

TRUE LOVE

THE recent address by President Reagan to Mrs Thatcher on his visit to London, following the Moscow summit, was a piece of political rhetoric behind which we can see clearly the nature of the Anglo-American alliance. The cause of his visit was because 'truly the relationship between the United States and Britain has been critical to Nato's success and the cause of freedom', and his invitation to Mrs Thatcher to visit the White House to meet his successor emphasises her leading role in the Western alliance.

'Nations do not distrust each other because they are armed, they are armed because they distrust each other', said President Reagan. Now, a nation has been defined as a group of people who may be of common descent and culture, or of diverse races, but inhabiting a territory with defined limits. Groups of people might distrust each other but they could hardly harm each other if neither were armed and in that case any distrust would have to break down. One might ask why groups of people in different areas should distrust each other and the answer is that a nation implies a state which rules over a territory, defines its limits, and has a vested interest in encouraging the people within those limits to distrust those outside it.

President Reagan's suggestion is that if a basis of trust is built between nations then armaments can be reduced, the degree of trust being apparently measured by the extent of 'civil rights' in Russia. After their meeting Mrs Thatcher 'was said to feel that the Russians could never again feel the same kind of threat from the US as they had been accustomed to do in the past'. But then, if the US believes in peace and freedom, why should the Russians have felt a threat? Surely this only underlines our contention that the 'threats' felt by the US and Russia were never real.

It is suggested by both Reagan and Thatcher that the Russians have only agreed to the INF treaty (to eliminate intermediate nuclear weapons) because of the intransigence of the Western powers. It seems to us more likely that both the Russians and the Americans have come to



This is Moggie, the Prima Ballerina of our corps de ballet, and she'll perform anything for you, Ron, just for a sympathetic round of applause.

the point at which both realise that neither can keep on increasing expenditure on arms, and wish for a mutual reduction for economic reasons. Why then the sudden change in America and in Russia? It seems that both are on the brink of economic crises. The US aimed to cripple the Soviet economy by means of the arms race, high-tech weaponry which the US could afford but the Soviet not. Now it seems the US can't afford them either. It is likely that the superpowers have come to an agreement that they cannot go on competing since both

will eventually be crippled and overtaken by others — Europe, Japan or China.

Furthermore there have been irreversible changes in Russian society brought about by urbanisation and the development of an educated middle-class, with the technical and professional skills needed to run the country, which is demanding the same freedoms and standard of living as are accepted in the West. Maybe America and Russia are fearful of regional wars, and have populations for whom Vietnam and Afghanistan would no longer be acceptable. [continued page 3

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What is anarchism? £2.50 a hundred.

Subscribers to *Freedom* will have received with this issue a copy of the leaflet which we prepared for the 'Time Out Live' show and intend to be distributed at all sorts of exhibitions, book fairs, and assemblies. One side is an explanation of anarchism, the other a potted history of Freedom Press with a map showing how to find the bookshop.

Copyright is waived; by all means reproduce any or all of the leaflet in any publication. If you want to use the leaflet itself, we offer it at £2.00 a hundred, plus 50p towards postage.

DONATIONS

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Freedom Magazine Fund

Lancaster RGG £4; Leamington SP £2; Wolverhampton JL £4; West Germany PFW £3.50; Lund KR 50p; Heidelberg RS £5; Walton-on-Thames GM £1.05; London NW1 AF £3; Clwyd JK £6; Wolverhampton JL £4; Vancouver GW £4; Bideford DS £2; Wolverhampton JL £6; Edmonton, Alberta HB £86.

April/Mid-May Total = £127.05

1988 TOTAL TO DATE = £503.10

Freedom Premises Fund

Southend RB £4; Hasselt MG £3.50; Wolverhampton JL £6; Bath BV £3; London W2 TE £2; Heidelberg RS £5; London NW1 AF £3; New York DW £2; Vancouver GW £3.50; Coral Harbour AK £4.10; Wolverhampton JL £4; Nottingham AH £3.50; Southampton TF £1.75; Wolverhampton JL £6.

April/Mid-May Total = £51.35

1988 TOTAL TO DATE = £462.05

Life is a Cabaret!

Jugglers, clowns, street theatre groups, musicians, comedians and the like, interested in being on an anarchist cabaret contact list ??? If so please write giving a description of your act plus phone number/address to: Anarchist Cabaret, c/o Box ASS, Leeds Other Paper, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS1 6DT.



Resist Trident at Faslane

ON JULY 23rd the peace camp at Faslane invites everyone opposed to Trident to come and make their personal protest about Trident at the base being built for it on the Clyde.

The peace camp has been at Faslane for six years and is a symbol of resistance to the biggest escalation of the arms race ever undertaken by Britain. For the last two years a massive construction programme has been underway on the Clyde, devastating almost 4,000 acres of previously unspoilt land.

The peace camp are organising a 'People's Witness for Peace' for the weekend of July 23/24. The idea is for people to come and make their own protest in whatever non-violent way they feel is suitable for them to highlight the Trident work. On the Saturday people are asked to bring symbols of all that they care for to hang on the fence. The perimeter fence of Faslane is made of weld mesh, and is topped with razor wire. Overlooking it are fifty infra-red cameras and electronic sensors have just been fitted so that anyone cutting the fence can be detected. The weld mesh is too narrow to fit fingers through so you will need to bring crochet hooks to help you tie your symbols on, or attach hooks made out of wire to them.

On the Sunday the camp have invited Scottish Christian CND groups to do an act of worship, and there are plans for a music festival at the other end of the base.

The peace camp expects non-violent direct action to happen and will provide workshops on Scottish law and legal support, but we want all people to come to do what they want to do to show their opposition to Trident and the Polaris nuclear weapons already based here.

For leaflets and posters to help publicise this action, or for more information write to **Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire** or phone (0436) 820901. If you can spare a donation to help with the costs of this action please don't hesitate to send it. Cheques should be made out to Faslane Peace Camp. Thank you.

Faslane Peace Camp

Book Launch

Fascism down the ages from Caesar to Hitler by Frank Ridley from Romer Press, will be launched at Conway Hall (25 Red Lion Square, London WC1) at 3pm on Friday 10 July 1988.

Anarchist Health Workers Conference

Saturday 2nd July 11am to 4pm approx. **Leicester Unemployed Workers Centre, 138 Charles Street, Leicester** (above AA building). Creche provided. If you require accommodation please contact us in advance. Please send items for agenda and resolutions to: **Leicester Anarchist Healthworkers, c/o 70 High Street, Leicester.**

Northampton Free School

THE meeting on Tuesday 24 May at the Guildhall Nottingham initiated by the Libertarian Discussion Group was attended by over 25 people. The intention was to establish whether sufficient enthusiasm and support existed in the Northampton area to establish a free school.

A free school, very simply, is an educational establishment that is run without discrimination of any kind along non-authoritarian lines. There was overwhelming support from the attendees to establish a school, initially on Sundays, from 12 June. Whilst the school will eventually cater for all age groups, start up will be for younger members of the community.

For further information please contact: **Graeme Hume, telephone (0604) 581183 or through Blackcurrent Bookshop, 54 Craven Street, Northampton.**

London Anarchist Forum

While the Mary Ward Centre is closed for the summer, London Anarchist Forum will meet on the first Monday of each month in the North Room at Conway Hall (Red Lion Square London WC1). 4 July, 1 August, 5 September at 8pm.

London ACF

The Anarchist Communist Federation holds discussion meetings, open to all, on alternate Thursdays at 8.30 pm.

Next meetings 19 May and 2 June 1988. **Marchmont Street Community Centre Marchmont Street London WC1 (Kings X, Euston, Russell Square tubes).**

TRUE LOVE

continued from front page

Gorbachev is involved in internal disputes — he has an All Union Communist Party Conference coming up — and is faced with dissent in the Communist block — and he needs an agreement to be able to persuade his own government of the rightness of his policies while at the same time being able to lay the blame for lack of progress on the Americans. President Reagan on the other hand, who, in 1983, was decrying Russia as an 'evil empire' now talks of a fundamental change, as he needs to portray Russia's attitude as one of response to American toughness.

But how could it possibly be that Russian society has changed because of a new 'leader', Mr Gorbachev? Or, for that matter, that we are in a new era in Britain because of Mrs Thatcher's happening to be leader of the Conservative Party when it happened to win a series of General Elections? Very soon we shall be hearing about the Presidential Elections in the United States, but whoever is elected American society and its foreign policy will not change. If there is change in Russia it must surely be because something is 'rumbling from below to explain the reforms being introduced from above', as Vernon Richards writes in his introduction to *Neither East Nor West* (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), just as civil rights for the blacks — the cause of freedom of which President Reagan makes so much — came about as the result of a mass move-

ment at a time when the American government was waging a war in Vietnam in defence of 'the cause of peace, the cause of freedom for humanity', (to quote Reagan last week).

President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher claim that 'human rights in Russia are the key to disarmament because the Russian government have to show they can be trusted'. If the Russians have to show the Americans they can be trusted, what then do the Americans have to do since they are so perfect to show the Russians they can be trusted?

Mr Gorbachev rebuffed President Reagan: 'We see ourselves ever more convinced that we were correct in choosing socialism and we cannot conceive of a society based on any other values.' So we seem to have two clashing ideologies, but do the leaders of the powers have any moral values? Reagan and Gorbachev are both speaking to their audiences at home, for governments can only maintain their power by persuading their peoples of the existence of an external threat. But Comecon and the EEC have just signed a trade agreement in Moscow, and the chances are that both sides see their weaknesses, the US in the Middle East and the Soviet in Afghanistan, and are worried about threats to their peace from China and the third world.

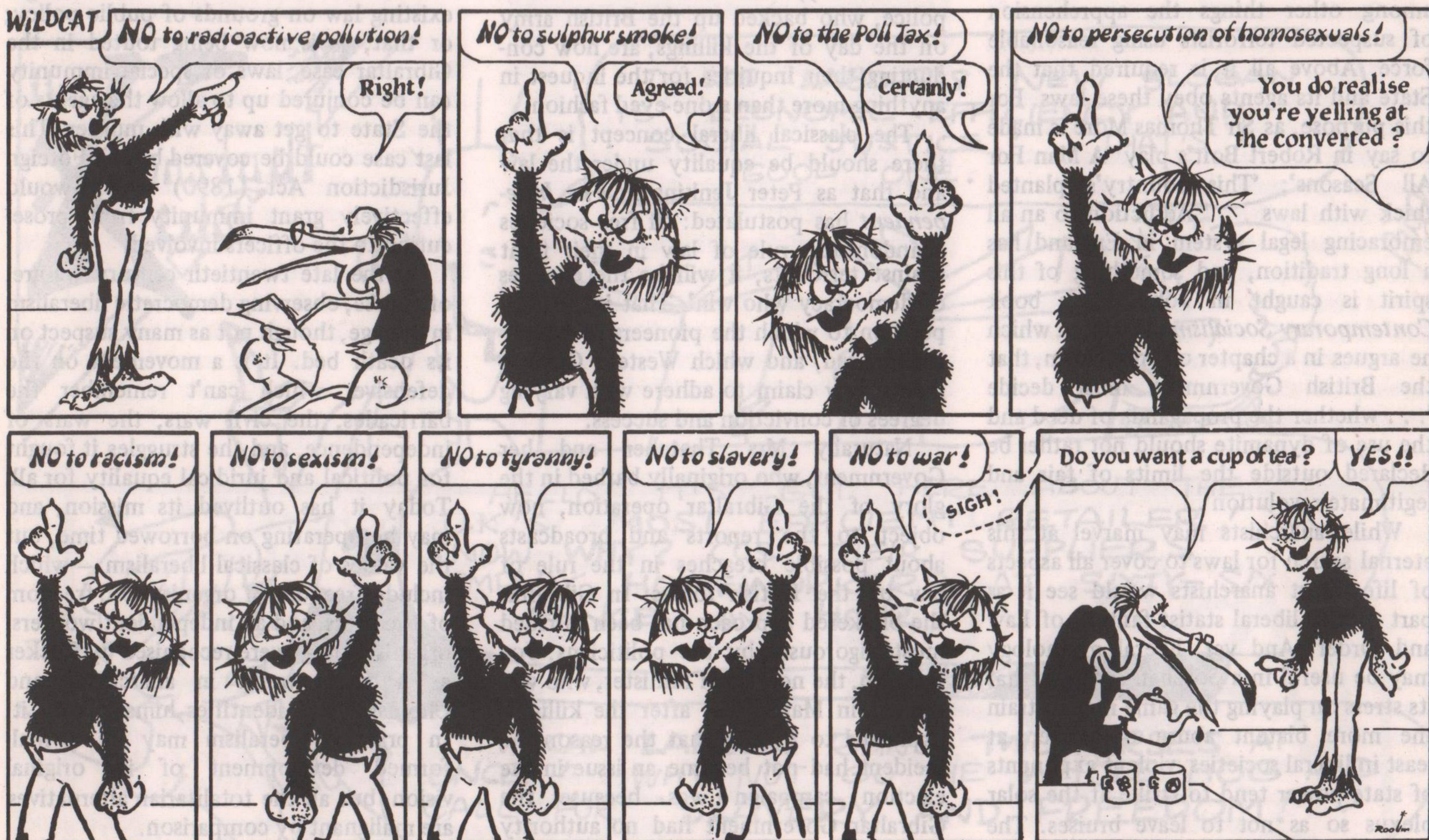
Anarchists see the concept of 'human rights' as meaningful only in the context of governmental society, and as rights can be given so they can be taken away. It is the drive of those in power combined with the apathy of the masses, both East

and West, which continues the institution of government with its insane expenditure on armaments, its squandering of lives in war and its reduction of the masses to servitude. It has always been *Freedom's* contention that the Cold War was a regulator for the respective economies of the super-powers, providing millions of jobs for the bureaucrats without which their respective economies could not have functioned. (Even the verification of the INF Treaty will require an 'army' of inspectors with their attendant bureaucracy.)

If there is really 'a new era in history, a time of lasting change in the Soviet Union', as President Reagan has said, then let us have a time of change in Britain and in the United States. Let us repeat that our rulers are there simply because they are the individuals who through ruthless manipulation of a party machinery have risen to power which is maintained by force, and this is as true of Neil Kinnock or Mrs Thatcher as it is of President Reagan or Mr Gorbachev.

But if we are correct in saying that it is mass movements of the people in Russia and in America that have brought about social change, then let us in Britain build up a mass movement here. On a simple, practical level we can refuse to vote in elections, support in particular the resistance to conscription in all those countries where it exists, in America, in Russia and in European countries, and forge bonds of solidarity with all people of goodwill in both America and Russia.

Charles Crute



Juridical Equality, or Liberal Mythology

AFTER the shooting in Gibraltar of three IRA members in March, a cartoon appeared in a Spanish daily showing Felipe Gonzalez, the Prime Minister of Spain, crouching in the posture of the 'See No Evil' monkey, while Mrs Thatcher waved a gun sprouting the words 'Thank you very much'. Gracias Senor for delivering the terrorists into my Gibraltarian death trap!

Terrorist disorder presents a dilemma for the liberal democratic state. And in the recent fuss (inducing in Mrs Thatcher feelings deeper than fury) over the media questioning of the rules of engagement employed by the British army (SAS) in the Gibraltar killings, the Government seems to be asking us to turn a blind eye while the State authorities wield and discharge their weapons with more fervour than a firing squad.

It is the basis of our liberal state to have laws to cover situations, including among other things the apprehension of suspected terrorists using reasonable force. Above all it is required that the State and its agents obey these laws. For this purpose, as Sir Thomas More is made to say in Robert Bolt's play 'A Man For All Seasons'; 'This country's planted thick with laws . . .' Addiction to an all embracing legal system in England has a long tradition, and something of this spirit is caught in John Rae's book *Contemporary Socialism* (1891), in which he argues in a chapter on Anarchism, that the British Government must decide ' . . . whether the propaganda of deed and the use of dynamite should not rather be declared outside the limits of fair and legitimate revolution'.

While anarchists may marvel at this eternal search for laws to cover all aspects of life, most anarchists would see it as part of the liberal statist fantasy of Law and Order. And yet, liberal mythology may be useful in a Sorelian sense, in that its stress on playing the game may restrain the more blatant abuse of power; at least in liberal societies, violent exponents of state power tend to strike at the solar plexus so as not to leave bruises. The problem of the SAS in Gibraltar is that



they seem to have left too many bruises on the body politic of liberalism.

'Bending the law'

But whether we are discussing an unobtainable fantasy or an ideal to be aspired to, the fact is the Gibraltar shootings have raised vital issues of concern to both liberals and anarchists: the possible breach of the law by agents of the British State; the right of the media to comment on this; the question of a Government sanctioned policy of 'shoot to kill'. This is perhaps more important than the factual details about the killings: whether the terrorists were raising their hands in surrender or self-defence; whether a key witness, smeared by some of the British press, is a prostitute or, worse still in Gibraltarian terms, a 'dove' (a sympathiser with Spain's claims to Gibraltar); even whether the Gibraltar police, who backed up the British army on the day of the killings, are now conducting their inquiries for the inquest in anything more than a one-eyed fashion.

The classical liberal concept is that there should be equality under the law and that as Peter Jenkins in *The Independent* has postulated: 'If free societies abandon the rule of law in their fight against terrorists, it will be the enemies of democracy who win'. That is the ideal position to which the pioneers of liberalism aspired, and which Western Governments now claim to adhere with varying degrees of conviction and success.

Naturally Mrs Thatcher and her Government, who originally bathed in the glory of the Gibraltar operation, now object to the reports and broadcasts about possible breaches in the rule of law by the British forces. In Gibraltar the blinkered approach has been pursued most vigorously by the politicians. Joe Bossano, the new Chief Minister, who was elected in March just after the killings, explained to *El Pais* that the reason the incident had not become an issue in the election campaign was because the Gibraltar Government had no authority for matters concerning foreign policy

or defence. Yet it was the Gibraltar police who drove the supposed SAS to and from the scene of the killings. Now it turns out that for there to be an independent inquiry under a High Court judge, it would require a request from the Gibraltar House of Assembly to the British Government.

Following the shootings the chorus of support for the British authorities from the Governor downwards was deafening. Yet as Conor Cruise O'Brien was later to remark in *The Times* (3rd May 1988) ' . . . the so-called shoot-to-kill policy which, since it connives at the breach of the laws currently in force, will necessarily be accompanied by prevarication and cover up, and followed by intimidation of the media when they seek to penetrate the fog surrounding the cover-up to establish the facts.' Ultimately Dr O'Brien recognises it as a policy which 'tends to bring discredit on the democratic system, to corrupt both the government and the security forces . . .' But while he wants the 'shoot to kill' policy scrapped, he suggests the re-introduction of internment which challenges both the idea of equality under the law, and the presumption of a suspect's innocence. Peter Jenkins, in contrast, prefers the 'high ground of the classic liberal position', even if this is 'something of a fiction', which means that the security forces will in practice 'bend' the rule of law.

It is clear that any Government, even in a liberal democracy, can suspend the rule of law in certain circumstances; or that judges can defer the effects of existing law on grounds of public policy; or that, as is now being touted in the Gibraltar case, laws of special immunity can be conjured up to allow the agents of the State to get away with murder. This last case could be covered by the Foreign Jurisdiction Act (1890) which would effectively grant immunity from prosecution to the officers involved.

In the late twentieth century we are, of course, observing democratic liberalism in old age, though not as many suspect on its death bed. It is a movement on the defensive, which can't remember the barricades, the civil wars, the wars of independence, and the struggles it fought for political and juridical equality for all. Today it has outlived its mission, and may be operating on borrowed time, but the values of classical liberalism — which include freedom of organisation, freedom of the press, and an independent workers' organisation — were recognised by Rocker as a vital strand in anarchism, and Chomsky still identifies himself with it. In practice liberalism may be a malformed development of its original vision, but all the totalitarian alternatives are malignant by comparison.

Brian Bamford

The Torturers' General comes to stay

PRESIDENT Evren of Turkey is scheduled to make a State Visit to Britain, starting 12 July. He will meet the Queen and the Prime Minister.

Royal conversations can't fail to include the part which Elizabeth I played in trade with the Sultan. And there are many non-political avenues to be followed when it comes to Turkey. Turkey has archaeological sites to equal in importance the best of Greece and Italy. Finally, good for a laugh, there are the antics of the British Ambassador with Kemal Ataturk, their drunken goings on throughout the nights — a secret passage linked the British Embassy with Ataturk's residence in those days.

The gist of discussions between the General and Thatcher may be more sinister, getting down to practicalities. What has the General to tell her about dictatorship? In 1980 he led the military coup. 50 people were hanged outright. The fate of a further 400 political prisoners is in the balance, awaiting the decision of the military court, which hinges on the outcome of Turkey's negotiations to enter the Common Market. Torture is still being inflicted, as Thatcher was assured before she left on her visit to Turkey, but human rights were not on the Ankara agenda.

The Turks are a charming race: as charming and hypocritical as the English can be, where lies are never considered to be lies in moments of extremity, as Thatcher knows only too well. But her policies have not yet sunk to the depravity of that premeditated evil — torture. In the past eight years more than 100,000 people have been tortured in Turkey and northern Kurdistan. And as many as 500,000 people, political prisoners, are now suffering long, savage sentences which were meted out by the military courts. One such married man of 29 (he has a small son) was sentenced to 18 years for making non-violent communist propaganda. In 1985, 1,500 books were banned, and 233,607 books were burned. Hitler set the precedent. If that isn't bad enough, Evren's appalling policy against the Kurdish people carries echoes of nazism also. That he and Thatcher should be sharing confidences is not a nice thought.

A march to protest against General Evren's State Visit will assemble at Hyde Park Speakers Corner on Saturday, 2 July at 2pm before proceeding to the Turkish embassy, and on to 10 Downing Street.

Rodney Aitchtey

Berlin police beat up their own officers

WEST Berlin police have opened an unprecedented investigation into the behaviour of their riot squads after three senior officers, mistaken for protesters, were beaten up by their own men.

The investigation into the incident followed disturbances in the Kreuzberg district on May Day.

The three police directors, who were in plain clothes observing a confrontation between protesters and riot police, were hit repeatedly with batons and tear-gassed, despite screaming at their colleagues that they were their commanding officers and not demonstrators.

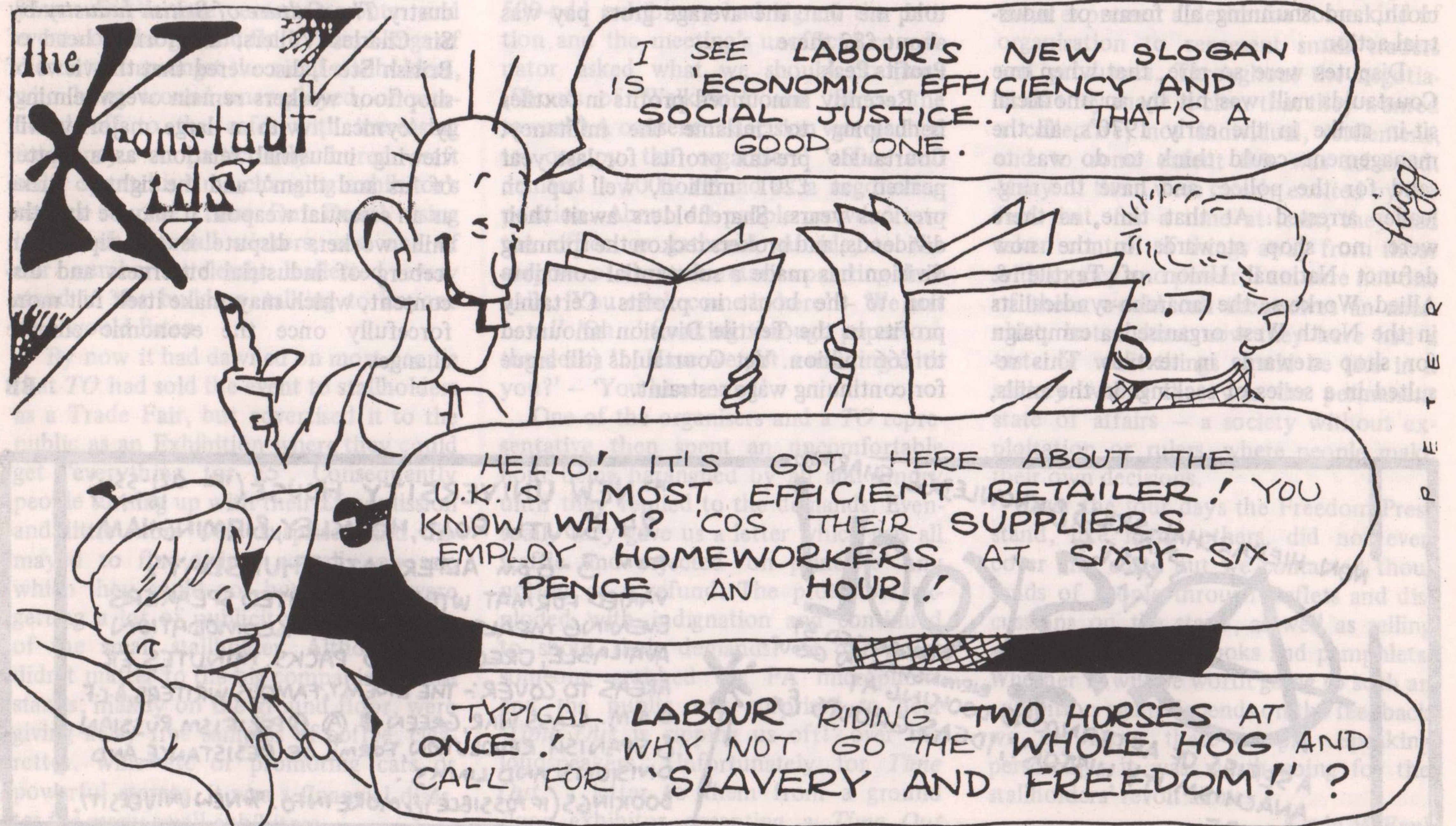
Lawyers for those detained said the fact that the police officers were beaten up by their own men was proof of brutal police behaviour.

An independent police panel was set up at the weekend to examine 'the whole sequence of events' during the riots, during which over 130 people were arrested.

The Guardian

Lord Skelmersdale, the junior health minister, is opposed to a European ban on high-tar cigarettes. Cigarettes with a very high tar content should continue to be sold if people wanted to buy them, despite the higher risk of cancer, he said. 'There ought to be an element of choice. People have a right to choose their own method of death.'

On the other hand, the health ministry continues to oppose voluntary euthanasia.



Textiles : fighting for

'Fancy Pay'

'If we start awarding ourselves fancy wage increases, we will not be able to compete.'

— Bill Iveson, Personnel Director of Courtaulds Spinning Division, 1 June 1988

CURRENT strike action by mill workers in Lancashire brings back memories. I was always brought up to believe no respectable worker should go into a mill or a brothel.

Snobbery is as deeply ingrained among the working classes, particularly as regards pay, as it is with any other section of the British public. When I was a lad, mill work was always seen as dead end work unsuitable for decent working men.

Low pay has been the rule in Lancashire's textile mills for as long as I can remember. Women and immigrants form the major part of the workforce. With the possible exception of man-made fibres the industry seems to have been in continuous recession since the 1950s.

For the most part the textile trade unions have been fawning organisations dedicated to grovelling. Such unions knew all about negotiating 'Sweetheart Deals' with the mill bosses, well before the label was attached to the Electricians' union. The textile unions allied themselves completely with the mill bosses; campaigning against foreign imports of cloth, and shunning all forms of industrial action.

Disputes were so rare, that when one Courtaulds mill was hit by an unofficial sit-in strike in the early 1970's, all the management could think to do was to send for the police, and have the ring-leader arrested. At that time, as there were no shop stewards in the now defunct National Union of Textile & Allied Workers, the anarcho-syndicalists in the North West organised a campaign for shop stewards in textiles. This resulted in a series of sackings in the mills,

and expulsions from the unions in Rochdale and Oldham. Ultimately mill representatives were introduced, and by the 1980's most of the mill unions had been absorbed by the more militant general unions like the GMB.

Ragged-arsed Democracy

Today's strikes are a ragged-arsed affair in an industry of about 20,000 workers; a far cry from the last big textile strike in 1932 over pay cuts, when half a million came out. At the Courtauld's mill near me in Rochdale the shop steward led a dozen scabs back to work within a couple of days of the kick-off of the dispute. I wonder if the lassies will literally 'blackball' him when they get hold of him?

The employers have complained that: 'More democracy in the union seems to have helped lead to the dispute'. In the past the union officials used to agree and deliver pay deals. The new system gives more say to the shopfloor.

On the picket people smiled, when I told them Mr Iveson, Courtaulds Personnel Director had said: 'We mustn't go awarding ourselves fancy pay rises'. One girl, cheerfully tossing a baby, declared her take to be £64 for a 39 hour week. She was working in Quality Control. The basic pay in textiles is £78.50. Pickets on duty at Courtaulds Mars Mill, Rochdale, told me that the average gross pay was about £83 there.

Profits Peak

Recently announced profits in textiles is helping to inflame the militancy. Courtaulds' pre-tax profits for last year peaked at £201 million, well up on previous years. Shareholders await their dividends, and brokers reckon the spinning division has made a substantial contribution to the boost in profits. Certainly profits in the Textile Division amounted to £66 million. Yet Courtaulds still argue for continuing wage restraint.

The union itself is demanding a 10.5% rise; up to now Courtaulds has offered 6.5%. Some smaller companies have already broken rank with the British Textile Employers Association and have put up close to 10%.

As I write, finished yarn is still being moved from stock, but this will soon run out if the dispute goes on much longer. And with the annual Wakes Holidays due in both Oldham and Rochdale in two weeks time Courtaulds could find themselves in trouble as yarn stocks begin to drain. Courtaulds' mills amount to about half the UK spinning capacity.

It is odd, at a time when the rest of the British trade union movement looks like a deflated balloon, that the mill workers of Lancashire, after over half a century, should shake a leg and take on the textile bosses. Surprise is the description of the management reaction. Perhaps the current structural weakness of the trade unions under the leadership of the waggling Mr Willis is deceptive. Of course, the tribal trade union snobbery of British workers, will always be an obstacle to human solidarity in this country. Workers will continue to look down on mill labour, and other low paid occupations, but their hostility to authority, and the boss, may even have increased under Thatcherism.

A recent study of the engineering industry *The Culture of British Industry* by Sir Charles Villiers, the former head of British Steel, discovered that the views of shopfloor workers remain overwhelmingly 'cynical', with a large majority still viewing industrial relations as a matter of 'us and them', and the right to strike as an essential weapon. It may be that the mill workers dispute is the tip of an iceberg of industrial bitterness and discontent, which may make itself felt more forcefully once the economic climate changes.

BB

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SITTING in the corner of a cramped bookstand at an exhibition centre in London under the glare of fluorescent lights for four days is not exactly my idea of fun, especially over a hot bank holiday weekend. But when *Time Out*, one of the London Listings magazines, offered us a stand at their 'Time Out Live' Exhibition at Olympia last month that's just what several volunteers from Freedom Press and bookshop agreed to do. The opportunity to get the anarchist message across to thousands of people unaware of our existence seemed worth even the expensive cost of a stand when compared to the price of advertisements in 'left-wing' magazines.

So it was with eager anticipation that we awaited the first of the '10,000 high-earning *Time Out* readers a day' confidently expected by the organisers. Most of the stands with us on the first floor were small independent producers/sellers of arts, crafts and clothes, many just run by one person, whose livelihoods depend on their own work and who had closed their usual shop or stall in towns across the country to be there, in expectation of plenty of well-heeled yuppie customers. It was not to be. From the moment the doors opened on the Friday, attendance was very low and those who did come appeared to have little money to spend. We chatted to our neighbours and encouraged what visitors there were to take leaflets on anarchism and free back numbers of *Freedom*. Disappointment turned to disgust as Friday turned into Saturday and the crowds stayed away in droves. In addition, the PA system was being reserved exclusively to publicise *Time Out's* free entertainments and events on the ground floor. Rumbblings of discontent amongst the small stallholders, who hung around unemployed, or wandered off to the cafes with increasing frequency. A particularly bored craft seller spent his time changing exhibitor's badges to read 'Time Out Dead', using hand-crafted small stickers, and one of our number tirelessly leafletted every stand in the building, talking to anyone who would listen.

By now it had dawned on most people that *TO* had sold the event to stallholders as a Trade Fair, but advertised it to the public as an Exhibition where they could get 'everything for £5'. Consequently people turning up with their £5 admission and little more were surprised and dismayed to find things actually on sale which they could not buy. So *TO* were getting a lot of publicity at the expense of the small stallholder. Although this didn't matter to the big companies whose stands, mainly on the ground floor, were giving away free samples of coffee, cigarettes, wine etc or promoting cars or powerful stereos, it was a financial disaster for many small exhibitors.

Time Out DEAD 1988

By Saturday afternoon many crafts people were extremely unhappy and had got together spontaneously to organise a petition calling on *TO* and the exhibition organisers to explain the poor attendance and misleading publicity. A meeting of dissident stallholders was called on the Sunday afternoon where angry voices threatened a mass walkout if the organisers, Expo Productions, or *TO* did not refund money on the stand prices. Freedom Press' position was that while we could not pull out (we were there to make propaganda more than money and anyway we had no transport until the Monday evening - when incidentally the car park was closed until Tuesday) we would support the rebels' attempts to get some compensation. More than 170 of the 500-odd exhibitors had signed the petition and the meeting's unofficial coordinator asked what we should do now. (Shouts of 'Walk-out!' and 'Storm the tower!') A consensus decision was reached to occupy the organisers' office and demand a 100% refund as a negotiating position. About 40 people crowded into the office or gathered outside, to the surprise of three secretaries painting their nails. 'You can't come in here' - 'We just have!' 'Oh...' (looking through papers on the desk) '... Have we got a meeting with you?' - 'You have now!'

One of the organisers and a *TO* representative then spent an uncomfortable hour being harangued by all and sundry until they replied to the demands. Eventually they gave us a letter which was all waffle and rejected 'on principle' any notion of a refund. The protestors exploded with indignation and continued to shout their demands. At one point someone grabbed the PA microphone and the public was surprised to hear '*Time Out* is ripping us off!' over the loudspeakers. Unfortunately for *Time Out*, a letter to them from a ground floor exhibitor accepting a *Time Out*

offer of one third refund for inconvenience was found on the desk some of us were sitting on, and was quickly photocopied (on the *TO* photocopier!) and distributed as evidence by a Freedom Press worker. It was pointed out that if no refund was made, a mass walk-out would be staged in front of the TV cameras sending out a live charity appeal from the exhibition; the press would be contacted to expose what *TO* was doing; and any future *TO* event would be boycotted through the traders' grapevine. The two men went white but continued to refuse our demands. The protestors then dispersed in preparation for a walk-out, but shortly afterwards word went round that *TO's* editor and publisher were prepared to meet us.

When they did, just before the TV transmission, they eventually acknowledged (after much armtwisting) many of the complaints and agreed to put an offer of up to 50% compensation in writing. The owner, Tony 'Moneybags' Elliot was stony-faced throughout the meeting but the editor, who had expressed some regret, was later seen wandering aimlessly round the exhibition in tears.

Whether or not the offer will satisfy everyone remains to be seen but what is interesting and encouraging about the affair is that it was a protest by normally unorganised and isolated groups and individuals who were coming together spontaneously, many for the first time, in solidarity with others over a common grievance. One of us on the Freedom stand pointed out to the rebels that this was precisely what had caused the formation of Trades Unions, and several of them expressed a desire for some kind of organisation to represent small traders and producers. Throughout the negotiations they made it clear that they wanted a collective, not individual, settlement, and to some extent this was achieved. Many of them were clearly excited by the fact that, for a time at least, they had taken control of things away from those with money and power. I am sure not one of them would call themselves an anarchist, but at least now they have had a taste of what things would be like in a society where that was the permanent state of affairs - a society without exploitation or rulers, where people make their own decisions.

Over the four days the Freedom Press stand, like many others, did not even cover the costs but we contacted thousands of people through leaflets and discussions on the stand, as well as selling quite a number of books and pamphlets. Whether it will be worth going to such an exhibition again depends on the feedback we get from these people. Speaking personally, it was worth going for the stallholders' revolt alone.

Kevin McFaul

Letter from Greece

ANARCHIST comrades Clearcos Smirneos, Christoforos Marinos, Makis Boukouvalas and Evangelhia Voghiatzi, were arrested on the 1 October 1987 and are to date still prisoners. The accusations against them are as follows: Participation in armed groups, illegal possession of arms, theft and falsification of public documents.

During the arrest of Smirneos and Matinos, Michaelis Prekas (who had been persecuted by the law and had connections with anarchists) was assassinated by special police forces.

The arrest and imprisonment of the four comrades is part of a methodical repressive action of the state against anarchists. This action also has the aim of attacking the whole of Greek society by introducing new repressive measures and wants to criminalise every social outburst of dissatisfaction.

In fact, the comrades arrested were always in the front line of many social struggles against the state's actions (more particularly, Clearchos has already been attacked for over 11 months because of his participation in a massive struggle against the destruction of a park in a suburb of Athens and had also been accused because of his participation at workers' strikes and demonstrations).

Effacing the social dissatisfaction is a purpose that the state promotes for a series of reasons. Further to its efforts to stop social struggles developing, the state pursues the aim of distracting peoples' attention away from the serious social and economic difficulties that actually confronts them (inflation is around 15% and several workers' strikes take place in the country almost every day). At the same time and according to the new restructuring necessary for the capitalist system of domination and social hierarchy, the state is obliged to repress all these social groups which resist and have insurrectional tendencies. That's why repression against anarchists is at this moment an important social question in Greece.

Part of these repressive and methodical actions against anarchists was realised on 1 October 1987. In this case, the state's immediate aim was to satisfy NATO's questions about the Greek police's ability to produce 'anti-terrorist work' and also accordingly to meet the international power centres exigencies.

'Terrorists and criminals' – spectacular headlines on the newspapers front pages have always been the classic method used by the state when confronted by serious social difficulties. In the same way now: by inventing 'guilty' parties and by making 'intrigues' the state tried to present the comrades' arrest as the greatest recent success against 'terrorism'. This action of the state was not only against anarchists but also against the whole of Greek society.

The Greek anarchist movement in its entirety has promoted several initiatives of solidarity for the comrades arrested (see chronology).

In particular, 'Anarchist Coil' which was formed in Athens in January 1988, organised on the 5 and 6 February a public meeting at the Polytechnic of Athens, where we extensively discussed the situation of the comrades' arrest and the repressive social conditions the arrest exposed today, the whole anarchist/anti-authoritarian activity in Greece, the initiatives that the anarchist movement must take in order to contrast this repressive wave and also to radicalise social struggles.

Our group has also published a pamphlet which contains a part of this analysis about the actual conditions of anarchist/anti-authoritarian activity in Greece.

The 'Anarchist Coil' continues to promote a public contra-information campaign by the exhibition of tableaux, the distribution of pamphlets and the organisation of meetings, etc., in order to denounce publicly the state's terrorism.

Anarchist Coil Athens

For more information contact:
**Sispirosi Anarchicon, PO Box 30658,
10033 Athens, Greece.**

Latest information from Greece and mobilisation of the anarchist movement

1.10.87 Michaelis Prekas is seriously wounded by special police forces at Kalogreza (Athens). At the same place anarchist comrades Clearchos Smirneos and Christoforos Marinos are arrested. Later the same day, Preka's girlfriend Evangelhia Voghiatzi is also arrested while entering the hospital to find Prekas. Prekas, seriously wounded earlier on the same day, dies.

2.10.87 Another anarchist comrade Makis Boukouvalas is spectacularly arrested inside a cafeteria at Exarchia Square (Athens) while drinking his coffee.

13.10.87 Solidarity meeting for the four anarchist comrades arrested at the theatre 'Irida' in Athens. About 1,000 persons participate.

5.11.87 Solidarity meeting for the four anarchists arrested takes place at the area in the front of the old university in Athens. Later, a demonstration takes place across the centre of the city.

15.12.87 Solidarity meeting at the theatre 'Gloria' in Athens. Public denouncement of the police action against the four comrades and the assassination of Prekas.

5/6.2.88 Two days' meeting at the Polytechnic of Athens. Discussion topics of the meeting: State's repression; anarchist movements methodical intervention of solidarity with the four comrades; defence organisation of the whole anarchist/anti-authoritarian activity, at this moment particularly attacked by the state's repressive forces.

8.2.88 Solidarity concert for the four comrades arrested is organised at the sports palace 'Sporting' in Athens.

16.2.88 Demonstration with motorbikes and cars around the prison of 'Koridalos' in Athens in solidarity with the four comrades imprisoned there and also with the discontented prisoners of 'Yenti-Koule' prison (Thessaloniki).

18.2.88 Solidarity sit-in with speakers at the area in the front of the old university in Athens, in order to support Makis Boukouvalas release demand.

22.2.88 In solidarity with the comrades imprisoned, a mass meeting takes place outside 'Kouridalos' prison. Between the slogans shouted other comrades decide to express their solidarity by flying kites.

28.2.88 Solidarity meeting for the four comrades in the cinema 'Angela' in Athens with films followed by discussion.

18/19/20.3.88 Three days of anarchist public meetings in Kipselis district in Athens. Tableau, counter-information, pamphlets about state's methods of social repression and more specifically against anarchists.

31.3.88 Public meeting at the Polytechnic Athens. Speakers include a lawyer, left political parties' members and a deputy of Germany's 'Greens'. Solidarity with Clearchos Smirneos, Christoforos Marinos, Evangelhia Voghiatzi and Makis Boukouvalas expressed. Immediate release of Makis Boukouvalas and Evangelhia Voghiatzi demanded. Identification and punishment of Prekas's assassins demanded.

Open Letter written after a journey from Buenos Aires to Washington

WE ARE finally back in Stockholm and back with the other members of our community. Our memories are still fresh of the many people we met in Rio, Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Washington and New York. Everywhere we met active comrades and groups with similar activities and aims.

Our first impression seems to be that an embryonic network is indeed developing. This network is made up of mutual aid groups growing outside and in opposition to power structures. This is taking place in the context of an increasing lack of belief in political parties and movements that intend to change society by co-operating with the Estate or adopting its ways and strategies.

Young people in particular are less and less interested in traditional forms of organisation (such as trade unions and political parties), especially today in South America. This is because, once the military dictatorships of countries like Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil fell, people expected a lot from the newly arrived 'democratic' governments. These gave more freedom but did not fulfil people's deepest hopes and aspirations.

In South America in the 1970s, many people thought that taking over the state could be the most direct way to achieve significant social change. Today this idea has lost credibility. Perhaps this change of attitude reflects the experience of having had military dictatorships which tried to be the maximum manifestation of 'the power of Power' and yet failed to brainwash people and change their mentality and social behaviour. Now, the system is offering a semblance of participation, but this pseudo-democracy does not convince everybody that this is not just a new form of adaption to domination.

Talks we have had in several universities and with different groups and social movements gave us the opportunity to get in contact with and assess the new structures that are emerging in these different milieus. These are open structures with internal contradictions and differences between one and the other, constituting a free manifestation of diversities, away from the rigid discourse of 'unitarianism' proposed by the traditional left (which, paradoxically, provoked fragmentation and exhaustion).

All these modifications in the social scenario makes us think that, perhaps, we must revise the way we perceive reality as we are too used to accepting the information that comes down from the State and the recognised opposition. Yet, there is much more to see in terms of what is developing as germs of a new

society. The old speeches of the left (which still have some vitality in Latin America) are by no means the only way of interpreting social reality and formulating social change.

In our trip, we met interesting groups which can be seen as forming part of this new social reality: libertarian journals such as *Autogestao*, *O Enemigo do Rei*, *Utopia* (Brazil), and *Utopia* (Argentina); publishing houses such as Tupac (Buenos Aires), Nordan-Comunida (Uruguay) and a newly established one in Brasilia; the Soma-Therapy groups of Brazil and the communities and self-management groups of Paysandu, FrayBentos, Colonia, Canelones, Montevideo (Uruguay), Rio, Minas Geraes, Porto Alegre (Brazil), Buenos Aires and New York. All these groups and organisations are giving a new vitality to anarchism and recreating its basic propositions.

At the same time, our trip brought into evidence the fact that one of the major weaknesses of this changing universe is the poverty of dialogue between groups. For this reason we are trying to set up channels of communication and inter-relation. In this sense, the following initiatives have been formulated: permanent contact between Comunidad del Sur of Montevideo and communities of Porto Alegre; the establishment of a common fund among libertarian publishing houses (IRL of France, Eleuthera of Italy, Sementeira of Portugal, Noir of Switzerland, Black Rose of Canada, Nordan and Federativ of Sweden). We also recognise the need to exchange articles, photographs, etc. between libertarian journals in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

We also reached an agreement with a New York community (The Foundation of Feedback Learning) and our own community, whereby young people from our community can spend two or three months there to learn English and organise the distribution of books that we publish in Spanish, in Spanish-speaking areas of the USA. This will also help make further contacts with similar groups in both countries.

We also visited the Deer Spring Community (Society of Brothers) and established contacts that will be the start of a solidarity network to help communities and self-management groups in Latin America: Ecomunidad of Santiago, Chile; Granja Autogestionaria of Cartago, Columbia; Comunidad del Norte of Paysandu, Uruguay; and Autogestao of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

We should add that all this implies an effort that goes beyond the real possibilities of our small community, both in terms of our financial capacity and in terms of our manpower. For this reason we wish to close this letter by inviting comrades to join this network, give support, actively participate in actual experiences and promote new ones, and act as a channel of communication between different groups at an international level.

Ruben and Alvaro Prieto

Addresses: Nordan Community, Box 15 128, S-104 65 Stockholm, Sweden. Comunidad del Sur, Casilla de Correos 15229, Montevideo, Uruguay.

[translated by Mario Marrone]

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A Blind Alley for Anarchists

THERE are several reasons for not sharing R. Hunt's enthusiasm over the ideas contained in 'A Historical and Economic Analysis for Anarchists' (*Freedom*, Feb). The first is that as an historical analysis it is unsatisfactory as well as stopping at a pre-capitalist stage of development.

Richard Hunt argued that the foundation of wealth is not trade and industry but the food taken from the peasantry (tithes, etc.), the implication being that the workers had a stake in the maintenance of the system: 'The workers depended on a strong ruling class to expropriate their food from the peasantry.' I would argue French history alone invalidates his theory.

By the eighteenth century both the French peasants and workers were starving and both played crucial roles in the destruction of the 'Old Regime'. The urban workers (*sans-culottes*) attacking the political edifice (the Bastille, the march on Versailles, the *sans-culotte* revolutionary committees, etc.) while the peasantry attacked and defeated its socio-economic base (the seigneurial system — tithes, etc.). This combined assault was what really finished the French 'Old Regime'.

However, those who gained least at the end of the day were the urban workers or *sans-culottes*, who lost all their brief economic and political gains during the later Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, while the peasantry had at least defeated feudalism and gained the legal right to buy and own land (which the wealthier ones did when the new state sold off Church lands). The net result was that the workers were left to fight on again (in the bloodbaths of 1848, 1871, etc.) while the French peasantry in general became a conservative force in French society as they fought to protect their gains from all-comers. No longer (if ever) were the French workers 'dependent on a strong ruling class' to protect their position, since that ruling class feared and despised the workers (after their experiences during the early stages, 1792-4, of the Revolution). For it was precisely this ruling class and its economic system which posed the greatest threat to the workers' position. Any attack on this system — capitalism — (such as the 1848 Revolution) was met with maximum violence and subsequent authoritarianism, i.e. Napoleon III who drew substantial support from the French peasantry.

Thus the 1789 French Revolution alone poses problems for Hunt's analysis. If the basic cause of wealth is the food expropriated from the peasantry (the tithe), what then was the base of wealth (and trade, etc.) in post-1789 France?

Are we also to assume that the French peasantry was not exploited and oppressed after the Revolution? What also fed the growing number of non-agricultural workers?

Aside from anything else, this analysis ignores the complexities of trade, which has the tendency to regenerate itself. Without this understanding, for example, eighteenth century Anglo-French rivalries in the West Indies are inexplicable. That food surpluses were the original generator of trade and wealth is not in dispute, but in of itself it does not explain how certain sectors of society did materially prosper to a degree that can not be solely explained by increases in agricultural produce and marketable surpluses.

One has to ask how Richard Hunt would explain that Britain was the richest and most powerful country throughout most of the nineteenth century, at a time when it was unable to produce enough food to feed its own population?

Richard Hunt is correct when he says that 'no political movement can get off the ground until it can claim to end poverty'. Yet who, in a 'post-industrial' society, is going to take anyone seriously who talks of the peasantry being the real producers of wealth? And in countries where the peasantry remain an important factor is not emphasising the peasantry as being the only producers of wealth, everybody else by implication being parasites, going to drive a wedge between the opposition to indigenous and international capitalism?



Technology

Another point of contention is Richard Hunt's analysis of the role of technology which is simplistic in the extreme, believing that technology has a malevolent dynamic of its own. He ignores the economic factors that govern the role of technology. The basic reason why Manchester overtook India as the chief textile exporter (although we shouldn't ignore the important role the British state played in opening up and protecting the markets) was that the technology employed in Manchester allowed less labour power to produce a greater quantity of goods at a cheaper rate. That this was

done at the expense of the Manchester workers was not the fault of the technology employed but of the economic system within which it operated — production for profit, not need.

Marx was right when he saw this development of technology as being a progressive factor. Yet Hunt misreads Marx if he believed that Marx thought these developments ultimately benefitted the workers (and peasantry, Indian or otherwise). Central to Marx was his analysis that wealth wouldn't 'trickle down' to the masses but that they would become progressively poorer as employers squeezed wages in the search for continued profit margins.

And should we lament the demise of the Indian textile industry? It too was based on the economic dictum of profit and loss, its workers exploited and paid subsistence rates. In fact, the Indian textile workers were worse off (especially in times of dispute); being a home-based industry, using 'low' technology, the workers were 'atomised', cut-off from their fellow workers and their industrial muscle being severely curtailed (it being easier to organise action where workers were concentrated, like in a factory). Therefore, they had less control over their wages, etc. as the supplier of raw cotton could switch supplies to more compliant workers in a way that became impossible for the Manchester factory magnates. The latter couldn't move their plant around the country in search of a more compliant labour force but had to import it in, in view of all those in dispute, thus galvanising attitudes.

This illustrates that the type of technology used does have important consequences (see P. Rabin, *Raven* No 4). However, just because the old Indian textile industry used traditional 'low' technology doesn't mean that it was necessarily benevolent — that has as much, if not more, to do with the wider economic system in which it operates.

Simply bemoaning the new 'high' technology will get anarchists nowhere. We have to understand fully the impact that new technology will have on work patterns, the workforce and wider society. Thus computer technology will allow greater numbers of lower grade workers to do work from home and will produce a new generation of 'atomised' workers, cut-off from physical interaction with fellow workers. We have already seen, in this economy, the decline of the huge factory plant that traditionally employed thousands of workers, which was argued to have facilitated the development of a collectivist mentality, spontaneous solidarity, etc.

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Anarchism must thus discuss the development of new strategies and tactics that foster and develop resistance to capitalism and the state amongst this new, high technology workforce (whose exploitation remains the same). Thus we have to ask if, for an 'atomised' labour force, strike action is the most effective and practical weapon for winning disputes and developing anarchism among the working class? Also, what are the implications for direct democracy and

'shop floor' participation in the new or existing trade unions or workers' organisations?

At the same time we must not forget those who still labour in the older, traditional industries and in the new 'low' technology industries like the service sector and small manufacturing concerns (supposedly on the increase); or those workers currently unemployed or on state schemes and benefits, who are currently bearing the brunt of the re-

structuring of the world and domestic economy.

I hope this article has done something to refute some of the sillier ideas in R. Hunt's piece, which I fear would lead anarchism up a blind alley and leave us all open to intellectual attack from all sides. Far from being a refutation of Marxism, R. Hunt has had to move the posts in order to score, which is itself an admission of defeat, an own goal.

Eddie May

The Irrelevance of Class

IN THE April edition of *Freedom*, A. K. Brown began an article entitled 'Class and Education' with the following: 'One of the currently fashionable views is that class isn't really important any more and that freedom is all about an attitude of mind. To me this represents a serious misunderstanding.'

It was not A. K. B.'s intention to examine class as a key concept, as it is mine, but to rightly illustrate how class inequality effects choice in life. He thinks 'class' is a useful analytical tool, whereas I do not. As I see it, there is little point in insisting on using *any* concept if, as I intend to show, it is difficult if not impossible to define, and frequently means different things to different people. Also, I feel strongly that freedom really is 'all about an attitude of mind'.

Class in sociology has an economic basis. A. K. B. referred to 'rich', 'poor', 'working class' and 'middle class'. In Marxism you will find the bourgeois, petit bourgeois, proletariat, lumpen proletariat and class fractions. The State in its census statistics uses ten occupational categories ranging from self-employed and higher grade professionals at the top of the pecking order, to unskilled manual workers at the bottom. You may also read of white collar workers, blue collar workers and the black-coated poor — the list is seemingly endless. My point is that this very profusion of class categories makes the concept most nebulous. All that is being said is that our society is marked by gross inequality, okay, so what?

Hand-in-hand with wealth goes a whole complex of cultural mannerisms — dress, speech, etc., etc. I can remember being assigned to the 'middle class' by another anarchist because he heard me use the word 'actually', and with a knowing glint in his eye, was willing to bet that I used toothpaste and wore underpants! It's true — honest! And me brought up on a council estate by my shop steward father and ex-cinema usherette mother, both rank solid Labour Party members from way back, bless 'em!

From the above, I think it is clear that if 'class' is going to mean anything much, it must be properly defined. Marx, in his description of sharply polarised nineteenth century capitalism, is of use here. Thus, if you own part of the means of production you are a bourgeois, and if you don't you're a proletarian — simple. While this basically two class model of society goes to the root of capitalism as an *economic* system it is left breathless when extended as a *sociological* model for late twentieth century conditions. Consider for instance the 'higher grade salaried-professionals' at the top of the State's census tree. They may not own any shares, but how many would regard themselves as proletarians or working class? Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly common for wage earning workers to own shares, i.e. according to Marx, to be simultaneously members of both bourgeois and proletarian classes!

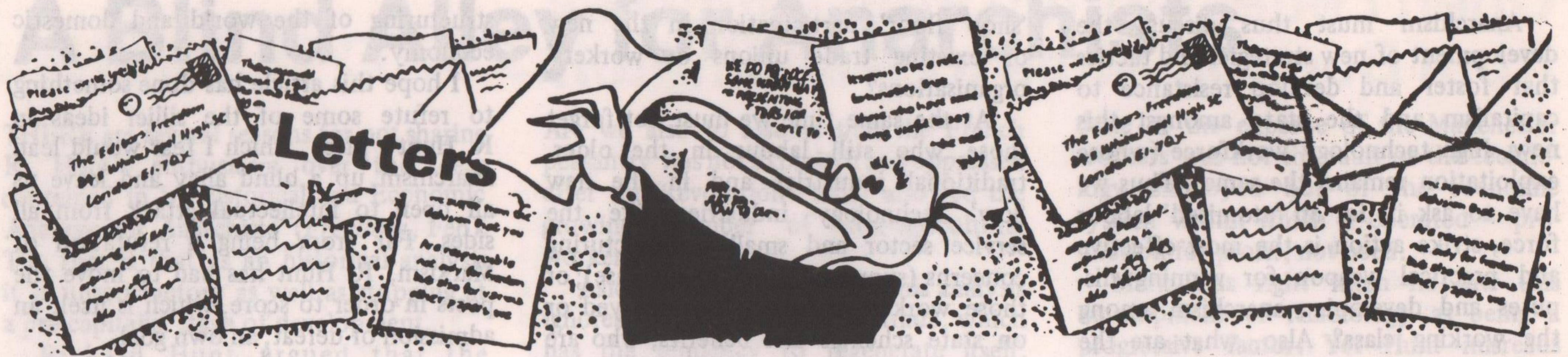
It seems to me that once you start to use class in any serious analysis you're barking up the wrong (probably Marxist) tree. Surely if you call yourself an anarchist, then by definition you oppose all hierarchies lock, stock and barrel, regardless of their complexity and regardless of the economic inequality that goes with them. I think anarchists need to look no further than the French revolutionaries' demands for liberty, equality and fraternity, on the clear understanding that not one of these is attainable without *anarchy*. As a core concept for late twentieth century conditions, 'class' is a confusing irrelevancy.

Now, in order to maintain the current plethora of complex hierarchies, there must be various forms of *power* — economic, directly coercive and most importantly psychological. Since there is seldom any need for the State to resort to the police or the army to maintain 'order' it follows that hierarchies have their greatest strength in the *willingness* of some to acquire and use power to their advantage, and in the *willingness* of

others to submit to them. To return to A. K. B.'s statement, it follows that freedom is 'all about an attitude of mind'. In that all authoritarian societies demand both domination and submission it is but a short step to characterise their psychologies as being, in essence, sadomasochistic, and Freudians would also add hoarding as being an associated trait. If you accept this line of approach, and link the will to power with a need to submit to power, and a drive to hoard wealth, then in my view you have some very powerful analytical tools with which to view all forms of authoritarian and acquisitive societies. The great tragedy, as I see it, is that anarchists do not seem to have come up with some really cogent theory on something like these lines, and are stuck with outmoded and ineffectual thinking — like that which surrounds 'class'. We spend so much time attacking the Marxists, yet still insist on kicking the Marxist ball around when what we need is a ball of our own! Class is *the* key concept in the Marxist view of the world, why not rubbish it?

That is not all. As I showed above, it is possible to shed ones 'class' and adopt another by such devices as changed speech mannerisms (this was not my intention in the incident I referred to), however, it is much more difficult to shed authoritarian behaviour. If you keep your eyes and ears open you'll find instances of overbearing behaviour, aggression and intolerance within even libertarian circles. On occasion I can detect them within myself. They don't always make themselves apparent, but they are *there* — I feel them and know them; I try to understand their roots and lessen their influence, but I am certain that knowledge of my 'class position', and even the *ideology* of anarchism is of little help. Sadly, I think that all who live in authoritarian societies inevitably absorb, to a greater or lesser degree, authoritarian patterns of thought, which are in direct opposition to the revolutionary objectives we share.

J. G.



Portugal

BOTH A Ideia and Collectivo Parreirinha bear the responsibility for their texts published in *Freedom* (February and April). I only want here to comment on one point.

I was one of the 'experts' invited to the Conference on Technology and Freedom, and I am not a man, nor is Lucilla Salimei from Rome, nor were several of the chairpersons in the Conference. The meeting hall was extremely weird but I did not see any police inside or outside; there were of course a few uniformed persons like in any public building, but I doubt they were undercover police agents. We were invited to give talks and to eat one very good dinner, but our travel and hotel costs were certainly not paid for by the Portuguese state.

After the Conference two of us spent some time with the Antitese group and other active anarchists, with whom we had very fruitful and friendly exchanges of views.

Marianne Enckell

Cultural Identity

I SUSPECT my disagreement with John L. Broom is more about shades of meaning than about matters of substance, and would be better discussed in a conversation than in a letters column. However,

His letter (May) arrived after my article on *National Front News* (same issue) had been typeset. Appearances to the contrary, I did not search *NFN* for verbal echoes of what he wrote.

'Proud of Scotland's cultural heritage' and 'proud to be white' are similar sorts of pride (please note I did not say history is similar to skin colour; I said the *pride* is similar). They both show an attitude in which 'peoples' are thought of as more important than persons, so that an individual may regard another individual's achievements as his own, merely on account of 'belonging' to the same description.

The notion of individuals 'belonging'

to things that can be said of them, rather than vice versa, causes people to court death as individuals for the good of a category, under the misapprehension that the category is more valuable than themselves.

If it were possible for people to have exactly the same description, with regard to appearance, speech, ancestry and education, they would still be individuals. To suggest they would melt together into an 'amorphous mass' is to exaggerate the importance of cultural variety. But it is not possible for individuals to be culturally indistinguishable, nor is it in the least desirable.

Cultural variety is inevitable and healthy, but when people confuse their culture with their identity, that makes it easy to recruit mugs to fight wars.

DR

Poverty

P. N. ROGERS managed to get two separate letters printed in the May *Freedom*. And both defending Richard Hunt for his February article on history and economics! He used his second letter to criticise my own objections to Richard's article which were printed in the April issue. Unfortunately, try as I might, I haven't been able to understand P. N.'s criticisms. Maybe other readers have been more successful. The only things clear to me in his letter are that I am being rapped for using 'a patronising and schoolmasterly tone' (presumably for saying that Richard's article read like 'a very mediocre schoolboy's essay') and told that I 'presumably' espouse a 'procentric orthodoxy' and look to 'some technological dreamworld'. Apart from the fact that I don't know what 'procentric orthodoxy' means, can P. N. really find this stuff in my letter?

Richard himself, in replying to my letter, was a lot more constructive (May). But he still didn't convince me of what he sees to be a central point of the thesis of his original article, i.e. that 'power causes trade'. One of his own examples of a 'no-trade' society, ancient Babylon, seems to contradict the point, since Babylon had a highly centralised power system. And the rise of early mercantile capitalism in Europe having as its centre Italy

was not particularly connected with powerful centralised state rule. Surely it makes more sense to see the rise of trade, whether by barter or by money, as initially part of a community's response to scarcity of an important good and then an expression of the ethic of an acquisitive society.

And if there is a useful point to come out of this discussion, it's got to be that, with the potential abundance of goods and services which could abolish scarcity in the modern world, we don't need trade any more in any of its forms. We could organise a world community without trade or exchange based on common ownership of resources, production and distribution according to self-determined needs and free access to everything that's produced.

Howard Moss

Abortion

I'M SICK to death of so-called anarchists who are willing to kill handicapped unborn children, or as EFC prefers to call them 'imperfect' fetuses ('We may question his views but not his sincerity', April).

Who the hell does s/he think they are? Is this person so perfect as to pronounce death in this somewhat intolerant magazine it has the cheek to call itself *Freedom*. Freedom for who? Only perfect, middle class, white people?

The issue of life and death has been steadfastly ignored by anarchists for too long. If this issue can not be faced, then why are we even bothering? What more fundamental right can there be than life itself?

Anarchists are afraid to confront this issue lest they be accused of attacking women's rights. There are not rights, but permission to kill. In times of war the state gives us permission to kill others, i.e. the enemy. When a woman wants (or thinks she wants, or is persuaded she wants) an abortion because she cannot cope or does not want the baby, the state gives permission.

Deliberately inflicting death on someone else is murder, and should be punishable, whether inflicted by the SAS soldiers, Reagan, cold blooded murderers or doctors. But where a woman is despe-

rate she must have the support and guidance of those who best help. That aid must include counselling the woman about the nature of abortion, i.e. that death occurs to the baby and the killing is performed sometimes after the abortion, others whilst the baby is in the womb, by poisoning, etc., it is dangerous for the woman and it is the ultimate form of oppression.

EFC must clarify his/her position on whether they are seeking a master race, because there are many doctors who are. There is an implicit understanding by some doctors that they will do less than is necessary to keep 'imperfect foetuses' alive. Are anarchists prepared to accept this? I want to see just how many believers in freedom want full rights for handicapped people.

Peter Wakeham
Anarchists for Life

Clause 28

IN *FREEDOM* for May Stephen Cowden writes opposing Clause 28 of the Local Government Bill, the one which would prohibit local authorities from promoting homosexuality or teaching its acceptability. He wishes to preserve the right of local authorities to do these things. Has he thought what this means?

When a local authority promotes or teaches anything, it employs people for the purpose. These have to be paid, and the money comes from rates or (by way of grants by central government) from taxes. Demands for rates and taxes are backed by the power of the State, and they are levied not only on the recognised taxpayers and ratepayers but also, indirectly, on all who rent or buy anything; part of their payment goes to meet the landlord's or the supplier's liabilities.

Stephen Cowden wants to maintain the right of local authorities to compel the poor, as well as the rich, to pay for the promotion and teaching of homosexuality. He does not claim to write as an anarchist, but the tone of his article suggests that he expects readers of *Freedom*, most of them presumably anarchists, to support what he says.

But local authorities are *authorities*. They are part of the State machine and help to wield its coercive powers. Do anarchists now approve of State power, provided it is used to support a cause they consider good?

George Walford

PS: The Marxists have a theory that the working class receives an amount sufficient to maintain it at the historically necessary standard, so that finally only the capitalists pay rates and taxes, but if that works at all it does so only in the

long run. Here and now the workers pay rates and taxes, directly or indirectly, out of their wages, salaries or benefits. Were this not so there would be no point in protesting against, for example, the proposed poll tax. Or, for that matter, against wage cuts.



Wobbly Wildcat from the 1920s

SOME time ago you printed an article on anarchist symbols which was interesting enough, though long on rhetoric and short on detail. So I feel I ought to tell what I was assured is the true story of the origin of the black flag as an anarchist symbol. I can't guarantee its accuracy but it is at least an interesting story.

The black flag has long been a symbol of mourning and death and had been used by pirates, with or without skull and crossbones, for many years before the incident where it became an anarchist symbol, but the pirate history probably influenced the idea.

The story goes that at the end of the Franco-Prussian War in about 1870, the victorious Prussian army held a 'victory' procession through the streets of Paris to further humiliate the already badly demoralised French whose army had been routed.

As a mute token of reversal of the attempt at humiliating them, the people of Paris hung black flags along the route of the parade to show the Prussians that they were celebrating death.

Later, in 1871, the people of Paris revolted and formed the Paris Commune. The revolt's early success was facilitated by the ease with which the soldiery were seduced into joining the rebels. This would not have been unconnected with their recent defeat in war. (This idea was revived by trotskyites during the Falklands fiasco as an excuse for supporting Argentina despite its openly fascist regime.)

For many weeks the Commune held out against political and economic pressure and half-hearted attempt to use force to crush the revolution. But the rebels were isolated on Paris and failed in their attempts to spread the revolt signifi-

cantly. As the military attacks on the Commune became more concerted, the reformists and statist convinced enough of the people that they needed to elect a new central council and a mayor instead of relying on the loose federation of local committees which had run the city since the uprising.

The anarchists active in the Commune, of which there were so many, in order to show the people that to re-elect a central representative council and a mayor was a humiliation and a defeat, hung black flags in the streets of Paris once again.

Shortly afterwards the Commune was crushed by armed forces from the outside in the bloodthirsty fashion so characteristic of counter-revolutions. Whether it could have held out if it had remained organised along anarchistic lines is, of course, doubtful. But the moral of the tale persists.

I apologise if there are any historical inaccuracies in this account. I only heard it verbally, and that about nine years ago, so I can only vouch for the spirit of the story, not the detail, and that's second hand.

Regardless of its historical accuracy, I think it's a very interesting story with a moral that looks like it will be relevant for far too long.

Leonard Hinckley

P.S. If anyone has a more accurate account I'd love to hear. After all, what are people like Nicolas Walter for?



Roberto's Anarchik

Religion

CHRISTIAN Vassie (May) makes the common mistake of supposing that the precept 'Love your neighbour as yourself' was first enunciated by Jesus. In fact, as Leviticus chapter 19 verse 18 shows, it was part of the Jewish legal code several centuries earlier.

John L. Broom

Neither East Nor West

Neither East Nor West: selected writings 1939-1948

Marie Louise Berneri

with 16 political cartoons 1943-1944 by John Olday.

Freedom Press £4.50

WILL the Russian people be told the truth about Stalin's regime? Have the British people been told the truth about the Second World War, what people were fighting and dying for? Now that we have the rivalry between the Superpowers known as the 'Cold War' the governments of America (and its satellite Britain) and of Russia present their peoples with a picture of good against evil, capitalism being equated with 'freedom' and the Soviet system with 'socialism'. Many thinking people in the West (and no doubt the East too) are aware that in fact the Superpowers are devoid of ideals, but in the end liberals will always choose between evils and come down on the side of the system they know.

It is the anarchists alone who have pounded the inescapable logic that the only way to abolish war is to abolish the State. The 'Cold War' is a game played by the two Superpowers by which they each seek to maintain their positions by looking at the other as a menace, an economic regulator for their respective economies, with millions of jobs dependent on 'defence' and on the gigantic bureaucracy of the United Nations. But if we are to persuade people of the anarchist case it is not sufficient merely to assert it; our views must be backed by careful documentation, and in *Neither East Nor West* Freedom Press has produced a book of great importance.

Marie Louise Berneri was born in Arezzo, near Florence, in 1918. In 1926 her family had to flee Italy because of persecution by fascists and she was brought up in Paris where her father Camillo Berneri was continually harassed by the French authorities until the Spanish Civil War when he joined the struggle in Catalonia, being assassinated by the Communists in 1937. In that year she came to London and was a member of the Freedom Press Group and joint editor of its journals *War Commentary* (1939-1945) and *Freedom* (from 1945) until her death in 1949 at the age of 31. She is now remembered mainly as the author of *Journey Through Utopia*.

Neither East Nor West is a collection of fifty-three articles written for *War Commentary* and *Freedom*, and was first published in 1952 as a tribute to her memory, and it is indeed a reminder of how much her untimely death was a loss to the cause of anarchism. To mark the centenary in 1986 of Freedom Press a

series of volumes of selections from its journals is being published, and *Neither East Nor West* will be a supplement to the third volume which is in course of preparation and should appear later this year entitled *From World War To Cold War*, with which it should be read in conjunction.

This volume is a facsimile reprint of the 1952 edition together with a new introduction by Vernon Richards and sixteen pages of political cartoons by John Olday, some of which were directly inspired by Marie Louise Berneri's writings.

This book and its companion volume will provide a masterly survey from an uncompromisingly anarchist point of view of some of the momentous years of our century. As Vernon Richards says, it has perhaps more relevance in 1988 than it did in 1952 for only now is the Left beginning to question whether World War II was the anti-fascist crusade that they were led to believe it to be. 'Certainly the Labour Party hierarchy which joined the nationalist chorus at the time of the

Falklands War is not yet ripe for a revision of the party line on the 1939 war.'

But this book will be of value not only to anarchists but to all those who are studying history, politics or international relations, at this time when accepted views of the Second World War are being questioned. Some of the points Richards brings out in his introduction are that 'survival was the main concern at all levels of society', that there was widespread labour unrest, and that her criticisms of the Communists 'are always carefully documented and therefore valuable for anyone today honestly seeking to make an objective assessment of the changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union more especially in the present phase of its development'.

One agrees with Richards when he calls these articles anarchist journalism at its best. But I'm not sure I'd agree when he goes on to say that Marie Louise Berneri's generation 'were much more politically informed and involved in knowing what was going on on the Left' for today those who give vent to their in-



Marie Louise Berneri 1918-1949

dignation by what he calls 'four-letter expletives, chaotic graphics and horrific drawings' would at least be likely to resist being called-up for cannon fodder, while today we have a far larger educated populace to whom this book will be of value, though they may lack the political involvement of an earlier generation.

The book consists of fifty-three articles covering the Second World War, and its aftermath: the witch hunts of the West and the repressions of the East. The articles are divided into three sections; the first, under the general title *Defenders of Democracy*, were all written between 1941 and 1943, and show how the War was not a war for freedom, but a war for imperialist gain. Berneri predicts the rise of America to a world power and shows how rearmament was used to boost the economy and how trade union leaders collaborated with the US government in sacrificing the interests of the workers to the war effort. She opposes state control of British industry, with the idea of workers' control, and opposes the Comintern and Stalin's government at a time when Russia was Britain's ally.

The second section *The Price Of War and Of Liberation*, written between 1943 and 1947, details the terrible cost in human lives and suffering inflicted on civilians by both sides, and the complicity of the labour movement. The allied bombings of Germany and Italy, with the famine, starvation and disease in their

aftermath are graphically described.

The third section, *United Nations*, shows the carving up of Europe into East and West, exposing the appeasers of Russia as well as the Communists. Here we have the meeting of Truman, Churchill and Stalin at the Potsdam Conference in 1945, material on the Marshall Plan, Communist terror in Eastern Europe, the death of Jan Masaryk, and the United Nations delegates living in luxury while the workers live in starvation and oppression.

Each article is based in facts and is argued from a consistently anarchist point of view, and this new edition is brilliantly illustrated with John Olday's remarkable graphics.

'Our politicians professed to want revolution in Europe to overthrow fascism', wrote Marie Louise Berneri in 1943. 'But it is now clearer than ever that what they are most afraid of is that fascism should be overthrown by popular revolt. They are terrified of revolution, terrified of 'Anarchy'. They want to establish 'order', and as always they are prepared to wade through rivers of blood to secure their ideas of order — order in which the workers accept their lot of poverty and pain with resignation.

'How many times in the past have we heard that Anarchism means bombs, that anarchists work for wholesale destruction. How many times has ruling class police repression been instituted because an anarchist has attempted to

assassinate a single ruler or reactionary politician? But one single Hamburgizing raid kills more men and women and children than have been killed in the whole of history, true or invented, of anarchist bombs. The anarchist bombs were aimed at tyrants who were responsible for the misery of millions; ruling class bombs just kill thousands of workers indiscriminately.

'Disorder', 'Anarchy', cried the bourgeois Press when single-handed resolute like Sbardelotto, Schirru and Lucetti, tried to kill Mussolini ... Now the same capitalists want to rub whole cities off the map of Europe; want to reduce whole populations to starvation, with its resulting scourge of epidemics and disease all over the world. This is the peace and order that they want to bring to the workers of the world with their bombs.'

In his foreword of 1952 Vernon Richards says that these writings will still be valuable when the events discussed in them have ceased to be of any topical interest, and he refers to Marie Louise Berneri as belonging to 'that small band of uncompromising defenders of our social conscience, as her writings bear witness'.

It is sometimes said that there is little of originality in modern anarchist writings, but Marie Louise Berneri's work joins the ranks of the classics as an indispensable item on the anarchist bookshelf.

Charles Crute

OBITUARY

Daniel Guérin

DANIEL Guérin died in the night of 14 April at the age of 83, in Paris.

As a militant, theoretician and historian, he inspired many and continues to have an effect on the revolutionary movement world-wide.

In 1930, he became a Marxist after reading Marx, Lenin, Proudhon and Sorel, breaking with his bourgeois family. In 1936 he was active in the left wing of the SFIO (forerunner of the Socialist Party). By successive stages he moved in a libertarian direction. Reading the 6-volume edition of Bakunin compiled by Max Nettlau and James Guillaume, he rejected all forms of authoritarian socialism. A further development came with the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He took up the ideas of anarchism, explained in his *The Youth of Libertarian Socialism* (1959) and then in his *Anarchism*. This book, translated into English, still remains one of the best introductions to anarchism, despite a surprising over-emphasis on Stirner, and its illusions in workers'

control in Algeria and Yugoslavia. He also compiled the anthology of *Neither God nor Master*, where many anarchist writings, from Bakunin to Malatesta and Makhno, are gathered together.

Then distancing himself from classical anarchism, he wrote *For a Libertarian Marxism* whose title, he admitted 'lent itself to confusion and shocked my new libertarian friends'.

After the 1968 events, in which he took an active part, marching at the side of Daniel Cohn-Bendit on many demonstrations, he helped set up the Mouvement Communiste Libertaire. Following its collapse, he was active in the Organisation Communiste Libertaire, and for the last eight years of his life, in the Union des Travailleurs Communistes Libertaires.

As he says 'For nearly a quarter of a century, I attached myself to libertarian socialism or libertarian communism (the word 'anarchism' appeared too restrictive to me, and I only adopted it if it was completed by the word 'communism').

He was active against fascism, and his *Fascism and Big Business* is still worth reading. He was active against French colonialism, fighting against the French presence in Algeria, from the 1930s up till the 60s and took a prominent stand against the French occupation of New Caledonia in the last few years of his life. He was a convinced anti-militarist, and as a working journalist was active in the CGT union. He was not afraid to proclaim his homosexuality from the start of the gay liberation movement.

I met Daniel only once whilst attending a conference of the Organisation Revolutionnaire Anarchiste as an observer from the Anarchist Workers' Association in 1975. He had a fluent command of English, developed during his war-time exile, and had a lively interest in the British situation. His death comes as a great loss to the revolutionary movement: his activity and thinking had an important influence on several generations of militants.

Nick Heath

LAND NOTES

Finance Destroys Wealth

THERE we have it, the people worth saving after a nuclear holocaust are the carpenters, plumbers, etc., making no mention of the stockbrokers, politicians, priests, and accountants. The horticulturalists are likely to be at some disadvantage, as the surviving plants from the F1 hybrids are likely to be infertile.

Any idea that land is a basic community asset has been finally put to rest in this country, with the abolition of the rating system; although the agricultural land-owners have never contributed to local communal expenses and always gained from increased value of community development. In recent years they have benefited immensely from general taxation, and now the community has to pay for the consequences of much of this subsidised activity.

After a nuclear holocaust the financial system would be gone, but the land would remain, although it would be difficult to revive for some time. However, the acquisition of land goes on as if the land is transient and people are permanent. Although the land's ability to produce can be destroyed mainly by the activity of humans. The land is then passed on by right of having been produced by a certain womb in a certain place.

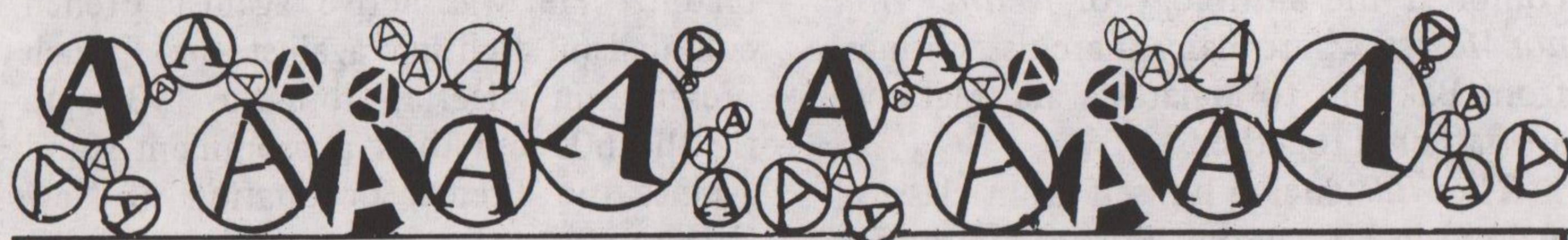
Perhaps one of the most obscene manifestations of the market economy is the buying and selling of currency. It is this control of the financial system based on the ownership of that commodity known as real estate (the only estate which is real) which enables a few people to exercise control and leave the majority of people feeling in a state of near impotence. A point in history has been reached in which we have to remove the control of resources from the blind and irrational

forces in which real wealth is being destroyed with increasing rapidity, because accountants are asked questions and supply answers that have no relevance to the sustaining of real wealth necessary for human life. Because most people have no control over the air they breathe, the food they eat, the water they drink, they are wage slaves no matter how well they are paid.

The politicians are the aliens in an alienated world and their idols are the insubstantial symbols of the world currencies which they try to control to maintain the people in control. They elevate the market and the accumulation of financial wealth to a religious gospel, while this activity destroys the forests, the land, pollutes the atmosphere, water, and seas, and creates demand that cannot be sustained. They use the irrational to sustain the irrational, and put peoples lives at risk on the altar of profit with activities that create demand which has no relation to real production.

The creation of vast state bureaucracies on the eastern model is no solution, as the peasants revolt has turned into another tyranny. While the Soviet rulers look to co-operation with America to explore Mars, the planet under their feet decays. The Aral sea is destroyed by bad agricultural practises and monocropping. The accelerating dangers of nuclear power cannot be confined to one area or our shrinking planet. The incompetence of the dealing of the effects of the Chernobyl disaster here shows the necessity of extending our knowledge, and asking the right questions unassociated with the demands of power and profit.

Alan Albon



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