

# CHINA

## dictatorship for the proletariat

FOR the moment the power struggle in China is over and the real meaning of the dictatorship of the proletariat should now be clear enough for even the most fanatical Marxist to see — it is the proletariat which gets dictated to and the party which does the dictating. Faced with the alternative of allowing a period of fruitful uncertainty or of re-asserting the power of the party, the stark reality was that authority was more important than progress and the party was willing to shoot innocent civilians rather than put its power at risk.

It is difficult to communicate the immensity of the tragedy that this represents. The sufferings of the relatives of the 2,000 people killed will be compounded by the fact that they will now be officially labelled as being 'problem' families and will consequently experience systematic intimidation and discrimination from petty officials. The real tragedy, however, is that the atmosphere of fear that those families are living under will be shared by more than 1,000 million people. From the top to the bottom of the regime, no-one is now safe.

When I was in China two years ago, a youth handed to my travelling companion a letter explaining that his mother was in jail because she had refused to sleep with a district police chief and he was taking his revenge. That is the sort of issue that the demonstrators were complaining about when they made corruption the central issue of their campaign and that is the type of abuse which every citizen must now fear.

Now that the party has re-asserted its authority, corrupt party officials will once again be expecting their palms to be greased for every travel permit, housing allocation, promotion, application to study, or permission to move districts to live with the person you wish to marry. But even these corrupt officials who appear to benefit from the system are no longer safe. Anyone who wishes to take a step up the ladder of privileges and finds an official occupying the post that

they wish to fill next can make rapid progress by denouncing the official as a counter-revolutionary who was soft on the demonstrators. One of the first moves of the Chinese government after it secured power was to institutionalise the practice of informing as the duty of all good citizens and consequently no-one is safe from the petty rivalries of a neighbour or the cynical accusations of a political rival.

Yet despite all the depressing news which has emerged from China, there are still grounds for optimism about the future. They come not from China but from Eastern Europe, where the evidence is that communist repression cannot be made to work in the long run. It is fascinating, for instance, to make comparisons between events in China and those in Hungary and Poland. The parallels with Hungary in '56 are considerable. In both cases the initial attempt to use force backfired and more reliable troops had to



be drafted in. In both cases a popular uprising was put down by the party of the working class. And on both occasions events were twisted round so that a mass uprising against oppression was presented as a counter-revolution. Perhaps more significantly both uprisings were followed by a repression which appeared to be impenetrable and permanent.

Yet whilst the Chinese communists were executing revolutionaries and reformers, the Hungarians found it necessary to dig up Imre Nagy and bury him with honours. And in a similar reversal of policy General Jaruzelski, who presided over the repression of Solidarity, was desperately inviting Solidarity to participate in a coalition government and promising to extend the principle of election. Why?

Neither the Hungarian nor the Polish communist authorities are kind-hearted

# FREEDOM

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## Note for Raven readers

A number of *Raven* subscribers have been enquiring about issue no. 7. Editorial problems have delayed publication. We are hoping it will be ready for dispatch some time in ~~April~~ ~~May~~ ~~June~~ ~~July~~.

## DONATIONS

JUNE - MID-JULY 1989

### Freedom Magazine Fund

Nottingham AH £2; Vallejo Cal DK £4;  
Wolverhampton DL £4; Fareham JB £4;  
Midhurst RHB £3; London JM £4;  
Heidelberg RS £3; London AJRS £4.50.

Total = £28.50

1989 TOTAL TO DATE = £776.06

### Freedom Press Overheads Fund

Nottingham AH £2; Vallejo Cal DK £4;  
Oban GC £3; Wolverhampton JL £6;  
Edinburgh AG £2; Glasgow WT £3;  
New York GW £3.50; Midhurst RHB £3;  
London AF £4; Nottingham AH £3;  
Oban GC £3; County Durham MB £1.

Total = £37.50

1989 TOTAL TO DATE = £599.89

## ACF

Anarchist Communist Federation discussion meetings held on first Thursday of each month at 8.30pm at Marchmont Centre, Marchmont Street, London WC1 (nearest tube Russell Square) open to all genuinely interested in the politics of the ACF.

### BOOKSHOP PRICE CHANGES

Since publishing the Freedom Press Bookshop list in June, we have been obliged to increase the prices of some imported titles due to increased prices overseas and changes in dollar exchange rates. We regret this, but also one or two prices have decreased. When using the mail order service, please note the prices below.

ARDITTI Science & Lib £5.95

BABIN Nuclear p. game £8.95

BAKUNIN God and the state £4.20/ On Anarchy £9.95

BAY Civil disobedience £3.50

BOOKCHIN Limits of the city/ Modern crisis/ Post-scarcity

anarchism/ Remaking society/ Towards an ecological society, each £8.95

BRINTON Authoritarian conditioning/Bolsheviks & workers control, each £3.50

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FLEMING Geography of freedom £9.95

GOLDMAN Living my life, 2 vols each £7.60

GOMEZ CASAS Anarchist organisation £10.95

GROSS Friendly fascism £9.95

HARRISON Mod state £7.95

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MELNYK Search for community (hardback only) £15.50

METT Kronstadt uprising (hardback only) £6.50

PATTON Sex & germs £8.95

ROCKER Nationalism and culture (Pluto Press) £7.95

ROUSSOPOULOS Coming of World War III £8.95/ Radical papers 1 and 2, each £7.95

SHOR Critical teaching and everyday life £10.95

SPRING Primer of libertarian education £5.95

VOLINE Unknown rev'n £9.95

WOODCOCK Proudhon £9.95

## Education Conference

This year Lib Ed will be holding its fourth annual conference on Saturday 28 October at Vaughan College, St Nicholas Circle, in the centre of Leicester. The structure of the conference is to be slightly altered this year, and it is hoped it will be both bigger and better than in the previous three years. As with previous years, there will be a space for stalls selling/distributing educational and radical literature, information, t-shirts, etc., although this area is to be expanded in comparison to previous years. It is hoped that many different organisations will be represented. For any organisations who would like to have a stall at the conference there will be a fee of £15 (which includes admission for one person). The final date for booking a stall will be 1 September, although it would be preferable if you would contact the address below as soon as possible if you are interested.

The price of admission will be £8 in advance, £9 on the day (waged), £4/£5 (unwaged), £1/£1.50 (young people).

Lib Ed Collective  
c/o 132 Holgate Road  
York YO2 4DL  
Tel: 0904-612903

## LIBEL!

SOME readers will be aware of a recently published attack on our comrade Nicolas Walter. Undoubtedly, lawyers would characterise it as actionable, and all decent people would call it despicable. *Freedom* is in the dilemma of wanting to defend Nicolas against the libel, but not wanting to give free publicity to the perpetrator. So we are not publishing anything about it other than this short notice, but will send a copy of Nicolas's reply to anyone who sends for it, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope.

## History Workshop

### History Workshop 23

Salford 3-5 November 1989

This year's History Workshop is to be held at Salford University. There is once again an anarchism 'strand' - with the following programme:

**Sharif Gemie:** Charles Fourier and the Politics of Harmony.

**René Berthier:** Can Anything New be Said About the Bakunin-Marx Opposition? A Methodological Approach.

**Colin Ward:** Unexpected Relevance of the Anarchists

**David Goodway:** The Anarchism of Alex Comfort

**Tony Powell:** Rallying 'Round a Fading Flag: Responses of the British Anarchists to the Spanish Civil War.

**Caroline Cahm:** Peter Kropotkin: Revolutionary Action Past and Present.

Registration fees: £12 funded individuals, £7 unfunded individuals, £1 unwaged individuals. All registrations to (and further information from): **Helen Bowyer, Working Class Movement Library, 51 Crescent, Salford M5 4WX. Tel: 061 736 3601.**

## Anarchist Forum

London Anarchist Forum will resume meetings when the Mary Ward Centre re-opens in September. Fridays at 8pm, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Street, London WC1 (behind Southampton Row, opposite Russell Square). Forum people usually meet in the ground floor cafe beforehand.

September 29 - Introductory meeting: open discussion

October 6 - David Dane **The Future of Anarchism**

October 13 - Peter Neville, subject to be announced.

# dictatorship for the proletariat

continued from front cover

people with a genuine desire to share their power with others. For them to compromise there had to be a political advantage and the nature of the political advantage can be seen by studying the fate of their economies. Both the Hungarian and Polish communists see their right to govern as being wrapped up in the ability of communism to develop the productive forces. Put another way, the ultimate God of the communists is economic growth and it is an unfortunate irony that for a service sector economy operating in the international market place, state direction of an unresponsive workforce is a guarantee of stagnation. The active resistance of workers, peasants and technocrats in Poland and Hungary was crushed by tanks, but the passive resistance which came from a steadfastly bloody-minded unwillingness to co-operate with a repressive regime proved too difficult to overcome and the communists opted for compromise.

What I am arguing is that there are two sources of political power and the Chinese have only captured one of them. On the one hand it is true that power flows from the barrel of a gun. Without guns it would have been the party hacks who were in danger of being strung up and not the leaders of free trade unions. However, power also stems from acceptance. If enough people refuse to accept the right

of a regime to rule and stage an unspoken national go-slow, then their refusal eventually makes it impossible for the regime to govern and forces it to change.

The Chinese communist party can force its employees back to work, but if it continues the repression then those workers will play dumb, do exactly what they are told, accept no responsibilities, put forward no new suggestions, take no initiatives, and shrug their shoulders as they watch the economy grind to a halt. An efficient modern economy requires a degree of willing co-operation from the workforce, not a permanent work to rule, whereas a state directed economy creates an awful lot of pointless regulations and meaningless directives just waiting to be misinterpreted.

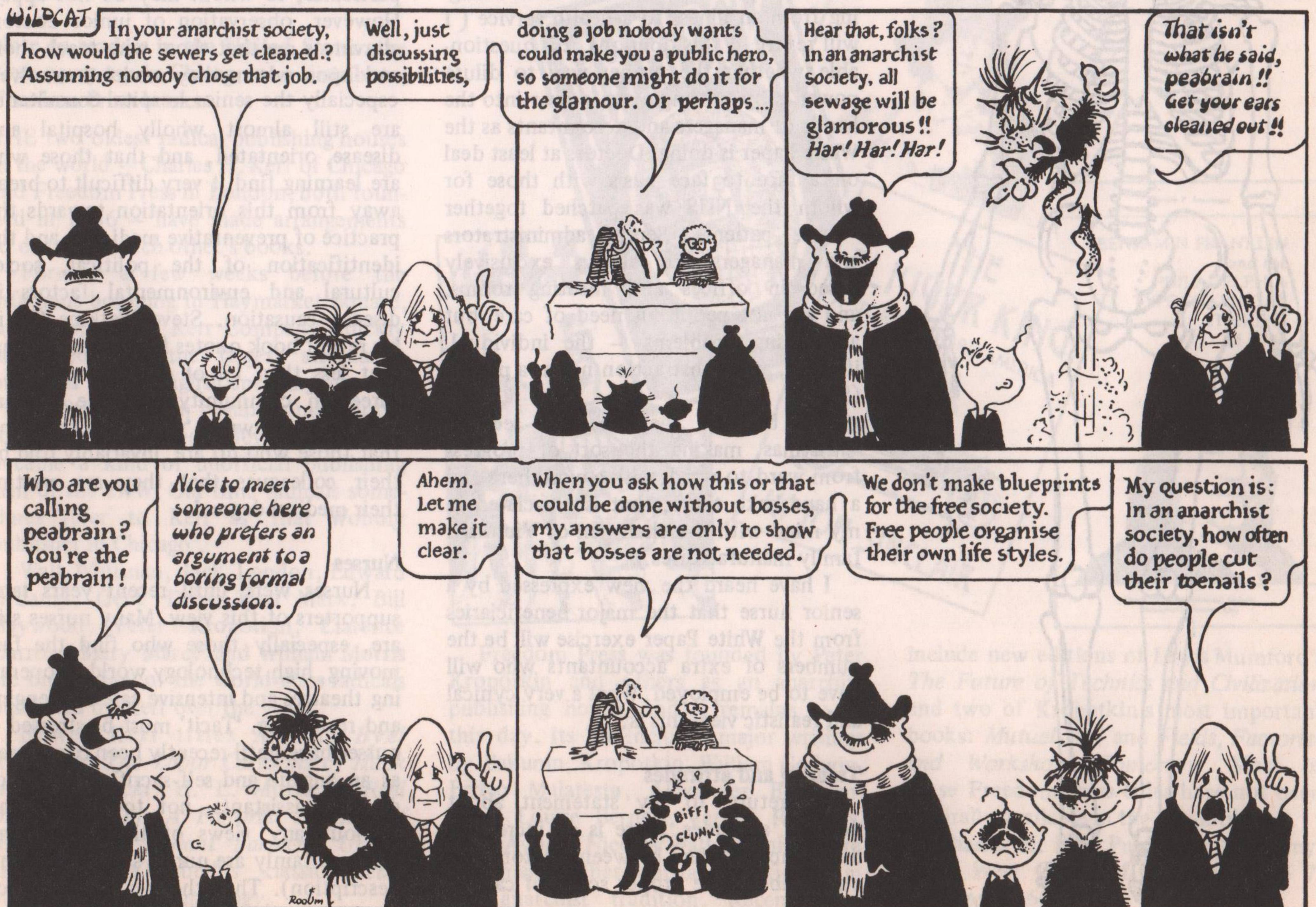
The Chinese communists are already beginning to face this dilemma. They want economic growth yet they know that they cannot achieve it without allowing some degree of political freedom. They would like to grant the minimum possible political freedoms and continue to keep a firm hand on the direction that society is allowed to take, but they have now discovered that the Chinese people are not prepared to accept a limited tinkering with the political system. The demands coming from them were for full-blown democracy of a kind that could potentially have gone far beyond anything we have in Britain. The fact that the leadership grew scared of these demands

and re-asserted their political authority does not change the circumstances which gave rise to the movement in the first place.

Throughout the world communists are battling with the same dilemma. To achieve their prime aim of economic growth they have to allow increased freedom of thought and action and give up more and more of their political power and control. Yet without the exercise of that power and control the party is of no value to its members. The alternatives are therefore economic stagnation which carries the risk of revolt and a total loss of political power, or the risk of raising too many expectations by allowing a gradual reduction of that power.

No one can really forecast the way that contradiction will be resolved as, for example, a simple assassin's bullet in Gorbachev's head could alter the balance of power overnight. But what we can say is that the Chinese communists will not have the repression all their own way. You can shoot the people who believe in freedom and equality, but the ideas themselves are so much more vibrant than the philosophy of party rule and bureaucratic management that the ideas will continue to reassert themselves. In the end the fact that the vast majority of the Chinese people see right through Li Peng and know him for what he is will guarantee his downfall.

Andy Brown



# Working for Patients

## Working for patients – a nurse's view

THE recent White Paper on the health service (1) emphasises and intensifies a conflict of interests that afflicts those who work with patients, of which I as a nurse have become increasingly aware over the last couple of years.

The Griffiths Report (2) – that famous report which was, it was mythologically rumoured, written on the back of an envelope, and which was in a businesslike manner to solve all the problems of the health service at a stroke – started the demolition of a system of nursing management which had been established in the '60s and '70s after the Salmon report (3), which though cumbersome and unsatisfactory had at least begun to allow nurses a degree of autonomy in their practice. Griffiths replaced this with

a system of general managers, with increasingly absolutist ambitions and powers, chiefly intended as a method of introducing financial savings, most of which have been effected at the cost of patient care, rather than of top-heavy administration.

### Power

Erosion of the power of nurses in the thing that most concerns us – the provision of care for those who want and need it – is now further threatened by the thinly veiled advances of the White Paper towards privatisation.

Doctors, too, are threatened by this White Paper with an erosion of their clinical freedom through the financial power of bureaucrats, against which threat they are strenuously defending themselves.

There is a New Right approach, exemplified by the work of David Green (4), that claims that it is just because the doctors have already too much power that the NHS should be dismantled, and there are many working in the health service, nurses among them, who would agree with that.

Although it is perhaps more than anything else the attitudes of many doctors that have prevented the NHS from changing from an illness to a health service (I will revert to this opinion), it is questionable whether the proper way to dilute power is by putting extra power into the hands of managers and accountants as the White Paper is doing. Doctors at least deal on a face to face basis with those for whom the NHS was patched together – the patients. Senior administrators and managers are always exclusively based in offices and meeting rooms, and see not people in need of care, but accounting problems – the individual, if at all, as an abstraction not as a person (5).

(To be sure they may be seen at Christmas, making the sort of progress from ward to ward, with a word here and a handshake there, that is associated in my mind with the chairmen of Victorian family manufactories.)

I have heard the view expressed by a senior nurse that the major beneficiaries from the White Paper exercise will be the numbers of extra accountants who will have to be employed. What a very cynical and realistic view this is.

### Training and attitudes

To return to my statement about doctors' attitudes, there is an increasing divergence of view between doctors and nurses about the proper scope of care in

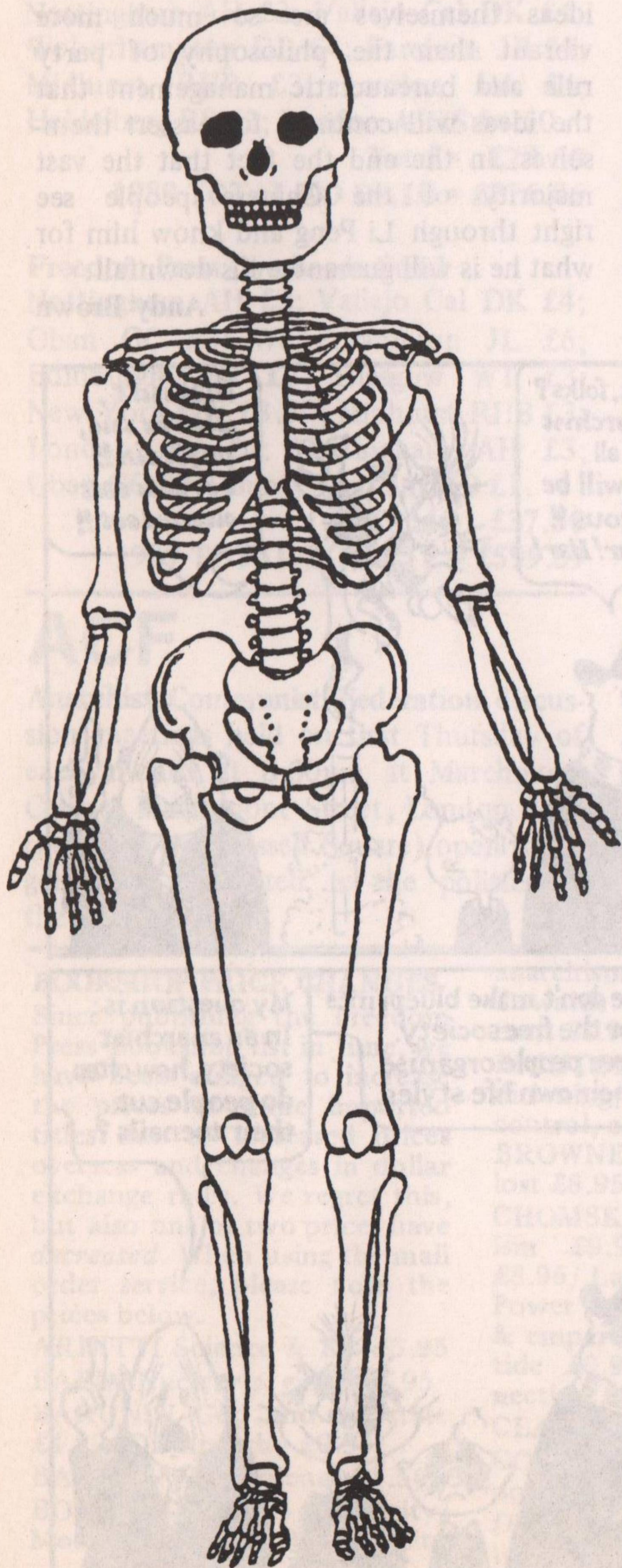
health services. Doctors (and it is this that maintains the NHS as an illness service) have been intensively trained so that they are repositories of fact, to enable them to deal quickly and surely with the job of diagnosing problems even in emergency situations. Their intense knowledge of the body and its problems inevitably means that the social, spiritual and psychological aspects of their training are under-emphasised. With this factual training there goes a process of socialisation, which centres health care firmly on a hospital, staffed by scientific crusaders fighting against almost personified diseases (6).

This leads to a view that services are ideally provided for the acutely sick, through which doctors can display their battle skills, slaying bacterial and viral dragons and sending damsels home free from distress. This unfortunately means that the chronically ill, the elderly and the mentally and socially handicapped are either fitted on to the procrustean bed of acute conditions, to be fought and cured – sometimes leading to inappropriate use of technology, and the diminishment of individual dignity – or put into poorly equipped and staffed areas, deprived of funds because all available cash is being poured into high technology acute care.

These are, of course, unfair and sweeping generalisations, and there are many doctors, general practitioners in particular, to whom they do not apply. However, observation of junior doctors convinces me that those who teach them and upon whom they model themselves, especially the senior hospital consultants, are still almost wholly hospital and disease orientated, and that those who are learning find it very difficult to break away from this orientation towards the practice of preventative medicine, and the identification of the political, socio-cultural and environmental factors in disease causation. Steve Watkins (7) in his recent book quotes figures that suggest that less than 1% of doctors consider a career in community medicine – what used to be known as 'public health' – and that those who do are 'invariably told by their colleagues that they are wasting their medical degree'.

### Nurses

Nurses were until recent years tacit supporters of this view. Many nurses still are, especially those who find the fast moving, high technology world of operating theatres and intensive care challenging and rewarding. 'Tacit' must be stressed – nurses have until recently been considered as an angelic and self-sacrificing band of doctors' assistants, not too bright and without any views of their own (and there certainly are nurses still who fit this description). That the new NHS policy



planning committee does not include a nurse, when nurses are the largest group of workers, and the only group who are with the patients all the time, certainly suggests that this remains a government view.

For an independent view of what nurses might be, there is an interesting description in Fritjof Capra's book *The Turning Point* (9), in which he examines the implications of the so-called New Physics for everyday life. He sees us as central to health care, co-ordinating the specialised work of doctors and therapists, and becoming increasingly, as we already are, the person who is closest to the person receiving care.

Nor is this passive view of one person giving and another receiving health care any longer a valid one. Many of us believe that our job is chiefly to make resources available and supply information, so that individuals can maintain their own good health.

This approach to nursing requires two things — firstly, freedom from the traditional doctor/nurse relationship where the nurse administered the treatment the doctor ordered, and secondly freedom from a bureaucratic management that sees success only in terms of larger numbers of patients dealt with at a smaller per capita cost.

These two freedoms are essential to providing a service that maximises the individual's power to make decisions about their own health, and minimises the paternalistic power of health professionals of all disciplines, nurses included, to make moral judgements on the people who come to them, and to try to compel those people into courses of action 'for their own good'.

The recent White Paper takes us back towards a technical illness service for the relief of acute symptoms, efficient and quick for the rich, inadequate and unwelcoming for the poor, where positive approaches to the maintenance of good health and properly funded care within the community are, despite continuing governmental lip service, only retreating dreams.

B. Clifton

#### Notes

1. White Paper: *Working for Patients*, HMSO (1989).
2. DHSS: *NHS Management Enquiry Report (Griffiths)*, HMSO (1983).
3. *Report on the Committee on Senior Nursing Staff Structure (Salmon)*, HMSO (1966).
4. David Green, *Working Class Patients*, Maurice Temple Smith (1985).
5. Steven Lukes, *Individualism*, Basil Blackwell (1973).

6. Some entertaining work on this theme: Ian Kennedy, *Unmasking Medicine*, Reith lectures published in *The Listener* (1980). Nicky Hart, *Sociology of Health and Medicine*, Causeway (1985).
7. Steve Watkins, *Medicine and Labour*, Lawrence and Wishart (1987).
8. Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point*, Wildwood House (1982). The relevant passage reads: 'Increasing numbers of nurses are deciding that they want to be independent therapists rather than assistants to doctors, and are in the process of applying a holistic approach to their practice. These highly educated and motivated nurses will be best qualified to take on the responsibilities of general practitioners. They will be able to provide the necessary health education and counselling and to assess the patient's life dynamics as a basis for preventative health care.'

In such a system medical doctors will act as specialists . . . and practice the full range of medical care for which the biomedical approach is appropriate and successful. Even in those cases, however, the nurse practitioner will still play an important role, keeping the personal contact with the patient and integrating the special treatments into a meaningful whole.

## US Readers!

Note to readers in the United States: the Kerr company in Chicago now distributes Freedom Press books.

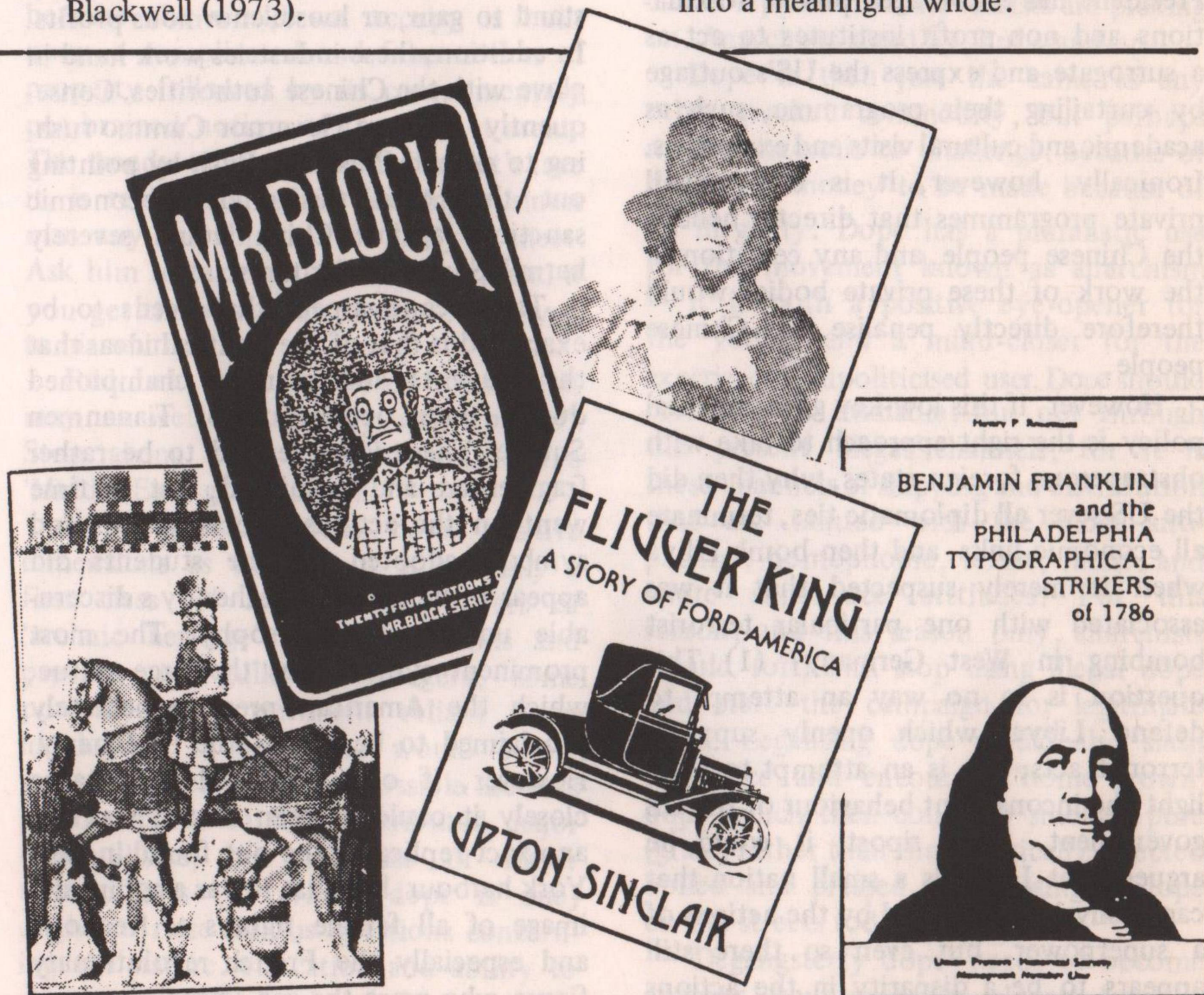
THE two oldest radical publishing houses in the world — Charles H. Kerr of Chicago and Freedom Press in London, both founded in 1886 — have made arrangements to distribute each other's books.

Formed a few weeks before the infamous bombing in Haymarket Square, the co-operative Kerr Company quickly developed into the largest alternative publisher in the English-speaking world.

In 1899 the firm began to publish the socialist classics, and a few years later it became a kind of unofficial publishing arm of the IWW. Old time radicals sometimes refer to Kerr as 'that Wobbly publisher in Chicago'.

Walt Whitman, Jack London, Edward Bellamy, Gene Debs, Karl Marx, Bill Haywood, Peter Kropotkin, Clarence Darrow, Mary Marcy and William Morris are only a few of the world-class radicals published by Kerr over the years.

Newer Kerr titles include *Bye! American: The Labor Cartoons of Huck and Konopacki*, H. L. Mitchell's *Roll the Union On: A Pictorial History of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union*, and Joyce Kornbluh's classic *Rebel Voices: An IWW Anthology*.



Freedom Press was founded by Peter Kropotkin and others as an anarchist publishing house, and it remains so to this day. Its list includes major writings by Bakunin, Kropotkin, William Godwin, Errico Malatesta, Alexander Berkman, Marie Louise Berneri, Vernon Richards, Paul Avrich, Nicolas Walter, Colin Ward and many other outstanding figures in the anarchist tradition. Recent titles

include new editions of Lewis Mumford's *The Future of Technics and Civilization* and two of Kropotkin's most important books: *Mutual Aid* and *Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow*. Most of these Freedom Press titles have not been generally available in the US until now.

Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 1740 West Greenleaf Avenue, Suite 7, Chicago, Il. 60626.

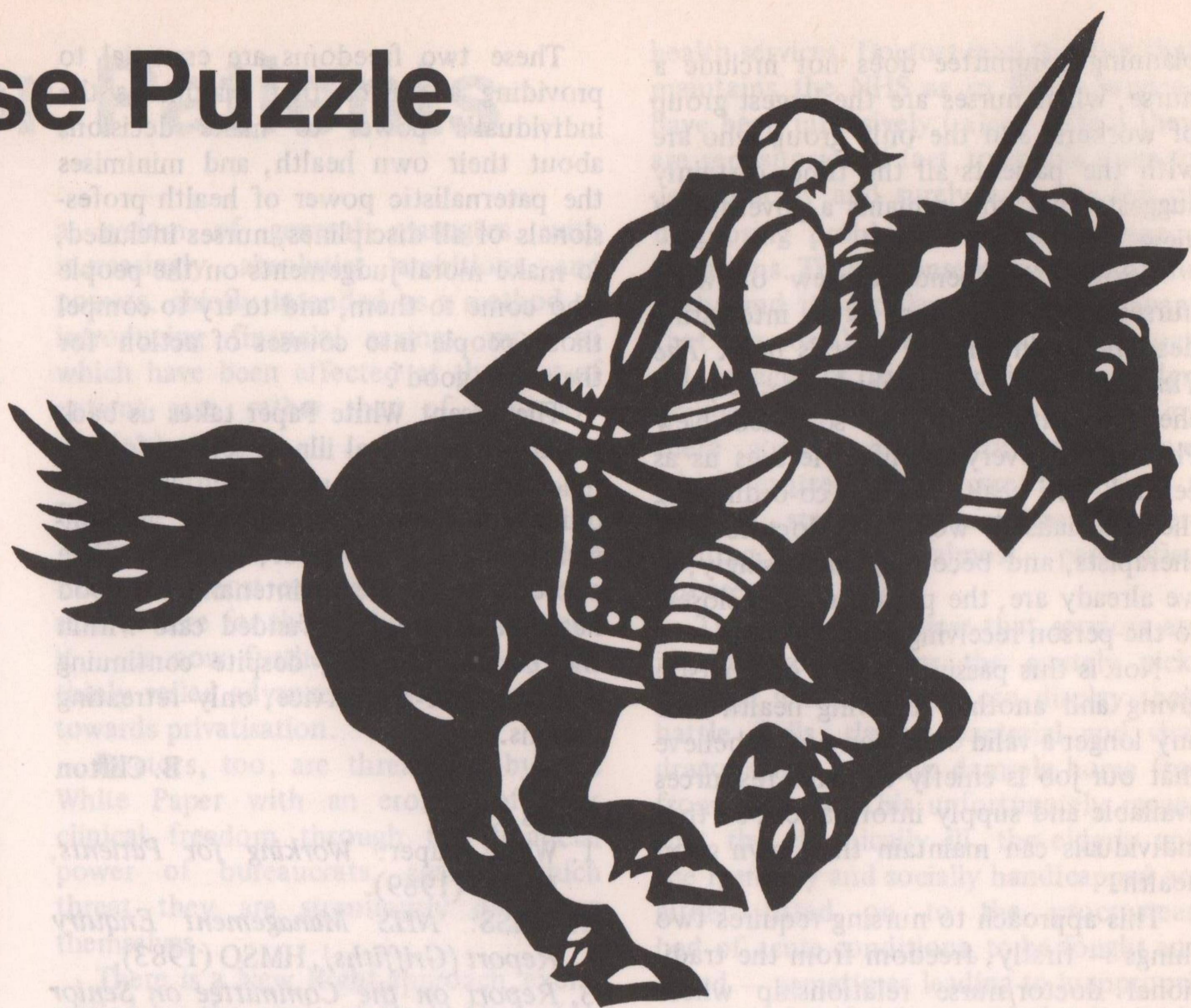
# The Chinese Puzzle

THE events which occurred in Beijing on 4 June can only be described as tragic. All reasonable people must be horrified at the way in which troops killed unarmed students and workers. And yet President Bush appears to be barely perturbed by these events. He has, of course, delivered a relatively mild verbal rebuke, and suspended arms deals and high level talks with Chinese officials, but this is merely a slap on the wrist when compared to the economic actions that could be taken. So why has he not expressed outrage at these heinous crimes by exerting strong economic pressures on the Chinese government, such as barring American companies from doing business with China?

To address such criticisms several US government officials have suggested that the President's low key approach will allow the US to exert its power via normal diplomatic channels. Other excuses have been that stronger punitive diplomatic or economic actions would have little effect on such a large nation as China. However, while these apologists have been mouthing these palliatives the President has encouraged private foundations and non-profit institutes to act as a surrogate and express the US's outrage by curtailing their programme, such as academic and cultural visits and exchanges. Ironically, however, it is these small private programmes that directly benefit the Chinese people, and any cessation in the work of these private bodies would therefore directly penalise the Chinese people.

However, if this low-key governmental policy is the right approach to take with obstreperous foreign states, why then did the US sever all diplomatic ties, terminate all economic links, and then bomb Libya when it merely suspected that it was associated with one particular terrorist bombing in West Germany? (1) This question is in no way an attempt to defend Libya, which openly supports terrorist acts, but is an attempt to highlight the inconsistent behaviour of the US government. As a ripost, it could be argued that Libya is a small nation that can easily be influenced by the actions of a superpower, but even so there still appears to be a disparity in the actions taken by the US against these two states.

On a closer inspection of the present events in China a pattern, however, does exist that can readily explain the docile attitude of President Bush and his administration to the massacre in Beijing. To discern this pattern one must first look at three apparently disparate aspects of the situation in China and the US before and after 4th June.



To begin with one should look at the degree and level to which American industries are involved in China. Financially US industries have invested billions of dollars in China, and as a result they stand to gain, or lose, enormous profits. In addition, these industries work hand in glove with the Chinese authorities. Consequently, we have Governor Cuomo rushing to defend President Bush by pointing out that even the mildest economic sanctions against China would severely harm US industrial interests.

The second aspect that needs to be examined is that of the political ideas that the students and workers championed during their occupation of Tiananmen Square. These ideas tended to be rather fragmented and disjointed, but as time went on the actions, proclamations and symbols adopted by the students did appear to be bound together by a discernable underlying philosophy. The most prominent symbol was the large statue, which the American press immediately proclaimed to be the Statue of Liberty. However, if one examined the statue closely it could be seen that it was not an exact replica of the one found in New York harbour, but that it was a composite image of all female figures of freedom, and especially the French revolutionary figure who wore the red Phrygian cap of liberty. Another significant symbol that the workers and students embraced was the Internationale, the anthem of the international socialist movement. Finally, it should be noted that an observer of the unrest in China compared these events to those of the Kronstadt unrest in the Soviet Union in 1921, in that both groups of protestors called for increased freedom and a truly democratic society.

Taken together these actions and symbols suggested a philosophy that emphasised real freedom and a radical democracy. A philosophy that demanded that each person be allowed to have direct control over their own destiny, and yet a philosophy that desired a society based on radical socialism. The comparison with Kronstadt was therefore very apt, since the principal participants in that revolt, the anarchists, demanded reforms that are identical to those being demanded by the Chinese students and workers.

The third aspect of this tragedy that must be considered is the past actions of the US government when confronted by indigenous popular movements calling for reform. To begin with we can go back to Chicago in 1886, where an initially peaceful demonstration by workers demanding the 40-hour week was broken up when police started to fire randomly into the crowd immediately after the apparent explosion of a bomb. In response to this incident the state rounded up the eight demonstration organisers and accused them of murder. Subsequently, four were hanged, one committed suicide in his cell, and the others were given long prison terms. In another example of state suppression Joe Hill, the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) organiser and balladeer, was framed for murder, found guilty and shot by the state of Utah in 1915, despite international protests. Eventually, several years later the governor of Utah acknowledged that an injustice had been committed and that an innocent man had been wantonly killed.

To continue our exploration of US mass movement management we should then turn to Kent State University in

1970, where four students were killed when troops (national guards) fired into a crowd of unarmed students who were protesting against the Vietnam war. And finally (2) we should look at the case of Brian Wilson who, in 1987, lost both feet, an ear and part of his skull when a weapons train ploughed into a group of demonstrators during a peaceful protest against the shipment of arms to Central America. This 'accident' occurred despite the fact that officials had been told about the planned demonstration, which was to involve protestors sitting on the track, and despite the fact that the train crew had plenty of time to stop — in fact the train crew maintained their speed and made no attempt to stop (3).

The pattern that therefore emerges is one of a state that sees another state — and even the concept of state — being threatened by a popular movement demanding radical democracy and social justice. To the US government the Chinese students and workers too closely resembled anarchists, and as a result it only tentatively supported the democratic movement — enough support to

prod the Chinese government along the path to capitalism, but not enough to threaten the Chinese state itself, or even to encourage a similar movement in the US. Consequently, when the Chinese authorities moved against the students and workers, the US saw a kindred spirit using tactics that it has used, and continues to use (but in a less extreme form) to suppress elements that threaten the existence of the state. For example, we have already seen that in response to similar threats the US has also been willing to kill student protestors, and to execute dissident workers by using trumped up murder charges. There is even the uncanny similarity between the Brian Wilson 'accident' and the recent case where a train near Shanghai killed several workers when the train crew deliberately ploughed into a group of workers who were blocking the track in protest to the actions of their government.

If the US had therefore vigorously condemned the actions of the Chinese government by imposing severe sanctions, it would be condemning its own past, and possibly future, actions. Also given that

the US is a capitalist state, which by definition exists to protect the owners against the workers, it is not surprising that the US chose to kowtow to big business rather than to show solidarity with the Chinese workers and their dead comrades. Consequently, we once again find that when a state perceives a threat to its own existence, or the vested interest that it protects, it will abandon its principles and willingly make a deal with the devil.

Allan MacGregor

#### Notes

1. It was subsequently revealed that it was Syria and not Libya that played a major role in that particular incident.
2. I have not cited any of the numerous atrocities perpetrated by various states during the civil rights movement protests because of my lack of knowledge of most of these incidents, and because I wanted to provide incidents to closely parallel the events in China.
3. A report of this incident can be found in *Freedom* vol 49 no 12, December 1988.

## Degangsterfy Dope!

THE dope issue is certainly an issue the anarchist movement in suit with the rest of the gutless society they derive from appear only too willing to either avoid or tread gently around. *Freedom* ought to be applauded loudly for treating this issue with a modicum of respect especially in a time of hyperactive-dopephobia. Anarchists need to become conversant with the dimensions of the dope issue, in order to be able to make a proper choice in the face of heavy business sales coercion from dope dealers, and to be able to counteract ideological propaganda distributed through both the gutter press and gutter television.

The dope issue is not essentially about whether dope is either a good or bad turn on, for most anarchists and believers in 'freedom of choice' believe in the individuals right to choose, even if the choice equals one really screwed up and screwed around individual. No, comrades, the dope question is centrally a question of control.

Anarchists ought to be able to ask — who are these 'gunmen' in flashy suits dealing out weights to hippie-looking-type-would-be-anarchists? The street dealers selling quarters and wraps then follow on from their business brothers, cutting up the weight they've bought to deal out to the 'real anarchists' who may be scratching a living off some lousy state benefit, trying to work out why the world is so full of bullshit.

The answer to the dope question is simple to say but hard to understand,

because the world we occupy is built upon a complicated and false notion of property followed by its complimentary pea-brained notion of the market arena. The trendy talking dope dealer, let's face it, is really the ugliest looking business man any anarchist is ever likely to meet. Ask him to take you to his dealer, and if you get there, ask his dealer to take you to his source.

Red Leb, what a load of bollocks! It may as well be 'bloody red lebanon'. Stop giving cash to fund and feed a 'Middle East' gang gun war!

Dope smoking does have positive dimensions as well for it is certainly a first class aid for removing layers of 'archaic heritage' from the minds and psyches of gullible teenagers, some process any government reliant upon ideological hoodwinking would surely want to repress. Another possible use is as an alternative to state-distributed major tranquillisers; but the use of major tranquillisers (of which dope is one) ought to raise serious questions concerning the nature, education and ability to react and strike back of the particular individuals who use them. We should try to show those who rely on truth suppressants that they are strong enough to face the truth, but this is no easy task, sisters and brothers.

The use of dope is widespread in our society. I don't want to smoke because I am a pacifist, yet I've been offered a joint from my nurse, teacher, neighbourhood policeman, librarian, milkman,

window cleaner, TV technician, rent collector, and even those little things called hippies that the fascists are picking on. Anarchists stand by, but stand up.

Dope is then just the same as any other market commodity, but perhaps more dangerous to challenge, because of the quick money to be made because of its illegality. Dope has a pluralistic use for the movement known as anarchism — it is both a positive eye-opener for the young, and a mind-closer for the experienced unpoliticised user. Dope should certainly be available, but not through the present illegal channels, for it is these channels of shipping and distribution that are tainted with the most anti-pacifist, homophobic, sexist, racist, and white super-race attitudes. For this reason, and this reason only, anarchists should forthwith stop using illegal dope and start the campaign for legitimate dope. Legalising dope would also slash the price and encourage 'home grown' dope which then could be smoked pure (grass) rather than the chemically injected boiled and pressed shit passing as dope on the streets today.

'Degangsterfy dope' needs to become another new anarchist slogan for the purpose of moving towards anarchy as we understand it.

CA

[Glossary: We are told by comrades familiar with the jargon that *Red Leb* is Lebanese cannabis, *weights*, *quarters* and *wraps* are various trade quantities of cannabis, *dope* has various meanings, but the only drug being discussed in the article is cannabis or hashish — Eds.]

# CLR James 1909-1989

IN early June I was deeply saddened by the passing away of two remarkable men – both of whom were in their eighties. One was my dad, a barely literate foundry worker who sweated and toiled around fifty hours a week, fifty weeks of the year, for over fifty years. He'll get no obituary. He simply heaped his treasures in the hearts of his family and friends – restricted to those who played dominoes, drank beer and kept pigeons. The other was C. L. R. James, a Caribbean intellectual who was one of the most cultured, literate and creative marxists of the last half century – a truly world historical figure.

It would be difficult to think of two men as different as C. L. R. James and my dad. James was a black intellectual, cultured and cosmopolitan; my dad, white, working class, uncultured, a bloke whose body and spirit hardly left the Black Country. But they had I think one thing in common – a kind of instinctive, unarticulated anarchism. My dad would not have understood what the term meant, but he hated 'gaffers' and had a deep-seated antipathy towards all forms of authority. C. L. R. James never claimed to be an anarchist but his writings and life

are infused with a libertarian tendency, and his passing surely deserves some mention in the pages of *Freedom*.

James was born and educated in Trinidad. His father was a schoolteacher, his mother an avid reader, and he had an elite education at the island's premier institute – The Queen Royal College. He learned Latin, Greek and French, and developed a passionate interest in European culture, particularly English literature. Thackeray and Shakespeare were his favourites. He thought Shakespeare the most profound political thinker in the English language. But from his earliest years James had an acute awareness of the realities of the colonial situation – its sociological inequalities, the racial discrimination, and the poverty of the working people. His ambition was to become a writer, and his earliest works were a number of short stories and philosophical essays, and a biography of an early West Indian nationalist, Captain Andre Cipriani.

In 1932 James came to Britain, and joined the cricketer Learie Constantine who was then living in Nelson. In the heart of industrial Lancashire, the town had a reputation for political radicalism

and James soon joined the Independent Labour Party. He became interested in Trotsky's writings and joined a marxist discussion group, eventually helping to form the trotskyist Revolutionary Socialist League. At the same time he became deeply involved in the anti-colonial struggles. He chaired the International African Friends of Abyssinia, strongly opposing the Italian invasion of the country – though he was not oblivious to the feudal and reactionary aspects of Haile Selassie's rule. At that time many socialists supported Mussolini. James also immersed himself in the Pan-African movement, editing *International African Opinion*, the journal of the International African Service Bureau which had been founded by his boyhood friend George Padmore. Through this organisation James came to know and support such African nationalists as Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah. During this period James supported himself as cricket correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* – cricket being another of James' lifelong passions. Stuart Hall described him as a 'walking wisdom'. At this period too, James published some of his most important works – his classic study of the San Domingo revolution *The Black Jacobins* (1938), an important critique of Stalinism *World Revolution 1917-1936* (1937), *A History of Negro Revolt* (1938) – which indicates James' commitment to both socialism and African national independence – as well as a novel about West Indian barrack-yard life *Minty Alley* (1936).

In 1938, at the invitation of James Cannon of the American Socialist Workers Party, James emigrated to the United States. The following year he visited Trotsky, then in exile in Mexico. Although deeply impressed by Trotsky, James was critical of many of Trotsky's basic ideas, contrasting him unfavourably with Lenin. Trotsky, he felt, in spite of his opposition to Stalinist bureaucracy, was at heart always an administrator, a bureaucrat, unable to fully sense the creative power of the working class. During his fifteen years in the United States James' political activities were centred around an autonomous group of Marxists, a separate 'tendency' based mostly in Detroit, which included such figures as Grace Lee and Raya Dunayevskaya. James was actively engaged in the sharecroppers strikes in Missouri and agitated among black workers to oppose the Second World War, stressing the need for an autonomous black workers movement. James was attempting to delineate a form of Marxism that incorporated

**T**HE STALINIST THEORY is, despite zigzags, logical and consistent. Like every theory of all exploiters it

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direct producers whom they exploit, and

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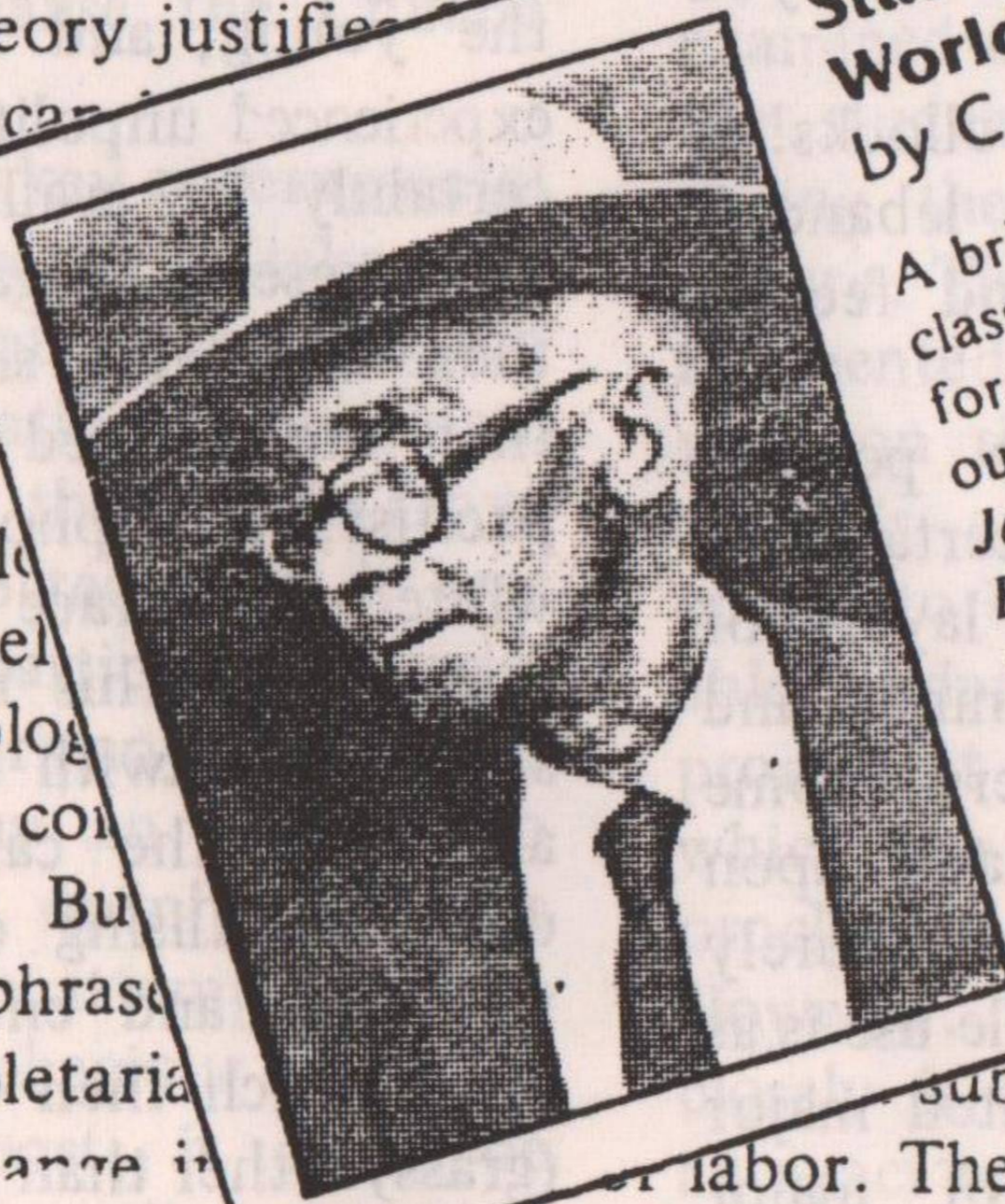
shall go into later. But

summed up in a phrase

society with the proletariat

with no essential change in

## State Capitalism & World Revolution by C.L.R. James



A brilliant analysis of global class struggle by one of the foremost Marxist theorists of our time, author of *The Black Jacobins* and *Beyond a Boundary*. Originally published in 1950, this new edition includes a new foreword by the author and an introduction by Paul Buhle.  
160 pp. £5.35

When one looks back over the last twenty years to those men who were most far-sighted, who first began to tease out the muddle of ideology in our times, who were at the same time Marxists with a hard theoretical basis, and close students of society, humanists with a tremendous response to and understanding of human culture, Comrade James is one of the first one thinks of.

—E. P. Thompson



black struggles and which stressed that the agency of transformation could not be the 'party' but only the mass of the working people. James' political ideas of this period are expressed in *State Capitalism and World Revolution* (1950) and *Notes on Dialectics* (1948), a study of Hegel, Marx and Lenin. In 1952 James was arrested and interned on Ellis Island — allegedly for 'anti-American activities'. During his internment he wrote a study of Herman Melville, whose novel *Moby Dick* seemed to James to encapsulate the essence of American culture. The following year he returned to Britain.

In the last years of his life James travelled widely through three continents — Africa, Europe and America. He lectured and wrote books and articles on a wide variety of subjects — history, politics, literature, art and cricket. Though a truly renaissance figure with wide erudition and a searching intellect, James was free of obscurantism and intellectual pretension, and he wrote and spoke, whether on Thackeray or the labour theory of value, on Shakespeare's sonnets or black nationalism, with a style that was simple and lucid and essentially communicative. In 1981 he moved to Brixton and in his last years his room seems to have been a place of pilgrimage for a host of friends and visitors, especially young black people. He had, it seems, a spirit of generosity that was quite unique, and he never lost his quiet but passionate optimism and his belief, as a revolutionary socialist, that working people had the creative potential to emancipate themselves, and so rid the world of discrimination, poverty and exploitation. In this decade of intellectual pessimism and a historic nihilism he was like a breath of fresh air.

C. L. R. James was a marxist, not an anarchist. He never claimed to be an anarchist, and you can search through his voluminous writings and not find any mention at all of anarchists — although he does describe Kropotkin's book on the French Revolution as the best general book in English on a revolution. Given his trotskyist background, anarchism seems to be a cultural blind spot in James' political theory. Nevertheless there are two aspects of James' marxism that bring him close to anarchism.

One is his trenchant and important criticism of stalinism, or what many anarchists would deem to have been the inevitable outcome of orthodox Bolshevism. James looked upon the Soviet system as a system of state capitalism, stressing that in the control of the productive process through rational planning and coercion there was little to choose between the bourgeoisie and the Russian state bureaucrats. The factory regime instituted by Ford in the United States was, he suggested, the prototype of

production relations in both fascist Germany and Stalinist Russia. 'State property and total planning', he wrote, 'are nothing else but the complete subordination of the proletariat to capital' — and thus the Soviet system under Stalin was essentially a totalitarian system. James is equally perceptive in his account of how the Stalinist strategy in China, in its support of Chiang Kai Shek and the bourgeoisie, completely sabotaged the 1925-1927 Chinese revolution. But James seems to be completely ignorant of the fact that the depiction of the Soviet system as a form of 'state capitalism' and as a despotic and totalitarian regime had been voiced and outlined long ago by Berkman and other anarchists in the immediate aftermath of the revolution — and had even been anticipated by Bakunin in the nineteenth century in his critique of Marx. 'The Russians have nationalised, collectivised, and they plan. The result is the greatest tyranny known to history'. Anarchists might agree, but rather than seeing this as some kind of 'aberration' or the 'degeneration' of the ideas of Marx and Lenin they see this kind of state capitalism as inherent in the Marxist conception of the future 'state'.

The other important aspect of James' political theory which links him to anarchism is his repudiation of the concept of the vanguard party. For someone who continually heaped praise on Lenin — James always spoke of himself as someone extending the heritage of Marx and Engels — it does seem strange that he rejected what was the most significant aspect of this heritage, namely the idea of a revolutionary party who would lead the proletariat in the revolution and 'seize' or 'capture' state power. James was highly critical of this idea, and his book *Facing Reality* (1958), published in Detroit in the aftermath of the Hungarian revolution, has a distinctly anarchist flavour. Paul Berman suggests that the 'anti-state proletarianism' expressed in the book has a 'Bakuninist resonance'. Some extracts from the book will suffice to indicate the tenor of James' ideas.

'The whole world today lives in the shadow of state power . . . This state power is an ever-present self-perpetuating body over and above society. It transforms the human personality into a mass of economic needs to be satisfied by decimal points of economic progress. It robs everyone of initiative and clogs the free development of society. This state power, by whatever name it is called, one-party state or welfare state, destroys all pretence of government *by* the people *of* the people. All that remains is government *for* the people.'

Working people the world over, James goes on to write, were rebelling against the 'monster'. And the Hungarian revolu-

tion of 1956 indicated that a revolution could take place without the seizure of political power, and without the need for a revolutionary party.

James wrote: 'One of the greatest achievements of the Hungarian revolution was to destroy once and for all the legend that the working class cannot act successfully except under the leadership of a political party. It did all that it did precisely because it was not under the leadership of a political party. If a political party had existed to lead the revolution, the political party would have led the revolution to disaster . . .'

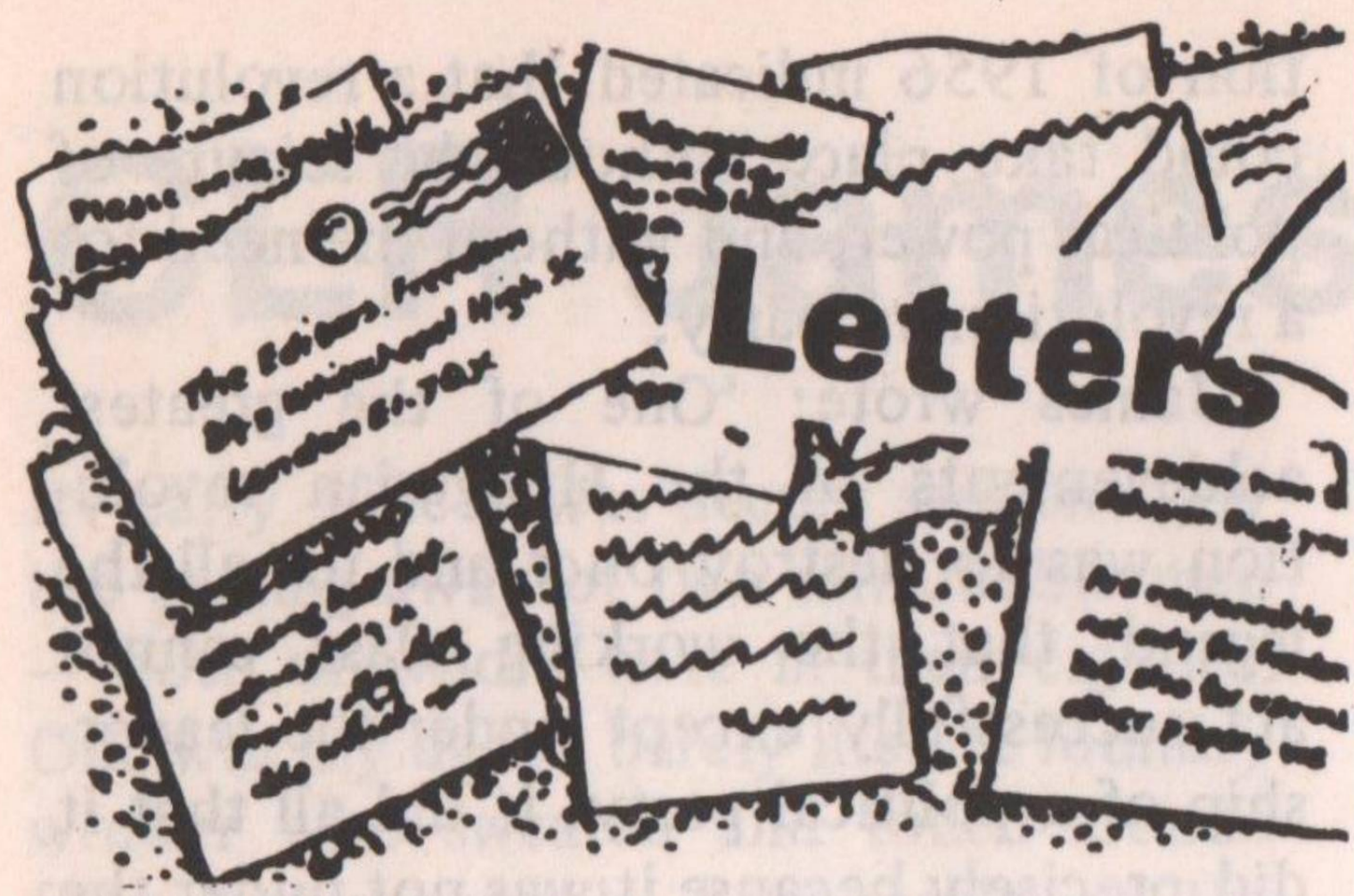
The establishment of workers' councils in Hungary, James argued, 'put an end to the foolish dreams, disasters and despair which have attended all those who, since 1923, have placed the hope for socialism in the elite party, whether communist or social-democrat. The political party . . . constitutes essentially a separation of the organising intellectuals and workers with an instinct for leadership, from the masses as force and motive power.' For James, therefore, a genuine revolution could only come from the spontaneous creativity of the working class itself, and he sensed, like Bakunin long ago, that a vanguard party would inevitably substitute itself for the working class and establish another despotism. But James misleadingly sees 'a society based on workers councils' as reflecting the strategy of Marx and Lenin, and fails to understand that 'Stalinism' did not begin in 1923 with Stalin but is inherent in Marxism itself and began with the Bolshevik assumption of state power in October 1917. The 'legend' is orthodox Marxism.

Paul Berman suggests that James forcefully condemned anarchism in all his writings, and that *Facing Reality* represents an improvement on anarchism. Anarchism, Berman felt, lacked any focus on the industrial proletariat or any substantive method of analysis — something which James provides. None of this really holds water. James hardly engaged himself with anarchist thought, and consequently in his critique of Stalinism and orthodox Marxism and his advocacy of workers self-management, he simply replicates what anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists have long argued — namely, to quote Bakunin, that the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves.

Brian Morris

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## China

YOUR reports on the demands of Chinese workers and students for freedom hardly speculate on what they mean by the word. Freedom from Marxist oppression, yes, but what is their alternative?

Judging by the behaviour of the tens of millions of Chinese who live outside the People's Republic (in Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, etc.) 'freedom' to most of them means pursuing the interests of private businesses and their own families. I have no objection to small businesses so long as something useful is produced, but the Chinese are a people who have a flair for business and who, given the chance, take to big scale capitalism and consumerism like ducks to water. This is a bad thing.

The individual Chinese emphasis on the family is another worry, for, given the opportunity, they tend to have many children. The Communists realised this when they came to power and, alarmed by such potential fecundity, ordered that people could not marry until well into their twenties and each married couple could have only one child. Those who disobeyed were punished. Despite this the population of China soon reached one billion.

Restricting people's sexual activities and reproduction is, of course, a gross violation of their freedom — but what is the (anarchist) alternative? It should hardly need saying that if some nations and peoples practise restraint in their economic and reproductive activities while others do not, then in the long run

ill-feeling, racism and war are the result.

By all means champion people who are struggling against Marxist oppression and for freedom, but also ask 'freedom to do what?'

**H. I. Jones**

[To our correspondent, who has enough sympathy with our views to support our paper without himself fully accepting the anarchist position, we owe an explanation of our views.

It is quite true that the response of the Western press and media, reflecting the position of Western governments, to the massacre in Tiananmen Square has been to condemn what our correspondent calls 'Marxist oppression' because they

hope that China can be brought within the sphere of influence of the Western powers and the economic system they operate.

Capitalism means production for profits, and not for needs, and the creation of markets not the satisfaction of wants. It is true that under certain social circumstances, as for instance in Hong Kong, some ethnic Chinese have successfully taken to building businesses, but any number of employers means an even greater number of employees — surely Mr Jones does not think that 'most of them' are employers? Like all those who cannot accept the case against government, our correspondent confuses governments with peoples, the State with society. Under any power system individuals have the choice of trying to rise to the top of the economic or social scale or sinking to the bottom, and we see no reason to suppose that the Chinese are in this respect different from any other people.

A similar confusion is shown in the reference to population control. 'Nations and peoples' do not practice restraint or otherwise in their reproductive activities — individuals do. When Mao Tse Tung came to power he 'encouraged' large families by refusing birth control facilities to the people, boasting that China could fight a nuclear war and still survive as a powerful nation after the decimation of a large part of its population. With the death of Mao and the move towards industrialisation there was a complete change and women were forbidden to have more than one child.

The answer to Mr Jones's last question is that women should have absolute freedom to control their own fertility and not that populations should be manipulated in the interests of ruling elites.

If our correspondent does not accept this, then what does he propose? — Eds.]

## Disappeared

SO FAR my research into the events surrounding the 'trashing' of the people commonly known by the names 'Peace Convoy' or 'Hippies', have uncovered no factual basis for the proliferating rumours that a number of people who passed through the 'Southampton' reintegration centre after the incident known as 'Stoney Cross' have disappeared. Could anyone who knows of any individual or group of individuals who passed through the 'Southampton' centre and who has not been seen since, please write or call at the address below with names and particulars. Stand together!

**Clive Allsop**

**46 Withern Road, Broxtowe Estate,  
Nottingham NG8 6FJ**

## Feminism

IN THE July issue of *Freedom* Peter Neville expressed the view that anarchist/feminist is a contradiction in terms and also comes to the strange conclusion that equality is not a matter of right but of agreement. Usually it is much easier to express mixed up ideas than it is to unravel them, but this case looks like a rare exception.

Anarchism is about freedom, that much we can probably all agree. One of the essential barriers to freedom is inequality. This inequality can take many forms. It can, for instance, be inequality of income, power or privilege, and this inequality can be based on many different foundations from ownership of capital to religious influence to sex.

One of the roles of an anarchist is to fight these inequalities and established privileges to the best of their abilities wherever they are encountered. This is not a matter of simply deciding in our heads that we are the equals of those with privilege, though Peter is absolutely correct to identify the importance of this psychological approach. I can decide in my head that I am the equal of John Paul Getty but that still leaves him sitting on an awful lot of money. Equally it is not enough for a woman to decide psychologically that she is the equal of men — there is still a massive disparity in the earnings, the power and the privilege of men and women.

What is required therefore is for all anarchists, male and female, to assist in the task of removing male privileges at the same time as undertaking whatever changes in our own outlook and perspective necessary to achieve equality between the sexes. Put another way, unless a person is a genuine feminist then that person has only a very constrained and limited commitment to freedom and to anarchism.

I would therefore be grateful if more contributors to *Freedom* would at least make the attempt to recognise the variety, imagination and insight of feminist writing and incorporate some of the ideas into their own thinking instead of indulging in the current unspoken assumption that feminism begins and ends with the most narrow-minded radical feminism.

Reading some of the recent contributions to *Freedom*, the average reader would be entitled to ask themselves whether they are committed to freedom for all or only for men. I am beginning to wonder myself.

**Andy Brown**

# Fission Fusion Fossil

I READ Norman Albon's article in the July *Freedom* with interest, and must agree with all the issues he raised. In fact, I recently wrote to Cecil Parkinson, Minister for Energy, on just these points. Needless to say, his lack of courtesy in replying is to be expected from a typically arrogant, stupid politician.

The points Norman raised which I would like to emphasise are that cheaper, cleaner, more efficient electricity production can come from water, wind, wave and solar energy. Using these sources, together with a national insulation programme, it is perfectly feasible to predict free energy for all. Good news for ordinary people, but as Norman correctly points out, dreadful news for those who wish to monopolise our energy systems.

I can only echo Norman's sentiments on transport too. This country has far too many cars, and a much too powerful road transport lobby — who are forever having their plans to build more roads approved, even though the result of transferring congestion from one place (road A) to another (road B) is perfectly clear to all.

Now, with the backslapping over, to the point. What can we do about it now? Within our present political system, the Tories, Labour Party and the LSD Party (or whatever their name is this week) all have policies committed to building more nuclear power plants. As to transport, here in Coventry we have a 'left-wing' Labour MP who is reactionary enough to fight all the way the Coventry car workers 'rights' to remain in wage slavery, producing wealth for the capitalists and filth for the rest of us.

So, what do I suggest? This will appal many anarchists . . . but vote, and vote Green in your next election. This is, I believe, a realistic plea, to work with what we've got. The Green Party are the only party in Britain dedicated to change in the existing system by devolving power.

Before dismissing this out of hand, try reading the Green Party manifesto, or even better get together and talk things over with your local Greens.

If after that you still cannot bring yourself to support and/or vote for the Green Party, a non-political organisation campaigning on these issues is ECOROPA, Crickhowell, Powys NP8 1TA.

**Russell Gill**

[It is not clear from the wording of Mr Gill's letter whether he means that Cecil Parkinson sent him a rude reply or whether, as we suspect, his letter is still in an in-tray at the Department of Energy, but lest we be thought discourteous let us reply to Mr Gill's suggestion that we should vote for the Green Party.

Whatever the merits or demerits of

nuclear power or road transport, and granted that some workers are engaged in socially useless jobs, working with the Green Party will not bring about the results he wants to see. It could only operate by putting into power a group of politicians who, whatever their original intentions, would find themselves having to operate the capitalist system, and if Mr Gill finds politicians to be 'typically' arrogant and stupid then why should he think that any other lot of politicians would be less arrogant and stupid? They too would change if they ever came to power.

You are mistaken if you think that by voting for a small party you are voting against either of the consensus parties, because voting against one of them means in effect voting for another of them. The only vote against government is not to vote at all.

Anarchists do not support the devolution of power, but its abolition. Devolution of power means devolution from the top down, and authoritarianism and bureaucracy can exist quite as much on a local as on a national scale, while leaving the top unchanged — it represents an extension not a diminution of power. What anarchists propose is federation from the bottom up, from free individuals uniting on the basis of shared community and work — what Kropotkin called 'mutual aid'.

And if we had a society based on mutual aid, then those problems of human existence — the waste of natural and human resources about which Mr Gill feels so strongly — would not exist in the first place. Let us have done with the game of party politics. The time to abolish authoritarianism and bureaucracy is now, not after the Green Party comes to power — Eds.]

NORMAN Albon (July) runs the risk of being wrong when he writes 'that the emission of vast quantities of carbon dioxide has already altered the delicate atmospheric balance'. Similar statements are made in almost identical press ads by Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth ('The Greenhouse Effect — send us your money'). But I doubt whether it is safe to go further than ' . . . already seems to have altered . . .' The evidence, reviewed at a conference in Toronto last year, is suggestive, but not yet conclusive.

Britain and some other countries have systematically recorded weather for 150 years, during which average recorded temperatures have steadily increased. Weather ships and some individual land based weather stations, however, have recorded no long-term change. How do we account for this inconsistency?

The weather stations were put up 150 years ago, in open country but within easy reach of towns. As the towns grew the weather stations were not relocated, so many which began recording rural temperatures came to be recording town temperatures, which are higher. The same contingency can account for an increase in average recorded carbon dioxide over the same period.

The other evidence is from satellite observations, which have only been going on since 1979. During the past ten years the average temperature of the Pacific has increased by about one degree Celsius, but there is no way of knowing whether this is an increased greenhouse effect or natural fluctuation. There has been no change in satellite measurements of carbon dioxide.

This is not to disagree with Norman's recommendations (echoing those of the Toronto conference) to plant trees, stop polluting the oceans (the world's 'oxygen factory'), and to waste less energy. The danger of greenhouse effect catastrophe is real. All I am saying is, we should be cautious of accepting the advertising people's assertion that the catastrophe is already here.

**Donald Room**

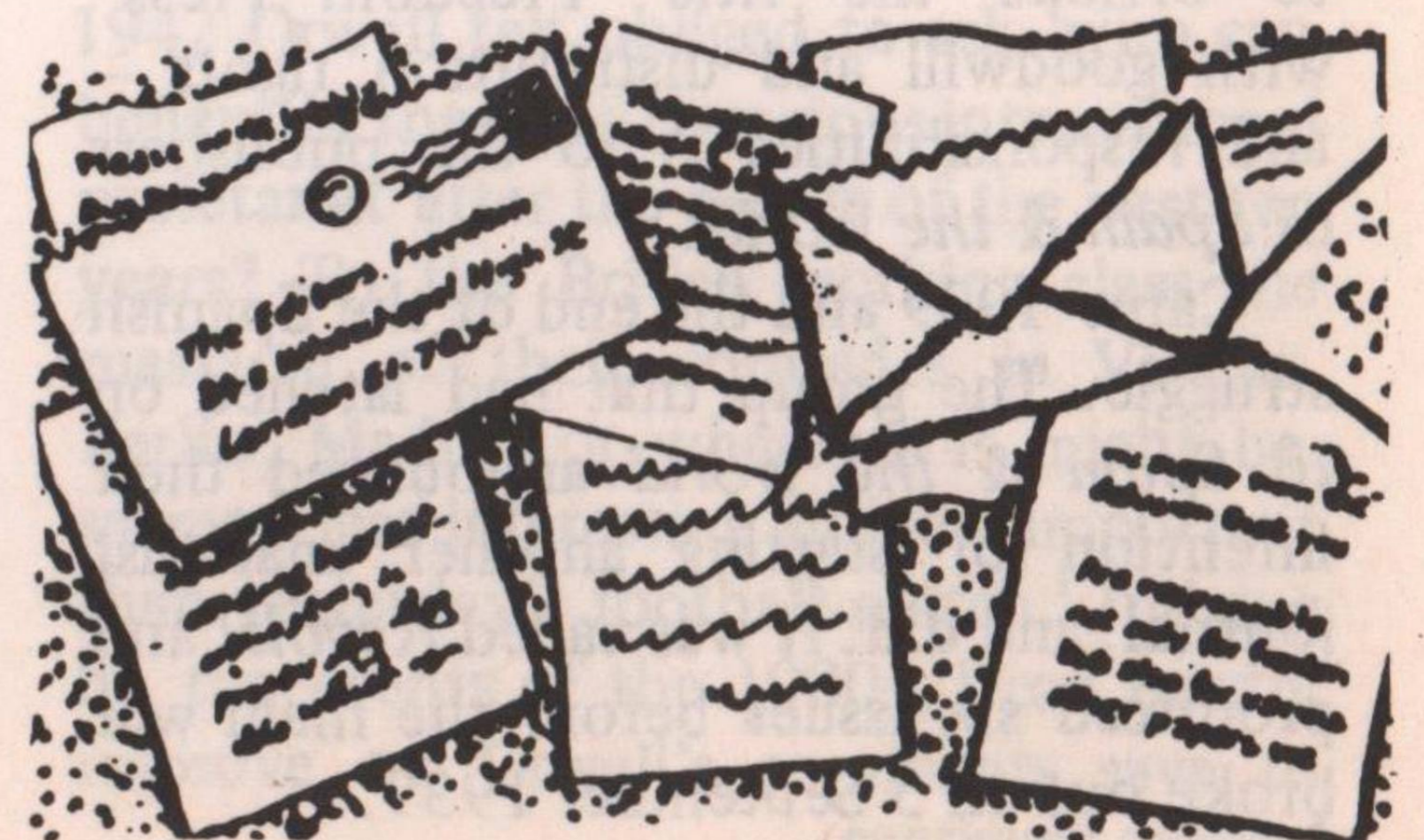
## Economics

I FOUND the article 'Thinking about Economics' by JG (*Freedom*, July 1989) to be helpful and clarifying to my present orientation about anarchism, i.e. the belief in a society without coercive government.

At present we live in a wage-slave society. Money makes use of the slaves. And money is used by the capitalist bosses to keep the workers in slavery.

I am indebted to Dick Donnelly of the SPGB for his insistence that we are ruled by the capitalist bosses and that *they* are the government of our country and Thatcher, Kinnock and co are the office workers and use their authority for the capitalist bosses. Can JG and perhaps some of our other *Freedom* comrades help us to orientate our thoughts as near to objectivity as they can and help us to see that our capitalist bosses are the real government, the real enemy of anarchism.

WT



# Anarchist Victims

LIKE Peter Neville (*Freedom* July) I dropped into the Anarchist Conference at what is now called the West Ham Precinct (something to do with Hill Street Blues?). For me it was a sentimental journey, since I had spent three formative years in that building, when it was the West Ham Municipal College and had a very lively art department. The conference was not nearly so lively as the anarchy we created for ourselves in that art school in the years before World War Two. Alas, science now rules, OK?

However, what I am really writing about is the sloppy criticism of the pamphlet *London's Anarchist Movement Today*, which I picked up there, by both Peter Neville and yourselves. I always hold that if there's something wrong in a part that I know about, there's probably a lot wrong elsewhere as well — but that's for others to point out.

In the brief section on *Freedom* it is said to have 'changed its name several times'. This is just not accurate. The *Freedom* which was started by Kropotkin and others in 1886 was continued unbroken — having shed Kropotkin when he turned pro-war in 1914, after bitter arguments (so what's new?) by Tom Keell who eventually retired exhausted in 1927.

He continued to produce an occasional *Freedom Bulletin* until 1932, and to distribute Freedom Press pamphlets which, as a printer, he helped to produce. He therefore held, quite legitimately, the title 'Freedom Press', for he guarded the stocks, looked after them and reprinted them as necessary for many years.

In 1930 another group of individuals, hostile to Tom Keell, began to produce a paper which they called *Freedom*. But they had no right to the publishing title 'Freedom Press'. They published their journal from 1930 until 1936.

In 1937 *Spain & the World* burst upon the world. It was not a phoney *Freedom*, it was not originally published by Freedom Press, so cannot be called *Freedom* under another name. However, when old Tom Keell saw, naturally to his great relief, that here was a very good anarchist paper, absolutely of its time, relevant, forceful, and genuinely anarchist with no ifs and buts, gathering support from all over the anarchist world, he was delighted to offload the title 'Freedom Press', with goodwill and distribution rights — and responsibilities — to the publishers of *Spain & the World*.

Came 1939 and the end of the Spanish struggle. The group that had latched on to *Spain & the World* announced their intention of starting another anarchist journal, and did. It was called *Revolt!* and produced six issues before the main war broke out on 3 September 1939.

Nothing else appeared until November 1939, when the original *Spain & the World* editors brought out the first, duplicated issue of an anti-war journal called *War Commentary*. It went into print for the second number, December 1939, and continued, becoming a fortnightly in January 1943, to the end of the war when the title *War Commentary: For Anarchism*, obviously outmoded, changed to *Freedom* on 25 August 1945, after the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan.

From then on, and for the first time, the title *Freedom* was used by the group

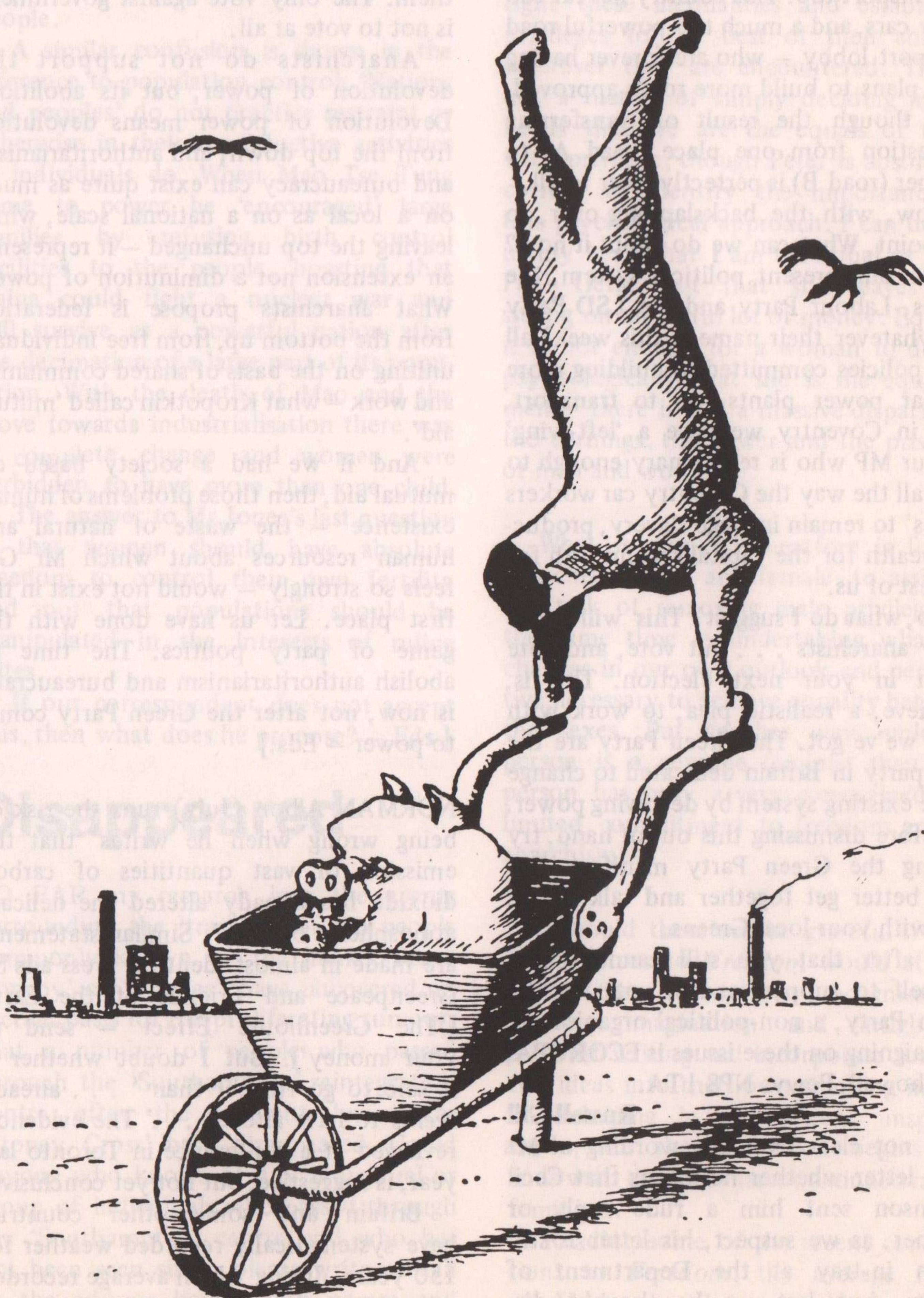
which took over the Freedom Press title from Tom Keell in 1937. To say, then, that 'over the years it has changed its name several times' is just sloppy thinking.

And so, of course, is to put *Freedom* in a chapter headed 'Liberal Anarchism'. And there is one factual error you must regard: 'Albert Meltzer is . . . a one-time editor of *Freedom*.' This is simply not true.

One thing is correct. Yes, *Black Flag*, *Direct Action* and many other anarchist publications are printed by Aldgate Press, which was financed and founded by Freedom Press, which does not dictate to the printers what they should or should not print. Very liberal, eh?

Philip Sansom

## TONY EARNSHAW'S VIEW FROM THE BACK OF TOWN



Dedicated to the Working Man.



## The Great Dock Strike

**The Great Dock Strike 1889**  
 edited by Terry McCarthy  
 Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.95

AN UNSUPPORTED statement, made by the Italian political writer and novelist Ignazio Silone in 1964, that history proves 'there has been no political or social progress of any importance that wasn't due to the struggles of the so-called lower classes', has continued to irk me mainly because I lack sufficient historical know-how to establish the claim to my own satisfaction. Much, if not most, historical literature seems to focus upon the activities of historical personages, and these leaders of men are usually represented as belonging to the middle and upper classes.

In theory labour history has for its subjects the struggles of the working class and their institutions — the trade unions. Yet even its historians cannot easily resist the temptation to study the working class movements as being guided by individual heroes, leaders, and the ideas they embrace — socialism, fabianism and syndicalism, and so on. Of course it is more comfortable for an historian seated in a library to analyse the literature on the ideas and activities of a handful of leaders rather than interpret the will of the people.

Terry McCarthy in his edited analysis of *The Great Dock Strike 1889* tries to get behind the strike leaders and their ideology, questioning the presentation of the strike, in most books, as being 'caused by socialism and socialist propaganda'. He knits together a wealth of reports and excerpts about the dispute — its background and aftermath from primary and secondary sources.

The strike started spontaneously out of a bonus dispute over the unloading of cargo from the 'Lady Armstrong' in London's West India Dock. But as in so many strikes the actual pretext which sparked the strike covered up a mass of underlying complaints. Their leaders on the spot had to hold back the men while a set of demands were formulated and sent to the dock authorities. Their demands were finalised as follows:

No man to be taken on for less than a four-hour shift;  
 Piece work to be abolished;  
 Wages to be raised from 6d (a tanner) an hour, and 8d for overtime.

The Dock Strike of 1889, which Mr McCarthy in his subtitle describes as being the Labour movement's first great victory, is generally seen as the turning point in the development of modern trade unionism and according to Ron Todd, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, the T&G was founded in 1922 of seeds sown in 1889. Mr McCarthy's book is published in association with the TGWU.

Over the years the form of political and social action in this country had varied. In the 18th century the riot was the accepted style of social protest, and between 1735 and 1800 there were in Britain 275 outbreaks of rioting of which two-thirds were over price rises of basic foods. In the second half of the 19th century, after the Chartist demonstrations, the established trade unions settled down into a conservative craft association designed to regulate skilled labour and provide benefits to their exclusive memberships — they have been called the 'top-hatted trade unionists' and the 'Labour aristocrats'. Even as late as 1889 these unions formed a cautious crew giving grudging moral support to the dock strikers at the TUC annual congress in September of that year. That same congress also rejected the call for an eight-hour working day. Ben Tillett, one of the strike leaders, was contemptuous of the TUC establishment and their parliamentary hacks, saying they had got so used to being the lap dogs of society that they forgot the duty they owed to the men who made them what they were.

While the craft unions smugly looked after their skilled members like benefit clubs, the poor and unskilled continued to demonstrate. Disturbances throughout the 1800s involved issues like the Irish question, unemployment and poverty. But by 1887, after the demonstration in Trafalgar Square which turned into the 'Bloody Sunday' riot, Mr McCarthy claims 'it was becoming clear that aim-

less violence was no way to achieve social justice, and that hope for the future lay rather in the organisation of the working classes and the withdrawal when necessary of their labour ...'

So far so good. George Orwell once described the struggle of the working class as being like the growth of a plant. 'The plant', he says, 'is blind and stupid, but it knows enough to keep on pushing upwards towards the light, and it will do so in the face of endless discouragements.' Knowing a decent life to be technically possible, the workers press on from riot to political demo, from demo to political campaign, from campaign to organised trade union and the withdrawal of labour. On to the Match Girls' Strike of 1888, to the Gas Workers' dispute in March 1889, and the Dock Strike of August the same year.

Out of the seedbed of 1889 came the Labour Party and modern trade unionism, so we are told by Mr McCarthy, 'its roots were deep in the New Unionism'. My belief in the inevitability of horticultural progress begins to falter at this point! It would be better to say we started out with good quality wholemeal flour, and ended up with sliced bread, suitably packaged.

True the trade unions and their political arm, the Labour Party, have steadily grown in size throughout the 20th century, but the gain in mass has been matched by a loss of momentum. The spirit of 1889 is hardly mirrored in the current Dock Strike, not when one sees drunken dockers waving their redundancy cheques before the TV cameras. In August 1889 the dock workers in London were in many cases immigrants who had fled from the Irish famine who Ron Todd tells us 'seemed to seize history and get themselves organised'. But that spirit, that dynamism, which produced anarchist and militant syndicalist movements in Europe at the turn of the century, has been strangled in the party machines and mass bureaucratic trade unions of today.

What rescued the dockers in 1889 was the financial support sent by the Australian labour movement. This international solidarity came as the strike began to spread, draining the limited funds of the strike committee. This kind of solidarity is not easily come by today (of the £48,750 raised during the dispute, over two-thirds came from Australia). In 1942 Orwell felt obliged to ask 'who can believe in the class-conscious international proletariat after the events of the past ten years? To the British working class the massacre of their comrades in Vienna, Berlin, Madrid or wherever it might be, seemed less interesting and less important than yesterday's football match.' Judging by the events of the 1980s, I can hardly improve on Orwell's comments save to

continued overleaf

## THE GREAT DOCK STRIKE

continued from page 13

say that solidarity between workers of the same nationality in Britain is scarcely much in evidence, if they belong to different trades or industries.

Perhaps trade union solidarity will improve as a result of the impact and interaction of events in Europe in the next decade. Already there are signs in Britain that the unions may be gaining some of their lost initiative. One senior BR manager has said: 'It is the end of the era when managers could simply kick the unions about or ignore them.'

Terry McCarthy must hope so for he is an active trade unionist and a member of the Labour Party. In the main he navigates us through the 1889 strike in a workman-like manner, and he admits to imposing a pattern in his linking of the editorial text. Only in his conclusion does glorification creep in when he says 'truly, they became workers of the world, liberating themselves and their class from wretchedness and social isolation and building a new basis for trade unionism and socialism in Britain.' Language worthy of Hollywood, but I doubt if it will cheer up the sacked dockers in Tilbury this week.

Brian Bamford

### What is Communist Anarchism?

Alexander Berkman

Phoenix Press, paperback, £3

ALEXANDER BERKMAN was born in 1870 in Russia, but emigrated to the United States when he was 17, and soon joined the anarchist movement. He became famous (or infamous) for trying to assassinate Henry Clay Frick in 1892, for which he was imprisoned for 14 years — this was the subject of his book *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* (1912). He then became important as a speaker, writer, teacher and editor of *Mother Earth* and *The Blast*. He was imprisoned for opposing the First World War, and deported to Russia in 1919. He tried to work with the Bolshevik regime, but soon turned against the growing dictatorship — this was the subject of his book *The Bolshevik Myth* (1925) and his documentary collection *Letters from Russian Prisons* (1925). From 1922 until his suicide in 1936 he lived in exile in Western Europe, and it was during this period that he was commissioned by the Jewish anarchists in New York to write a general introduction to anarchism.

The result was published by Vanguard Press in New York in 1929 in two simultaneous editions — *Now and After: The ABC of Communist Anarchism* and in a smaller and cheaper form in the *Outlines of Social Philosophy* series as *What is Communist Anarchism?*. A new American edition appeared in 1937 with an introduction by Emma Goldman, and an

American paperback reprint appeared in 1972 with an introduction by Paul Avrich. Meanwhile in Britain an abridged version called *ABC of Anarchism* was published by Freedom Press in 1942, and this has appeared in several later impressions and editions, and is still available in the Anarchist Classics series with an introduction by Peter E. Newell (£2). Now an abridged version called *What is Communist Anarchism?* has been published by Phoenix Press.

The original book had a Foreword and Introduction (Now, Anarchism, and The Social Revolution), and a booklist. *ABC of Anarchism* contained everything except the first section (though the booklist was dropped when it became obsolete), and it is now a well-produced booklet of 104 pages. *What is Communist Anarchism?* contains the Foreword and Introduction and the first section, and is a well-produced booklet of 127 pages. The two booklets therefore contain between them the whole text in a form which is convenient enough for anyone who can't get the book itself.

The first section, which filled just over half the book, begins with material about present society — the class system, wage system, law and government, unemployment, war, church and school, justice, reformers and politicians, trade unions — and then concentrates on the history of socialism and especially of the Russian Revolution (which gets five chapters). The second and third sections expound anarchist communism along familiar Kropotkinian lines, with much less historical material. It is certainly possible to get Berkman's message by reading only the second half, available in *ABC of Anarchism*, but it is certainly preferable also to read the first half, available in *What is Communist Anarchism?*. The two booklets, therefore, complement rather than compete with each other — *ABC of Anarchism* has the advantage of Peter Newell's introduction and a lower price, but the disadvantage of some minor bibliographical errors. (Both versions have been reset with a few alterations to the original text.)

Berkman's other books are still valuable and readable classics. What about this one? George Woodcock has described it as 'a minor classic of libertarian literature'. Peter Newell's 1971 Introduction described it as 'one of the best introductions to the ideas of anarchism, written from the communist-anarchist viewpoint, in the English language'. Paul Avrich's 1972 Introduction described it as 'a classic, ranking with Kropotkin's *Conquest of Bread* as the clearest exposition of communist anarchism in English or any other language'. The Phoenix Press booklet has no Introduction, but the blurb describes it as 'a key text in the development of anarchist ideas', which 'to a

large extent still provides an introduction to the anarchist position', and whose value 'lies not in originality but in clarity' — but it adds that the book 'is seriously defective in several respects', especially for 'Berkman's belief in the imminence of revolution heralding a free society' which 'has been shown to be wrong by the last sixty years', and it concludes that 'a new anarchist primer is needed, one that will take account of recent developments and omit the errors of the past'.

Until that much-needed work is published — whether by Phoenix Press or by Freedom Press, or by someone else — here are the two halves of Berkman's classic text of sixty years ago. How does it read today? His intention was to rescue anarchism once and for all from the distortions of ignorance and prejudice, and also to take account of the lessons of the Russian Revolution which he had seen for himself. His approach was to write directly and simply for the workers of Anglo-Saxon countries, as distinct either from intellectuals or from workers of other countries who saw themselves as part of a revolutionary tradition. The intention is still valid enough, but it is not certain that the approach makes sense any more. Unfortunately Berkman adopted a tone which is so simple that it tends to alternate between being rhetorical and being merely banal, and his trick of arguing points with an imaginary reader now seems irritating rather than illuminating.

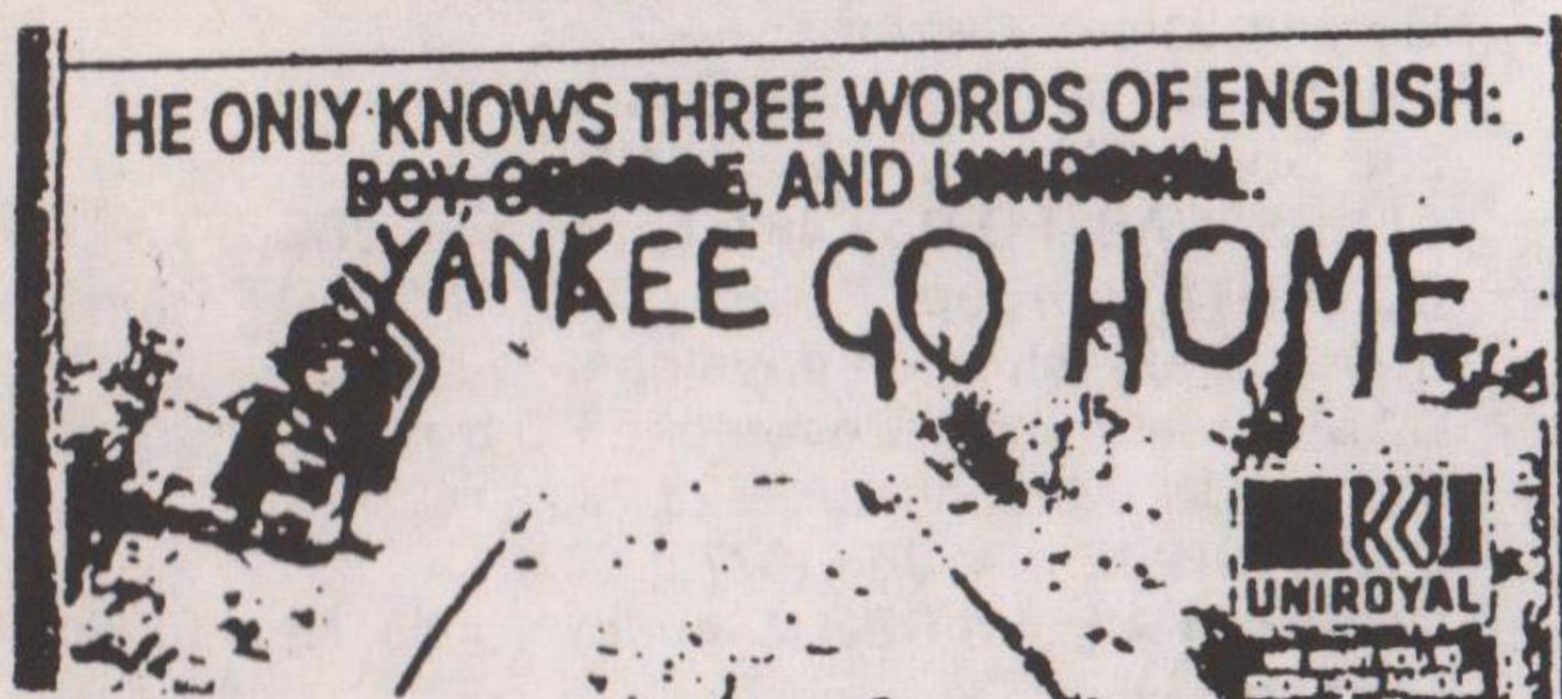
Another problem is that Berkman doesn't really grapple with some of the crucial difficulties of anarchism, even those in which he had particular experience or interest — such as the use of violence (both he and Emma Goldman eventually abandoned their belief in the use of individual violence, but they never faced the issue of collective violence), the danger of revolution provoking counter-revolution (neither he nor Emma Goldman, nor indeed most communist-anarchists, ever fully recognised this issue), or the organisation of the anarchist movement (both he and Emma Goldman, and indeed almost all anarchists, rejected the Platform of Arshinov and Makhno during the late 1920s, but again never fully confronted the issue).

Another problem is that Berkman dismissed 'non-communist anarchists — individualists, mutualists, pacifists — too confidently in a couple of pages, and that anarchist communists and anarcho-syndicalists (and class war and revolutionary anarchists in general) must take more account of the insights of other varieties of libertarian if they are going to make any progress with the difficulties facing us all.

A final problem is that after more than sixty years the book is inevitably out of date in many ways — most of the exam-

ples come from America or Russia in the early years of the century. It doesn't take account of the Spanish Revolution (which began just after Berkman's death), or of the World War and all the other wars, the revolutions and counter-revolutions, the reforms and reactions which have happened since then. So the conclusion must be that Berkman's last book should be read by all serious anarchists, but that it will have much less appeal for non-anarchists, and that a replacement would indeed be welcome.

NW



**Cabaret 1980-88: an anthology of political buffoonery**

compiled by *Christiana X*

Christiana X, Box JAG, 52 Call Lane, Leeds 1, £1.50.

SUPPOSE you want to bring public pressure on the Co-op to stop stocking South African goods. One way would be to put out an angry leaflet saying 'Boycott the racist Co-op', but a more effective way would be to put out a leaflet with a Co-op logo and the heading 'Once again the Co-op leads the way', announcing that the Co-op has decided to stop selling South African goods and will mark the decision by selling off all remaining stocks of South African goods at half the marked price at such-and-such a time. Make it sound authentic — imagine you are the Co-op's own advertising writer, with a brief to get as much sales value as possible from the event.

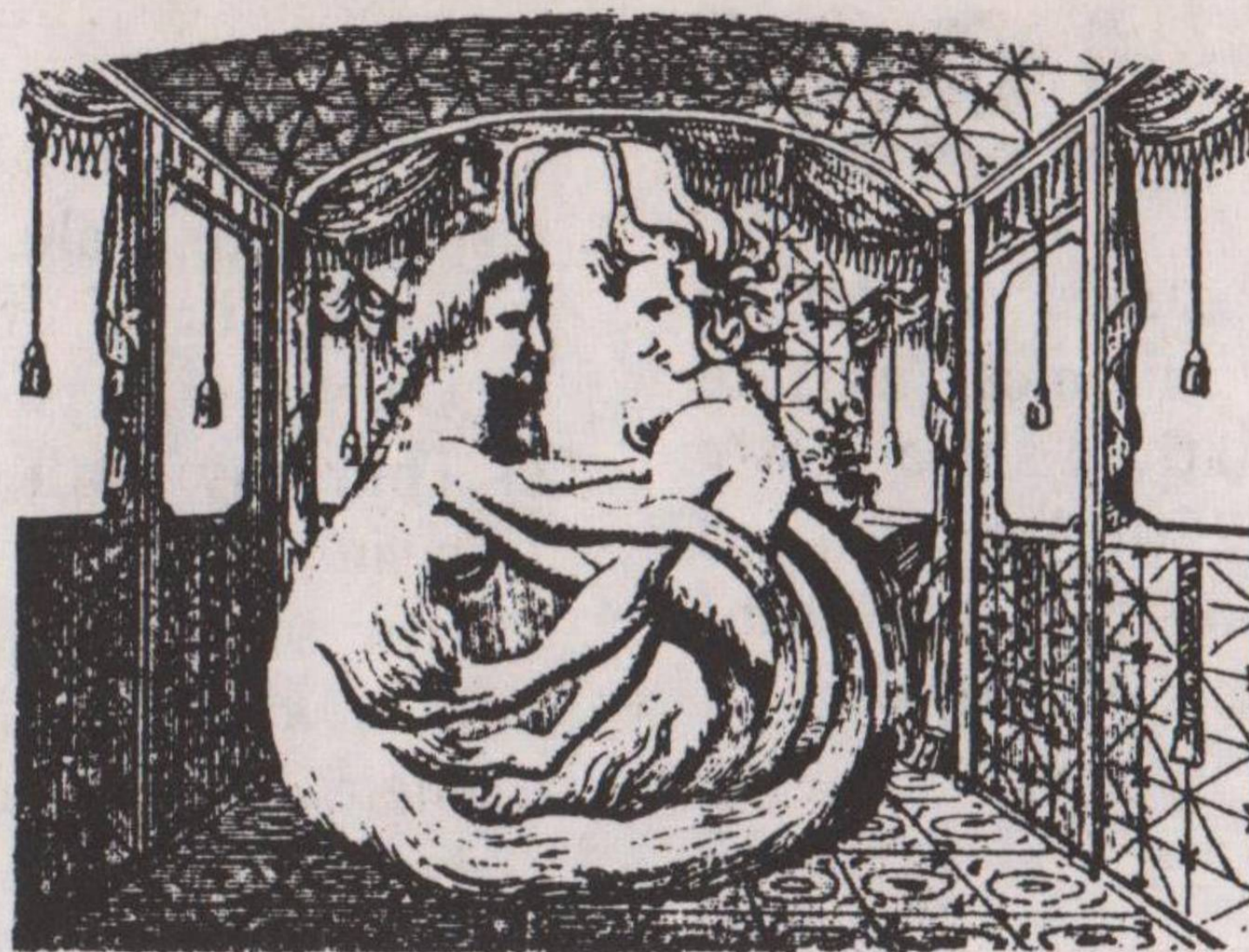
The text of just such a leaflet, used in Nottingham in September 1985, is among many hoaxes, street theatre happenings, graffiti, and other jokes included in this excellent compilation. There are also a few laughable news items, such as when Roy Mason MP gave his occupation as 'MP' on an official form, and was taken for a Military Policeman — by the electricity board in his own constituency.

This pamphlet is full of laughs, and full of ideas for getting people to think by disrupting their fields of reference. It is dedicated to the late Larry Law and clearly inspired by his *Buffo*. Some items he collected for an unpublished edition of *Buffo* are included. If the comparative value of things reviewed in *Freedom* were reflected in the comparative length of reviews, this review of a 48-page pamphlet would have gone on for two or three pages.

The compiler invites items for future editions of the book.

DR

# Leonora Carrington



*Collage by Debra Taub*

**The House of Fear (Notes from Down Below)**

*Leonora Carrington*

Virago £10.99

**The Seventh Horse and other tales**

*Leonora Carrington*

Virago £4.99

TWO new collections of short stories and essays by one of the surrealist movement's most original and long-standing members, some of the pieces being published in English for the first time and many for the first time anywhere.

*The House of Fear* opens with the 1937 story of the same name and continues with classic stories from the 'Oval Lady' series, including 'The Debutante' in which a hyena becomes the narrator's friend and takes her place at her 'coming out' dance. 'Little Francis', an uneasy autobiographical novella, chronicles the story of the menage a trois between Leonora, Max Ernst and Marie-Berthe Aurenche, his wife at the time. Leonora had eloped with Max Ernst when she was 19 and he was 46 (a difference of 27 years, not 40 years as Marina Warner states in her otherwise entertaining introductions to both books). Her relationship with Ernst was to have a lasting effect on her both in terms of work — they gave each other inspiration and many motifs appear in each others works at the time they were together — and personally — the mental breakdown she suffered is well chronicled in 'Down Below'. One of the more interesting aspects of this period was Leonora's famous culinary diversions: 'She might cook an omelette with hair cut from the head of a guest while he slept and serve it to him, or dye sago black by cooking it in squid's ink and dish it up with cracked ice and lemon as caviare for a collector paying a call'.

'Down Below' and a postscript of 1987 complete the first volume. In 1939 when Ernst was arrested in France as an enemy alien, she worked for and secured

his release. The outbreak of the Second World War and Ernst's second imprisonment proved too much for Leonora and her subsequent descent into madness is chronicled in 'Down Below'. She was incarcerated in an asylum in Madrid which appears to have been run by Jesuits left over from the Spanish Inquisition, and the despatch by submarine in 1940 of her former nanny Mary Kavanagh to rescue her makes the whole episode all the more unreal. The first English translation of 'Down Below' appeared in the American surrealist journal *VVV* (no 4, 1944) but the best version is that published by Black Swan of Chicago, originally in 1972 but more recently in 1983 with collages by Debra Taub, a member of the surrealist group in Chicago where Leonora is now based and maintains regular contact.

*The Seventh Horse* is the more interesting volume for the sheer revelations it provides. Most of the stories — but in particular the classics like 'White Rabbits' or the short version of 'The Stone Door' — put her in the realm of English fantasy writers like Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear.

Early influences which fed an already fertile mind included childhood visits to the zoo where she saw the 'wild beasts and animals'. she used to dream about, Irish faery lore and Edwardian nursery moralities, such as this little gem from Harry Graham:

Little Francis home from school  
Swung the baby by his tool.  
Mother screamed, Auntie shuddered,  
Father muttered, 'I'll be buggered!'  
Nanny said, 'Naughty Francis!  
You've ruined Baby's future chances.'

Apparently young Leonora was too much for the nuns and the finishing school she was sent to, definitely not the behaviour that was expected of the daughter of a very wealthy industrialist family. Nor was she going to live the life of 'prosperous tedium' she was destined for.

Francis Wright

# Porton Down Peace Camp 1989

TEMPORARY peace camps at Porton Down have publicised chemical warfare and non-violent alternatives since 1986. This year is on 20th-25th August, sited on the A30 verge opposite the Pheasant Hotel Gate, six miles north-east of Salisbury.

## Aims

- To oppose Iraq's continuing genocidal chemical war against the Kurds (1) and support the Kurdish Relief Agency by sponsored fund-raising.
- To support the forthcoming Chemical Weapons Convention banning poison stockpiles and oppose US attempts to subvert it by chemical rearmament (2).
- To oppose Porton's involvement in the US binary programme and support its conversion to peaceful purposes that will ensure long-term socially useful employment for local people.
- To oppose Porton's useless vivisection (3) and support humane alternative research.

## Events

On **Sunday 20th August** the camp will start with a die-in at 3pm in Salisbury Market Square followed by a motorcade and first leg of the short sponsored walk to dramatise the flight of the Kurds and establish camp.

On **Monday 21st August** the second leg of the short sponsored walk will be across Porton Down to Pains Wessex-Schermuly where they will meet a motorcade for a vigil outside this Porton-backed CS Manufacturer from 8am onwards. There will be an open day at camp where press and public can chat with peace campers and join in their workshops during the day and music during the evening.

On **Tuesday 22nd August** there will be mass leafletting, mock trial and sponsored pillorying of Saddam Hussain of Iraq in Salisbury Market.

On **Wednesday 23rd August** the long

sponsored walk will set out for a round-tour of the perimeter of Porton Down.

On **Thursday 24th August** the Reverend David Penney will hold an inter-faith service at the peace camp and there will be a vigil at Allington Farm, where Porton animals are bred for vivisection.

On **Friday 25th August** the camp will end with bulb-planting along the verge where we have been for the last six days - ready for next year . . . !

## Can you come?

The camp will have communal food, womens' space, a creche and sanitation available, BUT please remember to bring your own tent, food, bulbs, musical instruments, etc., along and remember that you will be camping alongside the A30 - a very busy road. If you are interested in taking part in the short or long sponsored walks, write to us for your sponsorship form right away.

## And if you can't . . .

Don't worry, because we want this week to raise chemical weapons issues across the country - and that's something you can do best locally. Sponsor someone else on the walks or organise your own. Organise your own street theatre, displays (CND should have the materials), or leafletting (we can send you the leaflets) over 20th-25th August.

## References

1. News Chronology in *Chemical Weapons Convention Bulletin*, issue no 4, May 1989: Federation of American Scientists Fund, pages 3-14.
2. *ibid.*
3. *The Military Abuse of Animals*, 1987: British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, pages 10-15.

Contact: PDPC89, c/o Box ZZ,  
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**DAM** Direct Action Movement, PO Box 19, Wythenshaw PDO, Manchester M22 7JJ  
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**DURHAM** A's, c/o DSU, Dunelm House, New Elvet, Durham  
**EDINBURGH** Counter-Information, 11 Forth St  
**ESSEX** Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex  
**FAP** Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists, c/o John Hill, 28b Clifton Road, Ilford, Essex  
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**WORCESTER** College of HE Anarchists, c/o SU, WCHE, Henwick Grove, Worcester

Our contacts list, often ripped off, is the best way to get your existence known to the movement. We need information on groups which have ceased to function.