

# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

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FIFTY PENCE

*"Only by making the ruling few uneasy can the oppressed many obtain relief."*

Jeremy Bentham

## "YOU'RE NOT RICH ON £400 A WEEK" and that's OFFICIAL - Chancellor Lamont

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Norman Lamont, during a recent business visit to Washington confidently declared at a press conference that recovery from the recession is "around the corner" (his actual words, not ours) and will come sooner than the CBI and other business lobbies have predicted. He also "gave a broad hint", according to *The Independent's* Washington correspondent, that another cut in interest rates could be in the offing and actually said that "as and when inflation falls there may be flexibility on interest rates". All this was pure electoral propaganda — with the local elections of 2nd May in view — for not a day passes but that some large enterprise announces redundancies, and the sackings and bankruptcies among the small fry are obviously considered of no public interest. The

unemployment figures for April are not available as we write, but one need not be an 'expert' to prophesy that yet another 100,000 people will join the queue of the unemployed. But then of course the 'experts' will point out that the increase in unemployment will 'inevitably' continue even when the economy has 'bottomed out', implying that it cannot get worse — though they never explain why this should be so.

Nor, for instance, Lamont's contention that only a few weeks had passed since the cuts in interest rates and the 'big impact' on consumer spending had yet to be felt.

Two categories of 'spenders' will feel the 'impact' of any reduction in interest rates. Obviously Maxwell and Murdoch who have been selling some of their assets recently to

reduce their borrowings, running to billions, will be smiling but then will that affect them as 'spenders'? After all, Maxwell, when he goes to work at *The Mirror* office, doesn't need a Rolls Royce; he descends on the roof with his private helicopter — status with a vengeance by the fully paid up member of the Labour Party. The beneficiaries at a lower level are people who have borrowed money because they haven't got the cash to buy their houses or various gadgets from motor cars to furniture, television sets to video-scopes. The reduction in interest rates simply relieves them of some of the burden with which they have saddled themselves. Very few with the experience of getting into the hands of the money-lenders will lash out, as Lamont hopes, and add to their existing misery. After all, in the past year some 40,000 homes have been repossessed by the finance companies.

## Electoral Circus Back in Town!

Politicians, no less than the media, rely on people having short political memories. Weeks ago the political commentators 'in the know', with their ears to the ground, were assuring us that it would be a June general election. They thought the poll tax was out of the way (which it isn't) and the recession was bottoming out and unemployment didn't matter (we shall see) and that the local elections wouldn't be too bad for the government, especially with the support of the millionaire media. Well, let's jog those short memories.

A week before the local elections *The Guardian's* political correspondent reported:

"Labour needs gains of about 300 seats ... if it is to dash Tory strategists' hopes of achieving an overall Commons majority in an early general election ... Chris Patten, the Conservative Party chairman ... will be content to improve on his party's 1990 performance when the Tories suffered a net loss of 220 seats."

This is what Mr Patten actually said:

"We shall have election results which show an improvement from our position last year", Mr Patten said. 'I have no doubt that the political mood has been transformed from the campaign last year. We have more candidates and more canvassers than in 1987.

'I am absolutely confident that the local election results will bear out the opinion poll results and show a steady improvement in the Conservative position'."

*The Guardian's* correspondent commented that:

"It will not be hard for the Conservatives to improve on last year's local election performance when the Tories took 32 per cent of the votes to the Labour Party's 40 per cent."

But some Tories were pointing out that the present elections should be compared with the local elections in 1987 where the Tories had gained, so they said, 200 seats. Yet according to

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And at a lower level, how many people who have fallen for the temptation of 'buy now interest free — or VAT free — and pay in six months' have had their 'treasure' seized for non-payment?

But apart from these considerations, how does Mr Lamont imagine *that purchasing power will increase as unemployment increases?* Surely the answer is that these politicians live in a very air-conditioned world of their own. We will try to explain, kindly supplied by Mr Lamont himself with the answer.

But before we quote his 'clanger', reference must be made to the Minister of Education's (Kenneth Clarke) reference to the readers of *The Daily Mirror* as 'morons'. Asked to phone in their views as to whether they thought Mr Clarke was a moron or a prat, they overwhelmingly voted that he was a prat thereby indicating

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# "YOU'RE NOT RICH ON £400 A WEEK"

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that some readers of *The Daily Mirror* are not morons. Needless to say, the Tory election managers were very upset. At the time of writing they have not yet been upset by another Lamont statement on his return to the homeland when faced with the Labour Party's Shadow Chancellor's (John Smith — an intelligent, right wing Scottish MP) statement that everybody earning more than £20,300 a year (£400 a week) would have to pay extra National Insurance under a Labour government. At present you can earn as much as you like over £20,300 without having to pay NI on the extra. So that the chairman of Tesco's, for instance, who had just had his modest salary increased 500% to £520,000, is paying NI on just the £20,000; the other £500,000 is sheer profit (apart from income tax which at present, assuming he doesn't put against it all kinds of expenses, such as Maxwell with his helicopter for instance, will be left with £300,000, which is £6,000 a week — yes, six thousand pounds a week!).

According to Mr Smith, there are 3,000,000 people earning more than £400 a week and under Labour they would pay an extra £2,500 million in National Insurance which would be used for the underprivileged (for good social purposes).

Mr Lamont lost no time to 'hit back'. Within hours of the Smith statement he declared that his opposite number "had let the cat out of the bag" and that millions of skilled workers, managers and engineers would be "walloped" with Labour in power. He added that this was "only the tip of the iceberg" and that with Labour's spending plans "millions of other ordinary people will pay more" (our italics).

We have italicised "millions of other ordinary people" because that is what Mr Lamont considers people earning £20,000 a year to be. He felt he was exposing his Labour counterpart when he declared "for Labour the rich begin at £20,000".

We would reply that many more millions in this country would consider themselves very rich if they had an income of £400 a week. After all the

## STOP PRESS:

At Prime Minister's Question Time last week Mr Major confirmed the government's view that the police sergeants, head-teachers, skilled workers *et alia* all earning more than £20,000 were not rich and would be clobbered by expecting them to pay their full share of taxes.

official average earnings are not much more than £200 a week and include the three million who earn more than £400 a week, which means (as if we didn't already know) that part-time workers, short-time workers and farm workers (£129 a week for a 39-hour week) are earning a lot less than the average, and that the three million earning not less than £400 a week include the thousands of top directors and yuppies, snooker and football stars, MPs and consultants for everything from investments to sexual prowess who are earning well above the £20,000 a year which Mr Lamont looks upon as average.

And what about the unemployed on £40 a week? And old age pensioners who have just received their annual increase and now get the princely sum of £52 a week (£2,704 a year), a £5 a week increase (in arrears on the inflation increase in 1990) to enjoy their old age after a working life of forty years.

Would you think you were rich on £400 a week when you were expected to enjoy your old age on £52 a week and now also have to pay for eye tests and dental treatment?

# Two ways of helping the Kurdish refugees

Recent harrowing sights, seen on television, of Turkish soldiers using the butts of their rifles to beat back Kurdish refugees were an eloquent testimony to the barbarism that can result from the existence of national frontiers. For the small stream they were being prevented from crossing marked the frontier between Turkey and Iraq. Supplies of food, clothing and shelter lay on the other side but this was Turkish soil and national sovereignty had to be respected. Each night we witnessed scenes the politicians of the West would have preferred to have kept hidden, but the media had the reporters and the reporters had the facilities and recognised a good story.

Under pressure of public opinion the politicians had to do something, so they produced their high tech solution. Bomber planes with fighter escorts, weather permitting, dropped supplies, sometimes lethally, by parachute. Although visually impressive, the commentators' small print disclosed that such efforts were totally inadequate in relation to the size of the need and the refugees continued to die of cold and starvation.

Now armed camps have been built inside Iraq and the refugees are being persuaded to go into them. An undignified way to live and with the Iraqi military not far away, how safe?

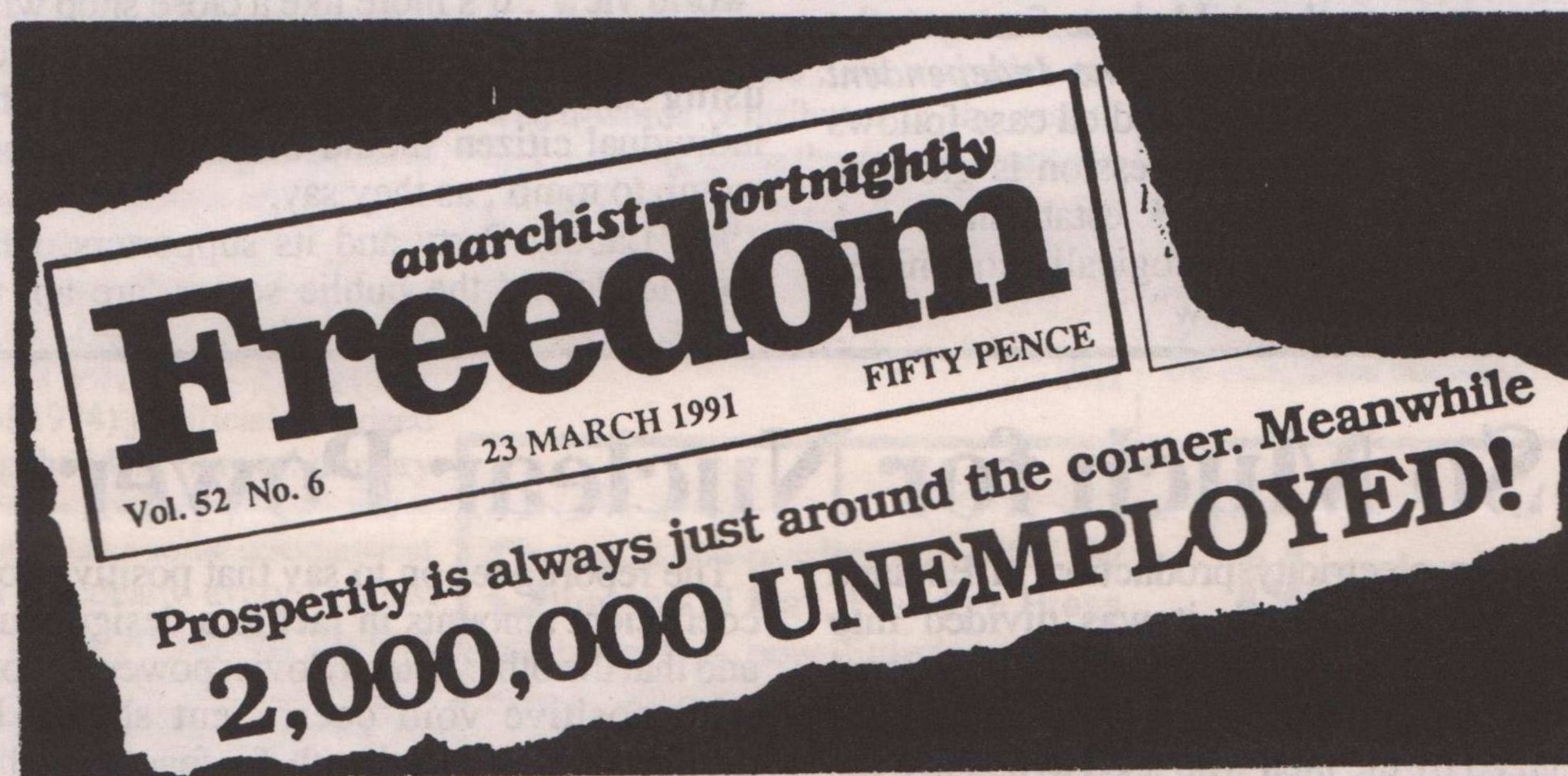
With the poor conditions and overcrowding some are already dying of diseases.

There was always another way, blocked only by the Turkish government, to allow the Kurds into Turkey where relief supplies are piling up and where ten million Kurds already live; trying in spite of government persecution to keep alive the language and culture they share with the Kurds of Iraq. Would not many of the Turkish Kurds, family for family, have taken the refugees into their homes and provided at least temporary help? But that would have been an anarchist solution not acceptable to the Turkish government, part of NATO and the so-called free world.

The Turkish state fears the desires of the Kurds of the region to join together to create a Kurdistan and still keeps thirty thousand, who escaped into Turkey from the Iraq poison gas attack in 1988, separated behind armed guards in refugee camps. We would not like many of the characteristics of such a Kurdistan but what right has the Turkish state to stop them?

As a *New Statesman and Society* editorial (12th April 1991) pointed out whilst being unable to draw the consequent conclusion, the "whole notion of human rights is inherently subversive of the organisation of the world into sovereign states — a system in which all governments have a vested interest".

HS



# Electoral Circus Back in Town!

(continued from page 1)

The *Guardian's* correspondent their gains that year were 78 "building up on the net gain of 113 seats in 1983 — both results good enough to trigger general election victory the following month".

In the event — and if you have forgotten what Mr Patten said please re-read it to savour what follows — the Tories did not improve on the 220 losses in 1990 nor on

the modest 78 gains in 1987, but actually lost more than 800 seats and goodness knows how many councils, including more than 400 seats to the Labour lot as well as control of some 20 councils. Needless to say the press pin-pointed the Liberal Democrats' 'sensational' gains (more than 500 seats) and wrote down the Labour Party's obvious success. The right wing *Independent* headed its post-election editorial "Well short of a Labour triumph", and declared that:

"The Liberal Democrats are the only true winners of Thursday's elections ... the Conservatives have done badly, but not disastrously. Labour did well but not triumphantly so. Perhaps surprisingly the outcome is more reassuring for the Tories than for Labour: the Conservatives can be more confident today than 48 hours ago that they would gain a small majority in an autumn election." And so on and so on. One does not have to be a Labour supporter to protest at the anti-Labour campaign of the media — press and television — and the anti-Kinnock propaganda based on his apparent unfitness to assume the premiership, etc. The opinion polls are also an anti-Labour Party weapon in the attempted brainwashing of the electorate. It has always been so. More than sixty years ago Bertrand Russell summed it up with these words:

"The average man's opinions are made for him like the house he lives in ... what is called the rule of the majority in a bourgeois democracy is, therefore, in reality, the rule of those who control the methods of manufacturing opinion, especially in the schools and the press."

# Merchants of Death Back in Business

The US aerospace industry has received a salutary boost as the Pentagon awarded the largest aircraft contracts of the 1990s — a \$65,000 million contract for the 'next generation' of fighters. One assumes that they are even more deadly and that the ones they replace will be sold to third world countries. Apparently so desperate was the industry for contracts (after all, they have lost a third of the workforce in the past four years — believe it or not 165,000 jobs — useless, destructive, anti-social jobs!) that each of the contestants invested \$1,000 million in trying to win the contracts.

Czechoslovakia, which pre-war was a producer of tanks and other war-like weapons, has just done a deal with Syria to sell them Soviet-style tanks. They are very apologetic about it, especially with the Americans, who still look upon Syria as harbouring terrorists, but the Czechs ask them to be understanding as they try to re-tool from

war production to civilian production. This sale could "help to plug the gap in our programme".

Meanwhile, other beneficiaries from the ravages of war are that *The Independent* (3rd May) calls the "hungry Wall Street law firms trying to use Washington's influence at the United Nations to get access to the potentially lucrative business of assessing compensation claims against Iraq for the Gulf war, to be paid from the country's future oil exports".

*The Independent's* New York correspondent points out that "US firms made enormous litigation fees from the compensation process between the US and Iran in The Hague following the seizure of the 52 American hostages in 1979".

Perhaps one should not include them with the Merchants of Death. They are rather the vultures picking on the corpses following war. No less despicable surely?

# POLL TAX: Who will have the last laugh?

Americans show their contempt for party politics by turning up to elections only in very small numbers. The British public show their contempt by voting for members of the Monster Raving Loony Party. It is surely a reflection of the all-time low that representatives of all three major parties are held in that the Monster Raving Loony Party recently gained its first council seat in the local elections. 'Loony' Stuart Hughes was elected to Sidmouth Town Council with 865 votes.

There is little to laugh at in the government's council tax proposals. The only concessions won by the anti poll tax movement as far as I can see are the abolition of the register and the legalisation of non-payment for students and the unemployed. And what are the costs? Not only will it be easier for councils to force people to pay the new tax, it looks like it is now going to be easier for them to prosecute past poll tax bad debtors. At the same time as the anti poll tax movement seemed to be reaping the benefits of the long campaign for active non-payment, people were increasingly prepared to rebel only passively as individuals rather than continuing to organise to build on their position of strength.

Here in Brighton, for example, bailiffs have been sent to the homes of at least fifty people. They have made only half-hearted attempts to gain entry and have then given people fourteen days to hand over personal details (so that wages may be arrested) on pain of being summonsed for a committal hearing, which means prison. Of course, they are using this as a threat simply to frighten people into paying up. The local rag reports that 26,000 have not paid a penny and 23,566 have only paid a bit, so they can't all be sent to prison. I haven't yet heard of anybody calling the court's bluff; the trouble is, the first few who do are likely to be sent down to set the rest of us an example.

It was good to hear Tory councils conceding that they think it will be even more difficult to collect the poll tax now that people know it's doomed. But there is also a tendency going in the opposite direction whereby some people think the reason for withholding their poll tax

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**Pioneering professionals**

With calls for a regulatory body for social workers, a general social services council, and more elaborate training, social work may yet become a 'proper profession'. Top officers involved in the Rochdale child abuse botch-up may have contributed to this promotion by closing ranks to obstruct inquiries into their handling of cases.

A wall of silence always increases the mystique, which is vital to any proper profession. When silence is not possible most professionals invent a private language incomprehensible to outsiders, and in this social workers have not been lacking either.

After the Rochdale cock-up, Councillor Kevin Hunt told the local press: "We had highly opinionated social workers who became obsessed with the righteousness of their own case, to the detriment of everyone else". Councillor Hunt was one of the few Rochdale councillors who tried to overcome the stonewalling approach of the social service functionaries.

And yet, judging by the comments of delegates at last month's annual meeting of the British Association of Social Workers, many of them see themselves as heroic pioneers correcting society's ills by claiming to care for the weak and defenceless. Requiring only more resources, more funds and more training.

Ms Statham, director of the National Institute for Social Work, told delegates: "At the moment our pioneering activities create sticks with which we are beaten, rather than understanding that we are often on the frontiers of *unknowing*, treading where others fear to go".

Would that they weren't so cocky in their ignorance.

Councillor Hunt is determined to block

**The Factory and Beyond****Invented Professions**

further invasions by social worker types on the Langley Estate, scene of the child abuse allegations. He told council officials and councillors: "We are in no mood for the importation of any more well-intentioned do-gooders. We don't want paid missionaries".

**Class conscious child abusers**

But what kind of people get themselves accused of child abuse?

In January, before the collapse of the pioneering cases of alleged ritual child abuse in Rochdale and on the Orkneys, *The Rochdale Observer* disclosed that none of the children in Rochdale Council care were from Norden or Bamford — the better-off areas of Rochdale. Gordon Littlemore, the now retired (or sacked?) boss of Rochdale Social Services, then argued: "The middle classes are more likely to avoid detection of abuse, as they are more elaborate in constructing defences and more articulate".

It is also easier for the social services department to snatch the children of council tenants than those of the more well-heeled citizens.

**Feathering their own nest**

Commenting on the child abuse fiasco on the Orkneys and elsewhere, *The Independent* editorial stated: "As mishandled case follows mishandled case, the impression is growing that there is a social work establishment ... whose members are ideologically committed to a particular world view".

What is this world view of social workers?

Certainly it is clear that they are anxious to elevate themselves to a professional status, something akin to the medical or legal profession. One of their justifications seems to be that even doctors amputate healthy limbs in error and judges imprison innocents.

Social workers have been called the 'soft cops' and the 'carpet sweepers of the Welfare State'. In so far as they are necessary they are a reflection of social irresponsibility within a society. But if doctors, looking for work and eager to boost their prestige, were to claim that grey hair was a treatable disease or baldness in old age was a curable illness, they would be asking to be ridiculed.

Since there has been no hard evidence of 'ritual' or 'satanic' abuse of children in this country, it would seem to represent the invention of a social disease by social workers for their own purposes. As I write, one leading social worker in Nottingham, a born again Christian, has declared that: "Abortion is the biggest form of child abuse". If these people have a coherent ideology, it is that of an interest group bent on promoting themselves as a profession.

It would seem a bit fanciful to call this a 'world view'. It's more like a close shop with members seeking to expand their influence using the Welfare Statist idea that the individual citizen should be cared for 'from womb to tomb', as they say.

The Labour Party and its supporters, who seek to defend the public sector, are apt to

accept this mentality, promoting the petty professions like social work. But they are not its only victims. Mr Bevens, an assistant director of social services in Rochdale who votes Tory and reads *The Daily Telegraph*, told me that there would never be enough social workers or Welfare Rights Officers. God help us from the empire builders!

The soup kitchens are gone! But in town halls, tribunals and public offices one comes across little groups of petitioners and claimants being shepherded like sheep by Welfare Rights Officers and social workers. Few would be taken seriously or even listened to without their paid guides. In any case most could hardly find their way around the maze of red tape without some protection or assistance.

In this sense the social services promotes the disability of the claimant and the citizen — thriving on the cultivation of social irresponsibility. And yet Michael Moerman, the anthropologist, stresses a point which will ring true to anarchists when he says: "Social science assumes, as our human experience daily confirms, that social life is orderly. No one can take professional credit for that order, however, for it is a member's accomplishment".

In the same way that policemen seek to convince us that the country is full of criminals, so social workers have a vested interest in putting over the view that social life is disorderly — that parents are forever abusing their children, that satanic abuse is rife in society, that many citizens are socially incompetent cripples in need of professional help. Consequently these evangelists of the Welfare State invade the impoverished areas of our towns and cities to tell people how to live their lives.

Mack-the-Knife

**POLL TAX  
Who will have  
the last laugh?**

(continued from page 2)

payments has gone, as in the case of Scottish National Party people mentioned in the last issue of *Freedom*.

How is it that at the same time that we seemed to have won we are actually losing? An important point is that people rebelled against the poll tax for different reasons. Hence there were different goals, some of which were quite vague. As attention came to be focused on the government's attempt to cut its losses, the media's characterisation of this as a victory for those who opposed the poll tax dove-tailed with the typically British norm of reaching the minimum possible objective then giving up. Sensing success, many people then saw no reason to do any more.

I fear the only winners in this farce will be those playing at party politics — Militant Tendency, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats are trying to claim credit for the poll tax's demise; the Tories are trying to win back old supporters who only opposed them because of the poll tax. It is as if, after recognising and using their power on the streets, people have willingly handed it back on a plate to Westminster as soon as the politicians sat up and took notice. Materially, we will now be worse off: we will find the new tax less easy to dodge, and, though it is relatively simple to beat the bailiffs, there is apparently no longer enough popular pressure to prevent councils jailing non-payers (obviously they will not jail all fourteen million or so, but even one is one too many; for one thing it encourages others to pay). As it stands, the anti poll tax victory is therefore merely a *symbolic* one; and unless lessons are learned and a significant upsurge and broadening of the popular rebellion occurs, it will contribute little more to abolishing capitalism than voting for the Monster Raving Loony Party.

Johnny Yen

**So Much for Nuclear Power**

When electricity production in England was privatised, it was divided into three. The fossil fuel stations went to National Power and Powergen, private companies managed by the men who used to manage the nationalised CEBG. The nuclear power stations were originally going the same way, but private capitalists had more sense than to buy shares in nuclear power, so they went to Nuclear Electric, which remains with the state.

It was stated at the time that the local distribution companies, also privatised, would itemise their various sources on the bills. They are not doing so because it is 'too complicated', but some overall figures have been published by a quango caller Offer, the Office of Electricity Regulation.

In round terms, National Power and Powergen produce 80% of the electricity and get 75% of the income, while Nuclear Electric produces 20% of the electricity and gets 25% of the income. Nuclear costs about 47% more per unit than coal. The distribution companies are required by law to pay a 'nuclear levy', because the nuclear power stations would not survive if they had to compete on equal terms.

So much for the official claim that nuclear power was cheaper.

Now that the business is private, anyone may sell power to a distribution company. If you can raise the capital, you can sell wind-power, wave-power or solar-power, without contravening a state monopoly. One snag is that you will have to charge at a lower price per unit than National Power and Powergen, to compensate the distribution companies for their trouble.

It appears from a report recently published in the USSR that the operators responsible for the Chernobyl accident compounded their initial error by shutting the station down when things started to go wrong. The station had a 'positive void coefficient', and when things went wrong they should have increased production to the maximum, exporting as much energy as possible. This would not necessarily have avoided the catastrophe, but it would have made catastrophe less certain.

The report goes on to say that positive void coefficient amounts in fact to a design fault, and that the other fifteen Soviet power stations with positive void coefficient should be decommissioned forthwith, for fear of another Chernobyl.

Britain had two power stations with positive

void coefficient. One of them, at Winfrith in Dorset, was shut down earlier than planned, perhaps (though they are not saying) in response to an internal report about Chernobyl. The other is the fast reactor at Dounreay. There are no plans to shut that down early.

So much for official assurances that Chernobyl couldn't happen here.

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The world's attention is currently being focused on events in Iraq. We are constantly being told that this is an isolated incident where the Western democracies are bringing a renegade nation under control, and back into the harmony of the world order.

If the world order is 'dancing to an American tune' then they are probably not far wrong, but as for it being an isolated incident this is pure fantasy.

In a recent interview in *The Sunday Telegraph* an ex-arms dealer claimed that he could rely on at least sixty conflicts in the world at any one time. If you think this figure is high count them up. India alone is involved in at least five wars, there are half a dozen or so in the Middle East and probably as many again breaking out in the Soviet Union. They may vary in size from the total war currently happening in the Gulf to bombing campaigns, such as is being carried out in the Basque region.

Although each may have its own history and course of events, they do inevitably have similarities. Common denominators in conflicts are power, land and border disputes, resources and wealth.

Within each nation state the ruling order controls wealth and power. This is inevitably expansionist and in the quest for the resources needed to create wealth and power the various ruling orders invariably clash. Border disputes are one outcome of this. A government will always be able to come up with some historical reason why a border should be

## No War But The Gulf War?

pushed back, or a piece of land is theirs; if the resources within it are worth the effort.

There are literally dozens of examples of regions which have been taken over by larger more powerful nations such as New Caledonia by France, or East Timor by Indonesia. The people of these areas inevitably react against this oppression and organisation has traditionally taken the form of demands for national identity. This is understandable, but as the resistance develops those holding relative power within the communities form a new ruling order in waiting. Demands will then take the form of power acquisition for this group of people. This has happened in Southern Africa where the needs of the people were superseded by the power aims of SWAPO and the ANC. Being exploited by an external or an internal government makes little difference!

With resource use geared to maximum profit, fair and equitable distribution is an impossibility. It is pointless fighting an external power to gain control of your land and then creating an internal power elite to control it. They will only look after their own interests (they may or may not see their aims as being synonymous with those of the people) joining the competing ruling classes internationally.

Other common denominators in all these

wars are the civilian casualties — the poor always die for the rich. Those who wage war very rarely suffer by their actions. Resources are not important, it is the control of them which matters. Industry and agriculture are often destroyed in the fight for control. People lose their homes, land, jobs and go hungry, but those in power lose none of their privileges. Hardship for them is moving their riches to a bomb-proof bunker.

Many of the regions suffering hunger and epidemics amongst their people are also areas of war — Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Cambodia. Food and medical aid to these people is a sick joke. Food shortages are inevitable in war, but add a fragile environment and disasters must hardly come as a surprise. Development also takes a back

seat as governments stock up on weapons. The Bangladeshi military government seems quite happy to let people drown and starve while it suppresses the Jana Sanghati Samity (JSS) guerrilla forces in the Chittagong Hill tracts. Alternatively a nation wishing to destabilise another sets up and arms a guerrilla movement. In the ensuing chaos and carnage hopefully the economy and the government collapses. This was the US tactic of arming the Contras in Nicaragua, and South Africa's backing of UNITA in Angola.

The more you look into conflicts, the more obvious it becomes that it is an intrinsic part of the capitalist system as various groups of the ruling classes slug it out for wealth and power, while the rest of us suffer the consequences.

Andrew McGingle

## News from Northern Ireland

The Ulster Defence Regiment received royal colours recently to mark its 21st birthday. It is the largest and the newest regiment in the British army and the only one continuously on operations. It grew out of a part-time militia set up to soften the blow of the disbandment of the B Specials, but suffers from the perception that it is the B Specials by another name. The record of the UDR is atrocious for criminal activity and the constant harassment by members of the regiment and the suspicion of widespread collusion with loyalist paramilitaries means that it is effectively a protestant militia for a protestant people. It is named explicitly for the defence of Ulster. In a sense it is 'our boys' in the way that the IRA is seen as 'the lads' by republicans. In any future arrangements in Ireland disbandment of the UDR will be vital, but at present it is highly unlikely.

Certainly the regiment and its activities will be under scrutiny when the talks between the so-called constitutional parties start here in May under the direction of Peter Brooke. Already the sides have been squaring off and remarks by Bishop Desmond Tutu that no-one should be left out of negotiations, an indirect comment on the fact that Sinn Fein will not be at the talks, has fairly set the cat among the pigeons. Disenfranchising large sections of the population by not including Sinn Fein in the process will probably lead to their collapse as the activities and analysis of Sinn Fein go to the heart of the nationalist agendas of all the parties in the talks, especially the SDLP.

In the face of these developments, what do anarchists have to say? Given that the state is as much an attitude of mind as an institutional reality, anarchists will continue to build for the revolution in small ways. And yet we can't ignore the big picture, full of things like the UDR and the

Brooke's talks. As a young anarchist from a loyalist area in Belfast said to me recently, it is very hard to build widespread anti-state activity when allegiance to this particular state is bound up with personal identity and image. Wouldn't things be easier for anarchists if Ireland was united and then we could challenge the state emanating from Dublin?

Unfortunately such a simple 'Brits Out' position ignores the British people in Ireland who certainly have to address this issue of allegiance. But also, and more importantly, it falls into the trap of assuming that any one state is better than another. For anarchists in Ireland the task remains the creation of real social change by working people aware of the historical and political contexts in which they find themselves.

In Letterkenny, County Donegal, Mrs Nancy Stokes, who was quoted in local papers responding angrily to the comments of members of the town's Urban District Council, has been living in a caravan in a car park outside the town's Catholic Cathedral for 15 years. She has raised 22 children in the period in atrocious conditions. The councillors were deploring the problems caused by the so-called itinerants (often known as gypsies, but properly known as travellers or travelling people) especially in spoiling their plans to push Letterkenny as the boom town of the region. Some of the travellers, like Mrs Stokes, want to be housed. Others want properly serviced sites for their caravans. No local authority in Ireland has adequately responded to the needs of these people and the continuing inability of Irish society to make meaningful provision for these citizens is one of the greatest indictments of that society.

Dave Duggan

## POVERTY THE REAL ENEMY IN BANGLADESH

When one reads of the cyclone that hit Bangladesh, earthquakes in a Russian republic, floods in Afghanistan, famine due to drought in Ethiopia, Sudan and elsewhere, to mention only the disasters one can immediately recall, does one not despair that at the same time man-made disasters in Iraq, Kuwait, in Africa, Asia and Latin America are taking the lives of thousands, perhaps millions, of fellow beings for no valid reason at all?

Even the 'natural' disasters should not cost the number of lives that have been lost in Bangladesh or that are threatened by famine in Africa if we lived in a more just world.

Michael Simmons, writing in *The Guardian* (3rd May), points to the fact that it is poverty and not the tidal wave that "is the real killer" in Bangladesh.

The twenty million Bangladeshis who live in the worst affected areas are not there by choice but because they are desperately poor and the only lands available to them are the silt islands which, according to the United Nations, are threatened with "total inundation" if the sea level rises by 5ft. Another ten million would be at risk if the sea level rose by 10ft. The wave driven by the cyclone was in fact 20ft high.

The victims cannot be brought back to life but we are already being told that this disaster is not the first nor the worst to hit the Bay of Bengal. In 1970 half a million people died

after a cyclone and in the intervening years many other thousands of people have been swept out to sea. A BBC report on the present cyclone said that something like 2,000 fishing boats were destroyed, some swept miles inland.

How fortunate are the affluent countries in the West. We have our hard winters when transport is halted by snow drifts and electric trains are damaged by snow getting into the works. We even have, apparently, a problem with 'over-production' of cereals so that in the Common Market countries we are paying farmers to set aside hundreds of thousands of acres of arable land to reduce the food mountains. At the same time we import cheaper cereals from the third world to feed our livestock. Our deficit balance of payments on food and animal feedstuffs is £6,000 million a year, and yet the government pays farmers not to produce cereals because there is a 'mountain' of the stuff! Yet we cannot afford to give the starving Africans — after all, they have been long enough the victims of white colonialism — the means both of survival in the short term and the infrastructure to allow them to fend for themselves. And if the Western powers stopped selling arms to the third world, that too would contribute to solving the man-made disasters in Africa.





# The Living Dead

There is a great sadness in London's Bond Street area as the wives of the art dealers sit at the door watching desks eyeing the painted garbage on their gallery walls, sipping Earl Grey tea and nibbling their supermarket biscuits for no-one dare dispute that we are in one of those great historical moments of historical time when culture ain't culturing for the trade. No Rolling Stones, no Hockney, no Bertie Russell to be logically positive in relation to the bomb, no spy exposé and in the world of the visual arts no mad wonderful lunatic talent. This is the time when the art market has to send the little woman and her miner's lamp down into the gallery cellars to exhume the sour remains of yesteryear's dead and at this moment in Einsteinian time they fill the walls of too many state and private art galleries. There was a time so many years ago when the British kitchen sink school of art graced the walls of the old Beaux Arts Gallery and those garish canvases illustrated the slums of London's poor but London's wealthy art-buying middle class did not want to be reminded where daddy's loot came from and they were non-sellers for those who could only stomach Paris or Neapolitan vermin-infested slums. But time, as we are taught, moves on and in their usual necrophilia circus act the art dealers have dug up this trivia for the dead art market.

To protect the innocent I shall not name the galleries but do no more than say that any gallery that did not get into the act with a nice slab of badly painted 1950/60 social realism should be deemed unworthy of the title of art dealer. Land-locked between the White Hart and the Nag's Head pub in London's Whitechapel High Street is the Whitechapel Art Gallery, and to its credit it has mounted many a fine major free art exhibition and at, again, this moment in time it is exhibiting the late paintings of the late Jack Butler Yeats who died on 28th March 1957. JB, as we all know, was the brother of the Irish poet WB, and over the long years his work was the small

coin of many an art gallery where its bright colours made it the ideal solitary painting for the gallery window. They were what they were — a down-market version of Turner's colour-slapping period, and one could claim that if one had seen a reproduction of Turner's 'Fighting Temeraire' then one has lived and seen Yeats' minor reworkings of the master. Weak on figure drawing but high on merging colours, they supplied the romanticism for the wealthy Boston Irish cocktail partywise. I have always liked the work of Yeats, without pretending to praise it, but have felt bitter that over the years the gallery mafia have always ignored the way Yeats paid his rent in that as an illustrator he did many a page and a front-page for the children's working class comics such as *Comic Cuts*. It was in this back-street working class comic that Yeats had his 'The Adventures of Chubblock



Homes' and those drawings in 1894 in *Funny Wonder*. We read that J.B. Yeats did his black and white drawings for his brother's poetry books, *The Vegetarian* and *Punch*, yet one feels that in the Bond Street area art trade there is something not particular art culture, till throbbing in earning one's rent in drawing for working class back-street children's comics. As the Town would say to his blushing frau as the bride throws up at the altar, 'veil the eyes and close the mind, beloved'. Yet to quote the captain of the Titanic as he fitted his bicycle clips, 'all is not lost', for in that lost limbo of lesser known fruitcakes the late art lover Dr Albert Barnes has forced open the coffin lid to annoy the establishment and let the guardians of our culture beware. Doc Barnes, or Albert, manufactured and sold to the faithful a gargle that he had named Argyrol, and there are certain people whom one does not wish to mix with who claim that Albert stole the recipe from a German chemist, see 'dedicated'. But in his pre-Thatcherite world Albert sold his oral version of snake oil for the masses and became rich. With the accumulated wealth from the bad breath brigade, Albert went into the art collecting jag and bought whatever he could be it Renoirs, Matisse and Cezannes, yea even to the largest collection in the old US of A. There is a nobility about we the poor that the rich can never understand and it is that mystical aura that surrounds the head of every labouring working man and woman that Doc Barnes understood, for he hated the wealthy art establishment and decided to leave his major art collection to coloured people, even though the bomb-happy Bertrand Russell did say that he accepted them as equals, only because he did not. But Albert left the visual loot of his oral snake oil market to an obscure little 'black' college that made no claim to an understanding of 'art beautiful', but Lincoln

College staggered across their campus with the Cezannes and the Renoirs and the rest. Sir Kenneth Clark, of art for the masses via the television, said that Albert's method of collecting his paintings from 'penniless widows', etc., made Kenneth's blue blood run cold, but oral snake oil to high art is but a short step and to old Doc Barnes credit when the mighty Le Corbusier wrote asking to be allowed to view Albert's collection, Albert simply returned the letter unopened with 'merde' written on the envelope. Oh happy days. But Doc Barnes the oral snake oil king is kaput and the little 'coloured' college want to break Albert's last remaining will, etc., and flog off fifteen 'art beautifuls' to mend the roof and it is the very wealthy art establishment who are fighting, legalistically, to keep Albert's collection together. The old trustees are dead and with its acquired reputation as America's finest 'black college' it is now in the control of a dollar-wise new style of trustees and sadly Miss de Mazia, authoress of *The Lure and Trap of Coloured Slides in Art Education* and *The Time-Release Venom of Their Make Belief*, who colonized the Old Southern Guard of trustees, retired leaving the field clear for the carpet-baggers and the art dealers. Great works of art belong to no-one for no matter what the market value the rich man merely rents them during his lifetime when another 'owner' believes he 'owns' it. So too, sadly, with Doc Barnes collection for they will enter that broad stream of the art market to North America leaving the world of Tennessee Williams 'sleepy time south' to dream out its history. Yet there is hope for the future in that in the small English town of Reading an art exhibition was mounted by three brilliant young artists, Paul Petard, Arthur Moysé and Dave Ullman. Magnificent works in the style of Paul Klee and amazing surrealist work held me enthralled and as I left that Reading gallery I know I had seen the future.

Arthur Moysé

## Remembering Charles Bradlaugh

I have just spent an interesting two days in the Bethnal Green area of East London, exploring the locality associated with one of my childhood heroes, the social reformer and militant atheist Charles Bradlaugh.

Bradlaugh had been a household name throughout most of the second half of the nineteenth century, prominent for his radical politics and his championship of individual liberties. His father had been a poor solicitor's clerk and his mother a nursemaid in Hoxton, but by the time he reached his early twenties he had become widely known as a militant anti-religious lecturer and pamphleteer under the name 'Iconoclast' (the 'icon-breaker'). Aged 22, he achieved fame as a champion of the right to public assembly in Hyde Park and five years later became editor of *The National Reformer* and was repeatedly prosecuted for blasphemy and sedition. A working relationship existed with Annie Besant from 1874 to 1885, during which time they were prosecuted for re-publishing an American birth control pamphlet — their indictments were nullified on a technicality. In 1868-69, Bradlaugh successfully challenged the last government obstacle to press freedom, whereby newspapers would be required to deposit £800 in sureties against blasphemy or seditious libel. At the time he first stood for parliament on a platform calling for compulsory national education, separation of church and state, abolition of hereditary peerages and the legal equality of employers and employees. He publicly identified himself with the campaign to abolish capital and corporal punishment. However, it was not until 1880, on his fourth attempt, that he was elected to the House of Commons, and not until 1886 that he was able to take his seat (see below). Although the product of an age that followed that of the Chartists, he was firmly anti-socialist and tended, in many respects, to become more conservative the older he became. He remained in parliament until 1891, when he died, in debt, aged 58.

I first came across Bradlaugh's work entirely by chance. It was the early 1940s and I was about twelve years old and growing up in Adelaide, South Australia. We lived on a small sheep farm in the Adelaide hills and an essential part of my upbringing (as for most Australians of that generation) was an unchallenged assumption of the truths of Christianity (Adelaide is still known as the 'city of churches'!).

Bradlaugh's *Humanity's Gain from Unbelief* and *Plea for Atheism* (published together in the Thinkers Library edition, 1929) were the first *secular* texts I ever read ... and I can still recall so vividly that feeling of exuberance/liberation with which I devoured these booklets. I remember the Saturday afternoon I spent in the Adelaide public library copying out the letter text into a school exercise book. Of course, when one returns, as an adult, to the books that so impressed, they are often a little disappointing, a little less intellectually satisfying. But for me, finding Charles Bradlaugh was the beginning of my break with the conventional outlook into which I had been socialised. By the time I was fifteen, I had been thrown out of home (like Bradlaugh before me) and told I could only return if I agreed never to mention the word 'atheism' in the parental home.

Earlier this month I had stumbled across a copy of Bradlaugh's 35-page *Autobiography* (1891) and anticipating being in the Shoreditch area for a weekend in the immediate future, decided to visit some of the addresses in the area where the 'iconoclast' grew up.

Bradlaugh had been born in Bacchus Walk, Hoxton, in September 1833. Then, newly-built four-roomed terraced houses, the original 'walk' has now disappeared — about 50 yards of the original street remains, joining up with the Hoxton Street market (and the Bacchus pub). The market is worth visiting for cheap fresh vegetables — fresh, no doubt, due to the proximity of Spitalfields. The house where young Charles first saw daylight is now replaced by an 'Arden' housing estate.

Three months later, Charles was baptised in St Leonards Church — just ten minutes walk in the direction of Bethnal Green. The church remains (usually referred to as Shoreditch church) dominating the intersection of Shoreditch High Street, Kingsland Road, Old Street and Hackney Road. Inside and outside it is very dilapidated and attendances are meagre.

The family was soon to move to the other side of Arnold Circus to nearby Birdcage Walk. Now renamed Columbia Road, it's the site of the Sunday morning flower market. Those who have not visited the market really should do, even if, as for me, flowers do not hold a special appeal. Like the Brick Lane market that takes over a dozen acres of the neighbourhood streets (there are no parking places for at least

half a mile by 8.30am each Sunday) one needs to experience the atmosphere of hordes of individuals determined to find a bargain. The flower association with Columbia Road is clearly long-standing, for 150 years ago Bradlaugh senior's dahlias were well known. Their old home is now apparently the site of the Columbia Primary School, and interestingly the school wall painting fronting Columbia Road has been impressively decorated by a series of mosaics devised by the students and helped to do so by a local community workshop. The mosaics bear the title 'Birdcage Walk' and so the old name lives on. On the nearby corner stands the popular and noisy Birdcage pub.

At about this time, Bradlaugh became a student at the nearby C of E administered Abbey School (it was in Abbey Street, now called Buckfast Street, just off Bethnal Green Road). Although a church school the 'discipline' was so outrageous that his parents were soon to remove him — indeed, the wounds he received from being beaten with a ruler were so obvious *ten years later* that they were recorded when he joined the army for a short period.

There were two more shifts of residence for the Bradlaugh children (Charles was the eldest of seven) — both within five minutes walk of Birdcage Walk: first to Elizabeth Street (now Mansford Street, and entirely council flats) and finally to 13 Warner Place.

Warner Place, Bethnal Green, was an interesting place to be at that time. At nearby number 1 was the home of Richard Carlile who had been imprisoned for six years for publishing Tom Paine's *The Age of Reason*. It was also the home of Carlile's common law wife Eliza Sharples, who managed a coffee room at the corner. It became a meeting place for free-thinkers. Behind the shop a temperance hall was built — and became the venue for many radical gatherings.

Further down Warner Place, away from the Carlile and Bradlaugh homes, a new C of E church was consecrated in 1841. This was St Peter's — the third of twelve Anglican churches to serve Bethnal Green (one for each apostle). Although Bradlaugh's parents were not religious, they did insist their children attend Sunday School, and as the new church was only a few steps distant from their front door, this is where the young Charles reported at the end of 1840. The newly-appointed minister, the Rev John G. Packer, was to



## JUDGE PICKLES FOR LEGALISING SOFT DRUGS

In spite of every country declaring war on the drug cartels the industry continues to flourish, its tentacles spreading worldwide unchecked. Even attempts to trace funds laundered through the world's banks will fail.

And meanwhile, more people are being killed for trying to interfere. A second Minister of Justice in Colombia, Enrique Lou, has been murdered by hired killers. In Peru, the world's main source of coca leaf (where 200,000 families make their living from growing coca legally) all attempts to draft an anti-drugs agreement by the Institute of Liberty and Democracy accompanied by a \$100 million subsidy, met with opposition in the form of a bomb blast in the Institute, attributed to the drug traffickers organisation.

Recently a teenager was murdered and another shot and injured in South Manchester in what is believed to have been a battle between rival factions of young drug dealers. In Southern Italy eight people were murdered in three days as part of a war among crime families for control of the drug traffic there. So far this year 105 people have been killed in Calabria, the province with the highest murder rate in Italy.

The list is unending, the traffic is ever increasing in spite of all governments expressing their determination to stamp it out. Now the controversial Judge James Pickles, who is retiring from the Bench, will instead be running his own television show on BBC 2 presenting a 40-minute documentary on 11th June in which he will make the case for legalising cannabis and other soft drugs. According to the *East Anglian Daily Times*: "He will review the argument for legalising all drugs, including heroin and cocaine, using evidence and interviews from addicts, a dealer, drug squad chiefs in London and Amsterdam, an MP, a university lecturer and a psychiatrist.

Speaking from his home in Halifax, West Yorkshire, Judge Pickles yesterday defended the decision to make the programme and the validity of his argument.

He said, 'the very fact that drugs are illegal drives up the prices. Racketeers move in, import and push the drugs and users have to steal to buy them'."

Our only criticism is to ask why limit it to soft drugs only. After all, there is just as much 'demand' now in the hard drugs and the traffickers and pushers would concentrate on these.

## MALATESTA SAID IT ALL LONG AGO

Writing on 'The Cocaine Threat' in the Italian anarchist daily *Umanita Nova*, 10th August 1922, this is how Malatesta put it:

"There are in France stringent laws against the traffic in drugs and against those who take them. And, as always happens, the scourge grows and spreads in spite, and perhaps because of, the laws. The same is happening in the rest of Europe and in America. Doctor Courtois Suffit, of the French Academy of Medicine, who, already last year [1921] had sounded the alarm against the dangers of cocaine, noting the failure of penal legislation, now demands ... new and more stringent laws.

It is the old mistake of legislators, in spite of experience invariably showing that laws, however barbarous they may be, have never served to suppress vice or to discourage delinquency. The more severe the penalties imposed on the consumers and traffickers of cocaine, the greater will be the attraction of forbidden fruits and the fascination of the risks incurred by the consumer, and the greater will be the profits made by the speculators, avid for money.

It is useless, therefore, to hope for anything from the law. We must suggest another

solution. Make the use and sale of cocaine free [from restrictions] and open kiosks where it would be sold at cost price or even under cost. And then launch a great propaganda campaign to explain to the public and let them see for themselves the evils of cocaine. No one would engage in counter-propaganda because nobody could exploit the misfortunes of cocaine addicts.

Certainly the harmful use of cocaine would not disappear completely, because the social causes which create and drive these poor devils to the use of drugs would still exist. But in any case the evil would decrease, because nobody could make profits out of its sale, and nobody could speculate on the hunt for speculators. And for this reason our suggestion either will not be taken into account, or it will be considered impractical and mad.

Yet intelligent and disinterested people might say to themselves: since the penal laws have proved to be impotent, would it not be a good thing, as an experiment, to try out the anarchist method?"

(From *Malatesta: Life and Ideas*, Freedom Press, 311 pages, £4.00)

remain at the church for no less than 32 years — indeed he remains there still, buried alongside the north wall. As part of the consecration activities, the Bishop of London arranged to conduct a confirmation service and the Rev Packer, in order to impress his bishop, suggested that his most promising student teacher, Charles Bradlaugh, make a special study of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the C of E (these Articles in their present form date from the seventeenth century — few Anglicans are aware of their existence, and even fewer, if informed of their content, are not embarrassed or offended by them).

Bradlaugh took the suggestion quite literally — indeed he did even better and checked the Articles' Biblical credentials. He was amazed to discover not only that many of the Articles did not have Biblical sanctions but also that the gospels themselves were frequently contradictory. How could these disparities be explained if the Bible were indeed the 'word of God'? (Ironically the convocation that originally approved these Articles, instructed preachers to teach only what conformed to the teachings of the Bible!)

He asked the Rev Packer for an explanation. The response of the close-minded vicar was an angry letter to the youth's parents denouncing their son's 'atheism'. Charles was suspended from Sunday School duties. Under pressure from Packer, Bradlaugh's father began attending the church services regularly and in his living room, on the wall facing the chair occupied by his errant son, erected a framed text spelling out that "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God".

As any amateur psychologist could predict, the consequence of this parental pressure was to polarise Charles' views vis a

vis religion, and to drive him from home. He was now a lodger in the nearby home of the recently-deceased Richard Carlile.

To return to my exploration of the Bethnal Green sites connected with my old hero ...

St Peter's Church is locked up most of the time, so I turned up on a Sunday morning half an hour before the advertised Communion. The vicar was pleased to welcome a visitor, but his disappointment was apparent when I confessed that I would not be staying for the service. The minister bewailed the falling congregations (he expected, hopefully, thirty might turn up for the Communion service) and suggested they were the consequence of church bungling (they had built far too many churches!) and there had been a great number of incompetent priests. When I made it clear that it was the history of his church that interested me, he proffered a booklet produced by his congregation, *The Story of St Peter's Church, Bethnal Green*, nine pages of A4, duplicated.

A reference to Bradlaugh appears on page 3: "The school, too, flourished at this time ... one of its most famous pupils was Charles Bradlaugh, the social reformer and MP, who later taught in the Sunday School, although as a politician he claimed to be a 'free-thinker' and refused to take the oath on entering parliament."

With no other 'famous pupil' to celebrate, I suppose the attempt to lay claim to Bradlaugh is understandable.

The reference to the parliamentary oath is inaccurate. Bradlaugh was elected to the Northampton seat in 1880. He asked to 'affirm' believing this to be legally acceptable, but a select committee decided this was not the case. The new MP promptly declared his willingness to take the oath, but another select committee refused to allow him to do so. His seat was

## Book Reviews

**Antilinguistics: a critical assessment of modern linguistic theory and practice**

by Amorey Gethin

Intellect (Oxford), 1990, £14.95

In his book *Antilinguistics*, Amorey Gethin had taken on the mammoth task of challenging the universally accepted theories of linguistics experts in general, and the revered wisdom of Noam Chomsky in particular.

For me, the book served two main purposes: it is a reasoned and clearly argued critique of standard practices of how and why we speak, and it is also a very palatable way of reassessing and grasping Chomsky's linguistic hypotheses.

Gethin's main challenge is against Chomsky's 'innateness hypothesis', namely his proposal that the rapid and complex development of children's grammatical composition can only be explained by the supposition that they are born with the innate knowledge of at least some of the universal structural principles of human language.

Gethin puts forward the simple claim that we learn to speak by imitating others. That often we speak in sentences which include words whose exact meanings we don't know, purely because we have heard them used by others to express similar emotions. Gethin sees language as a constricting social construct rather than the creative expression of emotional need Chomsky claims it to be.

He is irritated by the Chomskyan assumption that language is a separate organism with a life of its own. Gethin believes that language is "far more superficial than awareness, logic and the powers of co-ordination". He regrets the fact that in his opinion the terrible thing about words is that they *limit* human's awareness of reality, make them blind and deaf to it, in fact words almost certainly limit experience itself.

So who is correct? Is language merely a limiting social construct? Do we learn to speak by imitation or are we born ready-programmed with rudimentary speech patterns? I noticed a recent article in *The Lancet* which may satisfy both camps. Contrary to medical opinion hitherto, research in the USA is now showing that far from being deaf until days after birth, the foetus can hear and respond to sounds and music at least twelve weeks before birth. Consequently the child may be born with speech functions — but these could have been learned by imitation of voices heard in the womb! The researcher

states that unborn babies respond particularly well to soap opera themes (is there no hope!)

All in all, *Antilinguistics* is a refreshing and welcome critique of theories of language which have remained undisturbed for far too long.

In his final paragraph, Gethin apologises for sometimes being "polemical and rude". He is polemical and sometimes rude, but in a very engaging and enthusiastic way. Thoroughly recommended.

Silvia Edwards

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vacated and no less than four re-elections followed. Bradlaugh was the victor on each occasion and each time demanded to be able to take the oath. It was not until 1886 that a new speaker (A.W. Peel) agreed he could do so. Perhaps it could be argued that his principal 'achievement' as an MP was the Act of 1888 which gave members the right to affirm.

The streets of East London are filled with the ghosts of the past struggles for freedom. Looking at just some of the places associated with the young Bradlaugh (all those I have mentioned are within a square mile) certainly provided me with an interesting few hours. And, of course, so much more could be said — just a couple of miles along the Hackney Road, for example, would take the pilgrim to the south west entrance to Victoria Park, to Bonner's Fields, as they were called. Here is where the Chartists orators had gathered, here is where the young Bradlaugh was to test his oratory before the general public.

Should anyone feel the urge to repeat my return to the locality where just 150 years ago this year Bradlaugh first challenged the church, there is probably no better means of returning with a shock (!) to the twentieth century than to end the visit to Warner Place, home of Bradlaugh, Carlile and countless forgotten radicals, by popping into the Jeremiah Bullfrog 'free house' situated just half-way down the street ... here you will meet masses of young people ... you'll not be able to talk to them, because the music will make communication impossible ... you'll not be drinking too much, because the beer is rather pricey ... but you will emerge from the experience reminded that we can't claim to have made much progress in these last 150 years that have passed.

Bob Potter



## An open letter to Lord Runciman

The proposed Royal Commission on Judiciary and Police

Sir,

It would probably be too much to hope that your commission will be likely to interpret your area of inquiries to look at acts of omission as well as of commission; and would thus cast an eye on the total failure — on the part of the police — to make a serious investigation of the Hilda Murrell affair. But is it too much to ask that the commission at least bear in mind that there is a certain selectivity of official investigation?

On the issue which you will be covering, is it possible to retail to you stories that were going around years ago, even though — almost by definition — these were rumours based on unattributable accounts? For when 16½ years past every leftist said the evidence against the Birmingham Six was totally flawed, and this was dismissed as sympathy for the IRA, there was other evidence that we heard at the time, and which did not get published nationally, such points that — if they were noticed at all when they appeared in small journals — were merely repeated as examples of the paranoia of the left.

The two bars bombed in Birmingham were normally used, one by the Irish community, one by leftist students — indeed, I have been told by Irish Republicans that of the 21 dead, two were in (*sub rosa*) contact with the IRA, and two were openly members of the campaigns against penal laws (such as the PTA) passed against the Irish. It was reasonable to ask why would the IRA have chosen these? The Coventry IRA cell had a little while previously been picked up by the Special Branch, a new cell had been formed quite surprisingly quickly and it was in the name of this body that the IRA headquarters took responsibility for the bombing.

Most non-IRA Irish republicans and at least some IRA men were saying (and seemed to believe) that the new cell was an example of the IRA being penetrated by the security services (it was, after all, at about the same time as the Littlejohn bombings, when two English brothers, both members of MI5, joined the IRA and started leaving bombs in Southern Ireland in its name). This was consistent with the policies advocated a few years before by Brigadier Kitson in his book on counter-insurgency. Leftists who believed this account were not, incidentally, thereby excusing the IRA from all blame. One of the major criticisms of the methods of guerrillaism which have been made, when some people have argued that it could be applied to socialist rather than nationalist ends, has always been that guerrilla groups lay themselves open to infiltration by agents provocateurs.

Laurens Otter

My mother has a non-specific late onset mental health problem. Were you to visit her on one or two occasions you would probably think her quality of life didn't amount to much. You would need to care for her for several weeks to begin to see that, be it in a limited way, her ability to enjoy simple pleasures shines through. I mention this only because she came to mind while I was watching a video about QOLYS during a course on community care.

Sound jolly don't they, QOLYS? On the contrary. QOLYS (Quality of Life Years) are a proposed unit of measurement for assessing how to apply health service resources. During the City & Guilds course our group was asked to list the following health problems in order of 'preference' — namely, if you were a health administrator or God, perhaps, how would you choose the illness you would treat on a priority scale of one to twelve.

Here are the illnesses/health conditions. Try it yourselves.

- Heart attack (bypass and transplant)
- Bronchitis
- Liver cancer
- Stroke

## Our Lives in Our Hands

- Abortion
- Kidney failure
- AIDS
- Leukaemia
- Premature babies (under 2 lbs)
- Broken back/neck
- Lung cancer
- Infertility

Some students protested on the grounds that to do the exercise would be ideologically unsound. How could we be asked to place value judgements on the health and quality of life of others — it went against the whole ethos of the National Health Service. But we were soon persuaded to play the game and arguments became heated and fierce. No two lists agreed on the order of merit.

"There's no comparison between the excruciating pain of a broken back and the possible emotional pain of infertility", said one.

"Well, I would leave abortion off the list altogether, except for victims of rape", said another. "I mean, if people will use abortion

as a means of birth control then they should bloody well pay for it".

Shouts of "shame".

The group fell roughly into two camps — the 'free health for all-ers' and the 'we're not treating you because you only have yourself to blame-ers'. And so it went on.

The video omitted any explanation of how 'quality of life years' would be assessed. Someone (me!) asked who would presume to compare one person's half an hour of ecstasy with another's five years of depressive anxiety.

The policy-makers on the video used a familiar ploy — they began by telling us ex-cathedra style that there would never be sufficient resources to provide for all the country's health problems and that was where QOLYS could come in useful (loud jeers from the 'health for all' corner). Something was needed, so why not QOLYS.

Have you heard of 'QOLYS'? No, neither had I, but beware. There they are all prepared and lying in wait to jump out of the skirting board and tell you that it's pointless repairing your spine as it's rarely a successful operation and even if it is the spine is liable to snap again at any time. Be realistic — think of the cost.

Perhaps we could go one better — a little freedom of choice. How about issuing us all with a ration book at birth specifically for health care. Our lives in our hands. Shall I have treatment for infertility or shall I save up my coupons in case I need a hip replacement when I'm 70. When we die we could leave any unused coupons to our nearest and dearest to use as they saw fit. I'd better not joke too much or some zealous policy-maker might lunge upon it and the whole idea could catch on. If it should, please forget where you read it first!

Silvia Edwards

## GREETINGS FROM LANCASTER or what's left of it after the developers

From back in February, the bailiff violence cover-up saga continues! A copy of the council whitewash report was 'leaked' to an anti-poll tax activist. Press statements were issued, but why bother? True to form, *not a single word* of our side of it was published. After this the bailiffs have been given *carte blanche* to belt people. Therefore bailiff-buster squads are tooling up in readiness ...

Predictably the report failed to connect the assaults with the bailiff company concerned. It also reported that a woman who received a visit from bailiffs at 10 o'clock at night, during which they took £450 plus a portable television set, "suffered no major injustice".

A fifteen year old boy who was clubbed to the ground by thugs and taken to hospital was "found to be suffering from *only* bruises". The cops were unable to trace the yellow van concerned in the attack, despite being given the registration number. Strange that the local APTU sussed out within a matter of hours that the attackers were local gypsies. But then we don't have the resources of the police and the benefit of access to the DVLC, etc.

A Lancaster student, Glenn Howe, was taken to court for anti-Gulf war graffiti and fined £120 plus costs.

Some Lancaster anarchists were among those expelled from the Green Party conference at Bridlington for selling *Green Anarchist* magazines and t-shirts. We even got a mention in *The Independent* for this.

We had an anti-census campaign all over town and we also hope that our anti-election poster ('Only dead politicians give us hope') will upset them. All in all, a busy time ...

Kevin Klubbmann and Bill Bailiffbuster (won't you please go home?)

## A Day in Court

A man described as having a "very Achequered past" spent six weeks in custody after falling asleep in a classroom (well, lessons were always boring, weren't they?).

The man, unemployed, said he had entered the school because he was "drunk, tired, and wanted to get out of the cold". He was not in possession of anything from the school and had "no intention" of stealing anything.

He pleaded guilty to trespass and yawned while being sentenced to a conditional discharge — well, courthouses are just as boring it seems!

An unemployed man who thought "all his Christmases had come at once" when a cheque for £1,800 dropped through his letter-box, will spend 288 hours on community service work instead!

The cheque had been sent by the insurance company to the wrong address and, in his naivety, the man opened an account with it. He immediately withdrew £800 in order that he could give his family "a Christmas they'd never forget".

He pleaded guilty to fraud and, as well as being given the community service order, was ordered to repay the money at the rate of £15 per week. All in all, the poor man has not much of a Christmas to look forward to this year!

A man who was "arrested for his own good"

was also fined for the pleasure!

Prosecuting counsel said the man, a "habitual drunk", had been found singing while lying in the roadside. The arresting officer said he had saved the man from being mugged as he was clutching £25 and "obviously didn't know what he was doing".

The court duly fined the man £20 (for what, was not clear) plus £5 costs — a case of being mugged by the state instead!

An unemployed girl of 17 stole a dress so that she could attend an interview, and caused magistrates to disagree in the process!

Defence counsel said the girl had stolen the dress, worth £24, because she was not in receipt of benefit due to the fact that she was homeless. She was residing in a hostel and had been making a sincere effort to "get her life together". Her attempt to steal the dress was described as a "hopeless muddle" and was her first offence.

The magistrates retired to consider her case, returning some fifteen minutes later to admit they couldn't agree. Expressing some sympathy, they adjourned the case for fourteen days in order that social reports may be considered. I would have thought the shopkeeper needed a 'dressing down' for having her arrested in the first place!

TV

## Food for Thought ... and Action!

Recent additions to the Freedom Press Bookshop stock.

*William Morris and News From Nowhere: a vision for our time*, edited by Stephen Coleman and Paddy O'Sullivan, Green Books. A reevaluation of Morris's ideas on such diverse subjects as love, work, revolution, architecture, economics and ecology, and including a chapter by Colin Ward. 213 pages, recycled paper, £8.95.

*The Black Flag: a look back at the strange case of Nicolo Sacco and Bartolemo Vanzetti\** by Brian Jackson, RKP. A few more copies of this book have turned up after we thought it was out of print. Still excellent value. 208 pages, hardback, £2.95.

*The Art and Science of Billboard Improvement\** by Billboard Liberation Front and Friends, Los Cabrones Press. "There are many different reasons for wishing to alter or in other ways improve an existing advertisement ... a can of spray paint, a blithe spirit and a balmy night are all you really need." A5 pamphlet, 12 pages, £1.00.

*What Then Must We Do?* by Leo Tolstoy with an introduction by Ronald Sampson, Green Books. In examining the causes of poverty through the ages, Tolstoy develops a vision of a way of life that would deny the possibility of the exploitation of one person by another: a vision of self-discipline and responsibility, of joy, passion and compassion. 239 pages, £8.95.

*An Alphabet: twenty-six drawings\** by Clifford Harper, Working Press. Well, I admit I can't draw for toffee, and "A is for Anarchy" — that's fine. But "C is for Cigarette"? Cancer, more like. Approx A6 booklet, 52 pages, £3.95. NB Ignore the inscription inside. It says that the drawings first appeared in *Visions of Poesy*

edited by Jeff Cloves and Dennis Gould and published by Freedom Press in 1990. But we're still waiting for the editors to finish it. Come on, you guys!

*Confessions of a Drone* by Joseph Medill Patterson, See Sharp Press. A critique of capitalism by the son of a wealth newspaper tycoon at the beginning of the century. "I have an income of over \$200,000 a year. I produce nothing. I can keep on doing this all my life unless the present social system is changed." A5 pamphlet, 7 pages, 35p.

We have now received more copies of *Fra Contadini: a dialogue on anarchy\** by Errico Malatesta, Bratach Dubh Editions. A lively discussion 'between peasants' (the title), first published in Italian in 1884. Included is an introduction by Alfredo Bonnano and an appendix about Malatesta by David Poole. 43 pages, 95p.

*The Unknown Deserter\** nine drawings by Clifford Harper, Working Press. The story of a soldier from the East End of London, shot for desertion in World War One. Dedicated to all deserters everywhere. A6 pamphlet, 20 pages, nine illustrations plus text, £1.50.

Please note: the price of *Our Generation* journals, omitted by error from the last issue, is £3.50 each. And for all those waiting for a new bookshop stock list for 1991, please be patient for a little while longer! I am working on it now and it should appear in the next few weeks.

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

As usual titles distributed by Freedom Press Distributors (marked \*) are post free inland (add 15% towards postage and packing overseas). For other titles please add 10% inland, 20% overseas. Cheques payable to FREEDOM PRESS please.



## When Prophecy Fails

Dear Editors,  
Johnny Yen's response to my article 'When Prophecy Fails' is pretty preposterous, and maybe he is trying to reduce his own 'cognitive dissonance' — i.e. discomfort at being unable to reconcile his own basically Marxist view of society with the brute facts that confront us in the 1990s. Marxist-Leninism has been shown to be a howling failure in the modern world, yet we have a bunch of loonies propagandising to have this very theory implemented here in Britain. What is Yen's explanation for this? He writes: "I would guess that it is economic and political struggles at home that have influenced people to join the SWP and similar parties, most notably of course, the poll tax." That is, he beats the old

Marxist drum.

'Common sense' would indicate that if the policies they advocate were implemented in Britain, the results would be precisely the same as they were in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc., and the SWPers, etc., would then have a hell of a lot more to squawk about than the poll tax and other economic and political ills that have been with us for a very, very long time. I suggest that if we ever hope to understand what is going on in the world around us, we abandon the old assumptions about human motivation central to Marxist thinking, and try to take a new look at what moves people to take action. Yes, I do think the people of Eastern Europe have taken a step in the right direction, and I regard with contempt those who, relatively comfortable in their own circumstances, wag a disapproving finger at them for not having achieved an anarchist blueprint.

Tony Gibson

## 'No war but the class war'

Dear comrades,  
As a member of the Anarchist Communist Federation, which worked with and in the alliance of revolutionaries around the slogan 'No war but the class war', I found the comments of LO in his 'What sort of class war?' (*Freedom*, 6th April 1991) interesting but confusing.

What we as revolutionary anarchists should be seeking is a social revolution and the establishment of a stateless, classless society. To make this come about we have to reach the stage when the class war, which takes place *all the time*, as long as classes exist, is transformed by mass action and the changing of consciousness of the mass of the population, those who are oppressed and exploited, as LO himself says.

Our ideas themselves, at the present moment, alienate or are regarded with disinterest by the mass of working people (that is when they have the limited

opportunity of being exposed to them!). Revolutionaries cannot hide their ideas because they are unpopular at the moment, they must ceaselessly and tirelessly put them forward. Revolutionaries have always, both in Britain and in the rest of the world, advanced the battle-cry of 'No war but the class war' — see for example the activity of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation in the 1940s.

Wars show capitalism at its most vicious and aggressive, and it is possible, as they drag on, for large scale disaffection to develop. Revolutionary situations have often emerged at these times (the Paris Commune of 1871, the revolutions in Russia, Germany and Central Europe towards the end and after World War One, the unrest at the end of World War Two, the Portuguese Revolution of 1974) justification indeed for advancing the ideas of revolutionary opposition to war. Indeed, I feel that our slogans began to have some resonance at a time when practically every Leninist outfit was running to support Saddam

takes control of the creation of wealth the 'underclass' may be given a chance to alter their status as industrial policy inevitably grows and produces employment opportunities. The only effective way the worker takes control of wealth creation is through anarchist syndicalist policies via the medium of government. These arguments are old but are not being produced any more.

Clive Allsopp

## Purpose in Life

Dear *Freedom*,  
Regarding my letter (23rd March) in reply to Ernie Crosswell's 'The Purpose in Life' (26th January). My comments are spoken from the point of view of someone of the 'underclass' and I didn't indicate that 'rights' are social and every person is subject to social forces. Moreover, there is another general difference between male and female that is one of physical strength which is in part biological and in part social. The example of the strength of, say, Fatima Whitbread is often cited to support the social argument. Furthermore, there are tasks involved in heavy industry that generally would not be kind to involve women in. Also my arguments are set in a period of officially two million unemployed, probably much more, and are therefore best understood in the context of government failure to provide an economic climate where employment opportunities are in surplus not in deficit, as the case is now. Traditionally there have always been exceptions in every community to traditional roles and usually these exceptions tended to be employed in the service sector, which itself was in part derived from the wealth creation of a strong industrial base. The decimation of that industrial base is directly attributable to the government who have followed a misguided ideology since 1979. The success of nationalised industry is still missing from your pages of *Freedom*. *Freedom* itself is purchased by many people of the 'underclass' who are themselves only surviving on the handouts given by the wealth creators. The 'underclass' are continually thrown between voting for two groups of people — the capitalist and the worker, one who controls the creation of wealth and one who creates the wealth. When the worker

Keep sending us your letters and donations!

## Crocodile Tears

Dear Editors,  
In your 'Crocodile Tears' editorial (20th April) you say: "We are opposed to all wars between states, not as pacifists, but because wars create more problems than they solve". This statement could imply that, in your opinion, wars that are not between states (e.g. civil wars) may be expected to solve more problems than they create. Is there any evidence for this?

The question of pacifism has not, so far as I know, been properly addressed by Malatesta, Bakunin, Kropotkin or *Freedom*. My own attempt, over many years, to get the subject on the agenda has met with "This correspondence is now closed" or almost complete silence.

Is pacifism so dreadful?

Ernie Crosswell

## People Without Freedom

The review of Harold Barclay's *People Without Government* (in *Freedom*, 20th April) duly reports complications presented by the book, but there is more that can usefully be said about them. Barclay sets out to show that the early foragers lived in anarchist communities, but as a responsible academic, paying proper attention to the evidence, he finds himself obliged to add that these contained non-anarchistic elements, and not trivial ones. They included patriarchy, the tyranny of conformity, what Barclay calls "diffuse coercion" and, sometimes, coercion by no means diffuse; among the pygmies a thief is likely to be thrashed. (This is done collectively, which doubtless lifts the act to a higher moral level but makes it no less coercive.)

We have to ask: are anarchists working for a patriarchal, coercive and tyrannical society in which deviants get beaten up?

Barclay tries to escape the difficulty by distinguishing between, on the one hand, "the sort of society envisioned by anarchists", which "does not exist and apart from a few short and isolated examples never has existed" and, on the other, the "numerous examples of anarchy — societies without government

against the Western allies. far from sending the 'class militant minority on suicide missions' and paving 'the road for Leninists to use', our activities and watch-words contributed to the assault on Leninism and to the development of a genuine revolutionary alternative, not least in the unanimity of response and the willingness to work together of revolutionary groups.

NH

and without the state" provided by the foraging communities. Boil that down and he is found to be saying that anarchists aim at something other than anarchy, but to emphasise this might sound like logic-chopping. Let us stay with the substance of the argument.

Foraging communities, both those of modern times and (the evidence indicates) also the early ones, had neither government nor state and to anarchists, for whom these institutions constitute the main limitation on freedom, this makes them sound libertarian. Anthropology shows, however, that they imposed restrictions, upon the individual's freedom of social and political action, narrower than those found in sophisticated societies today. In *The Hunters* (a title forced on him by his publishers) Elman R. Service summarises a great deal of work on the foragers by saying that although overt institutions of government do not appear, etiquette, custom and psychological sanctions exert even *closer* control over individual people. In the absence of personal rulers "custom is king". Barclay himself reports that among some of the peoples of the Northwest Coast of North America witches were often killed, without objection from the community. There can hardly be a more *unanarchistic* act than killing people who refuse to conform; it is taking coercion to the limit. George Woodcock sums up:

"the anarchist historiographers fall into the error of assuming that the primitive or medieval folk community, based on mutual aid and roughly egalitarian by nature, is also individualistic; most frequently, of course, it is the reverse, inclined towards a traditional pattern in which conformity is expected and the exceptional resented."

When discussing something as complex as a social system, even the most 'primitive' one, a simple yes-no decision can rarely be reached, but it does seem to make better sense to say these early communities were not anarchist than to say that they were. We also need to bear in mind that foraging, at one time the universal way of life, was succeeded by horticulture and herding, and with these came the beginnings of the state. Unless we are prepared to say this was sent by God, or brought by little green men from Mars, Venus or wherever, we have to accept that it developed out of the foraging communities. If these were anarchist then anarchy produced the state.

Reason and evidence both indicate the early foraging communities to have been farther from anarchy (in the anarchist sense) than any later society, and to see this as a pessimistic conclusion would be to get things backside-foremost. If the first communities were anarchist then anarchy has declined from its primal condition and anarchists are bucking the trend of history. If, on the other hand, their constant supervision and interference by neighbours was even more limiting than the impersonal, legalistic restraints imposed by the state; if, in short, freedom in the anarchist sense has *grown* through history, then we have better reason for expecting it to grow still further in times to come. Accepting that anarchy does not lie behind us does nothing to reduce the probability that it lies in front.

George Walford

### Notes

- 1 *The Hunters* by E.R. Service, 1966, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc., page 83.
- 2 *Anarchism: a history of libertarian ideas and movements* by G. Woodcock, 1977, Hammondsorth, Penguin Books, page 40.

Special pre-publication offer. By the end of May, *Freedom* Press will have five new *Freedom* Press titles in print:

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- **Donald Room, *Wildcat ABC of Bosses***, 48 pages, ISBN 0 900384 60 3, £1.95.

These five volumes — totalling more than 500 pages — will sell for £12.45. We are offering them for £10 post-paid inland (please add £1.50 for overseas orders), cash with order please. All five titles will be dispatched in early June, subject to printers and binders delivering on time. Inland orders for this special offer must be received not later than 31st May. The full price will be charged thereafter.

We are also expecting to have *The Raven* number 14 'On Voting' (£2.50) ready for dispatch at the same time. Non-*Raven* subscribers ordering the five volumes can, by adding only £2, receive *The Raven* number 14 in the same parcel.

## News from Angel Alley

The *Freedom* subscription list is due for another pruning. Readers who have received a green reminder (for subs expiring between 9th March and 18th May) and have not yet renewed their sub will shortly be receiving a pink (final notice) reminder. If you want to go on receiving *Freedom* please attend to this important matter now. Our finances are dependent on a healthy subscription list. So far this year new subscriptions have just about matched the lapsed ones.

This year we are aiming to spend some money on advertising our two journals and *Freedom* Press and Black Rose titles. It is more than two years since we did so and we are hoping that it will bring us new readers. But what about following the example of two of our comrades who last week made presents of a subscription to friends who they thought would welcome our journals. Just a three months sub to *Freedom* at the claimant's rate will cost £2.50 and who knows the impact this might have. And we still offer a packet of recent back numbers for just £1. There were very few takers when we first made the offer. Now with election 'fever' mounting — thanks to the media — the apathetic British public is taking some notice of politics and we should be there too with anarchist anti-voting arguments.

Warm thanks to the contributors to our funds. Would that there were more of you! Did you see in the newspapers that the Labour Party

had some fund-raising 'do' at a fashionable establishment. Tickets were £500 per person. We are not aiming to emulate them, but we were tempted to end the editorial 'You are not rich on £400 a week — official' with a challenge to any *Freedom* readers/comrades who agreed with Mr Lamont, to relieve their consciences by sending in £100 to our Overheads Fund to help us make a splash with our forthcoming publicity campaign. If they don't agree with him, even more reason to contribute! No offence intended. Simply that we at *Freedom* Press need more money, not to win votes but to propagate anarchist ideas.

## DONATIONS

22nd April - 30th April 1991

### Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund

Ilford IP £5, Chipping Sodbury SG £10, Lancaster JA £3.50, Newport NF £10, Bromsbrough TH £4, Wolverhampton JL £2, London N5 GW £4.

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### Freedom Press Overheads Fund

Forest Row OM £1.50, London N5 GW £1, Loughborough DMR £6, Wolverhampton JL £2, Edinburgh ALG £2.

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### Raven Deficit Fund (10th list)

Ilford IP £2, Lancaster JA £3.50, Bromsbrough TH £3, London N5 GW £3.

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# 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

- 17th May - A Poetry Evening with Dennis Gould
- 24th May - A Talk from a Member of 'Spanner' (speaker John Howell)
- 31st May - General discussion
- 7th June - 'Turkey: Past, Present and Future' (speakers M. Kemal Tilgarimolu and Serpil Kara)
- 14th June - 'Kurdistan and the National Question in the Middle East in Retrospect' (speaker Aliser Mameki)
- 21st June - To be arranged
- 12th July - To be arranged

The meetings from 7th June to 14th July may be at the earlier time of 6pm to 8pm (the Centre may wish to close earlier). Watch this space.

We are now booking speakers or topics for 1991-92. The dates are 27th September to 13th December 1991, 10th January to 20th March and 17th April to 10th July 1992. If anyone, including comrades from abroad, would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, please make contact giving their names and proposed subjects and a few alternative dates so we can start filling slots. We meet on Fridays from 8pm as normal. Friday is the only night available as the centre is booked up on other nights.

Please do not ask for a topic to be discussed and then not turn up, as happened on a number

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of non-speaker evenings this session. Non-anarchists who turn up tend to get annoyed when this happens and this does the movement no good.

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 (Tel: 081-847 0203).

Do not telephone or write to The Mary Ward Centre as this is an adult education centre which lets us have a meeting place, not an accommodation address, and messages left at the centre of letters sent to it sometimes stray. Note this is a discussion group, not an action group. Many of us are active elsewhere. The forum is our common ground. The regular attenders have no particular line except we dislike having a formal chairperson and rely on participant assertion coupled with individual self-discipline.

The anarchist conference suggested for summer 1991 did not receive sufficient support, but who knows what 1992 might bring? Details of this summer's anarchist picnic will be forwarded later. Any suggestions for venue? Not up a hill again please!

## The State is Your Enemy Selections from the anarchist journal *Freedom*, 1965-1986

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*Land Notes:* V. Richards, c/o Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

### Regional Correspondents

*Cardiff:* Eddie May, c/o History Department, UWCC, PO Box 909, Cardiff CF1 3XU

*Brighton:* Johnny Yen, Cogs U/g Pigeonholes, University of Sussex, School of Cognitive and Computing Sciences, Falmer, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 9QN

*Northern Ireland:* Dave Duggan, 27 Northland Avenue, Derry BT48 7JW

*North Wales:* Joe Kelly, 28 Erw Llwyd, Rhosllanerchrugog, Clwyd LL14 2EL

*Norfolk:* John Myhill, Church Farm, Hethel, Norwich NR14 1HD