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## editorial

One more step towards the corporate state. One more step to remove the freedom of choice which is supposed to be the basis of our 'free' democracy.

Although the announcement by Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe that the employees at the state's Communications Centre at Cheltenham may be regarded as one more attack on trades unionism, in fact it is much more than that.

Under pressure from the USA, the British Government intends to introduce the polygraph (the lie detector) into regular use in government departments regarded as 'sensitive' as far as security is concerned—although everybody knows the lie detector is unreliable.

This is one more example of how the needs of the Pentagon are dictating behaviour to the British Government. This may worry patriots, but need not bother anarchists too much, since as far as we are concerned 'they're all the same' and Thatcher's government doesn't need much pushing along the road to 1984.

Far more significant, as we see it is the creeping division between the employees of the state and the rest of us. WE know that division is there all right—but until now it has been more in terms of mental attitudes instead of being built-in to the conditions of employment, as far as civilian workers are concerned. Now the division between them and us is sharpened, codified.

Predictably, the trades unions are already some of our readers by saying that we agree with them—for our recent arguments have been about—as far as we are concerned anyway,—that very freedom of choice which is now being denied the workers at Cheltenham.

But this raises another issue. How much can we care about the freedom of choice or the working conditions of those 7000 workers at GCHQ who have in effect already sold out to the state?

There are 1000 radio officers there monitoring communications behind the iron curtain who can, it is said, listen in to chat between taxi-drivers in Moscow! These workers are already serving the warfare state and if they are ready to go on doing so under Thatcher's terms, they will be given £1,000 and the right to join 'departmental associations'—company Unions to you, brother.

Already Labour and TU leaders are complaining 'Why couldn't they be made to sign a "no strike" agreement with the government, as the gas and electricity workers have?'. That's about the level of reformist thought!

As for anarchist thought—do we want these workers to occupy and take over their workplaces? Can THEY come up with alternative socially useful work, as the Lucas workers did?

## The State of Maggie

It's a great shame, isn't it? Instead of a popular uprising of the people dislodging the most repressive Prime Minister in living memory, it is falling to a load of backbench Tory wets to give us even a slight hope that she may be riding for a fall.

Most Tories—and not just the wets—really do think that the party stands against centralisation, against the steady encroachment of the state into everyday life. But the only way this has been expressed by Thatcher's monetarism is to attack all nationalised and municipalised industries or services and seek to put them into private hands—ie, the rich particularly, but also the miriads of small investors (and union pension funds!) who dabble in stocks and shares and those working people who think they are making themselves freer by buying their own council houses.

This latter ploy—said by many to have been one of the most important vote-winners for the Conservatives in the last two elections—is, like many other Tory ploys, backfiring. Building Societies, long in the tooth in the matter of putting up cash for mortgages, are very careful in examining the means of prospective buyers of houses. They weigh many factors, but most of all the income of the main breadwinner in a family, and it is his or her ability to pay—and prospects for continuing to pay for many years—that governs the Society's decision on terms, or whether to grant a mortgage at all. They may call themselves 'building' Societies, but of course they are nothing of the sort: they are simply moneylenders, or usurers, as they used to be known.

When the government, however, sent out its dictat to local councils to start selling municipally owned housing, the councils practised no such care in selecting buyers whose longterm prospects made a safe bet for mortgages. They simply took the overall income of the family at the time of the application, without taking into account the fact that grown-up sons and daughters tend to leave home and that everybody, nowadays, is liable to the sudden sack.

What is now happening is that families' incomes are halved or quartered by a variety of change in circumstances, and the mortgage cannot be met—which means that local councils are now finding many of their mortgages are running into debt—and we all know what happens when you can't pay the mortgage.... If we were cynical, which of course we're not, we might think that Labour Councils were perfectly aware of what might happen—since they do, after all, have a bit more experience in dealing with the problems of real families than the policy-makers in Whitehall—but cynically let it all go ahead, foreseeing what might happen to the Tories' vote-catching scheme.

This particular business has not yet come to the boil—but it will. It is,

however, another matter relating to local councils that has brought about the afore-mentioned backbench 'revolt'.

### Politicking

'Revolt', even in quotes, is of course far too strong a word to apply to a reluctance of a handful of Thatcher's rank and file to support positively her 'rate capping' measure. This is a trick by which high-spending Labour councils suffer cuts in order to bring them in line with the lower-spending local authorities. This is crude politicking by Thatcher, for the high spenders are mostly the poorer inner-city Labour boroughs, where more people need all sorts of support in terms of benefits—while the low spenders are those middle-class Tory areas where people are better able to look after themselves and their dependants.

Maggie obviously hopes that the simple common people will blame their local councils if local benefits are cut, while the country Tories will be confirmed in their loyalties to her. She is, after all, interested only in immediate profits, both in money and political terms, and so her plans may pay off—but the fact remains that everything she does seems to be aiming at greater power for the Government in Westminster and less for the regions.

Her attack on the GLC and the other metropolitan authorities throughout the country—Liverpool, Manchester, etc—is a case in point. No doubt it sticks in her craw that just across the Thames, in County Hall, sits Red Ken Livingstone and his Greater London Council majority—operating a budget bigger than that of many sovereign states, and wielding an influence she wants for herself.

It is certainly not for anarchists to defend the GLC—but then you would think that it is not for Tories to seek to extend the power of the centralised state—except that the Conservatives need the power of the state to back up their foreign policies abroad and need money now being spent on helping the old and poor, and on the Health Service, to build Mr Brittan's better prisons and to defend them from the Russians.

It is in her attitude to the Health Service that she is exposed as the common political liar she is—for how

anarchist fortnightly



many times during last year's election did she promise that 'The Health Service is safe with me...? Yet how early in the session did the screws begin to be put upon the Hospitals—especially the training hospitals—and the supply of special equipment, like Kidney machines?

### The Jackals

The present action by backbenchers (including ex-ministers like Frances Pym and Edward Heath, who has never forgiven Maggie for ousting him from the party leadership) is based, we would think, less on caring for the old and the needy, than for the necessity for the individuals concerned to take the longer term view, if they want to get back into Parliament next time. But also, it could be that they are beginning to sense a weakness in the Iron Maiden, and like the jackals they are, they will move in for the kill if they see personal advantage in it. Only starry-eyed idealists believe they are there for the public good.

For instance, is it only coincidence that this rumbling from below has come along just at the same time that Mrs Thatcher is ever so slightly embarrassed by the revelation that when she was in Oman in 1981, and was incidentally trying to get a massive contract for building a prestigious new university (yes, a whole, modern new concrete university in the middle of the desert!) worth £300 million, her son Mark had surprisingly found his way to Oman also—and was acting for the one British construction firm, Cementation, which had tendered for the job?

Not that we would dream of accusing Maggie of nepotism, using her position for the advantage of any member of her family, or any such nasty imputation, but, it was just a

bit indiscreet, wasn't it? And after the Parkinson affair last year, Tories are getting a bit jumpy about discretion.

On top of which, Maggie's greatest triumph—that reason to rejoice down in the Falklands—is turning out to be a running sore on the national budget.

Not only is the famous airstrip escalating in cost month by month, but we have just learned about massive bungling in the provision of houses for British personnel which were provided in prefab form—except that the cost of transport, erection, building, draining, etc, etc, has escalated to such an extent that they are costing £130,000 each. Back to the sums we were doing in April 1982! Wouldn't it be amusing if it transpired that Mark Thatcher had something to do with the contract for those houses as well?

Altogether it hasn't been a good winter for Maggie so far. Let's hope that the cold winds blow up a storm and she doesn't ride it. But then, short of an anarchist revolution, somebody else would only take place.....

PS  
Later:

Talking of running sores the latest news from the Falklands is that the lamb meat which is the main (only?) product is subject to boils and cysts—which can fortunately be cut out, so the meat is good enough for the soldiers, but not for the EEC... French farmers—rejoice!

LESSON OF WARRINGTON

As one of the Middlesbrough comrades criticised by PS in his article 'Anarchists and Unions', I feel that a reply must be made to his elitist and patronising article. The only way that PS knew that we attended the picket line at Warrington was thro' a leaflet we produced, 'The lessons of Warrington'. Nowhere in this leaflet is there a defence of the closed shop or the NGA. In fact the closed shop is not even mentioned. The leaflet was/is a discussion of the tactics used. We have argued that the days of the successful massed picket are over, and that our strength lies not in having 'a ruck' with the police, but with taking over our workplaces and communities.

Why then did I attend the Warrington picket line if it was not to defend the NGA and the closed shop?

Two reasons: one, to show solidarity with sacked workers in a struggle against an intransigent boss and the full state apparatus and, more importantly I went to fight for the right, the freedom, to show solidarity in a positive way ie for the right to 'secondary picket'. The state is trying to destroy this, as they realise, that solidarity amongst ordinary people is the greatest threat to their rule. Remember, that when you are defending a principle you don't have to like the other participants or defend their views. You fight for the principle I am sure that anarchists in the peace movement agree with this.

I agree that the closed shop is something that must be argued against, but not from the bosses point of view. We must argue from an anarchist view that although we are against the compulsory closed shop

,we are for voluntary association in councils/syndicates/unions. We must argue that this is where our strength lies. We must argue with ordinary workers, discuss with them and not insult them as PS does.

The whole tone of his article is patronising and elitist, concepts that should be an anathema to Solidarity.

Ian  
Middleborough

PS REPLIES:

'Elitist' and 'patronising' are fashionable swear-words at the moment, and I suppose just saying that is patronising for a start. So I'll start again.

I may indeed have been patronising in that I wrote last time about anarchist attitudes to political parties—which of course all our readers know—and then on to our attitude to the trades unions, and how, I quote myself: 'We want to see the people who work in industry take over the running of that industry..' and continued: 'But at no time can (the anarchists) set themselves up as leaders except in the sense of inspiring others to act for themselves.' If that is elitist, will the Middlesbrough comrade please spell it out for me in words of one syllable that I can understand?

Secondly, Ian is wrong in saying that 'The only way PS knew that we attended the picket line at Warrington was thro' a leaflet we produced' 'The lessons of Warrington'. I knew about it through a letter we received from someone who signed off as S M, Middlesbrough', who 'dared' us to express comment upon it.

This letter took us to task for printing other letters about the Van-

cover Five without spelling out exactly where we stand. Do you care, SM? And then it went on to tell us that Freedom is 'nothing more than a rag, producing bullshit, expensive bullshit too'—plus the odd 'fuck all', etc, etc. We thought we were doing Middlesbrough a favour in not printing it, but I personally thought it worth following up the reference to Warrington, which told us that the Middlesbrough anarchist went down there to 'exert their influence to spread revolutionary unionism..'But 'in no way were they supportive reformist unions such as the NGA.'All I can say is that they chose an issue, in that case.

Mind you, it did go on to say: '... the saddest thing is that FREEDOM is held in high esteem. It is THE Anarchist paper. obviously it must have done something to deserve this praise. 'Yes, perhaps it has—and perhaps SM just can't see what it But back to Ian and things that matter. Perhaps if Middlesbrough had bothered to send us a copy of the leaflet we would have got their position straight—but there are some ragged edges in what he says above. Like 'the days of the successful massed picket are over' ,but he nevertheless went to Warrington to fight 'for the right to "secondary picket" '.

I may be wrong, but it seems to me that the object of a secondary picket is to make it strong enough to stop exits and entries from the plant—and the stronger the better. In other words it has to be a mass picket to be worth while—and that automatically brings about 'a ruck with the police'.

Within the context of reformist

unions, I don't know what the answer is. I do ask Ian to please read again what I actually wrote and, if he can see through the patronising tone to the actual words, he might agree that I did not argue against the closed shop from the bosses point of view—and if he wants us

down here to know the reasoned view of the Middlesbrough group, let him make himself responsible for sending their leaflets. We may even be glad to reprint them. 's that for patronising?

To end on a personal note. I do not write to impress my comrades or indeed for convinced anarchists anywhere. I write as a propagandist hoping that someone, somewhere will pick up FREEDOM for the first time and see that anarchists are not mad bombthrowers, but do have a reasoned point of view.

Obviously, for those who know more than I do, this approach may appear 'patronising' but I believe there are millions of people out there who are disoriented with politicians—and trades union leaders—but cannot see an alternative. The first thing we have to do is to let them know that there are many equally disillusioned, and that we do have an alternative.

The second thing is to make the alternative look constructive and fruitful—even if only in terms of personal satisfaction. You may find some respond to cries of 'Bullshit' and 'fuck off' , but I prefer the bland approach, myself. Sweet reason may be less exciting, but one convinced by reason, instead of a rush of blood to the head, is more likely to remain a comrade for life.

THE OLD NEW BILL

In what our government calls a free thinking society I would like to make my response to the latest Police Bill known, in the hope that this letter will bring to the attention of the people of this country the dangers of having a super powerful police force.

Unfortunately, throughout the course of history humanity has had the bad experience of having suffered at the hands of these super powerful police forces of one kind or another. It makes little difference to the public at large whether they be dressed like the Gestapo types in black leather coats or they are wearing their blue uniforms as masks — they are one and the same thing.

As soon as they slip out from under the thumb of suspicious local tribune, they become arbitrary, merciless, a law unto themselves. They think no more of justice, but only of establishing themselves as a

privileged and envied elite.

It has come to the notice of some of the media that the present police force has already mistaken the attitude of natural caution and uncertainty of the civilian population as admiration and respect, and over the last two or three years, they have started to swagger back and forth, crashing doors of innocent people, flashing their warrant cards and assortment of weapons in a megalomaniac euphoria.

We the people have become not masters, but servants; such a police force becomes merely an aggregate of uniformed criminals, the more baneful in that their position is unchallenged and sanctioned by law. Some of the elite squads we have amongst us now cannot regard a human being in terms other than as an item or object to be processed as expeditiously as possible.

Under even most of the present

laws, public convenience or dignity means nothing, police prerogatives assume the status of divine law and submissiveness is demanded.

The general public should take note about what our police forces are doing now. If a police officer kills a civilian, it is a regrettable circumstance, the officer was probably over zealous, insufficient evidence, justifiable homicide. If the civilian is an innocent person they will then go to any lengths to make it known he or she was not as innocent as the media first made out.

However if a policeman is killed then all hell breaks loose. The police have even taken to publicly foaming at the mouth through the media. All other business comes to a standstill until the perpetrator of this most dastardly deed is found out. Inevitably, when he is found out he is beaten or tortured or killed or a combination of all three for his

intolerable presumption.

The police complain that they are unable to function properly or efficiently without the present Police Bill, that criminals escape them and therefore they want more power, but the powers they are asking for are not for chasing criminals like myself, but these powers will enable them to suppress the ordinary working man on the street. When he finally comes to his senses and realises what this government is actually doing if they get their way, then we will be no better off than some of the countries they are so quick to condemn.

One only needs to look through the pages of history to see what monsters governments like this have created out of their police forces.

The police in this country holds the power of life or death over us now.

How much power do they want?

Roy Ivers  
Hull

REMEMBER DRESDEN

On the nights of February 13th and 14th 1945, British and American bombers rained down bombs on Dresden. This was at a time when its streets and buildings were known to be crowded with 500,000 refugees and 27,000 allied prisoners of war in addition to a basic population of around 400,000. The numbers killed 'couldn't be counted'. The city burned for seven days and nights and over eleven square miles of buildings were destroyed.

It is right to remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is right that we are appalled at street explosions which kill and maim two, three, six or a dozen.

Surely we should mark these days, Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th February 1984, privately and publicly by whatever means seem appropriate. The bombing of Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki must be seen as horrific examples of the indiscriminate killing that is always a consequence of war.

And not only of nuclear weapons in war.

Let's work together to re-emphasise that the aim of an anti-war movement must be not only to abolish particular weapons systems but to oppose war and the social structures that lead to it.

Peter Ford and Christine Higgott  
Bristol

THANKS

Doug Fazackerley is currently on remand in Armley Prison Leeds, and wishes to send his Thanks to Simon Saxton and his brother Paul of Keighley Anarchists for visiting him in all weathers and checking his home and belongings.

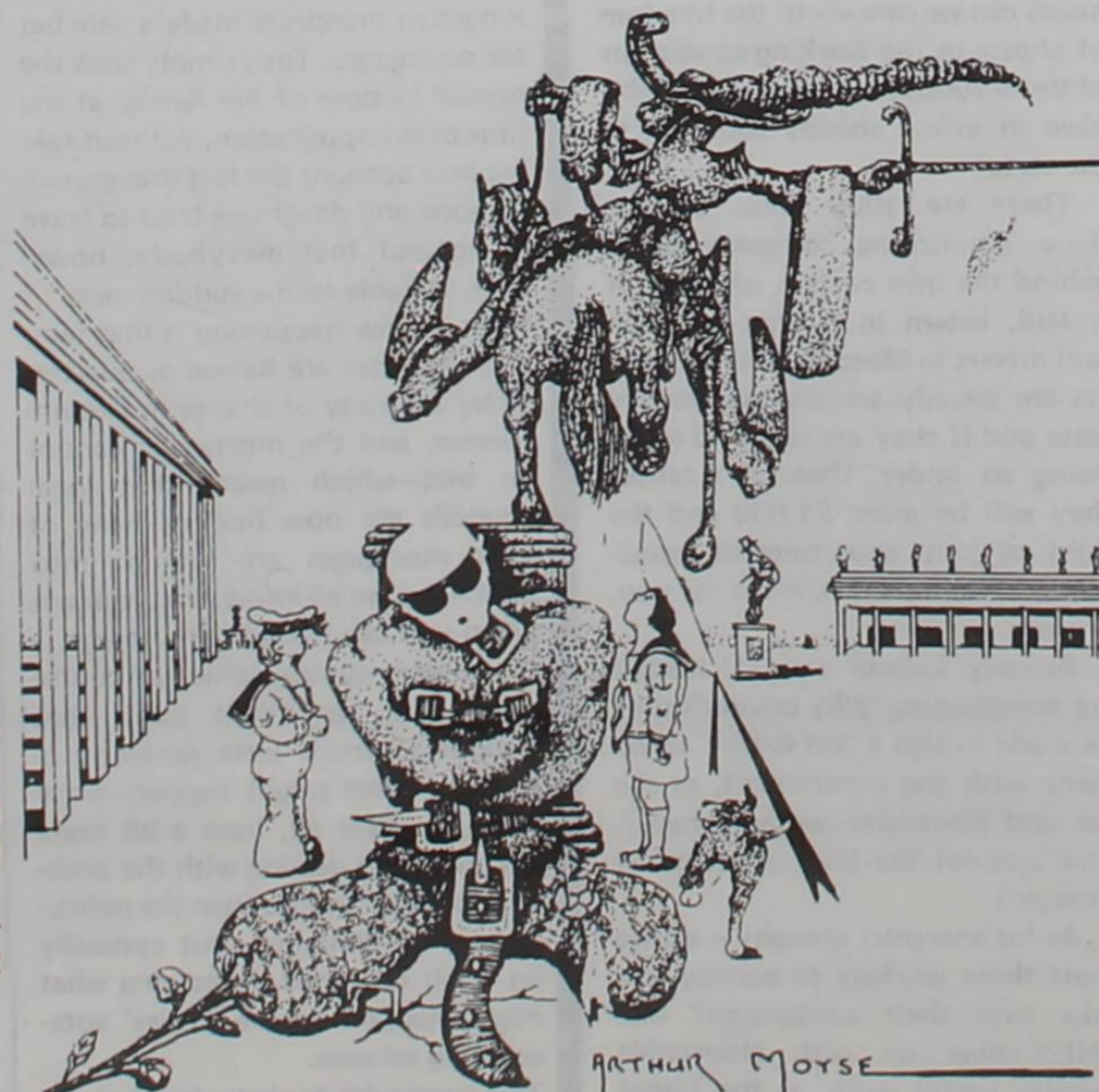
He would be grateful for any anarchist papers that could be got through to him:

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# Towards Mass Action

The Christmas holiday and the coming of the New Year gave the nuclear disarmament movement a valuable opportunity to consider the situation as the critical year 1983 ended and the mythical year 1984 arrived; but there seems to have been little serious consideration of its paradoxical position. Its membership and support are growing, yet its activity and influence are static. During 1983 it organised two of its largest demonstrations — in London on 22nd October and at Greenham Common on 11th December — but suffered two of its worst defeats — the total absence of impact on the General Election and the installation of Cruise missiles at Greenham Common; but there are no signs that it knows how to advance on the former or avoid retreating from the latter. The CND national office has larger income and staff than ever before, but is offering no initiative except to stifle initiative. The CND National Council decided at its meeting on 14/15th January to have no national demonstration at Easter or during President Reagan's visit to Britain in June, and indeed no London demonstration at all. A great deal of important educational and propaganda work is being done, but there is no sense of direction, rather a feeling of paralysis. The only major action being discussed is what to do if the Cruise missiles are brought out of Greenham Common, but two of the most obvious answers — everyone to Greenham Common to stop them getting back, or everyone to central London to stop it moving — are tabu, one for fear of the women, and the other for fear of the authorities.

This paralysis is also affecting the radical wing of the movement. There are more people now who are willing to take part in and who have recently taken part in various forms of non-violent direct action, yet this energy and experience are being wasted. There have been sporadic demonstrations at Greenham Common and other military bases around the country, but no national demonstrations. The two London demonstrations initiated by the informal affinity group network on 9/10th and 18/19th December were complete failures because of a lack of proper organisation or general support. It is clear that, apart from a real emergency (such as the recent arrival of Cruise missiles at Greenham or their possible future deployment outside the base), there is no basis for large-scale illegal demonstrations except through the structure of the established peace movement, above all the hundreds of independent local CND and peace groups all over the country. On the other hand it is also clear that, as libertarians always expected, there is no prospect of such demonstrations being initiated or even endorsed in present circumstances by National CND.

Faced with this situation, a new informal grouping has decided to take a fresh initiative to break the deadlock. Under the name 'Action 84', a call for national demonstrations of mass non-violent direct action to be organised is now being circulated throughout the nuclear disarmament movement, the most likely time being Reagan's visit in June and the most likely place being central London. If the response is favourable, one or

more alternative plans will be suggested, and a nation-wide discussion will be held through meetings and documents. The intention is to combine the maximum of involvement from the rank and file with the maximum of organisation of whatever action is favoured — avoiding at the same time the rigidity of CND demonstrations, the sectarianism of Greenham Common, the confusion of Stop the City, and the low turn-out at more recent London demonstrations. The hope is to bring something of the spirit of the Burghfield and Upper Heyford demonstrations of last year into London this year, and something of the power of the movement into a real challenge to the establishment.

Meanwhile, the long procession of court cases from last year's demonstrations continues. The hundreds of hearings arising from activity at Greenham Common are now being processed by magistrates at Newbury, the central authorities skillfully avoiding serious charges and jury trials, and so far successfully avoiding legal confrontations or dramatic sentences. Elsewhere the policy is similarly to restrict charges and to limit penalties as much as possible, even small fines often being avoided in favour of conditional discharges.

One odd case has been that of the Cenotaph die-in on Remembrance Sunday. Of the 26 people arrested, the first batch of nine have now been tried at Highbury Corner Magistrates Court, in four sessions. Those who were originally charged only with obstruction were also charged with insulting behaviour a few minutes before their hearing. In three of the sessions, the three different sets of magistrates paid virtually no attention either to the evidence or to the legal arguments of the defence (whether by lawyers or by people defending themselves) and took only a few minutes to find everyone guilty, but then imposed only conditional discharges (from three to twelve months). It was reasonably assumed that some kind of instruction had been given or agreement reached beforehand; but then in the fourth session a different magistrate took much the same attitude to the prosecution, and decided there was no case for the defence to answer. As a result, some of those found guilty on particularly absurd evidence are now likely to appeal on the ground that lying in the road without making any sign or sound cannot be called insulting behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace. But the general assumption is that this precedent will be stored for future use — and that there will soon be plenty of need to use more serious charges against more effective demonstrations.

MH

## Stop the City

Over the weekend 14th/15th January, over 80 people attended 2 days of discussions and preparations for the next stop 'the City' protest. The plan is to halt the 'city of London' on Thursday March 29th, the last day of the financial year, in protest at the wars, poverty and human and animal exploitation caused by financial institutions in the pursuit of profit. All social protest movements are invited to join in, and help to create a celebration of life on the streets together. Those involved in struggling for peace, animal liberation and ecology are already involved, and

activity is beginning to involve those agitating amongst claimants/unemployed international Solidarity (exile) groups and in the women's and squatting movements, etc. More efforts are needed to contact Workplace organisations, especially in 'the City' itself. Bands and cyclists are also being asked to participate.

Regional preparations, publicity and protests the week before (Thursdays March 22nd) in financial centres are also encouraged. The first regional conference is in Nottingham on Jan 28, for the Midlands area.

Contacts are being sought all over London and the whole country to strengthen the 'Stop the City' network. There will be North and South London STC meetings on Sunday February 5th (phone Lyn (South) 318 3808 eves, and Ron 281 0719 (North)).

The next Country wide gathering will be on March 3rd, 12-6pm at the Ambulance Station, 308 Old Kent Rd, SE1.

It is refreshing to see a process developing of discussion of the causes of oppression, and of interaction and mutual respect amongst all those active in various related struggles. Everyone is welcome to participate in any way they feel can

Contact:

BOX STC, 6 Endsleigh St, WC1, London  
Phone, London

Phone, London Ron 01-281 0719.  
Midlands, Chris 0602 624742  
South Joe Brighton 602708.  
Cornwall/Devon Betty 0326 315379  
or people working in specific movements:

## Cruise Fund

Magistrates in London, in coping with the numbers of people charged with 'offences' arising out of the sit-downs in Whitehall on Remembrance Sunday, seem to be trying a policy of containment rather than punishment.

Instead of levying fines, as was expected, they are finding all the defendants guilty, but giving them conditional discharges for a year — conditional upon good behaviour, that is. Which means that if there is another 'offence' within a year, present defendants can be fined for the present offence as well as the new one, and fined an unknown sum at that.

This obviates the need to get the defendant's agreement to be bound over to be of good behaviour — something few of the present bunch would agree to — as well as not sending them in to swell our already over-flowing prison population.

This leaves us with still no demand on our Cruise Fund — although we have received two more donations since our last list: £1.00 from JF of Brentwood and £1.00 from FY.

So our total now stands at £135.50. It will almost certainly be called upon when the next wave of civil disobedience breaks out.

We have, however, been approached by one defendant who wants to mount an appeal against his conviction as above, and enquired if our Cruise Fund would make a donation towards his legal costs.

We feel that it was not the purpose of the Fund to pay lawyers' fees, but to pay fines for those unable to pay themselves and who did not want to go to prison in lieu, and that it could be used as a mutual aid fund for families of those who do go inside and are in need.

Those who want to appeal, but do not have the means, can, if they wish to be legally represented, apply for Legal Aid.

# The Other CNT

Every account I've ever seen in English language papers gives the impression that the new CNT, or CNT-V, is a small ineffectual organisation. During my most recent visit to Spain, in November 83, I decided to speak to them for myself and discovered the reality is far from this.

By way of redressing the balance, and hopefully opening up a discussion on the subject, I'd like to set out in this article some basic information on the CNT-V from its point of view.

My conversations with both CNT revealed a very real difference in tactics, which is also obvious from their propaganda, although both profess the same ultimate goal. This difference centres around the reformist 'works committees' which the CNT-AIT boycotts on principle and the CNT-V makes use of pragmatically.

Faced with what it viewed as 'fanatical dogmatism' and manipulation by the 'anarchist brotherhood' (FAI, exiles etc.), the CNT-V rejected the resolutions of the fifth congress held in December 79 and set up as an alternative.

Although at present only about half the CNT-AIT's 20,000 membership, the CNT-V is the only union in Spain which can claim to be growing in numbers.

I arrived in Gijon, on the coast of northern Spain, just after the capture of a tower block built on the site of a building taken from the CNT after the civil war. Following some initial animosity the CNT-AIT had established itself on the first floor and the CNT-V had the third and fifth.

The CNT-V's 800 members (which compares with 300 in the CNT-AIT) cover all the major industries in the area except mining, being strongest in their metal-workers union. There is a pensioners union with 150 paying members, most of them old militants, and there are about 25 CNT-V members on local works committees.

The militants I spoke to believe they have benefitted from putting people on to these committees as it enables them to get information which makes their demands more relevant and also expose dirty tricks by the reformist trade unions. 'Unless we can get results on bread and butter issues we will be marginalised and our ideas ignored', one told me, 'We lose nothing by being on the committees, it doesn't stop us building up our union branches at the same, so we resented not being able to try out

these tactics in the old CNT'.

As can be seen in the accompanying photos from the regional bi-monthly paper *Accion Libertaria* (which has a print run of 1,000 copies) the new 'local' is spacious and well equipped. There are seven offices for different unions on the third floor, a large meeting room and a smaller one for slide shows etc.

In Barcelona itself (where CNT's history has in some ways been a mirror image of that in Gijon), the CNT-V only has a strong presence in the entertainments union, but here it represents about 80% of the city's organised workers, and had recently won 3 strikes against conditions on temporary contracts.

There are CNT-V branches in banking, commerce and the metal industry, and although only 3,500 strong in the surrounding region of Catalonia, they claim to have doubled their numbers in the past year.

The most impressive aspect of my visit, though, was the co-ops movement which the CNT-V is promoting and which involves several hundred industrial workers.

I visited one of these co-ops just south of Barcelona, where 204 members of the CNT-V make slaughterhouse machinery in a factory they bought with redundancy when their previous employer went bust.

Although obliged to employ an outside 'director' who has the necessary knowledge of market economics, all positions are subject to instant dismissal by the general assembly, which also has the power to alter or reject work plans drawn up by the director in connection with the elected assembly. As is usual in the CNT, many of these duties are carried out voluntarily after work.

I hope that goes some way towards stimulating people's interest in the CNT-V. I'm not suggesting that they are without problems, or necessarily better than the CNT-AIT. In my opinion, however, it is beyond doubt that to talk of anarcho-sindicalism in Spain today without mentioning the CNT-V is to only paint half a picture.

Further information on the situation of both CNT's in modern Spain is available in our newsletter *Sinews*, (cheque or PO for 35p) from Spanish Information Network, c/o 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs. We also welcome contact with anyone who has or would like information or speakers on the subject.

ML



# Home on the Range

Part 1 of Cliff Harpers impressions of the film 'Heavens Gate', currently on re-release in London. Part 2 in the next issue.

Howdy Partners!  
Y'know, it can git awful lonely out here on the range. Especially at night with that big black sky up above, with all the stars looking down from far away, an' only the critturs and coyotes fer company. Times like this your mind kin git to wandering, going back to when things were mighty different: Sometimes my mind kinda tells stories, just to pass the time till sun-up, an' I remember just how things used to be. Why don't you pour yourself a cup of coffee an' pull yourself a little closer to the camp fire — it kin git mighty cold in these parts — and I'll tell you a tale. A true tale, mind...

Y'know, it sometimes seems to me that folks fergit just how much anarchism there's been in America. Why, it was an Englishman, George Bernard Shaw, who said the American constitution was 'a conspiracy against Government', and Thomas Jefferson reckoned 'that Government is best which governs least'. Of course, out here on the range folks've known that for a long time, there ain't never bin too much need for Government out here, we kin git along just fine by ourselves.

Why, not so very long ago, and not so far away, just over in Wyoming, in 1892 folks rose up and fought a real bloody revolution, nearly wiped out the bosses too, if it hadn't been for that god-durned US Cavalry steppin' in just at the last minute an' saving their worthless hides. Over in Johnson County it was. Johnson County, North Wyoming.

The 1880's were a terrible hard time. Economic depression had swept the land from coast to coast. Revolutionary ideas, especially anarchism, were everywhere. The working people were a-bustin' for a showdown, an' it was the railroad men who led the fight in the 1884 strike. An' don't fergit Chicago. Now in those days that was an anarchist town all right. Why, it was the Chicago anarchists who led the first General Strike right there, May Day 1886.

Those great cities, Chicago, New York, were a-burstin' an' a-teeming with millions of hungry people,

mostly immigrants from Europe. They'd come to America on the run from oppression and misery, with a fire in their eyes and a hunger in their bellies. They'd got that fire from the ideas of anarchism an' socialism, an' they'd got a hunger for freedom. For most of 'em, that freedom meant land.

But, in the meantime, all those millions of empty stomachs had gotta be filled. An' it was away down in the south-west, down in Texas an' New Mexico, where the answer to that hunger was. Cattle! The great cattle-herds were driven north, up the thousand mile or more cattle trails, the Chisolm and the Goodnight-lovin' trail, to meet with the railroads pushing from the East. An' where the cows and the trains met, why that's where the sprawling cow-towns grew up, with their miles of dusty stockyards. Towns like Dodge, Abilene an' Cheyenne.

Now, you kin probably imagine, there was a heap of money to be made from feedin' hungry folk. Folk've gotta eat, afore they kin do anything else. And of course, raising cattle don't cost a lot, the cows kinda do most of the work for you. You just need to hire a few cowpokes, unemployed saddle-bums, to push 'em along the trail an' shove 'em into the freight cars at the other end. Easy. So, you see, vast fortunes were built on the cattle industry, an' don't fergit, most of the shareholders lived over in England. Now, as their power increased, these great cattle-companies, the 'stock-growers' they were called, looked fer ways to improve their profits. An' they started lookin' this way, an' that way, fer grazing land nearer the railheads, where their herds could grow unchecked. They pushed the cows along the valley of the North Platte river out onto the plains of North Wyoming.

But other folks had been fixin' their hearts on Wyoming's open range, too. 'Cos it was here that all those immigrants from Chicago and New York saw the answer to their hunger fer land. They just climbed aboard the Northern Pacific railroads empty freight-cars, westbound, climbed off again at Keogh an'

headed down the Powder river valley, down into Johnson County, Wyoming. Now this here was 'open' territory, it was there for the asking, an' they just marked off their patch and homestead. These folks were pretty desperate people, desperate fer land an' desperate fer freedom, an' don't fergit, most of 'em were socialists, an' some were anarchists, too.

Now, you kin imagine, the cattle-bosses didn't take too kindly to this invasion. Sure, the range was 'open', but the cattle-bosses kinda thought that meant open fer them, an' closed fer everyone else, if you see what I mean. An' of course, it didn't help none that these people were foreign, an' it just made matters a whole heap worse that they were anarchists into the bargain! So, you kin maybe see that here in Johnson County we got the makin's fer a whole passle of trouble. But that ain't all, no sir, not by a long way!

Now, you folks'll have to bear with me awhile, fer the tale gits kinda complicated around this here point. You've seen that we got on the one hand the cattle-bosses, powerful, greedy men. An' on the other we got the homesteaders, poor, hungry men, women and young 'uns. An' you kin see they don't exactly see eye to eye on things.

Well, there's another bunch of folks in this story. An' they're the meanest, an' the orneriest of 'em all. Kinda natural anarchists in a way. The cowboys. Most of 'em had bin raised-up in Texas, where folks have a kind of tradition of independence, doing things fer theirselves, an' doin' it their way. Now, the cowboys were just plain workers, bottom of the pile mostly. It was them that drove the cattle herds north to feed the folks back east, an' at the end of the drive they'd find themselves paid-off, out of work and stranded in the dust of the cow towns. After that, they didn't have too many options. They could stay on, mebbe git some casual labour in the stockyards, they could drift back south and mebbe pick up another herd an' work it north again. Some would strike out further west, heading for the territories, Utah, Nevada, ending up on the Pacific coast.

Or mebbe they could head north, following the cattle companies, an' hope to find employment on the big, new ranches in Wyoming, signing on as ranch hands. Now, the work on these ranches was what these days you'd call 'seasonal', an' it was mostly centred around the big round-ups, when the company gathered in the thousands of steers that had scattered themselves across the range. The cows were gathered together, branded and pushed to the railhead. It was hard and dangerous work. And at the end of the round-up, why, the

bosses just laid the cowboys off, an' they were expected to shift fer themselves 'till needed again. (By the way, it was here around the 1900's that the IWW found a heap of eager recruits fer their particular brand of industrial unionism).

Now, fer the cowboys this way of life weren't too satisfactory. Mostly they was single men, an' they could see their lives just a-slippin' away. Mebbe they'd git all busted-up fallin' off their horse, or a hlaf-ton bull might roll the wrong way, or p'raps them cold Wyoming nights would bring on bad chest trouble. At best they could look forward to endin' their days down and out in some one-horse town in the territories, mebbe sweepin' out the stables fer a plate of beans. Just like people everywhere, they dreamed of somethin' just a mite bit better'n that. Mebbe a little place of their own somewhere's, mebbe even the love of a woman to give it all some kinda meanin', an' p'raps a coupla children to tell stories to at night afore turning down the kerosene lamp.

Well, fer a cowboy determined enough and pissed-off enough, out there in Wyoming was the chance to make that dream come alive. The land was there, in abundance, an' all around were the immigrant homesteaders, a-building that new life. Towns were springing up, with stores an' boarding houses an' dance halls an' all kinda things. An' these homesteaders were downright happy to teach the cowboys how to throw up a little two-room house, an' plant a row of vegetables, an' a crop of hay for the cowboys horse. Why, they'd bin practising what we anarchists call 'mutual aid' fer centuries. That's where the idea came from, in fact. An' what's more, the homesteaders needed neighbours who were on their side agin the cattle-companies. The big cattle-companies were a-crowdin' an' a-threatenin' the homesteaders continual.

Now, you'll recall I said earlier on just how this story gets a mite complicated. How you've got the cattle-barons, the homesteaders an' now the cowboys. Well, here's where the final characters in the story come in, and they're the last ones. After I've told you about them we'll have all the players in the game an' the story kin git on to where the action starts.

These characters, you might say, are just about the most anarchist of the bunch. The ones that cause all the trouble. An' they went by the name of 'mavericks'. Now, a maverick was a bull or a heifer that had quit it's mother before being branded at the round-up, and was just livin' free, roamin' the range. Having no brand meant of course it weren't nobodies property, and over the years custom dictated that whoever came across a maverick, why that maverick was theirs, fer keeps. You understand, out on the plains custom pretty much amounted to law. People naturally went along with it, 'specially when it was to their advantage. In fact, all the ranches paid their cowboys a bonus fer every maverick they could catch and brand with the company mark.

So, there fer any cowboy with a mind fer going independent an' settin' up fer himself was the source for his own small herd. All he neede was to rope 'em in, put his own brand on 'em, an' he was in business. Now, pretty soon, these independent herds was a-growin' in both number an' size. The cowboys had a ready market fer their beef right there with the homesteaders, an' it weren't unknown fer the occasional homesteader to ride out an' rope a maverick steer in order to supplement his diet. Sounds kinda like heaven, don't it?

Well, you know, the devil's always a-hangin' 'roundsomewheres, 'specially when folks is havin' a good

Crowded like cattle inside and atop a box car, immigrants from Eastern Europe arrive to settle in Wyoming's Johnson County.



time. An' out there in Wyoming there was one helluva big, powerful devil. It went by the name of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, an' it's president was John Clay. You gotta understand, the SGA was pretty big. In fact, it was one of the largest and most powerful organisations of its kind in the world. It ran the cattle industry, an' therefore, the state of Wyoming. Where the SGA's cattle grazed, the SGA was the law. The railroads were its toys. It put Senators into Washington. It had the ear of the President of the USA, in fact some folk said it had his balls, too! An' I don't think they were too far from the truth. An' finally, don't fergit, the SGA shareholders were mainly British folks.

Now, the SGA was a might unhappy seein' it's maverick cattle gettin' roped in by the independent cowboys, an' thereby losin' a sizeable slice of the pie. So in 1888, the stockmen pushed a bill through the State Legislature (that was their toy, too) declaring that henceforth all mavericks be branded with the mark of the SGA! An' not only that, the SGA then went and backed up their new 'law' with a Blacklist which they enforced pretty damn ruthlessly. Any cowboy who persisted in mavericking was out of work, fer good!

Hell, you kin imagine! Overnight, the cowboys found 'emselves out of work and one of their longest established customs made illegal. Well, naturally enough, they just carried right on doing what they'd always done — but now of course with one big difference — they were now criminals — cattle-thieves or 'rustlers'.

The homesteaders, too, well they didn't stop taking the SGA cattle fer their tables either. An' you see how it was that the actions of the cattle-bosses just forced the cowboys an' the homesteaders even closer together. An' that union, of those two groups of people, was gonna make fer some powerful trouble, pretty soon, you kin bet.

Things just carried on fer awhile, but underneath it was a-building up to some kind of almighty bust-up, sure enough. Rustlin' got worse, an' at first all the SGA could do was try an' catch the cattle-thieves an'

bring 'em to court. They had their own 'detectives' fer this job, by the way. But it didn't do the SGA no good, 'cos all the Johnson County juries were homesteaders an' cowboys! An' they just persisted in findin' any cattle-thief 'not guilty' an' settin' 'em free! Well, the SGA were gettin' themselves pretty riled-up by this time, an' John Clay, their president, was loosin' his mouth off about 'thieves and anarchists' an' such like, makin' speeches and so on. Hell, they weren't worth a spit.

So the cattle-bosses turned to more direct solutions. First they organised a 'special fund' of \$100,000. This they used to buy in 50 Texas gunmen, or 'detectives'. Then they drew up a death-list of 120 Johnson County residents who, as ringleaders, were to be murdered, or 'executed' as the SGA put it!

By now Johnson County was pretty much in open war, ever since in July 1889 cattlemen had lynched Jim Averill and Ella Watson, both homesteaders. Jim Averill ran a store in Buffalo, and this along with Ella Watsons brothel on the outskirts of town were among the centres of local resistance to the SGA. Here's how that skunk John Clay defended these murders. He said 'What are we to do? Are we to sit still and see our property ruined with no redress in sight?'

Well, I figure you can't really reason with men like that. An' the folks of Johnson County figured the same way. Their response was to shoot down Association detective George Henderson over by Sweetwater creek in 1890.

Yep, things were hottin' up right enough. Next, an Association back-shooter by the name of Frank Canton ambushed and killed two homesteaders. But the people of Johnson County weren't the kind to git beaten down easy. No sir, terror weren't no news to them. They got organised. First off, they elected themselves a sheriff, all legal and above board. But this sheriff was a known rustler, an' he was called Red Angus. Quite a name, huh? And Red was quite a guy. He set about organising the round-up of mavericks on a systematic basis, swearing in 100 homesteaders and cowboys as armed



The US Cavalry lines up to meet the train carrying the head of the Johnson County Stocks Growers Association.

'official deputies' to do the job!

The gloves were off and things were set fer a showdown. The Association made their move first. The last of the winters snowstorms was a-blowing when in April 1892, 50 Association 'regulators' led by that low-down murdering sonovabitch Frank Canton and his sidekick Frank Woolcott (who's brother was a Colorado Senator!) rode north headin' fer Buffalo. Riding with this gang were two newspaper journalists. Canton had in his pocket the Association death-list an' they figured to just plain murder 120 people, to break Johnson County once an' fer all.

But they'd figured it wrong. They planned to strike first at the 'Kaycee' homestead of Nathan Champion, just south of Buffalo. To git him first and then carry on with the rest of their dirty work. They surrounded Kaycee at dawn. An' without any warning at all, when Nathan's pal Nick Ray stepped out into the morning sunshine to bathe in the stream nearby, why, they just gunned him down. But Nathan was still inside, an' now he had warnin'. Single handed, alone an' surrounded, he held off those 50 murderin' bastards

fer over an hour. Eventually the cowards ran a blazin' wagon against the shack and set it alight. The flames an' the smoke drove Nathan out into the open an' he fell with more'n 30 bullets in his body...

But Nathan Champion's heroic stand weren't all wasted. He'd delayed the 'regulators' long enough fer a neighbour, who'd witnessed it all, to race through a hail of bullets fer Buffalo, an' raise help. While Nathan was makin' his stand he was givin' the folks in Buffalo time to git ready an' give the Association gunmen a real Johnson County welcome. An' that weren't gonna be no dance party with apple pie to follow. No sir!

The news from Kaycee burst through the town like a spring storm, an' pretty soon Red Angus was leading more'n 100 armed, angry people out of Buffalo. They met the Association men 12 miles outside town an' they just smashed into 'em like a wave of fury. Why, those murdering jackals just didn't know what hit 'em. When the first roar of gunfire died down, an' silence fell, those who survived scabbled in the dust, clawin' at the earth fer cover. They were

surrounded an' pinned down an' as the day wore on into the evenin' all they could do was wait as the rifles of Johnson County whittled 'em down, one by one.

Well, night fell, an' as they lay there in the dark and cold they must've figured that this were their last night on earth, an' tomorrow would find 'em all in hell, or wherever it is that company detectives end their lives. And out there in the black night the cowboys and homesteaders were waitin', ready to finish 'em off when sun-up came. But one of those journalists I mentioned earlier managed to slip through their circle, racing into the darkness for the telegraph office at McKinney.

Yup, I.M sorry to say, he made it. But that's the press fer you. He wired the State Governor. The State Governor wired the Wyoming Senators in Washington. They vamoosed over the White House and pulled President Harrison out of his big soft bed with tales of anarchist insurrection in the west. Well, the President of America knew where his duty lay, with the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, and he ordered 3 troops of US Cavalry to ride immediately.

## Noise

'Folk' music is a music which develops over centuries through the playing and singing of the working people in an area or country. What is now known as 'rock' music was stolen by white men from black men in North America three decades ago. This statement alone should be reason enough to abandon the consumption of 'rock' music in favour of involvement in a 'folk' music.

I have always been vaguely offended, in my vague, white, liberal way, by the words 'Rock against Racism'. In its consumption by an overwhelmingly white, comfortably off market group, as in its 'roots', rock is intrinsically racist. Women, as ever, have shown the way here. The unfortunate title 'Rock against Sexism' was soon changed to 'Anti-

sexist Noise'. My choice of the words 'consumption' and 'market group' is deliberate. Rock is, above all, an industry, heavily dependent on advertising and the sale of expensive reproduction equipment for its survival. How can a rock band claim to be 'ideologically sound' or 'concerned' (do any still make that claim?), when their chosen means of communication necessitates travelling to work in a petrol driven van packed to the roof with expensive electronics which they use to throw sound from *up on the stage* to 'the kids' *down in the auditorium*, in the hope that they are compelled to buy, buy, BUY, the single, the album, the T-shirt, the badge, perhaps the video? If 'the kids' simply borrow the album from the

local library and tape it, the results are the same. Mass consumption.

In 1976, the cry was, 'now *anyone* can form a rock band! Great. All you need is a thou or more for the equipment. OK, steal it. Great. Now you can join the elite. *Up on the stage* playing to the kids *down in the auditorium*. I have no desire to slight the genius of Malcolm McLaren. Punk was swallowed eagerly by large numbers of British youth and, more importantly, the music industry, because McLaren is extremely clever, rather than British youth and the music industry being very stupid. Well...err... Anyway, the 'punk explosion' ensured that a massive exploitative industry would flourish, for the time being.

Ever heard of 'folk explosion'? Ever hear the cry, 'Now *anyone* can form a folk band'? No? Surprise, surprise. Folk music has always been *people's* music, played on easily portable acoustic instruments

in homes, village halls, pubs, cafes, fields all over the world. It is communicated, at its best, by word of mouth, note of whistle. It has no need for, indeed it would be destroyed by, mass consumption of and communication by records, videos, TV broadcasts. Its strengths are its organic growth and its variety, both of music and of instrumentation.

This is not to say that folk music 'has not suffered at the hands of industry. The 'folk-rock' phase of the late '60s - early '70s gave rise to some quite appalling music. Also, I remember from my mid-teens that, just as no small-town rock band's set was complete without an encore of 'Johnny B Goode', no pub folk night was complete without some long-haired male guitarist with a stuffy nose whining his way through either 'Black Jack Davy' or 'The Rose and the Briar'. Perhaps time has warped my perceptions there, but I'm sure you get my drift. The ubiquitous acoustic guitar is, in my opinion, totally unsuited to an intimate, 'folk' music; lacking in sensitivity as a melody instrument, too intrusive when used for rhythmical backing, except when wielded by an expert, but a true folk music should have no room for experts. Why the heavy reliance on guitars, when one has such a wide choice, including tin-whistle, concertina, accordion, harmonica, bag-pipes, fiddle, jews harp, hurdy gurdy, mandolin, flute, bodhran, or even that little dog collar thing with bells on which one straps around one's

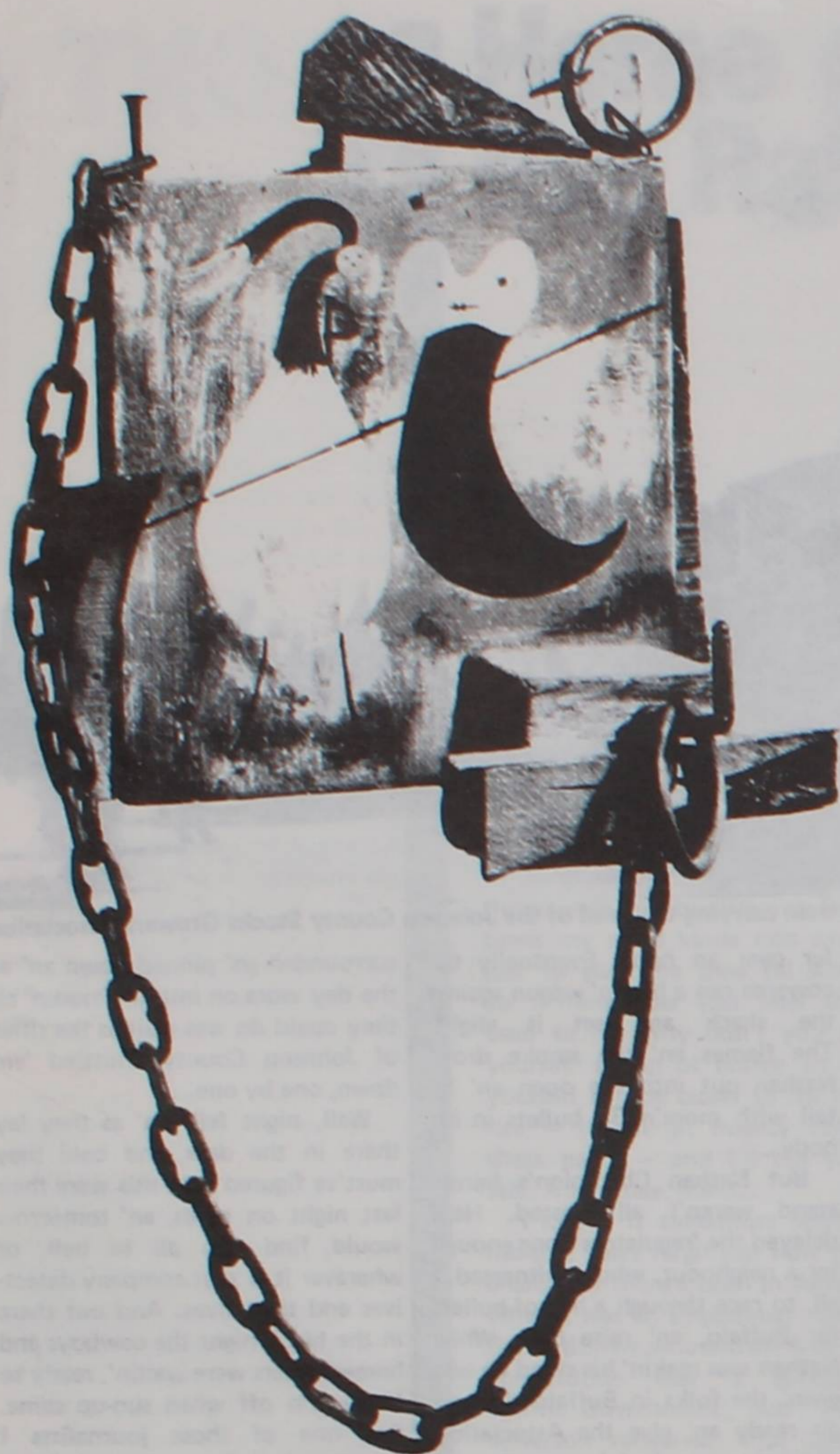
calf and I always forget the name of?

But the greatest virtue of folk over rock is surely the possibilities for participation. Reluctantly attending one day of the '82 Reading Festival, I was appalled, not only by the music, but also by the *passivity* of the audience. They were spending three days in a field having extremely loud music played at them. At both the Cambridge and Leeds folk festivals of the same year, I was amazed, it being my first attendance at such events, by both the great variety of music being played on the various stages and by the small groups of people, scattered throughout the festival and camp sites, playing their *own* music on their *own* instruments. How can an industry, dependent on consumption of product, retain its stranglehold on our music when our music is created and communicated between individuals with something as easily available and potentially all-pervading as a tin-whistle costing around a quid?

Could the unpopularity of folk and acoustic music in this country be due to something more than current tastes? Who, if anyone, has the means to manipulate or control those tastes? If we are to work towards a more decentralised society with more control over our own lives, then we must scrutinise our means of entertainment with as much vigour as we do our means of production. One could easily negate the other.

Barry Rothery





measure of the extent to which Miró and all he represents have been lost to popular culture by the incorporation of Catalunya and the rest of Spain into modern capitalist 'civilization' since Franco's death. There are, however, many other signs that most Spaniards, town or country, prefer 'Dallas' or the rest of the spiritual 'sophistication' of plastic capitalist culture, to Miró's human world.

I will give just three examples from our own experience. The first concerns a giant Miró pavement-mural on Ramblas — the famous walk-way in the centre of town where people promenade to see and be seen virtually around the clock. A few months ago, some vandal smashed part of it. Yet, we were, we felt, almost the only ones on Ramblas either to know or care that we nightly walked over one of Miró's dreams, or that the work had been damaged — or, sometime later, very roughly 'repaired'.

The second is the lack of local knowledge of or interest in, the Miró Fundacio. Even though this treasure of delights was opened (just after Franco's death) in 1975, almost none of our friends, 'high-brow' or 'low', have ever been there, despite the fact that the Fundacio on Montjuich is only 20 minutes walk away.

As a final example, there is the fact that Miró's absolutely wonderful book for kids, *Diary of the Red Sun*, first published here in 1980, is already out of print, with no plans by the publisher for another printing. (Symptomatic of the Anglo-Saxon

lack of interest in Miró is the almost complete lack of translations of the many books by and about him).

Paradoxically, modern capitalist 'culture' has made also Spaniards, it seems, too 'sophisticated' to appreciate the human — the 'child' — in themselves and Miró, and too childish to recognise or appreciate the incomparable technical skill and mastery with which Miró realised his creations. (Miró himself said that his works are conceived 'with a soul of fire, but executed with clinical coolness'. Sometimes he worked on a painting for years.) When there is 'Sesame Street' and its equivalents for Spanish kids and adults alike, what need or place is there for a Joan Miró?

Yet it is precisely now when he is dead, as Pujol and Co attempt to exploit his name and legacy for the *acceleration* of the programme of Catalunya and Spain Incorporated, that Spanish and world culture need Miró more than ever. 'Merde' — shit — was Miró's last word when he died on Christmas Day: Shit to death, shit to war, shit to all the forces of 'civilised' destruction, shit to all that Felipe Gonzalez and Pujol, Reagan and Thatcher, stand for.

In Paris in 1937, before Picasso began his *Guernica*, Miró painted a series of extremely powerful artistic affirmations of his commitment to humanity and life in opposition to the spirit-violating shit of the world. (One of them was entitled 'Hombre y mujer ante un monton de excrementos'.) Another was his famous appeal to the world

to 'Aidez l'Espagne'.

Of this poster, the 60 year old Catalan artist Antoni Tàpies has said: 'For me and my development, the human activity of a Pablo Casals or Miró's poster *Aidez l'Espagne* had more importance than all the paintings and museums in the world.' Standing on Miró's (and Picasso's) shoulders, Tàpies too has laboured mightily in the service of the human spirit, justice and decency.

As we move into 1984, the least the rest of us can do is our best, however little or much this is, to climb up the ladder of Miró's efforts, and to join him in the struggle to create a truly human world in opposition to all the branches of the death industry.

How fresh Miró's air is, how bright the sun and stars, how blue the sky and clear the view of the green, yellow, red and brown soil below. Head in the bright spiritual clouds and feet on the ground, the unity of sky and soil. This is Miró's human world. He paints 'to express exactly the golden flashes which my soul creates... Painting is like dancing; or rather to paint is to create a beautiful and harmonious movement.'

But, Miró insists, 'the force comes from the earth': 'It is necessary to have one's feet firmly on the ground in order to make great high leaps. It is precisely this act of descending regularly to earth which permits me to fly.'

Amen, and bless you, great Red Sun.

Patrick Flanagan

# JOAN MIRÓ

The great Catalan painter Joan Miró died in Palma de Mallorca at 3pm, Christmas Day, aged 90. 'I want my work to be like a poem set to music by a painter', Miró wrote in his *Carnets Catalans* (Catalan Notebooks).

In his 14 line testament written in January 1971, this 'Catalan universal' of incomparable gifts and child-like humility asked that his funeral arrangements be conducted 'with all the simplicity, absolutely without any official characteristics'. Yet, predictably, the heads of the Generalitat (regional government) and the Barcelona Council, have ignored Miró's request. Instead, in keeping with their ruthless, Banks-sponsored exploitation of Catalan art and culture in the service of modern capitalism, Miró's body is to lie in state for the public to file past. Generalitat boss Pujol — after Felipe Gonzalez perhaps the most skillful and powerful political servant of Espana Incorporated — had already flown with appropriate publicity to Mallorca to express his condolences to Miró's family, who wanted only to respect the painter's wishes.

There is to be an official day of mourning throughout the whole of Catalunya; flags at half mast for 3 days; a second, special Big Wigs funeral service in the beautiful, 600 year old Santa Maria del Mar. Perhaps the only non-obscene feature of the official travesty is that the wonderful Miró Fundacio (designed to house Miró's paintings and sculptures by his fellow-Catalan friend and outstanding architect Josep Lluís Sert) is to be opened to the public free of charge for a week from December 30th.

Of course, in every essential, unalienated, spiritual sense, the life, work and nature of Miró — now forever alive on his giant scaffold painting of red suns, blue stars, black nights, women and penises and all the rest in the bluer-than-ever sky — transcend every attempt at

exploitation by the Pujols, Gonzalezes, and other 'modernising' pimps of Catalan and Spanish culture. Yet agents of foreign capital and NATO, Catalan-striped Big Mac hamburgers and the rest of the materialist, technological totalitarian 'air conditioned nightmare' — have already succeeded in large part in stealing this popular artist *par excellence* from his people.

On tourist-blown, capitalist-corrupted Mallorca, Miró and his work are regarded with uncomprehending amusement and derision by the tele-watching locals. 'He paints like my five year old son', is a common symptom-expression of their alienation from Miró's profound ability to express unalienated humility — the natural and the childlike — in his paintings. The aim in life, wrote the German psychologist Georg Groddeck, is to be a human being, and we have but one choice: to become ever-more naturally childlike — or childish (the world of 'normal' adults). Miró has, since childhood, completely identified himself with the Spanish soil and the 'ordinary', unsophisticated people who work it with their hands and bodies. As with Spanish poets like Garcia Lorca and Rafael Albertini, this identification with and desire to express the textures, colours and rhythms of the relationship of 'simple' country men and women with nature, is the constant inspiration, subject and strength of his art. Ever since his childhood, the Catalan and Mallorcan soil and people have coloured the blues of his dreams, the reds of his suns, the blacks of his nights and stars, and the 'child-like' eros of his penises, women and birds. Yet in the words of Pep Pinya, director of the Pelaires art gallery in Palma de Mallorca: 'Do you know how many paintings of Miró I've sold in 14 years? One!'

Of course, it could be argued that such alienated money-market criteria are hardly an accurate

## AN OPEN LETTER TO ANTONI TÀPIES

We are writers, Australians, in this sense, outsiders. We write in anger and sadness, based on our profound admiration and respect for your artistic and moral integrity hitherto.

Antoni Tàpies, how can you, the friend and spiritual heir of Joan Miró, collaborate thus in the exploitation of Miró, and all he stands for, by the Generalitat politicians in explicit violation of his wishes and principles? In his will, Miró said: 'It must be done with total simplicity, absolutely eliminating any official character.' He wanted only 'simplicity' and 'dignity'.

You have stated: 'For me and my education, the humane outlook of a Pablo Casals, or the poster of Miró 'Aidez l'Espagne' have had more importance than all the paintings and museums in the world.' And in your tribute to Miró, you wrote: 'Miró lives and will continue to live amongst us (in us), while the struggle for the world of authentic modernity, of liberty, of justice which he glimpsed with his sharpened knives of colours goes on being necessary, as long as there exist reactionaries holding firmly to the past...' (*La Vanguardia*, 27th December 1983).

Reactionaries. This is exactly what those politicians are who seek to exploit the legacy of Miró, the grief of his family and his great popularity with the people of Catalunya. In the name of 'preserving Catalan culture by modernizing it', Signor Pujol et al are really destroying it, selling it as cheaply as possible to the economic and cultural plunderers of western capitalism. Barbarians.

By participating in the politicians' cynical exploitations of this great son of Catalunya for their own ends, you are serving the very forces of 'modern civilisation' which are so alien to Miró's and your own work. When Peter Kropotkin, another

great libertarian and humanist, died in February 1921, his friends did not passively allow the state to organise any obscene manipulated 'tribute' to 'the peoples' great son'.

Instead, in conditions of great adversity, those defenders of the human spirit not yet murdered or imprisoned by the Bolshevik state and its Cheka, organised their own *genuinely popular* mass demonstration to practice precisely those *anti-state* principles of genuine democracy, freedom and humanism of which Kropotkin was such an outstanding representative.

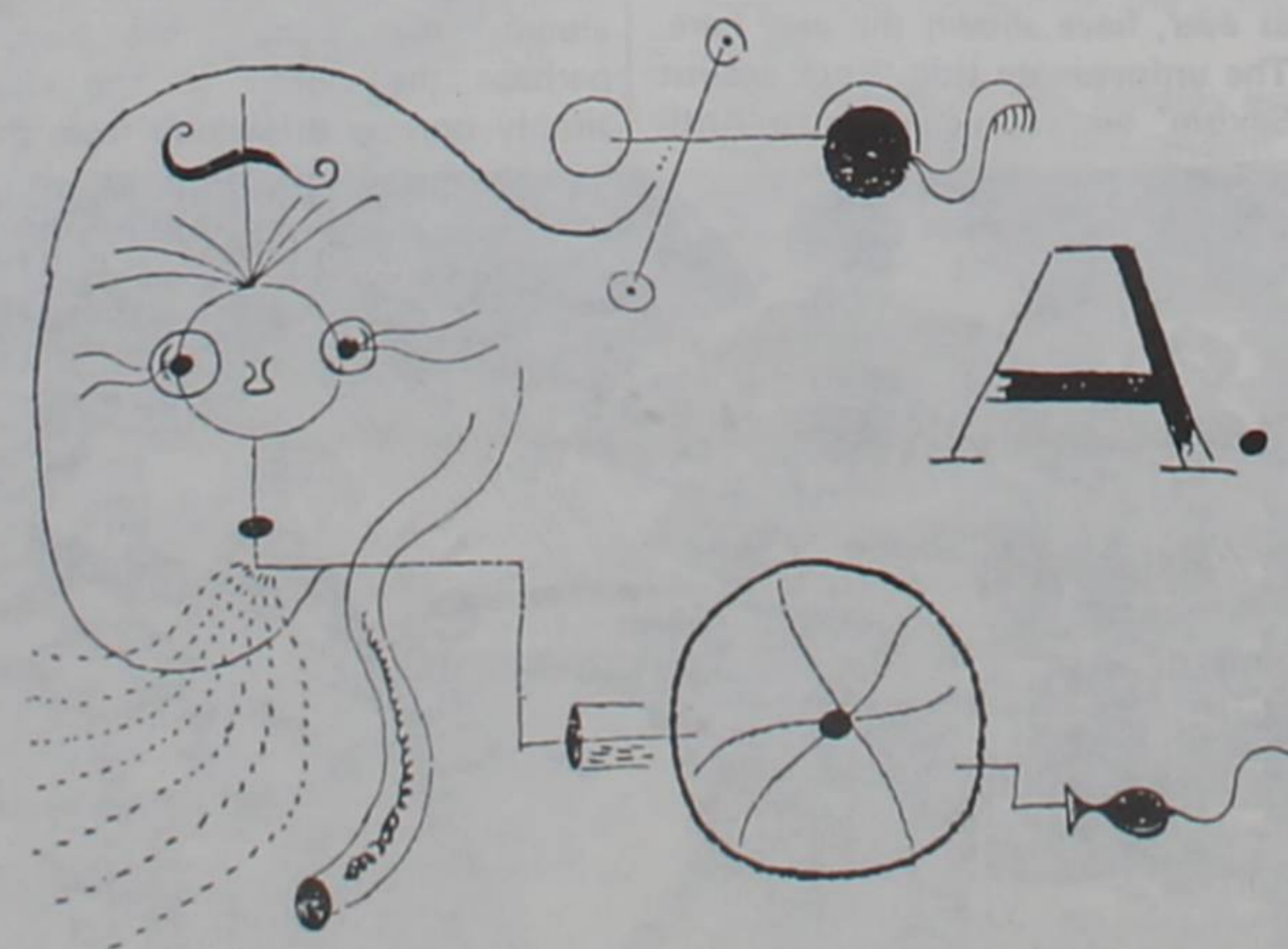
The times then were very hard, freedom of expression and organisation virtually impossible. Your moral responsibility remains the same as that of Victor Serge, Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman et al. Your situation is far easier. Yet you *freely* collaborate in this state-organised travesty of Miró's wishes and values. Between 6 and 7pm the Officials filed past Miró's coffin. From 7 to 8 it was the turn of

'cultural entities' and fellow artists like yourself. Only then did the Authorities allow in 'the people'. What a tragedy.

Miró asked that there be no official functions. But genuine expressions of popular tribute are something else entirely. If the family of Joan Miró agreed, you could have given the lead your status and moral responsibility demand by inspiring such popular tributes.

Miró, that great embodiment of life and human decency, said that his last word would be: 'Merde': Shit to death, shit to the forces of destruction and inhumanity — the same forces organising and exploiting this 'popular tribute' to 'Catalunya's' great son. We call on you to stand up and say 'shit' too. As much as we love Catalunya, we cannot and ought not to do it. You have the freedom, the right and the duty.

Patrick and Julie Flanagan  
Barcelona



## Right to read

It is now 16 months since the first raids on establishments selling literature relating to drugs. The police still hold over 20,000 books and comics, of some 250 different titles. These include Hunter S Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, Tom Wolfe's *Electric Kool-aid Acid Test*, William Burrough's *Junky* as well as *Fat Freddy's Cat* and *Freak Brothers* comics which have sold several million copies since the late 1960's.

It is one of the anomalies of censorship that books seized in raids on bookshops in one part of the country have been returned by the police after raids in another part. At a magistrate's court in Nottingham at the end of September many titles were acquitted as not being obscene that are still held by the police in large quantities, from raids on *Knockabout Comix* and *Airlift Books*. The police in one town did eventually return a copy of *The Coffee Lovers Handbook* to

the shop from which it was seized.

More seriously the prosecution in the cases of the main defendants, *Knockabout Comix* and *Airlift Books*, have recently added new charges to the existing Obscene Publications Act offences. These are charges of conspiring to contravene sections 5 and 6 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 by causing persons to obtain cannabis, cocaine and psilocybin. Perhaps these late additions are because the Director of Public Prosecutions thinks the case under the Obscene Publications Act is unlikely to be successful in front of a jury at the Central Criminal Court, as information and education about drugs and their use helps to prevent abuse.

There are many thousands of titles available about drugs, both pro and anti, ranging from humorous comics to anthropological theses, and including famous works of fiction. The police have a representative selection (more by luck than

judgement) of all categories of writing about drugs, and if the prosecution is successful it will be impossible, or at least inadvisable, to publish anything on the subject.

Having been chosen as a test case we intend to mount a vigorous defence of the right to publish and we need your help. We require expert witnesses and money. We need witnesses who have researched the effects of reading on people's subsequent actions, and witnesses who have expert knowledge of the effects of various drugs. We need money to pay our legal costs and for this purpose we have opened a deposit account no 7337635 at Lloyds Bank, 32 Oxford Street, London W1.

Meanwhile *Knockabout Comix* no 6, the welcome to 1984 issue, has come out (£1) and there is a Right to Read Benefit Cabaret at LSE Old Theatre, Houghton Street, London WC2 on Friday 27th January at 7:30pm. £3 or unwaged £2.

## reports

## Italy

The Italian Anarchist Federation is organising a meeting about the study on the 'War Industry and the State's militarisation'. The meeting will be held in Livorno on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th of February, in the premises of the Peace Initiative and Documentation Centre in via del Porticciolo.

This is the programme:-

Saturday 10am

- 'The Italian War Industry' (report carried out by the comrades of the Neapolitan Communist-anarchic Organisation)

- 'The function of welfare' (report carried out by Salvo Vaccaro, Franco Riccio and Aldo Caruso) - debate

Saturday 3:30pm

- 'The new soldiers: from the reconstruction of the army to the co-management of the war industry' (report carried out by Fabio Magni)

- 'The war industry and the Italian politics in the Mediterranean' (report carried out by the antimilitary commission of FAI) - debate

Sunday 10am

- 'The militarisation of Sardegna' (report carried out by Ugo Dessy)

- 'The militarisation of Sicily' (report carried out by Pippo Gurrieri) - debate

Sunday afternoon is reserved for eventual thorough study, commission work etc.

For further information about the meetings contact: 'The antimilitary commission of FAI', via E Rossi, 80-57100 Livorno.

## Alternative Press

In an attempt to increase communication between the alternative up and down the country *Brighton Voice* decided to organise a long awaited conference in the autumn of 1983. The main aim being to meet other alternative papers from all over the country and hopefully produce more co-operation and support. Apart from workshops, a general discussion, etc, it was the aim of the conference to establish

an Alternative Press Syndicate. This Syndicate would coordinate general news, take joint action on particular issues, produce updated lists of all alternative newspapers and encourage better contact on a national basis. It was hoped that further conferences would take place on a more regular basis than had previously. The most ambitious aim was to perhaps set up a permanent body

with permanent workers to carry out these functions. The conference turned out to be quite successful. The immediate results have included a further conference to be held in Leeds in April and a preliminary meeting to be held in Coventry. What long term effects this will of the National Alternative Press.

Contact: *Brighton Voice*, 40 Cowper Street, Hove, Sussex.

## Japan

On March 2nd 1976, the Hokkaido Government office was bombed. Hoikkado is the official Japanese name for the island of Ainumoshiri which was colonised by Japan in 1868. The people since then have been exploited by the successive Japanese Governments.

On August 10th 1976 a young Japanese anarchist, K Omori, who openly supported the struggle of the Ainu's was arrested and savagely interrogated by Japanese police. Although innocent beyond dispute, Omori was charged and has been

held in prison since then.

On March 29th 1983, the courts in Japan sentenced Omori to death for a crime he did not commit!

The so-called evidence against him, which was less than flimsy, was having sugar and batteries in his flat, not having a fire extinguisher there and also that one individual noticed him on the night the Hokkaido Government office was bombed.

Pending the result of a two day Appeal Court hearing, the execution by hanging is to be carried out in

January 1984, on Omori.

You could help prevent this barbaric act from being carried out: by engaging in protest activities against Japanese business in this city as well as protesting to the Japanese Embassy. A series of protests are in the process of being organised, to draw attention to the plight of K Omori and also show international support and solidarity. You could write or telephone the Japanese Embassy: 46 Grosvenor Street, London W1. Tel: 01-493 6030, 493 2103 or 493 2475.

## In brief

The Chinese government continues its crackdown on criminals. 'It is necessary', said *Red Flag*, an official journal, 'because serious criminals act on the basis of extreme individualism and anarchist ideas. These are a reflection of capitalist ideology and opposing them is therefore a new form of class struggle.'

The underground nuclear shelter at Taunton, intended for up to 100 local government administrators, has only two chemical lavatories and its water tank is on the seventh floor of a nearby building. A

NALGO official describes the preparations as 'crazy'.

Vampire-like attacks have been reported by 21 young women in Sumatra who said that a man had bitten their necks to suck blood.

General Ershad of Bangladesh has restored political freedom. He has lifted the ban on 'indoor political activity'.

Authorities in south-western Poland have condemned two Jehovah's Witness preachers as 'habitual work-evaders' and may order them to perform forced labour.

Nato's naval forces in the English Channel and Atlantic are 50% short of frigates and destroyers. Admiral Sir William Stavely, Commander-in-Chief, Channel, warns, 'I hope the politicians will be able to stomach the decisions we shall have to take in the event of war.' We can only hope that we all will be.

Michael Heseltine, Defence Secretary, 'recognises' that the quality of British society is as valuable a weapon against Communism as a successful military deterrent. We can't see this, after all it includes tolerance of Mr Heseltine.



NATIONAL

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

**BASILDON**  
Mark, 27 Little Lullaway, Basildon, Essex.

**BEDFORDSHIRE**  
Bedfordshire and Isolated Anarchists, write to: John 81F Bromham Road, Bradford, MK40 2AH.

**BELFAST**  
Just Books, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast.

**BIRMINGHAM**  
Birmingham DAM, c/o Peace Centre, 18 Moor Street, Ringway, Birmingham.

**BOLTON**  
'New World in our Hearts' - ten weekly meetings on aspects of libertarian thought and action. Bolton Metropolitan College, Manchester Road Centre - Thursdays 7pm, from 26th January. Details: ring Bolton 42869.

**BRACKNELL**  
Bracknell Anarchists, Box 21, 17 Chatham Street, Reading, Berks.

**BRADFORD**  
'Peoples Squat for Life', Peace Centre, The Waldo Centre, Ivanhoe Road, Bradford 7, West Yorkshire.

**BRISTOL**  
Box 010, Full Marks Bookshop, 197 Cheltenham Road, Bristol 6. The Peace Centre, 1 Picton Street, Montpellier, Bristol BS6. Open 11am-5pm Monday to Friday, 11am-4pm on Saturday, some Sundays and late nights.

**BURNLEY**  
BAG, c/o 2 Quarrybank

**CAMBRIDGE**  
Cambridge Anarchist Group and East Anglian Anarchist Federation, Box A, c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge.

**CARDIFF**  
COI, Box 999, c/o 108 Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Road, Cardiff 2.

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

**ESSEX**  
DAM, Martyn Evrett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.  
Oral Abortions, The Catskills, Maldon Road, Gay Bowers, Danbury.

**EXETER**  
Anarchist Collective, c/o Community Association, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, Exeter.

**FALKIRK**  
Black Bairn, c/o Box 3, 488 Great Western Road, Glasgow.

**FORMBY**  
Floating Free, 58 Freshfield Road, Formby, Merseyside L3 73HW.

**GLASGOW**  
'Practical Anarchy' (monthly free broadsheet, send large SAE), c/o Box 3 Calderwood, 15/GPP pamphlets c/o Box V2 At Glasgow Bookshop Collective, 488 Great Western Road, Glasgow G12. (Kalinbridge subway).

**GRAVESEND**  
Adrian, Lodge House, By Valley Lodge, Ifield Way, Gravesend, Kent.

**HUDDERSFIELD**  
Huddersfield Anarchist Group & DAM, c/o Peaceworks, 58 Wakefield Road, Huddersfield.

**HULL**  
Hull Anarchist Group, 24 Albany Street, Spring Bank, Hull, Humberside.

**KEELE**  
Keele University A Group, R Knight, c/o Students Union, The University, Keele, Staffs.

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

**LEAMINGTON SPA**  
Box 7, c/o The Other Branch Bookshop, 12 Gloucester Street, Leamington Spa.

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

**LEEDS**  
Leeds Anarchist Group, Box LAP A, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds, LS2 3AW.  
Leeds Direct Action Movement, Box DAM, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AW.

**LEICESTER**  
Blackthorn Books, 70 High Street, Leicester.

Libertarian Education, 6 Beaconsfield Road, Leicester. Tel: 552085  
The Anarchist Society, Societies Room, Students Union Building, University of Leicester, University Road, LE1 7RH.

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

**LONDON**  
Anarchy Magazine, Box A, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.  
FREEDOM Collective, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1. Tel: 01-247 9249. (Aldgate East tube).  
Greenpeace, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1. Meet Thursdays, 7pm.  
London Workers Group, c/o Little A, C1 Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, London E1.  
121 Books/Anarchist Centre, 121 Raiton Road, London SE24. Tel: 01-274 6655.  
Contact address for: Anarchist-Feminist Magazine; Pigs for Slaughter; South London Anarchist Group (SLAG); South London DAM; also London Anarchist Youth Group meet every Friday at 121, 7:30pm.  
Martin Nicholas, 111 Reed Road, Tottenham, London N17.  
K Potkin, Student Mail, Polytechnic of Central London, 32-38 Wells Street, London WC1.  
Solidarity, (London Group and editorial group), c/o 123 Latham Road, London E6.

**MACCLESFIELD**  
Brandon Spivey, 37 Fallibroome Road, Broken Cross, Macclesfield, Cheshire.

**MANCHESTER**  
DAM, Wildcat, Aware Multimedia and South Manchester A Group, 8-10 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester M4 5AD.  
Black & Red Society (Anarchist Group), c/o The Students Union, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester.

**MIDDLESBOROUGH**  
Strike Back, Box A, 120 Victoria Road, Middlesborough.

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

**NORWICH**  
Norwich Anarchist Group, c/o Box 6, Freewheel, 52-54 King Street, Norwich.

**NOTTINGHAM**  
Nottingham Anarchist Group, Box A, Mushroom Bookshop, 10 Heathcote Street, Nottingham. Tel: 582506.

**OLDHAM**  
Nigel Broadbent, 14 Westminster Road, Fallsworth.

**ORPINGTON**  
Rik Fuller, 60 Ramsden Road, Orpington, Kent.

**OXFORD**  
Oxford Anarchists, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford.

**PLYMOUTH**  
Anarchists, 115 St Pancras Avenue, Penycross, Plymouth.

**PORTSMOUTH**  
Portsmouth area Anarchists Group, c/o Gerry Richardson, 25 Beresford Close, Waterlooville, Hants.

**READING**  
Reading Anarchists, Box 19, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham Street, Reading, Berks.

**RHONDDA**  
Rhondda and mid Glamorgan, Henning Anderson, 'Smiths Arms', Treherbert, Mid Glamorgan, Wales.

**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 Road, Sheffield 11.  
NEAF Secretariat, Box 168, Sheffield 11.

**SOUTHAMPTON**  
Southern Stress, c/o October Books, 4 Onslow Road, Southampton.

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

**SOUTH WORCESTERSHIRE/NORTH GLUCESTERSHIRE**  
Deb, 41 Southcourt Close, Leckhampton, Cheltenham. OR c/o 30 Ashdale Avenue, Pershore, Worcs.

**STAFFORD**  
Anarchist Communists, c/o R Black, Students Union, North Staffs Polytechnic, Beaconside, Stafford.

**SUSSEX**  
Brighton Anarchists, c/o Students Union, Falmer House, University of Sussex, Brighton, East Sussex.  
Hastings Anarchists & Poison Pen, 92 London Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex.

Sussex Anarchist Society, c/o Hastings Anarchist Group.  
Libertarian Group, Ray Cowper, 1 Bluebell Close, Crawley, W Sussex.

**SWANSEA**  
Anarchist Group, Box 5, Neges, 31 Alexandra Road, Swansea.  
Billy, 63 Clynnmaes Place, Bonymaes, Swansea.

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

**TYNE-AND-WEAR**  
Newcastle Anarchist Group, c/o 2 Priory Court, High Street, Gateshead, Tyne-and-Wear NE8 3JL.

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

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

**WATFORD**  
Watford and area Anarchists (WAAA), c/o 135 Gammons Lane, Watford, Herts.

**YORK**  
Shell 22, 73 Walmgate, York.

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Why I am not a Christian and the Faith of a Rationalist by Bertrand Russell. (32pp ppr) 60p (17p).

We can give full trade terms on the above titles.

NEW THIS WEEK

1984 in 1984: Autonomy, Control and Communication edited by Crispin Aubrey and Paul Chilton. (120pp ppr) £3.95 (45p).

Direct Action by April Carter (with a new introduction by Bob Overy). (24pp ppr) 60p (17p).

\*The Populist Manifestos by Lawrence Ferlinghetti (44pp ppr) £2.75 (27p).

A MISCELLANY

Emma Goldman: Una mujer en la tormenta del siglo (in Spanish) by Jose Pierats. (312pp ppr) £2.25 (60p).

The Guillotine at Work: Vol 1. The Leninist Counter-revolution by Gregory P Maximoff (337pp cloth) £6 (95p) (Note: only one volume is available).

Mary and the Wrongs of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft (231pp ppr) £1.75 (40p).

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Piecing it Together: Feminism and non-violence by the Feminism and non-violence study group. (50pp ppr) £1.50 (27p).

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The Child in the City by Colin Ward (221pp cloth) £3 (£1.30).

The Greenham Factor by Greenham Print Prop. (12pp ppr large format) £1 (27p).

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La Rivoluzione Volontaria: Biografia per immagini di Errico Malatesta illustrated b/w throughout. Text in Italian (102pp ppr) £4.50 (£1.30).

\*A History of Work Co-operation in America by John Curl (58pp ppr) £2.50 (40p).

\*A History of Collectivity in the San Francisco Bay area edited by John Curl (56pp ppr) £2.50 (33p).

FOOTNOTE ON SURREALISM

Surrealisme et anarchisme by Pietro Ferrua. In French. (26pp ppr) 90p (21p)

Surrealism: The things of History compiled by Conroy Maddox, John Wilson and Pauline Drayson. Freedom supplement. (8pp ppr) 15p (17p).

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