

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

"You are not guilty because you are ignorant, but you are guilty when you resign yourselves to ignorance."

Mazzini

FOR 'G' READ GANGSTERS

EDITORIAL

One surely does not need to draw attention to the fact that the alternative press is in disarray. It's now years since the *Labour Weekly* disappeared. Then the *New Socialist's* checkered career came to an end when, instead of the journal, subscribers received a note explaining that they would not be receiving their copy because the editors were looking for more finance to produce a better journal (at that time it was jointly published by the Fabians and the Labour Party). Since then silence would indicate death of another journal.

Peace News has re-emerged after a year or two 're-thinking' but as a monthly jointly published by them and the War Resisters International with the emphasis on the latter's propaganda. Then *Sanity*, organ of CND, with how many tens of thousands of members couldn't make it. Now there is talk that *Marxism Today*, the coffee table journal of the moribund CPGB (Communist Party of Great Britain) is also about to go out of business. And who knows what will be the fate of *Tribune*, a shadow of the fighting dissident Labour Party weekly edited by Aneurin Bevan and then by Michael Foot, now reduced to eight pages which with adverts and illustrations contains very little copy and depends on the TGWU for a home and for finance.

Another independent socialist journal *Samizdat* couldn't make it on its own in spite of an impressive list of names on the Left and has been taken over by Pluto Press with the result that its price has gone up from £2.50 to £5.99!

And the latest to join the fray — or almost — *Socialist* published a dummy issue months ago which was even dull by Labour Party standards, and was due to appear in March, but at the last minute publication was put back to September. We shall see!

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The G7 summit has come and gone. What the spokesmen for the so-called 'seven richest industrial nations' actually discussed at their private meetings we shall not know until perhaps the interpreters and other hangers-on at these expensive gatherings write their memoirs. But we cannot imagine that anything which will help the third world or even the poor and the unemployed in the affluent West will have been discussed. For the simple reason that the self-appointed 'seven richest countries' are themselves at daggers-drawn — all faced with growing unemployment, and a recession that is worldwide and, in spite of what the Gangster-7 declared in their agreed statement shows no signs of ending.

Co-operation is a swear-word in the capitalist world. You cannot argue that competition produces efficiency (hence the Tory government's fetish for privatising all public services) and at the same time produce a joint statement of common objectives. After all, these Seven Gangster nations are each other's worse enemies in the world's markets, and as usual the United States is intent on dominating, certainly in agriculture, and with Japan and Germany in industry. The ever-smiling John Major may have been the host at this 'summit' but the taxpayers had to foot the bill for yet another annual outing for the politicians and their retinue.

As we write (17th July) Mr Gorbachev has been having man-to-man discussions with the seven-summit-men with results we at present ignore. But it is obvious to us that the fact that he has had individual meetings with 'seven' supremos before addressing them collectively would indicate that far from coming cap-in-hand, as some of the anti-bolshevik media maintain, for cash he is suggesting to them that they can solve the problem of recession in the West — over-production, balance of payments — by unloading some of it at rock-bottom prices. After all, has not the EEC been doing this for years with agricultural over-production? But it is also clear the Soviet Union has vast untapped resources of oil, gas and minerals. Potentially one of the richest areas in the world.

We cannot imagine that Gorbachev or his advisers are as stupid or desperate as the media present them. We also don't imagine that they have been 'sold' on the free market of wanting to launch the rouble onto the money market racket. If this is their intention, 'God help Russia!' The 'seven' will skin them alive.

Anarchists were the first on the Revolutionary Left to expose Lenin, Trotsky and his bolshevik comrades, as well as being their first
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Capitalism Rotten to the Core

For a fortnightly journal it is quite impossible to keep up with financial scandals not only in this country but worldwide.

The government's criticism of the super pay increases awarded to the bosses of the privatised services industry was a routine response to please the public. Quite rightly the CBI drew attention to the vast fortune made by Madonna (and we would add that of the various 'stars' who strike balls with

foot, racket, club or cue and are millionaires in their early twenties) to justify its defence. But two wrongs don't make a right. The producers of real wealth in the world are generally the worse paid. When one considers that the Labour Party's proposal for a minimum wage of £3.40 an hour is in fact what a farm worker is officially paid, everyone surely should start questioning the values of capitalist society.

EDITORIAL

(continued from page 1)

Why does a *Freedom* editorial retail the failures of the alternative press? Obviously because one of the reasons for failure is lack of support. For most of the journals we have referred to they have/had full-time paid staff and depended on income from advertising. *Tribune* for instance in their appeals for donations referred to the need to increase the remuneration for editor and three other staff who are each receiving £8,000 a year. All the journals referred to (apart from *Samizdat*) also relied on advertising revenue. And just as the millionaire press is feeling the draught, as advertising revenue also reflects the recession, so too the alternative press.

Freedom and *The Raven* also have financial problems, but ours are much more modest. Our printer comrades are generous and we don't pay editors or contributors! So we get by with *Freedom* (less easily with the 96-page *The Raven* on which we lose £1,000 an issue but which is subsidised by Freedom Press Distributors), thanks also to the donations which we publish in each issue of *Freedom*.

As much as financial support the future of our journals depends on contributions to our columns. We need a growing number of comrades and sympathisers who are anxious to write for *Freedom* and *The Raven* for no remuneration but who consider that the time spent on a well-thought article is handsomely rewarded by its publication in one of our journals.

In sorting out the topical material for this issue of *Freedom* one editorial writer listed about ten topics for discussion from an anarchist point of view. Only two or three will appear for purely physical reasons. What we need are comrades prepared to specialise in a topic at least for, say, a year and who will submit material, on time, for each issue of *Freedom*. We need comrades prepared to write book reviews, and certainly reviews of interesting television and radio programmes.

Dear readers, you cannot expect your unpaid editors (who also have jobs to earn their keep) to fill the paper without your collaboration. Apart from anything else, what even now makes *Freedom* unique is that you already contribute four of its pages each issue. We would like you to make it six!

The Editors

FOR 'G' READ GANGSTERS

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victims. But we cannot remain silent when our smug native historians and retired diplomats are crowing on television over the 'bankruptcy' of communism and implying that the Eastern bloc countries are all coming round to 'our' way of life, and capitalism of course.

Anarchists were the first victims because they pointed out that you could not impose communism — or anarchism for that matter — from above. They also pointed out that you could not organise production — especially on such a vast continent — from above, from the centre. So the regime in Russia was not, is not, communism as we understand it but dictatorship. Communism means the participation by all in a society of equals. The God that failed in Russia is authoritarian socialism/communism. True communism has yet to be given a chance. We believe that there are still a large number of communist idealists in Russia who will resist any attempts by the party bosses to go along the capitalist road to ruin.

IRAQ: What Nuclear Threat?

President Bush has declared that he is "deadly serious" about his determination to eliminate the Iraqi nuclear threat. *The Independent's* Washington correspondent writes that:

Even though the victory parades are over the White House believes that a brief Gulf War aftershock to flatten nuclear sites would play well domestically.

Playing at war with a vengeance to please the public! But surely there must be other reasons, not least that Bush has a personal interest in getting rid of Saddam Hussein, which he did not succeed in doing with the carpet bombing of Baghdad, and the continued maintenance of sanctions would appear to have strengthened Saddam's power rather than the contrary.

What is quite clear is that contradictory reports as to Iraq's nuclear potential appear in the press just as also reports of the deteriorating health situation of the civilian population, which makes me very suspicious as to the motives of the Americans in their new aggressive stance as well as their refusal to allow food and medical supplies to enter Iraq.

All their talk about humanitarian considerations is surely disproved by the way the victorious Americans in the 1939-45 war were responsible for anything up to a million Germans dying of hunger (see *Freedom*, 4th May 1991) by denying them food supplies that were available. According to one report published in *The Independent* (3rd July) "Iraq faces famine and disease if UN sanctions remain". The same paper reports (11th July) "Nutritionists find no famine in Iraq". And yet

Washington Gave Saddam \$2,000 million and credit before war

According to Thomas Maier of *Newsday* in Washington (14th July)

On the same day that he sent troops to the Gulf, President Bush tried to drum up support for his stand against Saddam Hussein by inviting fourteen prominent Arab Americans to the White House.

Apparently unknown to Mr Bush, one of his guests — Texan Robert Abboud — was a favourite banker of President Saddam. Only a year before, Mr Abboud's bank provided \$50 million in loans guaranteed by the US government to Iraq's main commercial bank.

"I don't know if the President knew [about Mr Abboud's financial ties to Iraq]" said a White House deputy press secretary about Mr Bush's hour-long meeting last August.

But federal investigators are looking into how an estimated \$2 billion in loans and credit was extended to the Iraqi regime during the build-up of President Saddam's war machine through the export loan programme of the Credit Commodity Corporation, an arm of the federal Department of Agriculture. Investigators say that the agency's lending programme — designed to help third world nations buy US food products — was abused.

The money lost must now be repaid by American taxpayers. Under the programme, banks that lent money to Iraq will get 98% of their money refunded.

Congressional investigators say that one of the key players in the US decision to keep financing Iraq was Robert Gates, recently nominated to become CIA director.

again, this time in *The Independent on Sunday* (14th July) reports "Iraq faces famine UN told".

For the threat from nuclear weapons US information came from an Iraqi dissident scientist though apparently, according to the White House, "Iraq has admitted it was trying to develop nuclear weapons". On the other hand *The Independent on Sunday* (14th July) publishes a long article to show that "scientists explode the myth of Saddam's nuclear bomb". Iraq's "admission" used by the White House is demolished by the IS physicist from Imperial College who points out that it would take thirty years for them to accumulate enough material to produce one nuclear weapon!

On the other hand the United Nations Commission that recently visited Iraq reported that \$4.5 billion over the next year will be required to avoid famine:

The commission, the first scientific survey of the results of the allied bombing offensive found conditions in Iraq, after a year of sanctions, worse than it had expected. Some provinces have no food stocks left and government rations provide only a third of food needed for an individual to stay healthy. The death rate has risen sharply and children are stunted by under-nourishment.

To relieve the famine Iraq is not asking for charity but either to exploit oil or for some of their frozen assets in the USA to be freed. Bush and Co. may well have also the deaths of thousands more on their consciences — not that they worry all that much about their consciences.

After the Poll Tax — What Next?

As the rain poured down outside and I sat reading of expected water shortages this summer, I was reminded of the water authority official who some years ago confided that there was no reason why anyone in this country should ever be short of water. He might have added except for the stupidity and inefficiency of water authority managers.

Now they are privatised and the ten water companies of England and Wales are announcing their profits, declaring their dividends, rewarding their managers, and it is not a pretty sight. Of the first six to declare results, the average increase in profits last year was 17.4%, the proposed increase in charges 15% and this in the middle, we are told, of a recession. However these increases pale into insignificance alongside the increases grabbed by the company chairman (for they are all men); 143% to £100,000 at Wessex, 172% to £120,000 at Southern and 119% to nearly £155,000 at Thames, all on top of large increases the previous year.

We their captive customers know to expect to pay more for a worse product and a deteriorating environment for these ten companies, between them, were responsible for 6,029 know incidents of sewage pollution, an increase of 14.4% over the previous year. What is being done to improve the quality and reduce shortages? Not a lot, it seems. The obvious need for a national water grid continues to be ignored, although it would solve any problem in the south east, the only part of the country to have had less rainfall in recent years.

To pick out individual companies, South West Water which nearly doubled its profits to £88 million and pays its chairman £87,000, proposes to increase its charges by 16.2%, the maximum allowed, whilst wanting more to clean up the beaches it contaminated in the first place. Last year it poisoned the 20,000 people of Camelford whilst claiming the muck

which came out of the tap was perfectly potable. It was fined £10,000.

If you live in Yorkshire you might like to ask Yorkshire Water why it refused to build a replacement pumping station for Withan Clough reservoir near Hebden Bridge when it was needed twelve years ago, and why the reservoir hasn't been used since. And in Wales, why the LEK partnership which has one of its partners on the board of Welsh Water was paid nearly half a million pounds by them as consultancy fees.

Last year in my own supply from Thames water, nearly 50% of samples tested exceeded the prescribed concentration or value (PCV) for total pesticide residues and for one herbicide, atrazine, all 53 samples tested exceeded the PCV and for another, simazine, 75% exceeded it.

What is there is another dry summer — there is still time. Thames Water contingency plans include pumping treated sewage back upstream to top up the rivers, but the Anglian water spokesman probably spoke for most when he said: "What can we do about it? Every morning we get down on our knees and pray for rain".

This is capitalist exploitation at its most rampant. They are monopoly suppliers of a product essential for health and indeed life with licence to charge exorbitantly, although not actually whatever they like. The office of Water Services (Ofwat) was set up by the government to decide maximum price increases. Its director general has said that profits should be "no more than is absolutely necessary" but also that "the time of cheap water is past" and that within five years water charges will increase by 50% over and above the rate of inflation. He seems more concerned that shareholders should get a good return on their money and with a fine turn of phrase talks of how the opportunity for consumers to economise on an increasingly expensive

commodity would be of growing significance — especially for low income families.

The National Rivers Authority (NRA) was set up by the government in 1989 to monitor water pollution by industry and the new water companies as well as take responsibility for flood control and land drainage previously done by the old water authorities. Within a year, although deprived by the government of adequate resources, it had proved remarkably independent and effective incurring squeals of protest from industry and the water companies. It was not surprising then to read in June of the resignation of its chief executive and in July that it is going to be merged with the inspectorates of pollution and drinking water to produce a body no doubt more firmly under government control that will not be allowed to interfere too much with the profits of private enterprise.

The water companies made £238 million profit, more than expected, last year, so what are they going to do with it? Diversification is the answer, buying into other companies to generate even more profit. Which one will be the first to buy up a bottled water company? Those who can afford to are increasingly getting their drinking water from a bottle so the potential for profit there must excite the men in suits to multiple orgasms.

The cost of domestic water has already increased dramatically and according to the Citizens Advice Bureaux is causing some people to get into debt. If you can't afford to pay they cut you off and Seven Trent (profits up 15.2%) are trying to out the use of prepayment meters for bad payers. So what of the future? If you can make people pay more for less the profit possibilities become grotesque. Scrapping the crudely fair rating system where cost is to some extent related to ability to pay and perhaps stimulated by the thought of those supermarket shelves, they

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“Worst figures for 11 years”

(Dun & Bradstreet counting who has been done in the High Street)

Put like that it didn't sound too startling. Only when I learnt that records weren't kept more than eleven years ago, so that no one can say whether there were higher figures before, did it become meaningful. Not that in the normal course of events an anarchist would be over-bothered about petit bourgeois bankruptcies.

Remembering, however, that three successive Tory governments have been elected after orienting their main propaganda to the themes that small businesses “are the backbone of the country”, “that their industry provides the life-blood of the economy generally”, their working “lubricates the relationship between the large industries and the consumers” and that “all other industry (nationalised and multi-national included) ought to be re-modelled on the pattern of such small industry”, these failures take on an importance for us.

Consider the summarised figures: failures in the first six months of this year were 166% of those in the first six months of 1990; failures in the same period were greater than in the whole of 1989; so not merely has there been an acceleration of decline, but the rate of acceleration is itself accelerating (in mathematical jargon, ‘an exponential curve’ — and any academic economist ought to be saying that this is one indication that recession has given way to outright slump. has someone brought pressure to ban that word?)

Of course, since there is no firm definition of ‘small business’ there is no certainty that we are comparing like with like. (Apparently 90% of this year's failures employ fewer than 100 people.) So it could be possible that the rate of individual bankruptcies could rise, while the total initial capital value of the firms going bankrupt fell; except that the figures also say that the knock-on effect to the construction industry and to banking has also risen.

So we have what (in classical, non-socialist, economic theory) appears to be evidence that the rate of increasing bankruptcies has reached the point when it must continue under its own momentum, even if the initial cause of the recession had been removed. This is moreover happening in the very areas of the economy where the right wing of the Tory Party has traditionally found its greatest support.

(As by the end of the year, it will no longer be possible to pass off what is happening as a mere short-lived recession, so — after over a year of constantly repeating that the temporary turn-down is bottoming out — the Tories will have to concede we're into a slump; it seems by no means so certain as Freedom's editors think, that the government can afford to wait for an election until next spring. If the Cabinet has any sense whatsoever it will cut and run as soon as it can; let Labour get elected with a small majority, and then blame it when the full slump becomes apparent by the end of the year.)

If the Tories are still in power when people begin to admit the existence of the slump, the political consequences will be far reaching. Nor will it be

much less so, if by then Kinnock is Prime Minister, for whoever is in office will take the major blame for a slump, and many will forget that there was evidence that it was coming for at least two years before everyone had to admit it was there.

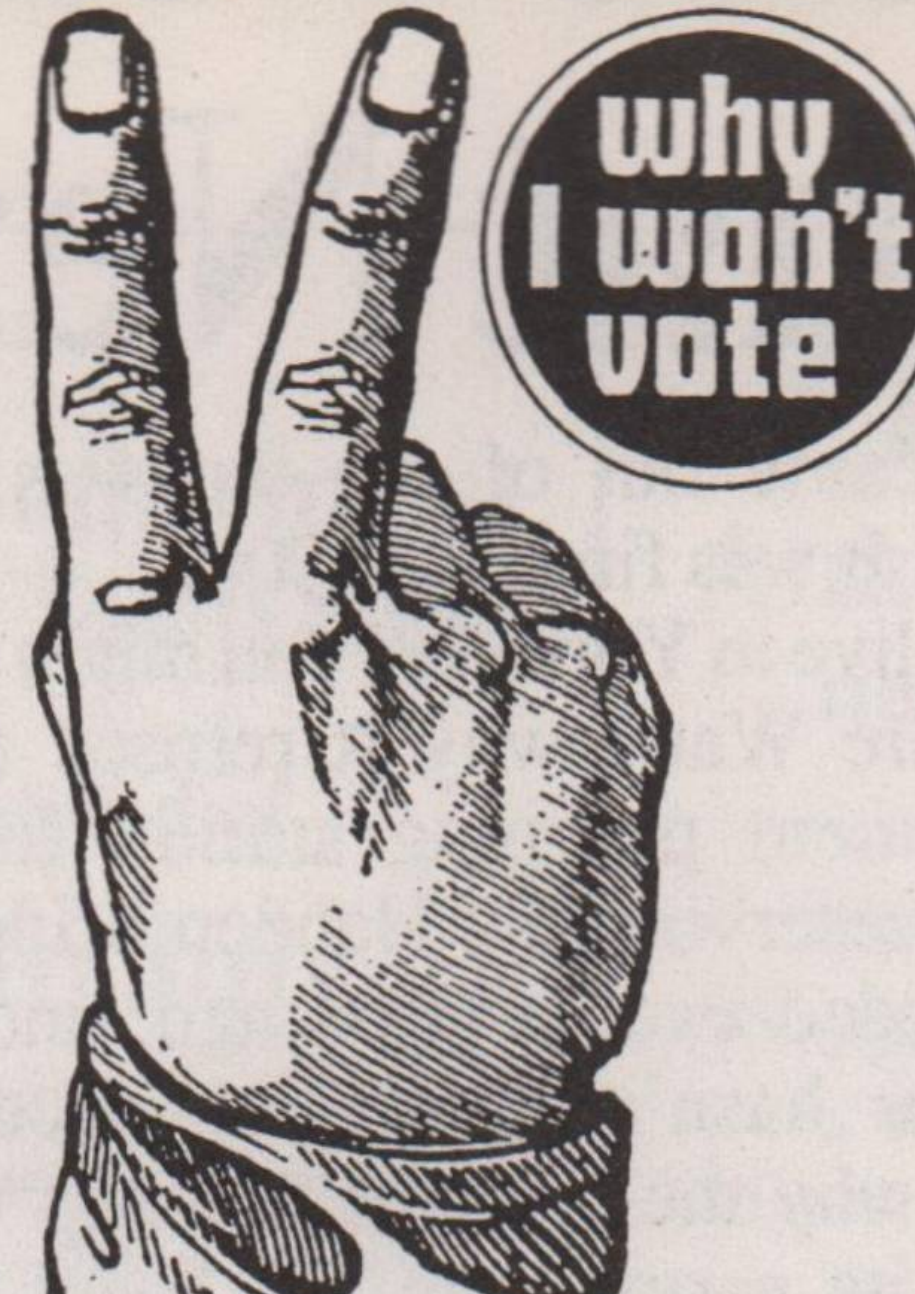
The purely intellectual political fall-out might perhaps be most strong (if one judges by accounts of the '30s) amongst the young academically-minded and economically privileged, whose forerunners in the '30s, looking for short-cut solutions, embraced stalinism and fascism in almost equal numbers. The economic assumptions which had justified the conditions that produced these jeunesse dorées had turned sour; the leaders of the economy were jumping out of windows; their putative successors suddenly found that their futures were uncertain, and were then told that if their elders had actually bothered to read the economic books which they had always alleged justified their actions, they would have found in them warnings against these.

Deprived of the easy route to wealth and power, hundreds of spoilt younger members of the establishment sought easy explanations. Some, since their elders had for years denounced Marx, pretending that any criticisms of their actions stemmed from him, felt that the solutions might be found in him, but being in the habit of worshipping success they did not turn to what Marx may or may not actually have written, but to a large militaristic force which professed to be modelled on his writings. Others sought an even more pseudo-intellectual justification in a belief in a worldwide Jewish conspiracy.

But, parallel with this pseudo-intellectual development, the '30s saw a real rise of working class consciousness (though much of it too was diverted into stalinist or fascist cul de sacs), which shaped political events during the inter-war years. History may repeat itself “once as tragedy, once as farce”, but one way or another we will need to be prepared.

LO

On Voting



THE RAVEN ANARCHIST QUARTERLY **14**

96 pages £2.50
FREEDOM PRESS

Basic incomes, not jobs,

“What is physically possible must be financially possible” was a truism I learnt as a child from my parents, who were actively campaigning against the absurdity of widespread poverty amidst plenty in the '20s and '30s — the financial absurdity which led to the Second World War.

After that war, the destruction it had caused and the savings the wartime workforce had been encouraged to make, kept the wheels of industry turning despite the financial system for some years, making good the damage; but the increased and fast increasing productivity threatened to saturate markets, so planned obsolescence was born!

Now we have many even in the Green Party seemingly unable to conceive the magnitude of the wastefulness of the resulting ‘economy’ of the present day, and consequently the possibility of providing adequately for all of everyone's real needs in a developed Green society. They are mesmerised by the pronouncements of establishment economists and treasury spokespeople, who deny my truism.

There are two linked anomalies in the financial system underlying the problems we face: the right usurped by the private banks to create and claim ownership of our money supply; and usury in its widest sense, but including, importantly, that charged by these banks for the use of this money by the rest of the community. This forces firms to compete desperately for an always adequate supply of money in the hands of consumers (there is *never* ‘too much money chasing too few goods’! — if this were so we wouldn't have the massive, desperate advertising campaigns trying to persuade people to buy products they don't want and can't afford), at the same time as forcing prices up to cover expenses

which include advertising costs as well as interest charges. Goods only continue to find buyers by virtue of ever-increasing public debt, of which the third world share is but the most publicly acknowledged. For instance, according to published government data:

Gross domestic product at market prices = £374 billion
Total household income (from wages and salaries, rent, dividends, interest, private pensions, annuities, etc., social security benefits) = £282 billion
Deficiency of consumer purchasing power = £92 billion
(These figures are for 1986, but are typical of the last decade at least.)

This gap is closed partly by the mortgaging of people's futures by bank loans, credit cards, etc., partly by bankruptcies — and importantly by constant expansion of output, which puts into the pockets of workers money to buy current production, as they are paid with borrowed money for the new productive capacity they are creating: so postponing the problem!

Ever-more wealth is syphoned off from the general population into the hands of a shrinking number of the elite who manipulate the system; a system which forces employers into conflict with employees over wages, and forces environmentally disastrous cost cutting — as well as forcing a desperate search for ways to ‘create new jobs’ to distribute pittance to the workers and make handsome profits for the shareholders, however useless/harmful the product, provided only that its advertisers can persuade enough people to buy it.

The unthinking acceptance of the idea that we must seek ‘full employment’ even in an age of

Waiting for the Bus

How many kids have you got, Bert? ... Don't be daft, Daisy, four of course ... How many kids have you had, Bert? ... You gone barmy? None. What are you getting at? ... Well, you seem to know everything, and I don't seem to know much ... But ... But nothing. Let's see, nine months times four, that's three years pregnant with kids pulling on my skirts. Not much time to read the newspapers and go to meetings. And after all that the kids don't belong to me ... Course they belong to you ... No they don't. They belong to Lord Kitchener, or whoever took over from him ... see what you mean, Daisy, but you wouldn't be without them, would you? ... Sometimes I'm not too sure, Bert. Isn't it funny, you can't get more involved in life, or death for that matter, than getting pregnant. Yet when you're pregnant you are out of action and Kitchener and his boys do as they like with you. If only men could menstruate it might make them stop and think ... Steady on, Daisy. You should thank your lucky stars you don't have to get up and shave every morning ... But men don't have to shave if they don't want to ... Come off it, women would moan about us looking like old men and having to kiss a hairbrush. Why do women cripple yourselves in high-heeled shoes. Answer that one ... Fashion, I suppose, but I wonder if there's a cunning male scheme at the back of it ... Like what, Daisy? ... Like as you say, men have got all the power so women feel they must go along with their ideas if they want to survive. So if kissing is in the rule book, we go around kissing men, and if we don't like hedgehogs we tell them to get a shave. And we hobble around in high-heels for fear of being left on the shelf ... You finished now, Daisy? ... You were telling me about the rising world population the other day. Isn't it daft, everybody is trying to find ways of getting turned on when they should be thinking of ways to get turned off before the population suffocates itself. Perhaps if men grew beards and women

stopped using make-up, or vice versa, it would cut down the birth rate. A woman in *The Guardian* told her husband she doesn't want any more sex. That'll cut down the birth rate ... What's he going to do about that, then? ... Another woman wrote in and told him to have a wank ... It's tragic isn't it, young girls feel they must get a man if they are not to be failures in life. Then, when they've had enough of pills and caps and pregnancies, it dawns on them that they've been conned ... Isn't it funny how women take a lot of notice of men who wear skirts ... How do you mean? ... I mean priests. More women than men go to church ... The Archdeacon of York is complaining that the World Council of Churches is anti-white, anti-Western, anti-semitic and anti-American. Strikes me the Archdeacon is anti-black and anti-third world. I see the General Synod has started. Should be a great laugh. One parson wants the Christening of babies stopped unless the parents are true believers ... How typical! Never mind the feelings of the baby. Splash it all over, regardless. At least the Jehovah Witnesses have got the right idea on Christening. They wait until the people are old enough to decide for themselves ... Yes, but when it comes to blood transfusions it's a different story. The Bible says something about not tampering with blood and that's it. It seems you can justify anything by quoting the Christian terrorists handbook. One Christian said in the local paper that killing can be justified provided it is not done for personal gain or pleasure! ... Do you think Bush will carry out his threat to wipe out Saddam's nuclear factories, Bert? ... Wouldn't put it past him ... Can't understand it. Israel has nuclear weapons, thanks to Uncle Sam ... Ah, but they are for defence, Daisy. Try saying it over and over again — defence, defence, defence, and you'll find yourself believing it. But don't start singing the Stars and Stripes on the bus, or I'll get off ...

EFC

The other rate of inflation

Two years ago 2 litres of Ribena blackcurrent drink retailed at £2.99. Today the same drink retails at £4.46, an overall biannual rise of some 50%.

Two years ago 4kg of washing powder retailed at £1.99. Today the same washing powder retails at £4.05, an overall biannual rise of 100%+.

Last week a 12oz jar of beetroot retailed at 47p. Today the same jar of beetroot retails at 54p, a rise of 15% in a single price jump.

Two years ago 1kg of Golden sugar retailed at 58p. Today the same bag of sugar retails at 79p, an overall biannual rise of some 40%+.

Two years ago a pair of black denim jeans retailed at £23. Today the same pair of jeans retails at £33, a rise of some 32%.

Two years ago a competition prize was offered at a value of some £4,000. Today the same car, but latest year, retails at some £3,000, a decrease of some 25%.

Two years ago a luxury yacht retailed at £95,000. Today the latest model of the same yacht retails at some £65,000, a decrease of some 30%.

Two years ago an average electricity quarter cost £65. Today an average quarter costs some £100, an increase of 50%+.

Two years ago an average gas quarter cost £65.

Today an average quarter costs some £100, an increase of 50%+.

Two years ago an antique table was retailing at some £500. Today the same table is retailing at £250, a decrease of some 50%.

Today 3lb of wholemeal flour costs 67p. Dried yeast costs 62p. Whilst the cost of using a cooker costs 20p. Therefore it costs £1.49 to bake two wholemeal loaves of bread at home, each loaf costing 75p to produce. The same loaf of bread retails in the shops at 75p, whilst the cheapest loaf of bread on sale is a white sliced loaf which retails at 42p.

The government's policy on inflation is as clear a case of statistical manipulation as any other of their espoused claims. By controlling a few vital commodities such as bread, and by counting in luxury items as new cars, yachts, antique furniture, etc., the government produces an inflation rate which is meaningless to ordinary people. Meanwhile, all welfare benefits are updated only in line with the contrived low inflation rate set by private government departments.

CA

for planetary survival

advanced (and still advancing) automation, as our prime means of distributing incomes severely distorts thinking on related economic issues.

We can afford an adequate basic income, once our proposed transition period is over — and that need not take many years. We can both cut drastically our consumption of raw materials and energy, and at the same time maintain and improve our quality of life. Adequate basic incomes are essential for this, to free us not to go on producing for the sake of profits and wages, and instead to turn our attention to more worthwhile things.

Full basic incomes will have a profound effect on wage rates and differentials, and on what work is done. The number of unpaid 'voluntary' jobs will probably increase, as increasingly people will opt to do things for each other without payment; other work will be done for little financial reward, as its main rewards will be the same as for 'voluntary' work: the interest, pleasure and satisfaction of doing it, and social approval. Other jobs now highly paid will attract no-one, as their undesirability will be apparent when the wage offered can be rejected without serious hardship; and average pay levels will probably fall, as the basic needs are met by basic income. The extremes of wealth and poverty will be ironed out, as exploitation becomes more difficult.

The whole of industry and commerce will become transformed, as the competitive pressures are removed and the goods are redesigned for durability and ease of maintenance and repair; and the huge waste of effort and resources on superfluous packaging and persuasive advertising will cease.

To pay for these basic incomes, taxation should progressively be shifted from earned incomes to unearned. Capital gains tax is an obvious candidate; so too is an immediate increase of tax on investments to match that on earned incomes — at present national insurance charges on employer and employee, which are additional to income tax, are not matched by any charge on other income. This should, however, be but a first step. Company payout taxes are proposed, as well as various others. Resource and pollution taxes could provide substantial amounts in the early years of a Green administration, though it is essential that their level be set to ensure conservation of resources and minimisation of pollution, and not to gain high tax revenue.

Currently some 30-40% of government and local authority spending goes on paying interest, largely directly or indirectly to the creators of the money supply: the banks. Our proposals on community

credit will end this burden, so releasing that amount to spend on basic incomes, given the same level of taxes and government spending overall.

Margrit Kennedy, in her paper *Toward an Ecological Economy: Money, Land and Tax Reforms*, lists examples of the hidden costs of interest charges: sewage costs 47%, rent in public housing 77%, water supply 38% (for Aachen, 1983). We must give serious attention to the question of usury, in its widest sense (including all 'making money out of money') — examine its role in the development of the present mess — as also the question of money creation and issue (vide Deryck Artingstall's paper) — and develop alternatives, if we are to develop a workable, sustainable, equitable economy.

Much discussion has taken place on the topic of inflation, and my concern has increased steadily that the term itself needs careful, critical scrutiny. Years ago the CPAG was pointing out that inflation hits the poor much worse than the better off, because of the 'basket of goods' chosen to measure it by, and the different rates of increase for those items of more importance to the poor. When Green production gets going, we will have dearer but far longer lasting goods; if their longevity is not entered into the calculation, then we will be experiencing a falsely high 'rate of inflation'.

Another factor which must be allowed for is the 'inflationary' effect of government spending, the costs of which are not recovered by charging for the services directly, but by taxation, the costs of which then filter through into the prices of consumer goods and services. Resources taxes and pollution taxes will directly have this effect. Such 'inflation' is not the result of 'too much money', and attempts to counter it by 'reducing the money supply' would be/are very damaging.

William Krehm, publisher of *COMER Comment* (newsletter of the Committee on Monetary and Economic Reform) suggests adopting the term 'structural price rises' for such effects to distinguish them from 'market inflation'. Whatever term is chosen, unless the distinction is made, cogent thinking about 'inflation' is impossible. Worst of all, perhaps, is the attempt to control inflation by raising interest rates; this itself causes inflation, or 'structural price rises', most obviously in the cost of mortgages, but also as a hidden factor in all prices. Borrowers (i.e. most of the population) are squeezed, to the benefit of the rich lending institutions and individuals).

This being said, abolition of usury should reduce the pressures towards inflation to negligible proportions.

Brian Leslie

Origins of the State

For most of its existence, the human species lived by foraging. Modern foraging societies live in jungles, tropical deserts and the Arctic, and have the same sort of social organisation in all these environments, so it seems reasonable to suppose that prehistoric foragers had the same. They do not have rulers or bosses or chieftains or elected councils, but the rules of good behaviour are decided by custom and consensus, and enforced by 'diffuse sanctions'.

Nobody advocates a return to foraging economy, but it is surely an argument for the feasibility of a free society that the human species lived without governments for a million years.

However, it may be seen as an argument against anarchism, that people whose ancestors had lived without governments for a million years acquired governments when they could afford them.

Nobody can be certain exactly how they began, but there are some plausible conjectures consistent with the archaeological and anthropological evidence.

Farming people, unlike foraging people, need to predict the cycle of seasons so that they know when to do the planting. The seasons can be predicted by comparing the movement of stars year on year, a skilled job which must be done when most people in a farming community are asleep. Perhaps there were specialists in weather prediction who acquired a reputation for actually controlling the weather and were given special privileges in return for the seasons occurring in the correct sequence. A reputation for magical power does not in itself, however, make anyone into a boss.

A more likely origin of government is systematic robbery: early farmers were probably harassed by foragers, who would see a field as a foraging bonanza, and later by ex-farmers turned robbers when their crops failed. The theory is that some robbers became tolerable by being systematic, taking part of the produce but not all, and driving other marauders away.

The earliest peoples to leave written records had monarchs who were both demigods in control of the seasons and military commanders. A formidable combination of magic and coercion.

The modern British state has all the ritual trappings of an early state. There is a royal family treated with awe, deference and privileges. One member of this family is put through a deification ceremony to become the monarch. His (or Her) Majesty is the commander of HM forces, HM government, HM prisons, HM justices of the peace, even HM loyal opposition.

But the magic has gone. Nobody with a modicum of education believes that the Queen, or the Emperor of Japan or any equivalent, has the slightest effect on the weather.

The defensive function has also been lost. Military preparations are still described as 'defence', but so far from protecting resources, they are an obvious and massive waste of resources.

A few centuries ago people realised that monarchs do not have magic powers. Revolutions in ancient times replaced one monarch with another, but lately people have increasingly replaced monarchies with other forms of state.

The United States elects a rich man to perform the functions of a monarch for a set period of office. The Soviet Union was for many years ruled by an elite acting in the name of the working class. Britain retains a monarch as 'Head of State', but has transferred much of the power to a 'Head of Government' who is more-or-less elected.

Most states now pay lip-service to the people, holding elections for certain conspicuous offices, or proclaiming that they have the mandate of the people, or that they intend to organise elections when the time is ripe.

By kicking out monarchies and reforming the state, ordinary people have been trying to take power back to themselves. Of course, it doesn't work. Military preparations get more and more wasteful, dangerous and absurd. But the important thing is that people are trying, however mistakenly, to take power back for themselves.

Few have yet realised that what is needed is to get rid of the whole structure of government. But there are grounds for cautious optimism.

DR

News from Lancashire

In Lancaster, the Labour Party did quite well in the May elections, but not enough to beat the crooked system and win an overall majority. Before they could sack the bailiff company for their use of strong-arm tactics, the company resigned and did the job for them, so the council had to pass on all the cases to another firm at great expense.

Now that the elections are over the nice masks can come off, and the parties revert to normal and go back the the serious business of persecuting non-payers by starting committal proceedings, while at the same time writing off £¼ million lost in dodgy bank deals, and £2.9 million in the now-scrapped town centre plan. See where their priorities are!

But we know that there is little difference between the parties. What is the point in voting, Labour, Tory or the *Laboratory* Party when they are both the same in this fucked up one-party dictatorship? What is the difference between the Economic League blacklist and Labour snoopers in Walton looking for window posters supporting 'Real Labour' so that people can be targeted for expulsion? There ain't nothing to choose between them, so why choose?

Parker & Hamer, an auctioneers in Bury, Lancashire, got besieged by protesters when they tried to sell off goods taken by Madagans bailiffs. People went inside and made false bids which fucked up their auction somewhat. Just a few people, organising here to do their bit to mess up the system, and not a *Militant* paper seller or anyone advocating the dead hand of authority in sight!

Kevvinn Klubbmann

Wandsworth Prison Picket

Wandsworth Prison is currently home to five people who were at the Trafalgar Square poll tax riot of March last year. All have been convicted under the Public Order Act (1986), Section 2; none (in fact nobody out of all the 500 people originally arrested for taking part in the riot) has been convicted of Riot. This charge is more serious, and carried a maximum sentence of ten years; it is more difficult to prove than Section 2, however, and requires evidence that those charged acted as a group in an organised and premeditated way. Everyone now seems to agree, and even the official briefing of the Metropolitan Police now admits, that the Trafalgar Square riot was *spontaneous*; the other side of the coin of the state's attack on the rioters, however, is that their behaviour was 'mindless violence'. In this way, the meaning and purpose of rioters' behaviour (which is inextricably bound up with the immediate conflict with the police and the wider economic issues that gave rise to the demo in the first place) are excluded from the explanation of what happened. For many offences under the Public Order Act, the actual behaviour of the defendant is irrelevant, just as long as the policemen or women giving evidence 'felt threatened'. Thus people have been banged up for standing on walls, gesticulating from buses and kicking police vans in response to having their foot run over. Many, like the poll tax prisoners in Wandsworth, have received sentences of up to two years.

Last Sunday, 14th July (Bastille Day), one of the irregular prison pickets that have been held outside various jails in London in the last year took place outside Wandsworth Prison (in one of the few places in Britain where even all the Tories pay no poll tax — because there isn't one!). About fifty

people turned up; not a bad number as such events go. The aim was, as usual, to demonstrate solidarity with prisoners by making loud noises outside the gates for a couple of hours. The layout of the prison was such that it was unlikely that many of the prisoners could have seen the picket (although a waving hand was seen at one cell window); but it is known from past experience of these events that prisoners are well aware of what is going on outside (drums, whistles, chants, songs, megaphones, etc.) and that they enjoy and are encouraged by such shows of solidarity.

The prison pickets are not pre-arranged with the police in the same way that demonstrations usually are. But up until now the police have tolerated every such prison picket. It is perfectly within their powers for them to deem such a gathering illegal, however, as a public order offence of course. After about one and a half hours, a police megaphone instructed the people to leave the area. A number of police had been standing next to the picket for about half an hour before this, but had done nothing. It is sometimes difficult to avoid the conclusion that since police actions appear so arbitrary they are senseless and random. But, although they do make errors of judgement and are undoubtedly mostly stupid and vicious, there is no doubt a method to their madness. As outsiders we can't see what rules guide their actions at any given time. Perhaps the police broke up the picket when they did because they felt it was causing prisoners inside the jail to be disruptive (banging doors, etc.), or perhaps they just wanted to show how hot on security they are after the Brixton fiasco. Or maybe the noise was simply getting on their nerves. Perhaps they should wear ear-plugs next time.

Johnny Yen

Labour Party Witch Hunt

Of course the millionaire press has made capital out of the Walton, Liverpool by-election as its contribution to the Tories campaign to show that to vote Labour is to introduce the Commissar and to clobber the British electorate with more taxes and more restrictions. The imprisonment of the Labour Party MP Terry Fields for non-payment of the poll tax was a further excuse. They were assisted by Neil Kinnock and the Party who are in the process of carrying out a massive witch-hunt with expulsions of the dissidents.

To think of what the media and the politicians had to say in favour of the dissidents in the Central European countries as well as of the breakaway republics of the Soviet Union! Obviously dissidents are okay in other countries. You respect and admire them for going against the current. But in your own country they are traitors. Right. That's what the Russians and all the nationalities thought of *their* dissidents! They may have been a bit more violent in some cases but the attitudes are just the same.

Anarchists have no love for the Trots. Nevertheless they can teach us a few lessons on how to put over propaganda. Their sellers are at every political meeting. Where are the anarchists with *Freedom*?

Anarchism and the Problem of Nationalism

One of the most fascinating aspects of the break up of the Eastern bloc in Europe has been the emergence of old nationalist rivalries and hatreds. Communism clearly failed in that respect, as well as in most others. Despite the rhetoric of internationalism and socialist brotherhood, it is clear that all the communist parties of Eastern Europe did was sit on the old antagonisms without making the slightest attempt to resolve them. So now we sit and watch the Balkans become the centre of the middle and eastern European storm, just as it was before 1917 and before the Red Army tanks rolled across the region, bringing all that fraternal love with them. What this shows us is that national feeling exists, and it's not just the artificial product of states. Most on the Left still argue that nationalism is a cosmetic emotion manufactured by capitalists, and, at best, only useful when used to promote wars of 'national liberation'. But nationalism isn't just some by-product of the French revolution that grew into a terrible beast that nearly destroyed Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, before looking further afield and gorging itself on the unfortunate populations of former European colonies. Nationalism has a much older origin than 1789. Take, for example, the Declaration of Arbroath of 1320, when Scots swore that "for as long as an hundred remain alive we are minded never a whit to bow beneath the yoke of English domination". Nationalism exists, it has strong roots amongst peoples, and is proving, once again, to be a more powerful source of allegiance than class. As I write, Slovenes are killing Serbs, and Serbian tanks are moving into Croatia. These people are prepared to die, and will die, not for class but nations.

Nationalism is a powerful force. But what is national sentiment? A sense of national identity seems to be most strongly connected with what is familiar to oneself. John L. Broom, writing in *Freedom* in defiance of Scottish nationalism, talks about Scotland having been a nation for 1,000 years. However, that 'fact' is something that he learnt, and forms only one aspect (the 'intellectual' aspect) of national sentiment. I would guess that John's fundamental feeling for Scotland comes from the sights, sounds, and people with whom he grew up. Emotional sympathy for the background to one's childhood and youth (i.e. one's formative years) forms the basis to much national feeling. This aspect of nationalism is usually reinforced by the 'intellectual' aspect, that is, the myths about one's nation that one learns from parents, schools, churches and politicians; be they myths about Empire, so beloved of people like Kenneth Baker, or myths about martyrdom for Ireland, so beloved of Irish folk singers and politicians. This dual characteristic of national feeling is what makes it such a powerful sentiment. The duality of nationalism associates large and generalised myths (of 'Empire' and 'martyrdom') with very close, very personal emotions connected with families and small groups. In this fashion, natural emotional ties with family and friends are allied to much larger causes. One example of this approach was the question that conscientious objectors were asked in the First World War: "What would you do if a German was raping your sister?"

One feature of the personal origin of nationalism is that a sense of identity is often associated with physical space. Childhood memories are often associated with the family home, school, or some particular playing space. Similarly, national identity is often associated with certain territory, be it the 'terra irredenta' that help Mussolini into power, or the Jewish conception of Israel that they remained loyal to for over one and a half millennia.

The importance of the claim to territory to nationalism is one of the reasons why nationalism proved to be so useful to states. One only has to think of the importance of Alsace and Lorraine to Franco-German antagonism to realise this. If one has to defend the integrity of the nation then, of course, it is necessary to have a large, well-equipped army, and, usually, conscription. It was on such grounds that the Prussian state was empowered by Frederick the great, who followed in the footsteps of his brutal father, the Sergeant Major King, and thereby helped to ensure that Europe suffered more than enough from the Sergeant Major mentality. And that has always been the way in the modern period, war being the ultimate *raison d'être* of the state, war to protect the nation.

But the role of territory in nationalism is not solely the result of state manipulation of popular emotion. Indeed, the state has only had to manipulate the popular consciousness if a territorial issue did not already exist. Good examples of this fact are provided by the nationalisms to be found in the British Isles. In the North of Ireland we find the classic case of nationalism that is now (if not historically, i.e. with Norman invasion and Elizabethan theological and political politicking) sustained by popular emotions. In that region manipulation from above is no longer necessary. What keeps the war going is that two rival groups lay claim to the same territory, and wherever nationalism is at its most virulent you

will find that is the case. And if there are no conflicts over territory then you will find that active nationalism is almost entirely the product of manipulation from above. An example of this is nationalism in Britain. The British Empire was sustained almost entirely by manipulation from above, especially at its period of peak popularity — the high Victorian era (when, interestingly, the economic rewards of Empire were beginning to decline). The proof of this was that there was no popular resistance to the dismantling of the British Empire in the post-war period. No workers ever got together to protest at the loss of India or Nigeria, or any other bit of red from the map. However, the arrival of large-scale immigration from the New Commonwealth did bring about the emergence of an aggressive, and often vicious, nationalism. Working class dockers marched in support of Enoch Powell, and the 1970s saw the emergence of the most successful British nationalist party ever, the National Front. Today, the British National Party, led by Hitler fan Tyndall, is on the rise. Interestingly, the BNP is most successful in certain areas of east London, i.e. in areas where two groups are contesting the same territory. In fact, one could argue that racial tension on the scale of parts of the East End of London is the confrontation of two rival nationalisms, one being the 'Britain is ours' view of the BNP, the other being the 'We're here to stay' of immigrants, and the children of immigrants. The pattern is the same everywhere, be it in the Tyrol, Sri Lanka or Yugoslavia.

There appears, then, to be two origins of nationalism, although the two are often intermingled by history. One form of nationalism arises from emotional attachment to that which is familiar, and is connected to formative experiences based on family and immediate community. The other is manipulation from above, often playing on the first form of nationalism in the interests of the state. Although the second has been strong in the past, and has often given the first a much-needed boost, it is the first form of nationalism that has proved to be the most long-lived and virulent, especially when territory is contested. Whereas most readers of *Freedom* would condemn state nationalism out of hand, what is the view about the first type of nationalism? Clearly, people like John L. Broom feel that such nationalism is somehow more legitimate than state-induced nationalism. But just because the sort of national feeling that John promotes is independent of the state does it make it any more acceptable to the libertarian? Interestingly, John has, in one sense,

chosen to defend an acceptable face of nationalism, as Scottish nationalism is rarely viewed as a contest for territory (apart from those who wish to reclaim Berwick), and Scotland has avoided any noticeable immigration since the war — although Protestant Action in Edinburgh in the 1930s showed a different face of Scottish nationalism. But can a libertarian defend this type of national sentiment?

The answer depends on one's view of oppression. If one views only institutions and formal organisations as being oppressive, then one would find it difficult to object to Broom-type nationalism. The problem in that case would be one of reconciling competing claims. Although, as Peter 'Babbling' Brooke has just found out in the North of Ireland, that is by no means an easy task. However, if one takes the individual as the centre of one's view then the Broom type of nationalism is also an oppression, even if it does originate in a common, community feeling. Views that originate freely in the community do not necessarily coincide with the anarchist view of the liberty of the individual. This question is currently being debated in *Freedom*, with Harold B. Barclay's views shedding some light on similar problems.

John Broom is right in the sense that there is a Scottish nationalism, or, rather, many Scottish nationalisms (though Scotland isn't, even in his terms, one nation, but at least two — ask my wife, Stornoway-born from a Skye family of Calvinists, who see the events of 1715 and 1745 as some sort of Papist plot. Fortunately my wife broke with this background by benefiting from another Scotland — the liberal, civic Scotland epitomised by Edinburgh University). But as long as people accept, as John appears to, that nationalism has some unconditional call on them then they will always be in the position of being ready-made cannon-fodder for national 'leaders', be they Alex Salmond, James Connolly, Ian Paisley, the Queen (or whoever's using her as a mouthpiece at the time), or any other state tyrant. And things will not have changed for the individual. As W.B. Yeats (that famous songwriter for the Irish Blueshirts, another manifestation of Celtic nationalism, although perhaps not as fascistic in their rhetoric as their rival, de Valera) put it:

"Parnell came down the road, he said to a cheering man: 'Ireland shall get her freedom and you still break stone'."

It was John L. Broom who challenged *Freedom* to produce an anarchist view of nationalism, let's hear his socialist view!
Steve Cullen

FOR THE 70th ANNIVERSARY

My Debt to A.S. Neill

I sat absorbed as the children argued with confidence and vigour. One had accused the other of stealing her bicycle and leaving it with a puncture; the other denied it. He had borrowed it for a few minutes and left it intact. He called on several friends to back him up. A noisy row started. The chairman, a girl of 15 elected at the last meeting, told them to shut up and then called on one to speak. Others interjected and were curtly silenced. Three of the youngest children, bored with the dispute, trundled toys across the floor and began to talk loudly. They were asked to be quiet, and when they repeated their activities were taken from the room to play elsewhere.

This was one of the usual Saturday evening meetings of the whole school — Summerhill. Round the room sat or squatted all the children and staff. Visitors were honoured with hard chairs or a bench: Neill sat in his usual wooden armchair with a small child on his lap. Not once during the arguments and discussions did he speak. Ena, his wife, sat on the lowest step of the stairway that led up to the upper floor, while children sat on the stairs or leaned over the bannisters intent on what was happening below.

Somehow I felt that this meeting was very familiar although this was my first visit to Summerhill: I had read all Neill's books. At another level I felt what I can only describe as a deep psychological shock — as if I had previously suffered from fogged vision and was now suddenly granted the power to see with clarity.

After the meeting Neill told those visitors who wished to talk about the school to make their way to one of the classrooms. Here, for nearly two hours, they asked questions about the school and its history, about the curriculum, but mostly about 'discipline', punishment and the relationships between staff and children and between boys and girls. I was

aware of a growing sense of wonderment that so many of the questions had to be asked by people who had just been at the meeting. I felt that I need never read another book by Neill: what I had seen and heard made everything clear with an immediacy that not even the best book can command.

It had shown that in Summerhill children were taken seriously. I had witnessed being applied in school what I had been trying to do in my own family — bringing up children without fear of authority; the making of the daily preoccupations, activities and interests of the children the source of social learning and morality, rather than the textbooks and moral homilies beloved of school. Disputes were argued out so that all concerned had the chance to bring their points of view to bear.

That one meeting made me understand how those children lost their fear of adults; how they were able to express themselves so easily and fearlessly. I could see why children previously brought up in an over-restrictive manner often started to swear and be abusive and constantly and often continued to do this for months or even years. They did most of the things they had been forbidden to do at home: they smoked, swore, bullied, stole and, in general, got out of their systems the anger, fear and resentment so commonly built into young children by our fetish-ridden and competitive society.

Staff and older children dealt with all this by ignoring the swearing and by openly discussing the stealing and the bullying. Those who had been upset or hurt voiced their feelings and usually gained the support of the rest, unless their actions had provoked the offence, when they would be told that they had only themselves to blame and should share the penalty or the act of restitution.

Reactions to Summerhill have ranged, at the extremes, from

The Many Faces of Fascism

On An(archy) and Schizoanalysis

by Roland Perez

Autonomea, £7.95 (post free from Freedom Bookshop)

This book is concerned with "how to recognise the many faces of fascism in everyday life and how to lead — insofar as one can — an anarchical, creative and non-fascist way of life in the midst of a very complex and very powerful capitalist socius".

The subject here is not political anarchy concerned with smashing the state in its economic, political and social forms, but "an(archy)" concerned with smashing the internalised states of rigid, coded structures of human thought and behaviour with which we imprison ourselves. As one example of graffiti from Paris, May '68, read: "There is a sleeping cop in all of us. He must be killed".

On An(archy) and Schizoanalysis starts from the principle that human beings have the potential to be self-determining individuals without reference to inherited moralities, institutions or states. This is the principle that we can live "beyond good and evil" and must do so to free ourselves.

So what are these internalised states and how do we break free of them? First, the concept of 'human nature' must be rejected. This idea should be more than familiar to those who argue for anarchism and face the inevitable objections that being greedy, selfish and competitive are 'natural' human characteristics.

If we mistakenly accept the idea of a single, unchanging 'human nature' then we allow a whole range of specialists — philosophers, scientists, psychologists, etc. — to define what that 'human nature' is in ways which often reinforce feelings of helplessness and undermine any confidence in the ability to take control of our own lives on our own terms.

For example, in Freud's concept of 'penis envy' it is argued that all women are envious of the male penis and consequently feel that

they are 'lacking'. In Freud's terms the normal woman is the one who accepts this 'lack'. Here we are presented with a phallogocentric view of humanity in which women are defined negatively and therefore projected into roles of passivity against male activity.

We can only break free of such constraints by refusing all laws, all structures, all repetition. We must dare to live in a continuing process of becoming using desire and play as our only guides: "The an(archist) is someone who actively creates his or her own world every morning afresh".

The problem with this is the immense difficulty of such a task "in the midst of a very complex and very powerful capitalist socius". Capitalism involves huge numbers of people in repetitive, wasteful and useless labour or facing the alternatives of poverty, unemployment and homelessness. The individual cannot transcend these conditions individually. Only through organised collective action can we hope to liberate ourselves and our world.

Doug

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OF SUMMERHILL

that of Max Rafferty, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who said, "I would as soon enrol a child of mine in a brothel as in Summerhill", to that of Father John Culkin, the Jesuit teacher, who said, "Summerhill is a place where they make saints", the very epitome of the feeling I had as I sat in the first of many meetings I was to experience over the next 20 years.

Neill always acknowledged his debt to Homer Lane, "the greatest man I've ever known" as he would often say, and then repeat the story of Jason, the boy who smashed the teacups but refused to smash Lane's watch when dared to do so by Lane himself. Neill would tell the story to illustrate Lane's vision, humanity and insight. His own books are crammed with similar examples that reveal his own profound and intuitive understanding of children. He has little patience with theory or the philosophy of education, as I found when I tried to talk about Leo Tolstoy's school at Yasnya Polyana or about John Dewey's philosophy which arose from his practical experience with children.

Neill and the state school

As the head of a state school I found many pressures which prevented me from trying to put Neill's ideas into practice immediately. During the five years of Raisinghill's life our troubles arose not from any attempt to put 'progressive' ideas into practice against the will of the staff or the parents, but from the antagonism between the Labour Party in Islington and County Hall who tried to get elected members just to kow-tow to County Hall policies. To persuade the Labour Party that they had been wrong to appoint me as head, they withheld teachers (the school opened on the first day with barely a third of the teachers having been appointed and a mass of supply teachers had quickly to try and absorb the layout of the school and a huge timetable). The full story is being told in another place so I won't go into the Raisinghill details here.

Neill appoints his own staff; heads of state schools — unless their schools are 'show' schools of value for publicity purposes — had to take whatever the local authority sent

them. Many, not all, teachers become teachers not because they are interested in kids but because it is one of the easiest steps up the 'professional' career ladder. That was shown by the extent, until the EEC put an end to it, of caning in state schools. The ability to 'control' a class came foremost in the judgement made on a teacher's suitability. It still is. The idea of 'forcing' ideas of freedom on teachers is self-contradictory. Only a teacher who has seen freedom in action and believes in it himself could be able to make it work.

To try and put 'progressive' ideas over in a state school against the will of the staff is so absurd that those who try to claim that as the reason for the closure of Raisinghill merely show their ignorance both of staff relationships in state schools and of the real meaning of 'progressive'. A head can only work by persuasion; he cannot force ideas on an unwilling staff unless he is in cahoots with his local authority and it supports what he wants to do. The teachers unions would raise hell with any head or any local authority trying to push teachers too hard. Nowadays, with teacher unions weakened, it is probably easier to 'persuade' teachers.

Sadly, for most young teachers who believe in gentler methods of persuasion, their pupils have been so conditioned to traditional authoritarianism methods that gentler methods are interpreted as weakness or indifference so disobedient or disorderly behaviour is one way of testing the teacher's integrity. During this testing time the teacher is likely to be branded by colleagues and the head as 'incompetent', and reported as such to the HMI who, if the teacher is in the first year of teaching and 'on probation', may refuse to pass him as competent.

Parents, too, have been conditioned to expect 'strict discipline' as the mark of a good teacher. When Arthur Young (head of the school taking part in the experiment devised by Royston Lambert of Dartington and Alec Clegg, the Education Officer for the old West Riding) asked the pupils and staff to use first names, one mother was heard to say, "I won't have you calling Mr Young 'Arthur'! You'll call him 'Sir' and that's the end of it".

Similarly, heads are responsible to management committees

Food for thought — and action

Recent additions to Freedom Bookshop stock.

*Terrorising the Neighbourhood: American Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era** by Noam Chomsky, preface by James Kelman, AK Press and Pressure Drop Press. This work, tracing the origins, goals and implications of US foreign policy serves as an analytical preface to George Bush's 'New World Order', as Chomsky illustrates America's willingness to stop at nothing for control of the world's wealth. It also serves as an extension and vindication of Chomsky's previous analysis of the internal and external role of foreign intervention. Essentially the text of a lecture given at Edinburgh following the US invasion of Panama, it includes the subsequent question and answer session. A well-produced booklet, although the quality of design and the unusually large print have increased both its size and price, one suspects, but recommended for the content, nonetheless. 63 pages, illustrated, £3.95.

Black Eye, published by Black Eye, New York, occasional periodical. Contains articles on a range of subjects such as Yuppies and Weathermen, Women's Liberation and Feminism, Marxism/Communism, Tiananmen Square, the Polish Anarchist Federation, Bike Messengers and more, from an anarchist/situationist perspective. Writers include Bob Black, Ken Knabb, Jacques Camatte and Edwin Hammer. Cheaply produced but readable, with occasional cartoons and poetry. Issues 9 and 10 available — take your pick. A5 format, approx 45 pages, £1.00.

*Bigger Cages, Longer Chains** edited by Larry Law, Spectacular Times. At last! A-Distribution and Dark Star Press have combined to reprint one of the best-selling of the Pocketbook Series which was first published — to a rave review in *Freedom* — in 1987. Buy one for your well-meaning-but-deluded Labour Party friends. A6 pamphlet, 67 pages, £1.20.

*Pirate** or to give it its full title, *A True Historie and Account of the Pirate Captain Misson, His Crew and Their Colony of Libertatia Founded on Peoples' Rights and Liberty in the Island of Madagascar*, edited by Larry Law, Spectacular Times. Another useful reprint, a fascinating 17th century story, whether fact or fiction. Well, wouldn't most anarchists love to have been pirates? A6 pamphlet, 30 pages, 75p.

Lesbian and Gay Freedom Movement Newsletter, no. 5, LGFM. This issue proclaims "LGFM supports dolphins who want to have sex with humans". Hmmm ... well, I've heard of masochism but drowning on the job gives a whole new meaning to safe sex! A5 pamphlet, 16 pages, 40p.

Lovebite: Mythography and the Semiotics of Culture by John Moore, Aporia Press. If you understood his previous pamphlet, *Anarchy and Ecstasy*, you'll probably understand this one. Here's a sample: "For contemporary proponents of anarchy the crucial issue remains the light thrown on most ancient and deeply-seated control structures in the present psycho-social environment. Taboos against incest and cannibalism are the basic instruments through which the control complex maintains its domination over humanity. Those who desire global liberation must confront this issue if they are to achieve anything but a failed — because incomplete — revolution. To be efficacious counter-action must be total, but more importantly, it must be holistic. The current text traces a shift from anarchy to control — from cult to culture. It rejects linear historical consciousness, and seeks in cyclical mythic consciousness techniques for effectuating total liberation". (Or to put it another way, fuck your relatives and eat your enemies! Give me sex with dolphins any day.) Heavy and mystical A4 pamphlet, 44 pages, £3.95.

*Cruisewatch: Civil Resistance Against American Nuclear Cruise Convoys in the English Countryside** by Martin Baxendale, Silent But Deadly Publications. The Cruisewatch story — its beginnings, aims, methods and successes over six years of tireless resistance to Cruise deployments; including details reports on the midnight convoy movements that Thatcher's government and the American authorities would have liked to keep secret, the Cruisewatch actions that ensured Cruise never did 'melt into the countryside' unobserved, and the often horrifying reactions of the police and military towards protesters. Well produced with good photographs, A4, 42 pages, £6.50.

KM

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or bodies of governors who are often made up of local business people, trade unionists or magistrates. They would be the first to exert pressure on heads thought to be indulging in fanciful ideas of allowing freedom in state schools. A workforce who might be educated to think for themselves would be a revolutionary force indeed — to be discouraged at all costs if you are in business and looking for profit! As Mr Jones, HMI, said to me when I was head of a secondary modern school in Hertfordshire: "Progressive education is all very well for some middle class children. It is quite unsuitable for working class children and cannot be tolerated in local authority schools".

I have found that heads of state schools are usually so overburdened by paperwork and administration — it gets heavier year by year — that they have little time for thinking about the long-term purposes of education. Those state heads whom I have known and admired for their principles and their application in their schools have almost invariably been in almost constant conflict with the senior officers and with many of the education committee members. Other heads solve their problems and salve their consciences by using a 'progressive' vocabulary to the outside world and using traditional methods and relationships within their schools.

There is no mystery about all this. State education exists to perpetuate the current society and its values. In Britain that means a class-stratified, capitalist society where wealth is made for the few at the expense of the living standards and the health of the mass of the people. Progressive education aims to create and increase happiness for all. So while it may be permitted for the fortunate and usually wealthy few it is denied to the vast majority of ordinary kids. Royston Lambert, briefly head of Dartington, said: "What is the use of progressive education if it cannot be applied to all our children?" That was a 1972 version of John Dewey's statement: "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must society want for all its children. Anything less is ignoble; acted upon it will destroy our democracy".

Michael Duane

Workers Solidarity Alliance: IWA celebrates 8th convention

Workers Solidarity Alliance, US section of the anarchist unionist International Workers Association, held its 8th national convention in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on 25th-26th May 1991. WSA members from Indiana, Alabama, Texas, Tennessee, California and New York attended this annual convention.

The WSA national secretary Ginger, stated that: "Those attending this year's convention managed to carry out 18 hours of work into two days and the results are impressive. New leaflets, new activities and new contacts with others are planned for the upcoming year".

As is customary at WSA conventions, the opening session heard reports and reviews of the organisation's work by the national secretary, international secretary, local groups and working groups. A review of the current finances of the organisation was also heard in the national treasurer's report.

The WSA working group's report on various forms of activities. There currently exists two working groups: the feminism and sexism, and East European working groups. There continues to be discussion about forming a public workers group for comrades employed in this sector.

Local WSA reported on their various activities. The WSA groups continue their various activities, which include: labour solidarity, workplace organising, anti-sexist issues, anti-racist issues, anti-militarism and a whole host of other activities and projects.

This year, like last year, WSA members spent a lot of time talking about our focus and many new projects originated in this discussion.

The WSA further agreed to make a concerted effort at fund-raising to help support on-going activities and to send a delegation to the 1992 IWA Congress. Several proposals were also agreed to in regards to the 1992 IWA Congress including one resolution each on racism and reproductive rights.

One of the more controversial issues at this convention was how to respond to the Industrial Workers of the World recent interest in opening up discussions with the IWA about possible IWW affiliation. The Convention resolved to have the WSA national secretary write to the IWW asking them to respond to earlier correspondence by the IWA secretariat. We are also

seeking IWW clarification about their two proposed 'understandings'. The first IWW 'understanding' pertains to their non-US members and how they would fit into the IWA organisation outside of the USA. The second 'understanding' regards the IWW's desire to include within the IWA's ranks organisations that currently are not members of the IWA. Favourable response by the IWW may be the starting point for future discussions between the WSA, IWW and IWA about possible IWW affiliation with the IWA.

On the subject of relations with other organisations, WSA passed a proposal that we go on record as supporting the creation of a free women's group, autonomous of the WSA and affiliated with the international Free Women's network. The WSA working group on feminism and sexism will serve as our contact with this organisation. Women from the WSA and throughout the libertarian workers and anarchist movements are encouraged to participate in this process.

In many ways, the focus of this year was as much on how to get things done as it was on what to get done. People proposing projects also proposed times limits for completion of these projects and there was more of an effort to complete things in a timely manner. The national committee (composed of regional delegates) plans to do a better job corresponding and in helping to facilitate the completion of proposed projects.

During the recap and closure portion of our convention WSA members thought that the convention was productive and in persevering in a comradely way through some difficult issues. As one participant put it, comradeship is "one of our hallmarks".

A lot of action was taken to make the WSA more efficient and more vital. The WSA is as committed to finding new ways of expanding our activities and influence as ever. If the convention was any indication 1991-92 looks to be a good year for the Workers Solidarity Alliance-IWA.

The 9th national convention of the WSA will be held in New York City, Memorial Day Weekend, 23rd-24th May 1991.

National Secretary
Post Office Box 11838
Knoxville
Tennessee
37939-1838, USA

News from Northern Ireland

Mr Joseph McKeever is 79 years of age and a registered blind person. He lives with his 75 year old wife Elizabeth in the nationalist/catholic working class housing estate called Creggan in Derry, and simply because of this their home was subjected to a three-hour search by ten members of the security forces. Nothing was found in the house, nor in any of the other houses raided in the area that day. The elderly couple were greatly distressed by the search, which an RUC man described as 'routine'. The family is concerned about the couple's health and their son has said that if anything happens to his mother or father he will hold the RUC responsible.

This is just one specific example of the brutalisation of areas like Creggan. Since the killings of the army corporals after a funeral in West Belfast, over forty people have been charged in relation to that incident. The whole of West Belfast is being victimised.

The latest Amnesty International report clearly shows the extent to which the UK government has abandoned any attempt to comply with international human rights standards. Another report, this time from the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights, called the 'Financing of Schools in Northern Ireland', highlights a case of underfunding of catholic schools over a long period of time, with per capita figures in 1984-85 reading £775 per protestant pupil and £738 per catholic pupil. In 1989-90 the figures were £1,710 and £1,218. All of the above contribute to the decision by Irish men and women that armed activity through the IRA is the only way to respond to state oppression. That anarchists believe that this decision is wrong is easy enough to say. What is a lot harder to do is offer a meaningful alternative that supports the Irish people but not the IRA.

And what about the British people in Ireland? How should anarchists respond to their aspirations? Specifically what can anarchists make of the killing by the IRA of Cecil McKnight, a leading loyalist in Derry. He was shot in his home while discussing his personal safety with two RUC detectives who reportedly ducked behind a sofa when the shooting started. Claims and counter-claims have rung out since the killing, specifically that

Cecil McKnight was involved in the killing of Sinn Fein councillor Eddie Fullerton. Fears are now high that tit for tat killing may become a feature of life in Derry as they are in Belfast and the notorious murder triangle in Tyrone. The killings of Eddie Fullerton and Cecil McKnight at the time of the charade of the Brooks Talks are particularly poignant. Neither man's views were meaningfully present at those talks, yet both of them were from the working class and had more in common with each other than John Hume of the SDLP and James Molyneux of the Official Unionist Party, who represent the official sanitised versions of the nationalisms espoused by Eddie and Cecil. Their deaths mark a particularly low point in the division and oppression of the working class in Ireland and present anarchists with the most awesome of challenges.

The Brooks Talks have collapsed! Just as everyone knew they would, even the people involved in them! And the marching season is upon us, when tension gets particularly high. It is also the season of Gaelic Games, hurling and Gaelic football, and this year will go down as the year of the draw. Dublin and Meath have played a wonderful series of draws in the football and Tipperary and Cork have just drawn in the hurling. The association that runs these amateur games, the Gaelic Athletic Association, is now rolling in money from the huge attendances at the matches. Far more attention is going on these games than on the recent local elections in the Republic, with many areas showing poll turn-outs of just over 50%.

From sport to films! I've recently seen Ken Loach's film 'Hidden Agenda', a thriller which mixes the Colin Wallace and the Stalker stories into a moderate yarn where the telling points are in the sub-text. Here we find that the film is telling us that 'shoot to kill' is only an issue when an American lawyer is killed, and then only because it opens the can of worms in Westminster around MI5's efforts to topple a Labour government. Once again Ireland provides the interesting backdrop and the Irish populate the side-show. An interesting experience of cultural imperialism!

Dave Duggan

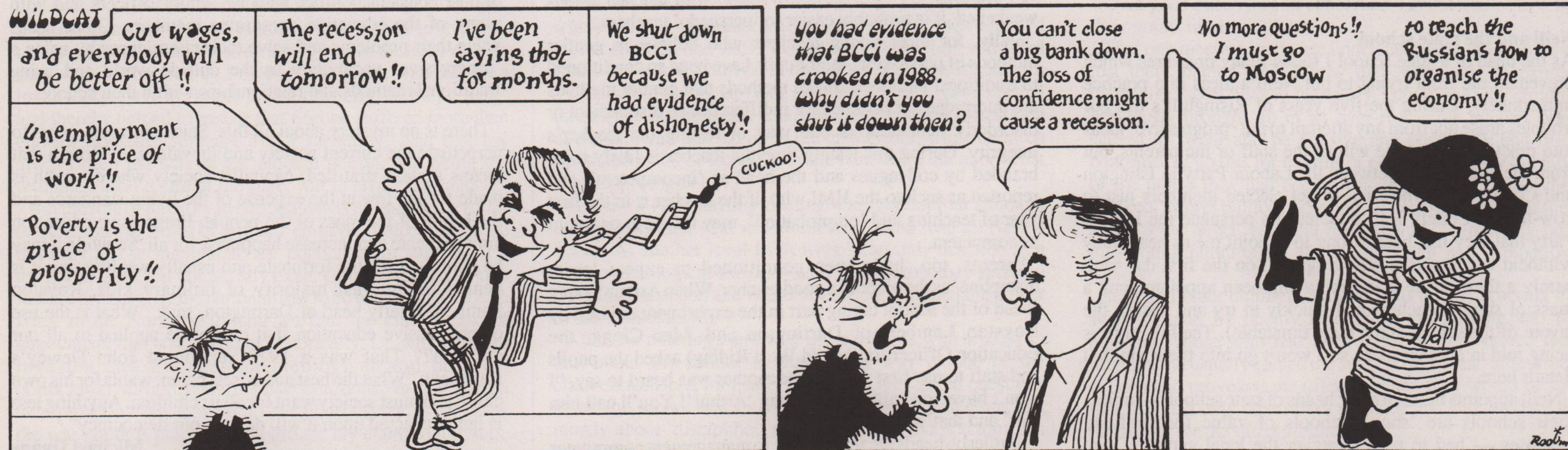
Having decided that Labour was a nest of sitting ducks, and having disguised themselves with fine feathers and seductive mating calls like 'The Right to Work!', quacked from feather-lined nests of their own, nobody was more surprised than the Entryists when half the Labour Party got up and flew away. And the other half stayed put and quacked back.

This was not how it was supposed to work at all. The sappy social democrats were supposed to fall into the clutches of the bolsheviks 'just like that', as Tommy Cooper would say.

As we said at the beginning, it is fatal to underestimate your opponent. Still worse is just not to recognise him in the first place! For anarchists, the issues are still clear: both those in power and those struggling to achieve it — by whatever means — are equally our enemies.

PHILIP SANSOM

from *The State is your Enemy*, selections from *Freedom 1965-86*, £5 post free.



Greetings from Michael Randle

Dear all at Freedom Press, Many thanks for your letter of congratulations which we were particularly happy to receive.

We see our acquittal as a victory for the movement and culture of resistance in which we have been involved. It is this movement and its ideas which inspired us to act as we did in 1966 and to defend ourselves at our trial last month; and it is this movement which provided support over the last three and a half years since we were first named in *The Sunday Times*.

Michael Randle
Bradford

Whiteway

Dear Editors, Last October you kindly printed my letter asking for information about two photographers with anarchist connections: Hugo van Wadenoyen at Whiteway, and George Davison at Wern Fawr (later Coleg Harlech). I received a lot of useful replies and think I have answered them all but if not my apologies.

I am now wondering if any of your readers can help with another problem. The history of Whiteway by Nellie Shaw was published by C.W. Daniel. In 1971 the company of that name published a biography of their founder entitled *Centenary of a Crank Publisher*. The local library cannot trace it. Can any of your readers lend (or sell) me a copy?

Colin Osman
The Photo-Historian
(the quarterly of the Historical Group of the Royal Photographic Society)
14 Fairgreen, Cockfosters
Barnet, Herts, EN4 0QS

Briefly

Dear Editors, Fiona Williams (Letters, 13th July) can rest assured that I do not regard "women as all good, men as all bad". However, men have total control of the major institutions. Thatcher, Bandareneike and Ghandi (Mrs) are/were mouthpieces under the control of men. All armies, which are the ultimate defence of male power, are composed of men under the control of men.

I believe that peace and freedom can be realised only when women,

with the help of enlightened men, refuse to go along with the rules of male institutions. I do not think it possible, let alone desirable, for women to dominate men in the way that men presently dominate women; matriarchy, to my mind, could never be the opposite of patriarchy because women have better things to do than fight and compete and fantasise.

If I generalise, and thereby allow misconceptions to arise, it is an inevitable consequence of keeping letters short for editorial reasons. Okay, Fiona?

Ernie Crosswell

News from Venezuela

Correo A is a publication of Colectivo Circulo A, that is a socialist libertarian group working in Venezuela since the '80s, when an anarchist tradition did not exist until then. The first number appeared in November 1987 and we have tried to publish three or four numbers per year.

We produce around 1,000 copies which are sold at a rather symbolic price of US\$.17, and they are distributed in Caracas (the capital city of Venezuela) and eight other cities in the rest of the country. *Correo A* is not just the only libertarian publication in Venezuela, but it is also the only regular publication of the extra-parliamentary left. Because of this it is well appreciated among politically interested young people wanting alternative points of view in an intellectual environment where alternatives are few.

We keep postal contacts and we interchange publications with fifteen libertarian groups in seven countries. We have tried with eleven other groups in nine countries without

receiving replies, and we are now trying with some others.

We have published three booklets about anarchism and last December we co-edited with Editorial Recortes (related to the Federacion Anarquista Uruguaya) the book *El Pensamiento de Malatesta* written by Angel Cappelletti, one of our collaborators. We have some other projects along these lines that will be fulfilled according to our economic possibilities.

Colectivo Circula tries to organise groups to discuss and act according to anarchist ideas and take part and collaborate with several social and popular movements. Even though we are rather few in number we try to keep a permanent and enthusiastic presence in our society that we hope will develop a higher consideration for our positions.

If you write to us we shall be delighted. It will also be a pleasure to welcome any of you that happen to come to this part of the world and to receive your publications or contributions (in English, Portuguese, French, Italian or

You and the ECU

Dear Freedom, You say that anarchists "can see the usefulness of money as a means of exchange", but "oppose it as a means of exploitation of another person's labour, or in order to gain political power" ('You and the ECU', 29th June).

Let's think about this. Under what circumstances do I need to use money in order to obtain, say, an apple? Only when apple trees and the land they grow on don't belong to me. In other words, money functions as a medium of exchange only when the objects which we need and the means to produce them do not belong

in common to everyone, but are instead the exclusive property of certain sections of society — be they private individuals, the state, workers' co-ops, or whatever.

In such a situation, the non-property-owning sections of society can only gain access to the things we need by selling our labour power to the property owners in return for a wage or salary. Moreover, a class-divided society such as this must inevitably be propped up by laws, courts, judges, prisons, police forces, armies, and all the other trappings of political power.

So, it's just not possible to separate money as a means of exchange from the exploitation of labour power, nor from the existence of the state. Each presupposes the others.

Yes, "anarchists must be clear on these vital problems" — clear that the only "alternative non-capitalist society" worth fighting for is one in which money, property, classes and the state are done away with altogether.

Mark Shipway

Spanish). Everything we can get will be very useful for us because our lack of information, except for the official press.

Salud, alegria y anarquia!

N. Mendez
Casilla 25, Fac. Ingenieria
U.C.V., Ciudad Universitaria
Caracas 1040, Venezuela

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Hove HC £3, Newport NHF £2, Ontario GLP £10, Beckenham DP £10.
Total = £25.00
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After the Poll Tax

(continued from page 2)

had an idea. Let's sell it by the litre, let's put a meter in every household, the customer will pay. No matter that large families, the sick, the disabled, those on low incomes, all those with what is called high levels of water dependency, will suffer. Standards of health and hygiene will decline and all for what should be an inalienable right and which the water companies appear to get for next to nothing.

Domestic water metering is already being tried out on some new housing estates and the victims are appalled at the cost. Since 31st March 1990, the date the poll tax was introduced, Thames Water have been metering all new properties and even major conversions to existing properties. They kindly inform you that anyone can have a meter now, if they pay the cost of installation and, they say, it could be cheaper, especially if you are out all day, but not if you have a bath each day and, of course, there is the toilet problem. The National Consumer Council recognises that water metering could cause severe hardship for many low income households and points out that the £3 million installation costs would be better spent reducing the 15% estimated leakage from the mains.

Thames Water imagine they can substitute the glossy brochure for good service. Sent out with their bills, it invites you to pay £30 to become a Friend of Kew Gardens but doesn't deny the rumour that Kew prefers rainwater for its plants. There are also lots of promises. If they have to interrupt your supply they will restore it when they say they will. Unplanned

Stirner and the Consciousness of his Egoism

To properly answer the points raised by George Walford in his article 'Egoist, Anarchist or Cretan?' (13th July) would need far more space than even the most generous of editors would grant. I will, therefore, confine myself to a few salient remarks.

Walford declares that Stirner contradicts his "declarations of complete independence" by, among other things, writing a book "thereby showing himself to exist in relation to people around him and ... to be concerned with those relationships". It is certainly true that Stirner is concerned with the *consciousness* of his egoism and the effect this has in his relations to other individuals, but there is nothing in *The Ego and His Own* about the "independence" that Walford writes about. He appears to be confusing statements arising from Stirner's awareness of his uniqueness with the idea of the complete isolation of the

interruptions, they promise to restore within 24 hours of finding or, if not, within 72 hours. After that they will pay £5 a day until restoration, which won't buy a lot of bottled water. And there is a catch of course, in certain circumstances (details from head office) these promises don't apply. Heads they win!

Compulsory water metering is as iniquitous and unfair as the poll tax and only another massive grassroots street campaign will stop its spread over the next ten years. If it happens to your neighbour you may be next, and in this everyone is your neighbour. The anti-poll tax campaign brought down a government, surely the ten water companies of England and Wales are no less vulnerable.

HS

individual from all cultural influences which is nowhere expressed in Stirner's book. Stirner is not in the least opposed to having ideas, even if appropriated from others. What he is against is the ideas having him, that is, his subjection to their domination and his entrapment in a cage of conceptual imperatives.

According to Walford, Stirner's statement that "I must rather have so much as I am competent to appropriate" is a reformulation of the old communist hocus pocus of "to each according to his needs". I find this a mystifying claim. Stirner makes this statement in the context of a criticism of the bourgeois liberal's conception of "free competition". The liberal, he writes, declared: "it belongs to a man's essence not to be property, but proprietor. As the consideration here was about 'man', not about the individual, the how-much (which formed exactly the point of the individual's special interest) was left to him. Hence the individual's egoism retained room for the freest play in this how-much, and carried on a indefatigable competition.

"However, the lucky egoism had to become a snag in the way of the less fortunate, and the latter, still keeping its feet planted on the principle of humanity, put forward the question as to the how-much of possession, and answered to the effect that 'man must have as much as he requires'.

"Will it be possible for my egoism to let itself be satisfied with that? What 'man' requires furnishes by no means a scale for measuring me and my needs, for I may have use of less or more. I must rather have so much as I am competent to appropriate."

I fail to see how this constitutes a belief in "a society in which everybody has all they want". At most, and bearing in mind that Stirner seeks no "society", it could be construed as being favourable

to a condition in which "everybody" can obtain what they have the power to obtain. In other words, "to each according to his ability". What I want is one thing. What I am capable of getting is quite another!

It should not be necessary for me to point out that the statement that "all Cretans are liars" is not the equivalent of "all egoists will lie when it suits them", for the latter carries with it the corollary that "all egoists will tell the truth when it suits them". I doubt very much if George Walford has *always* told the truth and never uttered a lie because it suited him to. If, then, he has told a lie, whether out of convenience or "necessity", he has repudiated that "commitment to truth" he so sententiously proclaims and by the same argument he uses against Stirner what he says about Stirner cannot be taken "with complete seriousness" and "is not merely difficult or ill advised but impossible!"

In fact Stirner regarded "truth" as an instrument, not as some fixed idea one should serve (*The Truth*). He writes "before me truths are as common and indifferent as things ... There exists not even one truth ... that has stability before me, and to which I subject myself". This is not to say, however, that there is no truth in the sense of "the fact of the matter" since "for thinking and speaking I need truths and words as I do food for eating", but that "all truths beneath me are to my liking; a truth above me, a truth I should have to direct myself by, I am not acquainted with".

I read with interest George Walford's comments on Stirner and it has pleased me to reply to some of them. I am rather disappointed, however, that he did not make good his promise in the first paragraph of his article that there is "a good deal to be said on the other side" of the view that Stirner does not belong among the anarchists.

S.E. Parker

MEETINGS

Anarchist Forum

Fridays at about 8.00pm at the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square (via Cosmo Street off Southampton Row), London WC1.

1991 SEASON OF MEETINGS

27th September - 'Anarchism and the Mexican Labour Movement' (speaker Dave Dane)

4th October - General discussion

11th October - 'The Orogen of Social Work' (speaker Peter Neville)

18th October - General discussion

We are now booking speakers or topics for 1991-92. The dates free are from 25th October 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.

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.

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