

anarchist fortnightly

Freedom

Vol. 55 No. 8

16 APRIL 1994

FIFTY PENCE

"The power to command and the weakness to obey are the essence of government and the quintessence of slavery."

Charles Sprading

POLITICIANS, THE MEDIA, THE EXPERTS ARE ALL ENGAGED IN BRAINWASHING THE PUBLIC

For anarchists, to observe the Tory politicians tearing each others' reputations to ribbons egged on by the millionaire press is welcome entertainment. It certainly won't persuade us to join the Labour bandwagon.

The anti-Major campaign, which may well succeed if the Tories lose massively at the forthcoming local and European elections in May and June respectively (not to mention the outstanding parliamentary by-elections), will simply mean a

different face emerging from No 10, a new 'leader' to be built up by the media for mass consumption by the gullible public. But nothing will change with a change of parrots. Not even if the parrot is Labour's Mr Smith or the Liberal's Paddy Ashdown.

What needs to be changed, indeed *abolished*, is the capitalist system and neither the political parties, and least of all the millionaire press, would ever dream of doing so,

assuming the politicians could legislate for its abolition. In theory they could, but more than ever capitalism is now an international mafia which can only be destroyed by its victims and those of us who, while enjoying the material comforts of a civilised existence, cannot accept the extremes of poverty and wealth which such a system fosters.

Even the church leaders in this country are expressing their 'concern' at the widening gap between the least well-off people in society and the rest. The Archbishop of Canterbury in his addled Easter-egg sermon for the Tory backwoodsmen (and ladies!) said that "a very substantial minority are cut off from a reasonable share of opportunities, hope, status and prosperity". And he concluded that Christians could "never rest content with such a state of affairs".*

HEALTH SERVICE LOSES TEETH

Dentistry is no longer available from the National Health Service, except for children and those receiving certain classes of benefit. The rest of us have to pay for private dentistry.

Eye tests have ceased to be free, and the charge for prescriptions is now so high that honest pharmacists advise NHS customers to buy many prescriptions privately, as it is cheaper. 'Market forces' have been

introduced into the hospitals service, with a lot of blather about 'patient choice' and the real effect of handing the service over to a well-paid, self-serving bureaucracy to the detriment of patient care.

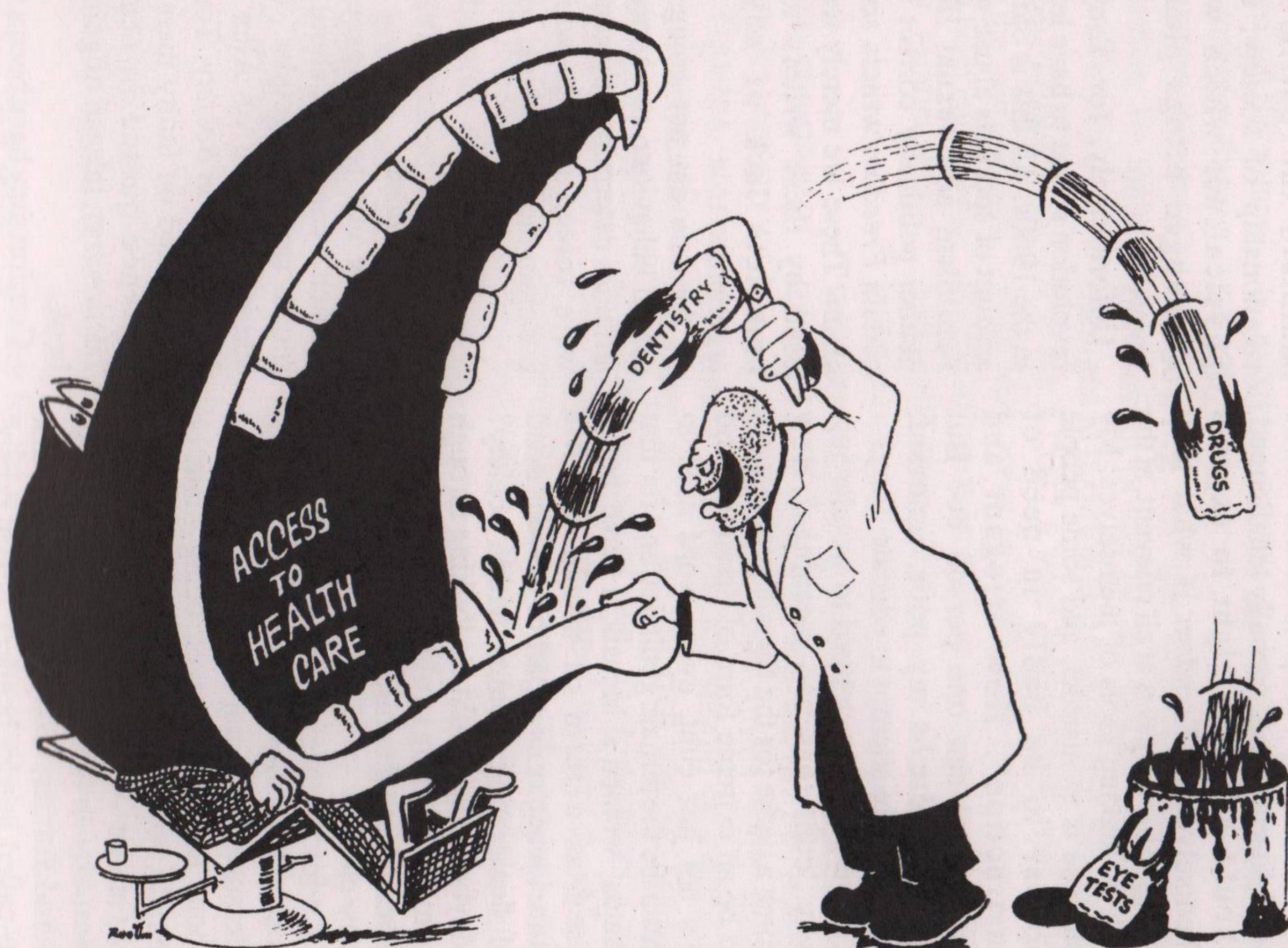
Ministry of Health statistics, released on 8th March, show that between 1990, when 'market forces' were introduced, and 1994 the number of managers increased by 14,387, while the number of nurses

Everything in our world is relative, including poverty ... and wealth! For instance, Mrs Shepherd, Minister of Agriculture, uttered some very
(continued on page 2)

decreased by 27,235. Pay rises for health service staff are limited by government edict to the rate of inflation or below, but managers have the option of becoming 'Chief Executives' of 'independent' hospital trusts, technically taking themselves out of NHS employment so that they can award themselves whatever pay increases the market will carry.

Traditionally, nobody expected to make big money out of the public health service. Before and since the NHS, people went into the job because they enjoyed the idea of helping and caring for people. This is still the attitude of most health service workers, but the 'market forces' bureaucracy has made the caring attitude difficult to sustain, and morale throughout the caring professions is at a low ebb.

In a recent quarrel between the Chief Executive of Luton and Dunstable Hospital Trust and a physician, a full-time trade union officer acted as negotiator, shuttling
(continued on page 3)



BRAINWASHING THE PUBLIC

(continued from page 1)

profound reflections on the Archbishop's references to "extremes of poverty and wealth". For the lady:

"... poverty has been redefined in terms of having things which 25 years ago they would have been astonished to have'. being without a car if you live in the city does not mean you are poor, she said, adding 'Not having prospects is poverty, but far more are going into training.'" (The Independent, 4th April 1994)

As Mrs Shepherd must know, what is lacking are jobs not training. And as Minister of Agriculture she has certainly been told by her friends in the supermarkets that in this country we could produce some £5,000 million worth of food that is now being imported each year. And at the same time Mrs Shepherd and the Tory mafia (government) are involved in the set-aside racket whereby some million acres of good arable land in this country is now growing weeds and the farmers involved in the compulsory racket are getting nearly £1,000 million to do nothing. And last but not least, farm workers are out of jobs. The only concern of Mrs Shepherd and her social security officials is that those unemployed farm workers are making a quid or two on the side and not declaring their ill-gotten gains!

Elsewhere in this issue we are producing an interim list of what the 'top people' get when for some reason or other in the capitalist jungle warfare in the boardrooms they too get the boot ... but accompanied by golden handshakes. The same does not apply for their employees on the bottom rung of the capitalist ladder. These good Christians really make you sick the moment they open their mouths to talk about anything other than shares, profits, the scrounging poor, the moonlighters and so on.

One cannot resist quoting two Tory worthies. John Watts MP is Tory Chairman of the Commons Select Committee on Treasury Affairs and suggested to the Archbishop that "it would be far better if he concentrated on giving a moral lead". Presumably Mr Watts considers that the "widening gap between the least well-off people and the rest" has nothing to do with morality in a so-called civilised society? Unto the rich, etc!

And if anybody doubts that what we need is a social revolution, Mr Watts gives one the excuse when he goes on to say that the Archbishop:

"... seems to think you make the poor better off by making the rich poorer."

And the other Tory, David Shaw, who is described as "a vice-chairman of the Tory backbench finance committee", told the prelate that:

"... he has got to recognise that people at the

* Needless to say, two government ministers (both women incidentally), one Ann Widdecombe, Under-Secretary of State for Employment, obviously hostile since she went Catholic over ordination of women, not only said that his statistics "were wrong" but that she was "grateful" that she was "in Westminster Cathedral hearing the Easter message instead of at Canterbury hearing a party political broadcast". Mrs Gillian Shepherd, the aggressive Minister of Agriculture but formerly Secretary of State for Employment (how they became experts overnight baffles this writer!), maintained that the Archbishop was out of date with his statistics; nevertheless agreed that "there has been a growth" in the long-term unemployed. She also admitted that people "are going in and out of employment in a way they didn't expect". Like Ministers? Like Prime Ministers?

bottom have more cars than they did in 1979, more central heating, more telephones."

Can you, dear reader, see the four million unemployed in this country and their families going off for the day to the seaside in their cars and ordering their fish dinners on their mobile phones, while their residences are kept warm by the central heating welcoming them and the fresh fish on their return? What do these Watts and Shaws know about the real poverty that is not only endemic in this country but in all the so-called 'advanced industrial nations' of Europe? And we are not talking of the starvation poverty of many countries in the third world, because only when the prosperous Western world will have solved its problems of gross inequalities between the rich and the poor can it presume to give advice to others. We are far from that situation in the capitalist Western world. Our rulers are not the governments, they are the parrots of the multinationals and transnationals, the pensions funds, the banks and the insurance mafia.

Let us give an example of the collusion of government with capital. To their credit, the Labour government of 1974 controlled the export of capital. The Thatcher government that took over in 1979 immediately released the export of capital. And in the first year £17,000 million was invested where it was considered it would make more money for the investors. And fifteen years later, according to Will Hutton (The Guardian, 4th April):

"British institutional investors have invested £106,000 million overseas over the past five years, nearly half of that during the past year alone" (our italics).

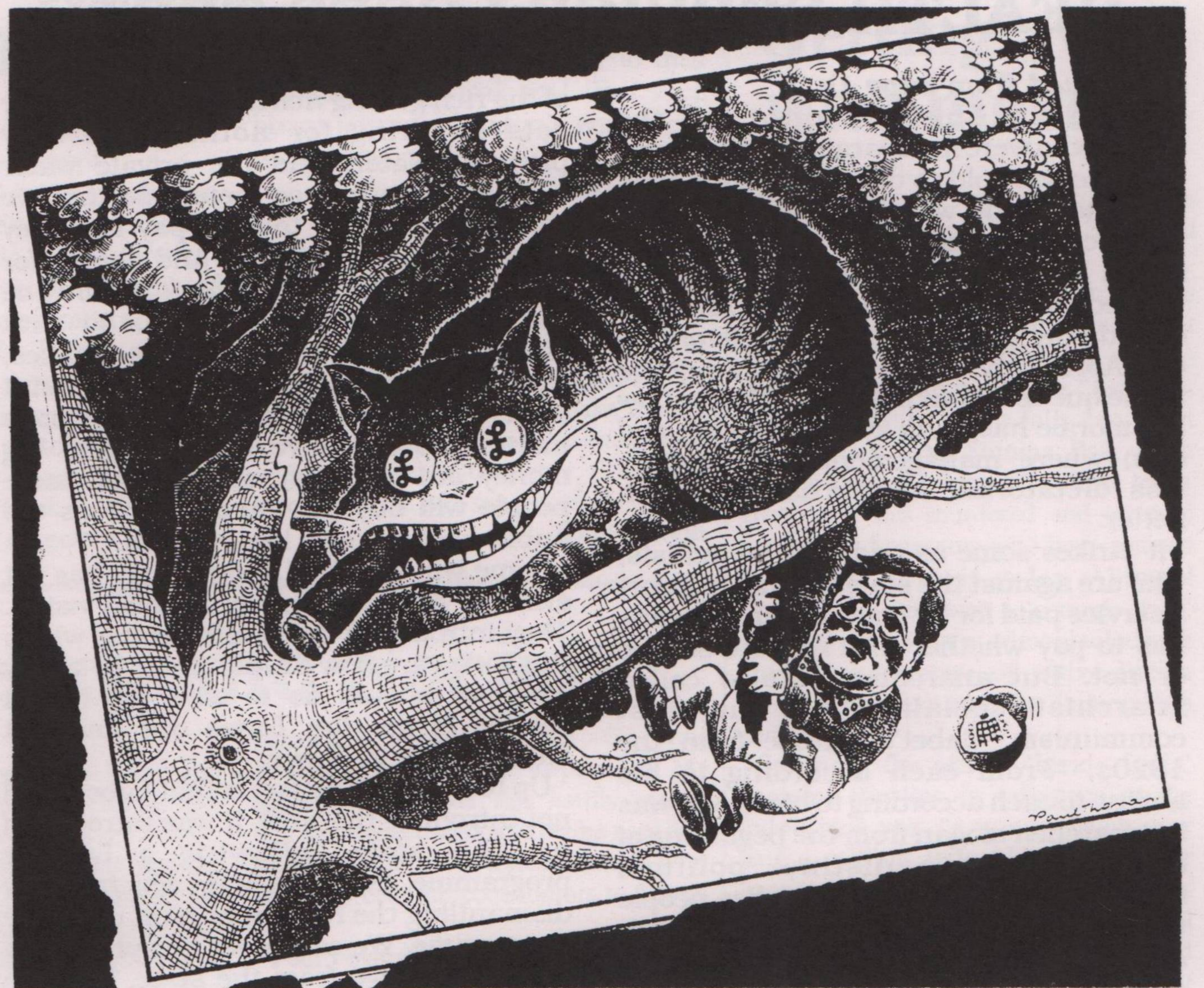
So much for investing in industry in Britain with a view to solving some of the unemployment problem. The government needs to balance the books and obviously is taking the unpopular decisions now halfway through its term of office in the hope that by the time the next General Election comes along it can make sizeable tax cuts which will affect a sufficiently large minority of voters to return them to office.

This alas is the political picture which is presented to the community as democracy, and equally sadly we have to report that the overwhelming majority - 70% - actually cast their votes for this bunch of crooks. Every citizen we can persuade not to vote represents a step forward to the day when enough people will not only be disgusted by the antics of the parliamentarians but will also be convincing themselves that we, the ordinary, sane people of this country, wanting no more than to be free to earn their livings by their efforts and to enjoy the leisure that technology, if used for the public good and not for profit, could ensure for everybody the basic necessities of life, without which there can be no freedom of the mind, no fantasies nor generosity. And life without them is slavery. And capitalism is wage slavery and exploitation!

A Million Waiting for Treatment

David Blunkett, Labour's shadow health secretary, succeeded in getting from the government figures as to the bed availability in NHS hospitals, showing that more than a third of NHS hospital beds had been closed since 1981. There were 352,000 beds available in 1981, 240,000 in 1991-92, and the latest figures for 1992-93 were 231,363, representing 10,000 closures in the past year.

"Mr Blunkett said the figures had to be seen in the context of hospital waiting lists of over a million and growing. "These figures confirm what we all suspected: the NHS is slowly being whittled away. We now know why patients have to wait so long for treatment or on trolleys in hospital corridors'" (Guardian)



From the Independent on Sunday, 6th March 1994

The Golden Handshake Industry

An excellent feature in The Guardian supplement last December posed the question on the front page:

"Q: What's the difference between Tanzania and Goldman Sachs?"

and provided the answer:

"A: One is an African country that makes \$2.2 billion a year and shares is among 25 million people. The other is an investment bank that makes \$2.6 billion ... and shares most of it between 161 people.

And in large type below this shattering revelation is the other question:

"FAIR ENOUGH?"

And on the inside page by way of introduction it surely says all that needs to be said about the capitalist stranglehold on any kind of reformist policies:

"How can a bank that generates as much wealth as an entire country keep a profile so low as to be almost invisible? Insiders and outsiders alike insist on remaining anonymous when discussing its affairs. The press can't even get in the door. Tales of employees' fanaticism are common currency in City wine bars. Yet there are rich rewards for those prepared to give themselves to The Firm. How about a \$1 million Christmas bonus, for instance. Ian Katz unravels the highly secretive - and extremely lucrative - world of Goldman Sachs.

The Independent on Sunday (6th March) in a fighting editorial on "thin excuses for fat cats" points out that:

"One of the guiding principles of Britain's Tory governments since 1979 has been that top people should be well-rewarded. If incentives were sufficient, executives would fly high and create wealth, the argument ran. Their rewards might seem excessive and unfair to ordinary people but they, too, would benefit - in the famous phrase, wealth would 'trickle down'."

This theory goes back well before 1979 and it has never worked, apart from the fact that it implies that the demands of the rich, like Maxwell with his yacht and others with similar lifestyles require all kinds of hangers on. Which reminds us that the 'top people' today are not just the Goldman Sachs and the Royal upstarts but also the top 'sportsmen' who not only have their managers, and accountants of course to fiddle the books (within the law!), but they have almost a Royal retinue that follows them around the world. When Boris Becker, who lives in (tax) exile, returned to Stuttgart for the tournament he was acclaimed as the 'returning king' by the capacity crowd and, according to John Roberts for The Independent (16th February):

"... with a bigger entourage that before: father,

mother, wife, baby, babysitter, coach, assistant coach, physio, agent, bag carrier."

All for a few hours hitting a ball around, providing entertainment for sure, but the Beckers of our television age are millionaires! A little bit filters through to the baby minders and the bag carriers, etc. But as the Independent on Sunday had to recognise, this 'trickle down' theory:

"We know now that this was piffle. Pay packages of £500,000 a year upwards have become commonplace for company directors, yet a fifth of the population is worse off than it was fifteen years ago. Far from trickling down, the money has been swilling around in the boardroom trough. The beneficiaries are well known. Peter Wood, chief executive of Direct Line, the insurance company (£18.2 million); Lord Hanson, chairman of Hanson plc (£1.3 million last year); Bob Bauman, chief executive of SmithKline Beecham (£2.1 million); Michael Green, chairman of Carlton Communications (£630,000); Martin Taylor, new chief executive of Barclays Bank (£737,000); Lord Young, former Tory minister and now chairman of Cable and Wireless (£863,000); Sir Ian MacLaurin, head of Tesco (£967,000). As one current case shows, even the chief executive of a quite small company can now expect at least £225,000, including bonus, even though the business has plunged, in a few months, from break-even to heavy loss."

And if we had the space we would quote the whole of this editorial which exposes in detail the capitalist racket. For instance:

"The simple reason - and the whole secret of the top executives merry-go-round - is that company directors award pay rises to each other. The only significant check is from non-executive directors but they are usually executives of other companies who have every interest in ensuring that their equivalents are well rewarded."

Unfortunately the Independent on Sunday, like The Guardian and even The New Statesman, believes that the politicians could run "a successful capitalist country" of only they found ways "to curtail the freedoms so widely abused in company boardrooms".

Surely our capitalist country is very successful ... for at least the top 10%. How do these apparent do-gooders like The Independent and The Guardian writers imagine that the capitalist system can benefit all the people who contribute by their labour to the nation's prosperity if not by a social revolution which would start by blowing up (literally) the City of London and all its equivalents in the Western world. But you will have to wait a long time before the serious press will face up to the realities of capitalism.

CORRECTION

For the benefit of our city-dwelling readers, the NFU is the National Farmers Union and not the 'National Union of Farmworkers' which crept into the article in Freedom (2nd April) on 'Who are the real wealth producers?', thereby making nonsense of the first sentence in the second paragraph.

HEALTH SERVICE LOSES TEETH

(continued from page 1)

between the Chief Executive and the doctor who were in separate rooms. At one point he was told to offer the doctor early retirement, and was not surprised when the doctor jumped at the chance. "If you asked anybody in this hospital who wanted to take early retirement to stand outside my office," he told *The Guardian* (1st April), "the whole hospital would be in the queue within minutes". That is how low morale has sunk at one hospital, and even where management attitudes are less dictatorial, morale is not much better.

It strikes some as odd that anarchists, who are against the state, should support a service paid for by taxes which everyone has to pay whether they use the service or not. But anarchism is also called anarchist socialism or anarchist communism. Cabet's phrase from the 1820s, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need," was an anarchist slogan from the beginning of anarchism as a distinct political movement, and the NHS supplies people with services according to need. Anarchists have always supported free access to medical services, free access to libraries and museums, free access to water supplies. The vision of anarchist society involves free access to all necessities, supplied by the same workers who supply such things now, who would of course have all their needs met by the same system.

Tories have an alternative vision: a society where nothing stands in the way

of the rich getting richer, and nobody poor gets anything for nothing. So they privatise water, and the private water companies introduce meters so that we get only the water that we pay for. They starve libraries of funds, and charge for museum entrance. They introduce market forces to the NHS, so that although it is still paid for out of taxes, executives can make big money out of it (well why not? executives of weapons manufacturers have always made big money out of taxes), and so that more people will buy private medicine as the public sector grows less efficient.

Some will say the Labour Party has yet another vision, a broadly socialist vision. They introduced the health service which the Tories are now dismantling. So surely what we should do to save the health service is get the Tories out and put Labour back in power.

Up to a point. The fact is that Labour did not introduce the NHS. It was introduced by the state, following a Labour programme, the same state which is now dismantling the NHS in pursuit of a Tory programme. We can never be sure of any good we receive from the state, because the state can change its mind and take it back.

The way to make the health service secure is to get rid of the state and the market system so that health service workers, whose programme is to care for people and relieve their illnesses, can run the service according to their own programme.

A day at the circus

We live in interesting times. Every passing day confirms the anarchist view of the circus of British government as now but a pathetic freak show. Like all such degrading displays, government should be consigned to the historic dustbin. Today, the institutional attitudes of our peculiar island race are being shown for what they are, outlandish and irrelevant, certainly in comparison with those of more egalitarian societies.

Comrades, although I may appear to be saying that other governments might be better, this is not so. The illustrations of utter inanity given below simply show how stupid government can become, how the smug assumption of power can corrupt beyond redemption. Other governments are doubtless stupid in their own ways, and unacceptable because they have authority which they inflict upon individuals and communities. While we are stuck with ours we might as well enjoy their antics.

They seem to be suffering from a sort of reality shock. I believe there are always good biological analogies for human behaviour; the British establishment is currently acting as if the stone which protected it has been suddenly lifted. The unaccustomed light causes much scurry and squirm; they knowing not what to do (except maintain positions under stones). They are totally unfitted to the brighter light of the twentieth century.

Pick of the entertainment must be the Scott and Baxendale Show. Our politicians confirmed as liars without conscience, prepared to let 'innocent' arms manufacturers go to jail. But they are more upset that people seem to think they should care about who goes to prison to protect their dishonest ways. They never used to care too much about who was hung, as long as it was an example to the rest. In the good old days the various Three, Four and Fives would have been topped and justice done. None of this expensive appeal nonsense that so upsets our poor policepersons.

Of course, picking Judge Scott was clearly an error. John Major has no doubt questioned the advice on which the prying and probably non-cricketing Judge was appointed. A man who bicycles to work, walks his dog on a lead and does not mind being seen on television

with his muslim son in full fancy dress might, with hindsight, not be good with a whitewash brush. As for co-inquisitor Preseley Baxendale ... obviously nobody mentioned Pres was a woman.

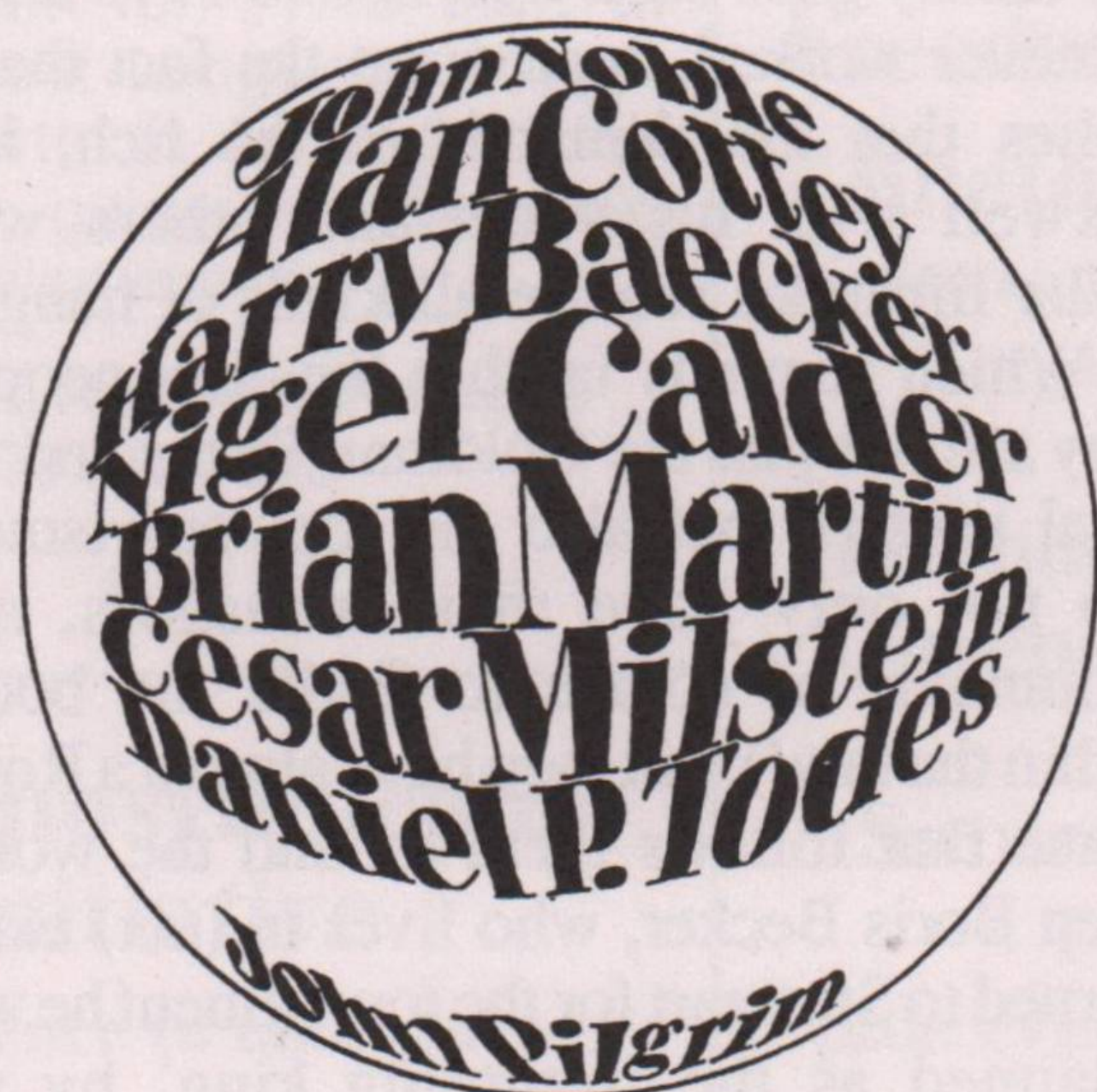
The Scott-Baxendale show also gets my vote for Most Cretinous Appearance. The staggering performance of the Attorney General, Sir Nicholas 'Don't read 'em - just sign' Lyell, will take some beating. His act was marked by confusion of the traditional 'what I said was that I said what I said, but what I meant was ...' variety. But, taken as a whole, this only served to up his moron marks.

Our circus us now part of the Eurodizzy Empire, and this is where the real action is. Our parochial freak show is finding it difficult to keep up; try as they do, their efforts only result in bigger and better prat falls. (What else can prats do?) Signing up to Eurodizzy has resulted in a permanent, and possible fatal, case of *spirella crutchosis* (twisted knickers). The obvious discomfort on Douglas Hurd's

Raven 24

on

Science - 1



96 pages

£3.00 (post free anywhere)

It's now official - in the recession top 10% got richer, poor 50% got poorer

'It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good' is, it seems to this writer at least, a saying that only has reality in the unequal, competitive, bugger-your-neighbour society in which we live today.

A perfect example came in a parliamentary reply by Stephen Dorrell, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, with regard to incomes during the first two years of the recession (between 1989 and 1991). And according to these official figures supplied by Mr Dorrell:

"... the majority of Britain's highest earners have profited from the recession while the average cash income of the poorest in work has been cut ... most of the top 1% have seen their salaries leap." (*Guardian*, 6th April)

The Labour MP Alan Milburn, chairman of the Labour's backbench treasury committee, said that the figures were conclusive proof that the Tories are governing in the interests of the few at the expense of the many. One could ask: *when have they not?* Come to that, as Peter Townsend has pointed out so often, even under Labour governments the rich have got richer and the poor poorer. Until the wage slaves of the world realise that no government will or can get rid of the entrenched money system and are prepared to use *their numbers and their power as the real wealth producers to fight them* nothing will change.

Mr Milburn provides interesting figures derived from the information supplied by the government.

The top 1% (262,000 super-rich) saw their

incomes (that is their declared incomes, softened by top accountants and exclusive of all the perks*) rise from £36,500 in 1980 to £129,365 in 1993, an increase of about £94,000. The bottom 50% (that is 13 million taxpayers) saw their incomes rise from £3,780 in 1980 to £7,794 in 1993, an increase of £4,070.

Allowing for the depreciation of the purchasing power of the pound sterling and changes in taxation and national insurance, the 1% are £7,047 a year *better off in real terms than they were in 1980, that is £150 a week better off and the 50% at the bottom are £523 worse off, that is £10 a week*. But that's £10 a week worse off on their £150 a week average incomes compared with the 1% top earners extra £150 a week on their £2,487 per week!

And Mr Milburn concludes with more interesting figures which should be hurled at the smug faces of the idle rich who are always complaining about the 'lazy workers', the 'moonlighters', or the 'phoney disabled' getting away with an extra quid or two, while they live off the fat of the land and produce fuck all!

"For the first time the 2,620,000 taxpayers in the top 10% of income earners - those earning more than £45,000 a year - are taking a bigger slice of the UK's income than the 13.1 million in the bottom half of the earnings scale."

* Douglas Brown, the Labour shadow chancellor, declares that if his party is elected he will axe the perks and reckons it will produce extra billions of pounds for the Exchequer. We shall see!

face confirms my diagnosis. His particular affliction seems to be caused by the fact that the British government is just not used to democracy. Shock horror, these Euroforeigners treat it as a matter of principle.

To hear Ministers complain at the outrageous fact that 60% of the EU population, through their elected representatives, can 'inflict' their views on the 40% minority, might lead one to believe that our government spoke on behalf of an overwhelming percentage of the popular vote in their own country. They know they don't. The trouble is they think that in Europe the 40% should inflict itself on the rest, exactly as they do at home. Er, providing of course the 40% includes Britain.

Sex is always popular in the circus. It is in such matters that a highly contagious *spirella crutchosis* makes itself most painfully felt by combining with the old politician's disease, *terminal cranial rectosis*. Representing a constituency cannot be easy with your head stuffed up your arse and your knickers in a twist. Our freaks insist on trying, although talking sense as well is clearly an impossibility.

Interesting recent examples involved John 'I was flogged' Patten complaining that the sex education offered at a Leeds school 'was explicit'. Another was Our Own Fluid Druid, Sir Wyn (known as 'Sewin' after the salmon trout of our Welsh rivers) Roberts, on the same tack. Here is your starter for ten, John and Sewin: 'How can you have sex education without being explicit about sex?' Birds and Bees is not an acceptable answer - unless you wish to play the back to basics Joker.

The thing about these sexual side-shows is that they often have exactly the opposite effect the performers intend. Thanks to John and Sewin, every child in the country is now asking 'What is oral sex, mummy?' and 'Are threesomes on the national curriculum, miss?'

Not to be left out, Dr Brian 'I'm a Looney' Mawhinny announced the banning of a sex education booklet. Shame the Health Education Authority had printed 15,000 copies. (A good remainder deal for Freedom

Bookshop?) The booklet was felt to be 'smutty and pornographic'. Apparently it contained details of sexual behaviour and contraception - what, really? Well, with the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Europe, we don't want that sort of dangerous nonsense given to our innocent and pure young persons do we?

It is of course all too easy to mock those who act in these peculiar ways. That so many are Sirs and Lords tells us we are part of a society long past its guillotine-by date. The Norman rump of the British establishment has endured, from 1066 and all that, until the present generation. Torn, as little boys, from mothers or nurses. Threatened with Victorian morality which made every feeling a matter of guilt. Cast together into life-long relationships based on wanking at public schools. Confused between sex and violence in their deformative years by habitual thrashings. One wonders, not at their freakish behaviour, but that the venter of sanity lasts so well.

Little wonder that anything to do with normal sexual behaviour throws them into a tizzy. As predictable as Lorentz's ducklings, their short-trouser conditioning writhes up to confuse and embarrass them and us. The rhythm of the mindset - threat - guilt - wank - thrash - produces not only the peculiar sexual behaviours they display, but a determination to use their authority to inflict their perverse morality on the rest of us. Even if their political positions were acceptable, this would still be gross abuse of minors and everyone else.

And that, comrades, brings us to the core of the problem. Britain's genetically elite society is cluttered by people in positions, rather than people who fulfil useful functions. We suffer from fools who have positions. Those who do function find, as anarchists have long known, that in so doing they are expected to support all those who have positions. For example, whenever the British Army has got into serious war, it had to chuck out all the fat and useless slugs from good families who clutter up the works. One answer would be for armies

(continued on page 4)



Guild Socialism re-stated – yet again!

Associative Democracy: New Forms of Economic and Social Governance

Paul Hirst
Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994

In a little book published almost eighty years ago on *Political Thought in England – from Herbert Spencer to the present day*, Ernest Barker suggested, in his critique of Guild Socialism, that either the state must go, as the syndicalists and anarchists had advocated – and for our Oxford scholar this could only mean 'chaos' – or the state would remain. If the state did remain it would inevitably have final responsibility for the life of all its citizens, and if it was socialist it would be a form of State Socialism, as advocated by the Fabians and Marxists. It would then entail a bureaucratic governing class that would regiment and control all aspects of social life. There was no half-way house for socialists, and Barker poured scorn on the guild socialists who advocated 'two democracies', a 'separation of powers' – economic democracy in the workplace through cooperative associations (or guilds), and state power at the political level.

Paul Hirst's *Associative Democracy* is essentially an updated and re-affirmation of G.D.H. Cole's *Guild Socialism*. As an ex-Marxist, however, Hirst is now seemingly disillusioned with socialism – which he seems to equate with Soviet Marxism – and like Barker and Cole before him, seems unable to envisage any society without a state, although for him it is supposedly of a federal variety. His study thus lacks the anti-capitalist tenor that permeates the work of G.D.H. Cole, who, of all the socialist historians, was most sympathetic to anarchism. The trouble was that Cole was as much influenced by Rousseau as he was by William Morris, and thus came to envisage a 'partnership' between the state and the worker-controlled guild system. Essentially he tried to find an alternative to capitalism – one that was neither anarchist nor state socialist.

Hirst's book is full of interesting and substantive reflections on the current political crisis. What he offers is an advocacy of *associationalism*, seen as a viable alternative, or rather corrective, to the two current political ideologies – state socialism and liberal democracy. Both of these, he argues, are now moribund. He gives a cogent discussion and critique of the three main types of economic theory

– socialist central planning, Keynesianism, and neo-liberalism (Hayek) – and clearly indicates his affinities with Keynesian 'demand management', if this is given institutional support and is balanced by cooperative agencies. Thus 'associative democracy' – the governance of social affairs through voluntary organisations – is seen as a 'vital supplement' to existing institutions: representative liberal democracy, bureaucratic state welfare, and the big corporations (page 42). He argues that individual liberty and human welfare are both 'best served' when as many of the affairs of society as possible are managed by voluntary and self-governing associations (page 19) – but like Cole sees such associations as co-existing with the state, and – significantly unlike Cole – sees them not as replacing but as happily supplementing the market economy (read capitalism).

Hirst has a rather benign view of both the state and capitalism. The latter is not seen as an exploitative system (in fact the market 'promotes liberty'), nor even as a world system, but only in terms of national economies that offer a better standard of living for people in Western societies than did the Soviet system. The poverty, malnutrition, ecological degradation, nuclear warheads and political repression that is intrinsic to capitalism – the market? – is by-passed. As for the state, Hirst has a typical liberal (i.e. mythological) conception of the state as a neutral benign force, and he continually speaks of the state in terms of 'public power', as if state institutions serve general public interests – the 'general will'? That the state is an institute of coercion and oppression, whose primary function is – as an old syndicalist would express it – to 'protect property', is equally down-played by Hirst. He writes that the function of the state is 'primarily that of the preservation of individual rights' – news to me. But his 'utopian' state secures for its citizens not only fundamental human rights, but protects the freedom of the individual to associate, offers welfare provision and public funds to voluntary bodies, and lays down the ground rules for associations so that 'peace' prevails. He reflects on the fact that the nation-state is becoming 'obsolete', without emphasising that the supra-national agencies that are replacing it – multi-national corporations, the World Bank, the IMF, and the various trading blocs – are not only highly undemocratic institutions but largely serve to bolster and manage the capitalist system. To see the 'Common Market' in positive terms as a 'public power' – and as an example of federalism in action – and thus unrelated to European capitalist interests seems to me somewhat dubious.

Although the state is seen by Hirst as the 'glue' that holds a 'voluntaristic society' together, it seems to have all the characteristics of the states of

A day at the circus

(continued from page 3)

to stay at home and let the fit ones shoot the fat ones, but I digress.

The strange thing about freak-shows is that, apart from morbid fascination, there is always something behind what is on show. I find it difficult to believe that these buffoons don't know that the world is leaving them behind. That they have given their role to Europe; that they cannot go on much longer in the same old ways. Who are they trying to kid – themselves certainly, the show must go on, their supporters or they'll go away. Perhaps it's just the old habits of ingrained dishonesty and hypocrisy; they are politicians after all.

Forthcoming Eurodizzy attractions involving the circus are guaranteed to maintain the level of entertainment. They will also draw out closet authoritarians – particularly amongst certain sorts of feminist. Under the free trade provision of the Maastricht Treaty, products which may be legally sold in one country may be legally sold in all. So, Dutch cheese, pickles, clogs and porno may now be legally sold in Britain.

It is just a matter of time. The order banning television decoders for Red Hot Dutch will go before the European Court, and be rejected. What then is our slug-like Home Secretary doing seeking to reinforce the medieval Obscene Publications Act, so thought police may enter your home and seize your video recorder and computer? What else can a poor freak do, just trying to pull the stone back to protect his version of the dark ages.

Colin Johnson

Food for Thought ... and Action!

Televisionaries: the Red Army Faction story, 1963-1993* by Tom Vague, published by AK Press. Slightly enlarged version of an article first published in the magazine *Vague* (#20, 1988). This day-to-day account of the development and activities of the West German urban guerrilla group presents the bare facts (i.e. no great detail as analysis). After reading this concise and enjoyable book – helped along by lots of illustrations – there can be no illusions as to the (non-existent) potential for liberation such groups offered. The postscript is a bit of a disappointment considering the new information that has become available over the past five years concerning the manipulation of such armed-struggle groups by the state/NATO (e.g. the 'Gladio' networks get only a very brief mention). 109 pages, £4.50.

Heatwave #1, reprint by Chronos Publications (The Boomerang series no. 1). First published in 1966, this magazine (praised in the Situationist inspired manifesto *On the Poverty of Student Life*) reflects the preoccupations of its time, from Herbert Marcuse downwards, 'The Revolt of Youth'. In retrospect this cult of youth seems extremely facile. Contains articles on the Dutch 'Provos', the Chicago riots, a day trip to Amsterdam and the editor Charles Radcliffe's (of recent television fame! – he appeared in an episode of 'The Underworld') important article 'The Seeds of Social Destruction', that analyses the various youth cults in post-war Britain (e.g. Teddy Boys, Beats, Mods and Rockers, etc.) A4 facsimile, 40 pages, £3.50.

JC

Corrections: In the last edition of this column *The Anarchist Yearbook 1994* was erroneously printed as being 'not in stock'. This should have read 'is now in stock'. Secondly, Joe Peacott has written to tell us that his pamphlets are all still in print except for *Misinformation and Manipulation* (a former distributor in the UK incorrectly informed us to the contrary – apologies to all concerned). We are, however, out of stock of those titles mentioned last time. The above also applies to *Poll Tax Riot*.

Notes: Woodcock's *Anarchism* is now £9.99; *Semiotext(e) SF* is back in stock at £8.95; the *Anarchist Black Cross ABC Bulletin* has changed its name to *Taking Liberties*; *Green Line* magazine is now £1.00; *Crime and Criminals* (Darrow) is out of stock, as is *Nationalism and Culture* (Rocker), *The Anarchist Collectives* (Dolgoff), *The Anarchist Moment* (Clark), *Benjamin R. Tucker and Proudhon's Bank of the People*.

Peter Marshall's *William Blake* is now out of print a revised reprint is planned for later this year. And Donald Rooum's *Health Service Wildcat* should be published by the autumn, if not sooner. In any case, both the latter titles, being by Freedom Press, will be announced in *Freedom* at publication time. The Herbert Read book is, as they say (like Christmas), coming.

KM

Titles distributed by Freedom Press Distributors (marked*) are post free inland (add 15% for overseas orders). For other titles please add 10% towards postage and packing inland, 20% overseas. Cheques payable to FREEDOM PRESS please.

old – it is 'strong' and has 'police powers' (i.e. coercive), it is involved in the 'defence of territory' (so much for the demise of the nation-state) and it has forms of compulsory control of individuals. And you certainly will not be free to join it. Hirst has an illuminating discussion on the 'ultra-individualist' who refuses to participate in the associations (as these are supposedly voluntary associations there is no reason why the person should?), and concludes that the only option open to him or her is to give greater powers to the state (page 60). A weird kind of logic?

All-in-all Hirst offers us a truly reformist

programme. He claims that Proudhon (along with Laski and Cole) was one of the precursors of associative democracy. He was not, Hirst argues, an anarchist but advocated a 'federal state'. Proudhon was a man full of paradox, but I am not sure he would have approved of the idea that voluntary cooperation (mutualism) is simply to be seen as a 'supplement' to the welfare state and to multi-national firms, helping to boost the profits and the ultimate management control of the latter – as Hirst contends. His idea, surely, was to replace them?

Brian Morris

New titles now available

AGAINST POWER AND DEATH The Anarchist Articles and Pamphlets of Alex Comfort

edited and with an introduction by David Goodway

Articles published between 1943 and 1986 in the journals *War Commentary*, *Freedom*, *Now*, *Peace News* and elsewhere, together with the pamphlet *Peace and Disobedience* (1946).

168 pages ISBN 0 900384 71 9 £5.00

HERBERT READ A One-Man Manifesto and other writings for Freedom Press

edited and with an introduction by David Goodway

The complete texts of all the articles, broadcasts, reviews, poems and speeches of Herbert Read published in the anarchist journal *Spain & the World* and its successors *Revolt!*, *War Commentary* and *Freedom*, from 1938 to 1953, together with the pamphlets *The Education of Free Men* (1944) and *Art and the Evolution of Man* (1951).

208 pages ISBN 0 900384 72 7 £6.00

FREEDOM PRESS

84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

If anarchism is the recognition of ultimate personal responsibility, then anarchism is also the origin and quintessence of law, not its opponent. The emphasis of anarchist thought is upon the original principle of all jurisprudence – that the individual human being has, by virtue of his existence and his manhood, rights which are inalienable and responsibilities which cannot be delegated. The conception of natural law, upon which, according to Blackstone, jurisprudence is founded, is in its essence an anarchist conception. The conception of common law, the existence of a body of custom recognised by common consent and common conscience to be in accordance with human rights and human duties, is an anarchist conception. The recognition of the responsibility which a human being bears for all those actions which influence the lives and affect the fortunes of other men is the starting point of anarchist ethics. The conflict between anarchism and law which has arisen in this case, and which will continue to arise in a more and more exacerbated form, is due not to the irresponsibility of anarchists but to the corruption of the universal ideas of equity by irresponsible statute-making. Where anarchists come into conflict with the legal system, it is not because they are opposed to the conception of law, but because the system of law with which they are in conflict is at variance with human conscience. There are in existence today two conflicting systems of law: one which represents the body of human will and experience, and the other which exists solely to maintain the authority of the state against that will and against that experience. The public at large is aware of the discrepancy. Let a London crowd see the police chasing a thief, and they will collar the thief not because they are fulfilling a common-law duty but because the prevention and prohibition of these are products of normal human will and experience. Let them see an escort chasing a deserter, and they will trip the redcaps. The public shows a more accurate awareness of the powers which law can and cannot arrogate to itself than any of the professional jurists.

Alex Comfort

Against Power and Death

Whilst Britain often seems stagnant, unchanging – conservative, no less – a place where us pawns feel like we have no effect on the machinations, Nicaragua in contrast is a volatile place that has seemed like at least three different countries in the last six years I've been acquainted with it – from the highs of the tenth anniversary of the revolution in 1989, to an attempt to escape poverty and war with a change of government in 1990, to an increasing apolitical sentiment caused by USA-imposed neo-liberalism in 1994. It often feels like a place floundering for a new identity, especially a political identity. Like all the countries of Latin America, it has never been free of 'first world pressure' to conform to an Uncle Sam defined norm.

There are no self-proclaimed anarchist groups in Nicaragua, and the country has no history of anarchism like Argentina with its links with the Italian and Spanish anarchist groups of the '20s and '30s. Though there has often been speculation over Sandino's interest in anarchism – the Sandinista flag is red and black and Sandino is known to have travelled far and wide throughout Latin America to talk to a whole spectrum of political thinkers (including Argentinian anarchists) whilst formulating his own political ideology. He referred to the revolutionaries under his command in the '20s as an 'army of free men'.

Today there is no awareness of what anarchism means as a political concept – after a conversation about the basic principles of anarchism with a taxi driver he asked 'so what country has an anarchist government?' I explained again but the same answer was the reply – but while it is not understood as terminology there is no lack of examples of self-help in the form of community organisations, informal LETS (Local Exchange Trading Schemes), self-build and squatting.

Community organisation in Nicaragua

Since the height of the US-backed contra war in the mid '80s there have been large numbers of people flocking to the cities to escape the violence and search for work. Practically no facilities have been provided for these 'refugees' and throughout Managua especially, large areas of land have been taken over and built on, shanty towns appearing almost overnight in some places.

In the case of one such 'asentamiento' (shanty town) called Tierra Prometida (Promised Land) the community was given the land by the council after it had been squatted for some time. However, the council then changed its mind and tried to repossess the land. The community physically defended their homes against the military for a whole month (two infants died from lack of health care during that time). Finally it was agreed they could stay, since when they have been able to get down to the work of creating homes and facilities for all the five hundred or so families living there.

The community sits aside one of the main roads of Managua. All the houses they built themselves of a simple breeze-block wall and corrugated iron roof construction, but they were not provided with basic services. All their electricity is 'borrowed' through an expansive wiring system connected to the powerlines that run along the road. They now have 'legal' piped water in most homes, a school, a health centre and regular workshops on preventative health care and a structure for discussing and dealing with problems that arise in the community.

Tierra Prometida is only one example of dozens of similar asentamientos in cities throughout Nicaragua. Of course not all have been so successful, many being de-located by local council demand.

Squatting here is on one hand a self-build phenomenon on squatted land, but also nearly all the semi-derelict buildings (damaged in the 1972 earthquake) are inhabited by homeless families. The 'centre' of Managua, which still looks like a post-nuclear holocaust landscape, is dotted with such buildings. Old cinemas, for example, with most of the walls missing are full of makeshift partitions, wood fires for cooking, washing lines – these people have been here for years with no alternatives being provided for them.

There are thousands of families in Nicaragua living in appalling conditions with no basic facilities and only roofs and walls of cardboard to protect them from torrential rain and winds or fierce tropical sun. Individuals you find living on the street are an increasing number of children, rather than adults, from broken or violent households, which is accompanied by an increasing drug-abuse problem (mainly glue-sniffing).

LETS in Nicaragua manifest as part of an informal exchange system that is prevalent in the non-affluent barrios (neighbourhoods). With unemployment at over 50% economic hardship promotes sharing. Within a barrio goods change hands constantly, not in an object for object exchange but excess gets passed along and not hoarded, and the favour is always returned in some way. Someone has a mango tree, another coconuts, somebody has tools, another a telephone. These are not things guarded selfishly when everyone has so little. Skills such as sewing, driving, electrical, become part of the system as neighbours form a lifeline for each other. It's rare that people travel outside the barrio for their domestic needs. There's always a relative or a friend who knows someone who mends this, that or the other. This also means that an extensive information system is built up on a local level. Who needs Yellow Pages?

Cooked food too works its way around the neighbours. It's not unusual for someone to turn up on your doorstep with a plate of lunch for you 'because they knew you were in and, well, they were cooking so why not?' There is not such a formal sit-down-for-dinner mentality in Nicaragua. Families are generally much bigger, so the cooking pot goes on and everyone helps themselves as the different relatives file in and out during the day.

Community organisation – with a vast percentage of the population feeling dispossessed by the government it is no wonder organisation in the community is so strong. The most elaborate group, the MCN (Communal Movement of Nicaragua), has its roots in the pre-revolutionary years when it began as neighbourhood defence committees protecting themselves against the atrocities of Somoza's National Guard. With a fifteen year history of being part of the FSLN (the revolutionary party in power between 1979 and 1990) the MCN has now taken a non-aligned stance to be able to work as a community organisation with no party political flag waving.

The population of Tierra Prometida (mentioned above) are part of the MCN network and benefit from national links to help them over health issues, land rights problems and education. With shared experiences from an organised base, the MCN has been able to confront local councils and the government to answer to demands made by residents.

Throughout the country the national network of communities linked by the MCN have

pooled information and resources to organise their own health centres, vaccination programmes, pre-school centres, free meals for schoolchildren, vegetable gardens, disaster relief programmes, legal aid, housing, training projects (sewing, agricultural and craft making workshops), recuperation of traditional medicines and a huge network of 12,000 health brigadistas who have received basic preventative medicine training and work voluntarily in their own communities to reduce deaths from diarrhoea, malaria, cholera, etc. It was the work of these brigadistas and a huge vaccination campaign that helped eradicate polio from Nicaragua.

The government, since its inauguration in 1990, has tried to play down the influence of the MCN, but it now has to admit that any national campaign planned by the Ministry of Health has to incorporate the health brigadistas as they have the access to and hands-on information about health programmes in most Nicaraguan communities.

The MCN now have links with the continent-wide ISMU (Instituto para la Superacion de la Miseria Urbana) which aims to make links with community organisations, such as the MCN, throughout Latin America.

Luz

This article is dedicated to Dominic Allt, a fellow anarchist and dear friend who was constantly outraged by the injustices of the world but who never failed to be positive about life's alternatives. He would be in Nicaragua now working with the MCN but for his tragic death on 10th December 1994. He was much loved and is deeply missed.

Inside India

Despite widespread opposition by popular movements and non-governmental organisations to the now-accepted Dunkel Draft and ready-to-roll GATT treaty, all the signs are that India is set to reel badly from the new economic orthodoxy. Few people understand what lies ahead.

India's population constitutes one-seventh of humanity. There is no technology that can employ the whole of India. In fact every technology proposed for import in the consumer sector will reduce current employment in India. And yet the whole 'New Asian Tiger' theory is spun and successfully sold with every newspaper repeating the same old argument – India is on the edge of an economic boom.

What, though, is the reality? The Dunkel Draft stated: 'Remove all the restrictions, let goods flow, capital flow, technology flow, trade mark and patent flow', the suggestion being that fluidity would remove domestic rigidity, the barrier to consumer growth. Interestingly labour will not be allowed to flow under Dunkel. It is here that one begins to discover the base upon which GATT is built and how even in conventional economic terms there is unlikely to be an economic boom in India.

Labour is in surplus in India. Unless the G7 countries allow free mobility of labour their commitment to free trade from government controls will always be suspect. Naturally they will not and this essentially shows where the thrust of GATT is rooted. Where protection is needed for the north it is granted, where protection is needed for the south it is denied. Dunkel is a piece of equalising rhetoric between the strong and the weak.

If this then is the real thrust of Dunkel what are its assumptions? The fundamental one is that the whole world has to be and will become homogeneous, the pattern having been produced in the north. The next assumption is that since state socialism has

failed, the debate whether capitalism can succeed or not is no longer valid. Capitalism will succeed because, apparently, there is no alternative. Thus, without debate, the world techno-economic establishment had defected to capitalism.

Turning to the mechanics of Dunkel, they will implement its assumptions and philosophy of homogenisation. It is the General Tariff Reduction Programme that will hit India and other southern countries the hardest. All countries must reduce their tariffs and substitute a low tariff where goods have hitherto been banned. High tariffs and bans have often existed in southern countries as part of a fair trade philosophy or due to cultural factors. In India, for example, the import of beef-talo is banned, as is liquor. Many items are restricted for import in order to protect the domestic economy. Dunkel decrees that the bans, restrictions, high rates of duty must go. The rate of import duty will no more be independently decided in India, it has to be settled by Dunkel.

In the United States import duty is not a revenue measure. If import duty is levied on an item, it is to make importing uneconomic and not to earn revenue. In India import duty has been levied mainly as a means of generating revenue. Import duty constituted 40% of India's budget in the year 1993-94. Now it will be no more. It does not take an awful lot to work out who will suffer the most. Already cuts are taking place in the meagre amounts that are spent on public and social welfare.

Dunkel is a disaster for India. Westernisation looms but more significantly, and so does a widening of the gap between rich and poor, between high and low caste. One can only look to the popular movements and non-governmental organisations for any real hope.

John Shotton

NEWS FROM BULGARIA

The last weekend of May 1993 saw a successful congress take place in Sofia of the Bulgarian Anarchist Federation (BAF), which now has groups in about a dozen cities. It was organised by militants in Sofia and Pernica and drew together some 350 participants. The agenda was given over to reports on the local and international situation and the activities of BAF.

The essence of the debates was focused on the functioning of the organisation, with discussions about its rules and their proposed changes and the election of a secretariat. The editorial committee of the BAF paper *Svobodna Mysl* ('Free Thought') was reappointed with, notably, the inclusion of some younger militants. Members of the Anarchist Youth Federation were present, but youth is not as well represented as it could be.

Bulgarian activists take it in turns to host conferences, produce local journals (as in Dupniza and Plovdiv) or are involved in the publishing venture 'Artizdat'. The latter was set up by anarchists and has already published a number of titles including Laval, Bakunin and Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*. On an international level, they organised a benefit for Nigerian libertarians recently.

source: *Le Monde Libertaire*

Now Available

Violence and Anarchism
various authors

A supplement to the Freedom Centenary Series. An attempted assassination of Hendrick Verwoerd, prime minister of South Africa, was greeted by a *Freedom* editorial headed 'Too bad he missed'. The controversy this provoked is reprinted in full.

79 pages ISBN 0 900384 70 0 £2.50

from FREEDOM PRESS

The following interview from *Le Monde Libertaire* gives us a first hand account of the situation in Mexico. Xavier, who first left the area two years ago, has just returned from another visit to the area around San Cristobal de Las Casas ...

LML: What struck you the most, returning after two years.

X: The countryside and overall setting is much the same. One thing you are aware of coming in from the outside and knowing the Mexican and Indian people is the extent to which the Mexican government has managed to block information within the Indian zone. Information about the Zapatistas is freely available elsewhere. A press conference room with telecommunications has been set up in San Cristobal, paid for by the federal state. Journalists and NGOs circulate freely in the zone but information is for external consumption only, preventing the spread of the revolt to other Indian communities. Thus Indians living 150 kms. away only receive press information. All direct contrast with the zone emanating from Mexicans or other Indian groups – cooperative, syndicalist – are blocked. Information is thus well under control ...

LML: 1992 was 'year 500'. The struggle has been going on for 500 years. We've seen other Indian groups in the Americas organising to combat the ideology of the New World. Can it be said this has influenced the Mexican situation, given that they share a frontier with Guatemala with an 80% Indian population?

X: The '500 years' resistance has certainly been influential. It has shown that one can be an Indian with dignity. They have remembered their history and Indian uprisings. The South and Mezzo Indian Council is known throughout the world. It has to be said that the Mexican revolt in Chiapas has influenced Indian associations, showing how organised struggle can function. Moreover, an Indian delegation came to make contact with the Zapatistas representing many areas in the continent. Together they demanded that all countries respect indigenous demands ... North American Indians insist the situation could develop elsewhere.

LML: What's the reaction in the street of the 'average Mexican' or those who work with the Indians?

X: Those who have worked with the Indians see it as an international problem, not just economic and political but social as well. It seems obvious that if wage rates were as in the West, a different situation would prevail. Mexico has to take the Indian situation into account with international support. But Zapatistas have 'infiltrated' Mexican society. In the beginning they were rejected as a load of bastards, the government was giving enough money and so on. But round about 5th January there was a change. The middle classes began to get the message. They started to realise that this was a Mexican problem. Even the taxi driver who used not to give a damn recognises the urgency. Amongst the middle classes, after initial rejection, they now realise they have a problem to solve but they turn to the IMF. They don't want to pick up the bill.

LML: And those involved in the struggle. Do they see things the same way? What are their demands?

X: We must distinguish between the guerrillas, the armed peasants and the committee. The demands of the peasants are more down to earth. First land, but also schools and hospitals. When politics comes up they don't deny it but refer to the committee. And it's true that the committee has the means of communication and is well genned-up on the international picture. Whilst putting the Indian

— MEXICO —

¡Viva Zapata!

question first they also demand wage levels comparable with the west. The Indian problem is a Mexican problem within an international framework. The federal state is surprised that they are not demanding independence for Chiapas. The Indian demands must be met within the context of Mexican politics.

Everyone sees their demands as justified. There are also the demands of the guerrillas: cease-fire, amnesty, etc. And then there's the land question. The Zapatistas are demanding land redistribution whilst recognising that this will take time. No question of a repeat of the '70s when only twenty haciendas were carved up. The Indian peasants want to trade off some of their unproductive land against the plains of the big landowners. For the moment nothing is being said about the big western industrial companies who can own about 30,000

hectares, although there's an official ceiling of 2,500. So Total can call itself Tital or Tatol, as can Volkswagen ... Every plot of 2,500 is owned by dad or mum or the kids or the dog!

LML: They waited for the NAFTA signing to mark the beginning of the revolt?

X: The 1st January was well chosen. On a political level the government, with the US behind them, could resort to repression as normal even though there was torture, etc. The US feels implicated. Everything was done to prevent embarrassment over the signing. From an internal viewpoint there are to be elections next August. Salinas can't stand again. Inside the IRP five front-runners are emerging ... The evolution of the conflict and a consideration of the Indian problem is sending out ripples. In addition the date was chosen because of

the festive atmosphere which would ensure that the police stations and barracks were 'well oiled'.

Thus the Zapatistas seized five towns, which would have been impossible in any other circumstances. To seize the mayor of a town with barracks just 8 kms. away is even more surprising. After the 2nd they withdrew voluntarily on a two-day trek to the forests, from which they cannot be removed. The armed groups are 90% young men and women. Local villages sustain them ... The committee has brought syndicalist and cooperative groups together and a support group of 55 organisations has been set up.

LML: And the future?

X: Firstly they feel they have won. The Indian problem is being addressed. For the negotiations they have sought someone with wide support to serve as intermediary. They could only find the Bishop of San Cristobal, Samuel Ruiz, even though they stressed they won't start filling the churches. For the moment he has no more information than anyone else. In the current negotiations the Zapatistas are demanding open fair elections taking into account the Indian demands. Otherwise they will take up their arms again.

report from Christian Veron (Nantes)

Mexico's thin-skinned people

Last month's assassination of the presidential candidate of Mexico's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), offers another Mexican mystery to add to the January Chiapas rebellion. Who killed Luis Donaldo Colosio in Tijuana, and why?

A retired policeman, acting as part of Colosio's security team, has been detained and taken to Mexico City's maximum security jail to join Aburto Martinez, the 23 year old accused of shooting Colosio. This has fuelled support for the idea that the killing could have been the work of elements inside the ruling PRI party.

Mexico has been described as a country where fascism has been softened by corruption. When President Salinas retires at the end of this year analysts reckon he'll be hundreds of millions of dollars richer than when he started in the presidency. It has been a habit of Mexican presidents to end their six-year terms as multi-millionaires, without any noticeable effort on their part.

According to Luis Buñuel, the Mexican president can do more or less what he likes during his six years in office, but is prevented from becoming a tyrant as he can't be re-elected. The assassinated Colosio was picked by Salinas as his almost certain to be elected replacement. Now Salinas has named Zedillo Ponce de Leon as the new PRI candidate. In this context the assassination has been compared to assassinating royalty – as if the Prince of Wales had been done-in in this country.

Social change Chiapas style

On 10th April it will be the 75th anniversary of the killing of Emiliano Zapata, hero of the Mexican Revolution. This year a big anti-government demonstration is expected on that day. As I write, the Chiapas rebels are again reported to be on 'red alert'. Another

rising there would be disastrous for President Salinas, as there are signs that the Chiapas revolt is spreading to other poor states like Guerrero and Oaxaca.

As the presidential elections approach, the PRI Party of Mr Salinas is split. The PRI has had power in Mexico since 1929. At the time of the Chiapas rising this year an editorial in *The Independent* declared that the forthcoming election would decide the course for Mexico, not a ragged-arse rabble rising in the south of the country. That kind of constitutionalist comment is no longer acceptable even in the leader columns of *The Independent* and last month it was argued: "The message of the uprising in Chiapas was that the fruits of economic progress need to be more evenly shared if stability is to be maintained." It is estimated that 95% of Mexico's wealth is stuck in the hands of a few hundred thousand people. The *Independent* editor now admits the hold of the PRI government "was visibly shaken by the rising this January in the southern province of Chiapas ..."

How easily the city dweller underestimates the rural peasantry.

Ignoring poverty

Some Mexican intellectuals, like Octavio Paz, have been ashamed of the rebellion of the poor indigenous people of Chiapas. So much that Señor Paz has blamed insurgents from Guatemala for the trouble. These people, though on the left, tend to want Mexico to be respected as a viable nation state.

Mexico has been the most stable Latin American country. But then thirty years ago I can remember them saying something similar about Chile. The country has for long, as yet, escaped military uprisings owing perhaps to the bonus of oil for the economy.

Yet there are ten million indigenous people

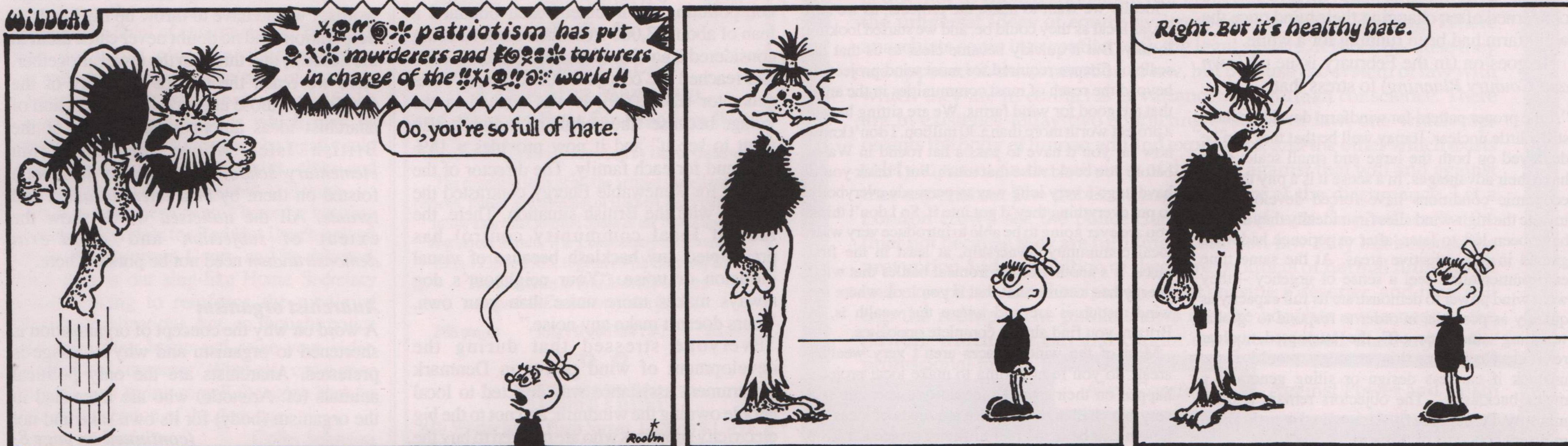
in a population of eighty million, and a vast number are of mixed race. In the Mexican ruling class whites predominate. The journalist Phil Davison has referred to "Mexico's astonishing persistent racism" while Luis Buñuel comments on what he sees to be the country's biggest problem – "its extreme xenophobia, based undoubtedly on a profound inferiority complex".

The 'racism' refers to the attitude of forgetfulness of middle class Mexicans to their own coloured indigenous people. They were not so much ill-treated, but rather ignored. The xenophobia is more widespread, and when the Spaniard Buñuel made his film about the poor in the slums on the outskirts of Mexico City there were violent reactions to it. Many organisations, including trade unions, demanded Buñuel's expulsion, and Mexican press criticism was bitter. Lupe, the wife of the artist Diego Rivera, sent him to Coventry, while Berta Felipe attacked him physically.

Even intellectual radicals in thin-skinned ex-colonial countries like Mexico don't like reminding of the poverty of the people on whose backs they live out their own lives. This could explain why Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, main opposition candidate of the Party of Democratic Revolution (PRD), has failed to confront the PRI and take advantage of the rising of the Chiapas poor.

We may be in for more surprises before the elections on 21st August; the head of Mexico's biggest bank has been kidnapped. The Mexicans seem to have a strongly developed sense of vengeance, and machismo means more to them than male vanity and dignity. Men in Mexico, Buñuel says, "seem inordinately sensitive to slights of any kind". In a land where turning down the offer of the tenth tequila may be deemed to be offensive, and in which machismo and the gun cult is still alive and kicking, I suppose anything can happen.

Brian Bamford



— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

Tilting at Windmills – 2

There's a pleasing parallel between Eric Gill's defence of pylons in 1929 and Duncan Couchman's defence of wind farms in 1994. When an accident in government policy over nuclear power gave the advocates of wind generation the opportunity they had wanted for decades, there was widespread press enthusiasm, as well as exaggeration of the likely proportion of electricity demand that wind could be expected to meet.

Now we are in the middle of a media backlash against wind power, orchestrated by Sir Bernard Ingham, former press adviser to Mrs Thatcher, who is a consultant for British Nuclear Fuels and has become president of a new body, Country Guardian, set up to oppose wind farms. And the representatives of various 'green' bodies have reversed their former support for this 'clean' and 'renewable' form of power generation.

As we have seen, government support resulted from the NNFO (Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation) imposed on all our electricity bills to support the nuclear industry. European Union rules put a time limit on it and required it to be applied to other sources too. So 2% of this levy was devoted to all renewable energy sources. The advocates of offshore wave power and of solar energy are rightly aggrieved that their technologies are not considered to be technically mature. "However, wind energy falls into this category, largely due to support provided by other governments, particularly the Carter administration in the US, following the energy crisis of the 1970s" (Merylyn Hedger, 'A Fair Wind for Energy', *Planning Week*, 28th October 1993).

Herbert Giradet reports that because of the enabling legislation in the period of governor Jerry Brown, "The wind power stations of California, several of which have over 10,000 windmills, are giant test beds for a rapidly maturing technology. Each 100 kilowatt windmill costs some \$100,000. Wind farms in California produce electricity as cheaply as coal-fired stations and more cheaply than nuclear ones."

In Britain, the sudden opportunity for wind power development had a time limit on it. Proposals had not only to find their way through the planning system but to meet the Department of Industry's assessment of their technical and economic viability. And the governmental climate is hardening. It was reported that:

"Of the 650 applications for financial help in the latest round – including small-scale hydro-electric schemes, and heat from waste and tidal power projects – some 230 were wind farms. However, Mr Tim Eggar, the energy minister, doubted that more than twenty wind farms would be approved for subsidy. 'This will depend on developers' abilities to find sufficient windy sites which are acceptable in planning terms', he said." (*Financial Times*, 12th March 1994)

Dr David Elliot of the Open University's Energy and Environment Research Unit, an advocate of wind power for years, finds that the backlash against wind farms is not as local as the media tells us. "Certainly local opinion polls indicate overwhelming support for wind farms, with people who initially were concerned often changing their mind once the wind farm had been running for a while."

He goes on (in the February issue of *Town and Country Planning*) to stress that:

"... the proper pattern for windfarm development is still a little unclear. It may well be that they can be deployed on both the large and small scale: both have their advantages. In a sense it is a pity that the economic conditions have forced developers to invade the high-wind sites first: ideally they should have been left to later, after experience had been gained in less sensitive areas. At the same time environmentalists feel a sense of urgency – they want wind power to demonstrate its full capacity as quickly as possible, in order to respond to 'global warming' and 'see off' the attempted nuclear revival. However, this strategy would come unstuck if careless design or siting generates a major backlash ... The objectors remain a small minority. Perhaps the final issue is what to do about minority concerns of this sort."

"I write not only as an artist but as a Sussex man – born and bred – to whom love of the South Downs is as natural as it is enthusiastic. Anyone who has seen the aqueducts striding, almost galloping, across the Roman Campagna must have been struck by the inexorable majesty of them, and the need of Rome for water is analogous to the modern world's need for power. In France I have seen these great electric standards striding across the country – delayed by nothing, hindered by nothing. Are we to suppose that beauty is only to be found in certain recognised 'styles' of architecture? Is the Forth Bridge ugly because it is not built of stone? Is the Tower Bridge beautiful because the citizens of London saw fit to clothe its iron work in machine-made imitation Gothic? Such an attachment to 'Nature', which goes with a refusal to see beauty in engineering, while making use of engineering and making money by it, is fundamentally sentimental and romantic and hypocritical. Let the modern world abandon such an attachment, or let it abandon its use of electric power."

Eric Gill, letter to *The Times*, 6th November 1929

By now the total installed capacity of the wind energy projects in Britain is about 140 megawatts, enough to meet the electricity needs of about a quarter of a million people, a small proportion of the population of the British Isles. The companies that raised the capital to set them up were formed by alliances between various interests, ranging from regional electricity supply companies, electrical and mechanical engineering firms, as well (Stephen Titherington pointed out in the most interesting media coverage of the issue, Radio 4's 'File on Four' for 12th March 1994) as companies developed by long-standing renewable technology advocates and engineers. Titherington talked to Tim Kirby, who will be remembered by any reader who visited the Centre for Alternative Technology at Machynlleth in Wales, for his years of experiment in wind generation there. Today he is chairman of Ecogen, the firm which has erected 103 hundred-foot Mitsubishi machines at Llandinam in Powys, and he told his interviewer there that:

"Wind turbines are never going to be completely silent. But noise is about two things. It's about sound and about attitudes to sound. Attitude is based on belief, and if people believe that this is a worthwhile development then their attitudes will change. The fact that this is 22,000-homes-worth of electricity supply is just not believed by a lot of people. We have environmental campaigning organisations who have been making comments like 'It takes three wind turbines to work one lightbulb'. Now if I believed that, I wouldn't believe this was worthwhile at all.

Ideally we want to make the projects, as we still do, as local as they could be, and we started looking locally. But it quickly became clear to us that the scale of finance required for most wind projects is beyond the reach of most communities in the areas that are good for wind farms. We are sitting here at a project worth more than £30 million. I don't know how far you'd have to pass a hat round in Wales before you could raise that much, but I think you'd have to go a very long way to persuade everybody to put everything they'd got into it. So I don't think you are ever going to be able to introduce very wide local community ownership, at least in the first place. It's another of the ironical battles that wind energy has to surmount that if you look where the wind resources are and where the wealth is, in Britain, you find almost complete opposites.

Most of the windy places aren't very wealthy areas. So you're not going to make local projects happen on their own. Community ownership is a very big challenge and there are seeds of ideas for how it can be made real in future projects. I keep

"Now that the Ramblers Association is to withdraw its support from the wind energy programme, can we expect it to oppose other artificial intrusions on to the moors, such as dry-stone walls, stone circles and hill-farming?"

I walked across Ovenden Moor last week and found the view of the wind farm rather beautiful. Going nearer it was also completely silent and, in my opinion, a rather fitting thing to stand on a very bleak moor.

The Ramblers Association has swallowed the propaganda of middle-class Nimbys, who moved to the country to avoid such things as coal-fired power stations, who now feel threatened by the sight of these turbines, while continuing to use vast amounts of energy to power their cars, dishwashers, central heating and so on.

I am sure that many town-dwelling walkers will continue to enjoy their own escape to the moors, whether or not they have to share the hills with wind farms."

Duncan Couchman, letter to *The Guardian*, 4th April 1994

using the word 'ironic' because there are a lot of ironies about. Because wind power is about 'utopia' a lot of people would want it to be perfect in every sense, and in fact that's impossible. Community ownership can happen, but its absence shouldn't stop very good and desirable things like wind energy projects. That's not a reason for not doing it at all."

So Titherington moved on to Jutland in Denmark, where wind-farming has been developing for the past fifteen years, to learn about local community ownership. He found that "What is strikingly different from Britain is that in Denmark the majority of wind turbines are owned not by companies but what are called Windmill Guilds. These are local cooperatives where groups of neighbours raised the money to fund their own windmill." One in twenty families in Denmark now has part ownership of a wind turbine. That is 70,000 people in a population of about five million.

Members of guilds explained to him that there has been public acceptance of wind generation "because the people who own the turbines live nearby, and you will see many villages with their own clusters of three or five turbines just outside the village. They have a social event when their windmill has made its first 100,000 kilowatts and again when it reaches a million kilowatts. They have a yearly general assembly which fulfils the same social role as older forms of getting together."

One member explained to him that fifty families whose prime interest was in a non-polluting environment each obtained a loan of about £3,000 from their bank (it being considered a no-risk investment) and by 1988 had reached the cost of a 200 kilowatt Vesta generator (£350,000). It was erected in the village because "the people who own it also want to see it" and it now provides a 15% dividend for each family. The director of the Centre for Renewable Energy contrasted the Danish with the British situation. There, the fact of local community control has pre-empted any backlash because of visual intrusion or noise. "Your neighbour's dog always makes more noise than your own. Yours doesn't make any noise."

Everyone stressed that during the development of wind power in Denmark government assistance was directed to local people owning the windmill, and not to the big electricity suppliers who are obliged to buy the

electricity generated. However, the Danish Energy Minister explained to Titherington that while these innumerable small-scale clusters provide 3.2% of Denmark's electricity needs, government policy wants this figure to reach 10% by the year 2005.

The dilemma as seen there is how to achieve the increase in capacity without antagonising people through the arrival of "bulldozers and entrepreneurs from abroad" and without losing the neighbourhood approach. What is proposed is a series of joint ventures between the electricity supply undertakings and 'people's partnerships', seen as a wider version of the existing Windmill Guilds.

Seen from Britain, the Danish evolution of wind generation seems a model of good sense, but the current backlash in Britain is real enough. It was reported in *The Guardian* (9th March 1994) that "Tim Eggar, the Energy Minister, is believed to be alarmed at the number of objections to proposed wind farms by groups who claim that their turbines impose noise and visual blight on the landscape. The DTI has been inundated with protests as part of a campaign at local and national level." It is therefore worth mentioning the figures that the DTI itself gathered. Michael Harper of the British Wind Energy Association reported (in *The New Statesman*, 11th March 1994) that:

"A DTI-backed survey showed that over 84% of local people approved of wind energy when questioned after construction of the Delabole wind farm in Cornwall – only 4% disapproved. The same DTI survey revealed that before the windfarm was built, 56% thought windfarms spoilt the scenery, but afterwards only 28% thought they did – 60% thought they did not. Before construction, 40% thought wind turbines were noisy; afterwards only 10% thought they were – 80% thought they were not."

The belated development of wind generation in Britain was owed, not to popular demand for non-polluting energy sources, but simply as a by-product of the sale of publicly-owned electricity generation and of the government's determination to subsidise the nuclear industry. The task in the next century is to spread it from very windy sites to moderately windy sites, which means everywhere, and to make it both local and ubiquitous, just like the old windmills which were perceived not as a blot on the landscape but as an embellishment of every town and village.

Colin Ward

Through the Anarchist Press

Languages blend into each other. The words 'anarchist' and 'organism' are both of Greek origin. The language in which these words are supposed to be written is modern English although a close scrutiny of the above words will find among them few if any 'English' words. If it were my task to translate even the gist of what is being said here purely in English without any adhesion of foreign words, I would have to throw up my hands in desperation (and no doubt never catch them in the descent) and throw in the towel altogether. Here we reach the nub or difficulty of the problem for those engaged in the diffusion of anarchist ideas amongst the natives of the British Isles whose education from elementary school to university has been foisted on them by benevolent invaders and tyrants. All the italicised words show the extent of *subjection* and *quod erat demonstrandum* need not be pursued here.

Anarchist organism

A word on why the concept of organisation is shortened to organism and why its usage is preferred. Anarchists are the only political animals (cf. Aristotle) who are interested in the organism (body) for its own sake and not

(continued on page 8)

Gender-benders and silly cunts

Dear Freedom,
Once again we have been treated to a spurious attack on feminism and sexual liberation in the pages of *Freedom*, this time from Tony Gibson - 'Gender benders and silly cunts' (vol. 55, no. 7). And once again those who defend sexual liberation are accused of fascism. Hilarious, when you consider Tony wrote "... everyone, however semi-literate and verbally challenged, should have the right to express themselves in *Freedom* if what they struggle to express is at all relevant, at the risk of making fools of themselves. My purpose is to instruct, and some people appear to be badly in need of instruction". How arrogant and egotistical can one person be? But anyway here is my poor, ignorant, semi-literate attempt to educate Tony!

Have you ever stopped to wonder just why 'cunt' has two meanings? How come a name for the female genitalia got to be an extreme form of derision? And it's not just cunt, every word used to describe the female genitalia, and for that matter women's breasts, I have heard used as a term of abuse. Is this coincidence or is it part of a wider trend of denigrating women within society? Maybe Tony should try looking through some pornography where the woman-hating nature of such language is very clear.

As for the use of 'gender' instead of 'sex', *The Joy of Sex* is about the pleasures of sexual intercourse, it is not about the pleasures of being male or female, so of course it wasn't called 'Joy of Gender'. By the way, is this what is meant by an intellectual argument?

And further, Tony goes on to attack so-called gender benders, a term coined by the tabloids to ridicule those who challenge our learned sexual stereotypes. Please explain to us what sexually ambiguous clothes are. I for one certainly do wear clothing which is supposedly meant for the opposite sex, because I don't accept gender roles or sexual stereotyping. As an example, maybe Tony could explain why the majority of

men around the world wear skirts yet it is sexually unacceptable in 'Western' society. Maybe Tony likes his men to be 'men' and his women to be powerless. I think we should be told.

It's very simple really, your gender is what you are born with - male or female; gender roles are how you are taught to behave to fulfil sexual stereotypes and maintain the patriarchal power relationship of society; and sex is a physical act which when freely exchanged brings pleasure to all involved.

Unfortunately, for Tony the sexual revolution seems to have left him behind in the 1960s. All this is old news and no amount of spurious abuse will change it. Feminism and sexual liberation are neither politically correct or fascist, as certain *Freedom* writers seem to like to claim. These are merely terms of abuse used by these writers to hide their complete lack of any coherent arguments.

I for one am not going to have my sexual behaviour, my appearance or my attitudes determined by gender roles that were forced on me, which serve to maintain the hierarchical social order.

Ging

Dear Freedom,

This is not to disagree with Tony Gibson's complaints about misuse of the terms 'sex' and 'gender', but to defend the good name of Alex Comfort. In judging *Sex in Society*, Tony appears to have relied on faulty memory (and one sentence quoted in *Oxford English Dictionary*), instead of going back to the book.

Comfort may have been a Christian; the book does not say. But he was not a prude, except in the sense that he guarded his language to avoid prosecution for obscenity. And he did not disapprove of pre-marital sexual intercourse, so long as both partners felt ready and took sensible precautions.

"If the stability of marriage depends, in its intention, on the needs of the child, it is obviously rash to begin with a pregnancy and discover incompatibilities later ... The point is being reached where people who oppose the giving of instruction on contraception and venereal diseases to teenagers must consider whether they are not defending a dogma at the expense of human suffering."

According to my own faulty memory, the Gibson/Comfort controversy in *Journal of Sex Education* was about Comfort's insistence on monogamy "during the child-rearing period", to give children "the required nidus of security".

But Comfort's notion of monogamy did not exclude "adulterous props".

The quotation used in *OED* is from a passage apparently about persons whose sex at birth is uncertain, who are brought up as either boys or girls and think of themselves as such, sometimes (as it later turns out) mistakenly. In this passage only, Comfort uses 'gender role' and 'physical sex' to distinguish between self-perception and anatomical reality. The word 'gender' does not occur anywhere else in the book.

Later writers have suggested that it is

somehow oppressive to rear people in 'gender roles' corresponding to their (obvious) 'physical sex'. But such bizarre misuse of Comfort's terminology is not Comfort's fault.

Donald Room

Dear Freedom,

A letter appeared in the paper (2nd April 1994) which referred to me and was signed 'Carole' (why no surname?) To avoid confusion I wish to make it clear that I have had no personal acquaintance with the writer of this letter. Comrades who know me will see the joke!

Tony Gibson

Science and Society

Dear Editors,

I have just read *Raven 24*, a lively and interesting issue in many ways, but questionable as an anarchist document. Nigel Calder in particular seems to have moved violently to the right since his *CND* days and I am at something of a loss to know how the normally perspicacious Dr Pilgrim came to accept this apologia for right wing quiescence for *The Raven*.

Like all defenders of sociobiology Calder is essentially saying that genetics will dictate behaviour so we may as well wait for the free society to emerge naturally. Nobody actually needs to do anything very much, especially upset the social order that pays Nigel Calder handsomely for his television scripts. People who are hungry and homeless at the moment might well think differently of course.

I don't see anything very odd in Nigel Calder accepting the grandiose claims of the sociobiologists - I suspect he isn't starving for a crust. The real puzzle is what this claptrap is doing in an anarchist journal and why John Pilgrim, who once knew better, accepted it.

Another sell-out by a former member of the working class?

Gerry Melanie

Dear Editors,

Agreeable though it is to find two long reviews devoted to *Raven 24*, I am, unsurprisingly perhaps, puzzled by aspects of Brian Bamford's discussion. Not the inevitable praising with faint damns, nor the strained inferences, they are by now part of the ritual. No it is the sources he uses as a base for his criticism.

Brecht is one example. He was an influential artist with many admirable qualities but fidelity to historical fact was hardly among them. There may be good reasons why a Marxist writer whose intellectual views were shaped by the

scientific tradition of German communism should appeal to Mr Bamford. However this hardly makes him an intellectual oracle on the uses and abuses of science, or a suitable stick with which to beat the contributors to *Raven 24*.

Paul Feyerabend is another. I suspect he was the man the unlovely Stephen Hawkin had in mind when he described the philosophy of science as a system of outdoor relief for failed physicists. An irrationalist who rejected the very idea of understanding (see NW's obituary in the same issue) Feyerabend ended up in an ultimately self-negating position. Bamford can adopt what *gurus* he wishes of course, but he can hardly expect the rest of us to accept these defeatist precepts.

Finally his implications of mendacity on my part are pretty reprehensible. Especially coming from a man who disguises his own excellent degree (rumour has it as sociology) and his PhD work, under the pose of being a simple craftsman. Indeed his opening paragraph is wrong on so many counts it is obvious he just makes things up when he wishes to be polemical. For the record I never depended on sociology for a living. I am not retired, only disabled, and am certainly too overworked for hobbyism. I do rather like his fanciful portrayal of me as an elderly pedagogue passing empty hours with dabbings in the history of science. However it is another fantasy. I studied science history seriously, for a masters degree, 25 years ago and have maintained that interest and even taught it for a while. If ever I earned a living in the academic field it was there. So he's wrong again.

I would rephrase his final sentence and give it back to him. Less invention, COMRADE BAMFORD.

John Pilgrim

Getting away with murder

Dear Freedom,

I wish to point out some factual errors in two articles on page 3 of the 2nd April edition of *Freedom*.

Firstly the article about Peru 'Fujimori's Policies, the Anarchist Movement and the Shining Path' describes the Shining Path as "a marxist leninist tendency". This falls very short of the mark. The Shining Path is an ultra-reactionary Maoist/Leninist terror group that has murdered and tortured hundreds of peasants who have refused to submit to their order. Abimael Guzman is in essence a 'commie thug' criminal whose many crimes include the murder and torture of native Indian people who reject both the Shining Path and Fujimori.

Secondly the article 'Inside India' contains the line in reference to the Indo-China war, "a war in which over half a million Indochinese lost their lives". A far more accurate estimate is that at least two million three hundred thousand Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian people were slaughtered. Profit fodder for the global Military Industrial Complex.

Further to the above I draw your attention to the article on page 4 of 2nd April, 'How to get away with murder'. While I agree that all governments profit and instigate murder I must condemn 'Derrick's' shallow perspective of the IRA and foolish comparison with World War Two. The IRA is a 'mafia' terror group whose only interests are using murder as a vehicle for the profits of their protection rackets and their continued political facade. There is under no circumstances any legitimate cause or reason behind the sick murder of those two young Warrington boys by IRA butchers.

No true anarchist who appreciates the heartfelt 'attentat' of anarchists at the turn of the century would ever make excuses for the IRA.

'Derrick' should understand the difference between Gaetano Bresci's heartfelt assassination of King Umberto and the cold blooded murder of those two young children by vile IRA scum.

Howard S. Marks

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

Through the Anarchist Press

(continued from page 7)

for its abstract qualities. The word 'organ' from which both words derive is of Greek origin and merely means an instrument. Words are like chameleons or colours which change within the text or can only be defined by their surroundings (cf. colour theory). This again cannot be pursued here.

In a recent article for *Freedom* I quoted the exceptional Scots poet Robert Burns who is instantly understandable and who, to my knowledge, never used any word which was not *frae* and *fiera*.

You may notice how the sudden change from imported words sticks out like a sore thumb in the agglutinated mess which must remain the necessary style for the subject in hand.

The word 'anarchist' presents no less of a difficulty. It has to be translated and explained and its derivation copied out of uninformative history books which seem to agree that it is of Greek origin at around the time 404BC when in Athens there was a state of society without any government, the real meaning of it as far as my understanding of Greek is concerned, which might come as a surprise to all and sundry, is simply *lack of a leader*. In other

words, we are talking about a natural order expressed as a political system.

It would have been far better had the anarchist revolution already succeeded, for then we would be already living in a *society* (from which the meaningless word 'socialism') which respects you and me and all our foibles and fancies and our very important material and abstract needs.

But we cannot change words to suit pragmatic needs. We hold on to the few attempts and the few people who risked their life and their sanity, who have been cut up into ribbons by those of all political persuasions who hold on to power for no other reason than for the sake of power, for the exhilaration, for the ride and for the glory, for the thrill of the moment of triumph over the vanquished.

Even in these islands where are they now - the early inhabitants, still speaking their own language, until they are pushed into the sea or live with the goats and sheep in inaccessible terrain. They pay the price for underestimating Caesar, whose navy of conquest initially floundered and yet were allowed to return and conquer and defeat what was an anarchist island, whose language is now lost in the mists of time, who committed all to memory and

were defeated by the systematic scribes whose knowledge was in the written word, which is the ultimate power.

Anarchy versus despotism. What is the strength of your word if your signature, your seal, your minted coin is thrown in the trash can?

Say that you have known a thoroughly unworthy person (not the one you glimpse in the mirror) but somebody who has proved to be the most asociable creature, say a politician who puts a whole town on the dole, or just a small entrepreneur who swindled the widow and the orphan, would you give such a person a letter of recommendation to a country and its people he/she may wish to visit? Certainly, upright citizen, you would do no such thing. But your country does. There is his passport duly stamped, all he has to prove is his birth of origin, another piece of paper.

What ancient inhabitant can resist that piece of paper which makes you homeless, which commits you to jail, which allows you so much pittance, which forbids you entrance, which closed down your factory, your hospital, which buries your rivers, asphalts your arable land.

And yet, like a canvas which once has been

the work of a master but other hands have covered over layer by layer, a careful restorer might bring back to its original hues (O.E. sound), the cunning meaning of anarchy may be recovered not by the copyist, not by the party-man, but by those with the will and the wish to wash away the stains of tyranny.

How long is a piece of string? This is the question to which the answer cannot be learnt from books. Most anarchists know the answer to this riddle. It is the organism that matters, not the organisation, it is the return of respect for the umbilical cord. It is in tying and untying of knots which distinguishes the anarchist from the impatient, clumsy tyrant cutting with his sword the Gordian knot which proved nothing but his ignorance.

Exiles have come to this land, perhaps they never knew why, and laboriously learnt the words of the language hoping that by knowing the words they could get to know the social arrangements. They could have saved their efforts in that direction, for nothing the natives liked more than putting their face sideways to the ground as with puckered mouths they blew at the kindling to light up their camp fires.

John Rety

The Raven

Anarchist Quarterly
number 24

on

'Science - 1'
out now

Back issues still available:

- 23 - Spain / Emma Goldman
- 22 - Crime
- 21 - Feminism
- 20 - Kropotkin's 150th Anniversary
- 19 - Sociology
- 18 - Anthropology
- 17 - Use of Land
- 16 - Education (2)
- 15 - Health
- 14 - Voting
- 13 - Anarchism in Eastern Europe
- 12 - Communication
- 11 - Class
- 10 - Libertarian Education
- 9 - Bakunin and Nationalism
- 8 - Revolution
- 7 - Emma Goldman
- 6 - Tradition and Revolution
- 5 - Spies for Peace
- 4 - Computers and Anarchism
- 3 - Surrealism (part 2)
- 2 - Surrealism (part 1)
- 1 - History of Freedom Press

£3.00 each (post-free anywhere)

from

FREEDOM PRESS

FREEDOM
fortnightly

ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press
84b Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7QX

Printed by Aldgate Press, London E1

Red Rambles in Derbyshire

A programme of free guided walks in the White Peak for Greens, Socialists, Libertarians and Anarchists.

— Spring 1994 —

Sunday 8th May: Cycle 'ramble' on the Tissington Trail. Meet 10am at Ashbourne end of the Tissington Trail. Cycles can be hired at this point.

— Summer 1994 —

Sunday 5th June: Circular walk around Upper Padley. Meet 11am for 11.15am start at Upper Padley railway station café (off B6521). Walk guide Malcolm Bennett. Length 5 miles approx.

Sunday 3rd July: Circular walk around Blackbrook Reservoir near junction 23 on M1. Meet at roadside near Mount Bernard Abbey at 11am for 11.15 start. Walk guide Mick Hamilton. Length 5 miles approx.

Sunday 7th August: Circular walk. Meet 11.30am for 11.45 start at centre of Great Longstone village, one mile north of Ashford in the Water. Walk guide Jon Simcock. Length 6-7 miles approx.

Telephone for further details
0773-827513



Anarchosyndicalist Initiative

Conference to take place

7th - 20th July 1994

Prague - Czech Republic

Further details from Freedom Press:
International Section

London

Anarchist Forum

Meets Fridays at about 8.00pm at **Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL** (note new venue).

SUMMER TERM 1994

22nd April - Anarchism and the Gift Economy (speaker: Michael Murray)

29th April - General discussion

Sunday 1st May - *May Day Picnic* in Chiswick Park in Chiswick House Grounds near junction of Great West Road (A4 leading to M4) and Chertsey Road (A316 leading to M3) close to North and South Circulars (car park off southern carriageway of Great West Road). LT Tube stations: Turnham Green, Chiswick Park and Gunnersbury (also North London Line) and Chiswick BR Station from Waterloo, Clapham Junction and Reading (via Witton). Good pubs in Chiswick and Strand-on-the-Green for early arrivals. Café and WC.

6th May - Anarchism and Utopia (speaker: Jason Wilcox)

13th May - General discussion

20th May - Talk by a member of the Socialist

Freedom in Education: Rhetoric or Reality?

a day conference on education
organised by LibED

at

**Friends' Meeting House
Queens Road, Leicester**

on

**Saturday 14th May
10am - 6pm**

plus evening entertainment

further information from:

LibED

170 Wells Road, Bristol BS4 2AG
(please enclose an sae)

Party of Great Britain (specific details yet to be confirmed)

27th May - General discussion

3rd June - The Co-op and its Place in Politics (speaker: Tim Pearce)

10th June - General discussion

17th June - History of Native Americans (speaker: Jim Baker of Boston BAD [Boston Anarchist Drinking Club])

24th June - Paganism, Feminism and Ecology (speaker: Daniel Cohen)

1st July - General discussion

8th July - Drawing up the 1994/95 programme

Monday 29th August - *Summer Picnic* (venue to be decided)

If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, overseas or out-of-town speakers especially, please contact either Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (Tel: 081-847 0203), not too early in the day please, giving subject matter and prospective dates and we will do our best to accommodate. **Note:** as we are no longer meeting at the Mary Ward Centre we are no longer tied to term dates so the meetings may continue into the summer.

**Peter Neville / Dave Dane
for London Anarchist Forum**

FREEDOM AND THE RAVEN SUBSCRIPTION RATES 1994

	inland	abroad surface	outside Europe airmail	Europe airmail
Freedom (24 issues) half price for 12 issues				
Claimants	10.00	-	-	-
Regular	14.00	22.00	34.00	28.00
Institutions	22.00	30.00	40.00	40.00

The Raven (4 issues)

Claimants	10.00	-	-	-
Regular	12.00	14.00	18.00	16.00
Institutions	18.00	22.00	27.00	27.00

Joint sub (24 x Freedom & 4 x The Raven)

Claimants	18.00	-	-	-
Regular	24.00	34.00	50.00	40.00

Bundle subs for Freedom (12 issues)

	inland	abroad surface	abroad airmail
2 copies x 12	12.00	13.00	22.00
5 copies x 12	26.00	32.00	44.00
10 copies x 12	50.00	60.00	84.00

Other bundle sizes on application

Giro account number 58 294 6905
All prices in £ sterling

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

To Freedom Press in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street,
London E1 7QX

- I am a subscriber, please renew my sub to *Freedom* for issues
- Please renew my joint subscription to *Freedom* and *The Raven*
- Make my sub to *Freedom* into a joint sub starting with number 24 of *The Raven*
- I am not yet a subscriber, please enter my sub to *Freedom* for issues and *The Raven* for issues starting with number 24
- I would like the following back numbers of *The Raven* at £3 per copy post free (numbers 1 to 23 are available)
- I enclose a donation to Freedom Fortnightly Fighting / Freedom Press Overheads / Raven Deficit Fund (delete as applicable)

I enclose £..... payment

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....