront to your notions of democracy, should you have any, is that since Lord Lieutenants choose their deputies, there is no way you can have any influence on this tight little system which guarantees that two out of every three Lord Lieutenants are Old Etonians. All you can do is take whatever comfort you can from the fact that, since 1921, your latter-day Sheriff is no longer empowered to raise the militia and chase you around Sherwood Forest or Burnham Beeches.

Subject to the approval of the monarch, Lord Lieutenants are selected by the Appointments Secretary at Downing Street, their prime responsibility being to "uphold the dignity of the Crown", "promote the industrial and social life of the county and encourage good works". Lord Lieutenants, who are one of the last truly feudal institutions in England, are guaranteed a place in the emergency underground seats of government.

Fairly typical of the breed, despite not being Old Etonians (he went to another famous 'public school') is Sir Nigel Mobbs, deputy Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, whose extraordinary web of influence includes boss of multi-million money-spinner Slough Estates Ltd., president of the Slough Conservative Association, Master of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers, honorary member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, member of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Chairman of the Council of the University of Buckingham, treasurer of the Airey Neave Trust and chairman of the Slough Social Fund and the Slough Occupational Health Service. Sir Nigel makes regular contributions to the Tory party locally and nationally and has not so far appeared on the lists of poll tax non-payers, nor does he live within suffocating distance of the town which, to Betjeman's horror, has his development company's activities to thank for its housing and traffic problems.

EFC

Censorship

The General Directors of the Evangelical Alliance and the Scripture Union have persuaded the publisher Robert Maxwell to order the destruction of a book.

True Faith is a graphic novel by Garth Ennis and Warren Pleece, published by Fleetway Publications which is part of Mr Maxwell's empire, and withdrawn by personal instruction from the boss. It tells the daft but unfunny tale of a man who 'loses' his Christian faith without ridding himself of the belief, and goes on a manic rampage to 'kill God' by burning churches and killing clergy.

Mr Maxwell writes letters in the third person and gets them signed by a flunkey, like the queen. "Mr Maxwell", he wrote to the Evangelical Alliance, "holds the view that the book ... must cause deep offence to all those retain belief in God".

Clive Calver, the General Director of the Evangelical Alliance, ran a campaign last October against children dressing up as witches and spooks at Halloween parties, on the grounds that this would initiate them into contact with evil. The balance of evidence

suggests that he is not a practical joker, but an honest believer in such nuttiness.

David Cohen, the General Director of the Scripture Union, told *Alpha* magazine: "It felt evil to read *True Faith*. It is bad, bad stuff, vicious and anarchic, full of hatred. Its thought processes are twisted and it contains the seeds for destroying our society".

Garth Ennis, the writer, takes some comfort from the fact that Christians have stopped burning people at the stake, he is glad, he says, that he did not offend Islam.

DR

Major pledges to sell the family silver (what's left of it)

At the recent gathering of the Tory faithful the Prime Minister set out plans for the Tory Manifesto which included denationalising (which means privatising) British Rail, British Coal, and selling off the 49% of shares in British Telecom still owned by us, the community.

Apart from the Telecom shares which are riding high, one wonders who in the private sector will buy British Coal and British Rail. After all, these two industries were originally nationalised because they were on the verge of bankruptcy under private ownership.

Rambling Notes

Let's take time off to look at a book of pictures, pictures of the countryside but with a difference. Fay Godwin, probably Britain's foremost landscape photographer, has in her recent book *Our Forbidden Land* (Jonathan Cape, paperback, £12.95) produced, as a contribution to her three years as President of the Ramblers Association, a collection of black and white photographs that tell the story of a land desecrated by industrial, agricultural and military vandals interspersed with scenes of unspoilt beauty. Here is Stonehenge in all its mystery, but seen through barbed wire; the Avebury circle, in danger of becoming just another side show in a theme park; and Faslane submarine base seen through layers of high wire fencing that would tax the ingenuity of any peace activist to penetrate, is contrasted with the domesticity of Faslane peace camp.

And of course there are the notices that now litter the countryside. No climbing, no camping, no hill walking, no admittance, no access, no entry, no this, no that, but no fucking for this is land owned by gentlemen concerned for the proprieties. North West Water may be proud of their 'This is your drinking water NO ADMITTANCE' but they should have added 'unless you want to build a theme park or a time-share estate' for have they not advertised for a manager to develop their landholdings commercially? Not all the notices are prohibitive, some offer friendly information such as 'Dogs shot'.

On the positive side this is also a book of photographs that convey the beauty of the countryside through the seasons and contrasting landscapes, that gain by being in black and white.

Her previous books have also been a celebration of the countryside, but this one, which must be her best so far, comes with a harder edge. There are brief accounts of the successes and failures in recent years in the campaign for free access to uncultivated land, but her 30,000 word accompanying text is primarily a magnificently sustained polemic against agricultural business, modern farming methods, the military, the nuclear power industry, road transport policies, the Official Secrets Act, politicians, governments and those landowners trying to deny us access to the North English Moors, yes, you've guessed it, the Moorland Association.

She attacks MAFF in particular for its role in introducing Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis to our dinner plates and the genetically engineered hormone Bovine Somatotrophin into our milk. And did you know that MAFF protects the interests of the factory farmers by imposing the same Salmonella inspection fee whether you have 25 hens or 25,000, putting real free range eggs out of the reach of most town dwellers?

You may not accept her solutions but you can enjoy her argument against "government agencies who seem to think they can censor as well as try to copyright the landscape of our heritage". English Heritage tried to charge her £200 per visit to photograph Stonehenge whilst trying not to get entangled with a crew making an advertising film, and the Ministry of Works with their red tape interrogations interfered with her photography of Avebury.

The book is not organised into chapters, but themes are subtly introduced and include pathways through history, learning to love the environment, theft, MoD remains, the National Trust and the military, inner city space, so you are not too surprised when turning a page to turn from a derelict military urinal to a stone lion at Chatsworth.

Some news is good, as for instance that which makes me want to visit Dean Clough in Halifax to see what has replaced the defunct Crossley Carpet Mills. Variety is introduced with excerpts from Crouch and Ward's book *The Allotment* and Rendell and Ward's book *Undermining the Central Line*, and poems by Peggy Seeger, Ewan MacColl, Adrian Mitchell, Stevie Smith and many others. There is also an excellent bibliography.

This is a book to be dipped into again and again. It is available from large bookshops, but don't expect to find it in the politics or environment sections. Such is the idiosyncrasy of booksellers that you had better look in the photography section, where it may well be between books on how to use an SLR and how to take the most exciting glamour pictures.

Incidentally, what do you do if you unintentionally get caught in cross fire on Dartmoor? Godwin described Chris Brasher using his mobile phone to get them to stop shooting. I guess you and I would just have to run like hell.

HS

Transport

(continued from page 6)

profit motivated private transport interest. In the modern world the choice of services to terminals is also now increased to the possibility of four modes: a) taxi, b) bus, c) tram and d) underground networks. Some of these localised transport systems can also be developed alongside the energy-choice principle of a proper electrified national community rail network. The failure of national rail is the proliferate myth of the Ford business principle.

If fighting wars against countries classified as the third world was bad business and could bankrupt the first world countries then the world banking system would collapse. In reality the banker in monopoly cannot be bankrupted. It is only through representative political intervention that the banking system can be defeated. As it is representation and democracy are incompatible.

The team of social ownership and the technology of the electric toy train set can be expanded in scale to plug our country into the year 2000 but the challenge is of a political structural nature not a financial class war.

The best ever argument levied against community transport and in favour of the private motor car was that the private motor car served disabled people better and therefore expanded freedom of movement to the most disadvantaged in our society. At best this argument was a spurious invention of the profit-led ideology. However with the recent development of battery-powered bike-chairs and the possibilities of carriage designs being built to incorporate the needs of the disabled there now exists no reasonable argument in favour of the private transport system to the detriment of community transport system networks.

CA

A Reader Complains

Dear *Freedom*,
Call it bleating, call it toadying, call it just complaining; I don't care! I read my recent copy of *Freedom* with dismay. Why? Well, after subscribing to your paper I realise that it must be written by and for academics (I hope you prove me wrong).

Firstly, 23rd March sees the second anti-poll tax demo in London. Was there any practical advice or info for refuseniks? No. Was it in fact mentioned? No.

Secondly, why do your articles seem to be littered with Latin quotes and phrases? Are the working class to be mutually excluded from what information you do

give because we were not privy to the privileged Latin schooled education?

Thirdly, what is the point of your regular article 'Waiting for the Bus'? It's complete bollocks!

You could have used that space to publicise the anti-poll tax demo (I'm sure *Merseyside Anarchist* wouldn't have minded if you had 'liberated' their article from them).

Don't get me wrong — this is supposed to be constructive criticism. I am not trying to pit one anarchist journal against another, I would just like to see a national anarchist paper with *teeth*. How about it?

Martin Morgan
Cheshire

— Editors' Reply —

Editors' reply:

Freedom argues the case for anarchism. This does not make academics of either our contributors or our readers. Contrary to the insulting opinions of some middle-class twits, working-class people are capable of understanding arguments. *Freedom* is written by anarchists, for people interested in the anarchist point of view.

Of course the coverage and the standard of writing could be improved. We invite Martin Morgan to assist in our improvement, by writing a few interesting articles for us.

His letter arrived before our 23rd March issue went to press, but after our letters page was full. The anti-poll tax demo of 23rd March was not the 'second' sizeable demo in London, but rather the fifth or sixth. We do not deceive ourselves that a mention in *Freedom* would have made much difference to it.

The poll tax was defeated by widespread non-payment. Demos, publications and speeches in Parliament no doubt encouraged the non-paying movement, but it was mostly spontaneous. People resisted what they perceived as an injustice against themselves, and were successful.

The point of anarchist propaganda is to spread the perception that all authority is unjust, and that injustice cannot be overcome by replacing one lot of bosses with another. The first stage in the anarchist revolution is for people to want

a free society, and recognise that a free society can work.

We cannot recall, offhand, any Latin phrases or quotations in recent issues. In general, we do not worry about phrases like 'status quo', which occur in ordinary English, but if a contributor uses an expression which we find obscure (i.e. one we have to look up in the dictionary) we add an explanatory note.

'Waiting for the Bus' pleases some readers and annoys others. This seems to be true of most original ideas.

Not all anarchist papers share our predilection for arguing the case. Some of our contemporaries prefer to belt out slogans, assuming that their readers already know the case, or will grasp it intuitively. It is useful that we have different styles. They attract readers which *Freedom* does not attract, and vice versa, so the message is spread more widely than it would be.

But we cannot agree with the implication that simple sloganising is more effective than argument. You do not acquire *teeth* by yapping.

US Arrogance

Not many years ago there was a tragedy. A Korean airliner was shot down with a considerable number of civilian deaths. The airliner had strayed into a highly sensitive Russian military area, where over-flying was strictly prohibited, several hundred miles from its normal route. It had ignored radio demands that it come down and even intercepting action by a plane, and had then been shot down.

The world instantly and unreservedly condemned Russia on that occasion. Some of us felt that there were suspicious circumstances. The fact that President Reagan knew all about it long before the Russian government had apparently

heard anything. The fact that only a year before the American government had boasted that it had filmed top secret Russian military installations near Moscow by putting cameras in the nose of a civilian aeroplane. The fact that just before he was shot down the pilot of the Korean plane was heard to radio back 'mission accomplished'.

But such reservations were dismissed as just nit-picking and we were challenged as to why we were not prepared to put all the blame on Russia. Why did we keep on having to find excuses?

Subsequently, in America, radar photographs and other material has been declassified and published, which shows conclusively that there were at the time two planes in the area of similar shape, and that the second one was almost certainly an American spying plane.

Nevertheless, no one would suggest that even with all these suspicious circumstances, even allowing for the fact that it looks probable that there was collusion (that America was smuggling a military spy plane in behind the cover of a civilian plane deliberately off course), that the USSR should not bear the majority of the blame.

Now, in an episode painfully reminiscent of this, a civilian air raid shelter was bombed in Baghdad with massive loss of life. Eye-witness accounts by Western reporters for the most part insist that there was no sign of military installations. The US, which may have been set up (in the same way that years ago it set up the USSR), however, refuses to accept any of the blame, quoting anonymous 'irrefutable' sources who state it was military and is having the arrogance to condemn the Iraqis for sheltering civilians in a civilian air raid shelter.

LO

Yet another 'sub-culture'?

Dear comrades,

In regard to Pat Murtagh's letter (23rd February 1991) I would like to take up on one of his points in regard to my article ('Anarchy starts with yourself', 15th December 1990). He says my idea of a commune is a "prescription of yet another sub-culture. Sub-cultures are where conformist coercions reach a

Keep sending us your letters and donations!

IWA Manifesto

This is too high a price to pay for oil!

Who are those who want a war and have an interest in war:

The people in power in the United States and their allies, responsible for so many invasions as in Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, etc., always in defence of 'liberty'.

The regime of Saddam Hussein, governing with the secret police, bayonets, threats and torture; a regime responsible for gas attacks against their own Kurdish population.

Once more the Palestinian people are being used and abused, a people which in a tragic way always has been the victim of the games of power played by the international governments.

In order to avoid a bloodbath which in the name of the 'just cause' will destroy the life of the whole region, including the Kuwaiti people they are pretending to

defend, in order to avoid an ecological disaster which will affect the whole globe, we are calling upon everyone:

- To refuse military and military-related service!
- To refuse all kinds of work and services in connection with the war!
- We declare ourselves willing to support war resisters and deserters!

We also call for a General Strike!

Plenary Conference of the International Workers Association (IWA)

Cologne, 13th January 1991

Participating sections of the IWA: CNT-E (Spain), CNT-F (France), CNT-B (Bulgaria), DAM (Great Britain), FAU (Germany), NSF (Norway), USI (Italy), WSA (USA), and observers from Switzerland and the Netherlands

height ..." By 'conformist coercions' I take it he means the obligation one feels to conform to the system present in the commune. However, the only 'conformity' in my idea of this commune would be a rejection of authority and a willingness to do some work. Call this 'conformist coercion' if you want, but I think this 'coercion' cannot be avoided in any type of anarchist society. Anyway, these communes wouldn't be society, they would be as Pat calls them 'sub-cultures'. Therefore, if you dislike it in the commune you can easily go back to society (at your peril!). Coercion would be absolutely minimal, but if someone simply refuses to help get food enough to live, then one is forced to take action in whatever situation and it is irresponsible as well as naive to refuse to face the problem.

Pat carries on to say "it is impossible to attain [such conformist coercions] in the real world". My point exactly! What I was trying to explain in my article is that we cannot hope to succeed operating within existing structures. We must escape from them to achieve our aims. Escapism? Yes, but it is not as though this 'escape' is only possible for the well off. In Western society today I believe it is relatively easy to set up a new society or 'sub-culture' as I set out in my original article. Of course, I realise this sort of direct action is unrealistic in many parts of the world, but not in Britain! My point is, surely one of the basic beliefs in anarchist philosophy is that we should take control of our own lives. The best way to help the poor and the oppressed is not to 'lead them to liberation' but to show them that it is possible to take control of our own lives, to show by example that government is unnecessary.

I would just like to add that I was

appalled by some of the comments Johnny Yen made in his article 'The power of numbers' (23rd February), by his blatant unconcern for human life, exultingly exclaiming "The IRA came within about 10 yards of wiping out the war cabinet! ... some of us welcome their choice of target on this occasion". Well, I am not one of them. I dislike politicians, but I would never applaud an attempt to kill one, an act which shows 'you' are as bad as 'them' and also because I believe killing to be the most authoritarian and despicable act a human being can carry out.

Harry

Working class?

Dear editors,

Every time I see the term 'working class' I wince. Nor am I any happier when it is explained that 'workers' are those that 'produce', as opposed to those that do not. Take, for example, an army private: presumably 'working class' despite joining up because there were no jobs available, is he not a destroyer rather than a producer? Indeed, having sworn allegiance to the Crown, army privates through sheer weight of numbers constitute the biggest threat to our freedom because the army is the ultimate guarantor of the nation state to which anarchists are by definition opposed.

Ernie Crosswell
Slough

News from Angel Alley

Because of the Easter holidays *Freedom* had to be ready for printing before the break but will only be printed after the holidays, so we probably will not be able to dispatch copies until Friday 5th April. The 'burning topic' which we shall miss out on is the government's alternative to the poll tax. But does it matter all that much? We shall have plenty of time to comment since it will probably take about two years before the bureaucracy will get the new scheme operational. And what will happen to it if the Labour lot win the next election?

Our poor *Raven* 13 didn't take off as anticipated in the last issue of *Freedom* but subscribers will have received their copy by now and we hope they agree with us that it was worth waiting for. We are well advanced with *The Raven* 14 'On Voting' — or should it be on *not* voting? Contributions are still welcome — up to mid-April. Mark you, in Angel Alley we have never expected a June 1991 election, but since we haven't the PMs confidence you can never tell when they will 'go to the country' — which in simple language means when they think they can win.

Most readers whose subscriptions expired between January and March who were sent green reminders have responded. For those who haven't done anything about their subscription renewal we shall be sending a second and final reminder with the next issue. So please do something soon.

Also those readers who receive free copies of *Freedom* and were sent a

note asking them to get in touch if they want to go on receiving *Freedom*, we gave them to the end of March to reply. This is a second reminder and also the last. Don't blame us if you don't receive *Freedom* after this issue.

As always our best thanks to those readers who have contributed to the current list of donations. The commercial periodical press in general is in crisis due to falling circulations and reduced advertising revenue. The alternative press is also in crisis because so many people these days cannot afford 'extras' and even a modest subscription to a journal is out of reach. If only *Freedom* could be made available in more newsagents' shops, paying out 50p a fortnight would not be felt as much as six months sub even at the claimants rates.

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4th - 21st March 1991

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London AG £7, Edmonton Alberta HB £32.

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1991 total to date = £278.00

Young anarchists

Dear comrades,

I am writing this letter for two purposes. The first is to try to get in contact with young anarchists throughout the country. At Ampleforth we have got an anarchist movement which has been going for over a year, and we are desperate to form links with other anarchists at school, and perhaps form a youth anarchist movement, primarily concerned with injustices within our education system. Any letters to me at the address below will be greatly appreciated.

The second purpose for this letter is to advertise a youth/teenage anarchist gathering on 10th April at Hyde Park Corner at 2.00pm. It will be a chance to meet young anarchists and to try to join together to form links. Anyone under 18 can come for as long or as little as they want and talk anarchy.

Andrew Wayman
St Edward's House
Ampleforth College
York
YO6 4ET

MEETINGS

Anarchist Forum

Fridays at about 8pm at the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square (via Cosmo Street off Southampton Row), London WC1.

1991 SEASON OF MEETINGS

- 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
- 17th May - A Poetry Evening with Dennis Gould

Volunteer speakers or discussion group leaders are wanted for the meetings from 24th 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 (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.

The precise dates for the new academic year 1991-92 have not yet been finalised but if anyone, including comrades from abroad, would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, please contact the above so we can book dates in advance.

FREEDOM fortnightly

ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press
84b Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7QX

Printed by Aldgate Press, London E1

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