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FIFTY PENCE

In this issue:
Four pages of
Book and Art
Reviews

The Maastricht Summit a game of **BLUFF & COUNTER-BLUFF**

We go to press before the Maastricht Summit Conference of the twelve member nations of the European Community. But it is obvious to us that there will be agreement on a whole range of topics, more hand-shaking and the big smiles, led by our Mr Major for the benefit of the media and especially television. No wonder Major, according to the polls, is more popular with our sheep-like electorate than Kinnock, who also can put on the smiles, and they both engage in body language for television — but with the difference that Kinnock, unlike Major, is not part of the leaders' jamboree which for the past fortnight has had nauseating exposure in all the television news programmes. In one day Major was first in Rome, then in Bonn, and for our benefit there they were

performing, yes, performing the handshakes, the back patting and the artificial Cheshire cat grins for the assembled media hacks.

The media then waste pages and television time to analyse the statesmanlike discussions that took place, and how the decisions taken at Maastricht will change the whole future of Britain and so on. The one thing that television has allowed the public to see for themselves are the actors in this sordid capitalist game of bluff and counter-bluff.

What was the original purpose of the Treaty of Rome if not to create an economic bloc to rival that of the United States and the Soviet Union (assuming that the industrialisation under Stalin would continue and eventually rival that of the USA). The urgency expressed by most of the European politicians for a political, social and economic federation is also an awareness of the ever-growing economic strength of Japan, China and many other nations in the Far East who are also looking to create their own economic bloc.

However stupid Major, Hurd and their hangers-on may be we are convinced that they will not be

allowed to opt out of the major decisions adopted by the twelve — not by pressure from the electorate, not by Tebbit or Thatcher, but by the multi-nationals, the insurance companies and the building societies, why, even the Church Commissioners with their invested billions of pounds. For after all, something like 80% of this country's trade is with Europe!

It is the social policy, dear to the French, which will be resisted to the bitter end by the Brits. Not surprisingly, since after all their major success in these past twelve years of office has been to clobber the trade unions and manual workers. To refuse to agree that the working week should be limited to 48 hours at a time when among the twelve there are twenty million unemployed is incredible. At the pre-Maastricht meetings in Brussels Michael Howard the Employment Secretary, a barrister who we are sure has never even soiled his hands to dig his garden, declared: "We can see no logic in arbitrarily laying down a 48-hour week and to suggest that it is justified on health and safety grounds", he could find no evidence. On the contrary, he was in a position to read

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DID YOU KNOW?

That on 26th November the British government carried out an underground nuclear test in Nevada, USA. According to Jane Powell of London NW3 in a letter to *The Guardian*, the Ministry of Defence refused to confirm the test. Ms Powell also asserts that nor would they confirm that Britain is buying 23 Trident missiles. She adds "we rely, as ever, upon American officials for information about decisions made by our government".

Ms Powell also says:

"The test went ahead despite a personal plea to John Major from Chief Raymond Yowell of the Western Shoshone Nation, upon whose land the test took place. Under the Ruby Valley Treaty of 1863 the Western Shoshone reject both Britain's and the US's right to conduct nuclear tests on their land. We don't know whether this test 'vented' or not, but both Britain's last two tests did, spewing radioactive xenon and krypton into the surrounding area."

She also makes two further important points:

1. that the test was undoubtedly related to developing new nuclear weapons, and
2. that it is also time we cease taking an imperialist attitude towards native peoples and contaminating their land.

WHOSE SUNDAY?

There is nothing sacrosanct about Sunday unless you are a God-worshipper who asserts that Sunday is a God-ordained day of rest to be spent on one's knees thanking the Almighty for all the good things of the week as well as reminding Him of future demands.

But for the rest of us who are wage slaves, Sunday may be the only day that, for instance, one sees one's children (assuming they are not of an age where they feel they have better things to do), and if one has a house or mortgage there are always jobs to do for which one cannot afford to call in the builder, and the family motor

car needs its Sunday polish to keep up with the Joneses.

Anyway, Sunday is no longer that day of rest. Football, cricket, motor racing, everything except rest — and even fewer people spend Sunday on their knees — so why make a fuss about Sunday shopping? Indeed, one newspaper pointed out that it was an occasion for a *family outing* to the nearest super- or hyper-market!

For one section of the community it's an afternoon outing. For another it means another working day whether they like it or not. *Shop*

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Maästricht: Bluff & Counter-Bluff

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a letter from a British worker who wanted to work 55 hours a week. Why did this wage-slave want to do 55 hours a week: "To restrict my working hours would give me serious financial difficulties". When the Greek delegate Mrs Papandreou replied that Europe's trade unions had "pleaded repeatedly for a 48-hour limit" and that they represented not the one individual quoted by Mr Howard but a membership of several million, how did this super-educated idiot respond? By quoting the Japanese experience:

"... the efficiency and alleged contentment of workers in Japan who only enjoy a bare fifteen days holiday a year. This in turn, he suggested, proved the case against another of the directive's proposals that every European worker should get at least four weeks paid leave a year" (*The Independent*, 4th December 1991).

He was not influenced either by the Greek delegate who drew his attention to the fact that there were more accidents in Japan than in Europe, or to the Spanish delegate's suggestion that there might be some link between "the intensive labouring of the Japanese and their level of mental sanity". According to *The Independent* the ministers "did not linger on this for fear of damaging EC-Japanese relations".

But Mr Howard is not interested in the effects of long working hours on employees' health. What his government is concerned with is to avoid having to implement measures which it believes will add costs to British employers. This was conformed by John Major at Prime Minister's Questions when he said that if Britain had to carry out all the items in the Social Charter "it would cost employers very large sums of money, in billions in the next year". He added that it would damage competitiveness in the Community to the benefit of the US, Japan and other competitors. "I am not prepared to see our competitiveness lost in that manner." So there's the answer in a sentence. Why do the other eleven countries of the community not share Britain's fears?

Why is Britain the odd man out? Not, in our opinion, because there is all that much to choose between the governments. So one can only conclude that it is because of the spineless attitude of the TUC and of the unions in this country. When will they wake up to the realisation that without the agricultural and industrial workers and all those engaged in our useful public services, governments are helpless as well as useless.

THE FRENCH 'SOCIALIST' solution to unemployment

Unemployment is part of the capitalist system. Full employment gives workers 'ideas', especially about how hard they have to work for the boss, whereas unemployment creates the fear of losing one's job so workers are more 'amenable' and prepared to 'work harder', longer hours, and so on. We have a Tory government and as the Chancellor has told us, to reduce inflation and interest rates "unemployment is a price worth paying". The Prime Minister has also declared that a 48-hour week is not for the British worker — meaning we cannot afford to be limited to a 48-hour working week, though we can afford to have three million unemployed!

Unemployment is endemic in Europe (now in the East as well since they have gone 'capitalist'). How does a 'socialist' government deal with the problem? The French Mitterand-Cresson 'socialist' government has come up with an original incentive for the idle rich to help reduce unemployment by helping themselves — of course. With nearly three million unemployed, including a large number among the unskilled, Madame Cresson's government has offered tax cuts to people employing domestics. Paul Webster in *The Guardian* puts it more forcefully when he writes:

"The national assembly has approved generous income tax cuts to bring back the skivvy to middle class homes. Half the cost of recreating upstairs and downstairs will be deductible from annual revenue returns, up to a maximum of £2,500 a year — enough for many taxpayers to take on at least a couple of dailies."

The French government hopes to absorb up to 150,000 "jobless poor who will queue up to scrub floors, clean the hearth, or answer the tea-bell in the drawing room".

Officially employers will have to pay them the national minimum wage and limit working hours to forty. In France some half a million people, mainly women working part-time, are registered as domestics quite apart from thousands of 'moonlighters'.

But in fact with supply for employment exceeding demand, obviously hours and national minimum wages will go by the board. And at the same time the *nouveau riche* will claim the full whack on their tax returns.

One other aspect of this new bonanza for the rich which was not mentioned by *The Guardian's* correspondent is that the *real* rich, the '200 families' as they were called in years gone by, who already had a house-full of domestics without tax incentives, will surely also be claiming. So on the one hand some 150,000 unemployed will be taken off social security (assuming that even the national minimum wage is sufficient for them to feed, clothe and house themselves), but on the other hand all these *aristos* and *nouveau riche* will be paying up to £2,500 each less tax. Not just the anticipated 150,000 new employers, but what about the 500,000 domestics *already* employed. Their bosses from January next will also be entitled to claim tax cuts. Result? The Cresson government will then declare that it has less revenue as a result and so social security benefits will have to be cut. In other words, as usual the sacrifices will be made by the poor for the benefit of the rich.

It makes no difference which government is in office. The capitalist system by definition favours the rich at the expense of the poor. If we want to end this state of affairs it's not by changing governments which promise to run the capitalist system more efficiently for everybody, but by abolishing government and *privilege* and seeking to reorganise society *from below*. If we really want to change society we must do something about it *ourselves* and not leave it to others to run our lives.

There are in the Western world *many* people with good, the right ideas in our opinion, but *very few* are prepared to give their time and intelligence to further these ideas.

No wonder the professionals — the politicians, the do-gooder organisations with paid officials, the charities relieving one of one's money and bad conscience — flourish ... and nothing changes.

The rich go on being rich (the extra-greedy ones like Maxwell can end up overboard) and the poor, even by relative standards, it is officially agreed get poorer ... in spite of the do-gooders who can only afford donations to the 'good causes'.

The first issue of *Freedom for 1992* will be published on 11th January

occupied also by mankind. And for a long time man has used animals both for work and for food. In the prosperous West we tend to use mechanical horsepower instead of horses. But for food most people include meat in their diet. And we are always rightly being reminded by vegetarians that animals consume much more man-grown protein than they produce as meat.

But even assuming that we went vegetarian, will the animal rights activists concede that we have a right to protect our crops from attack by animals, birds and insects? If so, how other than by direct action which invariably involves keeping down their numbers? We too have rights!

WHOSE SUNDAY?

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workers are among the notoriously underpaid and unorganised wage slaves in all countries. Some obviously will welcome the opportunity to earn a few more pounds which will probably be spent on Christmas presents.

Freedom (2nd November, 'You don't have to work on Sunday') reported on the case of a man who was dismissed by his employers for refusing to work on Sundays on religious grounds, though he was prepared to put in extra hours during the rest of the week (he was already working a twelve-hour day!) to make up for the Sunday. The Industrial Tribunal found in his favour.

So long as the normal working week, the school attendance week and holidays are more or less fixed for everybody, we live in an inflexible world determined for us by others who you can be sure are not thus constrained. There is no reason why shops should not be open seven days a week, except for one consideration: the small corner shopkeeper (such as was the case with Mrs Thatcher's dad in Grantham) who cannot afford to employ an assistant is unable to compete, without reducing himself to virtual slavery, with the supermarket which can easily attract as many part-time workers as they require (including teenagers still at school) for weekend work.

Surely a sane society geared to production for our needs and not for profit could provide a 24-hour service seven days a week without anybody having to spend more than twenty hours a week as their contribution to the commonweal. Today we have all the technology we need for the leisure society if only we used it for our real needs and not for the useless gadgetry, the built-in obsolescence, the eye-catching packaging, and the billion-pound advertising industry, all of which are very profitable for a privileged minority only. Every day hundreds of thousands of commuters, some from more than fifty miles away, descend on London by road and by rail and produce *NOTHING*, apart from miles of paper spewing out of machines.

In 1886 workers were demanding the forty-hour week. Here we are more than a century later with a government which

Which Animal Rights?

The animal rights activists are not often out of the news these days. And the other night on television there was a programme with Joan Bakewell on vegetarianism — a somewhat milder branch of animal rights.

In that programme, which attempted to be sufficiently balanced to be almost neutral, there were spokespersons for the meat industry, animal rights and the vegetarians. Joan Bakewell showed less impartiality when the programme ended with her sitting down to a meal of three large slices of beef and one baked potato.

This viewer was unrepresented by what we suspect were all good townies who got their food from a restaurant or a take-away or from the local supermarket. We will explain why in a moment.

The meat man, representing the trade, had nothing but praise for the industry — which is not surprising. Our standards, he said, were the highest in the world and the quality of our meat could not be bettered. Also the conditions in which the animals were reared were always improving. Fortunately for the truth, one saw shots of thousands of battery hens and of sows in farrowing crates trying to feed their young through the gaps, and of hundreds of piglets on slatted trays almost like battery hens. The youthful vegetarian propagandist pooh-poohed the meat eater who maintained that we had incisors because we were natural meat eaters (visions of Henry VIII making his way through a raw lamb's leg) and that it was immoral to kill animals for food. Even fish have feelings and modern factory fishing adds to the cruelty. Another speaker, when asked what about insects, declared that they too could suffer pain. The animal liberation activist who had suffered imprisonment for his involvement in direct action campaigns, he had no doubts. We have rights (have we?), animals have no rights and the animal rights people are there to act on their behalf.

Missing from the programme was somebody

refuses to accept the will of its partners (competitors?) in Europe who are saying that a 48-hour week for wage slaves is a maximum. Apparently British workers love to work all hours of the day and, given the privilege to do so, seven days a week. And they might even be prepared to have no holidays. Workers of Britain, wake up!

who actually produced the food that these people were talking about and eating every day!

How the meat spokesperson could say what he did knowing that millions of chickens have salmonella, thousands of cattle have to be destroyed each year because they have BSE (mad cattle disease), sheep diseases can kill up to 20% in large commercial flocks, not to mention the latest disease affecting pigs — blue ears. This can only be explained by the unnatural conditions in which they are reared. But in a country where cheap food and maximum profits rule it doesn't pay to rear animals in a humane environment. Nor is it profitable to transport and slaughter these animals in a humane way — even according to the law. For instance, the RSPCA monitored for television the journey of a lorry-load of sheep packed on three levels from this country to the South of France. Though the lorry driver stopped to refresh himself and to sleep, at no time in the 32-hour journey were the animals watered, let alone fed. Some were dead on arrival. Furthermore, by EC standards most of the abattoirs in this country will either have to spend vast sums in improvements or close down.

Once again mass production, mass slaughter, are bad for the animals and at the same time bad for the consumer — but this is another matter.

The animal liberation man in a programme on vegetarianism could not discuss the vital questions of vivisection — nor will we. But his condemnation of the meat industry as described above was not only shared by the vegetarian spokeswoman but by anybody with a minimum of human feelings. But where this writer parts company with him is that in taking on the rights for animals he forgets that if humans are to survive he must take into account *human* rights.

Big fish eat little fish (and we are not talking about capitalists but about real fish) and if you live on the land you will see the kestrel dive on to its victim, or even a weasel secure its meal from a poor unsuspecting little rabbit! And so it goes on: the 'balance of nature' is that the species that survive are the ones that don't destroy their sources of nourishment. It is clear that one of the problems of man-made 'nature parks' is that at a certain stage culling by man has to take place to prevent starvation.

Now the planet has been for a long time

Anatomy of a Riot

(from our Lancaster correspondent)

Lancaster had a small riot in the Ryelands estate on Monday 4th November. 'Mischief Night' is an ancient Lancastrian tradition where chaos reigns and children pay back their elders by playing practical jokes, but this year things went a little further than anticipated.

Ryelands is considered by many to be Lancaster's problem estate. It is a fairly compact, typical pre-war estate of 480 houses, pleasant in appearance and by no means a concrete jungle. Long-term residents are proud of its reputation — on the footbridge over the railway a painted message reads "welcome to Little Chicago". The papers have now dubbed it "The Toxteth of Lancaster".

Children and youths turned over a car and set fire to it. They burned garden fences and torched a telephone box. When the fire engine turned out it was stoned, and police cars were also attacked.

A few weeks prior to Mischief Night, the roof of the community centre had been smashed in by children. The community centre will now probably have to close as its budget allocation has been used up. Earlier this year the estate was the location of an ugly incident involving a mob of angry residents and a bailiff van. It is believed that another incident where poll tax bailiffs were enticed into a house and severely beaten up prompted the city council to declare the area a bailiff no-go area.

The nights after Mischief Night saw the estate saturated by police. Two Labour councillors wandering through the area were shocked at the heavy level of policing. When they attempted to ask questions they were ignored. Later the saturation police cover was described as 'low key' by one dissembling police inspector. Both police and press attempted to minimise the reports — no mention was made of the second wave of violence on the Wednesday.

Threats were made against the two (heavily boarded up) shops on the estate, and a violent incident involving an Afghanistani shopkeeper and two other residents resulted in the arrest of the shopkeeper and one of the men and the hospitalisation of the other. This only served to heighten the tension on the estate and intensify the threats against the Asian's shop. A round-the-clock guard has been kept on the shop premises by the police. So far racism does not seem to have been an issue on the estate, but with more Asians moving

into the area already perceived to be 'furreners' by the long-term residents the great worry is that fascists might use the estate as a springboard into the Lancaster area by scapegoating those seen to be outsiders for the problems which actually stem from the long-term industrial and economic decline of the area.

The immediate response of the police to the troubles was to saturate the estate. This intensified the sense of frustration felt by people in the estate at this invasion of their area by the forces of law 'n' order. The police are a highly visible manifestation of the state, and here people are fully aware of the nature of the corruption and rottenness of the system. One resident described the continuing anger and resentment as "seething under the surface".

On a more long-term basis, the policy of the authorities towards the increasing level of violence and crime here is essentially that of containment. On a day-to-day basis, police are somewhat reluctant to enter the estate even in daylight. Basic council work on houses and streets has been left, though a few years ago house exteriors were painted which brightened the place up a lot. Paint does not solve problems, however. Litter fills the gutters, covers on all the water stop valves have been broken, gangs of small children play in the streets.

This policy of containment suits the residents who, as you might have inferred, are very insular in their thinking and distrustful of outsiders. Once you are accepted though, people here are very friendly. Many of the men have been inside, a large proportion of people here are unemployed. A major factor in the mistaken thinking of councillors and social analysts is their refusal to acknowledge the drug problem. For example, most of the incidents either not reported or played down in the press were really acts of revenge against drug dealers and known police informers. The drug dealers who control the estate are part of a wider network of drug dealers throughout the North West, who use locals as front-men for the wider network. Currently there is a war between these and another group from Glasgow who are attempting to take over the market by the time-honoured method of grassing up the opposition. Another point which is never acknowledged is the fact that police and drug

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Waiting for the Bus

I see they are still inventing definitions for the word love, Daisy ... Who is, Bert? ... This time it's David Barker QC. He was defending that woman who killed her ex-husband, who she couldn't keep away from, after years of brutality. Barker told the court: "She killed the man she loved" ... Funny thing to do to someone you love. You never lay a finger on me. Does that mean you don't love me? ... It might be better if they talked about respect rather than love. Trouble is; love's a four-letter word, and that's the way they use it ... See what you mean, Bert. It would seem a bit daft to say 'making respect' or 'falling in respect' ... It's all summed up in the old joke, Daisy ... What's that then? ... This woman said to her husband, "Do you really love me, Bill?", and he replied "Course I love's yer; fucks yer don't I?" ... Keep your voice down, Bert ... well, that's what David Barker QC was thinking, wasn't it? ... Better change the subject. Eighty four sectarian killings already this year in Ulster. The Irish churchmen seem to be condemning it more than ever lately, but it seems to me the churches are a big part of the trouble ... Too right, Daisy. If there's one thing the churches can't do without, it's sinners. If the police catch people doing something bad they bang them up, but as soon as they're behind bars there's always a prison Chaplain falling over himself to forgive them, hoping they will boost the falling congregations when they get out ... Roman Catholic churches even take in sinners so that the police can't bang them up ... I know, but they met their match when the US government wanted Noriega in Panama ... He who pays the piper calls the tune? ... You can say that again, Daisy ... It says in the paper it's common knowledge that consular staff in British missions abroad have close links with MI6 ... You astound me, Daisy, go on ... So

consul officials are all spies? ... Obviously ... Then, what about businessmen? ... We're supposed to believe that all foreign officials and businessmen are spies, and all of ours aren't ... That was a sad letter from the Mayor of Dubrovnik in *The Guardian* pleading for intervention from Bush and Major and company ... I liked the bit at the end where the Mayor asks if they've got to find oil in the city before anyone cares about them ... Children, drunks and desperate men speak their minds ... It's a funny thing; when Yugoslavia was ruled from Belgrade, we tolerated it because there was law and order. Now that the different regions want independence, creating more leaders, more laws and more orders, they call it anarchy — but anarchy is supposed to mean no leaders, not more of them ... That Ian Richter who has just been released said he missed the democracy we enjoy in Britain ... Well, being upper middle class, I expect his share in our wonderful democracy would be very much missed. But isn't he a South African? South African democracy is even better than ours, if you happen to be white ... Do you still think Terry Waite will have a go at the government and the churches, Bert? ... I'll be surprised if he doesn't. He got five years solitary in chains, and Oliver North got whitewashed ... Did you read that letter in *The Guardian* from Alice Mahon and Dawn Primorolo? They said John Major is a two-faced, double-dealing, selfish, cynical man ... Well said, ladies ... What's all this about Eton College getting cheap EC butter? ... The College Bursar says they're entitled to it because they are a non-profit making organisation ... I thought the College owned half of Eton High Street ... That's only a fraction of what they own. Here's the bus. I'll tell you the rest when we get on ...

EFC

Thatcher's Legacy

In the parliamentary debates on the European Monetary Union at the end of November, Mrs Thatcher repeated again her claim that this government has seen off socialism and established an enterprise culture. Meantime we wait, not for enterprise but for 'a consumer-led recovery' to get the economy back on its feet.

We really ought to examine Thatcher's claims. During her reign the onus for making things happen (enterprise) passed wholly to capital. In my time at the London Business

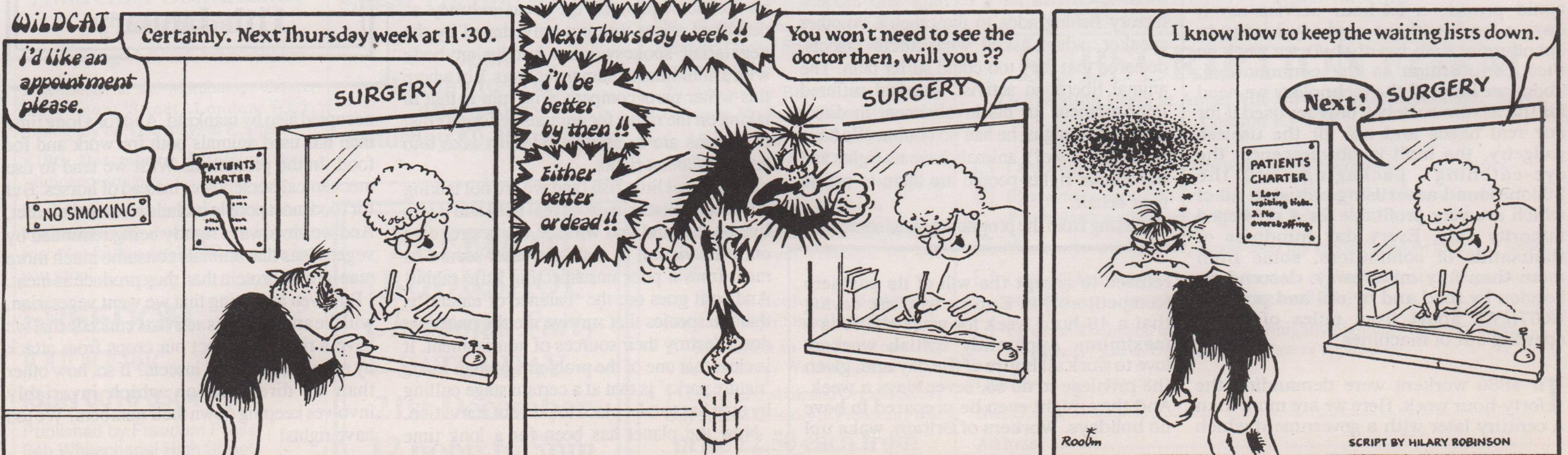
School I lost count of the number of students who expressed a desire to start their own businesses and then gave themselves away by adding 'unfortunately I need half a million (or whatever) to get going'. With money now replacing effort, ingenuity and organisation throughout the formal economy, this attitude is everywhere. Nobody is prepared to engage in 'independent' economic activity without government hand-outs or loans from money lenders. In the past fifteen months thousands of small and not so small businesses have gone

to the wall because their owners were encouraged to expand on the back of unrestricted credit. In this they were cheered on by usurers, the mass media and a government which conveniently forgot that interest rates for people in debt can seem a matter of life and death.

Thatcher has played her part in driving human enterprise out of the economy and into its last refuges: the street and the household. This, incidentally, is where it was to be found in eastern Europe under state communism. With perhaps ten million people engaged in nonsensical activities in the name of work, a sizeable élite getting fat salaries they can't justify, three million condemned to idleness in the name of employment and most employees fearful for their jobs, Thatcher's new morality,

her 'enterprise culture', is a curious amalgam of greed, deception, frenetic activity, idleness and loads of anxiety. Now a little anxiety, as every capitalist and keeper of battery hens knows, is good for consumption, but a lot may be not. If this 'consumer led recovery' doesn't materialise soon under the government of Tumble-Down Dick, she won't have done corporate capitalism much good either. Mrs Thatcher has certainly convinced a lot of people that they should think twice before paying government taxes and she does seem to have seen off state socialism, but she might also have done the restoration of a different kind of socialism a power of good. What about the editors sending the old girl a subscription to *Freedom*?

Denis Pym



News from Nowhere

William Morris and News from Nowhere: a vision for our time

edited by Stephen Coleman and Paddy O'Sullivan

Green Books, £8.95

News from Nowhere, or an epoch of rest, being some chapters of a utopian romance

by William Morris

Routledge, £5.99

William Morris (1834-96) was an aesthete in the tradition of Carlyle and Ruskin, and a pre-Raphaelite with Rossetti: in common with them it was above all the ugliness and materialism of Victorian life to which he was opposed, but unlike them he became a socialist — and not merely a philosophical socialist, but an activist who played an important part in the development of socialist politics in Britain. He founded the Socialist League and financed its paper *The Commonweal* in which, in 1890, he serialised his charming utopian novel *News from Nowhere*.

His influence has come down to this day, through the arts and crafts movement, the garden cities movement, environmentalism, the alternative technology movement, and what Coleman and O'Sullivan call "libertarian communism". In this context, Morris has been claimed by both Marxists and anarchists as part of their tradition: the Marxists most notably in E.P. Thompson's biography, the anarchists in his own lifetime and today — and neither with much justification: arguments over his exact political position continue. But anarchists have seen the ideal society depicted in *News from Nowhere* as close to their own vision of utopia.

The Green Books volume, published last year to mark the centenary of *News from Nowhere*, is a collection of both of essays on Morris by nine writers (who come from both marxist and libertarian political backgrounds) to which they have added a biographical introduction, a synopsis of the plot of *News from Nowhere* and a bibliography. They are to be congratulated on producing a book which is essential reading for all who are interested in William Morris.

Stephen Coleman shows Morris's utopia as part of the continuity of history, emerging out of class struggle; it is to Morris's credit that he showed — in flashback — the insurrection taking place; his utopia had to be fought for. Christopher Hampton traces the literary influences on Morris and his transformation from post-Romantic artist to the "recognition of the economic material conditions that determined the structures of his world". John Crump writes of the strengths and weaknesses of Morris's ideas on revolution; anarchists will be particularly interested in his observations on Morris's attitudes on state socialism and trade unions. And here is a delightful piece of donnishness: Crump writes "the century that has elapsed has provided no example of a revolution that even remotely approximates to the one Morris described", to

which is added in brackets, "except perhaps that in Spain in 1936 — editor". I love that "perhaps"!

Stephen Coleman, who would claim Morris as a Marxist, shows that although Morris rejected the Judeo-Christian view of human nature, he did not share the optimism of the



William Morris
1834-1896

early "utopian socialists"; he saw socialism arising not as the result of education, but out of material circumstances. Ray Worthington gives an account of Morris's attitude to work, in relation to the views of Ruskin and Ford Madox Brown.

Jan Marsh, who has written several books on the sexual relationships of the pre-Raphaelites, here provides a feminist critique of *News from Nowhere*. Morris was conscious of what was called "the woman question", and she makes the point that many of the early socialists were fearful of the effect on their supporters of raising sexual matters publicly. She points to the unsatisfactory depiction of sexual relationships — and the eroticism — in *News from Nowhere* and relates this not only to Morris's place in the socialist movement, but to his own marital situation. Marsh effectively shows the links between the political and literary aspects of *News from Nowhere*.

Colin Ward writes on the town planners Raymond Unwin and W.R. Lethaby as Morris's disciples, and claims the modern self-build pioneer Walter Segal in the Morris tradition. Mark Pearson, an architect, gives an original treatment of the differing developments of Morris and Philip Webb, architect of the Red House, designed for Morris at Bexleyheath, and assesses the thesis of Pevsner in *Pioneers of Modern Design*, who traces Morris's influence to Gropius and beyond. Morris saw architecture as the product of a given society, in contrast to Le Corbusier who "suggests that architecture might itself condition and in some way

determine that society". Pearson calls for a rejection of an environment "built to generate profit".

Adam Buick, writing on Morris's economics, claims him for the Marxist tradition. Morris depicted a society free of money and government (or, in Buick phrase, "coercive government"). To the anarchist, Buick is especially interesting in his definitions of "state socialism" and "communism"; and he also ably answers the objections of those who say, "It's a nice idea but it wouldn't work".

Paddy O'Sullivan's sympathies clearly lie on the libertarian side. In his concluding essay he traces Morris's concern with what people today call 'ecology', from his founding of the 'Anti-Scrape' to his concern with waste and pollution, and his views on the nature of work in 'Useful work versus useless toil' (included in the Freedom Press volume *Why Work?*). O'Sullivan divides modern environmentalists into the 'technocentric' and 'ecocentric', then further divides the 'ecocentrics' into 'gaianists' and 'communalists', and places Morris as father to the communalists.

The high standard of scholarship and the variety of approach make this an outstanding book.

Marie Louise Berneri remarks in *Journey Through Utopia* (Freedom Press, £4.50) that "a few extracts from *News from Nowhere* can only give a poor idea of this work, for it should be appreciated like a painting which must be viewed as a whole". It is currently available in the Routledge edition.

Charles Crute

Creativity and Resourcefulness

Why William Morris Matters Today: human creativity and the future world environment

by Paul Thompson

William Morris Society, 29 pages, £4.00 (not available from bookshop)

Paul Thompson is a historian who wrote the best general book about Morris, *The Work of William Morris*, a continually reprinted Oxford paperback (it should not be confused with the biography by his namesake, E.P. Thompson). So he was an obvious choice by the William Morris Society to give its Kelmscott Lecture last year. It is now printed as a handsome and fully-referenced pamphlet.

It's the kind of publication that an earlier generation would have called 'a little gem', as it is so full of unexpected insights and connections. As you might expect, Thompson traces the links between Morris's vision and today's worries about environmental and ecological issues, about the concept of world citizenship and the transformation of ordinary life.

But the most striking aspect relates to Thompson's own work. He is a pioneer of 'oral history' and in the 1960s conducted life-history interviews with 440 people born between 1870 and 1906. Unexpectedly he found, in his book *The Edwardians*, that there was one community in Britain where child-rearing was more gentle, generous and civilised than in the ordinary British family of those days of any class. This was among the crofter-fishing families of Shetland. Intrigued by this he was able, many years later, to study the fishing industry all around the British coasts in *Living the Fishing*.

In the capitalist trawling industry, now dead, he found long hours, low pay, "terrible violence both at work and in the home" resulting eventually in the "destruction of the workforce and the demise of the industry itself". In the Western Isles he found areas "where religious pessimism combined with a

rigidly hierarchical family system to repress and stifle new ways of working". In the Shetland islands, as had been hinted by his interviews with an earlier generation, he found that "the culture deliberately encouraged thinking and adaptability and innovation among ordinary people". It is surely useful, from an anarchist point of view, to stress Thompson's conclusions:

"In the Shetlands in particular ... there is a very special way of bringing up children, which instead of emphasising control and physical discipline, encourages reasoning and discussion. Children are brought up from a very early age to be part of adult society. If you go to a Shetland concert, there will be little children wandering around; nobody minds, and the children behave themselves. Shetlanders typically believe in social and moral self-responsibility and expect children to think for themselves from a very early age. They also have a high degree of literacy, and indeed the highest library circulation in Britain. It is my belief that this exceptional family and community culture explains how ordinary working families, who fifty years ago had a standard of living little above an elementary subsistence level, have since the last war shown a striking technical inventiveness and adaptability in taking up new ways of fishing. One of the Shetland fishing islands has, astonishingly, the highest capital investment per household of any community in Britain: yet this is an investment in boats owned by ordinary working families. It is an extraordinary manifestation of the potential of ordinary men and women."

Nor is this all. A current aspect of Thompson's work is an elaborate comparison of working lives in the car industry in Coventry and in Turin. Both places have experienced in the last fifteen years the collapse of the giant factory economy, the very model of modern mass production industry:

"But I found that while the English city in the face of that crisis seemed depressed and hopeless, the Italian city was unexpectedly optimistic, indeed booming with new firms at all social levels from engineering design to metal workshops and squatters' vegetable market allotments. Again I have been struck by apparent links between that inventive adaptability and the ways in which people are brought up in the two cities. In Coventry — perhaps as a result of more than three generations

of factory work in Britain — interviews brought a picture of a very rigid type of socialisation. In many families, children were still expected to be seen and not heard, for example at mealtimes, and indeed some are expected scarcely to talk or discuss at all with their parents. Parents seemed surprisingly unable to transmit either their ideas or hopes or their skills to them, and children were often harshly disciplined. In Turin, by contrast, children were brought up with a much more open expression of affection, and a rare use of physical punishment, while discussion at table was absolutely central to family life. At school admiration for inventiveness, creativity and beauty was inculcated as central to national culture. The case of Turin is not unique to northern Italy: indeed a similar economic development is found even more strikingly in Emilia Romagna, where the remarkable contemporary prosperity of the region is based extensively on co-operatives ... Such a democratic manufacturing economy has no parallel in this country."

Thompson and his colleagues are virtually unique in making these connections between child rearing and creativity and resourcefulness. Their findings ought to be of special significance to anarchist propagandists, quite apart from their importance for critics of the attempts of successive British governments to make the education system fit their antiquated vision of manufacturing industry.

It chances that the two cultures that Thompson cites have seemed to me to be important for anarchists for a very long time. (On Shetland, archaeologists can excavate my article 'Night Fishing', *Freedom*, 29th September 1956. On the Italian small workshop economy see 'A Few Italian Lessons', *The Raven* number 7, 1989.)

With the collapse of faith in other versions of socialism, alternatives to both Western capitalism and Eastern managerialism become increasingly attractive. As Thompson remarks, and the recent history of Eastern Europe shows, "the suffocating impact and environmental insensitivity of the undemocratic centrally planned 'command economy' has never been clearer".

Suppose we were re-inventing anarchism for the twenty-first century. I believe that the evidence that people like him gather from ordinary life provides a key element in the effort to win over other people. There's a lot more in his lecture than this, of course, but you can judge from my quotations how valuable it is.

Colin Ward

**THE RAVEN - 16
ON EDUCATION (2)**
96 pages, £2.50 (post free inland)
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Strip the Experts

by Brian Martin

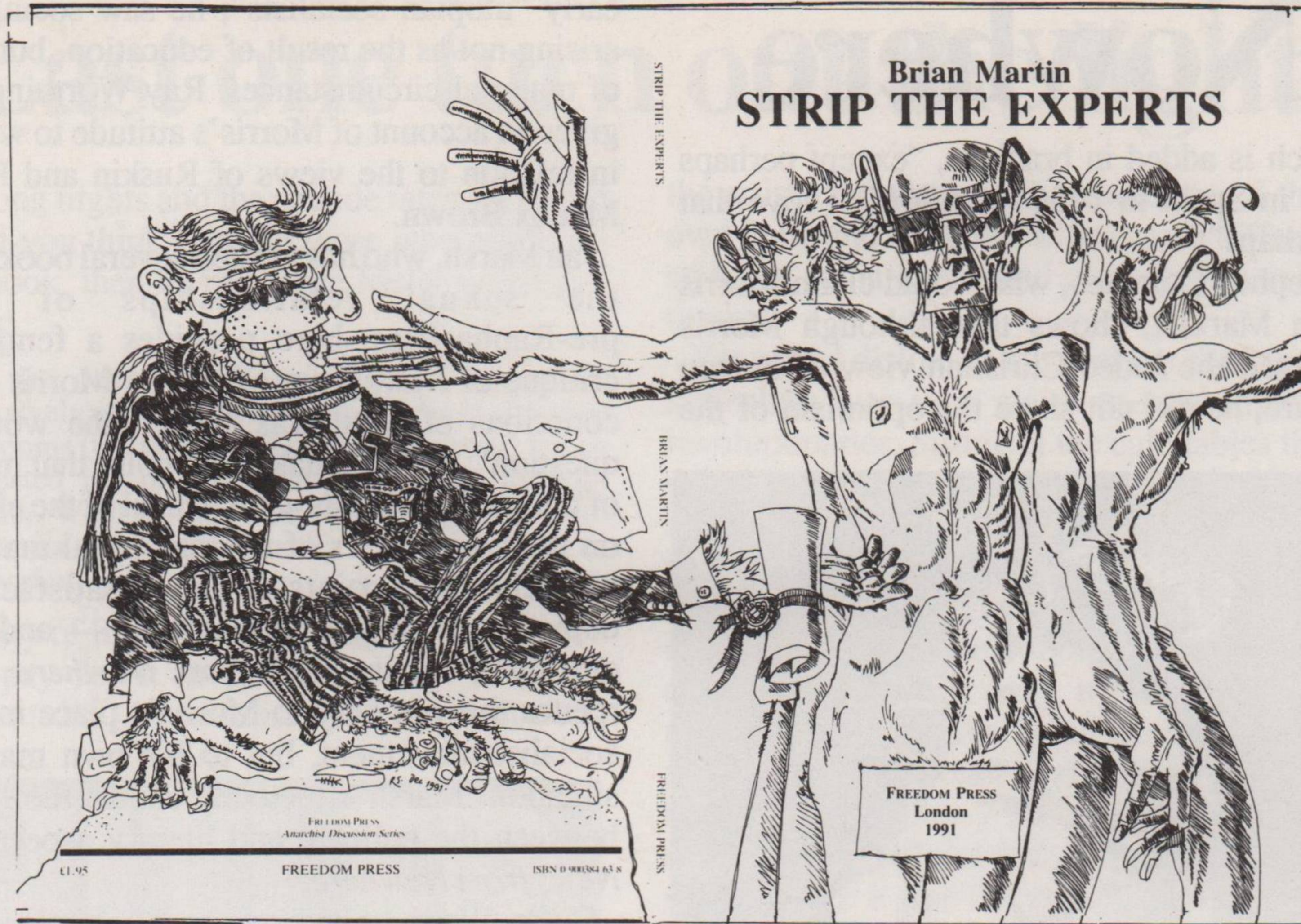
Freedom Press Anarchist Discussion Series,
70 pages, £1.95 (post free inland)

During the past couple of decades 'professional services' have been the fastest growing sector of employment. You can't do much in modern Western societies without coming into contact with (it's usually against) experts. Since anarchists are typically engaged in activities which deny or bring them into opposition with the system, they need to know how to handle its agents.

In this respect, Brian Martin's book has a lot going for it. He writes from his experience as an expert and in handling other experts. His illustrations are drawn from personal experience. In essence he is encouraging us to think and act for ourselves in the face of professional opposition. He encourages the reader to challenge the expert's facts, use counter examples and point to uncertainties. He recommends identifying the expert's assumptions and questioning them. He wants us to put the expert under the magnifying glass in pointing to his inconsistencies, vested interests and the irrelevance of his expertise in the question in hand. He advises us to find out about our expert opposition because the search will often reveal how incompetent and stupid he is and give us more confidence in fighting our own corner. In short, *Strip the Expert* is a useful, well-written pamphlet in practical anarchism.

Even so, Martin may be giving more credit to experts than he would wish, just by writing about them. Being rational folk, we continue to act as though experts were independent and objective and possessed competence. We know this is rubbish. Since practically every expert is either an employee or acting in the interests of those who pay his fees, he is a servant of power.

It is as characteristic of the modern tycoon, as it is of the corporate director, to surround himself with lawyers, creative accountants, advisers in tax evasion, marketeers,



Strip the Experts!

economists and tame academics who not only enable him to play the system but legitimise his fraudulent activities as well. Surrounded by such experts, even those once deemed to be unfit to run public companies like the late Captain Bob, can become worthy knights of capitalism.

People who haven't thought much about the politics of expertise could begin by observing and articulating, with appropriate abuse, the ways in which the 'neutral' BBC television uses experts to advance the cause of the powerful and authenticate topics which uphold the state and its institutions. This is a popular sport in our household during the six o'clock pantomime.

Within corporations, managers complain endlessly about the irrelevance of their advisers' advice and experts, in their turn,

lament the powerlessness and indecision of managers. Nevertheless their collusive public rituals are solidly based on expert relevance and managerial consequence. The point is that everybody knows how narrow, useless and disabling experts are when it comes to the questions and problems that matter in our daily lives. It's just a pity the poor old social workers are the scapegoats for what we know. Most experts have no idea how the 'facts' they bandy about are collected or of the context from which they are derived. Mostly they don't care. They seldom acknowledge the assumptions which underlie their thinking, let alone question them. For example, most experts believe that information clarifies — the more you know the better your decision. This is not just about building mystique, they actually think this way. A colleague of mine

invented a business game for managers and experts in which he aspired to satisfy their every demand for more information. Over the years he accumulated carefully indexed files to answer every conceivable question. He found the players weighed down by information seldom came to a sensible decision. Mostly they were so confused they couldn't reach a decision. In an information society it is often wise to assume information confuses. There's a tip to get you ahead of the expert.

When the system no longer works and even the expert is confused, he's more likely to repeat than change ineffective behaviour and advice. So a recent report from the Royal Agricultural Society of England informed us that organic farming was not sustainable and not environmentally friendly. It recommends farmers continue their quests for greater efficiency in their agri-business ventures. Perhaps, surprisingly, different kinds of advice are most likely to follow expert success.

Mostly experts continue to play the role of wicked magicians. They have done their bit for the many miscarriages of justice now littering the British legal system. Experts still recommend mammoth dams to third world countries that bring great profits to their builders but stuff the inhabitants and their lands. They've even recommended radio-active soil for growing vegetables and the fluoridisation of water as good for health. In my homeland the medical profession still had a kudos second to none. This, one suspects, is because Australia's fearful inhabitants continue to live in unspoken expectation that any time now medical science will deliver the formula for immortality. The profession has no intention of dispelling their blind faith.

So read Brian Martin's book and add to your self-confidence and drink to a never-ending Christmas story in which every anarchist is a Don Quixote tilting at tower blocks full of experts.

Denis Pym

Gondolas of the People

Kind reviewers of Colin Ward's *Freedom to Go* attribute to him the phrase "gondolas of the people" which is the title of his chapter about trams. The book itself correctly attributes this nice description to Richard Hoggart, but predicts that we'll all be using it soon. "British cities are about to re-invent the tram", announced an article in *The Guardian* by Christopher Harvie (8th November 1991), about the imminent reappearance of trams in Manchester after

forty years, and their prospective return to half a dozen other British cities.

The elimination of trams in the early post-war years (for unless you're quite old, you won't remember them in any town except Blackpool) is attributed by Harvie to a variety of factors and, interestingly suggests that "the fatal blow was the takeover of municipal electricity undertakings by the state in 1947, which broke the link between municipal transport and power supply. Councils had no interest in promoting the use of electricity which they no longer produced".

Just because of British memories of noisy clanking monsters, we are shy of using the word tram, preferring to talk of light railways or rapid transport systems, yet any European city, West or East, is familiar with efficient modern tramways. How extraordinary that the British, who go everywhere, have taken so long to bring back the message, except perhaps in the Tyneside Metro.

Ward, who claims that he never goes anywhere unless someone pays him, was obliged to quote other people's accounts of the sheer flexibility of rapid urban transport abroad, like Peter Hall's pleasure that there are places where *the same vehicle* operates as a suburban railway, becomes a tram in city streets and finishes its journey as an underground train.

But even since writing that book, he has had the good luck to test out the claim that in Zurich, the tram system "by sheer efficiency and convenience, makes any other form of transport seem somehow ludicrous", and has actually travelled on a tram in Lausanne,

which in the hilly suburbs became a trolley-bus.

Last week he told *Freedom*, "Both my nearest towns, Ipswich and Colchester, are at this moment operating park-and-ride schemes, where out of town shoppers are urged to park their cars outside the town and have a free or very cheap bus ride into town. This is simply because they know that the annual British madness of Christmas shopping threatens to bring any movement to a halt. Somehow the Thatcherite rules of profit-worthiness cease to apply in the run-up to Christmas. Now there was a time when both these quite small towns had a tramway system. All we need is that huge shift in values that would make a year-round Christmas, with a sophisticated modern rapid transport system, reducing pollution, traffic accidents and all the horrors we associate with the freedom to go."

The reviewer of *Freedom to Go* in the autumn issue of *Transport Innovation* remarked that: "Although he doesn't mention it, light rail could have a role and in rural areas — perhaps using combined road and rail vehicles which can hop on and off tracks. What's specifically anarchist about all that?" Ward agrees with this comment. It's obvious that what we lack is not the technical imagination, he says, but the moral and social will to apply alternatives to our current transport chaos. No-one imagines that France, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland or Italy are any closer to becoming anarchist societies than Britain. They are simply a little nearer a more civilised approach to public transport.

Freedom to Go is about a great many other issues than trams in towns, and provides an information pack for anyone involved in arguments about transport. And it costs £3.50 from Freedom Bookshop.

CHILDREN IN SOCIETY

Children in Society

by Stephen Cullen

Freedom Press, £1.20 (post free inland)

"Raphael is a lovely name — if it's a boy why not call the baby Raphael?" I said to my pregnant daughter.

"Would you want to be named after an old-hat mutant ninja turtle?" she said.

Not quite the namesake I had in mind, but I had to agree that Raphael, Donatello, Michelangelo and Leonardo turtle had had their day — I've seen them on sale racks all over London making a last ditch stand to join our happy family along with ageing 'cabbage patch' dolls, 'my (gone to pasture) little ponies', the designer trainers (now sold in baby sizes and costing £30) and the kiddies range of toy/snack packs from Marks & Spencers and Boots.

The Independent feature 'Honey I junked the kids' tells us of the new got-to-have-it, can't-live-without-it form of one-upkidship cutesy range of foodstuffs creeping into our lives. Soon no packed lunch will have 'street cred' unless it boasts a garish plastic cup shaped like a Disney figure complete with moveable arms containing a toffee fudge shake. The turtle shaped crisps will have been replaced by the shape of the new icon and the children can come home to microwaveable snack packs of bangers or burgers and mash which they can no doubt prepare themselves as children are usually better than adults at operating gadgets.

In his chapter 'Children and Markets' in *Children in Society*, Stephen Cullen is greatly

FREEDOM TO GO: after the motor age

Colin Ward



Anarchy in the USSR: A New Beginning
edited by Philip Ruff
ASP, £3.95

Anarchy in the USSR

The title of this valuable booklet is already out of date, since the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (rather like the Holy Roman Empire two centuries ago) is no longer a union, its disintegrating parts are neither soviet nor socialist and are barely republics, and what is left of it is in the process of changing its name. During the rapid collapse of the largest empire in the world into what is conveniently described as 'anarchy', one of the interesting developments has been the re-appearance of what we describe as 'anarchy' — the revival during the past few years of organised anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism after seventy years of suppression.

Philip Ruff's eighty-page collection

documents this phenomenon with twenty items written by or about 'Soviet' anarchist and anarcho-syndicalists (mainly in Russia and Ukraine) during the past couple of years. Most of the items have appeared in the British anarchist press (those in *Black Flag* and *Direct Action* are credited, those in *Freedom* are not), but it is convenient to have them all in one place. There are reports, manifestos, and interviews relating to the various new anarchist, anarchist-communist and anarcho-syndicalist organisations and to some of their activities and arguments. Ruff also provides a useful ten-page introduction putting the documents into context, summarising the little that is known of

underground anarchist activity in the Soviet Union between 1921 and 1989.

More might have been said about this historical background, and no doubt will be when the archives are opened — if they aren't destroyed first. Ruff mentions the anarchists who disappeared into the prisons and camps during the early Communist purges; Alexander Berkman's *Bulletin* of the political defence organisation and collection of *Letters from Russian Prisons* documented their fates during the 1920s, and Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* added some references to anarchists during the subsequent half-century. Many of the memoirs and reports covering the period between Berkman and Solzhenitsyn also mention anarchists, and the dissident intellectuals and working class activists of the 1960s and 1970s often approached libertarian ideas. For example, Ruff mentions Yuri Galanskov as a samizdat editor; he was also the author of a remarkable poem, *The Human Manifesto* (1961), which contained the following passage of pure anarchy: "Arise! Arise! Arise! O red blood of revolt! Go and break down the rotting prison of the state!" He died in prison in 1972, one of the many martyrs of the long struggle for freedom in Russia.

The history of Russian anarchism before 1921 was heroic but increasingly hopeless. The history of Russian anarchism between 1921 and 1989 was heroic but increasingly hopeful. Let us hope that the history of Russian anarchism since 1989 will lead to less need for heroism and more chance for hope. As Ruff says, the present condition of the ex-USSR is "objectively" a "revolutionary situation", but it could easily turn to "the wrong sort of revolution". All we in the West can do is hold our breath, and offer what little solidarity we can. Meanwhile this booklet, which Ruff describes as "a snapshot of the new Russian anarchist movement", is a useful contribution to understanding the situation.

NW

**The Raven number 13 is on
'Anarchists in Eastern Europe'**
Freedom Press 96 pages £2.50

Dissent

The Chatto Book of Dissent
edited by Michael Rosen and David Widgery
Chatto & Windus, £14.99

This anthology produced by two Marxist intellectuals contains several hundred passages expressing dissent, which they define as something more than mere protest but less than outright revolution. It excludes disputes about methods of government, right-wing dissent and utopian speculation, and concentrates on dissent by ordinary people and with a practical point.

In the circumstances remarkably few anarchists are represented — Proudhon's account of government, the will of Francisco Ferrer (who is described only as 'educator and radical'), Emma Goldman on homosexuality and Alex Comfort's speech at the founding meeting of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. There is no Godwin, Stirner, Bakunin, Kropotkin, or any of the hundreds of other anarchist dissenters. Instead there are Marx and Engels, dozens of liberals and socialists and feminists and nationalists, down to Valerie Solanas' *SCUM Manifesto* against men, and two communiques from the IRA.

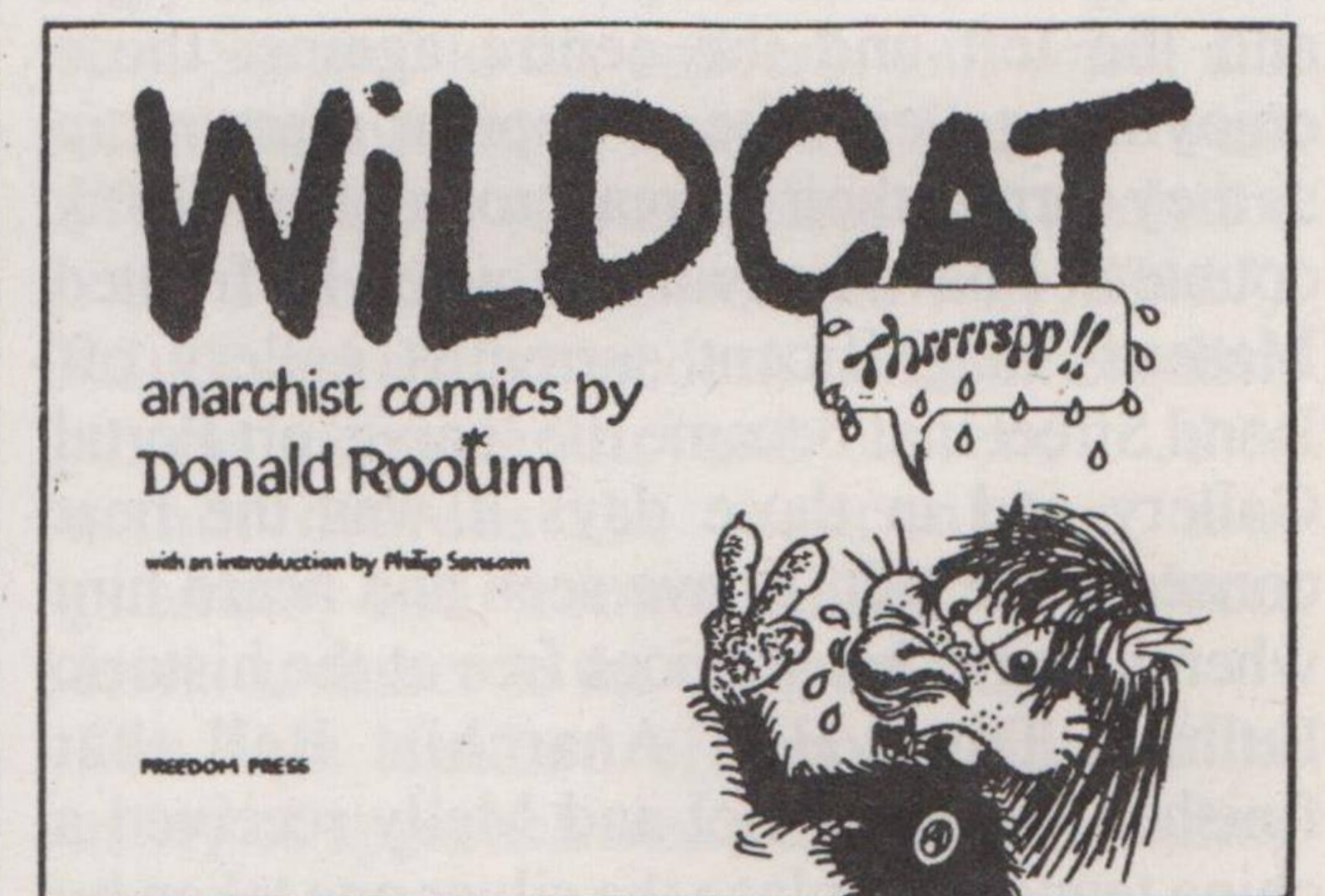
As so often, Marxism and Mammon go hand in hand, and the true voice of freedom is muffled by the echoes of the dialectic and the ring of the cash till.

MH

Propaganda as fun

"The cartoonists I would most like to emulate are the visual humorists whose drawings make you laugh even where there is no specific joke ... If you put an anarchist statement in an amusing cartoon, you not only induce people to read the statement, but also show that anarchism is not a miserable doctrine."

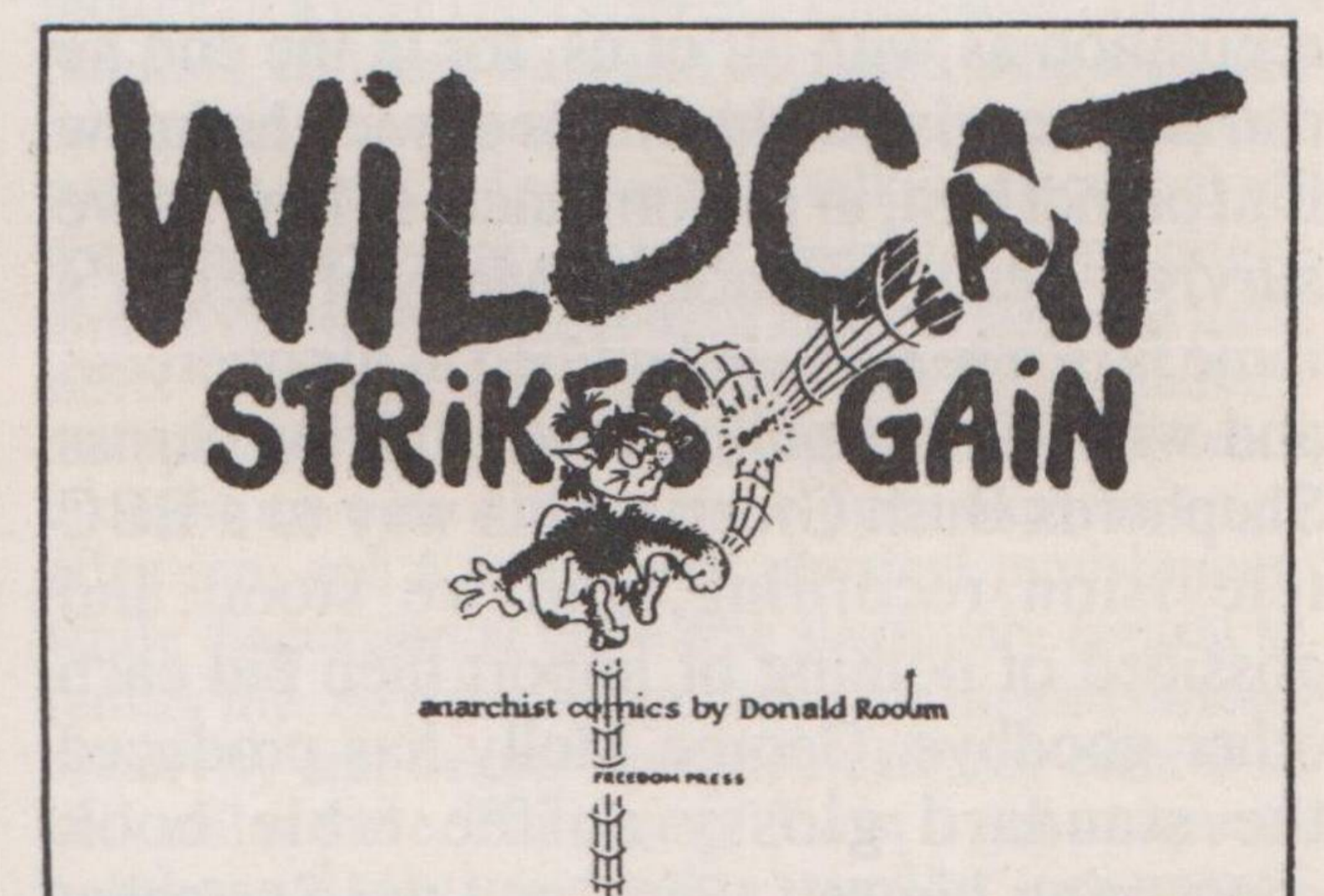
Donald Room in *The Raven* number 12
'On Communication'



"Serious argument in the guise of knockabout farce ... I urge you to buy this book, but do not imagine it will give you a nice, smug glow ... I can think of several stock characters in the anarchist movement who will find this all too satirical work not to their taste."

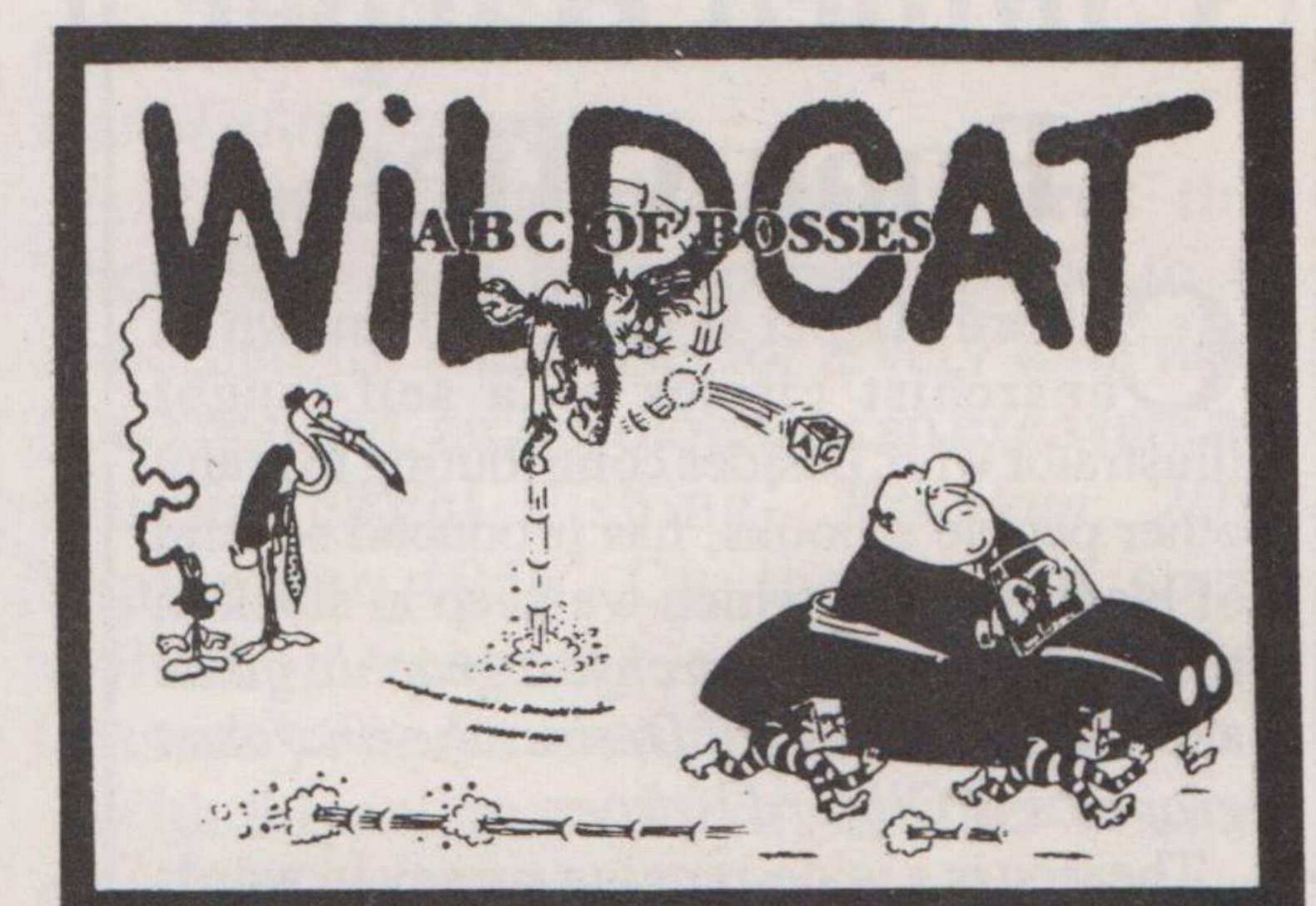
Tony Gibson in *Freedom*

"Anti-anarchist cartoon by Donald Room."
'Lars and Liberals', *Black Flag*
supplement number 3



"I must admit that my heart sank when I discovered that Matt had sent me a collection of anarchist cartoons to review. I thought I'd find them unfunny, obscure and pedantic. In fact ... I found them humorous to the point of laughing out loud on occasions, easily comprehensible to anyone who takes an interest in the way of the world, and with a delightful way of spearing the bubble of ultra-left-in-speak."

Hilary Robinson in *SSI Newsletter*



"Primarily, this book is not a collection of strips that have already been published, but a specially-drawn saga ... All the various contemporary issues and preoccupations are inventively and provocatively aired in Donald's familiar lively graphic style, and many a true word is spoken in his jests ... I enjoyed this book; it's original, different and funny."

Alex Noel Watson in *Jester*

Wildcat Anarchist Comics, 48 pages, £1.50
Wildcat Strikes Again, 48 pages, £1.95
Wildcat ABC of Bosses, 48 pages, £1.95
(all post free inland, add 20% when ordering from abroad)

Seasonal Thoughts

FEAR THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGION
Religion is based, I think, primarily and mainly upon fear. It is partly the terror of the unknown, and partly, as I have said, the wish to feel that you have a kind of elder brother who will stand by you in all your troubles and disputes. Fear is the basis of the whole thing — fear of the mysteriousness, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand-in-hand. It is because fear is at the basis of those two things. In this world we can now begin a little to understand things, and a little to master them by help of science, which has forced its way step by step against the Christian religion, against the churches, and against the opposition of all the old precepts. Science can help us to get over this craven fear in which mankind has lived for so many generations. Science can teach us, and I think our own hearts can teach us, no longer to look round for imaginary supports, no longer to invent allies in the sky, but rather to look to our own efforts here below to make this world a fit place to live in, instead of the sort of place that the churches in all these centuries have made it.

WHAT WE MUST DO: We want to stand upon our own feet and look fair and square at the world—its good facts, its bad facts,

its beauties, and its ugliness; see the world as it is, and be not afraid of it. Conquer the world by intelligence, and not merely by being slavishly subdued by the terror that comes from it. The whole conception of God is a conception derived from the ancient Oriental despotisms. It is a conception quite unworthy of free men. When you hear people in church debasing themselves and saying that they are miserable sinners, and all the rest of it, it seems contemptible and not worthy of self-respecting human beings. We ought to stand up and look the world frankly in the face. We ought to make the best we can of the world, and if it is not so good as we wish, after all it will still be better than what these others have made of it in all these ages. A good world needs knowledge, kindness, and courage; it does not need a regretful hankering after the past, or a fettering of the free intelligence by the words uttered long ago by ignorant men. It needs a fearless outlook and a free intelligence. It needs hope for the future, not looking back all the time towards a past that is dead, which we trust will be far surpassed by the future that our intelligence can create.

BERTRAND RUSSELL
from *Why I am not a Christian* (1927)

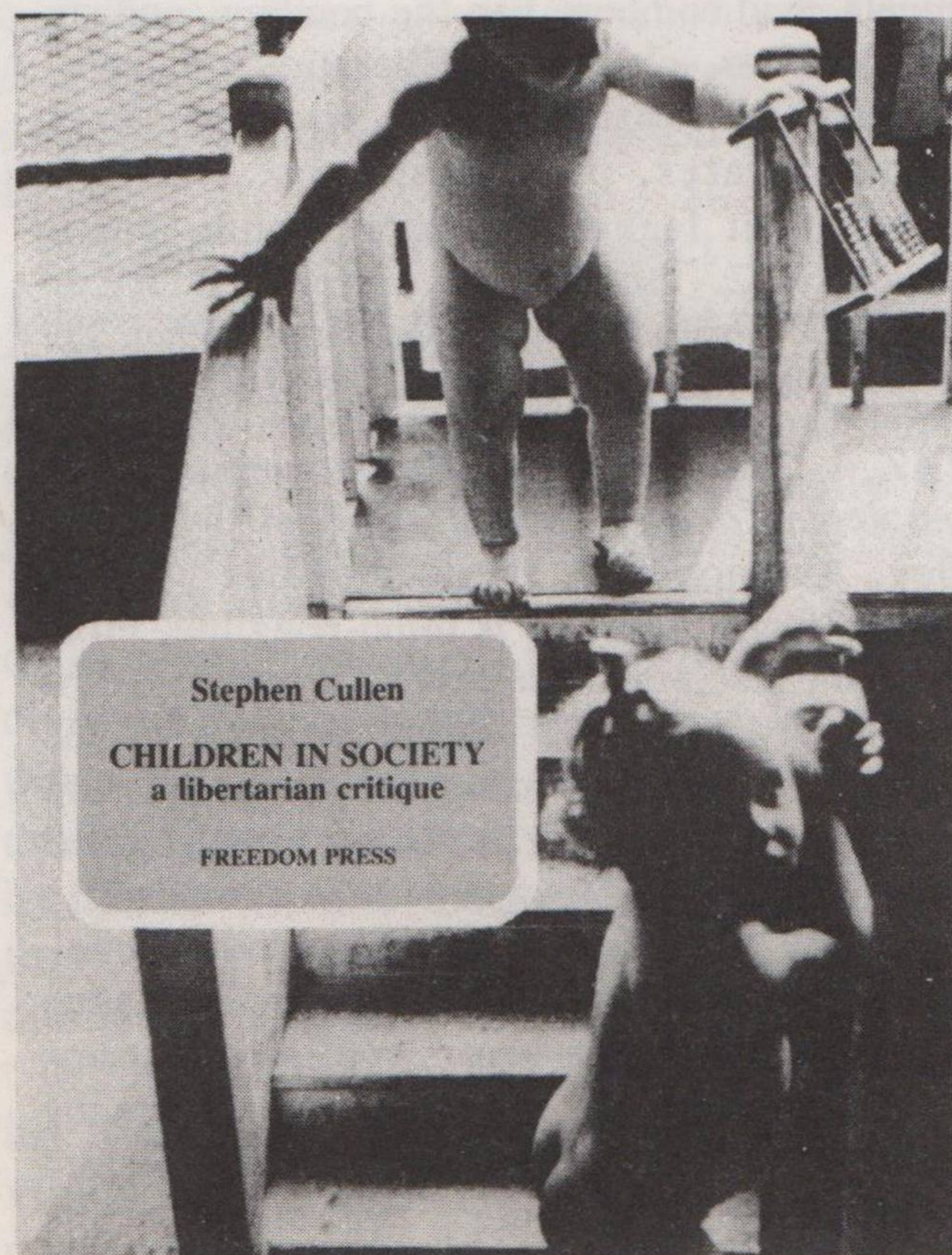
concerned by this manipulation of children (and well-meaning parents) by targeted market forces. He regrets the disappearance of children's imaginative play in favour of an imposed, profit-seeking 'norm' which children begin to see as necessities to happiness. But as Cullen says, the ability to create freely creates one's own world in which one can act out childhood desires, fears, fantasies and hopes is central to the development of individuality based on one's personal needs and desires.

The target group gets younger and younger and the force is hard to resist. The growing desire for designer trainers and the peer group pressure to conform has led to street attacks to rob not pocket money but trainers. It's the market ability to turn wants into needs that is so insidious. Some mothers have claimed to be walking to work to save up bus fares to buy trainers without which their children feel they can't go to school. More fool them, you might say, but if you feel poor and undervalued by society at least buying a pair of trainers is an achievable way of fitting in.

The bankers' philosophy of catching them young and keeping them for life has expanded into the infant years as far as commercial advertising is concerned. This spirit of

conspicuous consumption continues. People are tied to consumerism for life. 'I shop therefore I am!'

Silvie Edwards



Children in Society: a libertarian critique
by Stephen Cullen
Freedom Press, 43 pages, £1.20 (post free)

Paris and the Surrealists

by George Melly
Thames & Hudson, £18.95

Self Portrait

by Patrick Procktor
Weidenfeld, £18.99

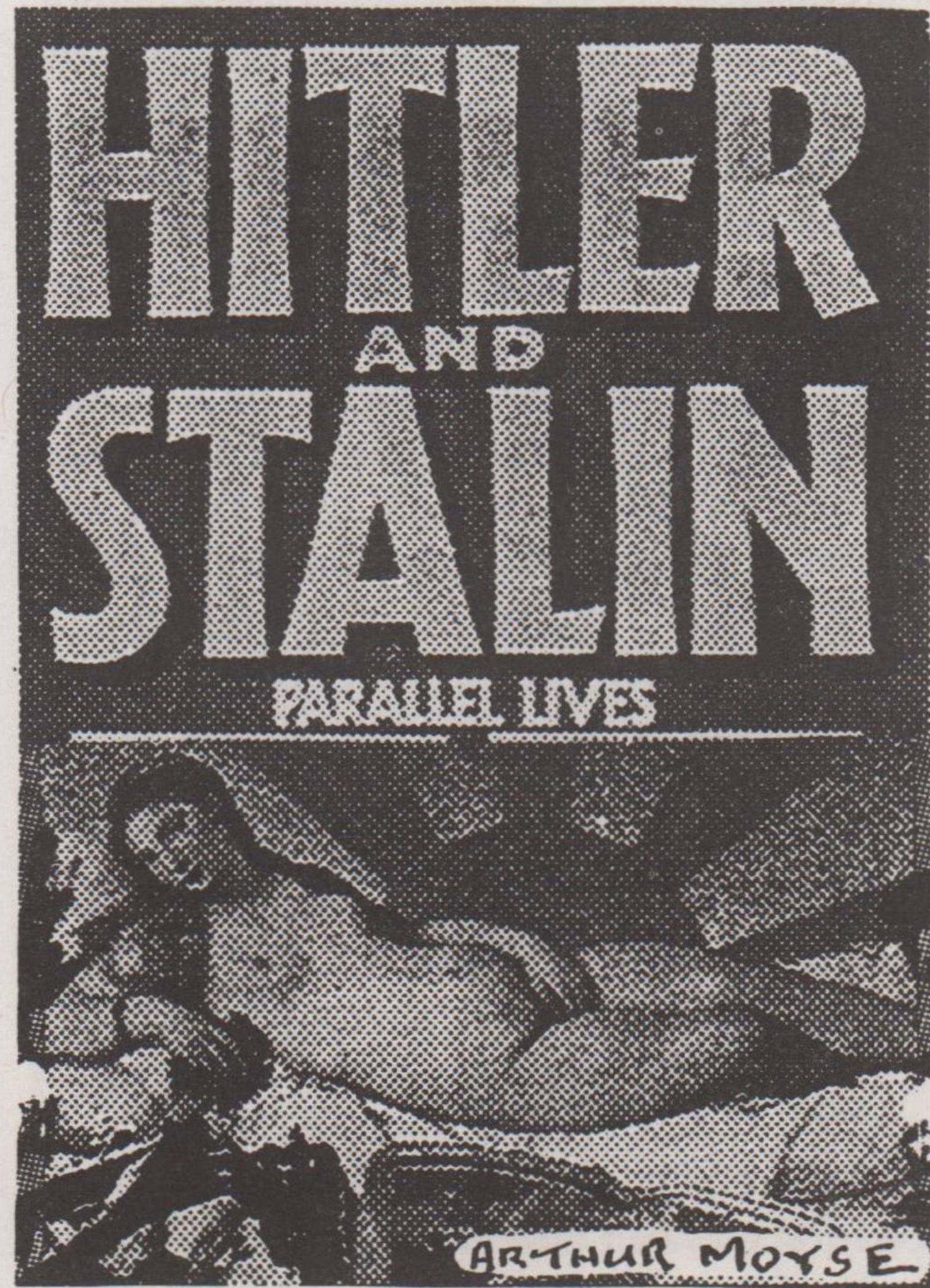
I have always had a great admiration and respect for George Melly, which is pretty grim for anyone unfortunate enough to have to live up to, for in his world of false emotional entertainment and as a commentator on a style of art that succeeds only in amusing and, to a very minor degree, winning the dubious approval of the pseudo-intelligentsia he has braved the wrath of the philistines of the right and the left and the centre against those enjoying, gallerywise, a popular martyrdom as they carried their surreal crosses to the bank counters. I have known him when he fronted Mesens' magnificent surrealist gallery off Bond Street that became the 'naive' art Portal Gallery and in those days it was the neat conservative suit. I have seen and heard him when he gave his services free at the historic Fulham Town Hall Anarchist Ball that finished in a mini riot and Melly received a china teapot to replace the silver one taken by the bailiffs when he had refused to pay that portion of his rates that went towards the cost of arms. I respected him when he gave money to a wordy meeting held in the basement of Better Books and I envy his reputation when an unfortunate on the run in London, fearful of being a victim of a political killing, turned to Melly for support. Our age being what it is, the unfortunate man ended up as carrion for the gunmen but in that glitter jungle of the Queen of Cities who did that sad victim of gun politics turn to? And yet it is an ephemeral reputation as with all of us, for in the end he can only survive in the minds of we who knew him or met him, in performance, as long as we survive. Yet my memory of Melly of the day's fame is of a small man huddled in his overcoat and with his hat pulled low, trudging across Shepherds Bush Green on his way to a BBC television recording, and we stood and gossiped of nothing of import then bid each other goodbye. George Melly has produced the standard glossy coffee table book concerning himself, Paris and the Surrealist Movement, complete with 104 duotone photographs by Michael Woods, and it is, for me, a wasted book for there is so much that Melly could have told. Yet what we get is a *Readers Digest* style of 'the most forgettable character I met' and 104 duotone photographs of a burg of Swedish-shadowed dullness when

Last one turn out the light

the long nights and the suicide rates set in and up. If you think I wrong those who produced the book, then let me quote Melly writing of Paris:

"On the other hand, private life appeared excessively private; one had none of those glimpses into rooms (the pouring of drinks, a quarrel) which interested me on my nocturnal walks through London. What windows there were opening on to the streets were either heavily obscured by net or firmly shuttered."

No city of light, love and laughter unless you can pay for it in private rooms. Like the present-day Americans, the French dealers,



the artists and the writers manufactured their own fame and from the artists came different styles of trivia that found a steady American market.

Yet what I dislike so much about the French surrealists was their claim to fame as café revolutionaries. Sitting at the café tables they raised their fists against the state and joined and expelled each other from the rear-guard of the revolution. They wrote their raging manifestos using white wine for red blood and come the blood on the cobble-stones so many of them made their way to their common market, the American Bond Street galleries and the dollar. It is their life and their problem, but oh, those phoney reputations in art and revolutionary politics and, George, that is the story. I think it was fair and fitting that when this book fell on the art counters it was given to the Mayor Gallery's two bright boys to baptise the still-born infant with the museum-style surrealist exhibition in a gallery wherein so many monthly reputations — hand on my heart, it is genius — have flowered and died.

Yet there is a great sadness in this world, as I said to the Queen Mother when she told me how she had stumbled and hurt her leg, and none more so that the one who comes second, be it reaching the mountain top or the moon, for in the brutality of the universal mind they are the great forgettable. This is the fate and the tragedy of Patrick Procktor, for he is a watercolour painter of slight talent who came onto the art market in the pale blue and baby pink shadows of David Hockney. Procktor had his high-selling days in the swinging '60s,

but then with David swaying and swooning into the hearts of their public, Procktor's insipid watercolours no longer appealed to the fashion. For eleven years I have had my framed Procktor invitation to the Redfern Gallery 'Procktor' exhibition holding up my humble wall, and the sadness of it is, for me, that the beautifully painted invitation (on rice paper?) was, and is, finer than the pallid paintings. This is the book that George Melly did not write, for in Procktor's *Self Portrait* is an artist who flirted with the media pack in the world of pop and painting and knew that the crowd are all off down the pub toasting the winner. Comrades, we sit among dreamers and we sit among fantasists and we make profound statements on the state of the world and how it must be solved and, like Procktor, so many of us cannot solve our own tragic lives. Procktor knew all the 'star' names, and he names them, but younger ones come screaming and pouting onto the stages. Over six foot tall he tried out drag and believed that he had found the real love of his life with the ex-head boy of Gordonstoun, the friend of Hendrix, but it became terribly Oscar Wilde for Gervase was to Procktor what one assumes Lord Alfred Douglas was to poor ol' Oscar. Gervase has long gone, and Procktor has another ten years for his OAP bus pass. I went along to the Redfern Gallery in Cork Street to view his exhibition of 1991 watercolours and stood and talked to the pleasant woman 'at the desk in charge'. Thirty or forty years ago one stood and talked to the pleasant young man at the desk of Mesens' surrealist London gallery and, in all those long years with the crash of empires and so many a lost reputation and so many pretty paintings, what went wrong George?

Arthur Moysé

Food for Thought ... and Action

Recent additions to Freedom Press Bookshop stock.

Peter Pank by Max, Knockabout Comics. A weird and wonderful collection of strip cartoon stories about Peter Pank, with Wendy and Tinkerbell as you've never seen them before, featuring punks, mad hippies, crazy teds and an island of nymphomaniacs. Their adventures lead them deep into the jungle and across the seas, involving them in sex, kidnap, sex, torture and more sex! Not for the prudish. Apparently the royalties on the original *Peter Pan* books all go to the Great Ormond Street Childrens' Hospital, but somehow I don't think they'd want to know about this version. Large format, full colour, 56 pages, £4.95.

Kronstadt 1921 by Paul Avrich, Princeton University Press. At last issued in an affordable paperback edition, this important work should be read by anybody interested in the Russian revolution, especially its anarchist aspects. *The New York Times* described it as "the first reliable, full-scale account of the rise, course and suppression of the Kronstadt insurrection. It is a remarkably good book, at once scholarly and readable, indispensable to the specialist and appropriate for anyone interested in the twin spectres of our age: revolution and repression". Includes nine black and white photographs, 271 pages, £9.95.

*Freedom in Education: a do-it-yourself guide to the liberation of learning** by Libertarian Education. In 1989 Lib Ed brought out a cheap and cheerful pamphlet — typewritten, photocopied and stapled — called *A DIY Guide to the Liberation of Learning*. It basically consisted of a national and international directory of groups and resources that readers might find useful in trying to combat authoritarian approaches to learning, an index to articles appearing in *Lib Ed* magazine, two very short articles on New Games and a libertarian library, and a bibliography. At first sight the new book looks like a revised version of the pamphlet, but in fact it is much more than that. *Freedom in Education* is a beautifully produced, properly

typeset book with a spine, and in addition to the directories and the chapter on New games — both updated and expanded — new articles have been added: 'Maths for a Change', 'Alternative Futures Now!', 'Ten Green Battles', 'Environmental Education' and 'Dead Musicians Society'. Although the piece on the libertarian library has been dropped there are new pieces on 'Liberation for People with Disabilities' and 'Education Otherwise', plus some new photographs. The increased price is easily justified by the greatly improved quality and doubled size. 55 pages, £3.95.

*Semiotext(e) USA** edited by Jim Fleming and Peter Lamborn Wilson, Autonomedia. This extraordinary, much-coveted situationist book is now back in stock in limited numbers. "A huge compendium of works in American psychotopography. Anarchists, unidentified flying leftists, neo-pagans, secessionists, the lunatic fringe of survivalism, cults, foreign agents, mad bombers, ban-the-bombers, nudists, monarchists, children's liberationists, zero-workers, tax resisters, mimeo poets, vampires, xerox pirates, pataphysicians, witches, unrepentant faggots, hardcore youth, poetic terrorists ... the best of current American samizdat." Profusely illustrated, large format, 352 pages (plus four censored ones), £10.50.

*TAZ — the Temporary Autonomous Zone, ontological anarchy, poetic terrorism** by Hakim Bey, Autonomedia. If the previous book is extraordinary, this one is mind-boggling. From the same stable as *Semiotext(e)*, it comprises the previously published 'Communiqués of the Association for Ontological Anarchy' and 'Chaos: the Broadsheets of Ontological Anarchism', now put together in one book with a new work, 'The Temporary Autonomous Zone'. It is not a big book, but is packed with fascinating material which pulls your sympathies first one way and then the other. Just as you're beginning to get annoyed/indignant about the line Hakim Bey is taking, he changes tack and you find yourself soaring blissfully away with his imagination, agreeing with every word. Particularly recommended is 'The Temporary

Autonomous Zone', which argues for a new revolutionary strategy, avoiding confronting the armed might of the state head-on, but the whole book is very powerful. 141 pages, £4.00.

KM

BOOKSHOP NEWS

Freedom Press Distributors have recently had a large shipment of Black Rose Books from Canada, so we are well stocked with most titles again. This includes all Murray Bookchin titles (see booklist) and most of Noam Chomsky's. *Radical Priorities* and *Turning the Tide* are out of print, although the first is now reprinting in early 1992 and a revised edition of the second is being prepared. The new revised edition of *Pirates and Emperors* is now here and contains a new chapter entitled 'International Terrorism: image and reality', and although the price has gone up to £9.95 it is still the best book around on who the real terrorists are. *The Culture of Terrorism* is unavailable at the moment, possibly reprinting, and the two volume set comprising *After the cataclysm* and *The Washington Connection* has sold out again already. Unfortunately Abel Paz's *Durruti: the people armed* is out of print, and no news of any reprint decision.

We keep accurate records of books we have been unable to supply readers with, but if you have been waiting for months and heard nothing please get in touch — your titles may be in stock again.

Finally, don't forget the **BOOKSHOP PARTY** on **Saturday 21st December** from 12 noon to 5pm. bring food/drink if you can afford it! See you there.

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

SPECIAL

Clifford Harper
Book Offer

Clifford Harper is quite well known in anarchist circles as a self-taught illustrator who, besides contributing to many other people's books, has produced several of his own. Two which we keep in stock in the bookshop are *Anarchy: a graphic guide* and *The Education of Desire: the anarchist graphics of Clifford Harper*.

The first is a wide-ranging survey in words and pictures of anarchism and related beliefs and practices over the centuries (Camden Press, 196 pages, £5.95 plus 89p p&p inland or £1.19 overseas).

The second is a large format collection of Harper's best drawings from the 1970s and 1980s, accompanied by text that recounts his life and the development of his art (Anarres, 100 pages, published price £4.95, special Freedom Press price of £1.95 post free inland or 65p overseas).

As our token concession to the time of year, we are offering a **free** copy of *The Education of Desire* to the first fifty people to order a copy of *Anarchy: a graphic guide*, i.e. both books for £5.95 (plus 89p p&p inland, £1.85 overseas).

NORTHERN IRELAND: two views

1. From Dublin

Dear Comrades, Peter Cadogan (Freedom, 16th November) asks if readers of Freedom will join him in a lobby with New Consensus, the Peace Train, Families Against Intimidation and Terrorism, and STOP. We certainly won't.

These organisations spend their time talking about 'peace'. And why not? Most decent people are sick of the violence. We know too many people who have been jailed. Too many of us have had friends injured and killed. Too many people in the six counties are afraid to answer their front door at night in case the caller may be a sectarian murderer.

Peter's fellow 'lobbyists' spend practically all their time attacking the IRA. We hear a lot less from them about loyalist terrorism, and next to nothing about the state forces. They have picketed Sinn Féin conferences, written volumes of letters of condemnation and their supporters on the Dublin City Council have recently voted to refuse to hire the Mansion House to Sinn Féin for meetings.

And we are not surprised. Peter's friends count politicians of the Official Unionists, Alliance, Fine Gael and the ex-Stalinist Workers Party among their number. In the House of Commons in October an answer to a parliamentary question revealed that the Peace Train grouping and FAIT both received money from the British government.

To claim that the violence of the IRA is the main problem in the six counties is the result of either a refusal to look at reality or of downright dishonesty.

to their traditional defenders, the nationalists of the IRA. There are major criticisms to be made of republicanism and the IRA. As anarchists we are opposed to both their goals and their methods. But we refuse to blame them for a problem that is not of their making.

We appeal to anarchists in Britain to

have nothing to do with these bogus 'peace' groups. We further appeal to comrades to continue struggling for an immediate withdrawal of the British state from Ireland.

Alan MacSimóin International Secretary Workers Solidarity Movement PO Box 1528 Dublin

2. From Derry

Dear Editors, Peter Cadogan, in his letter published in Freedom (16th November 1991), is perfectly correct to underline the difference between the militarisation of the streets of Belfast and the rest of the United Kingdom.

And it underlines why, in lower case letters at least, 'troops out' is a crucial part of what must happen next. Together with some of the other elements Peter has been raising.

There's a political folk phrase in the north of Ireland that says: "You're either part of the solution or part of the problem". New Consensus, FAIT, the Peace Train and other such groups are certainly part of the solution. But only

part, and a very delicate part at that, when I reflect on the STOP rally in Louth that followed the IRA's brutal killing of a local farmer.

The other part of the solution is the untangling of the post-colonial ambiguities British and Irish states perpetuate. Any thoughts anyone?

Dave Duggan

Romanticism

Dear Editors, I have been reading the various letters on romanticism in your paper with some amusement and some dismay. How can anyone talk of woman's prime purpose in life, or man's. I can see the prime purpose for a saddle, a candle or a spoon.

John Couzin

Correction

In our 30th November issue we published a letter from Denis Pym, which began: "Most of the anarchists I know either take their anarchism for granted as though it were part of them or they don't even know they are anarchists".

The following sentence should have read: "John Griffin, I suspect, is someone who has discovered the virus by some logical process".

News from Angel Alley

With this issue of Freedom we complete the 24 issues for 1991, and several hundred subscriptions are now due for renewal. If a green renewal notice is enclosed with this issue we hope you will be sending us your renewal, and a donation if you can afford it.

The computer has now been programmed to indicate the state of your subscription to The Raven as well, so the label on your envelope with this issue has two lots of numbers. The first number refers to the expiry of your Freedom subscription: for example 5224 is volume 52 number 24, which is this issue.

Unlike the professional charities we are not very efficient 'beggars' for Freedom and The Raven, but it is a fact that both journals are produced at a loss and so we do welcome donations.

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

and, this is the important point, donations just to the Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund brought in no less than £891. Can we catch up this year with that magnificent total?

At the time of writing we acknowledge a cheque for £100 from our reader AAG in Nayland who writes: "After treating yourselves to Christmas a drink", which we have accepted with alacrity.

The Raven is losing £1,000 an issue, but we can assure readers that four issues will be published in 1992. Number 17 will be on 'The Use of Land' and any reader with ideas for an article on the subject, please get in touch with a synopsis of what you have in mind.

DONATIONS 22nd Nov - 5th Dec 1991

Freedom Fortnightly Fighting Fund Sheffield ID £5, Dossenheim RS £2.40, Liverpool RE £4, Nayland AG £27, Penzance JM £5, Wolverhampton JL £1. Total = £44.40 1991 total to date = £896.34

Freedom Press Overheads Fund Sheffield ID £4.50, Edinburgh SC £3.75, Dossenheim RS £6, Romford MJB £6, Kirkby ASW £1.85, Liverpool RE £1.80, Nayland AG £20, Wolverhampton JL £1, Crewe SG £1, Lancaster JS 70p. Total = £46.60 1991 total to date = £774.12

Raven Deficit Fund Dossenheim RS £5, Nayland AG £20. Total = £25.00 1991 total to date = £585.00

Anatomy of a Riot

(continued from page 3)

dealers enjoy a symbiotic relationship of kick-backs and tip-offs where minnows are picked off while the main suppliers are left unmolested.

Drugs have implications for other forms of crime - car thefts and house break-ins, which are on the increase and starting to reach epidemic levels in the run-up to Christmas.

We also need to take into account the higher background level of violence in society. This has effectively raised the threshold of outrage - to generate a similar or greater response, incidents have to be more extreme than previous.

To an extent, the problem is of the council's own making - Ryelands is often referred to as a 'dump' estate. The council has lumped together the people

it construes as problem cases into one place, causing the problems to congregate and compound themselves. We have to consider the wider social context of the years of Thatcher and the whole culture of selfishness which this has spawned. People here have been worst hit, but also the problem is made worse by the fact that the provision of welfare makes people passive.

Violence, crime, drugs and poverty are symptoms. What about the lack of opportunity, the lack of purpose, the lack of hope? Hence the drugs and the often derided Sky television dishes. Television itself functions as a substitute for living, like the drugs, alcohol and cigarettes.

There is a kind of self-fulfilling inevitability here, that once people are branded as failures it is no surprise when their behaviour confirms this. A tutor

from the local technical college described levels of discrimination exercised against students known to live in the Ryelands estate, in terms of access to facilities and even admission to courses. Similar discriminations operate at the DSS and in council rehousing policies.

The poor are the British equivalent of South Africa's black people, and the estates are our townships. Ghetos for the dispossessed, such as Ryelands, are not materially different from any other places - it is just that the forces of social cohesion here are in a more advanced state of decline.

Power tends to Corrupt ...

(from a correspondent)

Reports of corruption in Labour Party circles controlling Derbyshire Council are presently featured in the Derbyshire local press.

October related the tale of David Bookbinder's new job. Bookbinder, the long time Labour leader of the County Council, has been offered a position with the Derbyshire Enterprise Board Ltd. He is to receive a salary of £10,000 per annum for seven days work a month.

Another local piece of news concerning the comrades was features in The Derby Evening Telegraph of 10th October 1991. The Education Department has commissioned a local firm to produce a high-tech teaching aid known as 'Inter-active Video' to help teach Japanese in local schools.

'Peveril' of the Peak

MEETINGS

Anarchist Forum

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

1991-92 SEASON OF MEETINGS

13th December - General discussion
 10th January - 'Radical Islam' (speaker Peter Lumsden)
 17th January - General discussion
 24th January - 'Anarchism: Ancestor Worship or Blueprint' (speaker Peter Neville)

We are still booking speakers or topics for 1992. The dates free are from 31st January to 20th March and 17th April to 10th July 1992. Anyone interested should 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).

Anarchist Communist Federation

Thinking About Anarchism

Discussions at the Marchmont Centre, Marchmont Street, London WC1, fortnightly on Thursdays at 8.30pm.

• 19th December - Effective revolutionary strategy

Five further discussions will continue this series in the new year - watch this space for further details. We hope to see you soon!

FREEDOM fortnightly

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Midlands Anarchist Forum

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 at 8pm

Anarchism & Cities

In The Snug, The Queens Head, Chesterfield Road, Belper, Derbyshire.
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