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editorial

For many years Marxists have been awaiting the inevitable collapse of the capitalist system, maybe their prayers are soon to be answered. The current debt crisis in world banking is assuming alarming proportions. Last year it was Mexico that threatened to destabilise the West's economy with its imminent fall into bankruptcy, averted at the eleventh hour by massive new loans from the IMF. This year Brazil, the world's biggest debtor owing \$ 90 billion, is the gravest threat. In order to pay its arrears to foreign bankers and buy essential imports Brazil needs \$ 11 billion more just to stay afloat, and the IMF are finding it difficult to raise the money. And next year the cycle will start all over again. One idea being mooted is for Brazil to simply stop paying all debts for five years but no one knows for sure what sort of effect this would have on the international financial system. In Brazil itself the politicians are already worried of the possible internal backlash against the austerity measures the IMF have forced upon them. The social upheaval that must ensue in the face of further cutbacks could well engulf the whole sub-continent. In Washington the IMF conference has just started, while in the immediate background the US Congress that provides their pocket money is refusing to pass a bill that will increase American contributions, vital for their survival. It is pleasing to view their obvious panic as they rush around like headless chickens desperately trying to stitch everything back together again.

Brought on by the actions of greedy bankers, spendthrift governments and the inherent contradictions of capitalism the stage is set for a show down.

No longer are they busy papering over the cracks with wads of crisp new fivers, they are now trying to stuff the chasms with reams of IOU's. How long they can carry on going remains to be seen. Capitalism over the past years has shown a disconcerting ability to keep its head just above water in the face of some very stormy seas. The domestic economies of the Western world seem far from imminent danger, but their international dealings and economic colonialism could bring them to the brink. Let's see what the lemmings do next.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Anarchists have, perforce, to be patient beings, at least when looking for the far-reaching changes in society that we want to see.

We can change the facade of a bank or the features of a few policemen, but these can so easily be rebuilt, healed up or recompensed by insurance companies or by the State, using our own money against the temporary effects of our actions that all we are left with is the satisfaction of at least 'having a go.'

Not that this is a totally negligible benefit — even from society's view. How many women are beaten up by frustrated men who, returning from work tired and angry after the humiliation of their working day, can think of no other target but the person they see as holding them back from a freedom they wouldn't recognise if they saw it? Especially if they have tried to ease their self-disgust by having a few drinks on the way home and so their self-control is weakened.

Before we are flooded with letters from indignant women who very rightly refuse to accept excuses, we must say that we much prefer our frustrated comrades to bomb a bank than to beat up their companions. What we do say — and here is where FREEDOM gets its wishy-washy pacifist reputation among some unthinking non-readers — is that neither angry reaction makes the slightest difference to society. Only to individuals.

Kill a cop and the State replaces him with two more and uses your money to compensate his widow — just as the police use your money to pay their super-grasses as well as any compensation or damages for wrongful arrest or injury. And all this takes no account of the money sent in by hundreds of right-thinking solid citizens when their guardians are attacked.

Bomb a bank and that bank's annual profit is reduced by an infinitesimal decimal point. Perhaps security is stepped up a bit to make it that much more difficult next time, but that's about all. Like the State itself, banks and insurance companies and your good old neighbourhood building societies use other people's money (including yours, comrade?) to make their profits.

Anybody who has money in a Post Office National Savings Account; in a bank deposit account; in a building society; in a Premium Bond; in a Unit Trust or a Trade Union Benefit or Pension Scheme — or any other interest or prize-winning scheme we have missed out — is linked into the massive, all-consuming commercial dung-heap called capitalism. Even your enforced Social Security contributions go into the pool (all right, comrade, cess-pit) of money that the State takes from us every week, every day, every minute.

Every pint of beer we drink, every glass of champagne, puts the money into the Exchequer. Every packet of fags, every gallon of

petrol for our motor bike or car. Every penny of the VAT we pay on every shirt or pair of shoes or every phone call or every bite we eat in a cafe or restaurant; every ticket at the cinema or theatre or pop venue or football match or music concert or whatever. Food, books, magazines, some medicines and children's clothing are just about the only things not subject to this iniquitous tax. Why the hell should we pay the government 15 per cent every time we want to buy something? And at the end of it all, we have no control over what the government does with the money, any more than we have control over the money that goes into the various corporations that operate the money system privately.

Employers and entrepreneurs can take their money out of the country to invest it abroad, while mouthing patriotic sentiments at home and being protected by the State's forces that we pay for.

This is the sick aspect of it all: we pay for the very forces which protect those who exploit us — just as in wartime we fight for our bosses and those who have control of all the natural resources of the country we are supposed to be fighting for. It is hardly surprising, is it, that some of us, from time to time, express our anger through violent methods similar to those the State itself finds perfectly legitimate to protect its own interests — 'terrorism', as they call it when it is used by 'their own people' against them.

The extent to which we are robbed blind every day of our lives is probably known to some economist in the Treasury, but how many

of us can sit down and feel that we know how much of what we spend on necessities is milked at some stage of its production and distribution by the government's wide-ranging and all-pervasive tax system? The Value Added Tax — more honestly named in the USA as Sales Tax — is recognised as an over-the-counter bit of piracy and features on most bills — but what about the petrol tax and the motor vehicle licence on the vehicles that have delivered the goods from the factory to wholesaler to retail shop, and the income taxes paid by every worker right along the line from

London meeting

The first of a new series of discussion meetings in Central London was held at the Mary Ward Centre last Friday (30th Sept.) and drew a very satisfactory number of participants.

Our opening speaker was Iris Mills, notorious conspirator in the 'Persons Unknown' trial of 1979, who began the discussion with a shortened version of her contribution to a debate on Feminism at the ill fated Autonomy Centre in Wapping.

Iris's case is that the real struggle in society is the class struggle and while feminism plays an important part in raising women's consciousness, it still remains only a part of the main struggle and can, indeed, be divisive in that it draws women away from the essential struggle for the liberation of all women and men alike.

Some straight talking followed, with 'some' anarchist men coming under criticism both for their behaviour and their sexist language.



primary producer (paying some government somewhere in the world!) to the factory worker — and so on, and on, and on.

We mentioned food, above, as being among the goods not subject to over-the-counter VAT. But, as Alan Albon points out inside, vast sums are paid to subsidise the purchase of farm machinery by large scale farmers, as a result of which the value of their land increases while they can buy more as they pocket more and more public money. So we pay the price of bread by indirect means.

This is the way the Conservatives reward their friends in 'The Shires', the landed gentry who happily get as much as they can out of the public purse, but allow no interference with their own rights as owners to do what they like with the land and the environment in general. Nor are the Tories alone in this, for succeeding governments have kept the price of food down over the counter by paying subsidies out of general taxation.

No doubt there is an argument for this in that it reduced costs for the poor and, after all, it's 'better' for public money to be spent on food subsidies than on armaments. We, however, are not allowed the choice — for like the money itself the choice is taken out of our hands by the government, which makes its own rules and priorities and by its very existence ensures the existence of 'the poor'. And the rich.

According to their temporary priorities and where their votes come from, different governments show more concern for different parts of the population, and all present the 'acceptable face of capitalism' while at the same time playing the real role: the defence of the ruling class — which in modern states, becomes more and more the state itself, controlling more and more every facet of communal life, grudgingly tossing back the crumbs of the welfare state to keep the proles quiet about the warfare state.

It's the biggest protection racket in the world — pretending to protect us, while all the time protecting themselves from us, by deceit, violence and daylight robbery.

PS

Indeed the talking was straight enough for two (unidentified) women to walk out, denouncing everybody in general as 'aggressive'.

Over thirty persons stayed, however, and the discussion ranged from extended families, the nuclear family as an oppressive institution, why women were not more active in political and anarchist groups and, yes, anarchism. Some of those present were there for their first contact with anarchists and we very much hope their interest will be maintained.

Especially pleasing about the turnout was that the only advertisement had been in the back page of FREEDOM, where obviously, it pays to advertise. Good sales of literature followed.

It is intended to maintain Friday evening meetings right up to Christmas, and they will all be announced in good time on FREEDOM's Contacts Page.

Callous and nasty

It has taken Michael V Diboll a year to denounce me for writing 'an intensely reactionary' article in FREEDOM (28th Aug. 1982) in which he claims that I 'suggested' (a nice word for not actually having the quote to prove anything) 'that what was wrong was not capitalism, which forced people to work in life-destroying conditions, but the fact that the capitalist boffins had not yet provided 'economical alternatives to asbestos'.

I wish he had written earlier, when the article (it appeared over my initials) would have been fresher in the minds of our readers. I have the feeling that he has swung into the attack now because something he wrote in the new publication *Commonweal* has been dismissed summarily by FREEDOM's reviewer MH as 'a very bad poem', and Michael has looked around for something to hit back with.

In view of what he now has to say, I have the feeling that he has been handed a copy of FREEDOM with the advice that he has a go at us on the basis of that 'reactionary article', for I cannot believe that he has been seething for a year over this iniquitous article without reaching for his pen.

Let me admit from the start that I did not write anything as clear or as poetic as:

...we are forced to toil and slave and eat shit, in order to live, WE are all being poisoned, maimed, AND THEY COULDN'T CARE A FUCK'

or:
And we're supposed to be grateful for this FUCKING SHIT.

Nor, incidentally, did I anywhere suggest that those who have worked with asbestos should pray that they do not begin to show the symptoms of asbestosis or mesothelioma — as Michael does three times in his piece of writing. This piece was, very understandably, a shout of anger, a howl of pain, a cry of fear

— but it was not a poem. There is more to poetry than writing lines of varying and indeterminate length, while anger and fear are no substitute for magical imagery, for an exciting measure or rhythm of the syllables that burn the words into the brain.

—Michael V Diboll asks 'besides, when has FREEDOM set standards of literary excellence?' Answer: since its very beginning, Michael. Over the years, no doubt, it has not always managed it, but we — and all our ancestors back to Kropotkin — have always held, at least as I have understood it, that you don't talk down to the working class; you write clearly and you don't have to use obscenities to bellow your own working class origins — or hide some other kind of origin.

In exactly the same way, we have always tried to maintain a good standard of production, seeking to show that anarchists, working voluntarily and collectively as equal comrades, can produce work of quality as high as, or even higher than, the capitalist press. Nowadays, alas, illiterate writing, badly printed and scruffily produced, are blanded as working class virtues. This inverted snobbery I see as condescending clothcappery.

Before going off the subject of 'poetry' let me clarify one position that FREEDOM has maintained over the years; one more position over which we have made a few enemies. It is that we have steadfastly refused to print poetry, for the very reason that it is so subjective that one person's poem is another person's poison. Not only that, but if we started to print poetry we thought was good, we would be bombarded with stuff that was, shall I say, not so good. Rejection makes enemies — as this current argument shows — and it seems to us that we have enough troubles already.

Arguments about prose articles can be carried on at logical levels. We all speak prose all the time and

we can understand when it is being used clearly and when it is saying what we want to hear said. Poetry is mysterious and appeals to understanding other than logic. (I can hear, after the reference to 'magic' above, that by this time next year we shall be hearing that Sansom believes in magic...but don't believe it, Michael!)

So, back to my reactionary article in which I forgot to condemn capitalism in so many words. Bear with me, comrades, while I reprint what I did say a year ago:

'It is said there is no alternative to asbestos products. This is not true. What is true is that there may not be one single material which can be used for all the purposes for which asbestos is usable — but there are now many materials which can be used in all its different applications. And these are known (at present!) to be safe.

Asbestos is not safe. It is a killer, difficult to control in enclosed, highly governable inside areas — impossible to control in mining conditions.

Let Turner & Newell — and all other manufacturers of asbestos goods — be shut down. Let our scientists come off nerve gas and neutron bombs and get down to providing economic alternatives, if they are so necessary. Alternatively, let's start blowing asbestos fibres into the boardrooms and directors' dining rooms of the companies that live by the misery of others. Then let's see how smartly they can act!'

Well, perhaps that is asking for action in the here and now, instead bloody revolution, but I'm prepared to stand by that. It's just a pity, I think, that our comrades who took over the City last week didn't quite get as far as that!

As for the TV programme 'Alice — a Fight for Life', yes, Michael, the crack about that being worth your TV licence all on its own was

silly. After all, it only warned workers against going into asbestos factories, didn't it? It only made some local Council authorities begin to get the asbestos out of their Council flats and to properly equip those workers who come into contact with the damned stuff. It has only played a part in getting Building Regulations altered after public pressure and it has only alerted people generally to the fact that blue, brown and white asbestos are equally dangerous — in the long run. Turner & Newell are now turning to something else. In other words, yes, Michael, thoroughly reactionary and reformist effects. And sickeningly sentimental, leaving the silly nation with tears streaming down its collective face.

Since you like presumptions (like my slaving at a TV hanging) then I have to presume that had you seen that programme before you went to work in an asbestos factory, it would not have made the slightest difference? You would simply have dismissed it as a TV fear-spectacle or some other situationist cliché? And clocked on just the same?

Michael, I'm not going to say that I'm sorry you've been exposed to possible danger, for I know you will dismiss that contemptuously as callous and nasty condescension. If you want to do anything about warning other workers, however, — in a purely preventative and reactionary and reformist way, you understand — you could do worse than get in touch with SPAID (the Society for the Prevention of Asbestosis and Industrial Diseases) which is run by a very efficient woman whose husband died from the diseases and who has devoted herself to the fight — both legal and medical — ever since. Her name is Nancy Tait and she lives and works at 38 Drapers Road, Enfield, Middx. EN2 8LU.

Philip Sansom

Can't win them all

Although I am in some doubt as to whether Pete from Caerdydd (Sept. 24) was replying to the same article as I had written, I feel I must assume this and reply in as courteous a manner as I can.

Firstly, Pete, I was writing in support of a *Common Humanity*. Of course I do not 'see women as a threat to our movement', simply because I do not think in terms of such factions. 'What we fight against is an attitude of mind' is what I recall writing — thinking in factional terms is symptomatic of this attitude and I find it offensive to have such statements put into my mouth.

Secondly, the purpose of my article was not to rubbish feminism but to attempt a critique of a problem which manifests in all move-

ments. My mistake was in not detailing a sufficiently long list of examples of what I meant, although I did give others (the anti nuclear movement in part, also some tendencies within anarchism itself). However, a small minority of feminists do seem particularly affected — hardly surprising, in view of what has happened in the past, but by no means commendable either.

Thirdly, had I wished to write specifically on the subject of pornography, I would have done so. However, as my article has been interpreted as a defence of pornography, I must make my position clear in this respect. Basically, I hate and despise it — not least because I value the genuinely erotic very greatly indeed. But I see pornography, and the attitude which feeds on it and

creates a market for it, as a *symptom* rather than a disease in its own right. Rather than rail inately at this great problem, we must ask 'Why does it exist? Why do people feel this way?'. Perhaps Pete and others suppose it had no cause — 'In the beginning there was vileness' — but I would prefer to at least attempt to trace the causes. The Hydra we face has many heads, and machismo is only one of these — it's the heart we have to go for. Trying to cure anything without a clear picture of its origins is like treating 'flu with an aspirin — a few symptoms diminish, but the illness remains', and a sense of proportion can only come from such a realisation of *cause*.

Finally, Pete, do I detect a certain arrogance in your reply? In linking

me with the 'other 99%', are you, a member of an enlightened 1%, asserting your (self-proclaimed) superiority over other men? Such elitism becomes no-one — least of all the chivalrous gentleman you purport to be. Although your quotation of whole chunks of someone else's text to illustrate your point, as if it were some kind of divine revelation, does suggest a certain balance of modesty.

I am chastened to find my article received at least by one, in a wholly different spirit from that in which it was written. It reminds me, not for the first time, that (to paraphrase Barthes), 'It is not the writer that creates the text, but the *reader*'.

Ah well . . . can't win them all.

Norman Jope

Conflict

Conflict found the state. Having put up with people in various conversations on anarchy. Thin on the ground are anarchist ideas upon resolving conflict.

Categorising conflict in two areas.
1) Conflict of ideals or rights such as pro/anti abortion, for/against South African sports tours.
2) Conflict over the distribution of scarce resources between competing rights and obligations such as education, roading or housing.

In any group of people there will be conflicts. The larger the group the more intricate the resolution, breeding politics and the setting up of standardized resolution procedures (laws) and associated offices.

The answering of the question 'resolving conflict in an anarchic society' normally gets a pretty superficial reply but it is the most

common challenge that faces anyone who expresses affinity to anarchism. It's a wonderful place to stand when criticizing contemporary society but chilly when faced with conflict in an anarchist setting. I have yet to see an anarchist treatment of dispute settling which doesn't involve the setting up of some sort of structure which in time would become like any other power structure.

If anarchism is going to strike people as a realisable goal rather than as an ideal, then more effort will need to be directed towards problem resolving in an anarchic society and less time spent on the easy meat of the evil aspects of contemporary society.

Mike Blundell
New Zealand

The shining path to revolution

Re: Ex-anarchist Klaus,
If you really want to fight US and USSR Imperialism you should go to Peru, join up with the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas who face Military advisors from both the US and USSR as well as the local Army and Police chiefs. They are the only remaining Maoists in the world into armed struggle. Otherwise you could join the Trots by starting your own 'critical support' of 'progressive state forces' etc. clique and build up a cadre who can follow the contradictions of your 'line'. You clearly reject anarchist ideas, actions and organisation for package-deal 'left' populism which may be 'progressive' in your eyes and others, eg, the PIRA or INLA in Northern Ireland, the Druze Moslems in Lebanon. These

forces will not advance the libertarian revolution though in the third, second or first world as those '19th century' Russian Anarchists foresaw and lived to experience in some cases.

Anarcho-syndicalists are not so unrealistic as you would have people believe; they do focus on the social and historic conditions of each country while remaining internationalists. Be they in Bolivia, Poland, Japan, Cuba or wherever, the State is the real enemy of working people and no vanguard coup has benefitted the poor, only gained privileges for the 'armed Party' etc.

Pedro
London.

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We reserve the right to cut letters unless otherwise specified by the author.

All signed articles reflect the opinion of the authors, not necessarily those of the editorial collective.

On Thursday 29th Sept. about 1,500 people protested against war in the financial heart of Britain — the City of London. We had come intending to slow up work in the area, establish a car-free zone, communicate to people working there and create a festive atmosphere.

STOP THE CITY

involved in discussions during the lunch break. Stink bombs in posh restaurants helped to keep them empty.

At 1pm the Lady Mayor was elected at the Guildhall and 500 people went to give her and her elite, ermine-clad cronies a proletarian welcome with cries of 'fuck off, fuck off!' As a few hundred others joined in, police used horses to protect the ceremony. Horses were again used as people went to blockade the Stockbrokers entrance to the Stock Exchange. Some people were injured and some cameras were smashed.



By this time over 100 people had been arrested, held up to 20 in a cell (the women were strip searched) — but spirits remained high. 40 people were then arrested for entering a bank to open a bank account, and 15 people who arrived in a 'race convoy' coach were grabbed, beaten up and then charged with 'assault'. A number of animal liberationists occupied a fur-trading company in Skinners Lane, and were arrested after a window was broken. By the end of the day about 210 people had been arrested on various charges.

People relaxed in various places (including a lively percussion session outside the Bank of England) until 3pm when a special court was opened for defendants accompanied by a mass picket of a couple of hundred people.

There was a final effort to block the Stock Exchange, and then people gradually left the area, chased up friends in nick, etc.

Throughout the day music, theatre and symbolic protests had continued (ie, pouring blood on the pavement outside selected places, and also glue and leaves) and also a lot of leafletting (I collected leaflets from 16 different groups).

The day surpassed everyone's expectations. All the back-up organisation including first-aid, children's refuge, legal support and communication went smoothly, (despite a pre-dawn police raid that morning on the newly occupied anarchist centre nearby, used to help with co-ordination). We had succeeded in creating a well organised event without any 'leaders' or central organisation. Also an effective public action against war in a very sensitive area, without any contact or negotiation with police, and where people of many differing views and groups acted in solidarity and with respect. We also made quite an impression on those working in the area, and according to BBC Radio 4's 'Stocks and Shares' programme we disrupted some of the work.

This small step, part of a process of development from actions at military bases this year, should give us all the confidence to gradually involve more people in the movement against war and the state.

D
*Follow-up weekend: **Sat 15th Oct.** (10am - 6pm) Defendants day — court tactics and support activities.
Sunday 16th Oct. (10am - 6pm) General evaluation of 'Stop the City', and the future...

At 99 Rosebury Ave., London EC1

In September 1980 yet another Anarchist Organisation, A Distribution, was forced rather falteringly on the world. In its first three months of existence its income reached the figure of £333.41. In the last three months it has grossed £3,621.55, a ten-fold increase in three years.

A Distribution has become the anarchist distribution service for the trade, a single address for shops to order all their anarchist material. As a co-operative, groups that previously weren't speaking to each other, are now working together. (Mind you they still don't like each other.)

The pooling of resources has meant considerably lower postage costs for individual publishers. Plus sundry minor pluses such as cheaper, easier invoicing, cheaper stationery and a good anarchist presence at the Socialist Book Fair.

Organisation

As befits an Anarchist bureaucracy, we have three major sections: London, The UK, and 'Abroad'. London is divided into three sub-sections: Central/North, South and South West. All viable shops in these areas receive personal fortnightly calls. Central/North, the biggest section, is covered by motorcycle and has achieved a steady growth from an income of £50 a run to about £300 a run.

Outside London the shops are covered with a fortnightly mail-out. Publishers get together to post the material out together, with postage costs averaging out at about £100 a run. Some of the recipients, such as Plymouth A's and the Northern Communications Collective, cover a number of shops, minimising our postage costs and ensuring the shops receive a personal visit. This is a direction in which we'd like to move.

Abroad, we have a section in New York, with its own bank account, and the rest of the world is covered by post. We prefer to ship in large amounts as it works out much cheaper.

Financial side

Financially each section does its own invoicing, but the money is passed to the central system. Costs (usually just postage) are deducted from the revenue and the publishers are paid at regular intervals. The money coming in goes straight back out to the publishers — it's their stock their risk, their profit (or loss).

Records are kept shop by shop and publisher by publisher. The books are always open, but records of sales are not given with payments because of the time it would take to collate them. A Distribution has to run on trust.

Problems

A Distribution has had a rather nomadic existence, three homes in our three years' of existence. But now, thanks to the famous open-handed generosity of Freedom and

Aldgate Press, we are well-established at 84b Whitechapel High Street. Comrades here have gone out of their way to make us feel at home, displaying their concern for the wider movement.

A problem we had at the beginning was the non-Anarchist publications which hassled about money and didn't help the co-operative effort. We've now largely got rid of these, however we're aware that they probably think we ripped them off.

Next we come to our major problem: periodicals. When we first started we intended to concentrate on these. After three years all we can say is *periodicals are unviable*. There is a six months' gap before the money coming in ever covers post out. There is a reluctance on the part of shops to stock new ones, particularly if they're local or duplicated. We've dropped ten papers as total flops, we've also had about six pull out in disgust at money received, including (perhaps the best Anarchist paper) *Outta Control*.

Moving right along we come to a simpler problem; shops going bust. While Anarchist material is selling well the Left and its Leftist shops (our major outlets) are in a serious decline. These shops are going bust in increasing numbers, we've had six so far, but more are due. All we can do is minimise their debts before they default. Non-payment problems have been partially solved with a backing agreement with Housmans and Freedom. However to some extent we feel sympathy with the shops, we have penniless collections of publishers on one side and penniless collectives running the shops on the other.

However our worst area of non-payment is Anarchist groups. If we were just trying to maximise income for publishers we wouldn't supply Anarchist groups — interesting dilemma. Part of the problem is student-based groups not recognising the debts their group built up in the past. Still, we are all on the same side, aren't we?

Our penultimate problem is that

some publishers prefer us to buy their stock (as 'A Distribution'), thereby sacrificing long-term profit for (relative) short-term cash. What happens is that we enter a 'minus' total for that particular publisher (which is covered by cash flow lag — people delaying paying in their cheques). This minor total eventually becomes a plus and the surplus is used for such things as invoices.

Buying stock, means that we look less and less like a co-operative venture and we don't like to do it. It's useful for publishers from abroad who don't know us. Some people like to do it because they can be separated completely from the problems of distribution.

The final problem is the amount of paperwork involved, and its intricacy. At the moment this is done by one person and it works well. However it is working on a basis of trust and it is not ideal because this trust could be challenged. It's difficult to see how to resolve this dilemma, but we wish more people would ask to see the books.

Needs

Finally we come to what A Distribution needs. At the mundane level we need packaging tape, large envelopes, jiffy bags, corrugated packing paper, address labels and cardboard boxes. If you can rip off any of the above, just drop it into Freedom.

More fundamentally, to expand, we need new titles. Reprints of Freedom's Greatest Editorials (1940-60) can only keep us going so far. Dump any books at Freedom, plus maybe fifty copies of an advertising leaflet aimed at the trade and details of who to pay. With a little help, we'll do the rest.

Our final request is for reps to cover specific areas. It's a lot of work every fortnight and it must be a longstanding commitment. The individual concerned must also not reject specific publications: A Distribution's motto is 'Despise all equally!'

Yours in struggle,
Martin, Carol.

Coming demonstrations

The next major nuclear disarmament demonstration in this country will be the CND march and rally in London on Saturday 22 October, coinciding with demonstrations elsewhere in Western Europe. Demonstrators will be assembling from 11am at the Victoria Embankment (on the north side of the Thames between Waterloo Bridge and Charing Cross) and then marching by various routes to Hyde Park, where the speakers will include political and religious leaders.

There will be a substantial anarchist presence, both to swell the numbers and to make our views known. The London Anarchist Federation contingent will meet at the Temple underground station from 10am, and all comrades are welcome.

There will be a special issue of FREEDOM, dated that day but available from the previous Thursday evening. We can sell hundreds if not thousands of extra copies if enough people will help us sell them. Please collect copies either from the Freedom Bookshop on Thursday evening or on Friday, or else from the LAF contingent at Temple underground station before 11am on Saturday. If you

want a large number of copies, please tell us as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, a new initiative in the movement has been taken by a small group based in London, calling itself Peace Anonymous, and committed to non-violent direct action demonstrations. Its first project is a die-in at the Cenotaph in Whitehall immediately after the official two-minute silence on Remembrance Sunday, 13 Nov. The plan is to wait until the second gun is fired at 11:02am and then to fall to the ground in groups and lie still and silent for two minutes. It has been agreed to have no slogans, no banners and no posters, and to use no form of identification except to wear something white. It is hoped that there will be similar demonstrations immediately following the two-minute silence ceremonies elsewhere in the country. There will be no attempt to interrupt or disrupt the official ceremonies, and there is of course no clash with demonstrations arranged by London Peace Action and the National Peace Council later on the same day.

The other current project of Peace Anonymous is a large-scale mixed demonstration at Greenham Common later this year, provision-

ally planned for New Year's Eve, to resist the installation of the first Cruise missiles. The problems are that national CND is unwilling to help with such a demonstration, as it did with the blockades at Greenham Common and Burghfield in April and at Upper Heyford in June, and that the Greenham Common women's peace camp is opposed to a demonstration which is not organised by them and is not for women only. It is hoped that friendly discussions will solve these problems, but serious differences seem likely. There is growing feeling that what is needed is a mass invasion and occupation of the base by as many people as possible, but there is also great reluctance to split the movement if this can be avoided. Meanwhile national CND seems to prefer the idea of a mass sit-down demonstration in London, of the kind pioneered by the Committee of 100 in 1961.

No doubt these and many other ideas will be discussed on the big demonstration on 22 October. It is important that anarchists should be involved and should press for the most radical forms of action likely to win mass support.

PD



The life of Richard Carlile

Radicalism and Freethought in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Life of Richard Carlile by Joel H. Wiener (Greenwood Press £24.95).

This expensive American book is the first scholarly biography of the man who was the most important campaigner for freedom of thought expression in Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century and who did more than anyone else to establish a free press in this country.

Richard Carlile was born into a lower-middle-class family in Devon in 1790. He was fairly well educated, and then apprenticed as a tinsmith. After working in several parts of southern England, and getting married, he became involved in radical politics in London in 1816, at a time of great social and political upheaval following the Napoleonic Wars. He abandoned his trade, and soon became a leading publisher, editor, writer, speaker and prisoner for the cause. His great assets were unlimited courage and unlimited energy; his great liabilities were intellectual eccentricity and emotional instability. For ten years he was a central figure in the struggle between the official authorities and the unofficial forces of reaction on one side and the organised opposition and miscellaneous dissidents on the other.

In 1817 he took over a radical publishing business founded by William Sherwin, and immediately got into trouble. He was imprisoned without trial for four months in 1817 for reprinting political parodies of church services (which William Hone had published and withdrawn under pressure), and for a week in 1819 for publishing furious denunciations of those responsible for the Peterloo Massacre (of which he was a principal witness and one of the first reporters). Then in 1819 he was prosecuted both by the Government and by the private Society for the Suppression of Vice for publishing *The Age of Reason* by Thomas Paine and other anti-Christian books.

This was the beginning of Carlile's great fame, but also the end of his real influence. He was determined to provoke the authorities, and when they failed to prosecute him for sedition but decided to prosecute him for blasphemy, he deliberately continued to publish books which had already been found blasphemous. In this way he founded the first freethought publishing business in Britain, but at the same time he lost the support of the wider radical movement, which was afraid of being thought to oppose religion. As a result he was almost isolated

by the time of his trial in October 1819.

He was convicted of blasphemous libel, in spite of — or because of — his vigorous conduct of his own defence, and in November he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment with heavy fines and sureties for good behaviour. He refused to pay a penny, so his premises were raided and his stocks seized, and he spent six years in Dorchester Gaol. But he succeeded not only in continuing to produce subversive literature from prison (which was possible in those days) but also in mobilising his family and a growing circle of friends to continue his work.

For a time his sister and his wife joined him in prison (where a child was conceived and born), and many other people were also imprisoned, including dozens of shopmen working in his London premises and an unknown number of street-sellers all over the country. (Another woman involved was Susannah Wright, a lace-maker from Nottingham who became a bookseller in Norwich.) From this struggle for the freedom to circulate freethought writings emerged the first freethought movement in Britain, appearing from 1821 in many parts of the country as a network of groups often called Zetetic Societies (*zetetic* is the Greek for *seeking*), and foreshadowing the secularist movement organised by G J Holyoake in the 1850s.

While Carlile was in prison, he also developed his own ideas. He moved from deism (the belief in some kind of deity, though not the Christian God) to true atheism, and became the first person in Britain who openly denied the existence of God; previous atheists had published their opinions posthumously or anonymously or pseudonymously, but he did so over his own name (in publications ironically written while he was in prison for blasphemy!). He adopted the philosophical system later described as scientific materialism, writing a remarkable *Address to Men of Science* (1821), and he was interested in phrenology and mesmerism.

He was a puritan in personal matters, opposing tobacco and alcohol and any excess in behaviour, and he called himself a prude in sexual matters. Yet he also became the first person in Britain who openly defended freedom of sexual activity and of publication of sexual material, and who openly defended and described contraceptive techniques in an astonishing essay called 'What is Love?' (1825), which was frequently reprinted as a pamphlet

with that title or else as *Every Woman's Book*. But this caused him to become yet further isolated from the wider movement, which was even more afraid of being thought to support free love.

Most important from our point of view, he became one of the few radicals of his time who rejected the old myths of the English law and constitution and the new myths of parliamentary democracy and utopian communism. This probably isolated him more than anything else.

In 1825 the authorities at last gave up their campaign, and Carlile and his followers were released. He immediately resumed his business in London, but he soon ran into difficulties. He had won the right to publish unorthodox writings by Paine and other writers (including banned poems by Byron and Shelley), and had shown that the way to resist attacks on the freedom of the press was to reprint whatever was prosecuted, but too few people agreed with his views to provide the basis for a viable movement or even for financial security.

At the same time he began to develop his ideas in strange directions. He became associated with an idiosyncratic priest called Robert Taylor who preached a mythical and mystical form of religion which combined an allegorical interpretation of Christianity with what was later called religious humanism. He toured the country, either alone or with Taylor, on 'infidel missions' which brought him notoriety but lost him support. He held regular meetings in London, which were successful for a time, and produced a series of magazines, which were not.

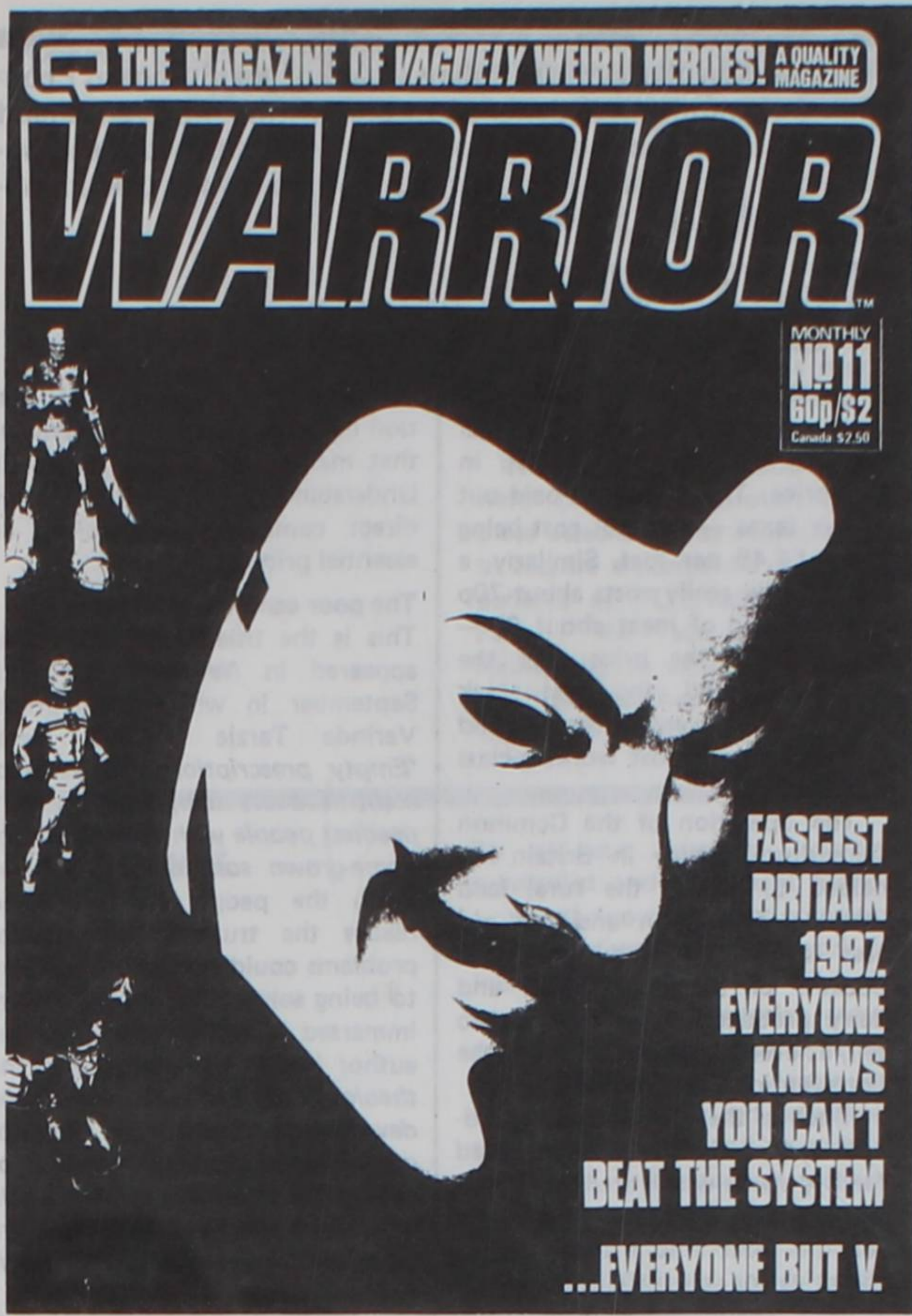
In 1831 he was again prosecuted, this time for an article defending the agricultural workers involved in the huge rural sabotage movement of 1830 known as 'Captain Swing' after its mythical leader. He was convicted of seditious libel in January 1831, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment with heavy fines and sureties again. Again he refused to pay a penny, and he spent two-and-a-half years in gaol in London. While he was in prison, he was approached by Eliza Sharples, a follower from Lancashire, and they began an association which became a lifelong union. In 1832 she became the first woman to give freethought lectures and to edit a freethought magazine — calling herself and the magazine 'Isis'. At the same time Carlile's first wife, with whom he had long been on bad terms, left his house, and when he was released in 1833 he

was joined by Eliza (who had already had their first child — prisons were very different then!).

Carlile lived for another ten years, but his significant career was over. He was imprisoned once more, spending a couple of months in gaol for causing a public nuisance after refusing to pay church rates. (Altogether he spent nearly ten years — a third of his adult life — in prison). He scraped a living from freelance journalism (often in quite orthodox papers), from gifts from rich admirers (one, Julian Hibbert, gave him over a period of fifteen years a total of £7,000, worth ten or twenty times as much today), and from a series of magazines. He called himself a Christian, and even took out a licence to preach; but one of his last public actions was to support Holyoake in his trial for blasphemy in 1842, and his last words in 1843 were: 'I am the same man I have always been; I have gone neither to the right nor to the left; my aim has been to accomplish one great purpose.'

Carlile's failure was to isolate himself from the movement he had joined, by following religious and social unorthodoxy to extremes and by opposing fashionable campaigns for such things as parliamentary reform and trade unions; his success was to be his own man to the end, to defend the principle of free and open discussion, and to extend the practice of free thought and free expression. Unfortunately, he has been badly treated by biographers. Holyoake produced a useful but partial tribute when he died, and one of his daughters produced a full-length but uncritical book in 1899. G D H Cole produced a short pamphlet for the centenary of his death and Guy Aldred produced several versions of an eccentric and unreliable biography between 1905 and 1941. Joel Wiener, an American academic, has used Carlile's papers (which his family took to the United States when they emigrated after his death) and much other primary material, so his book contains more information than ever before; but it is clumsily written, contains strange mistakes (such as the easily available details of *The Age of Reason*), and lacks sympathy for Carlile and both his wives. The most stimulating accounts still appear in the better histories of free thought, birth control, and press freedom, but this book must now become the authoritative source of information about this extraordinary man, who deserves to be remembered as one of our great predecessors in the cause of freedom.

NW



Warrior monthly from Quality Communications, 3 Lewisham Way, London SE14. 60 pence.

It is not often we find an active anarchist appearing regularly in a mass distributed comic. Still less frequently, do we find such as hero. The British comic industry is a traditionalist institution. The bulk of the market is still the weekly, jokey throwaway, mainly produced by large magazine publishers. Some are venerable, like the much loved *Beano*. (is Dennis the menace an 'active anarchist'? The fashion for his fan club badges seems to have died out amongst the London comrades.) Older age groups get chewy romance or war/sport features, which under the updated facade are still 'I Flew with Braddock' or 'Roy of the Rovers'. The cult title is IPC's *2,000 AD*, whose mixture of science fiction and fantasy has been consistently more witty than its American competitors (Hardly a major achievement, if Tharg the Mighty will forgive the impertinence). The comic still occasionally manages to sparkle but is tending to plod after six years. Without its satire Judge Dread is nothing but violence. There is immense nostalgia for *Eagle* with old copies fetching inflated prices and hardbound anthologies available. The IPC empire now owns the title and has attempted to cash in with dire photo-strip garbage.

There is a self absorbed fan scene selling each other smudgy leaflets full of intense letters and amateur sketches. The emphasis is American superhero pulp with its pubescent power fantasies and everybody got up like a fetishists tea party. The genre was exhausted years ago but still struggles along. Typical sales are about 100,000. Ten years ago, titles were axed below twice that. The 'underground' scene is still rooted in fading hippie visions, the *Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers* can still be found everywhere. You might think that after having been freely available for fifteen years, the shock value of druggy self indulgence would have evaporated. However, our friends at Knockabout Comics are currently being prosecuted, under the Obscene Publications Act for, of all things, distributing them. This delays their own anthology title, keeping Clifford Harper away from honest work. Their excellent *Lazarus Lamb* by Ralph Edney has been picked up by Pluto Press, which should ensure wide distribution, but I preferred the first volume. This brings us to the publication in question, *Warrior*. The name is unfortunate, evoking Conanque macho thugs. In traditional British style it is an anthology. Much of it is unmemorable, especially the derivative mystic fantasy. The revived *Marvelman* (ah, nostalgia again) started strongly, even believably, but has since trundled along a rut. There has been the quirky

Bojangles and the lubricious *Zirk*. But mostly there is *V for Vendetta* by Alan Moore and David Lloyd. 1997, after a nuclear crisis, a fascist takeover, 'England Prevails'. The background, physical, political and psychological is well drawn. The literate script helps (Moore also produces some of the better features in *2,000 AD*). The dark, scratchy artwork carries the mood. *V*, the alliteration is everywhere, carries out his campaign of assassination, disguised as a cartoon Guy Fawkes. He starts by blowing up the Houses of Parliament to provide a firework display. His vendetta is against those involved in Resettlement Camps. Their motivations are well brought out. All in all the roots of authoritarianism are explored. The first story ran in the first eleven issues of the magazine. The second has opened, but hasn't really got going yet. It's nice to see a relatively small 'alternative' publishing venture establish itself in the field. The last attempt, *Psst*, was hopelessly pretentious and expensive. In North America several such projects are running, distributing directly through specialist shops rather than risking the uncertainties of the newstands. This tempts them to pander to fannish tastes; after all most of them are run by retarded fans. The exception is *Cerebus the Aardvark*, whose *High Society* has just finished. Now there's politics in comics. DP

Housmans Peace Diary 1984 (Housmans £2.50). *Big Red Disarmament Diary and Directory 1984* (Pluto Press £2.95).

In the old days there used to be diaries and calendars, almanacks and yearbooks for all sorts of political and other ideologies, providing annual reinforcement of collective identity as well as practical information. Very few of these publications have survived, only two being currently available on the far left, and their new editions are now available for comparative assessment.

The *Peace Diary* was compiled for 30 years by Harry Mister, the veteran manager of the pacifist Housmans Bookshop in London. Following his retirement, the new one has been compiled by some members of the collective who now run the shop, with generally unfortunate results. There isn't much change in the basic material — general information about the British and international peace movement, and a detailed directory of relevant organisations and publications (including the Freedom Bookshop and Freedom Press and FREEDOM) — though there is rather less standard diary information than before. But there are various alterations and additions along lines made familiar since 1974 by the left-wing *Big Red Diary* — a larger format with limp covers, a lot of pictures (pretty but pointless), a few little illustrated features on relevant topics (Gandhi and Martin Luther King, war toys and Hiroshima, and so on), and anniversaries of dozens of interesting events.

This last feature is a good idea, but it is the usual mess — also along lines made familiar by the *Big Red Diary* — because it has been hastily researched and carelessly checked. The coverage is uneven, sometimes absurdly so — there are the first Aldermaston demonstration (1 March 1952) but not the much better-known first Aldermaston march (4 April 1958, when the nuclear disarmament symbol first appeared in public), the Direct Action Committee demonstration at Harrington (2 January 1960) but not the earlier and more important one at North Pickenham (6 December 1958, the arrest of the

Wethersfield six (6 December 1961, which should be 8 December) but not the Wethersfield demonstration (9 December 1961), the largest American demonstration against nuclear weapons (12 June 1982) but not the largest British one (6

June 1982), and so on. There are too many glaring omissions — the first significant antimilitarist movement in Britain during the First World War, the campaign against the Suez War, the pioneering civil disobedience demonstrations during

the 1950s, most of the important Committee of 100 demonstrations, the Spies for Peace, the British campaign against the Vietnam War, even the various blockades of nuclear bases during the past couple of years. There are also some silly

mistakes — 'CND begins' is dated 28 February 1958, although its founding meeting was on 15 January and its inaugural meeting was on 17 February; 'Committee of 100 launched' is dated 25 October 1960, although its founding meeting was on 22 October; 'Peace Pledge Union organises first British protest against nuclear weapons' appears on 11 January 1952, although there had been protests since 1943 and demonstrations since 1950, and what actually occurred on that date was the first civil disobedience demonstration. Let us hope that this feature will be better next year.

The theme of the new *Big Red Diary*, by coincidence, is disarmament and the anti-nuclear movement, with the slogan 'Demand the Earth'. There is a detailed directory of left-wing organisations and publications (including the Freedom Bookshop but not the Freedom Press or FREEDOM, and *Anarchy* but not *Black Flag* or *Refrac*). There are no anniversaries this year, which may be just as well, but in the main diary half the space is given to little illustrated features on more than fifty subjects — decorative but rather wasteful, and with the usual quota of errors (CND's formation is dated 16 January 1958 this time).

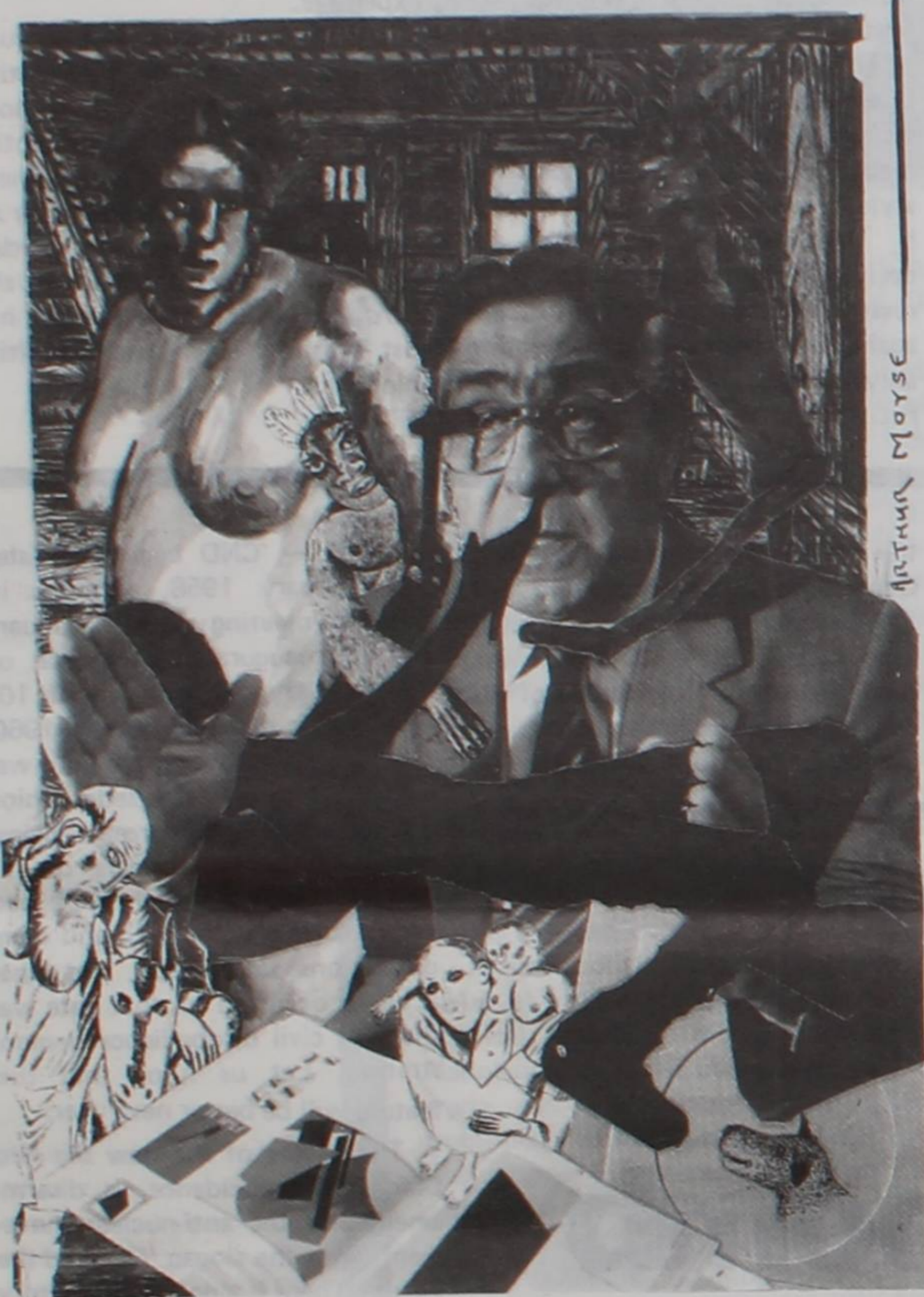
An intriguing contrast between the two diaries is their coverage of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The *Peace Diary* quotes Orwell's statement explaining what he meant by the book (wrongly dated June 1948 rather than 1949); the *Big Red Diary* quotes Orwell's guide to Newspeak and gives some contemporary examples of 'nukespeak': but neither bothers to mention the relevance of Orwell's vision of Britain as Airstrip One of the Oceania Empire. The two diaries are similar in size and appearance, but the *Big Red Diary* is superior design (by Mikki Rain), printing (in three colours) and production, and its price is correspondingly higher.

How nice it would be to have a political diary which could be used as a diary and also relied on; and how nice it would be to have a libertarian diary covering an area wider than just peace but clearer than the broad left.

Diaries against the bomb



Only when I laugh



We in the Blood Royal, even though conceived on the wrong side of the electric blanket, have a strong family unity that transcends national barriers, race, colour, religion and culture, therefore it was nought but a pleasant surprise to have His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester meet me at the cultural soiree at Canada House. I watched him enter surrounded by a corps de ballet of uniformed police and plain dressed Special Branch detectives and, as is my wont, I entered to join the revelry by night, he to make a speech and I to drink the champagne and eat the little curly things on toast. He passed, American football fashion, through the fashionable throng of desperate men and women fighting to get a glass of champers, and, in a neat forward pass, the Duke bowed from the waist towards me and I returned it with a right royal, regal wave of the hand engineered from the limp wrist as practised by Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth and brought to perfection by Ma Thatcher.

There are four exciting exhibitions within London, and for us in the Blood Royal it is a great and noble city within which to rage, to live, to die, to fulfil the role of the slobbering drunk, to dance upon the stones at high noon indifferent to the audience, where London's very evil wears the mocking panoply of its own particular greatness, but

enough of you. One enters each one of these major exhibitions to be bemused by the splendour upon the walls and strewn around one's feet, yet come the pub seat and the solemn company of German Fred, one must question one's first and superficial judgement of the product, of all the gimmickry and the bright colours. The Tate Gallery, as on a number of other occasions, has managed to take its usual number of short, sharp staggering steps to fall flat on its face, for like the drunk diving into the empty swimming pool, it is always done with the best of intent. The Tate Gallery's major, nay single or ultimate, fault was to label its current exhibition NEWART, yet here they offer the same sad old rubbish that has pleased us these last thirty years or more. Let no one scream from within those dark administrative corridors of the Tate that almost all the work on display was cobbled together within the last two or three years, for here is a Magritte, here a Munch, here an Appel, here an Ernst, here a Dine, simply reworked by a new generation of painters yet gutted of the excitement by the first 'only begatters'. Too much from the Tate's own collection giving the feeling that having bought it you'll have to lump it, literally, in the work of the broken crockery expert Schnabel. And one is pleased to see that the PR firm of Doris and Charlie Saatchi, who having given the British people the government

of Doris and Charlie's choice have now moved into Art in a big way and have loaned the NEWART exhibition six huge works of art. Good luck to you both Doris and Charlie, it is your year, for it is understood, by informed sources, that Doris and Charlie have or will pick up the contract for the new Victoria and Albert Museum public relation job and if it comes off then I will be most grateful if you would place my name on your small and select dinner list even though I did not vote for the political party you told me to and I think the NEWART exhibition is sad rubbish in the non-aesthetic meaning of the word.

Michael Compton, in a long, learned and impressive introduction to the exhibition, rejects the American critic Greenberg's Marxist approach that shifts that ol' economic dialectic into the field of art criticism, but to hell with Hegel, Oscar, you should be living at this hour and there are only good or bad works of art, and third, fourth or fifth rate works, uninspired and crudely executed do not become that one wit better by alibing and hiding under a banner screaming Conceptual, Pop, Minimal, Expressionism or just plain old 'I love my country and I'll paint it for a fee', so my advice to the young in heart is to go to the Tate NEWART exhibition and enjoy it and then go back to the ancient mini masters of the last eighty years and realise that too many of them were no more than European dealers con jobs. If anyone dare fault me then visit the Matthew Smith exhibition within that land of no return known as the Barbican. O to be young again and rediscover Smith, Van Gogh, the Fauves and the German Blaue Reiter group, that feast of emotion, for here was a world of raw, bright, swirling colours that only the poor pathetic drug takers pretend to, yet now that emotion has drained away by time's repetition, one sees in Smith just crude and rather banal paintings executed in raw reds, yellows, greens and blues and sagging two dimensional female nudes that Reubens patrons would have not pulled out their Flemish Creditcard to buy. Put it down to *deja vu* but everywhere, in art as in politics, it is the old double take. The Royal Academy offers a magnificent exhibition composed of 20% of George Costakis's collection of Russian avant garde art. Twenty per cent because the Russian State kept the other 80%. It is indeed a magnificent exhibition with wall after wall of bright noon day colours with nary a tone or a shadow in sight. Geometrical abstractions burn on the muted walls frame by frame like splintered glass of the frozen fingers of the dumb seeking to be heard, yea wall after wall, and there is the tragedy of those artists, for they allowed themselves to become enchained within a mindless discipline of single colour geometrical shapes that could claim no past or expect any future.

And it is a traumatic shock to realise that the ancient Town and his card carrying Frau are of that generation who were conditioned, and it was but a small crime, to believe that the great breakthrough in Russian avant garde art was a product of the 1917 revolution, for as date after date shows, the major breakthrough began before 1910 and owes so much to the German, Italian and French avant garde. From 1919 Vladimir Tatlin began his Constructivist frame tower as a model for the Monument to the Third International, but in 1913 Tatlin had already visited Picasso in Paris or in other sad words what was cosmopolitan middle class in a 1914 capitalist society became revolutionary art in 1917, agirop in 1920, decadent in 1925 and western tourist in 1983. Oscar, you were right.

Arthur Moyses

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Economic Community was designed to prevent the impoverishment of Europe's peasant population. In England it has had the opposite effect and Alan Albon suggests that the money paid in subsidies is going into the wrong pockets.

To CAP it all

When 45p is paid for a loaf of bread over the counter, the real financial cost is not reflected in that price. The balance is paid out of our taxes — the real cost being about £1.45 per loaf. Similarly, a pint of milk really costs about 70p and a pound of meat about £3 — much nearer the price over the counter. Indeed, the best steak costs over £4 over the counter and is thus beyond most working-class pockets.

The operation of the Common Agricultural Policy in Britain has helped to reduce the rural land working population and has put vast sums of money into the pockets of the large arable and dairy producers, enabling them to sell, at ever-increasing prices, to the 'intervention warehouses'.

Much of the milk and meat products are produced with imported feeding stuffs which could well stay where they came from — the excuse for this economic madness being the drive for self-sufficiency, which is itself meaningless if we consider the vast amount of oil required to produce commodities which could be produced economically on grass — which our climate grows so well.

Land Tenure

There are four main uses for land: agricultural, commercial, housing and recreational. The private ownership of land and the speculation that has gone with it have created enormous social problems. In the towns, cheap rented accommodation has dried up; in the country, many who want to stay and work there are driven away by rising prices, lack of work and poor transport.

At a recent symposium on rural housing which I attended, we were told that there was no money going into the countryside, at which I made the point that in fact enormous sums were going into the countryside — but into the wrong pockets. This was met with a stony silence, which was not surprising, for agriculture is the most subsidised industry in this country. What for? To produce more and more expensive food that most people cannot afford to buy — by means that will eventually ruin the soil, destroy the ecological balance, fill our water supplies with nitrates, produce waterlogged and extravagantly produced meat — and leave us with complete dependence on scarce resources.

We have an agricultural policy that is dominated by wealthy farmer politicians, now working together with European governments determined to stop their unemployment problems being made worse by an exodus from the country.

The ownership gives to owners and their political servants the right to do what is in their own interests; to abuse a resource that is vital to everybody. But the question of land resources is of concern to the whole world population — those who are starving mainly because of the mismanagement of those resources and those who are suffering from a surfeit of expensively produced food. It affects our crumbling cities, where scarce land resources are used to build banks, ever more empty offices, grand police stations — but totally inadequate housing provision.

The urban population has to be re-educated to understand how important the land question is and how the huge vested interests involved have made all the political parties refrain from saying anything about the subject. The solution of nationalisation and central

government controlled collectivisation has proved to be the medicine that makes the patient just as ill. Understanding of the problems and direct community control is an essential priority.

The poor can't eat theories

This is the title of an article that appeared in *Newsweek* on 19th September in which the author, Varinda Tarzie Vittachi, says: 'Empty prescriptions for development have left many of the world's neediest people with an appetite for home-grown solutions.' Of course when the people of the world realise the truth of this, major problems could be well on the way to being solved. For those who are immersed in economic theories the author has this to say: 'When the theology of economic and social development takes the place of actual development, millions of poor people throughout the world are in trouble. Doctrine predominates over good sense. Priestcraft confounds practice.'

As he goes on to claim later in the article, people are beginning to take matters into their own hands. I suggest this should also happen here. We should not wait until we are forced to by starvation or social breakdown.

In Upper Volta many villages have joined together to conserve water. In the Indian state of Kerala there is a People's Science movement which gets people to understand well tried techniques for dealing with problems.

Whatever might be said of this article from an anarchist point of view it cuts through a lot of verbal rubbish and is not divorced from the problems here since they are derived from the same attitudes and sources.

Disadvantage and affluence

Earlier I mentioned a seminar on rural housing. The same attitude and vested interests that condemn people in the under-developed world to starvation, treat people here as pawns in a game of economic chess in which it is only the pawns that are sacrificed. A certain Housing Association was recently asked by the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mineworkers to build houses for miners brought down from Scotland. They built them and a £150,000 Community Centre was built. Then it was announced that the local coal field would be closed in ten years. The representative from this Housing Association said that people did not want to be given things, they wanted schemes of their own choosing.

The Conservative attitude in Britain is now driving housing groups to work abroad where they are able to provide some infrastructures which enable people to live as well as being housed.

Conclusion

The financial situation in the world is growing less amenable to sensible management because the system is itself totally insensible to human needs. The management of resources controlled by vested interests, does not reflect the needs of the majority of human beings and the financial set-up prevents knowledge and technology from being used in the common good. The rationale for control of social and economic affairs by people generally is beyond argument. As anarchists, we must get people to see the necessity for this, in spite of control of the media by the very forces that govern an insane system.

After the distraining upon of Radio Libértaire on the 28th August, the FAF organised a demonstration on the 3rd September in Paris. Several radios, victims of the police repression just like RL, were called to that demonstration as well as some organisations such as Union Pacifiste de France, Libre Pensee and some groups of Ligue des Droits de l'homme and a support committee to RL was formed by 86 artists.

No less than 5,000 people were present to protest against these attacks in free expression and to require a licence for the 4 components of RL (Radio Libértaire, Paris — the voice of the FAF, Radio Liberte which struggles for the respect of human rights, Radio Esperanto — Esperantist libertarian

workers association, Radio Libérta-ria — CNT — AIT in exile in Paris).

As soon as the demonstration was over, RL announced its broad-casting. Since the 5th Sept., RL broadcast uninterruptedly from 6am to midnight, repeating in this way its resolution to not let itself be muzzled by the socialist and communist state. At this moment, support is increasing: many social, human organisations and various trade unions express their indignation against such practises which remind them of the previous government.

To support RL and the radios hit by the states repression, the proof reader's trade union (CGT) organised a meeting on the 13th Sept which was attended by 500

people in the Bourse du Travail in Paris.

This support will express itself once more at the time of our great feast 'Two days for Radio Libértaire' on the 8th and 9th October when we are expecting thousands of people. This feast will be include many variety shows and forums.

Besides the national support which RL has, the international solidarity has been established with many actions taking place in several countries throughout the world (Sweden, Norway, Canada, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Italy....) Special thanks to all the anarchist companions who have helped us. If Radio Libértaire broadcasts quietly again today (for how long?) it is because of this strong support.
French Anarchist Federation

Denmark

To all our anarchist, anarcho-syndicalist and syndicalist friends!

We all know that good communication is necessary in the work for international solidarity. We also know that most libertarian groups are quite small and lack time and energy to maintain a continuous dialogue with other groups and sections around the world. In order to ameliorate and encourage contacts, the Anarcho-syndicalist Organization, ASO, Danish section of the IWA, has decided to try to publish a quarterly newsletter so as to give you some information about our activities.

To some of you this first news- letter will not be news, but with this first letter we would first of all like to inform those who have written to us, asking who we were and what we were doing. So here we go:

ASO is the Danish section of the IWA. The principles of ASO contain much the same as the principles of the IWA, but are less extensive and with somewhat more emphasis on a local group structure as a necessary complement to the struggle in syndicalist unions.

The ASO is still, after ten years of existence, a small group. At present, we have around 35 members, most of whom live in Copenhagen. Our difficulties in growing bigger are not primarily due to lack of interest for anarchist ideas — even if the left wing seems to be-

come more and more resigned — but probably more to the fact that we have not yet managed to form natural local groups or syndicates. We are working on this, and it seems that at least 3 local groups are beginning to function which will mean better possibilities to integrate new members.

In spite of this one cannot say that the level of activities has been, or is, insufficient. A lot of effort has been put into three different activities, running for several years now.

First, the ASO has organized each year an Anti-authoritarian 1st of May. This year around 2000 participated in the demonstration.

Second, the ASO has organized, also each year, 'A week of Anar- chism', during which we have presented films, debates and expositions on all aspects of libertarian thoughts and actions.

Third, the ASO is running a rather well furnished bookshop. So far we have managed to keep it open every day, thanks to members who are unemployed or students. We have printed a catalogue of most of our books. Our ambition is to have in stock all scandinavian books, but we also keep quite a few English and German books.

Along with these activities, the ASO has participated in and supported political actions of various kinds. Some of us have been work- ing with the squatters' movement,

others with the Polish situation, others again have been active in the opposition to the social legislation of the conservative government.

At present, and in the absence of local groups and syndicates, most of the political work of the ASO is carried out by several subject groups. We have one group working with the problems of housing from a libertarian viewpoint. Another group deals with the problems of the workers, of trade unions and the economic struggle in general. A third group forms a Danish section of the Black Cross.

For internal business, the ASO has a printing group, a bookshop group, an international group and a group trying to keep control of all the money we rarely have. These groups usually meet once every two weeks. For the Copenhagen area, a general assembly takes place every two weeks. Decisions for the entire organization are taken at the annual Congress or by referendum.

Internal communication is cared for in the *Utopia?*, a paper published every 14 days, in between general assemblies. To some of you we have sent the *Utopia?* regularly. This, unfortunately is a somewhat costly affair, apart from the fact that only scandinavian comrades understand Danish. We have therefore decided to replace *Utopia?* by this news- letter, hoping that you still will get to know what we are up to.

LAF

At the last London Anarchist Federation meeting (17th Sept.) it was agreed that a good, strong anarchist presence at the CND march, 22nd October, in London would be best achieved if we all met up beforehand at a single, specific location. Therefore, we are calling on all anarchists to gather,

from 10am onwards, at the LAF banner, which will be behind Temple underground station. We believe it will provide a good opportunity for comrades from various parts of the country to meet up and renew contact, or to make new contacts, with each other. Also, we will then be able to march

as a large, cohesive contingent.

This, amongst other matters, will be discussed at the next LAF meeting which will take place on Saturday 15th October at the Prince Albert pub, Wharfedale Rd., Kings Cross, London N1. Meeting starts at 8:30pm.

In Brief

For the first time, NATO troops are rehearsing mass burials as part of their autumn exercises.

The Israeli army is planning to issue its female soldiers with teargas canisters for defence against molesters.

Senior officials at the Government Communications Headquarters in Cheltenham have agreed to offer themselves as the first candidates for lie detector tests. The rest of the staff have been uncooperative.

Britain is preparing to sell the destroyer, Antrim, to the Chilean government. It is armed with Exocet missiles, Seacat anti-aircraft missiles and a Lynx anti-submarine helicopter.

Another survey. European public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of the development of renewable energy supplies. Fewer than one in four believe that the expansion of nuclear production is desirable or even acceptable.

The Police Federation has acknow- ledged that 'people will never have

confidence in policemen investigat- ing each other.' They are to issue a joint statement with the Law Society favouring the setting up of an independent body. It is believed that they are hoping to trade this for improvements in the treatment of police who are charged with breaking internal regulations. At the moment such people are not allowed professional legal advice (unless they appeal to the Home Office.) Opposition to this change comes from the Association of Chief Police Officers, who believe it would be detrimental to discipline. Senior officers are not subject to the rule.

A couple of matters concerning welfare benefits. Norman Tebbit, the Employment Secretary, thinks that the new hit squad, the Regional Benefit Investigation Team, may have saved over £1 million. There again, he thinks that it may have saved about £500,000. It depends on whether people who have been 'persuaded' to stop claiming benefit stay intimidated for a year, or only for six months.

Meanwhile, Rhodes Boyson, Social Security minister, has had to swallow his pride and ask the Federation of Claimant's Unions for help. This is in an attempt to trace 56,000 people who were wrongly deprived of up to 40% of their benefit, a total of £1.4 million. The request is reported to be the first communication from the ministry to the Federation for four years. It is fortunate for the ministerial budget that the two sets of savings are so closely matched.

The military government in Turkey has vetoed 40% of the candidates in next months general election. Mean- while, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly has said that it will not accept delegates from the new Turkish parliament, as it will be 'undemocratic'.

Correction:

In the introduction to the commu- nique from the Emmanuel Goldstein Group (24th September), it was stated that about £2,000 had been collected for the Polish libertarians; the correct figure is about £900.

NATIONAL

ABERDEEN
Subversive Graffiti Collective, c/o 163 King St, Aberdeen (includes the ex-members of Aberdeen Solidarity). Activities include production of a local free news-sheet.

BASILDON
Contact: Mark, 27 Little Lullaway, Basildon Essex.

BEDFORDSHIRE
Bedfordshire and Isolated Anarchists, write John 81 F Bromham Rd, Bedford MK40 2AH

BELFAST
Just Books, 7 Winetavern St, Belfast

BIRMINGHAM
Birmingham DAM, c/o Peace Centre, 18 Moor St, Ringway

BRISTOL
Box 010, Full Marks Bookshop, 197 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6

BURNLEY
BAG, c/o 2 Quarrybank

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge Anarchists, c/o 186 East Rd, Cambridge
East Anglian Anarchist Federation c/o Grapevine, 186 East Rd

CARDIFF
c/o 108 Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Rd, Cardiff 2
C.O.I., Box 999, 108 Salisbury Rd

CLEVELAND
c/o Liverton Crescent, Thornby. Also produces 'Common Cause' local anarchist paper.
Box A, c/o 120 Victoria Rd, Middlesborough

COVENTRY
Anarchist Group, c/o Students Union, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL

CRAWLEY
Libertarian Group, Ray Cowper, 1 Bluebell Close Crawley, W Sussex

CUMBRIA
2 Forestry Cottages, Millfield, Hutton Roof, Penrith

ESSEX
DAM, Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gdns, Saffron Walden, Essex
Oral Abortions, The Catskills, Maldon Rd, Gay Bowers, Danbury

EXETER
Anarchist Collective, c/o Community Association, Devonshire House Stocker Rd

FALKIRK
Black Bairn, c/o Box 3, 488 Gt Western Rd, Glasgow

FORMBY
Floating Free, 58 Freshfield Rd, Formby, Merseyside L3 7HW

GLASGOW
'Practical Anarchy' (monthly free broadsheet send large sae) c/o Box 3 Calderwood, 18/GPP pamphlets c/o Box V2 At Glasgow Bookshop Collective, 488 Gt Western Rd, G12 (Kelvinbridge Subway)

GRAVESEND
Please contact Adrian, Lodge House, By Valley Lodge, ifield Way, Gravesend, Kent

HUDDERSFIELD
Huddersfield Anarchist Group & DAM, c/o Peaceworks, 58 Wakefield Rd, Huddersfield

HULL
Hull @ Group, 23 Nott St, (moving in Sept to 24 Albany St)

KEELE
Keale University A Group, R Knight, c/o Students Union, The University, Keale, Staffs

KEIGHLEY
Anarchists, c/o Simon Saxton, 1 Selbourne Grove, Kelghley, West Yorkshire BD21 2SL

LANCASTER
Tadeusz Szczepanski, 38 Bradshaw St, LA1 3BE

LEAMINGTON AND WARWICK
Lemming and Yorick A's, c/o 23 Radford Rd, Leamington Spa, Warwks CV31 1NF

LEEDS
Leeds Anarchist Group, Box LAP A, 59 Cookridge St, LS2 3AW
Leeds Direct Action Movement, Box DAM, 59 Cookridge street, Leeds, LS2

LEICESTER
Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Libertarian Education, 6 Beaconsfield Rd, tel:552085
The Anarchist Society, Societies' Room, Students Union Building, University of Leicester, University Rd, LE1 7RH

LIVERPOOL
Liverpool Anarchist Group, Box LAG, 31 Gothic Street, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside.
Discordians, Liverpool Students Union, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool
North West Anarchist Federation, 224 Garston Old Rd, Liverpool 19, Merseyside

LONDON
Anarchy Magazine, Box A 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1; FREEDOM

Collective, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High St, E1 (01-247-9249). Aldgate East tube, nr Whitechapel Art Gallery.
Greenpeace, 6 Endsleigh St, WC1. Meet Thursdays 7pm
London Workers Group, c/o Little A C1 Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall E1. 121 Books/Anarchist Centre, 121 Rallion Rd, London SE24 Tel: 274 6885
Contact Address for: Anarchist-Feminist Magazine; Pigs for Slaughter; South London Anarchist Group (SLAG); South London DAM; London Anarchist Youth Group meet every Friday at 121, 7.30pm.
Martin Nicholas, 111 Reed rd., Tottenham, London N 17.

NW LONDON
K Potkin, Student Mall, Polytech of Central London, 32-38 Wells St, WC1

MALVERN
and Worcester area, Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storridge, Worcestershire

MANCHESTER
Wildcat, Box 25, 434 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, Manchester, M4 3BN
DAM, Box 20, 184/44 Corn Exchange Bldgs, Hanging Ditch, M4
Black & Red Society (Anarchist Group), c/o The Students' Union, University of Manchester, Oxford Rd, Manchester
South Manchester A Group, c/o Raven Press, 8-10 Gt Ancoats St, Manchester 4

MORECAMBE & LANCASTER
Chris Preston, 27 Nightingale Close, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 3EU. (Correspondence only)
North Lancs Libertarians, c/o Cliff M Poxon, 13 Carleton St, Morecambe Lancs LA4 4NX

NORTH STAFFS
Careless Talk Collective, R Knight c/o Students Union, The University, Keele, Staffs

NORWICH
Norwich @ Group, c/o Box 6, FREE-WHEEL, 52-54 King St

NOTTINGHAM
Jackie Veevers, 7 Irene Tce, Basford
Individuals Anonymous 12p sae, above address
OLDHAM
Nigel Broadbent, 14 Westminster Rd, Fallsworth

ORPINGTON
Rik Fuller, 60 Ramsden Rd, Orpington, Kent

OXFORD
Oxford Anarchists, 34 Cowley Rd

PLYMOUTH
Anarchists, 115 St Pancras Ave, Penny-cross

PORTSMOUTH
area anarchist group, c/o Garry Richardson, 25 Beresford Close, Waterlooville, Hants

READING
Reading Anarchists, Box 19, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham St

RHONDDA
and Mid Glamorgan, Henning Anderson, 'Smiths Arms', Treherbert, Mid Glamorgan

SHEFFIELD
Libertarian Society, PO Box 168, Sheffield 1
Sheffield Anarchists, Doncaster Anarchists and Black Rat, each c/o John Creaghe Society, PO Box 217, Sheffield, S1 1FD.
Sheffield Peace Action, 69 Rustlings Rd, Sheffield 11
NEAF Secretariat: Box 168, Sheffield 11

SOUTHAMPTON
'Southern Stress', c/o October Books, 4 Onslow Rd

SOUTH WALES
DAM, c/o Smiths Arms, Baglan Rd, Treherbert. Write for anarcho-syndicalist contacts in Treherbert, Rhondda, Pontypridd, Penarth, Barry and Cardiff areas

SUSSEX
Brighton Anarchists, c/o Students Union, Falmer House, University of Sussex, Brighton East Sussex
Hastings Anarchists + Polson Pen, 82 London Rd, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex
Sussex Anarchist Society, c/o Hastings Anarchist Group

SWANSEA
Anarchist Group, Box 5, Neges, 31 Alexandra Rd, Swansea
Billy, 63 Clynnmaes Place, Blaenymaes, Swansea

TAYSIDE
Josh Cowan, 3/R 17 Cheviot Crescent, Dundee, DD4 9QJ

TYNE & WEAR
Newcastle Anarchist Group, c/o 2 Priory Court, High St, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE3 3JL

WAKEFIELD
Anarchist and Peace Group, c/o Fazackerley, 36 Bowan St, Agbrigg, Wakefield, West Yorkshire

WEST WALES
Terry Phillips, 7 Heol Nant, Felinfoel, Llanelli, Dyfed SA14 8EL

YORK
Shell 22, 73 Walmgate, York

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MEETINGS

DISCUSSION MEETINGS IN CENTRAL LONDON

They will be held every FRIDAY at 8 pm prompt at the MARY WARD CENTRE, 42 Queens Square, WC 1. Opening programme:
7 October; Dorice Ross on The Drugs and Food Racket.
14 October; Tony Jones on Anarchism, the individual and the law.
21 October; Philip Sansom on Anarcho-Syndicalism - is there an alternative?
Contact: Box PS, c/o FREEDOM

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DEADLINES

FREEDOM Collective would welcome any readers who wish to help fold and despatch the paper. The next issue will be sent out on Thursday 20th October, starting at around 6pm. This is also a good time to come and meet the editors.

FREEDOM also needs your written contributions and any graphics or photographs readers feel would be useful to us. Copy deadline for short items for the next issue is first post, Monday 17th October. Longer articles in by first post, Thursday 13th October.

WILDCAT



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