

# anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

**"Anarchy is the ideal of abolishing the violent and coercive authority of man over man."**

**Luigi Fabbri**

**We told them long ago!**

## **"ELITE COMPANIES RULE WORLD OF TRADE" say United Nations**

**I**n the editorial columns of *Freedom* we never tire of pointing out that governments of different stripes come and go but capitalism – the multi-nationals, the trans-national corporations – go on ... for ever if not destroyed by their victims worldwide.

### **DON'T PITY THE EX-MINISTERS**

**O**ne specially interesting quote from a page-long interview (*Independent*, 16th August) with Labour's Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, is where he lashes out, and rightly so, at the ex-Ministers who, no sooner are they sacked or politely 'resign' to 'spend more time with the family' so they say, get highly paid jobs in the very businesses and industrial worlds in which, as ministers, they were involved in privatising. Gordon Brown in his interview with Angela Lambert is quoted as saying that he was:

"... particularly enraged by the way in which some former ministers have apparently benefited personally from their privatising policies while in office. He ticks them off: Norman Tebbit privatised British Telecom and now he's on the board. Peter Walker privatised British Gas and now he's on the board. Lord Young presided over the formation of Cable & Wireless and now he's chairman on nearly £1 million a year. Norman Fowler privatised National Freight – and is now sitting on the board. It's a continuous succession from Cabinet room to boardroom.

Not only that: there are all those electricity and water millionaires who made money simply by being there when the public utilities were privatised, not by being any more efficient or productive ... while the pensioners, next winter, are having to pay VAT in fuel. The sense of fair play got lost in the eighties; but in the end, people do believe that society should be run on principles of fair dealing."

Anarchists applaud Mr Brown's exposure of corruption. But can he not see that *fair play* fair dealing can only exist in a society where there is common ownership of the wealth of this island. Today this does not exist and none of the political parties believe in the common ownership of the wealth of this land.

Yes, different governments have enough powers to look after their own for all kinds of services and to clobber the 'opposition' to pay for them. The present government has admirably illustrated this fact of political life. Every official, and other, report confirms that in the fifteen years that the Tories have been in office "the rich have got richer and the poor poorer". But before our readers jump to conclusions and ask us why then do we not advocate voting for the Labour opposition, we were about to add that even sympathetic expert observers such as Professor Townsend have pointed out, and with regret, that under Labour governments (and between 1945 and 1979 they were in office for a total of seventeen years) in the end the rich were richer ... etc., in spite of good intentions for the workers ... perhaps.

Even assuming 'good intentions', how could they implement a far-reaching re-distribution of wealth without taking into public control the land, industry and not least the banks, building societies and the

pension funds, as well as 'nationalising' public services which they did in 1945 and introducing the so-called 'welfare state'.

For the post-war generations one should perhaps add a long footnote on nationalisation and the welfare state. After all, in waging a bloody war in which a conscripted army and workforce were promised a 'brave new world' in return for those years of rationing – and though the rich could get all they wanted *it was rationing for everybody else* – and more civilian deaths and maiming than arming the fighting forces, it is not surprising that the general mood was not for a return to the inter-war years of unemployment, ill-health, slum housing. The Labour Party won the General Elections of 1945 with an overwhelming majority, in spite of all the propaganda for Churchill as the man-who-won-the-war (which he didn't of course – the Russians did!).

Nationalisation, the NHS and other services were introduced without difficulty or much opposition by the  
*(continued on page 2)*

### **GREEN LIGHTS FOR THE STRIKING SIGNALMEN!**

**T**he signalmen's battle for a working wage goes on in spite of a section of the media (*The Independent* for instance) saying that they should capitulate (in spite of polls indicating public support for their demands) and a more than luke-warm attitude from the Labour Party hierarchy, anxious not to be closely linked to any union direct action while not refusing the cash that keeps the party going.

**W**hile applauding the solidarity among the signalmen (according to the union more than 98% have resisted all the bribes and threats from Railtrack) one cannot be silent about the supervisors and other RTM employees who have agreed to operate signal boxes during the strike. And last but not least, the train drivers who just recently have been making noises about taking strike action not out of solidarity for

the signalmen but because Railtrack's use of managers and supervisors to operate the signal boxes might put safety at risk on the permanent way. What hypocrisy!

Once again, surely, the anarchists are right when they say that workers should not fight each other over pay (differentials); that they should resist (not in words but in action) the government's legislation which makes a solidarity, a sympathy, strike a crime. The trades unions, meeting as we write, are realising that more than ever the producers, the workers will never be represented by any political party.

When the workers realise that they are the producers of all the wealth that the stinking rich depend upon for their privileges, surely they will unite and fight injustice, privilege and, as we have argued elsewhere, property. Private property is the curse of humanity.

**"ELITE COMPANIES RULE WORLD OF TRADE"  
say United Nations**

(continued from page 1)

Tories. After all, during the war Churchill was offering the colonies their freedom if they were prepared to die for the Union Jack and in the Middle East the British were promising to share what was not theirs with their 'allies'.

We make no apology for these reflections since most people today were not born when the 'welfare state' was introduced and are unaware of the circumstances which made it possible in a capitalist society.

Now in 1994 the Tory government is dismantling the welfare state at an alarming rate for the poor 30% of the population, which includes the very young and the very old. The twin Tory gangsters Portillo and Aitken are pruning the Social Security budget with a vengeance. As we have pointed out on more than one occasion, the voting system in a prosperous nation (which two-thirds of the population of this country undoubtedly are) invariably favours the privileged - the prosperous.

The Labour Party can only win the next elections if they can persuade a large enough section of the electorate that they will not be worse off financially and enough of the poor and old that they will get something from a change of faces in Downing Street.

The anarchists have been telling would-be Labour Party punters that the Labour Party may win the next elections, and assuming that Tony Blair and Prescott and all the new NEC are as new-born socialists, the results will be that they will sort out all the financial problems they inherit from the Tories, will be unable to do anything about unemployment, poverty and homelessness because taxing the rich is not enough to balance the books and so, as in all post-war Labour governments, who pays if not the poor? And as a result the 'prosperous' 60% vote the Tories back to build up another enormous deficit!

We have now come full circle - to the first paragraph of this editorial. No government, we say, is today in control of the financial-economic system. The multinationals and trans-nationals are a law unto themselves. Freedom has been saying this for years.

Surprise, surprise, the United Nations have at last discovered, to quote Guardian headlines (31st August), that "Elite companies rule world of trade", that "multi-national groups dominate global economy". We can do no better than quote the capitalist enemy!

"A new study by the United Nations found that trans-national corporations (TNCs) account for one third of the global output.

According to the World Investment Report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the workplace is being shaped by TNCs, with trade unions and national

governments largely impotent to prevent the biggest companies setting their own agenda in terms of jobs, industrial relations and training.

The report found that the sales from trans-national corporations were now worth \$4,800 billion - bigger than total international trade - and formed 'the productive core of the globalising world economy'." (our italics)

Significantly the report added:

"... that the scope for still greater expansion of TNCs had been enhanced by the signing of the Uruguay Round of Gatt trade talks, the North American Free Trade Agreement and by other regional and bilateral trade treaties. One third of all world trade is already intra-firm."

How right the dissident spokesmen of the third world countries when they declared that GATT and the so-called free market were all inspired by USA and multinational vested interests.

Again we are encouraged to see confirmation of the anarchist view that capitalist greed contributes to its eventual

destruction. Their own report recognises that:

"Even within the world of TNCs, there is an elite group. The 100 largest multinationals held \$3,400 billion in assets by the end of 1992, of which about 40 per cent were assets located outside of their home countries. In addition, the top 100 - which includes 11 UK firms - control about one-third of the world stock of foreign direct investment."

But the enemy, the anarchists' enemy according to the research body, is mighty and no government left or right or in-between will defeat it.

The global network of TNCs is, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's research, comprised of:

"... 37,000 parent firms, which control 200,000 foreign affiliates, not including numerous non-equity links. Two-thirds of the parent firms - 26,000 - are from 14 wealthy developed countries, an increase of 19,000 since the end

of the 1960s, when economies tended to be far less open to overseas competition."

With this 'inside information' about the organisation of the capitalist system in action no socialist, no anarchist, meaning business can be argued that the capitalist system can be fought and destroyed (it is surely obvious that there is no point in trying to operate or reform a system which is corrupt beyond reform, which is disintegrating by its own greed) by the 'normal legal processes'. Never has revolution, a revolt of the slaves, been not only more needed but more possible, assuming enough of us lose their faith ... in politicians!

Believing in politicians is as unrewarding as believing in a loving God!

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

Sunday trading it is true gives 'freedom' to the public to relieve the weekend boredom, if that is the case, but for shop workers it means that the supermarkets will make their lives more difficult and even more underpaid than at present. There is already confusion as to a workers rights to not work on Sundays. According to a report in the East Anglian Daily Times (24th August) "shop workers have been given new rights to protect them from having to work on Sunday". The USDAW area organiser for the shop workers' union "said he was pleased with the extra employment rights". Yet the Guardian's labour correspondent (23rd August) reports that:

"A Sainsbury's distribution satellite firm has locked out its 300-strong workforce to force through compulsory Sunday working and a no-strike agreement, highlighting a loophole in Sunday trading legislation.

Workers at Lowfield's distribution depot at Middleton, Manchester, voted for industrial action after the company insisted that in future they would have to be available for work any day of the week because of pressure from Sainsbury's.

The action was suspended before it could smooth the way for negotiations, but Lowfield's, which is owned by the transport firm Tibbett & Britten, responded by locking workers out.

Last week the workforce voted under pressure to accept the Sunday working requirement. But Lowfield's has now said that there can be no resumption of work without a no-strike deal.

When will workers realise that they will never win against the supermarkets and the multinationals if they are not prepared to organise and to make solidarity the basis of their struggle?

Obviously if you start life at school with a calculator you tend not to be able to use your head when you have to work out what five bananas at 25p each will cost. And our Government Inspectors after long consideration and consultation have come to this world-shattering conclusion that "schools should consider banning the use of calculators to improve basic skills in mathematics and science" (East Anglian Daily Times, 17th August 1994).

**What is 'Permanent' in Northern Ireland?**

For the Northern Ireland Unionists to expect the IRA to declare that overnight they have abandoned violence permanently, that is for ever, is as ridiculous as it is to assume that when governments sign peace treaties or declarations of economic collaboration that unpredictable events will not make the treaties and declarations not worth the paper they were printed on.

We cannot help but refer readers to our editorial of last year, 'Hypocrisy Rules in Northern Ireland' (Freedom, 13th November 1993), where we pointed out that government is violence and the only language they will respond to is that of violence.

Surely this fact of life has been amply demonstrated in South Africa where apartheid was unquestioned for so long as Chief Lutulu played the Afrikaaners tune. Things only changed and the white racists started to 'see

reason' when in the 1960s the ANC began to respond to government violence with counter-violence.\* In Israel it was the Intifada, a violent reaction by the Palestinians in the territories occupied by the Israelis after the six-day war in 1967, which last year must have made the present Labour Rabin government 'see reason'. After all, Rabin was at one time Minister of War and hardly likely to want to shake hands with Arafat. But as a result of the unpredictable violence of the Intifada this is exactly what he did in Washington, with a smiling Clinton as referee!

So far as Northern Ireland is concerned, Surely both the IRA and the British government have come to the conclusion that neither side can win. The militant 'loyalists' who, it seems to us, are engaged in assassinations pure and simple - after all, if they meant business they should be counteracting the IRA bombings in the City of London with similar attacks in Dublin - and so one can dismiss them as petty gangsters. Before any attempts at assassinating Freedom's editors is contemplated, we should add that certainly anarchists in our circles have no sympathy either with the IRA nor the so-called loyalists terrorists and gunmen! And least of all with the role of the British government, not just for the past 25 years but for their having created the problems that the suave minister Patrick Mayhew is now trying to solve, some 300 years ago when they sought to hold down the rebellious Irish by 'importing' Scottish and English Protestants!

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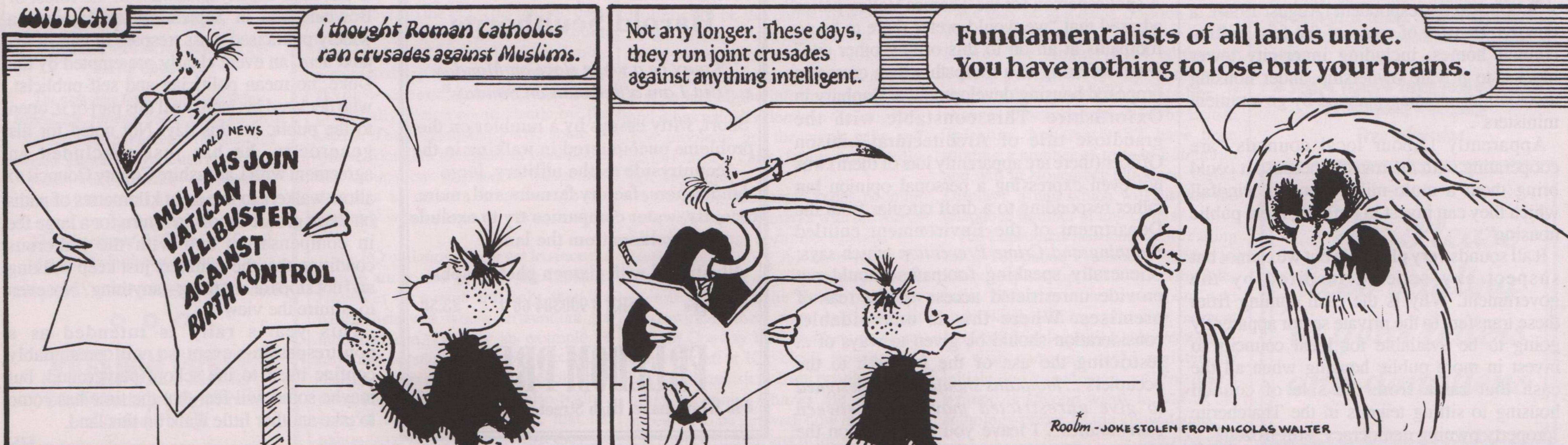
\* See Violence and Anarchism: a Polemic, Freedom Press, 88 pages, £2.50 (post free inland).

**John Major aka George Washington?**

The recent meeting between the Prime Minister and the fundamentalist Democratic Unionist the Reverend Doctor Paisley ended almost before it had started, with Mr Major chucking Paisley out.

The Reverend Doctor is reported as saying that he was told by the PM "Get out of this room. Never come back until you're prepared to say I speak the truth and do not tell lies".

For once we agree with Paisley when he told reporters "How many Members of Parliament would stand up and say that he believed every word John Major says". But how often has the Reverend Doctor himself been, as the former head of the Civil Service put it, "economical with the truth" or, in ordinary language, "obviously lying".



\* See British Imperialism and the Palestine Crisis, Freedom Press, 1989, 104 pages, £1.95 (post free inland).

## — ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

## The tree man's dream of home

Flora Thompson is remembered as the village postmistress's assistant of a century ago who on the eve of the Second World War began her trilogy of recollections of rural life *Lark Rise to Candleford*. Many years earlier, in February 1925, she noted down the characteristics of farm hedges:

"The hedgerow is so crammed with interest that it would provide studies for more hours than there are in the day. It is one of the old double hedges which, thickened with trees and twined about with creepers, used to be a common feature in English scenery. Such hedgerows used to be, and still are where they have been retained, both gardens for every kind of wild flower and sanctuaries for birds and lesser animals ... Such hedgerows are gradually disappearing, together with the small irregularly shaped fields they bounded. The modern scientific farmer does not approve of such waste of space and harbourage for 'vermin'. In highly farmed districts the old, untidy, picturesque hedgerow is doomed."

One interesting thing about this passage is its date. For she was writing during the inter-war agricultural depression, long before what we now see as the agricultural industry's assault on trees and hedges began. At the Town and Country Planning Summer School in Lancaster in 1993, Sir Richard Body claimed that "the intensification of agriculture in the last 25 years has gone ahead faster and more furiously in the United Kingdom than in any other member state of the EC" and he read out to the assembled planners what he called "the woeful litany of statistics" of damage to the rural environment. These included:

- 130,000 miles of hedgerows ripped up.
- 40% of our ancient woodlands gone.
- Seven million acres of pastureland ploughed up.
- Over 95% of our wetlands drained.
- 875 miles of stone walls destroyed.
- 95% of the downlands of southern England gone.
- 180,000 acres of moorland ploughed up.

"Some of us," he said, "have made such an uproar about this agri-vandalism that in recent years we have seen the introduction of several schemes to undo the damage". It infuriates people like him (and me) that having paid subsidies for years to farmers to do all this damage in the name of increased output, we are now "paying the farmer to manage the countryside and thus protect the rural environment".

I remember the same bemusement not far from where I live, where farmers had received grants from the Ministry of Agriculture to grub up hedges, and I now saw a swarm of young people employed under one of the bewildering set of acronyms, YTS, MSC, etc., replacing them at the public expense. I consoled myself with the thought that at last they were getting a training which will be important in the eco-conscious 21st century. For planting, nurturing and maintaining trees is a skill that has to be learned.

Where I live, for example, the nearby

Dedham Vale is designated as an AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural beauty) where the local planning authority has been given powers to preserve and enhance the area and to obtain Exchequer grants for this purpose. I watched with pleasure the enthusiasm of the people in charge, seeking to pass on wisdom and employability to the young whose job prospects around here are virtually non-existent. Elsewhere in the country the National Trust in another AONB employs contractors, who employ sub-contractors, to carry out the same planting function.

One young man from the next village (I'll call him Geoff) has at last found the right field of work for himself as a result of the six years of experience he has gathered this way in tree planting and maintenance. In the off-season he finds work in associated jobs like fencing. Like anyone else, he has the urge to find a place of his own and conceived the idea that the thing to do was to find a patch of land for a tree nursery so that he could win work supplying, planting and maintaining trees.

Land round here is absurdly expensive (thanks to subsidised farming) but some way north of here he has found a five-acre site, and has accumulated over those six years enough in the way of savings for a deposit on that site. You will have guessed that Geoff's plan would be to plant the site and live there in a caravan, supporting himself working for forestry sub-contractors and fencing until the income from his saplings would enable him to replace the caravan and build himself a house.

Naturally local anarchist advice in the pub was that it was a great idea and he should just press ahead and do it. He would make a nice martyr to the 'do your own thing' ideology. Fortunately he is wiser than that and knew that, quite apart from incurring the retributive wrath of the planning system, he would need every kind of approval simply for the difficult task of getting a loan for the balance of the purchase price.

So he went to the regional office of the Ministry of Agriculture and ASDA (Agricultural Development and Advisory

Service). He found both helpful but discouraging. They advised him that any other use of those five acres would be considered more viable and that the stumbling block was that the key issue was whether 70% of his income would come from that site. It wouldn't. The local planning authority seemed to Geoff less friendly. No more mobile homes would be allowed on their patch. If he cared to put in an outline planning application (and pay a fee of £150) he could be told this officially.

So Geoff is resigned that he can't pursue his plan and is looking still further afield for some area where land is less precious to try again. What should I advise him? I think that, unlike so many of the young, he has found his métier (or as our rulers would call it, his market niche), which is more than can be said of many of his contemporaries, thanks to the collapse of the job market. His occupation is geared to environmental priorities for the next century. He doesn't want subsidising like the farming industry. He doesn't demand 'affordable' housing. He simply wants to house himself at the level he can afford and to improve his situation over time, just as all our rural ancestors did.

Yet somehow the rural environment is too precious to make room for people like him, whose precarious livelihood has grown out of the effort to improve it.

Colin Ward

## Rambling Notes

**M**OTORWAYS GOOD, FOOTPATHS BAD, would be a government slogan if it were given to honestly stating its intentions. The determination to cover more and more of the countryside with concrete, just to be able to claim decreases in transit times measured in minutes or even seconds, is familiar to readers. Direct action opposition to this road-building madness is now so well established that the government is on the defensive and some new schemes are disguised as no more than a series of by-passes designed to relieve the blight that heavy goods vehicles inflict on village centres. However it is widely suspected that the eventual plan is to link them up to produce a completely new motorway.

The stated justification for these new roads is that they are essential to the economic prosperity of the country. An advantage not mentioned is that movements by road are less subject to interruption by militant groups of workers (no train drivers or signallers to contend with) and, of course, a good network of roads facilitates the rapid movement of security forces. Conversely, the unwanted movement of workers is easier to control, as was demonstrated during the miners' strike of 1984-85.

Why the humble footpath should be increasingly under threat is less clear, although the landowners' desire to keep others off their land is part of it. For one of the more ludicrous reasons we are indebted to a report in the spring issue of the magazine of the Open Spaces Society - footpaths encourage crime. A spokesperson for the Thames Valley police advised that "we would prefer there to be no footpaths at all on to this or any other site" when referring to a footpath which crosses a proposed housing development at Banbury in Oxfordshire. This constable with the grandiose title of Architectural Liaison Officer (there are apparently lots of them) was not even expressing a personal opinion but rather responding to a draft circular from the Department of the Environment entitled *Planning and Crime Prevention* which says: "Generally speaking footpaths should not provide unrestricted access to the rear of premises. Where this is unavoidable, consideration should be given to ways of ... restricting the use of the footpath to the occupiers ... footpaths should not be designed to give unrestricted movement between communities". I leave you to ponder on the

implications of this last phrase, which is in my italics. It is not surprising that the Ramblers' Association considers our network of footpaths so under threat that it has just initiated a campaign to draw attention to the problem.

Quangos, although set up by governments, have a measure of independence and sometimes develop a direction of their own until the government steps in to stop them. This happened in 1991 when the Nature Conservancy Council was abolished in a fit of pique by Nicholas Ridley when Environment Secretary (see Bev Nichols in *The Raven 17 on Land*) and replaced by English Nature. Its work on nature conservation and the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest had led it into a number of confrontations with large-scale farmers and landowners, especially in Scotland. Now history repeats itself as the government plans to abolish the Countryside Commission by combining it with the much larger English Nature. This is not to change the topic but to extend it, as the role of the Countryside Commission is to facilitate access to the countryside for leisure and pleasure, and when, in 1990, it conducted a survey it found that in any two-mile walk on footpaths the walker would have had a 66% chance of

encountering a serious obstacle. Following this survey, they produced a plan to have all 120,000 miles of England's footpaths made accessible by the year 2000. By badgering local authorities and using its own resources the Countryside Commission has been making good progress towards this aim. Some 300 organisations and individuals have opposed the merger, or at least had serious doubts, considering it both unnecessary and undesirable, whilst the landowners, who care little for a few footpaths, fell about laughing in their enthusiasm for the scheme. It is likely that the new body will be dominated by the Country Landowners Association, but then isn't that what it is all about.

**B**y noon on Sunday 25th September walkers from all over Britain will be gathering at Garstang High School on the B6430 road in Bowgreave near Garstang for one of the biggest access rallies in years. They will be protesting at their exclusion from one of the largest areas of wild open moorland in England not crossed by a road and known as the Forest of Bowland. Despite 25 years of campaigning, rallies and even protest invasions, little has been achieved since the last national rally exactly 25 years ago.

Lancashire County Council has succeeded in negotiating access agreements to 1,300 hectares out of the 25,000 hectares of upland. North West Water in the 1980s made a little-known pledge that, whilst not actually agreeing access, it would not turn suitably clad (sic) walkers off its land.

The seventh richest person in Britain and the richest landowner, the Duke of Westminster, is the other major landowner in the forest of Bowland and in September '92 I joined a widely publicised mass trespass of part of his land here, an event clearly pre-empted by the Duke, no mean politician and self-publicist, who declared his land, well this part of it, open to the public on this day. Not noted for his generosity, he has just concluded an agreement with Lancashire County Council to allow walkers to use eight kilometres of paths on these grouse moors in return for a large fee in compensation and with the ludicrous condition that the ramblers just keep walking and not stop for anything - anything? Not even to admire the view?

This year's rally is intended as a non-trespassing event so will presumably confine itself to the school playground, but maybe some will feel that the time has come to take another little walk on this land.

HS

## NEWS IN BRIEF

According to *The Independent's* chief political correspondent (August 1994) "a massive transfer of some of the four million council homes, including inner-city tower blocks, to private ownership under housing associations is being planned by government ministers".

Apparently Labour local councils "are cooperating with the transfer because it could bring them a multi-million pound windfall which they can invest in building more public housing".

It all sounds very plausible but we cannot but suspect any scheme inspired by the government. Why is the cash coming from these transfers to the private sector apparently going to be available for local councils to invest in more public housing when all the cash that came from the sale of council housing to sitting tenants in the Thatcherite 'property owning democracy' still frozen?

### Freedom to Roam by Harold Sculthorpe

"I may be a wage slave on Monday  
But I am a free man on Sunday"

Short, witty essays by a rambler on the problems encountered in walking in the countryside as the military, large landowners, factory farmers and, more recently, water companies try to exclude walkers from the land.

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## Through the Anarchist Press

We like drawing imaginary lines and although the sky through the large windows looks the same to me whichever way I look, when I go through that door marked 'Embarkation' I am shepherded to another country. It is a bit like going to the cinema. You buy your ticket at the box office and you can go through the door and watch the film.

Leaving the country is usually easy. They are only too pleased to see the back of you. Returning is a different story altogether.

Mind you these are formalities, such as passports, money. It is a bit like a Turkish bath. From the ice cold water to the steaming hot.

And all that geography! The sun shining on that placid wave is where England ends and France or Spain begins.

Whatever, it is a huge industry. You may recall my calculations (there must be a maths master out there who could check it for me) that within twelve months 916 million people go through the air space of any ordinary garden on the flightpath to London airport. That journey also started the same way. All they had to do was to go through a door flourishing tickets, passports and money. Once they are in the aircraft - where are they? Over our heads, making a lot of noise.

Money is good for business. Especially taking money off travellers on ships, at embarkation points or in the city centres. The money-changer is on to a good thing. He buys cheap and sells dear - and makes a fixed charge for his work plus commission.

The coach arrived in Plymouth at 5am and it was raining heavily. But the old man and his wife were opening the café, an enormous barn of a place.

"You run this place on your own?" I asked incredulously.

"My son helps, but he doesn't get up early." He was eager to explain his circumstances and suddenly my eyes filled with tears. Maybe I was tired from the journey, but that is a simplification.

The old man was a Greek Cypriot from the village of Muffli in Turkish-occupied Cyprus (imaginary lives and their consequences once again).

"We were told to leave our homes in two hours - we lost all our belongings. My wife wasn't even allowed to take a change of clothing."

His wife was standing behind the counter, squirting hot water into the teapot and gently put a finger across her mouth signalling him to be quiet.

"The gentleman doesn't want to know" she said.

This is when suddenly tears were pouring out of my eyes.

I recalled another story told to me recently by a Turkish Cypriot woman. It was the 'other side' which messed up her life and her family's. "They treated me like a piece of luggage from the age of two, I've never got over it."

Victoria Station was deserted on Tuesday evening. 'The pain of it all' said a poster put out by the management. A few people were sitting about. The polished floors would make an excellent ballroom.

The problem about railways is that, unlike shipping, it is almost like a Rubic's cube exercise of rushing empty trains across long distances to be in readiness for the following morning's passenger transport. There was no point in having the trains in Victoria where they stood empty at night on 27 platforms and dozens of sidings, when all that stock was needed in commuter country in the morning to bring the 'workers' into the city.

Come an anarchist society the rail track could easily be converted for the use of roller-skaters and skate-boarders.

John Retz

## Notes on the tribes of Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland the terms 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' are labels rather of tribal affinity than of belief about the supernatural. If the census in England, Scotland and Wales were to inquire about religion, perhaps 30% would declare themselves atheists, agnostics or humanists. In Northern Ireland the census does in fact ask for such information, but very few say they are atheists, etc., because your standing as an atheist depends on whether you are a Protestant atheist or a Catholic atheist.

The Protestants are in the ascendant, as is shown by the fact that 92% of police officers declare themselves Protestant. But there are two common misconceptions: that the Protestants are a majority, and that Protestants are identical with Unionists while Catholics are identical with Nationalists. (Unionists want Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom, and Nationalists want Ireland to be united as one country.)

According to the last census, the inhabitants of Northern Ireland are 45% Protestants, 39% Catholics and 16% others, mostly Muslims

and Jews. But of those who vote in elections, 55% vote Unionist and 35% Nationalist. The Protestants are a minority and the Unionists a majority.

It may well be that non-voting is more common in the Catholic community, as in general the poor vote less frequently than the rich. But it also looks as if a lot of the 'others', and perhaps some Catholics, vote Unionist.

There are several reasons for voting Unionist, other than wanting to preserve Protestant domination. One is that many people in Northern Ireland are unemployed and the UK has better employment pay. Another is that the Republic of Ireland is dominated by the Catholic church.

The 1938 constitution, which permitted the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy to veto Acts of Parliament, was repealed in the 1950s. But the church still controls primary education (village schoolteachers may be sacked by village priests), hospitals, public libraries and censorship. This may change soon, as it is deplored by many including the more liberal

Catholic priests, but it is the way things are now.

It might be argued that the tribal division in Northern Ireland, by which Catholics have second-class tribal status, is chiefly reinforced by the Catholics themselves. State schools are known locally as 'Protestant' schools, but this is a misnomer. They are open to all. The reason Catholic children do not attend them is not that they are excluded, but that Catholics insist on having separate schools where children can be instructed in Catholic doctrine. This reinforces tribalism by ensuring that Protestant or Catholic children remain strangers to each other, even when they are close neighbours.

Roman Catholics have separate schools in England too, but in England there is no tribal division to be reinforced. Catholics are descended from converts and absorbed immigrants, and neighbour children who attend different schools play together without anyone thinking it remarkable.

In Northern Ireland such easy association occurs only in the few small villages which have mixed Protestant and Catholic populations. In the cities, it is considered a triumph of community relations for 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' schools to share a playground, or for a concerned group to take mixed Protestant and Catholic teenagers on holiday together.

## Anarchist Movement News

### McLibel case resumes

The libel case brought by the McDonalds hamburger chain against Helen Steel and Dave Morris was in recess for the whole of August, and was due to resume on 12th September. We cannot report on the resumption because we went to press before then, but we learned during the recess that the case has been rescheduled and now seems likely to go on until February or March. The cost to McDonalds will probably be nearer to £2 million than £1 million.

Before the recess the United States media began to take more interest, and the case was reported on network television. None of it can be doing McDonalds much good.

The McLibel Support Campaign is calling for pickets at McDonalds stores everywhere. Details from **McLibel Support Campaign, c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, telephone 071-713 1269.**

### Anarchy in the UK 94

As *Freedom* has announced, the ten days which include the Anarchist Bookfair and the London Greenpeace Fayre, 21st to 30th October, will this year be turned into a ten-day London festival, 'Anarchy in the UK 94, ten days that shook the world'.

Events so far arranged include gigs, plays, exhibitions, poetry readings, a four-evening 'festival of smut', a demo described as the levitation of Parliament, and at least one big rally. For details send a stamped addressed envelope to **Anarchy in the UK 94, PO Box 1096, Bristol BS99 1BW.**

Fortnightly planning meetings for the festival are held at **121 Anarchist Centre, 121 Railton Road, London SE24**, nearest tube station Brixton. The next meeting is on Wednesday 28th September at 6pm. Telephone (always answered Wednesdays 4pm to 8pm, Fridays and Saturdays 1pm to

5pm, uncertain at other times) **071-274 6655.**

Among publications for the event will be a one-off comic with contributions from Leo Baxendale (originator of the Bash Street Kids), Ernie Crosswell, Hunt Emerson (Calculus Cat), Clifford Harper, Arthur Moyses, Peter Pavement, Peter Rigg (the Kronstadt Kids in *Freedom* 1982-86), Donald Room, Bryan Talbot and other anarchist artists.

## — OBITUARY — GEORGE WALFORD

George Walford died suddenly on Sunday 21st August. He was 75 years old.

A frequent contributor to *Freedom* and *The Raven*, and a regular at the London Anarchist Forum meetings, George was an articulate and original enthusiast for Harold Walsby's theory of ideologies. This puts anarchism at the top of a pyramid whose base is the great majority, "the ideology of expedience", who have no social ideals at all. His most recent contribution to *The Raven*, 'Through Religion to Anarchism' (issue 25) argues that the first step towards becoming an anarchist is to free oneself from the expedient mass. His last article for *The Raven* will appear in issue 27.

Earlier this year he provoked a long correspondence in *Freedom* by challenging anyone to name a freedom which does not restrict the freedom of others. Strictly speaking there is no such freedom (freedom from coercion restricts the freedom of people to exercise coercion, and so on) and to speak of "freedom which does not restrict the freedom of others" is to speak loosely, although we know what we mean. George delighted in exposing loose speech and questionable argument, as he showed in his witty collection of essays *Angles on Anarchism*.

For sixteen years he edited and published an entertaining periodical with the alarming title *Ideological Commentary, an Independent Journal of Systematic Ideology*. His family and friends hope to publish a collection of his best articles.

We shall miss him.

Donald Room

## What is 'Permanent' in Northern Ireland?

(continued from page 2)

A part from the growing American interest in investment in Northern Ireland and apparently Clinton's popularity stakes among the, believe it or not, *forty million Americans who claim to be more or less Irish* (it's unbelievable considering that in the whole island of Northern Ireland there are only five million inhabitants! - and even more unbelievable if one were to have a census of all the Irish living in Britain). The fact is that the British government has no interest in remaining in Northern Ireland. It has been for years a financial liability. The 3,500 deaths by the so-called terrorists in the past 25 years are good for the media and propaganda (after all, more than that number are killed on the roads every year and there is no special expression of indignation in the media). What is 'important' is that Northern Ireland is costing hundreds of millions of pounds a year to the British taxpayer and there is no 'solution' in sight. And it is this that exercises the 'intelligence' of Major, Portillo, Lilley et alia, whose only concern is to cut down costs. This writer is convinced that they have come to the conclusion that 25 years of the military occupation by up to 25,000 troops (now probably fewer) has failed and that the sooner they get out the better. Unfortunately these kinds of solutions in a capitalist society are not as simple as they might otherwise appear. As it is unemployment in Northern Ireland is over 20%. Remove the army and the IRA stops blowing up buildings (humans only have to be buried) and thousands of more jobs are lost!

So it's not surprising that 'peace in Northern Ireland' has many 'enemies' for vested materialistic reasons, and *not least the politicians*. But having said that, what is the anarchist solution to this problem which, apart from the vested interests, has divided a community which, if we understand it correctly, believes in the same 'God' but does its praying in two different churches. No mention even of the third category who have no God. Are there none in Northern Ireland.

What is the anarchist solution? For God's sake give us a break! So long as mankind clings to these superstitions there can be no solutions. But it must not prevent anarchists from going on making their own propaganda for freedom and against political and religious obscurantism.



# The Method of Freedom is the Method of Science

The Raven no. 26, Science 2

Freedom Press, 100 pages (£3.00 post free anywhere)

If you are not a subscriber to *The Raven* it is worth while your buying this issue as it has some good articles in it and brings together material that you would not encounter elsewhere very easily.

It is not about science specifically, but about ethics and social values in relation to science. In the radical press we sometimes come across some remarkably ignorant articles about science, for many people confuse science with technology and have a knee-jerk anti-science reaction which stems from their confusion. I myself find the most useful definition of science is that which Thomas Huxley gave in 1897: "Science is nothing but trained and organised common sense". This collection of essays begins, very sensibly, with one by Lynn Olson who sets out to explain what science is (and what it is not) and makes a very good job of it. She concludes by reminding us that: "The price of freedom is constant testing and evaluation. The method of freedom is the method of science."

Michael Bartholomew, a historian of science, gives us a very interesting discussion of the development of evolutionary theory, and relates Darwin's contribution to the ideologies that developed during the nineteenth century. The anarchism that developed in that century on the basis of British radicalism owes a very great deal to the debates around evolutionary theory, and it is often surprising how some anarchists in this century, although they have read works by Bakunin and Kropotkin, fail fully to appreciate how their social theories link up with the 'enlightenment' that came from the realisation that mankind is just another animal species. I note that Desmond Morris's most recent book is being advertised by a quote that emphasises that we are not 'fallen angels' as religious people would have us believe (and therefore in need of redemption and all that nonsense) but 'emerging apes' who have come a long way and have still further to go. Bartholomew's discussion of these issues is extremely interesting and provocative of

further discussion among intelligent people, provided they are not blinkered by Christianity, Marxism, Islam or dogmatic sociological theory.

Donald Rooum's piece on the Creationists who claim to be 'scientists' fits in very well with Bartholomew's essay, and is extremely informative. I must say that I have paid so little attention to this utterly bizarre movement that I am remarkably ignorant about it, which is perhaps a fault in me, as enlightened people in the sixteenth century should have informed themselves about the witch-hunting craze even though they realised that it was insane. Unfortunately, insane ideas can fuel powerful political movements. Rooum reveals himself to be a learned authority on Creationism and links it with medieval scholasticism.

When I saw that there was an essay by Brian Martin I was somewhat appalled, and came to it as I might have if yet another piece of nonsense from Enoch Powell had been included. Martin is the author of that ridiculous pamphlet *Strip the Experts* which should have the subtitle of 'The Smart-Alec Heckler's Handbook'. In it he explains how any bloody fool can make a nuisance of himself by heckling a speaker (or writer) who is trying to explain a subject about which he (the speaker) has some specialised knowledge. The heckler can be utterly ignorant of the subject; that does not matter, for if he follows Martin's rules, he can appear to know something and thus boost his ego. From time to time the 'Smart-Alec Heckler' comes into Donald Rooum's cartoons; this fellow with the bristly moustache wears a striped woollen scarf and a black hat pulled down over his eyes; he often follows his inane interjections by laughing 'Har, Har, Har, Har'. He appears to know fuck-all worth knowing about anything, but has obviously been tutored by Brian Martin.

The piece in *The Raven* by Martin is not as silly as the pamphlet, but the connection is there in the form of 'King Charles' head'. Those familiar with Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* will remember Mr Dick, a gentle and amiable lunatic who had an obsession about King Charles' head which somehow got into everything he wrote. Brian Martin's

obsession is not about the head of the decapitated king but concerning whether the water he drinks has more or less of the optimum level of fluoride in it. Of all the wacky forms of modern paranoia this strikes me as the wackiest. It seems to be related to the idea that there is an enormous conspiracy between dentists, chemists and politicians to reduce the amount of caries in our teeth; from my knowledge of dentists, this philanthropic exercise seems wildly improbable, for carious teeth are the bread and butter of dentists, a profession that has not shown any inclination to turn down good money by conspiratorial means.

There is a reprinted article from an issue of *The Ecologist*. This might have been good if the authors had thought out their case more lucidly, but they confuse science with technology. They also appear to be sentimental about farming as relatively well-to-do town-dwellers are apt to be. They contrast the "nimble mattock" with the "expensive tractor-drawn plough" to the latter's detriment. I have never seen a 'nimble' mattock myself, but I have certainly used a clumsy one when I worked on the land, and I know that farm-workers, whether they work in Lincolnshire or Zimbabwe would certainly prefer the latter to the former if they had the means to get it. Ecologists are very much

needed in the modern world, and there are huge problems to be solved; only by the application of *science* can they be dealt with sensibly. If *technology* is blindly applied without a scientific understanding of the problems we may do more harm than good, but sentimental people who automatically bracket 'science and technology' together, and pepper their writings with unnecessary bouquets to 'the peasant' do little good.

The excellent essay on 'The Ethical Dilemmas Awaiting Science Students' by Alan Cottey is all too brief. He is a Fellow of the School of Physics at the University of East Anglia where he gives students a course on 'Science, Values and Ethics', and I wish that more scientific establishments gave their students the chance to consider such issues as part of their education. Cottey contributed much the best article to the previous *Raven* (no. 24) issue on Science, which is worth getting simply for that article, although most of the others were rather indifferent. It is entitled 'Science, Scientists and Social Responsibility' and is rather longer than his brief contribution to this issue.

Barbara Davies sets out the facts about the use of animals in scientific research very plainly and leaves us to make up our minds about the ethical issues ourselves. Her article is much enhanced by the article following, by Gill Baker, entitled 'The Dark Face of Science', which is a typical diatribe against vivisection. Were it not for this silly diatribe we would not appreciate the points made by Barbara Davies so fully.

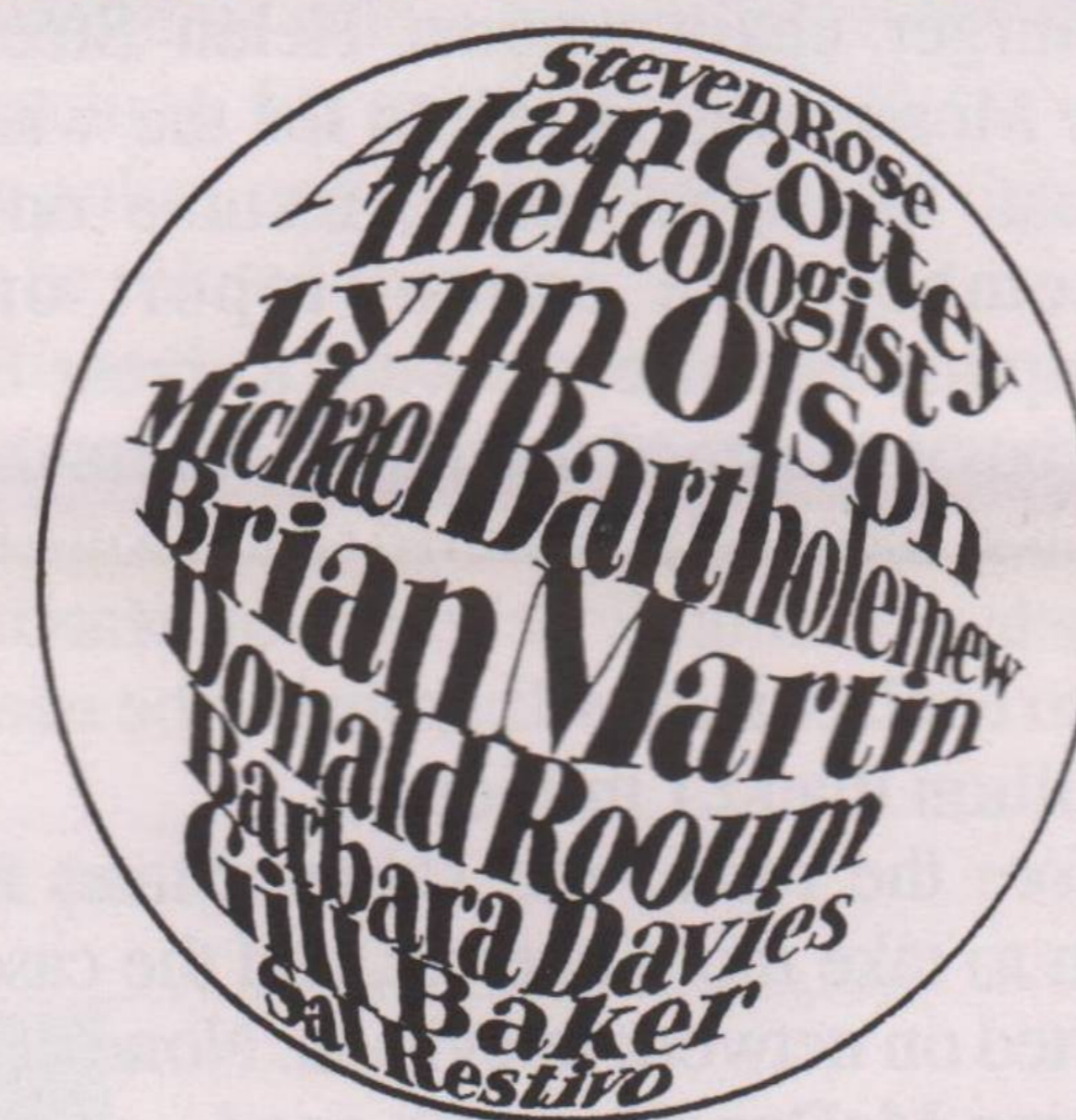
Davies reveals that in this country we eat over 600 million animals a year, excluding fish, and by contrast less than three million animals are used in medical research. Reading the two articles, it strikes me that the anti-vivisectionists are not seriously concerned about the lives or welfare of animals; they do not attack butchers' shops or fish-and-chips restaurants; they attack scientific establishments. They are simply anti-science, and their motivation appears to be more a matter of personal psychopathy than having any ethical commitment. The various 'animal rights' groups are not necessarily on the political 'left' as many people suppose, for some of them are outspokenly fascist in sympathy and express their general detestation of humankind by an exaggerated concern for other species. Their anti-science ideology finds various expressions, and one is reminded of the Nazi ideology in which Dr Goebbels advocated "thinking with one's blood" rather than by any process of reason. By chance this issue of *The Raven* comes out at the same time as *The Skeptic* (vol. 18, no. 3) which also contains an article on 'Animal Rights: Science or Pseudoscience' by Simon Brophy of the Research Defence Society, paired with one on 'Vivisection - the Case Against' by Lynn Williamson who works for an organisation called 'Uncaged'. People interested in this matter should read both journals.

I note that appended to Gill Baker's article is a statement by Steven Rose, who was shown the manuscript of her contribution and hence was able to nail a complete fabrication she made about his work at the animal laboratory of the Open University. I hope that others who are misrepresented by the anti-vivisectionists will take the trouble to inform us of the truth.

The last article comes as a piece of comic relief. It is by someone called Sal (Sally?) Restivõ and was delivered to a Sociology of Science Workshop in Dubrovnik. At first I thought it was a piece of clowning intended to entertain the audience and make some telling points by broad farce, much as *The Wildcat* does. However, on getting into it I decided that she (or he?) meant it to be taken perfectly seriously and it is not deliberately intended as a parody. It is full of name-dropping, although no references are given, so we are left guessing

(continued on page 6)

## Raven 26



100 pages

£3.00 (post free anywhere)

## The Individualist Anarchists

In putting together *The Individualist Anarchists: An anthology of Liberty (1881-1908)*, Frank H. Brooks has done contemporary anarchists an important service. At last we are able to read their opinions on a great range of subjects and draw our own conclusions about this maligned and misrepresented group.

The first thing you discover is that 'individualist' is bit of a misnomer, even though Benjamin Tucker would have cheerfully responded to the label. In reality, most of those who congregated around Tucker's publication *Liberty* were mutualists - followers of Proudhon and Josiah Warren. It is ironic that these American mutualists have been accused by other anarchists of the crassly individualistic anti-organisationalism that is usually hurled at all anarchists by marxists and liberals.

Far from opposing organisation, they wished only to make organisations voluntary and to replace the state with "voluntary defensive associations". Tucker, for one, saw the Irish Land League's rent boycott as "the nearest approach, on a large scale, to perfect anarchist organisation". Others of his comrades had similar feelings about trade unions and cooperatives.

The 'individualists' in stark contrast to contemporary right-wing libertarians who look to them as worthy ancestors, were anti-capitalist, considered themselves part of the labour movement and as socialists - scientific socialists, no less! Like marxists, they followed the labour theory of value (by way of Josiah Warren, thus having come to it long before Karl Marx). The whole point of their socialism was that "labour shall be put in possession of its own". This revolution was to be accomplished by abolishing the "Four Monopolies" they felt allowed capitalism to exploit

the workers. These were the credit monopoly and interest payments, the land monopoly and rent, taxation, and the tariff and patent monopoly.

Marxism tended to underestimate the importance of the state in the maintenance and development of capitalism. In fact, without the state, it is unlikely the capitalist system could have developed at all. If the Four Monopolies and the state that backs them were broken, entrepreneurs would have no more rights or powers than anyone else - most particularly when confronted with strongly organised labour and mutualist movements.

Their criticism of marxism did not make them friends of other anarchists such as Johann Most. They believed the anarchist-communism he espoused was not genuine anarchism, feeling that "forcible expropriation" and "organising all the concerns of men into communes" could only result in the re-creation of the state. They were opposed to the 'propaganda of the deed', viewing violence as essentially authoritarian. For them "the philosophy of anarchism has nothing whatever to do with violence". The 'individualists' saw that unhealthy attitudes of duty and self-sacrifice underlay this sort of anarchism and was also "inherent in communism, patriotism or religion of any sort".

There was a fear of the hyphenated anarchist who the right side of the hyphen might ultimately take precedence over the left (and with good reason, as with some contemporary anarcho-feminists who support censorship). In spite of opposition to communism, a voluntary variety was welcomed: "If they are anarchists first and then communists they are good anarchists ... My argument applies to those who make the leading idea communist ... For such communism cannot exist without a state. Voluntary communism can exist ... and flourish

under anarchy ..." (Could the mutualist criticism be applied to all the anarcho-syndicalists and anarcho-communists who went over to Bolshevism in 1918-1920?)

Tucker and his friends rejected utopianism and elitism and in doing so developed a purer anarchism devoid of these residual authoritarian tendencies. Their credo was "we do not hold out hopes of speedy deliverance and sudden emancipation. We do not, like religious enthusiasts, ask people to seek salvation in perfect obedience to the truth as we see it and pay no attention to surroundings ... We do not profess to be holier and purer than others ... We are not free from the disease ourselves ..."

A pragmatic approach developed among some of *Liberty's* correspondents, advocating a broad coalition of forces to fight the state. Lawrence Labadie (of the famed Labadie collection of socialist literature), a teetotaler, joined hands with the saloon keepers to defeat prohibition in his state: "I am willing to join hands with anyone that will help me to free the land from the grasp of the monopolies. I am ready to join with Communists, the State Socialists, the Populists, the Democrats, the Republicans, or anybody else, whenever I see an opportunity to gain a greater degree of liberty."

The men and women of *Liberty* were intrinsically anarchist - their main emphasis was in combating the state and authority. This attitude must come to the fore again to revitalise anarchism - in an age where one finds 'anarchists' who glorify Stalinist terror groups, support Saddam Hussein or encourage people to take the state's thirty pieces of silver.

*The Individualist Anarchists* is published by Transaction Publishers of New Jersey, who also publish several other books on anarchism.

Larry Gambone

[We regret that this book is not yet published in Great Britain, and thus not available from the Freedom Press Bookshop until further announcement.]



It is said that during one period of fashionable law and order the Chinese authorities would ridicule prisoners on the way to public execution by dressing and painting them as clowns. It never worked for greed, power or hunger cannot be laughed away, for if there is a gain to be made then the risk will have to be taken.

But ridicule has always been the weapon of the weak and always it is the voice in the background of the dance hall from the lonely, the spotty and the shy male declaiming *sotto voce* that every girl is a 'dog', to the shy girl raising her eyes to the ceiling to protest that there is not a decent man in the hall. We hate because we fear, we ridicule because we envy. Ridicule and exposure has now become a cottage industry from the tabloid to the hardback to the television, and pioneer for this generation in the art of 'O Gawd' reputation

#### A World Elsewhere

by Bernard Levin

Jonathan Cape, £16.99

#### Delightful Murder

by Ernest Mandel

Pluto Press UK, £3.95

## Method of Freedom

(continued from page 5)

as to their relevance. The *Raven* editorial commentator appears puzzled and states "... non-experts [experts in what?] may find parts of it difficult, not to say opaque. But it is worth the struggle for its analysis of the 'epistemological anarchism' of the late Paul Feyerabend". Restivo describes Feyerabend as follows: "Feyerabend wants to be remembered as a 'flippant Dadaist' not as a serious anarchist". Presumably he/she is informed of this posthumous ambition of the deceased philosopher via a spiritualist medium.

Lest the naive reader now imagines that Feyerabend was some sort of left-bank clown, a pal of Tristan Tzara and Marcel Duchamp, I hasten to make it clear that he was a respected philosopher, an associate of Thomas Kuhn. Together Feyerabend and Kuhn promoted a revolution in thinking in the 1960s that brought a recognition of psychology into science, so that now it is generally recognised that between the scientific fact and the recipient of the fact is the personality of the individual scientist who, being human, is subject to all the frailties of misperception, prejudice and lying. Feyerabend had this to say of his anarchism:

"The limitations of all rules and standards is recognised by naive anarchism. A naive anarchist says a) that both absolute rules and context-dependent rules have their limits and infers b) that all rules and standards are worthless and should be given up. Most reviewers regard me as a naive anarchist in this sense, overlooking the many passages where I show how certain procedures aided scientists in their research ... Thus while I agree with a) I do not agree with b). I argue that all rules have their limits and there is no comprehensive 'rationality'; I do not argue that we should proceed without rules and standards. I also argue for a contextual account, but again the contextual rules are not to replace the absolute rules, they are to supplement them." (Feyerabend, *Against Method*, 1993, Verso, London, 3rd edition, page 231)

I would agree with the editorial comment that Restivo is 'opaque', but this is because she is simply waffling, filling space with dropped names, high-sounding phrases and meaningless rhetoric. I have heard some speakers at Marble Arch do likewise, assured of adulation from some of the more bone-headed members of the audience who just love this sort of rhetoric that saves them the trouble of thinking. As the Free-Range Egghead remarked: "You may not entirely agree with anarchism, but at least you admit it's not mindless. It's just that some comrades behave as if it's mindless."

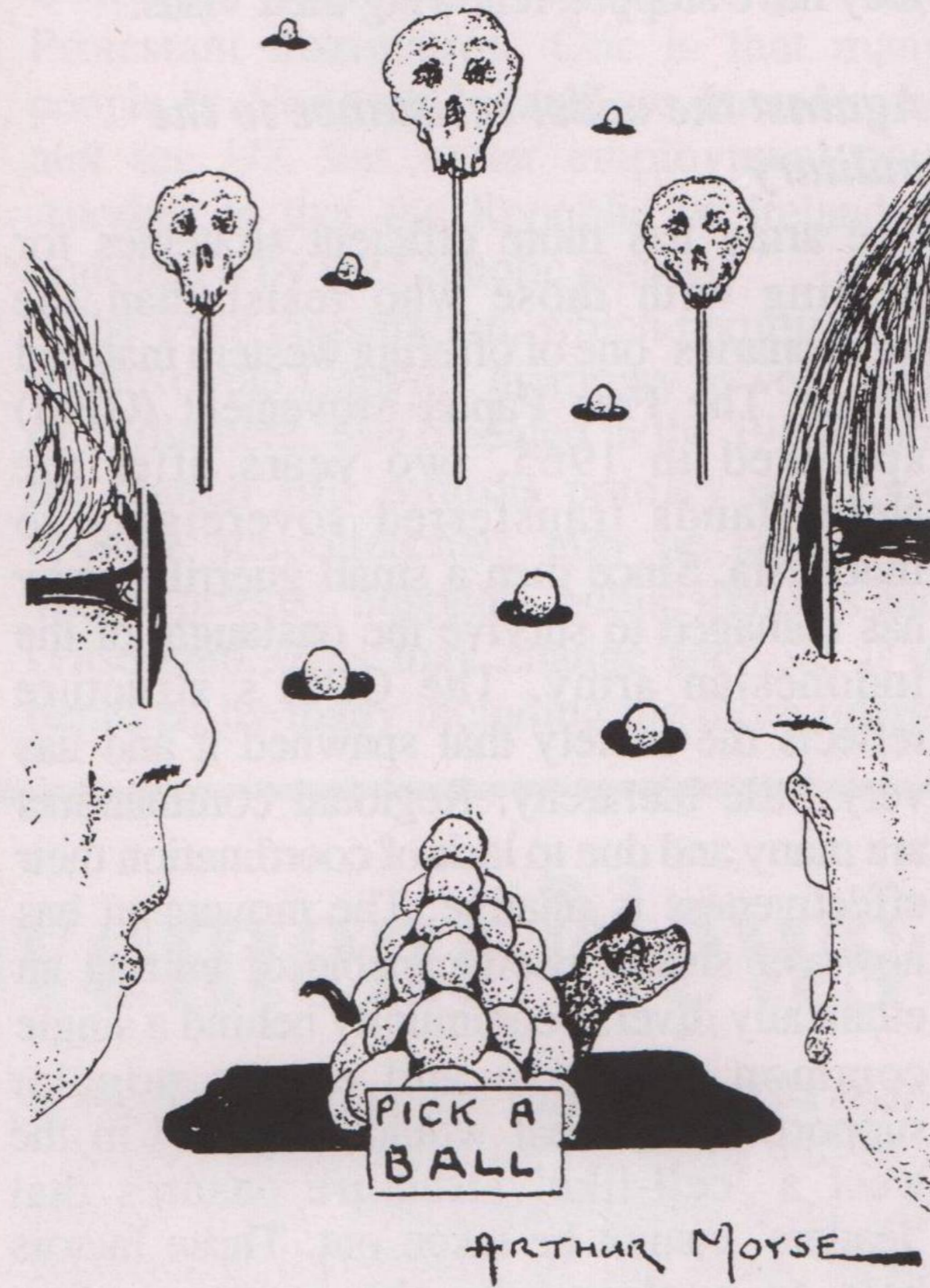
Tony Gibson

## Indecent exposure, or taking the water

debunking must go to Lytton Strachey when, in 1918, he raised the gutter press Sunday loo readings to the hardback library shelves with his book *Eminent Victorians*. In my youth, when I knew all the answers, I read it with pleasure as with easy reading Strachey opened up the public reputations, like bad oysters, of four secular Victorian saints and we read of their human failings and how they failed to live up to Strachey and the reader's high moral standards. The flaw in the Strachey syndrome is the refusal to accept that in spite of their human failings they, for good or ill, achieved an eminence in human affairs that in a major or minor way altered the flow of human history. Strachey was an uncaring leader of the Bloomsbury group. Bourgeois intellectuals, esoteric and elitist, they formed their collective and parasitically they made their place within any body politic despising it even while they fed off it. From anarchism libertarian to high Tory lunacy, they can be found and their printed opinions and their way of living, when put into practice, has all too often ended in human tragedy, for the Bloomsbury style of collectives - hedonistic and self-centred - is based on their own welfare, nay Stirner nay, that ranged from sycophantic adulation of the social hierarchy to the regimentation of we the lower order in our own interest. From Bloomsbury via Shaw and Wells to 1994, and the car, mortgage and the bleeding heart high-paid administration we carry them while they feed off our blood. Michael Holroyd has spent a huge part of his life writing Strachey's biography and what was the first edition of two volumes has now become one bulky volume (Chatto, £20) and with new material he has written a slightly sycophantic life of Strachey and the Bloomsbury group of such little importance and so easily forgettable, yet for all that the film script is already being papered in so buy your popcorn.

Yet I have seen Bernard Levin live when those many years ago we passed each other in a silent empty street in Bloomsbury, he a small man with the collar of his coat turned up and his head on his narrow chest thinking great thoughts, and I thinking great thoughts on art and beer, as we passed each other, two strangers in an empty friendless street. For to me Bernard Levin is the anarchist fellow traveller *par excellence* and his book on utopias and what he believes and does not believe makes heavy reading unless one has passed Bernard Levin in an empty street. Levin is the *doppelgänger* of all those strange comrades that one has sat with in so many meetings in rooms in backstreet pubs. For the superior working class anarchism means taking a high-minded attitude to any social tragedy and never having to fight it, but warming the chair at the back of the small meetings are those for whom it will all come right in a disappearing just beyond infinity, for they believe in an 'anarchist society', that some day 'the comrades' will bring it into being and they see it as a cross between King Arthur's Camelot and Butlin's Holiday Camp, and there will be rent control and the abolition of the police and wars will be outlawed by the anarchist parliament. Mention the name of Levin to any comrade seeking the 'message' and one doubts if it will raise an 'A Level' eyebrow based on 'if they do not know then it is not important'. Yet it is important for one feels that the anarchist movement has more than its fair share of Levins. Gentle creatures kissed by the fairies at birth or a sad accident at work they hand out dreams as futurist historical facts and with, fortunately, no intellectual discipline we still tend to amuse the media. Except on mass demonstrations when the neighbours, in full force, join us. Levin for years wrote as the political columnist of the *Spectator* magazine and his column was required reading for we the

eyebrow-raising 'O God' brigade. Each week Levin would sit in his press seat in Parliament and mock and sneer, for us, at the politicians of all parties and we without power savoured every mocking word. From the *Spectator* to the *Times* the angry and mocking denunciations fed our egos, but too many cowboys got into the act and the stand-up



"Every miss was meticulously researched"

Arthur Moyses

## Food for Thought ... and Action

**Insurrection in Euskadi: political struggles in the Basque Country** by Buzz Burrell, Partisan Press. This is a short, informative pamphlet "designed to give a general impression of recent political history and state repression in Euskadi". It spans the period after the Spanish Civil War and Revolution up to 1992. Not much is said about the northern part of the Basque Country in France, probably because the southern Spanish part is much bigger and the various independence, autonomy and nationalist movements are more active. A useful introduction. 12 pages, £1.50.

**To Build Jerusalem: a photographic remembrance of British working class life 1875-1950** by John Gorman, Scorpion Publications. An excellent, invaluable record of working class life and struggle, told in beautiful photographs with a profuse and informative text. Gorman is well-known as a writer and broadcaster on working class and trade union history, and as the organiser of the 1973 exhibition of trade union banners at the nearby Whitechapel Art Gallery, called 'Burning Bright'. This is a large book with around 200 photographs and 50,000 words and is all the better value for now being available at half the original published price of £9.99. It recreates real history - many of the pictures were supplied by ordinary people - and "provides a vivid and compelling alternative to the cosy images of the nostalgic past presented in so many visual studies of Victorian and Edwardian life in the good old days before the wars". One point about mail orders: due to the weight of this book, please calculate your postage on at least the original published price, as it costs us £2.50 to send by post. Large format, 192 pages, £4.99.

**Lib Ed: a magazine for the liberation of learning**, no. 25, special issue: rhetoric and reality. In the second of the supplements to the *Lib Ed* annual journal, we are treated to: 'Everything you wanted to know about sex but were afraid to ask ... but they didn't want to tell you anyway'; an open letter to all philosophy tutors; sex crimes and misdemeanours; the reality of some Equal

comics took over and Levin is now the great, the good and the forgotten, and he is now the man who blotted his parchment by becoming involved with insight that, for a price, would make oneself aware of oneself by various mystical methods, for a price one assumed. Dreamed up by John Roger, known to the believers as 'The Physical Embodiment of the Mystical Traveller', it offered the ol' well-honed utopia that never has a sell-by date and Levin and the pretty Arianna Stassinopoulos played and prayed Mr and Mrs John the Baptist to it. Levin, one assumes, is among the great forgotten who entertained a readership or a small room of unfortunates without television. Yet there is always the Bloomsbury groupies in our midst sneering at the back, and at the ol' table another Bernard Levin telling us about the 'anarchist society' when all ale will be real ale and everyone irrespective of age will have a free Old Age Pension buss pass.

Levin is fun, Levin is harmless, but one has reason to fear, despite his good intentions, Ernest Mandel who through his book *Delightful Murder* gives us a social history of the crime story. Mandel is a true-blue Marxist and has in the cause of "historical materialism can, and should, be applied to all social phenomena" written a Marxist analysis of the crime story for, cries Mandel, "Well, am I no more than a victim of bourgeois ideology being sucked into the vortex along with millions of other unfortunates, constructing an elaborate rationalisation for a simple idiosyncratic vice?" I honestly don't know, but after a huge slab of Hegel in the introduction and a promise of "classical dialectical method" with Sigmund Freud and the Chinese masterpiece of the twelfth century Shuihu-Zhuan, I vote to give Bernard Levin an anarchist party card.

Opportunities courses; plus the usual reviews, contacts and letters columns. Good value. A4 magazine, 16 pages, £1.00.

**Zapatistas: starting from Chiapas** by Marc Cooper, Open Magazine pamphlet. Excellent publication on the history and development of the Chiapas Indians' struggle over the years against the longest-surviving one-party state in history. It shows how the Zapatista uprising was deliberately tied in with the anti-NAFTA (North American Free Trade Association) protests, but was actually the culmination of years of preparation in the jungle. "The shots fired in Chiapas in January signal the End of the End of History. Rather than the final rattle on the snake of revolution, Chiapas is the first armed battle against the Global Market and simultaneously - in a way Americans cannot grasp - for Democracy." Includes *Communiqués* from the EZLN. 24 pages, £2.95.

**The Blast!** April/May, Agitator Index Collective. A new radical bi-monthly newspaper from Minneapolis, USA, with an anarchist / left libertarian stance. The first issue features a major article on the Zapatista rebellion, 'A People Born Rebellious and Dignified', which goes in depth into the EZLN and analyses its struggle as one of a combination of indigenous rights and national liberation. There are also useful articles on 'Anarchism and the Black Revolution' and 'The Myth of Overpopulation'. There are also reviews and a statement by the Collective. A promising first issue. 28 pages, 75p.

**Gutter Girl** no. 2, Gutter Girl Press, Lancaster. An 'alternative' women's magazine produced in reaction to the conventional ones, but badly written and produced, and separatist into the bargain. About 48 pages, A4, 50p.

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## Focus on ... Irian Jaya

Indeed the story of East Timor, which started in 1975 when the Portuguese moved out and the Indonesians began their illegal occupation, is predated by the violation of Irian Jaya by some twelve years when the Dutch handed it over to the Indonesians. Today the story continues despite continuing resistance from the Free Papua Movement (OPM) which has been struggling against the Indonesian military machine for over thirty years.

Here, on the western side of Papua, the Indonesians have welcomed foreign firms who have come to mine the gold and copper as well as to log the forests. At the same time they have been bringing in Javanese migrants to help disperse the population of one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The aim is threefold: firstly to seek further living space, secondly to swamp what is seen as a backward culture (or, as the Indonesian Prime Minister at the time of the hand-over put it, to "bring them down from the trees"), and thirdly exploitation of the areas mineral resources.

### The destruction of a culture

In the eyes of the Indonesians, the one million Papuans are inferior beings. Clearly their style of dress (grass skirts, penis gourds) is unacceptable and has to go, but so will their physical appearance. Whilst clothing may be discarded the latter aspect will take a little longer. Sukarno, the nationalist leader who ruled Indonesia before being toppled by the CIA, was not to be dissuaded, though: "I can change a human race by intermarriage between the races ... in a few generations hence there will be only a single Indonesian race from Sabang in Sumatra to Merauke in the south of West Irian".<sup>1</sup> This racist ideology is still in vogue today. The new superman will, in the words of a former governor, resemble more the Javanese, "a new generation of people without curly hair, sowing the seeds for greater beauty".

To achieve their aim of quelling the local populations, the Indonesians have opportunistically used the Protestant missionaries.<sup>2</sup> The missionaries have successfully converted hundreds over the thirty years of Indonesian rule, largely through The Mission Fellowship (TMF), the umbrella for six Protestant organisations with 1,500 stations run by 270 missionaries. They have convinced the Papuans to renounce their 'animist heresies' by means of a strategy which has served them well.

They head off from base to an unexplored region carrying with them cowries – the seashells which are abundant on the coasts and serve as currency on the higher plateaus. After some days walk and having made contact with the local community the missionaries select what they consider to be the most welcoming village to clear a site which can be used as a landing strip (and incidentally in the process introducing enough cowries to introduce hyper-inflation and destroy the local monetary system). Once the landing strip is built the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), a branch of the TMF, can go into action.

The Papuans are impressed by the metal birds which bring clothes, radios, plastic dolls, etc., and when they learn they come from people with a God ready to adopt them they are eager for more. But once the TMF have got their foot in the door, instead of all the presents it's rules and regulations time. The culture is dismantled and the way is opened for the Indonesian administration to set up camp. It is now clear why a country which is 85% Muslim and so concerned with cultural purity should tolerate the presence of Christian missionaries – the missionaries do the army's work.

The airstrips are used to launch the process of 'transmigration' from Java and the general encroachment of the Indonesians. Today at least a third of the population is no longer

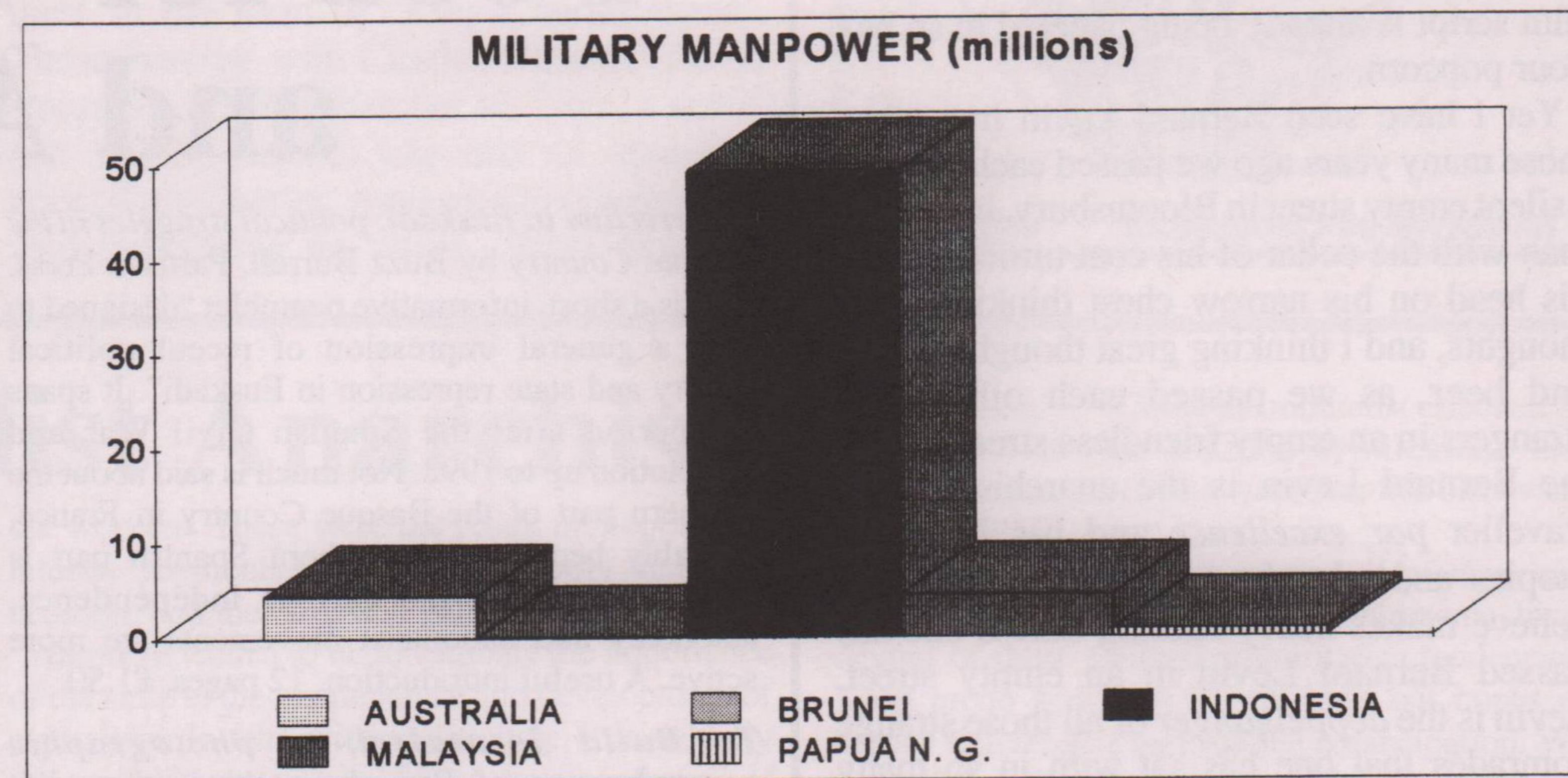
Thanks largely to the activities and writings of groups and dissidents in the west, the tragedy perpetrated by the Indonesian state in East Timor is now more widely known about. Voices which were too long in the wilderness, like Noam Chomsky and John Pilger, can now be heard and groups like Swords into Ploughshares, ARROW and No Hawks to Indonesia continue to draw attention to the blood on the hands of the British state. Hopefully such campaigns will continue, but it is necessary for the full spotlight to be turned on this area where other crimes are also being committed.

indigenous and, given that the authorities no longer need the missionaries, for the past year they have stopped renewing their visas.

### Against the odds: resistance to the military

The army has more efficient strategies for dealing with those who resist than the missionaries' one of offering western material goods. The Free Papua Movement (OPM) appeared in 1965, two years after the Netherlands transferred sovereignty to Indonesia. Since then a small guerrilla army has managed to survive the onslaught of the Indonesian army. The OPM's structure reflects the society that spawned it and has very little hierarchy. Regional commanders are many and due to lack of coordination their effectiveness is relative. The movement has however shown itself capable of uniting an ethnically diverse community behind a single common objective and enjoys popular support. Also, what would be called in the west a 'cell-like' structure ensures that 'leaders' cannot be taken out. These factors help to explain why the resistance has successfully continued for so long.

But with their spears and bows and arrows they are little match for the Indonesians, one of the biggest and best equipped armies in the world. Figure one gives some perspective of the size of the army compared to other states in the region.



Indeed the Indonesian army is a very profitable 'investment opportunity' for its supporters in the west, and Britain in particular. Indonesia is one of British Aerospace's biggest customers and its second biggest overseas military export market after Saudi Arabia. The British state doesn't care. In the context of the situation in East Timor, Alan Clarke, the minister for 'defence procurement' under the Thatcher regime, approved the sale of ground attack aircraft to Indonesia, valued at more than £500 million. When questioned about what they were to be used for he said "I don't really fill my mind much with what one set of foreigners are doing to another".<sup>3</sup> He makes Pontius Pilate look angelic.

Perhaps to an extent one can sympathise with Mr Clarke. Who wants to fill their minds with the slaughter of tens of thousands of Papuans that have suffered at the hands of the Indonesian army? Who wants to think about the systematic rapings, torture and imprisonments without trial? Who wants to

think about the resisters who, as in East Timor, have been dumped from helicopters at sea in sacks and, more obscenely, the village leaders who have been decapitated with villagers being forced to drink their blood? Who wants to think about the pregnant women who have been killed by having a stick rammed up their anus?<sup>4</sup> None of us wants particularly to think about such things, but neither do we want to be a party to it in the way the British state so clearly does. The Indonesians couldn't do it on their own. There are war criminals in this country too.

### Money, money, money

There has been some discussion in *Freedom* recently about nationalism and nation-states. It's hard sometimes to see where the nation state becomes an empire. If the answer lies in the indivisibility of nationality one would be pushed to come up with a good example of a nation state. The nation states of the EU, for example, are almost invariably comprised of more than one nationality but we don't call them empires unless we are 'extreme' Basque nationalists, for example. Perhaps we're just being polite, or perhaps the imperial definition must be related to size.

If this is the criteria Indonesia must come up to scratch. It is in extent about the size of Western Europe from the Russian border to the Atlantic. Granted 80% of this is water, but this has never proved a deterrent to

imperialists. About 10% of its three thousand islands are inhabited, attesting to a wide range of cultural diversity. Speaking of the Banda islands located between Ceram and Timor, prior to the arrival of the Europeans, Keay<sup>5</sup> has said:

"A peculiarity of the Banda islands at the beginning of the seventeenth century was that thanks to their isolation they owed allegiance to no one. Moreover, the Bandanese recognised no supreme sultan of their own. Instead authority rested with village councils presided over by *orang kaya* or headman. In the best tradition of south east Asian *adat* (consensus) each village or island was in fact a self-governing and fairly democratic republic."

Such social structures have still not fully been killed off and remnants can be found in Irian Jaya. Such democratic tendencies are however not to be tolerated, particularly when the area is of interest to the global market.

Because apart from the imperialistic angle the Indonesians are unwilling to cede a

territory which is so economically productive. In 1973 the American group Freeport opened one of the world's most productive gold and copper mines in Irian Jaya. It provides jobs for hundreds of ex-patriot Americans, Australians and Koreans and is the biggest economic asset the Indonesians have, contributing substantially to state revenue whilst lining the pockets of the Javanese families who support the presidency. Only some \$30 million are reinvested in the region against the \$35 billion that were earned in 1992. The company employs less than 10% of local people. Administrative business and agribusiness posts are occupied by Indonesia and from Java which, with 110,000,000 inhabitants in an area about the size of England, is continuing to export its population at the expense of the Papuans. The Javanese are settled in rainforest areas where rice fields are planted for them and the indigenous people are pushed off their land. Their resistance is inspiring and deserves more attention in the west.

## Oppression and Genocide in Irian Jaya

On 14th November 1988 Thomas Wainggai, a native of West Melanesia or Western Papua, informed the United Nations and various governments around the world that he would be proclaiming the independence of his country in exactly one month's time.

On the due date Dr Wainggai, his wife and 39 Melanesians carried out their stated intention of raising the flag of independence. He was jailed for twenty years by the Indonesian authorities. His Japanese wife, who made the flag, got eight years. They were lucky to escape with their lives. In 1980 five Western Papuans were shot dead on the spot for the same 'crime'. In 1984 a man was shot dead in the capital, Jayapura, for the same offence.

The Indonesian occupation of West Papua began in 1963. Irian Jaya was the name given to the 26th state. Over the last thirty years the military dictatorship has obliterated some 300,000 out of a total population of 1.2 million indigenous Papuans. In 1969 the so-called 'Act of Free Choice' (which was neither free nor a choice) confirmed the Indonesia military dictatorship over their 26th state.

One United Nations observer described this 'referendum' as "a monumental farce from beginning to end". Only 175 West Papuans actually voted in the farce.

The armed resistance to the Indonesian rule that followed resulted in torture and genocide on a grand scale, as the Indonesians tried to obliterate the culture of the West Melanesian people. Transmigration of mainly military settlers from Indonesia has been aimed at turning the Melanesians into a minority. The World Bank has provided \$530 million to support this programme. Local resources of timber, gold, copper and oil have been mined for Indonesian coffers and overseas appropriation.

In 1992 Dr Wainggai smuggled out a petition from his 'neo-colonial' prison in Jakarta, calling on the Secretary General of the United Nations to intervene over the continued exploitation and oppression of his people. It reached his barrister, Colin Amery, in Aotearoa via an underground route, and has since been presented to Boutros Boutros-Ghali in New York.

1993 is the Year for Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations. Appropriately Dr Wainggai's petition has been referred by the Secretary General to the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. This decision was made in December 1992 and the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva is currently handling Dr Wainggai's complaint.

Colin Amery  
from *The State Adversary*, April 1993

1. Quoted in *New Internationalist*, no. 116.

2. Information taken from *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 1994.

3. Interviewed by John Pilger in *The Guardian*, 12th February 1994.

4. *The Guardian*, 7th January 1994.

5. *The Honourable Company* by John Keay, Harper Collins, 1991.

# Alex Comfort: alive and kicking

Dear Editors,  
I have just read Nicolas Walter's review (*Freedom*, 23rd July 1994) of Alex Comfort's collection of writings published by Freedom Press as *Writings Against Power and Death*, and am somewhat astonished by some of the statements he makes.

Right at the end he writes, referring to both Herbert Read and Comfort: "Those who knew them remember them best for their personalities, which will fade; but some of the best of them has been carefully preserved for us in these two admirable books". The uninitiated might suppose that Walter is referring to two dead men whom some of us used to know. Having been talking to Comfort this morning, I can assure readers that he is still alive and kicking and he tells me that he will shortly be bringing out a new book of poetry.

In another part of his curious review, Walter writes: "His creative gifts seem to have failed in the 1950s, and his social and scientific writing steadily deteriorated after the 1960s. His ideas became increasingly mystical and his writings became increasingly mystifying."

The reality is that after the ending of his unsatisfactory marriage with Ruth Harris, Comfort went off with Jane Henderson (whom he subsequently married) and hence got over his migrainous condition and the long periods of depression in the 1960s which inhibited his creativity. So began, in the 1970s, the period of his greatest significant scientific productivity and the publication of books that have had the widest revolutionary significance throughout the world. I agree with Professor Arthur Salmon that the peak of his scientific creativity and accomplishment was towards the end of

the 1970s. In 1978 Salmon wrote, "Comfort is generally recognised as the foremost gerontologist of the twentieth century". For the record, during the 1970s and 1980s Comfort was publishing in no less than fourteen scientific and medical journals known to me, and probably in other journals unknown to me. I really cannot understand why Walter should presume to set himself up as a judge of the merit of scientific writing.

I have used the term 'revolutionary' of Comfort's writings in the 1970s, and no doubt those who think of revolution solely in terms of street barricades will raise their eyebrows. But he has been the leading figure in two inter-related revolutions in human thought and behaviour. He was chiefly responsible for the revolution in gerontology that occurred in the 1970s that has altered very materially the power relations between the generations, and which will have its full impact in the twenty-first century. His popular book *A Good Age* (which I am surprised that David Goodway does not mention) is a spin-off

from the new scientific gerontology. He revised it in 1990, and it was re-published by Pan Books.

As to the other revolution to which Comfort has made so distinguished a contribution, the sexual revolution, Walter makes a very significant remark that reveals the depth of his own misunderstanding of the nature of revolution. He writes: "Comfort is best known as an advocate of free and joyful sex (Goodway rightly emphasises the libertarian implications), but this has proved to be literally a dead end in the age of AIDS and anomie". The implication here is that Comfort has been the apostle of sexual promiscuity, and that is what his two popular sex books are about. Walter's reference to AIDS implies that now God has put a stop to all that nonsense by threatening us with a fatal disease, so Comfort's revolutionary endeavour has proved "literally stone dead". Check mate! I can best advise interested readers to read what Comfort says about AIDS in the revised 1987 edition of *The Joy of Sex*. As I see it, freedom and revolution imply responsibility, and that has always been the essence of Comfort's anarchism.

I strongly applaud Freedom Press for publishing this selection of Comfort's early writings, but I am afraid that the impression that Walter gives that he more or less fizzled out after the 1950s is quite grotesque.

Tony Gibson

# The Raven 25 on Religion

Dear *Freedom*,

"I never read a book before reviewing it" said Sydney Smith, "It prejudices a man so". Brian Bamford follows the same rule, going by his review of *The Raven 25* (20th August). I shall concentrate on what he says about my own contribution.

"Mr Walter concocts a mock trial for religion pretending to put a balanced case for and against, and not surprisingly comes to the conclusion that perhaps the Church is withering away." This is a ludicrous travesty - my article involves neither a concoction of anything nor a mock anything nor pretending to do nothing. It is a serious and sincere discussion not of religion but of the relationship between anarchism and religion, giving proper weight to religious aspects of libertarian thought and action from the ancient world to the present day, and concluding that there is a strong correlation between anarchism and atheism but that this is neither complete nor necessary and that there are several valid libertarian views of religion.

Tolstoy "gets a bit of a mention", "but he is presented as a bit of an oddity well outside the mainstream of anarchism". This too is a ludicrous travesty - my article includes Tolstoy, "above all", among several religious anarchists (although he always repudiated the movement), and presents him not as an oddity but as an influential figure.

Anyway, Brian Bamford seems to know as little about religion as about irreligion. "The story of Adam and Eve, and even in some cases the Virgin Birth, are not taken literally by believers" and "they are merely seen as poetic accounts". On the contrary, the stories in the Bible have been and still are taken literally by millions of Jews and Christians, just as the stories in the Koran are by millions of Muslims.

Such fundamentalism may seem absurd, but it is a serious business. Fundamentalist Christians are trying to suppress the study of evolution and the practice of contraception and abortion in the West and the Third World. Fundamentalist Jews are trying to incorporate the whole of Palestine into Israel and to impose the halachah, the traditional law of Judaism. Fundamentalist Muslims are trying to establish Muslim regimes in all countries with Muslim populations (including Britain) and to impose the sharia, the traditional law of Islam. And fundamentalists of all faiths are using assassination and terror all over the world to suppress freedom of discussion of such matters.

Brian Bamford says that one must sympathise with religion to study or criticise it (his source is presumably Peter Winch, rather than 'Wynch'). Does this apply to Fascism, Marxism and capitalism? As for choosing remarks about schoolboys masturbating during

Religious Instruction classes, and about the contributors to *The Raven* "masturbating to the God of rationalism", they say more about the author than the subject of the review.

Finally, "the two great tyrannies of the twentieth century", Nazism and Communism, were "attempting to create a heaven on earth". True - so is anarchism.

NW

Dear *Freedom*,

Pity no religious anarchist accepted the invitation to contribute to *The Raven 25* (perhaps one will write for *The Raven 27*). Nevertheless, it is an informative and entertaining read.

Nicolas Walter disagrees with the proposition that "anarchism implies atheism", showing that although most anarchists are unbelievers, the believing minority are intellectually respectable. The psychologist Tony Gibson wonders about mature, intelligent adults who claim to believe nonsense, and guesses that they do not believe but only convince themselves they believe. Colin Ward contributes an account of anarchism only marginally to do with religion, which happens to have been written for a theological dictionary. The classic essay by Sébastien Faure is in pedantic style, and might be called a "solemn, serious, rationalist sermon", but it is the only contribution to which that description could apply, by any stretch of the meaning.

Brian Bamford, however, writes (*Freedom*, 20th August) that it applies to the whole issue except Arthur Moyses's piece. In his successive reviews of *The Raven*, his interest is to find passages which do not conform to pronouncements by sociologists. In issue 25, for instance, he finds that the egregious Peter Lumsden disagrees with a sociologist called Peter Wynch (a sociologist tells me this may be a mis-spelling of Peter Winch). Otherwise, he is not interested enough to read the articles and must judge by preconception.

I suggest as a rough rule of thumb, if Dr Bamford finds a publication boring, it is probably well worth reading.

Donald Room

Dear *Freedom*,

I thought Brian Bamford's points about *The Raven* were so excellent - a tremendous amount of what appeared could have been written a century ago ...

Name and address supplied

## Report from Canada

The major event for the summer is the upcoming Quebec election which will be held on 13th September. The whole of the Canadian population looks on with anxiety as the future of the country may well be decided by its aftermath.

This is a battle between two dinosaurs. The Liberal Party has been in power for a decade and has run its course. An attempt at renewal has involved the adoption of neo-liberal ideology, something guaranteed not to warm the hearts of the working population. The other dinosaur is the Party Quebecois (PQ) which is big state social democratic and stridently nationalist, and wishes to make Quebec an independent state. The PQ is an example of something we have seen many times before, an intellectual, bureaucratic and political elite attempting to climb to power on the backs of the workers. The French-speaking majority's patriotism and desire for autonomy is being used by this group for its own ends and it doesn't matter if independence might bring misery for the average person, the elite still have their incomes.

The mass media and the highly undemocratic 'first-past-the-post' electoral system has effectively shut out the smaller parties, some of whom have more imagination than the reptilian twins.

The Green Party, which was number three in the last election, suffered the defection of its president and a number of members to the PQ. This may do them great harm. The Democratic Action Party, which takes a gradualist and more consensual approach to sovereignty and favours decentralisation, has been practically ridiculed to death by the media. The Regionalist Party, some of whose founders took part in roadblocks and occupations to preserve village life, deserves to make a breakthrough but probably won't due to the strength of the PQ.

The PQ will most likely get in since the people are so fed up with the Liberals. However, it seems unlikely that the nationalists will win a referendum for independence. Here is an example of how the population is more intelligent than its 'leaders' - for all Quebecois want more autonomy, but many also realise, even if only subconsciously, that the nation-state is obsolete and that they are

being led down the garden path by a group motivated by ideology and power-lust.

There is also a danger for minorities with a PQ victory. Nationalists everywhere complain about being oppressed, but once in the saddle step on their own minorities. The PQ leaders have stated that in an independent Quebec native people and those who inhabit areas with Anglophone majorities will not have the right of self-determination. Familiar story!

L. Gambone

## Nuisance calls

Dear *Freedom*,

I am a great believer in openness. I think if you want to converse with someone you should specify who you are. I have always been irritated by people who have convictions but not the courage of them, if you see what I mean: all these initials, pseudonyms and so on which appear in *Freedom* and elsewhere. In a general sense I can live with it so long as they do not hide behind this anonymity when attacking other people, especially other comrades. I am currently collecting an anthology of initials and pseudonyms with a view to publication. You have been warned.

There are however certain disadvantages in being too public. When I offered to be the public spokesperson of the London Anarchist Forum it was shortly after my car had been broken into and my filofax stolen so I felt the powers that be had all the information anyway, and it has paid dividends in the long run. The problems are the crank calls and intimidatory calls from supposedly fascist groups.

One young gentleman keeps phoning and prefacing his remarks with the words "You fucking commie bastard ..." obviously having no knowledge of communism or my biography. On a recent occasion he described how unidentified others were going to wait outside Conway Hall and beat us all up when we left at 10 o'clock. How he/they could distinguish us from people leaving other meetings amazes me. He also appeared to be unaware how many of us had studied martial arts in the past (I used

to do judo, aikido and kendo in my younger days, I wonder if I can remember it?).

We may be in a better position to deal with these kind of visitations in the future. The August 1994 edition of *Which*, published by the Consumers Association, detailed a number of changes to be soon introduced by British Telecom. Apparently BT have been running a number of tests in Edinburgh and will in November introduce 'Caller Display', a unit which will display the telephone number of any callers.

The Consumers Association are calling for a Telephone Preference Service to allow people to opt out of receiving sales calls. This may now come about next year. Nearly half my calls at the moment are from double glazing salespersons.

I wish someone could register the initials and pseudonyms of *Freedom*'s writers. If anyone wants to add to the anthology please let me know details.

Peter Neville

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**14th October** General discussion

**21st October** No LAF meeting – Ten Days  
That Shook the World Conference (discussion  
at Conway Hall led by John Rety)

**28th October** General Discussion

**4th November** Play Gives a Meaning to  
Existence (speaker J. Taylor)

**11th November** General discussion

**18th November** The Belief in Politics (speaker  
Eve Seguin)

**25th November** General discussion

**2nd December** to be announced

**9th December** Sanctuaries (speaker Adrian  
Williams)

**16th December** CHRISTMAS PARTY

**7th January** Employment, Unemployment,  
Further Education and the State (speaker Peter  
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**14th January** General discussion

**21st January** Cities and Libertarian Social  
Movements (discussion led by Dave Dane)

**28th January** Vacant to the end of July

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I enclose £..... payment

Name .....

Address .....

.....Postcode .....