

## inside

LETTERS	page 2
BN Replies	
GREENHAM and Sheffield	page 3
LUIS BUNUEL Part II	pages 4/5
REVIEW	page 6
REPORTS London	page 7
CONTACTS	page 8

## editorial

The mess that is Lebanon today is a nasty brew of past imperialist activities, present power politics, and religious fanaticism. The Kamikaze activities of the smaller religious groups are a reflection of the Kamikaze situation that the world finds itself in. In this area of the Russian backyard, Lebanon is probably closer to Russia than Grenada is to the United States, so you have the Soviet Union arming its Syrian surrogate as fast as it can while the Americans do the same for Israel.

The great powers began to take an interest in the Middle East in the infancy of oil exploration. The British, with usual perfidy, promised the Jews and Arabs the same piece of land — to get Jewish American finance for the First World War, and to get the Arabs to help remove Germany's Turkish allies from the area.

After the Second World War the Americans became much more interested in the Middle East, particularly as their own sources of oil were being used up at an enormous rate, so American companies became more involved in the area. The other factor was of course the holocaust in Europe, and against Arab opposition Israel was created and has subsequently been armed as an American surrogate, in spite of the hiccup due to the disastrous British blunder over Suez in 1956.

The subsequent history of the area is one of complicated political in-fighting and the growth of various sects of extreme Muslim religion plus weird Christian outfits manipulated by Israel and the attempts of Syria to dominate the exiled Palestinians as a fighting force that can be manipulated by them.

The various power struggles have surfaced in Lebanon and the war between Iraq and Iran are all part of the same thing. The Middle East has been a bonanza for the arms suppliers and the powers dabbling in the pot-pourri, with America finding excuses to play on the Russian back-yard and the Russians defending that area and in the position to threaten Western oil supplies.

The situation has been a tragic one for the unfortunate people living in the area. The Christian Phalangists have represented the rich and powerful section of Lebanon and before the dramatic spilling over of the fighting into the country were doing pretty well. Prospects in this crossroads of East and West conflicts of interest were never rosy or the Muslim majority, who were easy meat for those who wished to use them for their own ends.

This is how it always is for the people. Mystified by religious dogmas, manipulated by power-seeking groups, they fight other people's wars and suffer the consequences.

Will people never learn?

# 1984 and the Big Brothers are waiting

It's nearly here. Two weeks to go to 1984. And isn't it uncanny how so much of what was prophesied in Orwell's book has been developed in the 34 years since its publication? Not all the large — world-scale — predictions have (yet) come to pass, but in many small ways, the squalor and the surveillance and the total alienation in our everyday lives, what the man foretold is coming true.

The world is not yet divided into three great unified power blocks, but two such are quite enough thank you. The influences of the megalomaniac states of America and Russia affect the economies of all the rest of the world, although Europe with its own so-called economic community tries to balance the power of the almighty dollar. China contrives to live a life of its own, ostensibly Communist but practically bureaucratic capitalist, and unable to create an 'Eastasia' block because of the enormous economic power of Japan — perhaps the one thing not foreseen by Orwell.

It is perhaps the emergence of prosperous capitalist countries after the war that have affected those parts of 1984 that have not (yet?) come to pass. Probably Orwell guessed at a steady decline in all European countries after the war

and did not envisage the re-emergence of Germany as a stable capitalist country, with one of the strongest currencies in the world any more than he could have guessed that Japan would make its own economic 'miracle'. When Orwell died in 1949, having written his masterpiece in 1948, Japan was still making cheap copies of 'Western' goods and Germany was still rebuilding its cities out of the ruins. The significant thing about these two economically prosperous countries is that they are the two 'advanced' countries which were not allowed to start making armaments after the war — so they were able to concentrate upon civilian goods for export. Hence their capitalist success.

But it is undoubtedly in the field of internal power that the real significance of 1984 matters to most of us, and in this the reality has outstripped the book. The relatively crude equipment available to Big Brother in the 1940's — for example, the 'microphones' strung among the trees in the woods where Winston and Julia made love — has now been far surpassed. Nothing so crude as a telescreen, either, for in a society with far more telephones than we had in 1948, wiretapping does not disclose its presence and

can lull us into a false sense of privacy.

But the development of brutal control has proceeded well enough. Imprisonment has flourished; with 'control units' practising alienation and sensory deprivation just as O'Brien would have wished, with the 'liquid cosh' softening our minds and our ability to object. Outside the state's prisons, we are subjected to media pap on one hand and opportunities for feeble controlled violence at organised sports grounds on the other, where deliberately ill-educated youths are wound up for phoney battles with their own kind, instead of with authority.

If we talk today about microphones, we have to think about 'directional' instruments that can pick up what we say from across the street and through our windows, and we have to think about infrared cameras that photograph us in the dark and can detect our presence through our body heat from a helicopter. We have to remember internal circuit television in every shop and, under the guise of 'traffic control' in the street, where every bobby on the beat is in immediate contact with the police computer, and police control vehicles can drum up the Rent-a-Thug coppers in seconds.

Orwell was so right to see Britain as 'Airstrip One'. We are certainly the far eastern outpost of America — the 'Oceania' of 1984 — granted the role of being 'Target One' as well, by having the great honour to be the missile carrier for the new American empire.

But nobody is going to call our system 'Ingsoc'. No reference to socialism is going to be allowed. George Orwell so rightly saw the development of English 'socialism', during Attlee's Labour government — which introduced Britain to atomic bombs — as going in an authoritarian direction, but that has been superceded by the party of individual liberty, supposedly against too much state control, which is using its state power to smash all opposition to unbridled capitalism, to switch public assets into private profits and to strengthen the state in its own defence. And the Labour Party itself is embarrassed by 'socialism' too.

Lenin once said that communism was 'Socialism with electricity' we all know what use the modern Russian state makes of electricity. We are about to get wonderful lessons from the British state too, for we are now on the brink of 1984 — with electronics!

PS

## The Magic Mushroom

Where will you be when the Bomb comes? For, make no bones about it, we are on countdown.

And where will our masters be? Trapped in their troglodyte catacombs, short-lit by candles when the emergency power supply splutters to a halt, surrounded by tins of eponymous bully beef, drawing water from a well deep and safe enough to slake the bureaucratic thirst. With no-one available to be ordered to shoot the survivors who don't 'cooperate'. Once the canned soup is finished and the veneer of civilisation has been stripped away they will be left to eat one another, without the benefit of table manners.

Have you changed your genes recently? Mankind — and I use the word with care — has not radically rearranged the DNA in his double helix over the last 50,000 years. Nor his habits, other than superficially. In the good old days it was clubs and stones, then we graduated to swords and spears, went on to bows and arrows, progressed to gunpowder, TNT, agent orange and napalm. Now we crown this merry maypole dance with the H-bomb, plus a little bit of genocide with chemical and bacteriological warfare thrown in to make sure we all get the message.

Is anyone there — apart from the rats and cockroaches, that is? Well, maybe. OK, you can write off the northern hemisphere, but because of the way the winds circulate over the equator the odds are that life will go on in Tierra del Fuego, Tristan da Cunha and possibly even Tasmania. Standards of living will have to take a tumble, of course. Back to the Dark Ages with a bit of luck, rather than the Stone Age. Medical services will be on the sparse side. No brain transplants — which could be a blessing. Appendicitis? Tough. Try a rusty penknife and a gourd of poteen. Alcohol has been a boon for the past 10,000 years.

Brighter than a thousand suns? You should be so lucky. Try looking the other way. Remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki? The fossilised figures frozen in flight. There's poetry for you. After the light, the heat and the blast. Oh, I nearly forgot — and the radiation. That hits you with the light. Comes in all wavebands. Special delivery. An offer you can't refuse.

So, were you thinking of having children? Or have you already spilt your genes? Women of Greenham, are you trying to tell us something?

That 'The day after' should shock people is fatuous. Underlining the Mickey Mouse distinction between

pathos and bathos, the film intones that the next war could be a little messy. In point of sober fact we are now the proud possessors of the means to take our planet out of the cosmos, not just ten times, but a hundred times over. Makes you feel big. Power at last. Real power. Overkill.

Figures mean nothing. So try to digest this. A modest little exercise quaintly named Square Leg, (not cricket, old chap), was calculated by the lads and lasses masquerading as Home Defence in 1980. The envisaged attack on the UK was a mere 131 warheads. Out of 16,000 strategic intercontinental, 'as' opposed (unhappy phrase) to the simple minded dime a dozen theatre warheads now deployed around the globe, we elected to entertain only 131, yielding 205 megatons of explosive persuasion. Never mind the radiation that is thrown in free. Hold your breath — 205 megatons is roughly 16,400 updated versions of the tatty little bomb they dropped on Hiroshima spread skilfully over the UK. Read that again and say it to yourself softly. Then wrap your mind around it. One grotty A bomb as against 16,400 dropped with tender loving care and high precision on your doorstep. Makes you feel wanted.

Deterrence, we are told, has kept the peace for nearly forty years because both sides know how to play the war game. All the scenarios have been carefully scripted, computerised, and double checked to end in Mutually Assured Destruc-

tion. Great scenarios. But apart from that, Mrs Lincoln, how did you enjoy the play? The trouble is that apart from the MAD soft shoe shuffle, it won't happen thataway. It will be an unscripted version of the Apocalypse that will come galloping out of the wings with the four horsemen. It is not just that there is a fundamental misunderstanding between East and West, with the Russians thinking the game is chess while the Americans are playing poker. Besides our Superpower friends, there are too many Idi Amin's, Gaddafis, Ayatollahs, Lower Tollahs and kindred neolithic berks around who don't give a monkey's about sending the whole caboodle up in radioactive ash and who are perfectly prepared to play Chinese roulette, with the rest of us looking down the nuclear barrel with them. H-bombs are not all that hard to come by these days. It will take only one gang of ruthless, murderous fanatics or criminal lunatics — and I don't mean governments this time — to grab a bomb and blast us all to kingdom come.

So where do we go from here? Like nowhere, unless we tread very carefully indeed. The megalomaniacs who control these weapons have no imagination. They believe that they with their nearest and dearest will survive in their concrete caverns, cosily ensconced with their tins of dried milk, shotguns and crossbows, eagerly crawling out to command a desert.

Continued on page 3

SEXUAL POLITICS

It was good to see a small contribution to sexual politics again, this time from MH (5 November). Anarchists have been fairly shy about getting to grips with the 'personal is political'. People like Kropotkin in the past, although they were scientifically trained, were nevertheless unwilling or unable to get to grips with the gross problem of personal relationships. It was left to a few pioneers on the libertarian front, such as Edward Carpenter and Walt Whitman, to lay a few of the foundations of a demand for release from the straightjacket of sexual oppression.

There are contemporary fellow travellers on some of the other alternative scenarios who have tried to take up the banner more actively than Anarchs. This is especially true in the sexual liberation movements, of course. The difficulties in these movements, though, have revolved round their reformist and even within-the-state attempts at making small 'liberal' moves towards less viciousness and oppression in the sexual scene. I would suggest that the co-option into the status quo

and relative failure of these movements is rooted in the blind way in which people in them follow the old 'electoral' and statist forms. This is where the workers in the anarchist movement should be able to contribute much. We might all re-read Emma Goldman on this point.

On the main point about the continuing prostitution of the sexual names and verbs — including I agree, a growth of meaningless mouthings of them by so-called anarchists — I would agree with the view that such random noise is self-defeating for a number of reasons, which have often been expressed in these pages.

I remember writing a letter to the effect that 'Fucking is Pleasant' (Vol 42, No 10), including a humorous bit about a socialist meeting chairman who yelled that the 'wet' right-wingers of his party were a 'load of wankers'. The line I took then, as now, was to satirise such waste of emotive effort. On another and perhaps more significant note, the violent and denigratory tone of all the sexual cursing not only

amounts to the prostitution of perfectly good words and certainly to a twisting of their vernacular meanings, but arises from alienation and from the same root as rape. In this instance, it is rape by verbal abuse of perfectly intimate and close human relationships, namely sexual pleasure and communication whether by wanking, fucking, sucking, tonguing and kissing, etc, all very nice physical pleasures given and received — presumably when there is no need for power and domination — with damn sight more affection and unselfishness than we see 'as usual' (mutual aid).

But we should remember that lots of these perfectly pleasurable physical activities are *highly criminal*, by state edict. They attract total personal tragedy, insufferable degradation in the hands of state officers — and years of incarceration for those 'caught in compromising situations'. There is total vulnerability and no defence because of the enormous sexual sadism in the 'puritans' who keep the sexual tensions on the boil. No wonder there is a 'smash and grab' or a

'grab and run' attitude to a lot of compulsive sexual activity.

All this is done in the name of various 'illegal' ageisms, genders, arbitrary definitions of 'acts against nature', and from guilt-ridden anti-life and pleasure doctrines from various religions and so on. All of it is very useful for the mass media, for enforcement agencies, and for oppression of many for political and other social control reasons.

While we argue about the pros and cons of whether 'fuck' etc, should be used rapaciously — or with its 'true' meaning — what is our message and action about the appalling oppression of people in the sexual minorities — and that probably includes nearly all of us — that I mentioned above?

As Alex Comfort said, 'The State would not tolerate any real sexual liberation because people released in that would then ask, "Who are these politicians pushing us around?" and would tell them where to get off...' At least that is a paraphrase of what he said.

Ken Smith

BN RECEIVES YET MORE REPLIES

BN's article (19 November) includes some remarkably silly statements about anarchism in general and FREEDOM in particular.

It simply isn't true that 'anarchism, as it has developed from the last century in its original European tradition, stands for society against the state' or that 'the collectivist element is indispensable' or that 'anarchists are libertarian socialists/communists'. Anarchism, as it has developed in the last century in both Europe and North America, has always contained significant elements of both individualism and collectivism, taking in extreme egoism and communism at either end and moderate mutualism and libertarianism in the middle. Many anarchists are socialists or collectivists of some kind, and many others are not, and most anarchists not only stand for society against the state but also for the individual against the state and indeed for the individual against society, as appropriate.

It simply isn't true that individualist anarchism can be dismissed as 'Stirner's ego-tripping' or 'North American bourgeois individualism' or a 'petit-bourgeois deviation'. The middle class opposes individualism as much as any other class does, and individualists oppose the middle class as much as any other class. In fact individualism is an essential component of all anarchism in its rejection of every form of organised authority, including that exercised by as well as *against* groups. Of course anarchist individualism is expressed collectively, because we are all human and humans are social animals, but at the heart of anarchism is the individual human rejecting authority and demanding freedom.

DE's letter (3 December) puts a similarly silly statement in vulgar Marxist jargon. In our relatively free society, it is indeed possible to make a personal choice about one's life, to leave one's class, to become an independent individual, and so on. It is precisely by such an action that virtually all of us have become anarchists!

BN 'can only wonder whatever happened to FREEDOM, the anarchist paper we used to know'. The answer is: nothing. FREEDOM has taken the same line on anarchism since it appeared in 1886 and reappeared in 1936 and 1945, on Communist dictatorship since the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and on nuclear weapons since the Hiroshima bomb in 1945 — and there is no reason to be ashamed of it. FREEDOM has concentrated on the mainstream of traditional anarchism, but has always provided a forum for dissenting views, such

as those of BN. We can only wonder what has happened to him.

NW

I had written (and had set) an answer to BN of Leicester's hysterical outburst against Janet Lawrence, when her own answer arrived and I held mine back. In view of what looks like becoming a turgid correspondence — although about very important issues on which there is much confusion — I have cut my original letter considerably.

But I must say that I think JL has let BN off the hook too easily for his snide reference to her connection with the Government's 'dirty tricks department'. She misquoted him as saying 'CIA', but in fact in trying to refute JL's contention that CND was spreading Russian propaganda, BN wrote — and I quote: 'Where have you seen this, Janet? In the secret files of the government's dirty tricks squad, DS-19? As part of your job with them?' Janet Lawrence, rightly I suppose, finds this beneath contempt. I find that quite intolerable and demands an apology.

I have now cut out (and some readers will heave a sigh of relief!) what I had to say about the opportunistic role of the Communist Party during the last war, but must take up BN's question: 'Hasn't anarchism always been part of the Left?'

I would say that, yes, anarchism started off as *seeming* to be part of the left, but experience has taught us that we have no more in common with the authoritarian left than we do with the authoritarian right — for in practice they lay upon the working class exactly the same set of shackles. BN claims, didactically, that 'anarchists are libertarian socialists/communists'. No explanation, just that bald statement. It doesn't seem to occur to him that, quite apart from the relatively small numbers of anarchists, the terms 'socialist' and 'communist' are now dirty words in the minds of *millions* — precisely because of the behaviour in power of the parties carrying those names and as well as that, there is a contradiction in terms between 'libertarian' and either 'socialist' or 'communist'.

Where does 'the left' begin, BN? Just left of centre, with the SDP and the Liberals? Or with the Labour Party and the Trades Unions? Or with the Communist Party — Stalinist or Euro-Communist? Or with the Trots? The SWP or the WRP? None of these deviations existed when Marx and Bakunin fought in the first International, nor even when Kropotkin founded

Freedom Press in 1886 and introduced FREEDOM as 'A Journal of Anarchist Communism'. Words have changed their meanings since then. We cannot accept the loose change of authoritarianism as part of our anarchist currency. We have to renounce the jargon of the left as fiercely as we do that of the right. We are not part of that spectrum. You may believe that in some strange way, this justifies Lenin's sneer against anarchism as 'a petit-bourgeois deviation', although you pretend not to go along with it — but deep down, you do, you do. Strangely, it turns out that you are afraid of the individual, and don't realise that the very central core of anarchism is the stand of the individual against the state. How wrong you are when you dismiss (as though Stirner was 'North American') this as 'Stirner's ego-tripping tied to North American bourgeoisie individualism' — echoes of Lenin, BN?

For many years I was FREEDOM's reporter on industrial matters. I wrote as an anarcho-syndicalist, but at no time did I say or write anything to demean the individual. In anarchist terms, and in order to build an anarchist movement, we have to have strong individuals, who do not need leaders, who in fact will not be led. The 'ego-tripping', BN, comes to those who seek to lead the masses — who must be malleable, gullible, easily led. By definition, your ego-trippers are your party leaders of the left — or, equally, of the right. 'Individualism' may have been adopted as a word by free-market capitalists — but in the end they will depend upon the state to defend their property. That's *their* fallacy. Your fallacy is believing that we can have anything whatsoever to do

with Stalinists — however wishy-washy their policies may seem in this country.

Lastly, you ask 'whatever happened to the FREEDOM...we used to know.' Well, I don't know how long you've known FREEDOM, but I would recommend you to read *Neither East nor West* by Marie Louise Berneri written in the 1940s which, obviously, sums up the anarchist attitudes to both 'free' enterprise capitalism and state capitalism — both the imperialisms which plague us today. (And, incidentally, FC, whom you also castigate, said quite clearly: 'A plague on all their houses, we say; we are against all bombs and all the states that make them!')

Apropos of which, we must also remind you that we had the same situation in the sixties, when the Communist Party decided (after prevaricating for a long time about their attitude to Russia's atomic bombs — the 'workers' bomb!) to come out into the open and support CND — having banned the use of Party banners on Aldermaston marches, but being embarrassed by 'individuals' in the party going along with the protests.

In the 60's, the Labour Leader, Hugh Gaitskell, was bitterly opposed to the party's resolution to oppose the bomb, and said he would 'Fight, and fight, and fight again...' to get party policy changed... and he did. What we said then, in FREEDOM for April 8th, 1961, (and reprinted in *Protest without Illusions* by Vernon Richards) was summed up in the cartoon we carried then by one of our many brilliant artists over the years. We reproduce it below.

Philip Sansom

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December is Cruise month, when the British government is planning to make the new American nuclear missiles operational and the nuclear disarmament movement is resisting the plan. On the first weekend the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament held its annual conference (see report on this page), repeating its commitment to non-violent direct action but refusing to go any further; radical action, therefore, remains in the hands of various autonomous organisations.

On the second weekend there were two demonstrations at Greenham Common — on Saturday the first mixed demonstration there for two years (see the report on this page), when between two and three hundred people held a symbolic vigil; and on Sunday the largest demonstration there for a year (see the report on this page), when between twenty and thirty thousand women surrounded the base and again attacked the fences — punctuated by the television film *The Day After*, which was seen by about one-third of the population of the country on Saturday night. There were also several demonstrations at the Faslane Polaris submarine base in Scotland.

On 9th December there was a demonstration at the American Embassy which was too small to become a blockade, as planned by the informal affinity group network, which has organised another demonstration at the Ministry of Defence for 18/19 December, hoping that this will be more successful. The plan is to meet on Sunday afternoon, embrace the place between 2:00 and 3:00, then keep a vigil all evening and all night, culminating in a blockade on Monday from 7:00 in the morning until 3:00 in the afternoon. On Monday there is also a blockade of the American base at Daws Hill near High Wycombe.

The second batch of defendants in the Cenotaph 'die-in' case appeared at Bow Street on 6th December and were remanded until March. Of the 26 demonstrators arrested, 17 are charged with insulting behaviour, but it is expected that the charges will be changed before the trial.

The New Year will begin with a new initiative to organise mass demonstration of non-violent direct action and civil disobedience on a national basis. 1894, here we come...

## The mixture as before

The first mixed demonstration at Greenham Common since the exclusion of men in January 1982 was a very temperate affair after all the fuss about sexism during the past year. There was virtually no support for the action from the peace movement, strong discouragement coming from CND and *Peace News*, so it was very much a do-it-yourself business and the attendance was low, consisting mainly of couples and small groups. But among us were the founders of the original march to and camp at Greenham Common, Committee of 100 veterans, Green Movement activists, and many friends old and new. There were a few cross words from women preparing for the big demonstration the next day, but nothing serious.

We gathered on a beautiful sunny afternoon at the west end of the base, near the missile installations,

and walked up and down between the blue and green gates. I hadn't seen the place since supporting the 'Embrace the Base' demonstration a year ago, and the changes are dramatic — hundreds of police outside (though the local authorities are now reeling under the huge cost of the operation) and hundreds of soldiers and airmen inside, all with radios and torches; two or three or even four sets of fences, with rolls of ancient barbed wire and modern razor wire gleaming like steel cobwebs; dozens of new roads with vans and jeeps racing backwards and forwards; glaring floodlights coming on at sunset, fed by roaring generators; and further in the vast concrete silos and bunkers for the 96 nice new missiles and all their equipment for the war to end war and everything else.

At 5:00 we assembled at the fence as close to the installations as we could get and held a silent candlelit vigil for an hour in the freezing dusk. The many couples standing or sitting hand in hand symbolised the point of the demonstration, that men and women can still act together at Greenham Common without in any way spoiling the achievements of the brave women's camp or the glorious women's demonstrations. My companion and I remembered how we had been together at the beginning of the first Aldermaston March back in 1958. At 6:00 the songs began, and we quietly left in time to see *The Day After*.

What about the day after? We shall not return to Greenham Common in the near future, but women and men must be there together again soon. Meanwhile, this was a good new beginning, like that one 25 years ago, and I think everyone felt as enriched as we did.

NW

## A day of reflection

Why is it always freezing when I go to Greenham or Burghfield? I think it's a conspiracy (Special Branch, please note.)

Once again, it was tremendous fun. We arrived in the morning and wandered towards the Orange, gate where there was almost a carnival atmosphere, despite the intense cold. Everywhere one looked there were thousands of women, and coaches arriving from all directions all the time. Unfortunately, there were also hundreds of policemen; and this time they were on the outside of the fence, one at every third post. The fence looked very new and healthy (I wonder why?) and there was a barricade of lots of barbed wire and posts very close together about three yards inside the fence (I wonder why?). Women had tied tin foil, mirrors, paintings of the surrounding countryside, photographs of their families, to the fence; and of course there were the webs and the weaving — CND symbols, women's names and those of their loved ones, peace slogans and so on.

At midday we were startled, in the middle of our picnic, by an enormous upsurge of noise sweeping round the perimeter — women shouting, screaming, blowing hard into recorder and other mouthpieces, blowing whistles, making 'indian' whoops, keening, every imaginable noise that the human voice can make coupled with many other sounds. The effect was electric, and electrifying; we all joined in at once. This was repeated every

hour on the hour throughout the afternoon, and it didn't matter whether you were in a group of several thousand, or just a few wandering round the perimeter almost everyone joined in, every time. Some women we met later in the afternoon had a particularly effective noise-maker. On enquiry, it turned out to be a duck-decoy, bought from a gun shop! (If anyone knows of any other outlet that stocks duck-decoys, a lot of women would be very grateful.)

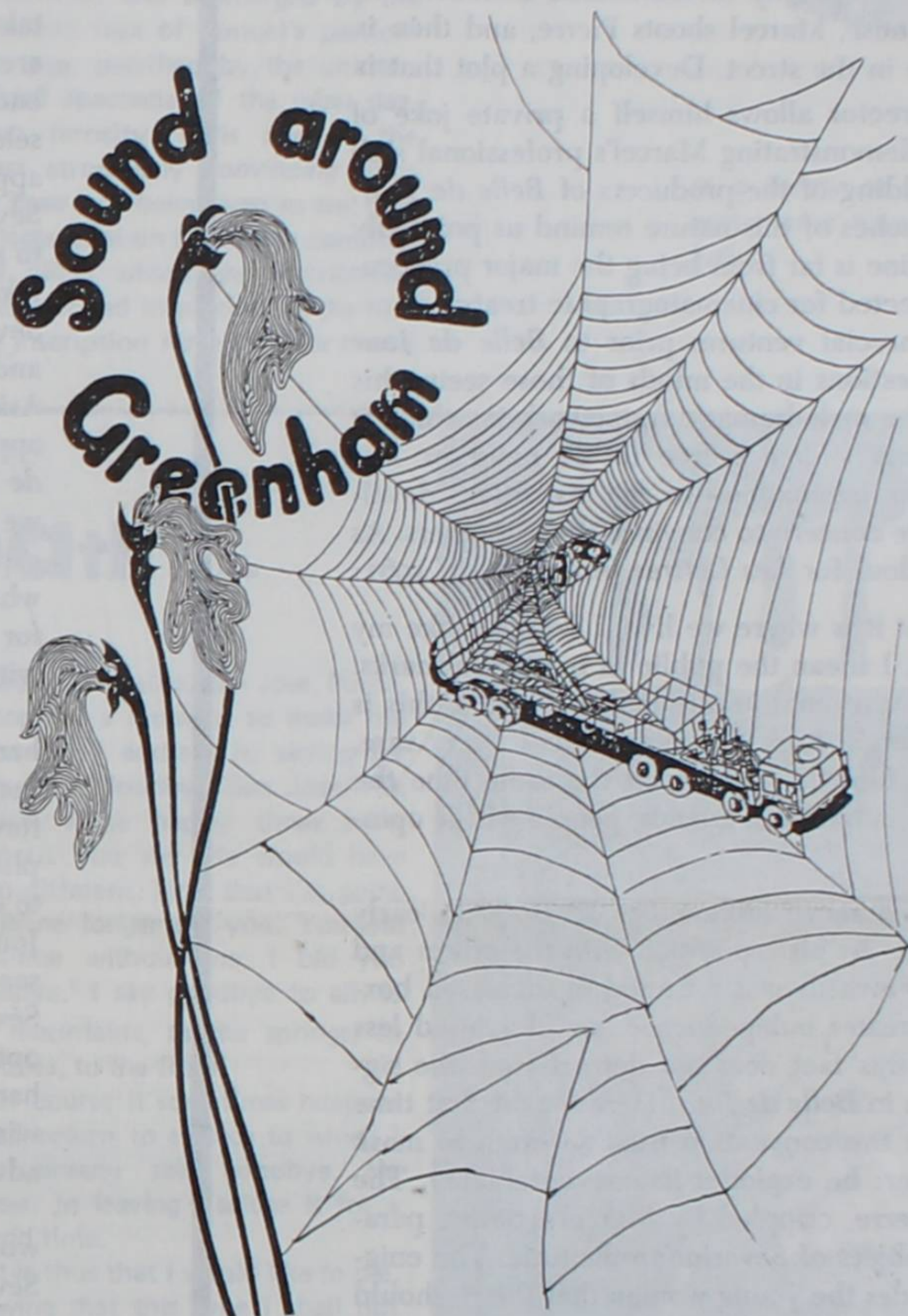
We walked, after our lunch, from Orange Gate towards Blue Gate, and caught up with a magnificent band of women, playing as they went. We walked and sang, until we came to a place where the road was completely blocked — mostly by women, but also by a couple of cars. No-one and nothing moved: we sang 'All we are saying, Is give Peace a chance,' for minutes and minutes on end: then there was silence, for minutes

'They've gone in through Green Gate — give them your support'. So we did. We made as much noise as we could, as did thousands of women all around the base.

Then we returned to Orange gate. Whole sections of the fence were swaying — and not just the fence, but the posts that (supposedly) hold it up. One of our party, when told on the preceding Friday that bolt-cutters were appropriate equipment for Sunday had expressed total horror. At about 3pm Sunday this same woman consigned her child to my care ('You've had your turn!') and ran off to try very hard to pull the fence down.

I wasn't at Green gate, where the women were determined to take the fence down — and did. I was at Orange gate, where thousands of us wished well to the few who heaved and pushed and heaved and pushed — and they need a new fence there, too.

V



## Tourist in Sheffield City

Londoners are so patronising about anyone from North of Watford. I am from Derbyshire; slow of speech and thought. Not given to fast jokes and smart talk. But when revisiting the city most caring about its poorer people, I'm made aware of how big a gulf there is between Londoners and others.

In the Yorkshire City of Sheffield, people are close to Derbyshire. For around 10p busfare you can be on the edge of the moors. But in Sheffield,

### THE MAGIC MUSHROOM

Continued from page 1

Somewhat ordinary people have to defuse the situation. Politicians hold us all in contempt. Maybe, like Switzerland, we should do without the bomb on our unsinkable aircraft carrier and spend the money on an underground fortress. Or supply everyone with an airline ticket to New Zealand. We could afford one of those every year if we stopped spending the loot on our own sarcophagus. Plastic bags are even cheaper, and you don't have to ask

once a city of steel there is a Peace Officer; a Peace Bookshop; a strong anarchist presence. A good number of these young people are vegans; animal liberationists and very much involved with music and poetry of a libertarian kind. There is a magazine worth reading: *Panic*. A marvellous marching band: Sheffield's Celebrated Street Marching Band. They have a project to reclaim a derelict inner city area and enough energy to see this project — centred around the Attercliffe District — get off the ground.

The City Hall was draped with banners against the new missiles. CND was in town for its national conference. Pat Arrowsmith called for workplace groups of CND to be set up in army units. She helped draft a leaflet which London Region CND has issued, addressed to soldiers.

Andrew Papworth called for Greenham Common to be left to the women to stitch up contrary to the letter issued by Ann Pettit, Fran De'ath and other women who helped set up Greenham from the start. (See FREEDOM, 3 December)

The inner machinations of the Labour CND Group took up so much time that the important issue of changing CND's aims to include opposition to the whole nuclear chain — from uranium mining to nuclear power, to the missiles — got squeezed out. Green CND — the specialist group of which I am a supporter — were either outgunned or outsmarted.

The main sessions were presided over by Mike Pentz in a very autocratic style; or by Joan Ruddock in a very seasoned manner. Bruce Kent and Roger Spiller and others sat upon the high table, like leaders.

The most important part of such political charades — since most resolutions and debates are stitched up in advance by various factions — were the informal meetings with magazine sellers leafletters or unofficial stallholders pitching on the steps of the hall or on the pavement.

The CP (Communist Party) and Labour Party 'delegates' were best organised — but the moral/ethical representatives of local groups were probably in the majority — ie, the unaligned religious or political CND local groups.

I put up a stall in the ballroom and created a lot of interest. People forget there are many pacifists and anarchists involved in CND. I spoke to lots of people sold copies of Riff Raff poets magazine *Greenline* and FREEDOM

If only a few readers out there sold FREEDOM and their own magazines we would see a much larger response from people everywhere! Write or ring Jim Huggon in the bookshop 01-247 9249 for magazines, books and booklists for your hometown bookstore! Then pay a visit to Freedom Bookshop and Aldgate Press in Angel Alley, between Whitechapel Art Gallery and Blooms restaurant and get a selection of literature to help reach out to new people.

Colin Ward's *Anarchy in Action* is probably the best of current books. Ask Jim to help if you are unclear or short of time. Also visit Housmans Bookshop at Kings Cross for pamphlets and books on non-violent action and nuclear and pacifist issues, etc, etc.

DENNIS GOULD

a benevolent government to provide them, either. Sainsbury's are a better bet.

What the hell are we doing here, waiting to be vaporised? Kruschev got it right, the living will envy the dead. Cold comfort. In the name of humanity, unite — you have nothing to lose but your magic mushroom funeral pyres. Is anyone there? Is anyone . . . . .

BOB GREEN

# BELLE DE JOUR

His 1966 movie, *Belle de Jour*, deals with a well-to-do young woman who takes up employment under a high-class procuress, for whom she works under a nickname suggested by the fact that she is available only in the daytime. Although this film brings together a number of actors Buñuel has used before (Michel Piccoli as Husson, Francisco Rabal as Hippolyte, and Georges Marchal, who was in *Cela s'appelle l'Aurore* and *La Mort en ce Jardin*), the leading roles go to three performers with whom Buñuel has not worked previously. Catherine Deneuve plays Séverine, Jean Sorel her husband (Pierre), and Pierre Clementi her gangster lover (Marcel). Séverine's relationship with the former, marred by frigidity, and her relations with the latter, to whom she seems able to respond without reserve, create a situation resolved by a highly melodramatic dénouement. Bursting into his mistress' house, Marcel shoots Pierre, and then is himself shot down by police in the street. Developing a plot that is anything but subtle, the director allows himself a private joke of the kind he likes: the theft demonstrating Marcel's professional skill takes place in the office building of the producers of *Belle de Jour*, on the Champs-Élysées. Touches of this nature remind us pointedly that, with Buñuel, the storyline is far from being the major preoccupation when a subject is selected for cinematographic treatment.

In none of his commercial ventures prior to *Belle de Jour* did Buñuel seek to raise questions in the minds of those seeing his film about the viability of the melodramatic framework in which it was cast. He always left his audience free to be more or less attentive—according to their inclination—to the narrative, developed in some cases with more concern to convince than in others. As he explained to Georges Sadoul for *Les Lettres françaises*, in 1961:

The world being what it is where we live, I do not make my films for the "public", I mean the public in quotation marks. If this "public" is conventional, traditional, perverted, this is not its fault, but society's. And it is very difficult, very rare, to be able to make a film that pleases at the same time the "public" (in quotation marks) and friends, people whose opinion matters to you.

The element of melodrama is more pronounced in Buñuel's early commercial movies than later. As his reputation with the critics and his knack of earning festival awards was reflected in increased box-office appeal, earning him greater independence, his films used less melodramatic features. But this fact does not detract from the significance of the step he takes in *Belle de Jour*. Here for the first time Buñuel openly turns against the convention used so often to mask his originality as a film-maker: he explodes its conventionality. The end of *Belle de Jour* has Pierre, crippled by Marcel's bullet, paralyzed in a wheel chair, the object of Séverine's solicitude. The enigmatic friend, Husson, persuades the young woman that Pierre should be informed of the circumstances under which she made Marcel's acquaintance at Madame Anaïs' establishment, where we have seen her report for work beautifully dressed in clothes designed for the movie by one of the leading couturiers in Paris. Husson takes it upon himself to enlighten the husband before leaving. Now Séverine goes in to Pierre, who appears to die, presumably because Husson's news is more lethal than Marcel's revolver shot. Then, miraculously, he rises from his chair, not only healed but apparently with his devotion to his wife undiminished.

Anyone who has managed to disregard certain disconcerting features of *Belle de Jour* because he is confident the plot will explain them away in the end, is going to be disappointed. More than this, he is bound to find his trust in the plot as the film's justification undermined by its ironical dénouement. In *Belle de Jour* things do not "come out right in the end"; they do not come out at all.

As we ask what Buñuel wishes us to make of *Belle de Jour*, an apparently minor detail takes on unexpected significance. It has to do with an Asiatic client who comes to the brothel during Belle de Jour's working hours, carrying a little wooden box which emits an unidentifiable buzzing sound, like that of an insect, when the lid is raised. Ever since the beginning of his commercial career Buñuel has used fetish objects in his films. They lend themselves without difficulty to interpretation. In fact, interpretation of them is a necessary step to comprehending the outlook and behavior of those to whom they belong. In *Belle de Jour*, however, we never see the Asiatic's fetish. We observe that, whatever it is, it horrifies every one of the girls employed by Madame Anaïs with the exception of Belle de Jour, who agrees to accommodate the smiling courteous client. But we are denied the chance to watch what goes on between them, even though the brothel provides an extra service in the form of peepholes through which voyeurs can witness activities taking place behind closed doors. The incident involving a fetish box which leaves Belle de Jour wrapped in thought and little else, after the departure of her client, is significant for what it conceals, rather than reveals. It is representative of the whole film, leaving us free to choose between possible interpretations of what we have seen and not been permitted to see.

In *Belle de Jour* every care is taken to blur the distinction between Séverine's fantasies and things the audience may reasonably believe actually happen to her. From the opening shot, the movie epitomizes confusion in this regard. Séverine is seen driving away from a large country house, her husband beside her in an open carriage. In a forest clearing she is dragged from her seat, tied and gagged, her back ritualistically bared. Then she is beaten with a whip before one of the coachmen rapes her, upon her husband's orders. Not until the scene is over do we feel entitled to interpret this occurrence as a sexual daydream. Subsequently, incidents which strike us as of the same nature are accompanied by the sound of bells like those attached to the harness of the horses drawing the carriage in the first sequence. Thus it is a simple matter for audiences to identify and draw inferences from the auditory clue provided on these occasions. Not all viewers will be so prompt, though, in noticing something else. In retrospect, the calm expression on Séverine's face while she is being flogged appears to signify she is only imagining being mistreated. And yet she wears a very similar expression after the departure of the Asiatic whose mysterious needs she has just satisfied in Anaïs' apartment. This similarity becomes significant when we consider Séverine's experience in the forest side by side with her encounter with the Asiatic client.

Once it is over, we readily assign the scene in the forest to the realm of fantasy. Then we congratulate ourselves on identifying a clue supplied by the director, when certain other scenes are ushered in by the sound of harness bells. Hence we feel entitled to take these for fantasy also. As for events occurring in the brothel, we are persuaded to lend these credence as actual experience because, back home after her first visit, Séverine is seen burning underwear selected in advance for her initial experience in vice. Revulsion appears retrospectively to authenticate the sequence during which Séverine met her first client as Belle de Jour. Consequently, it seems to suggest that everything occurring in Anaïs' apartment really does take place. But if this is true, why do we see the same look on Séverine's face when she is in the hands of her imaginary coachman and when she has just spent some time with her flesh-and-blood Asiatic? Such a question might appear hardly worth asking, if the apparently small detail under discussion were the only sign in *Belle de Jour* of the director's desire to establish a parallel between what we are sure is pure fantasy and what we are willing to accept as real experience. This is not an isolated incidental detail, however. One whole scene in particular adds its testimony to Buñuel's aversion for separating dream and reality. It concerns Séverine's encounter with Georges Marchal, playing an aristocrat.

They meet at a fashionable Parisian café, where Séverine lets herself be picked up with singular promptitude. One is tempted to suspect Anaïs has arranged an assignation and to conclude, therefore, that Belle de Jour's meeting with an aristocratic client is taking place in the world of reality. However we are not permitted for long to draw a clear line between the real and the imagined. If Belle de Jour is really meeting a client found for her by Anaïs, why do we see during this sequence the carriage we assumed existed only in Séverine's daydream? If, on the other hand, we are now to revise our opinion and believe the carriage really exists, then why do we hear harness bells, and see the vehicle pass in the street below Séverine's window, during the final scene of the film which common sense advises us to treat as pure fantasy?

Belle de Jour's client likes to lie in a coffin with a young woman crouching close by. Unequivocal evidence provided during Séverine's visit to his home reveal the principal motif during this sequence as masturbation. There seems some justification, therefore, for considering the whole of *Belle de Jour* as a fantasy, some kind of fairytale the heroine is telling herself. Viewing Buñuel's version of Kessel's novel in this light, we need not trouble ourselves overmuch, when we come across details in the movie that strike us as difficult to explain rationally, or hard to countenance on the plane of psychological motivation.

Moreover the subtleties of the process contaminating reality by surreality elude us so long as we are reluctant to see *Belle de Jour* as illustrative of the surrealist thesis that dream and reality are communicating vessels. This film exemplifies the conviction that reality and surreality are not at odds, but bound up with one another in human consciousness. Everything in *Belle de Jour* centers on the consciousness of Séverine/Belle de Jour, whose conduct proves her unwillingness—inability, perhaps—to keep apart the dream where her sexual fantasies are acted out and the world where she lives in frustration at her husband's side. Whether we are watching something true or false is far less significant, under these conditions, than whether it seems real or unreal to the heroine. It matters less whether Séverine does work for Anaïs and meets Marcel, or simply imagines doing so, than whether she desires the kind of experience prostitution can offer. The scale of values is imposed less by the reality or imaginary nature of events than by the intensity of experience, drawn either from the outside world or from within.

Buñuel's success in presenting Séverine's experience confirms that mystery continues to be, for him, "the essential element in every work of art." His success grows out of a remarkable capacity for bringing to light the surrealist virtualities of human existence. Michel Piccoli, who has had occasion to observe him at work more than once, has commented, "He is a film-maker who does not belong in his world because he has never been able to understand the constraints of the commercial cinema. Or else he pretends not to know them." This characteristic makes Buñuel fascinating to a professional film actor like Piccoli. It makes him no less fascinating to all surrealists.

J.H. MATTHEWS

Surrealism and Film

# LOS OLVIDADOS

Cinematic criticism. Traditionally no modesty restrains those who publicly devote themselves to this task. A generally observed characteristic must nevertheless extinguish some of the distress of those who make a profession of analysing films and deciding whether they are good or bad according to their own taste or particular dispositions for if one is able to draw together a general opinion of a certain group of people concerning a painting or a book, it seems that the same people lapse into the most perfect disagreement when it comes to the title of one of the latest films. To seek to cross the paid eulogisms of the critics, if it does not simply consist of a majority for or against a film recalling parliamentary attitudes too much, nothing gets to be decided.

Equally one must ask from each what is, in the presence of a film, the general criterion of judgement to use. What in the end limits a certain absolute agreement of the values of the cinematic work, to establish a decimal system of reference on a precise plan considered as a unity. There would probably be agreement about films like *Battle-*

*ship Potemkin, L'Age d'Or*, the film of *Charlot* and several others perhaps. This result obtained, it would be seen that it is rather for their moral and revolutionary value that we judge the film, to the extent that their presence responds to some intimate appeal. In short, in viewing a film we can ask ourselves how much this appeal has been satisfied.

The most recent *Bunuel* film is one of those which causes the most magnificent resonances within us, one of those films which appeal to revolt. It is for this reason that we have no hesitation in placing *Los Olvidados* (The Forgotten Ones) on the same level as *L'Age d'Or* — from the same author who made the *Andalusian Dog* and *Land Without Bread* in a similar spirit and with the same values.

We are in Mexico, in a quarter where the houses are built in the immediate neighbourhood of the rubbish dump, among the ruins, in the wastegrounds. Living there, a group of children abandoned to themselves, for whom no one cares. The society from which they came offers no acceptable solution to

their situation. Some ridiculous houses of correction can certainly do nothing against a destiny relentless to lose them. The world in which they roam is narrowly closed, all exits are guarded: only crime can open the way, can conserve their lives and even prevent them from losing it. Theft, mendacity, pederasty, guarantee their subsistence, cruelty and murder, their protection.

Throughout the length of the film, Bunuel presents a condensation of all the aspects of the depressing reality to which these beings are darkly thrown, with a black vertiginousness in which the dream can escape only into eroticism. Tied to his seat, the spectator is terrified and submerged by the incessant flux of Bunuel's passionate rage, petrified by the uninterrupted spectacle of the most dazzling ferocity. It is one of the most atrociously convincing films we have ever been given to see. One reflects then on the basely commercial alibis which the distributors have invoked in placing on the film the inscription *Have pity for them!*



It is hardly of pity that 'the forgotten ones' have need, but of Revolution.

G. GOLDFAYN (1954)  
TRANSLATED BY  
M. RICHARDSON.

## MY Last BREath....

My last breath: Thoughts on dying

For a longtime I have inscribed a notebook with the names of my dead friends. I call this book *The Book of the Dead*. I often thumb through it. It comprises about a hundred names, some at the sides of others, in alphabetical order. I include only the men and women with whom, at one time or another, I have had a true human contact and the members of the Surrealist Group are marked with a red cross. 1977/78 was a fatal year for the group: Man Ray, Calder, Max Ernst and Prevert all died within a few months.

Some of my friends detest this book, doubtless fearing that they will one day appear in it. I don't share their opinion. This familiar list permits me to recall such and such a person who without it would have only forgetfulness for departure. Once I was deceived. My sister Conchita told me of the death of a Spanish writer who was very much

### Bunuel

Any of Luis Bunuel's works since *Belle de Jour* (*The Milky Way*, *Tristana*, *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*) is a profound experience; it is impossible to apply to them the insipid vocabulary of the cinema critic. We have previously noted (see *Arsenal* 1, 'Since Atheists Dare Exist') the purity and strength of the Bunuelian system of absolute divergences, which, for its richness and depth, is comparable only to those of Fourier, Lautreamont, Roussel and Duchamp, and is illimitably superior to the clever maunderings of any given exemplar of venality and swinishness in film production, from the retarded Howard Hawks to the repulsive Jean-Luc Godard.

It is significant that the partisans of various 'theories of film' (none of which is more than a childish attempt to whitewash the most morally bankrupt Hollywood excretions) have had to maintain an uneasy silence in Bunuel's presence. Let us admit, once and for all, that today Bunuel alone demonstrates what is to be done in cinema.

younger than me. I included him. Some time later, sitting in a Madrid care, I saw him come through the door and make his way towards me. For a few moments I thought I was going to take the hand of a ghost.

For a longtime the thought of death has been familiar to me. Since the walking skeletons in the streets of Calanda and the processions of Holy Week, death has been part of my life. I have never wanted to ignore it, nor to deny it. But there is not a lot to be said when one is an atheist like me. We must die with the mystery. Sometimes I think to myself that I would like to know, but to know what? We know neither before nor after. After everything, nothing. Nothing awaits us but decay, but the sickly-sweetness of eternity. Perhaps I will have myself cremated to avoid that.

When I have nothing better to do I often think of our old Hell. We know that the flames and forks have disappeared and that for modern theologians Hell is only a simple deprivation of divine light. I see myself floating in eternal darkness, with my body, with all of my sensibility, which we need for the final resurrection. Suddenly another body touches me in the infernal space. It is a Siamese who has been dead for two thousand years after falling from a coconut tree. He lies in the darkness. Millions of years pass by, then I feel another blow on the back. This one was a sutler at the time of Napoleon. And so it goes on. I permit myself a moment in the agonising shadows of this new Hell, then I return to earth, where I remain.

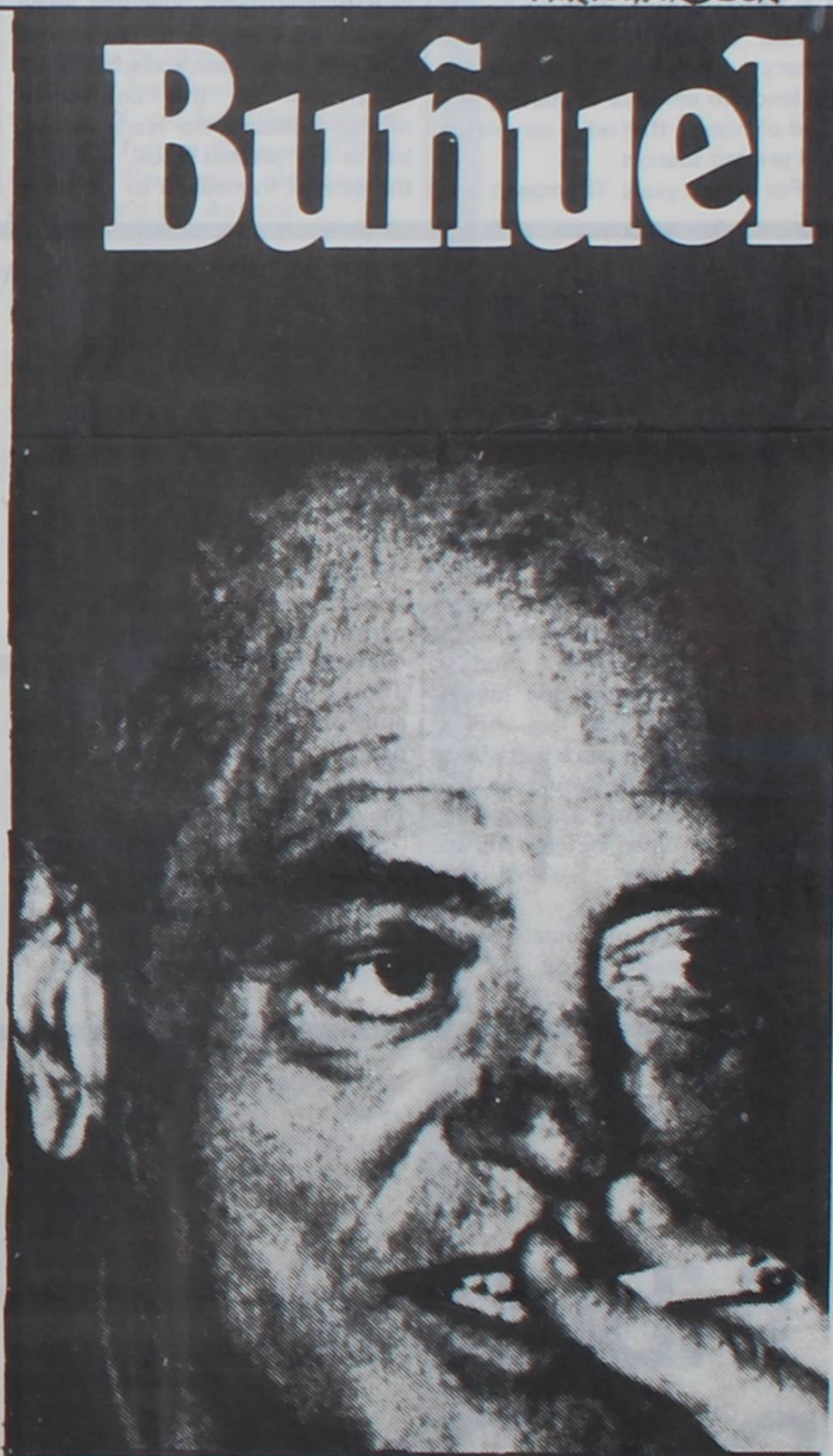
With no illusions about death, I still question the forms that it can take. Sometimes I think that a sudden death is admirable, like that of my friend Max Aub, who died of a stroke whilst playing cards. But most of the time my preference is for a slow more anticipated death, which would permit me to salute for a last time the whole of the life I have known. For several years, each time that I leave a place I know well, such as ones where I have lived and worked, which are part of myself, like Paris, Madrid,

Toledo, El Paullas, San Jose, Purua, I stop for a moment to make my farewells. I address it, saying for example: 'Goodbye San Jose. I've known some happy times here. Without you my life would have been different. Now that I'm going I will no longer see you. You will continue without me. I bid you goodbye.' I say goodbye to all, to the mountains, to the springs, to the trees, to the frogs.

Of course it sometimes happens that I return to a place to which I have already said goodbye. No matter. In leaving I salute it for a second time.

It is thus that I would like to die, knowing that this time I shall not return. When people have asked me for several years, why I travel less and less, I reply 'Because of fear of death'. They tell me that there is no more chance of dying here than there and I say 'It is not fear death in general. You don't understand. In reality it's all the same to die. But particularly not in the course of moving.' The most awful death, for me, is that which occurs in a hotel room in the middle of open suitcases and disordered books.

Equally awful, and perhaps worse, seems to me to be the death which is deferred by medical techniques. In the name of the Hippocratic oath which places respect for human life above all else, the doctors have created the most refined form of modern torture: survival. That seems to me to be criminal. I even get to the point of pitying Franco, who was maintained artificially alive for months at the price of incredible suffering. And to what end? If it is the case that doctors help us sometimes, most of the time they are just *des faiseurs d'argent*, money-makers chained to the science and horrors of technology. When the moment comes I should like to be allowed to die and even for them to lend a hand to help it come more quickly. In the near future I am convinced, I hope, that a law will authorise euthanasia, under certain circumstances. Respect for human life no longer has any meaning when it consists of a long torture both for those who are



going and for those who remain.

At the approach of my last breath, I often think of a last joke. I will contact all those among my friends who remain, like me, convinced atheists. Desolate, they will all take their places around my bed. Then a priest enters and I call him over. To the great scandal of my friends, I confess, ask for absolution for all of my sins and receive extreme-unction. After that I turn over on my side and die.

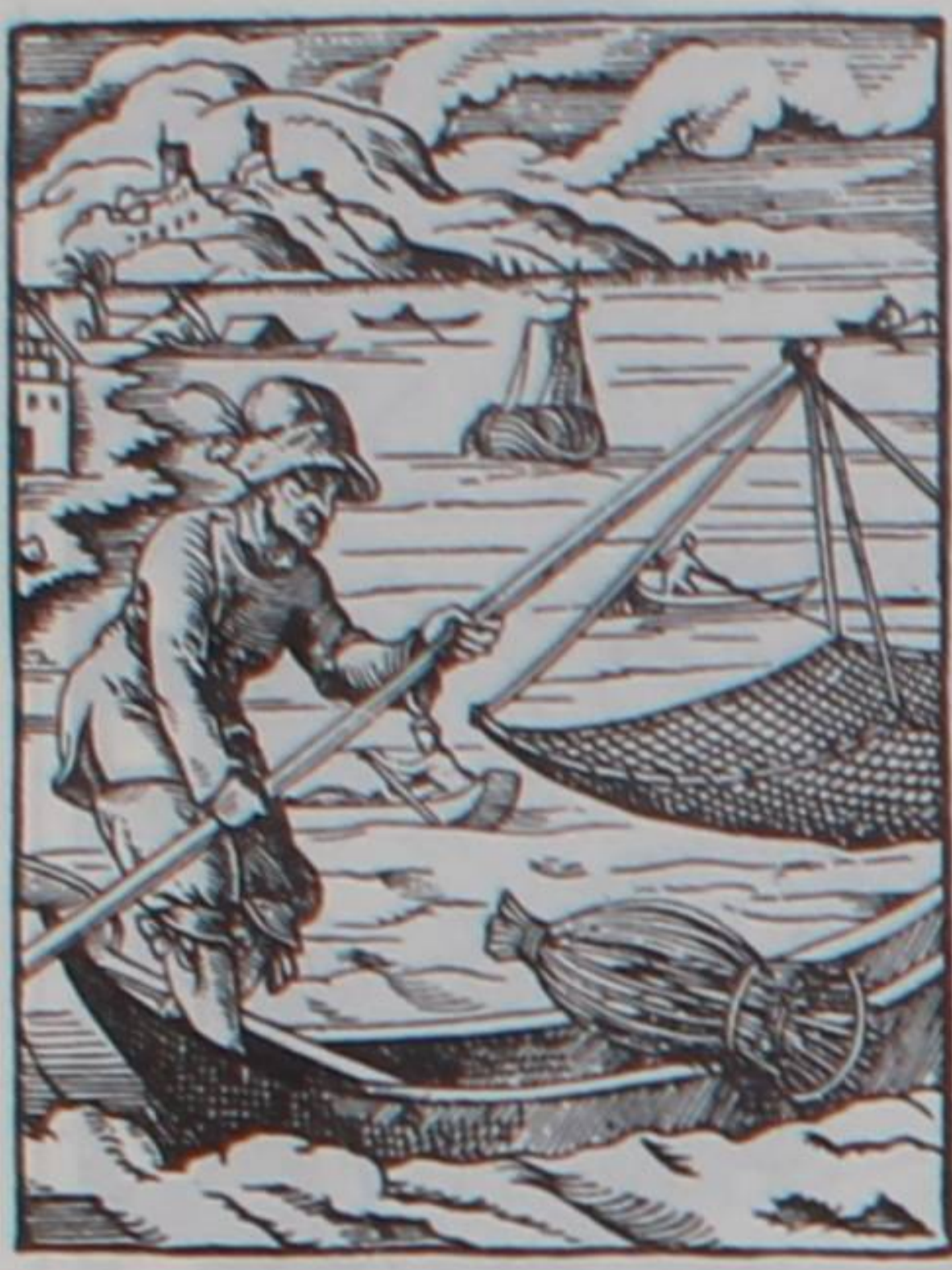
But would one find the strength to joke at such a moment?

One regret: not to know what is going to happen. To abandon the world in full swing, as though in the middle of a serial. I think that this

curiosity of the after-death would not exist at other times, or would exist less, in a world which changed less. A confession: in spite of my hatred for information I would like to be able to rise among the dead every ten years, to go to a newspaper stall and buy some of them. I would ask for nothing more. My newspapers under my arms, pale, brushing against the walls, I will return to the cemetery and read about the disasters of the world before sleeping again satisfied, in the reassuring shelter of the tomb.

Luis Bunuel *Mon dernier soupir*  
(Robert Laffont 1982)

p 314/317



# Community & Individualism

*Living the Fishing*  
by Paul Thompson, with Tony Wailey and Trevor Lummis (Routledge £13.95, paper £7.95).

Evidence from life for the contentions of the anarchist theorists often comes from unexpected sources, which is why I want to draw attention to this oral history of the fishing industry. Paul Thompson is an academic, though hardly an academic historian. He is Reader in Social History at Essex University, and if you know his name it is probably because he wrote one of the very best of the innumerable books about William Morris (not to be confused with the biography by his namesake E P Thompson) or because he is a pioneer in the techniques of oral history — the collection of verbal evidence to enhance or modify the kind of history that relies on written and printed sources.

For many years Thompson and

his colleagues collected the reminiscences of old people born in the late nineteenth century, most of whom, in the nature of things, are by now dead. One of the fruits of this work was his book *The Edwardians*, about growing up in the first decade of this century. And something which struck him — and also struck me — about the evidence collected in this book was that there was one community in Britain where parents of that period were more 'progressive' in terms of their gentle, generous and civilised attitude to their children, than those in the ordinary British family of the time in any social class.

This particular community lived in the remotest possible part of these islands. They were the Shetlanders, who made a meagre living combining fishing with subsistence crofting. Thompson's search for an explanation of this unexpected finding initiated the research that led to the present book, where in the general framework of the com-

plex history of the fishing industry, he links his 'close-ups' of fishing lives in Buckie on the Moray Firth, Aberdeen, the Western Isles, and Shetland, with Tony Wailey's account of the Fleetwood trawler industry and Trevor Lummis's chapter on the family and community life of East Anglian fishermen.

The evolution of fishing is used to illuminate a variety of issues on the relation between working life, domestic life and community life, and on the place of women and children in each. In this light, the famous strikes of the Fleetwood and Hull trawlermen are reinterpreted as struggles, not for cash, but for a working schedule that destroyed or brutalised their family lives. Every step in the elaborate argument questions our assumptions.

Modernisation theory, for example, whether Marxist or capitalist, contrasts societies 'slumbering in traditional immobility and poverty' with developed societies 'which have earned their present affluence

through adaptability, acceptance of the logic of science, the cash nexus and individualism'. But for some fishing communities, Thompson demonstrates, there are other paths to prosperity, 'in some cases based on the re-creation of more "traditional" attitudes, such as work organisation round the family boat rather than wage labour'.

The British large-scale capitalist fishing industry is dead, and Thompson attributes this not to over-fishing, the new sea limits, or the attraction of North Sea oil as an alternative employment:

*The cause of it lies in how they worked the trawlers: in a form of organisation that took in skilled family fisherman, made them into paid labourers, assaulted their moral values, drove them towards drink. What place is there in the harsh system which they imposed, for fostering the co-operative adaptability — let alone imaginativeness — which is needed to succeed in fishing now? The industry they created is indeed almost finished, and one can but gasp at the ruthless logic of a steam capitalism which had such power to suck men into its system, transform their work from a way of life into a form of bondage, break their family lives, degrade entire communities — and, ultimately, bring about its own destruction.*

Yet who would have guessed fifty years ago, he asks, that the modern capitalist trawler fleets of ports like Fleetwood, Hull and Aberdeen would today be on the verge of bankruptcy, while the then collapsing traditional fishing communities would now be flourishing? How is it that the prosperous crew from a

remote island, who 'by the normal logic of "progress" ought to have been driven out of business decades ago — could afford to lay up their £½ million ship for a week, in order to take in the hay harvest on their crofts'?

The answer, he is convinced, lies in the constellations of beliefs, values and attitudes, which are so contrasted between one community and another. In his chapter on 'The Protestant Ethic, the Family and the Economy', noting that one key factor in sustaining entrepreneurial initiative is the social encouragement of individuality, he turns upside down the truisms on which members of the present government like to pontificate:

*It is not the egalitarianism of the wider society which has stifled creativity, and forced innovators into social isolation, but its demand for the social conformity and quiescence necessary to maintain inequality. The importance of the fishing communities is that they know the viability of an alternative way: for it is only such socially isolated groups which have been able to sustain up to the present the truer form of egalitarianism which fosters real social independence and individuality.*

He thinks that the Shetlanders' fusion of communality and individualism suggests to us all a glimpse of an alternative future 'based on social egalitarianism on the one hand and more diffused access to capital and resources on the other'. This, Thompson concludes, could be as economically effective as it is socially appealing.

Colin Ward

# Krishnamurti

*The Urgency of Change* by J Krishnamurti (Gollancz £4.95).

When I first read Krishnamurti, during the Second World War, I found myself in agreement with most of his remarks on religious ideologies and other human inhibitions to straight and logical thinking. When the late Annie Besant found Krishnamurti as a boy, she hoped that he would be the new guru for the Theosophical Society, but when he grew up he would have none of it, and has gone his own way ever since.

The tendency of human beings to blame outside forces for the

state of the world and to latch on to religions and ideologies to provide the solutions to their problems continues unabated. Although there is an increasing impatience with the solutions presented by religious and political gurus, it has not yet expressed itself in action that has resulted in change. Those that think that change can be enforced without a majority of people changing their personal attitudes should have learnt that the result is no change at all.

Our responses are conditioned by childhood, by education and by all other influences that impinge on the individual. One of the ways of changing the attitudes of people to

each other is to question these responses. As Krishnamurti says, nobody can push you out of the trap of conditioned responses but yourself: 'Nobody can push you out of your trap — no guru, no drug, no mantra, nobody, including myself — nobody, especially myself.' God is a word which has meaning only in the mind; only the movements that the word gives use to have any real meaning, and in general these movements have brought darkness to the human race rather than light. As we see in the world today, people think so little of humanity and so much of this word that has no reality that they can blow themselves and others up with a smile on their lips. Such is the power of conditioning, based on fear.

If I were to describe a society

without fear, that society would be anarchistic. Anarchism is not an ideology, and where it becomes one it is dead. As Krishnamurti says, an ideology is a conclusion, and life is not a conclusion but is constant awareness and development.

Is complete negation the answer? Do we not have need sometimes to oppose tyranny in whatever way we can? Many of our fellow humans are in a situation in which they do not have the leisure or situation to engage in the semantics of Krishnamurti: 'We do not realise that we have created society, this disorder, these walls; each one of us is responsible for it all. What we are society is. Society is not different from us. If we are in conflict, avaricious, envious, fearful, we bring about such a society.' This is no doubt largely true, as we see in

the way people vote for particular groups for short-sighted reasons of supposed self-interest.

Which brings me back to the conditioned responses which all of us have to deal with:

*Be concerned with radical change, with total revolution. The only revolution is the revolution between man and man, between human beings. That is our only concern. In this revolution there are no blue-prints, no ideologies, no conceptual utopias. We must take the fact of the actual relationship between men and change that radically. That is the real thing. And this revolution must be immediate, it must not take time. It is not achieved through evolution, which is time.*

Alan Albon

# Tribute to Don Gerardo

November 20 is a special day in the Spanish calendar. For the Right, it marks the Día de los Caídos (those Franco supporters killed in the civil war) and the anniversary of the death of Falangist founder and leader Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, executed in Alicante by Republican forces in 1936.

For the libertarian Left, the day marks the death during the siege of Madrid of anarchist leader Buenaventura Durruti, head of the famous Durruti Column and FAI-CNT purist of the deed.

This November 20 saw another, different commemorative ceremony.

While a new graveside headstone for Durruti was unveiled in Barcelona and several thousands of Franco supporters abused the police and journalists and shouted 'Viva Franco' in Madrid, the 89 year old English author Gerald Brenan was honoured in Alhaurin el Grande, a small pueblo near Malaga in Andalusia. A plaque naming a street after 'Don Gerardo' — as Brenan has been called by Andalusians for more than 60 years — was unveiled outside Brenan's house. The president of the Malaga council read a telegram from government vice-president Alfonso Guerra, praising Brenan's love of Spain and

'great work', above all his history of the roots of the Spanish civil war, *The Spanish Labyrinth* (1943), 'which so greatly influenced our generation'. There was also a round-table discussion of Brenan's books on Spain by leading Spanish intellectuals, plus fellow foreign 'hispanistas', Ian Gibson (author of *The Assassination of Garcia Lorca*) and Gabriel Jackson (author of *The Spanish Republic and the Civil War*).

Brenan moved to Alhaurin el Grande fifteen years ago with his 39 year old companera the poet Lynda Nicholson, after the death of his wife Gamel. Before that, he had lived and worked for many years in another pueblo near Malaga, Churriana. Born on Malta in 1894, after a run-away-from-home youth and service in WWI, Brenan first came to Spain and settled in Yegen, south of Granada, as a young man of almost twenty six early in 1920. He has recorded his many years there in *South From Granada* and in volume two of his autobiography, *Personal Record*. With almost no money and over 2,000 books, Brenan set out to catch up on his lost education and to learn the craft

of writing. His love-affair with Andalusia progressed as rapidly as his fluency in Spanish.

Apart from spells of travel and visits to England, Brenan spent the twenties and thirties in relative isolation writing, punctuated by visits from English friends like Carrington and Ralph Partridge, Lytton Strachy, Bertrand Russell and Virginia and Leonard Woolf. In the early 1930s he married the American poet Gamel Woolsey.

In June 1935 Brenan, by temperament and philosophy a liberal, democratic socialist, wrote to Bertrand Russell of the imminent disintegration of the Popular Front: 'Moderate Socialists, Revolutionary Socialists and Syndicalists are all at loggerheads. Disorders go on increasing and I think that the most likely end is dictatorship' — of the Left or Right Brenan didn't know.

Francisco's military uprising in July 1936 inaugurated the traumatic three year civil war, during which almost one million Spaniards died. For a time, Brenan covered the war as a correspondent, then went to England. The destruction of the

Spanish Republic and installation of Franco's dictatorship aroused him deeply. The result was his great labour to understand its origins, *The Spanish Labyrinth*, which even today remains unequalled as a study of modern Spanish history.

After the Second World War, Brenan returned to Churriana. Deeply involved in Spanish poetry and literature, his post-War books include *The Literature of the Spanish People*, and *The Face of Spain*, plus two novels *A Holiday By the Sea* and *The Lighthouse Always Says Yes*. As a young man, he had planned a life of St Teresa; in 1973 with Ms Nicholson he published his study of the life and poetry of *St John of the Cross*.

Now, almost 90, Brenan looks back serenely on his long life in Spain and his work. The country is now less poor; overall things are better. As for his work, 'I have written everything I wanted to write and now I await death tranquilly.'

A fine writer; a very good man. *Bravo!*, don Gerardo.

Patrick Flanagan  
Barcelona

It has been 8 months since the first meeting of the London Federation. During that time we have learnt much about the practical difficulties involved in organising, and maintaining enthusiasm for, the Federation. One major difficulty has been in trying to reconcile the differing requirements of individuals and of groups within the same structure. This has caused a few problems and much thought and debate. At the last Federation meeting (10th Dec.) it was agreed that we should solve this conflict of interests in the following way. In future, the London Anarchist Federation shall be solely group-based. Meetings shall be of group delegates only. Their purpose shall be to facilitate discussion and co-ordination between the various groups based in London. It shall also encourage the formation of new groups and welcomes both new and established groups at its meetings. The next LAF meeting will be on Saturday, 14th January 1984 at 8:00pm. The venue is The Prince Albert pub, Wharfedale Road, London N1. (near

Kings Cross station)  
A new organisation, the Anarchist Association, shall be formed to encourage the debate and discussion of anarchist ideas. These forums shall take place in an informal setting, hopefully conducive to vibrant, healthy debate. All are encouraged to attend, not only to increase their knowledge and understanding of anarchism, but also to meet other comrades who may be isolated and welcome the social aspect of these occasions. The first meeting of the AA will be on Sunday, 22nd January 1984 at 8:00pm, again at the Prince Albert pub, Wharfedale Road, London N1.  
We believe that these two organisations are a splendid opportunity to strengthen and further advance the concept of anarchy and, more so, its desirability and possibility. Their success, however, depends on a positive and continuing commitment by all involved to the basic anarchist ideas that have motivated them — co-operation and self-help. Only by working together and, as individuals, taking a full part in

that work, can we succeed in our aims.

A most successful and enjoyable day was had at the Anarchist Bookfair in London. A good turn-out by publishers/bookshops/distribution meant that few people left empty handed. All reported good sales — an unanticipated side-effect was that Housmans Bookshop, only 200 yds. from the venue, enjoyed one of its busiest days in a long time as prospective bookfair attenders had to pass it on the way! After an exceedingly dull Socialist Bookfair only a month before it must be said — we ain't so many but we're more fun.

An informal collection was made and, with only a few threats of physical violence, sufficient was gathered to pay all the costs of setting up the Fair and also to make a £25 contribution to the funds of the London Anarchist Federation. Our thanks to all who attended, both buyers and sellers. See you next year!

ALF

1 December 1983 — South East London

In a midnight attack an ALF group smashed the reinforced plate glass window of a Halal butchers shop in Knightsbridge, West Norwood. Red paint was also splashed over the front of the shop in protest against the cruelty involved in Halal ritual slaughter.

The window of 'Scotch Meats' butchers shop in Rosendale Road was also smashed.

4 December, 1983, Motherwell, Scotland

More than 70 animal rights campaigners broke into a drug company's factory and rescued animals which were being used for painful experiments. The raid took place during a demonstration organised by the Scottish Action Group For Animals (SAGA).

The raiders, many masked, and some carrying crowbars attacked the premises of Organon, a firm of biological and manufacturing chem-

ists on the Newhouse Industrial Estate. The animals rescued were three beagles, eight guinea pigs, two rats and a rabbit. These have now been taken to good homes. A quantity of files were also taken from the laboratory.

Twenty-three people were arrested following the raid and have been charged with theft.

Donations to help those arrested with their legal costs should be sent to Dept. X, c/o Fund For Animals, 12 Royal Terrace, Glasgow G3 7NY, Scotland. Please make cheques payable to Fund For Animals

Cruise

CRUISE FUND CORRECTION

We have to apologise for the gremlins getting into our typesetting of the list of donations to our Cruise Fund as printed in last issue.

Sharp eyed readers will have noted that the donations acknowledged did not add up to the total shown. Most sharp eyed of all will no doubt be RB of Manchester, who sent £6,

and HVGO of Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, who sent £10. Add this £16 to the items that did get through the machinery and you will find the total now correct.

So far we have had no calls upon this fund, but any FREEDOM readers having difficulty in paying a fine for Cruise resistance are reminded that help is available.

And a nuclear-free Yuletide to you all!

LATER:

Since the above was written, three more contributions have come in, from: AJSF, Derby: £20; University of Lancaster: £3; and JG, London W11: £50.

Our new total now is: £130.50. Many thanks!

In brief

Leon Brittan, Home Secretary, thinks that the scenes outside printing works in Warrington are 'organised anarchy'. Well, at least they now accept that it is possible. Now, don't let's disappoint them.

"Dogmas, theories and ideologies are disastrous weapons of government", Francis Pym, aspiring member of government.

Mrs Thatcher's 'stiffest upper lip' has won her a place in a list of the world's 12 most impressive lips, according to a lip-care products manufacturer.

The government of Temotu, Solomon Islands, has passed legislation setting a maximum price of £400 for a bride.

President Reagan has signed legislation repealing an 1867 law that barred use of federal funds for maintaining a diplomatic mission at the Vatican.

Nearly one in three people entitled to claim supplementary benefit are still not claiming it, according to Rhodes Boyson, Social Security

minister. Between 1979 and 1981 the amount unclaimed has more than doubled, from £355 million to £760 million.

The Vatican has, for the first time, issued guidelines on sex education, saying children should be taught that sex outside marriage, homosexuality and masturbation are 'moral disorders'. Sports and team spirit are recommended as antidotes. It attacks forms of sex education using audio-visual aids, 'which can arouse an unhealthy curiosity'. Friendship is okay, but should the bonds become 'manifestations of a genital character, they lose the authentic meaning of mature friendship — and prejudice the future prospects of an eventual marriage'.

The latest report of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board concludes that 'some organisers of demonstrations welcome violence in order to attract publicity'. The Board receives a 'not insignificant number of applications from people injured in marches and demonstrations.'

A policeman with four years service in the East End of London has told a jury that he has never heard of attacks on Asian homes or shops and has never heard police officers using insulting language about ethnic minorities. He has also never seen or heard of a Home Office report showing the high incidence of racially motivated assaults on Asians.

A black apprentice mechanic in South Africa has been sentenced to 18 months imprisonment for drinking tea from a mug with slogans of the African National Congress scratched on it.

Two convicted thieves have had their right hands amputated in Sudan, the first such punishment since the introduction of Islamic law last September.

Israel's rate of inflation reached a record of 21% in October. The first half of November showed 10% price increases. The annual figure for 1983 will be more than 163%.

The Campaign for Real Life is holding this year's Circle Christmas Party on Thursday evening, 22nd December. Meet in the bar at Baker Street Underground Station at 7:00pm.

