

anarchist fortnightly Freedom

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FIFTY PENCE

"RICH, adj.
Performing no
useful work."

Chaz Bufe
from the *American
Heretic's Dictionary*

Major wants to make you 'feel good' about DOUBLING YOUR LIFE STANDARDS! We say he and his ilk are mad!

The most ambitious statement Mr Major made at the Tory conference earlier this month was to say that he felt able to repeat R.A. Butler's famous pledge to the 1954 Tory conference, namely that with the right policies:

"We have the chance once again to double our living standards in the next 25 years."

And with an ethereal smile for his applauding geriatric representatives he declared, raising arms, head and voice: "and that's something to feel good about".

On the contrary. The United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - as we write - makes it clear that poverty is endemic in the third and developing world, but is

actually increasing in the United States and Western Europe.

Far from wishing to 'double' living standards in the so-called advanced industrial world what is desperately needed is a *redistribution of wealth*.

But Major, as a mouthpiece of capitalism, is aware of the fact that the *health* of capitalism depends on ever-increasing production and it matters not whether it is of the goods and services we need or of useless services or harmful goods - as an example armaments, for which the demand (unlike the things we *need*) has no limits. And the Labour Party dare not oppose the armaments industry because they depend in many constituencies on the votes of workers who are employed in the war industries. They haven't the courage (or the conviction - *more important in our opinion*) to declare that if they became the government they would *abolish* the armaments industry and pay full wages to the workers in those industries to stay at home until they found them *socially valuable jobs*.

But we cannot repeat too often that the political parties (and this includes the Blair/Prescott pink-rinsed lot) are only concerned with office and power

over our daily lives. *The anarchist message is to learn to live without them lording it over us.*

For some the 'life standards' more than doubled in the 1950s and Major can well foresee this to happen for the happy few in the next 25 years. In the prosperous western world we have no doubt that the rich will get richer and the rest of us will get poorer.

Surely are there not those of us at the bottom of the capitalist ladder, pile, heap - call it what you will - aware that a capitalist society which passionately believes in maintaining the unequal society in order to make a distinction between the successful and the failures, is a society which depends on a privileged minority living on the backs of a dependent voiceless majority?

All that anarchists will go on saying is that the victims of capitalism will remain wage slaves, even if they can afford the lollipops of capitalism, until they no longer accept to be wage slaves, nor wish to join the 'enemy'!

The anarchist society is one of free men and women in a free world, with no privileges, no rich and poor.

Reflections on Rail Safety

The recent head-on collision of two trains travelling on a single line has produced all kinds of reactions, solutions, criticisms.

It is of interest to *Freedom* because it is yet another example of replacing human control by the computer.

Rather than scrap a double rail service because demand has decreased, the obvious alternative is a single line with loops if warranted. In this writer's experience on railway work in the distant past, there need have been no signalling problems. Before the driver of the train going on to a single line could proceed he had to collect a baton. If it was not there *he could not proceed*. So, fog or no fog, there was no question as to whether the single line was available for his train.

From the reports so far published not only were there no telephones in the drivers' cabins (there weren't fifty years ago) but the signalling system on that line was *computerised*. Today we seem to have more faith in computers than in human beings, but only because the bosses think that the computers are cheaper and therefore more profitable than employing people.

I, John Major, have spoken!

A *Guardian* writer (Alex Bellos, 15th October) points out that what the "lexicographic league table" reveals about Mr Major's conference speech at Bournemouth is a "concentration on simple, traditional vocabulary - words like *good, safe* and especially *old*". And a list of "buzz-word comparison" between Major's and Blair's conference speeches, both of which were of the same length wordwise, shows that Mr Major scores on 'old' by 28 to 13, on 'good' by 9 to 1 and 'safe' by 6 to 2. However, the Labour Party's 'white hope' wins by 33 to 20 on 'new', by 29 to 25 on 'change' and by 14 to 4 on 'responsibility'! He even beat him on 'market' by 10 to 3! Perhaps it was significant that they both used the word 'hope' 10 times.

This writer watched Major's performance and was struck by a buzz-word not even included in Mr Bellos's list: namely 'I'. And it was a series of *personal* assurances that the Health Service was safe in his hands - after all, did not his old parents owe their lives to the NHS (television cameras pick out Tory representatives wiping away the tears) and with Major passionately declaring his faith in the NHS:

"Is it likely that I would damage the National Health Service or privatise it? I can tell you - not while I live and breathe."

And on the platform all the bored looking heads were nodding in approval for the cameras, including their glamorous Ministeress who for the rest of the year is engaged in

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Is it a Genuine 'U-Turn on Car Culture'?

The *Observer's* front-page article "Tories plan U-Turn on Car Culture" is perhaps over-optimistic. The new minister has only been in the job a few weeks whereas the road lobby is solidly entrenched in the nation's economy as well as disposing of vast sums to brainwash the public into believing that with a car you are somebody – with two cars you are *really* somebody!

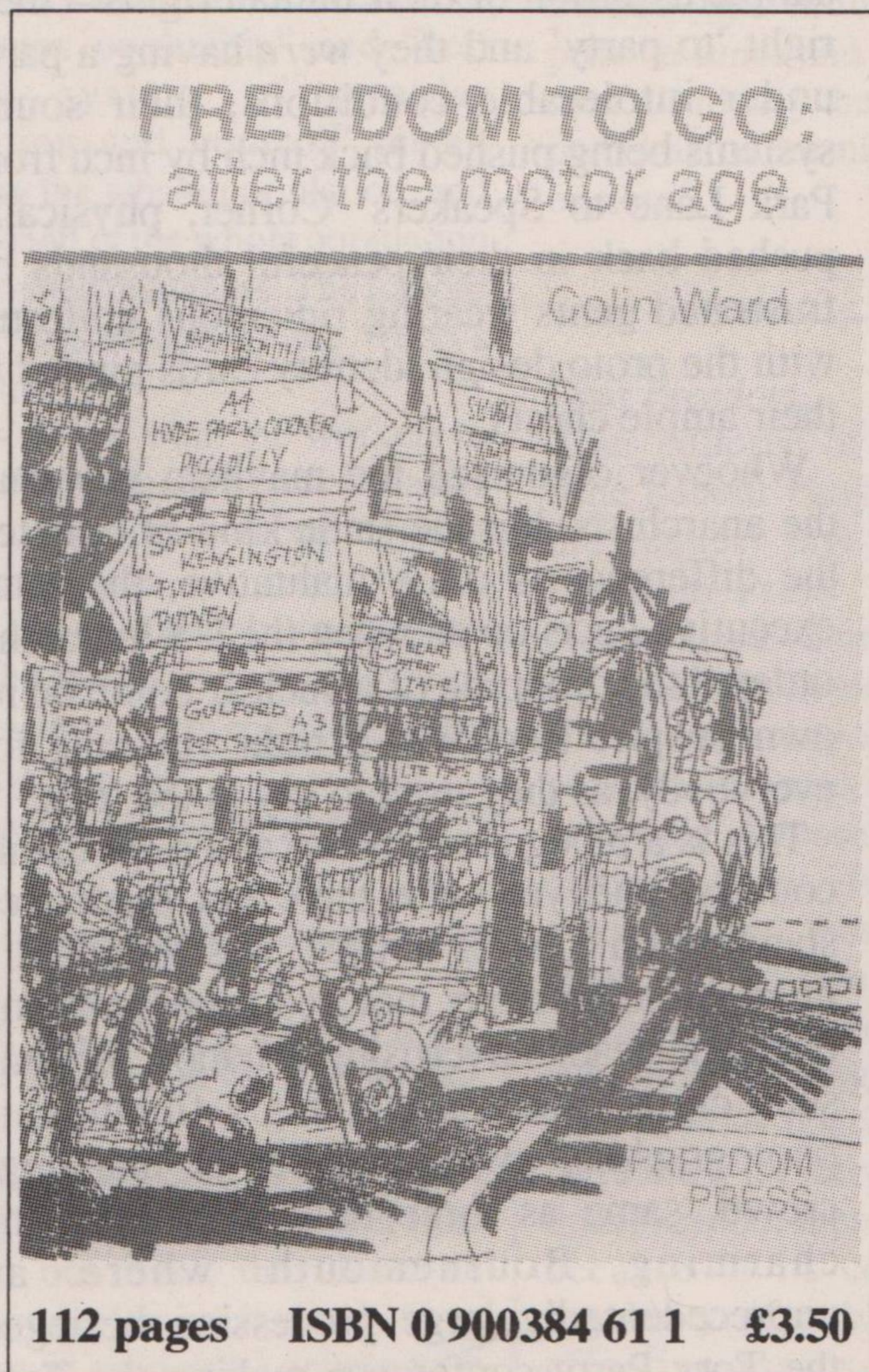
The 'car culture' will only be broken down when we will be able to enjoy a public transport designed to serve public needs. It's not enough to operate services only during the rush hours. This is especially true where rural bus services are concerned. In many areas of Suffolk, for instance, there is no public transport after 7pm and none at all on Sundays.

In the concluding chapter of his Freedom Press book *Freedom To Go: after the motor age*, published in 1991, Colin Ward writes:

"We have to be won back from car-dependency. And in a society dominated by central government, this means a policy of attracting people back onto an improved public transport system by manipulating fares. The alternative, of manipulating taxes on car ownership or on fuel, or of sophisticated road pricing devices, would simply penalise the poor, leaving the roads to the rich, the show-offs and the expense account drivers.

Some of us have for many years advocated free public transport in towns and cities, either for ideological reasons or as a cheaper solution than any other to the task of winning people out of cars."

When those lines were written, as he points out, "the pendulum of opinion" had moved away but, if now the *Observer* is right, then Colin Ward's conclusion was prophetic when he maintained that the pendulum:



"... will swing again as the intolerable dilemmas of an individually motorised society oblige governments to retreat."

And he listed six demands on the "politicians and policy-makers which can be shared with others of all political persuasions" which we reprint on the left. "These six simple demands would revolutionise transport in Britain. I deliberately refrain from any discussion of the desirability of changing our ways of living so as to reduce the need for transport, whether of people or goods."

THE SIX DEMANDS

1. No more motorways. They defeat themselves. As Charles Correa puts it, "traffic engineers have to postulate a traffic 'solution'. So they usually come up with an expensive system of freeways, tunnels, flyovers and so forth. Yet we know that such palliatives are short-lived; ease of movement encourages more journeys, thus clogging the arteries once again. *Journeys always multiply to the point of clogging* – it is a kind of Parkinson's Law in transport planning!" The evolution of, say, the M25 around London illustrates this dramatically.
2. Invest in railways. No-one can dispute the overwhelming evidence that railways can carry passengers more safely, take up less land, cause less pollution and cost less money than trying to move the same numbers by road.
3. Push the transport of freight from road back to rail. This is a fiscal matter. If the Treasury assessed the true cost to the economy of moving goods by road, as opposed to rail, it would manipulate the overheads accordingly.
4. Demand urban rapid transport systems, meaning trams or light railways as the automatic means of getting about in towns. They are safer and more economical of energy. It is true that this may simply involve transferring the emissions of carbon dioxide to a power station somewhere else, so it depends on how the energy is generated. This is a different issue. But undoubtedly rail-borne public transport entails the least demand on energy sources.
5. Find economical rural alternatives. Learn from the experience of the poor half of the world with 'jitneys' or collective taxis, or from the Swiss institution of the Post-Bus.
6. Calm traffic in towns, by simple measures to keep it out and to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

Identity Cards: for what?

The ever-grinning Home Secretary Michael Howard suggested to the baying pro-hanging-and-birching representatives at the Tory conference that a voluntary comprehensive identity card could be introduced which would cover all the kinds of activities that the car-owning middle classes now require anyway. The baying mob thought it should be made obligatory.

Not just the anarchists but all freedom-loving people have expressed their opposition to a national identity card – optional or obligatory.

Just as those who advocate the ending of the right to silence will argue that if the arrested person is innocent he/she has therefore nothing to hide, so with the advocates of the identity card. They can't see that the compulsory carrying of a card is a badge of slavery, and as *Liberty* argues, "whilst an ID card may be useful in beating credit card and benefit frauds ... the savings would be small compared to the cost of the scheme". As to its value in 'fighting crime', Dr Michael Levi, director of criminological studies at the University of Wales and described as "an expert on fraud", poured scorn on its effectiveness. On the other hand, Andrew Puddephatt, general secretary of Civil Liberties, pointed out that:

"There is clearly the possibility that a card with a machine-readable strip can be transformed into a coded dossier, labelling the unwitting carrier of it in ways in which that person is unaware."

The *Guardian's* Paris correspondent Paul Webster refers to new laws obliging French citizens to show their official papers to police even when there are no suspicious circumstances. This has made identity cards controversial after more than fifty years of being an accepted part of French life.

"Last year, the Gaullist interior minister, Charles Pasqua, introduced random ID checks. The government is now considering extending police powers to street video surveillance and car searches.

Critics claim the new laws reflect those introduced by the Vichy government during the second world war. Jews had their cards stamped 'juif' or 'juive'."

As to the boast that the plastic cards that have replaced those printed on white card are 'forgery proof', Paul Webster points out that:

"... the forging of papers and the trade in stolen cards have become among the most profitable criminal activities. The use of forged cards with stolen cheque books is one of the most common forms of fraud."

It's obvious isn't it? In a crooked society with a crooked capitalist system you can't keep down the crooked entrepreneurs!

I, John Major, have spoken!

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privatising the Health Service both by stealth and simply by closing down hospitals and services galore!

An excellent example of the 'I' buzz-word was his only reference to the so-called European Community:

"If I am not satisfied, I will do as I have done in the past. I will just say no to change which would harm Britain. But I hope I will be able to secure an agreement that we can accept." [Note six 'I's in three sentences!]

And it was 'I-Major' who was introducing compulsory sport in all our schools; who was providing nursery schools for all four year olds whose parents want it; and who personally assured teachers that there would be no changes to the national curriculum for five years.

And last but not least, he promised to double the standard of living in 25 years

(a subject of major importance which is dealt with elsewhere in this issue of *Freedom*).

It was quite clear to all but the I-starry-eyed blue-rinsed loyal, fund-raising, non-voting representatives and their equally well-fed spouses that Major's scriptwriters had to destroy the media's image of him as a weak person who couldn't make up his mind, etc. Hence the 'I ...', 'I ...', 'I ...' that dominated his speech.

Watching all the antics on the platform that day and the antics of the television with their interviews with MPs and the 'representatives' was important because it made this writer more than ever realise that today 'all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players'. Apart from the anarchists who preach to a world that is deaf!

New from Freedom Press

Visions of Poesy

An anarchist poetry book including over two hundred poems by seventy poets

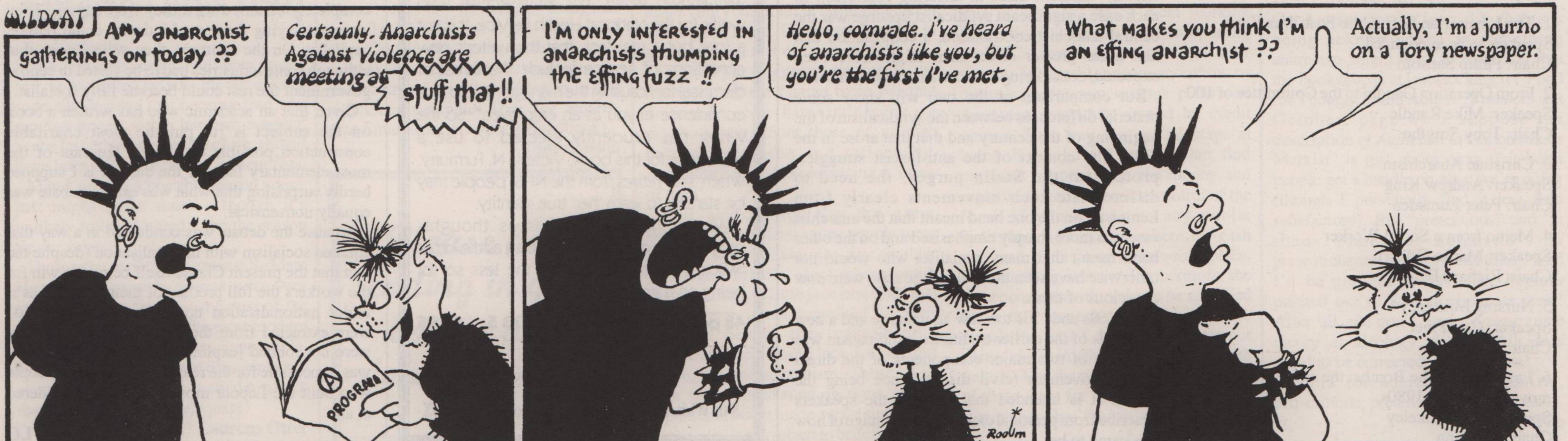
with 26 illustrations by Clifford Harper

Includes introduction, biographical notes on the contributors, bibliography and index.

317 pages ISBN 0 900384 75 1 £8.00

Freedom Press

84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX



Anarchy in the UK starts well

The Anarchy in the UK festival is proceeding magnificently as we go to press. Thousands of anarchists have come to London, some for the whole ten days, some for just the odd event. A joyful, well attended meeting at Conway Hall on Friday 21st October (day 1), then on Saturday (day 2) the most successful Anarchist Bookfair since it began, in terms of numbers attending, literature sold and reception at all the associated meetings. On Sunday (day 3) the Houses of Parliament did not actually rise into the sky, but the people trying to levitate it did not seem too disappointed.

Don't forget the Greenpeace Fayre at Conway Hall on Saturday 29th October (day 9). Freedom Press will be there again in case there is something you forgot to buy.

All kinds of new publications were ready for the Bookfair. Freedom Press were selling *Visions of Poesy*, the long-awaited anthology of 70 twentieth century anarchist poets (£8 post free in UK), in advance of the official launch on Wednesday (day 6). We also presented for the first time a pack of 36 cards, each with a portrait of an anarchist by Clifford Harper on the front and a potted biography of the depicted person on the back, all in a neat box (£5, post free in UK).

For readers unfamiliar with the sordid world of commerce and collections, the collection of anarchist biographies is a 'trading card set'. Trading cards, as they are now called, were originally given away with bubble gum and swapped among children. But as the point of them was to collect and the bubble gum was often discarded by the purchaser, the cards came to be issued separately then sold in sets. Believe it or not, there are shops dealing exclusively in trading cards of cartoon characters, super heroes, professional athletes ... so why not anarchists?

One publication, not from us but worth mentioning, is *Anarchy in the UK*, 44 pages of comics plus a bound-in mini comic, with contributions from Clifford Harper, Donald Room, Arthur Moyse, Ernie Crosswell and the creator of the Bash Street Kids Leo Baxendale, among others. (£1 from Freedom Press Bookshop plus 15% inland, minimum 19p, or 20% overseas postage.)

Through the Anarchist Press

At the recent anti Criminal Justice Bill demonstration, Jeremy Corbyn MP gave prior notice of plans by the 'Michael Howard Home Office plc' to issue national identity cards. This is the usual insane effort on the part of the authorities to pretend that there is such a thing as complete and successful surveillance. The mania for identity cards is just a money-making ploy. The photographs and the plastic have to be paid for. However automated an office might be, the staff has to be increased to deal with 55 million bits of separate individuals. Updating them with their secret code information is a tragic joke comparable to the work of Hercules cleaning up the Augean stables, except a little bit more smelly and difficult. Perhaps they would also like an instant census, all present and correct, sir, press a button and the whole population will jump to attention.

At the same demonstration - which was still peaceful despite great provocation until I left it - going home unfortunately we were not allowed to go down Oxford Street (the tube at Marble Arch was closed and we wanted to walk to Bond Street to the nearest station). We were met by a cordon of police who refused us entry into Oxford Street.

Conversation with unwilling member:

Q: Why can't we walk down Oxford Street?

A: Don't know. You can't.

Q: Who can tell me?

A: Ask the commanding officer.

Q: Where is he?

A: Don't know. Now move along.

So how could there have been a riot in Oxford Street when it was closed end to end, cordoned off by police. Was the cordon abandoned to allow a contingent specially hired for the occasion with the co-operation of the *Times* and the *London Evening Standard* to break at least one shop window and by doing so divert the attention in the next day's newspapers from the brutal crowd management tactics and risible incompetence of the Home Office plc?

I saw with my own eyes how the police in combat uniforms, together with a squadron on horseback, were constantly menacing the young people around the corner of Park Lane and Speakers' Corner. What was their crime? They were joyous and I for one liked their very cheerful music, very clever with simple good lyrics, and go along with and admire their

simple assertion of their human rights - their right 'to party' and they were having a party under intolerable conditions, their sound systems being pushed back inch by inch from Park Lane to Speakers' Corner, physically pushed back in their peaceful thousands by frustrated gents wearing ridiculous uniforms with the proto design identity cards pinned to their ample chests.

Whoever organised the mayhem it wasn't the anarchists, but the same kind of bungler, the difference is only qualitative, the same executive decision as when the US hierarchy ordered the dropping of a nuclear bomb on its own people. Here was a right yin-yang for everybody, as they used to say in the '60s.

This is a phlegmatic, polite and even docile country, and yet were there not marksmen standing on tops of houses, was there not a huge intruding noisy motored zeppelin flying over our heads advertising a lemon or some such citrus fruit and cunningly filming and photographing every member of that huge crowd, same as three days later in sunny charming Bournemouth where an unprecedentedly large procession besieged the Tory Party conference making the Tory rent-a-crowd shake with indignation. Disgraceful, they shouted, how dare these people protest against the curtailment of their civil liberties. On the television it was left to a police superintendent (he will soon get the sack) to have to defend his decision even to allow such a demonstration to take place.

Interviewer: Don't you think it was reckless on your part to allow this demonstration to take place [turning aside and reading from a prepared script] in view of the riots of last Sunday in Hyde Park [sic].

Superintendent: [grinning] These people had proper permission. I would have looked foolish to ban a demonstration which was protesting in a peaceful manner against the curtailment of their right to protest.

Cut to a clip of a young Tory (mentally not a day older than 85) who was given time to whimper "These people are not representative. Look at them, they are scum [spluttering], these people are the corrupters of the public morale" (he meant morality) - a revealing Freudian slip.

So while the Tories were practising their

oratory inside the ugly looking Business Centre, the procession wound along the leafy lanes, good humoured and peaceful (except for a bit of mechanical shouting of a sloppy slogan the SWP equates with revolution). The home-made placards were much more to the point, such as 'Hands off my DNA', Gerroff Moi Rights', even a pun on the latest Tory Party slogan 'Britain is getting Stranger'. You won't read this anywhere else except in *Freedom*, but I did see the population lining the streets and cheering.

But for the zeppelin above our heads making an awful racket, the sign of a government having lost the support of the population and falling back on technological defence, the aim of the organisers, who all live in Bournemouth, coupling their implacable opposition to the In-Justice Bill with the physical fact of the Tory Party jamboree in Bournemouth itself, have been fully justified.

May you live in interesting times, goes the old Oriental saying. My favourite slogan at the moment is 'Demons Out'. Who would have thought that metaphysics would ever have a new relevance. Cool heads and warm hearts, comrades, there is a lot of work to do.

John Rety

Santa Clause

'To steal from the workers, whether by hand or brain, 90% (or more if we can get away with it) of their product of their labour and hand this over to a minuscule minority.'

It is to be doubted if Tony Blair, when he does his rewrite of Clause 4, will have the honesty to phrase it as an open justification of what capitalism does, any more than the Tories or Liberal Democrats would acknowledge what they do in fact do, and intend to continue doing.

The debate at the Labour Party conference (and subsequently in the media) about Clause 4 is revealing more for what both sides in the debate either do not know or agree to suppress as for what was actually said.

For instance, despite magisterial tones and impressive qualifications, Professor Crick, who wrote to the *Grauniad* quoting the Webbs and Ramsay Macdonald to the effect that not everything was to be nationalised and so argued that contrary to the literal meaning of the Clause its creators did not mean to make a universal change, showed quite remarkable ignorance of what happened at the 1918 Labour conference.

The Guild Socialists and Industrial Unionists (following the resistance to the war and the pre-war Syndicalist upsurge) had gained very considerable influence and were pushing for a real socialist statement (abolition of the wages system, a society built on cooperation and workers' control of industry).

In such circumstances it was the Right Wing of the Labour Party that advocated the nationalisation of industry as an alternative to socialism. When it was apparent that this would not go through, Sidney Webb - as a compromise statement - drew up Clause 4 (which, as Professor Crick so rightly said, could mean all things to all [wo]men).

So when Bernard Crick quoted both Webb and Macdonald to show that they did not mean that nationalisation would be needed as an universal, he completely distorted what they were saying. They were not saying the rest of industry could remain capitalist. On the contrary, they were saying that although some industries had to be vested in central government the rest could become fully socialist.

Given that an academic who has written a book on the subject is (to put the most charitable construction possible on things) ignorant of the most elementary facts of the case, it is I suppose hardly surprising that what was said in debate was equally nonsensical.

Because the debate was conducted in a way that equated socialism with nationalisation (despite the fact that the present Clause itself being "to win for the workers the full product of their labours" as if under nationalisation no surplus value [profits] were extracted from their work and the workers were not robbed [exploited] in such industries) it was impossible for the real intentions of the people who built the Labour movement to be considered at all.

LO

Propaganda by the Deed

"Memories, rather than detailed research - speakers from several anarchist[ic] traditions contributing to an history of anarchism from the end of World War Two through the '60s revival to more recent days."

'Propaganda by the Deed' is the title of a strand organised by Laurens Otter at the History Workshop, University of Brighton, Pavilion Parade, Brighton BN1 1RA on the weekend of **11th to 13th November** (waged £30, students/unwaged £10).

The provisional programme:

1. The Libertarian Left in the Post-War Years
Speaker: to be announced
Chair: Philip Sansom
2. From Operation Gandhi to the Committee of 100
Speaker: Mike Randle
Chair: Tony Smythe
3. Christian Anarchism
Speaker: Andrew King
Chair: Peter Lumsden
4. Memo from a Social Worker
Speaker: Martin Gilbert
Chair: Richard Ehlers
5. Nursing Militancy
Speaker: Carl Pinel
Chair: Ken Smith
6. Last Night of the Bombs: the anti-nuclear peace movement in the 1980s
Speaker: Rip Bulkeley
Chair: Jay Ginn

The present convenor's underlying premise is that whenever the working class is in a period of militant upsurge a new restatement of anarchism arises largely synthesising the disparate older anarchist traditions (but in each case also drawing in views and recruits from movements that had until that current upsurge stopped short of adopting a fully anarchist position - no doubt also losing other currents, prepared to compromise).

Twice in this century - before, during and immediately after the two world wars - such upsurges have been marked both in Britain and abroad (though the movements reached peaks at slightly different dates in differing countries). In each case a significant syndicalist upsurge was the central anarchist contribution, a contribution that had a far greater effect than might have been expected, considering the low anarchist numbers.

But comparison of the two will show some material differences between the syndicalism of the beginning of the century and that that arose in the '30s. The context of the anti-fascist struggles, protests at the Stalin purges, the need to differentiate such movements clearly from Leninism, on the one hand meant that the anarchist case was more sharply emphasised and on the other hand meant that many socialists who would not otherwise have seen the evils of the state were now conscious of them.

The '60s and '70s too saw an upsurge and a new synthesis of the earlier traditions; syndicalism was then one of two major components of the direct action movement (civil disobedience being the other). It is intended that each of the speakers describe from personal experience one stage of how this came to be.

NEW FROM FREEDOM PRESS

Health Service Wildcat

As it says on the front cover, "this book is dedicated to the daft doctrine that people trained in making profits can run a better health service than people trained in caring for the sick". It is the fourth book of Donald Room's 'Wildcat' cartoons to be published by Freedom Press, but the first in which Donald has worked with a collaborator.

Most of the hilarious scripts are by a well-known writer, not an anarchist, who works for the National Health Service. It is not a joke but a real fact, that the writer's new conditions of service include the threat of dismissal for "causing the management to lose confidence in you as an employee". So the writer has prudently elected to use a pen-name for this book, Victoria N. Furnurry. When 'she' retires from the NHS, people may be startled to learn 'her' true identity.

Meanwhile the book is as thought-provoking and laughter-inducing as the other 'Wildcat' books, and none the less so for being on a single topic.

48 pages ISBN 0 900384 73 5 £1.95

Freedom Press

84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

Monday 4th October 1993, Oaxtepec, Morelos, Mexico. Representatives of the indigenous people of 23 countries gather together to set out a common strategy within the context of the international situation.

Amongst all the hubbub of the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the conquest of America, the counter-struggle left the diplomatic stage it had previously pursued through organisations like the United Nations to take on a more political hue by means of strategic alliances with popular sectors. Over the course of several congresses (Quito, Bogota, Rio de Janeiro), seminars and public demonstrations, the indigenous peoples let it be known that they did not applaud the extermination of their ancestors. On this occasion they launched a continental campaign, which was to become global, whose objectives were not only to boycott the celebrations but to put forward alternative propositions to promote their rights *here and now*.

A first stage culminated in the '500 Years of Resistance' movement (previously reported in *Freedom*) which took place in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, from 7th to 12th October 1991. Under the auspices of the Quiche Indians, representatives of different ethnic groupings gathered together on the Guatemalan plateau in traditional costumes, along with their centuries-old traditions and a list of the wrongs they had suffered. They paid homage to *Huracán* (the Spirit of the Sky) and to *Abya Yala* (Mother Earth) – but they also used computers to record their own history. Pluralism presided over a whole range of experience, opinion and ceremony. Some denounced the extermination campaigns, others the ravages of the environment and yet others evoked the incessant campaigns aimed at denying their identity.

Birth of a global movement

If the idea of creating an alternative on the continent by co-ordinating with national civil groups took root in Quetzaltenango, the nomination of Rigoberta Menchu for a nobel prize and the UN designation of a 'Year of Indigenous Peoples' gave witness to a new sensibility which had appeared in the international scene bringing with it a clear element of progress within the movement. That the most famous victim of military brutality should have won such a prize was a diplomatic success for the domestic Guatemalan resistance, which has been fighting a ferocious dictatorship for forty years.

Moreover, the determination of this sliver of a woman summarises the determination of the civilisations that our age has denied, and the prize awarded to her (despite its lateness and inadequacy) is in itself a homage to all these people. From this starting point, Rigoberta's offices in her Mexican exile have become the axis of a whole network of autochthonous

FOCUS SPECIAL ON Indigenous Peoples

Normally in the 'Focus ...' articles we try to set out an anarchist viewpoint of some particular issue. Here we break with tradition (aren't we naughty!) and bring you an article not written from a specifically anarchist position. We feel, however, that it raises a huge number of issues that are of interest to anarchists in a context which is currently of interest to progressives in general. It should also generate some debate. Anyway, read it. You'll see what we mean ...

organisations, which has reached out beyond its point of creation – the American continent – to become international.

Throughout 1992 and 1993 there were many congresses and summits, under various labels but with a common objective: to take advantage of the favourable atmosphere before it should fade. When the celebrations of the conquest were over, new forms of action saw the light of day with the Guatemalans leading from the front. From 24th to 28th May 1993 in Chimaltenango – the Cakchiquel territory – took place the first world summit of indigenous people.

At the same time as these people were setting up their first international organisation, the Guatemalan President Jorge Alias Serrano was carrying out his coup d'état which would cost him his power. The situation was a difficult one with the means of communication centred around the outcome of the crisis. However, the summit continued, becoming by this very fact an act of civil disobedience.

Here is an extract from the Chimaltenango declaration:

"At the end of the twentieth century, discrimination, systematic violation of ancestral rights and the exclusion of our people from the political process continues. We note that we live under the shadows of death such as racism, child traffic and environmental destruction. Faced with this sombre scenario, our millenarian cultures are surging forwards to become the voice of hope in favour of a more just and balanced future. We wish to restore the health of Mother Earth and re-establish egalitarian relationships based on mutual respect and solidarity."

Immediately afterwards the participants proclaimed the 'Decade of Indigenous Peoples' from 1994 to the year 2003 and appealed to the UN and the Organisation of American States. Under a full state of emergency and with the Guatemalan delegates under military threat, a ceremony was celebrated in Iximché on 28th May 1993 to close the summit with a promise to meet again as soon as possible.

The indigenous people speak

This happened in Mexico between 4th and 8th October 1993. The hundred or so delegates brought with them papers, tasks to be accomplished and much hope. After an inaugural ceremony performed by the Nahuatl women of the region, the debates began which were to last five days and were used to soften corners and to consolidate structures structures.

The delegates concentrated on defining the objectives for the Decade of the Indigenous Peoples, the problem of funding and organisational questions. Let us listen to the voices of some of those who were there.

"On balance it has been a bad year. We were unable to raise the funds we wanted to launch the developmental projects we had established. Indian territories continue to be used for military purposes and as chemical dumping grounds. A few days earlier, forty Yanomani brothers fell victim to the barbarism in Brazil. The destruction of ceremonial centres and sacred sites has continued. However, we have succeeded in breaking the silence. Our struggle is a long one and we have only just started to organise" stated Menchu in her opening speech.

During the working sessions Margarito Ruiz, a Tojolabal from Mexico, stated: "The International year resulted in the rebirth of the indigenous peoples. We have succeeded in finding allies who, like us, are struggling to achieve more human relationships."

Alicia Canaviri, an Aymara from Bolivia, pointed out that the meetings carried the risk of forming an indigenous elite separated from the grassroots. "That is why our task is to target international bodies with strong movements of national character, dedicated to propaganda, the raising of consciousness and focusing on internal problems."

Economic and legal problems were

confronted in their vast complexity. "We are the inheritors of important cultural and social values. Let us avoid the confused notion of minority – in some countries we even represent the *majority*. It is better to speak of *peoples* with a right to self-determination and to participate in national and international well-being" added Lázaro Pari, also from Bolivia.

"In order to give back value to our institutions we favour the creation of a body to study the notion of *common law*" said Alfredo Cupil from Guatemala. Tony Gonzalez from Arizona denounced the pollution of the Colorado river and the environmental damage that would be done because of the NAFTA.

From the Far East Victoria Tauli Corpuz claimed that "South East Asia is going through a period of high growth. For the indigenous peoples (some 150 million) the opening up of the economy has signified increased marginalisation along with the destruction of lands rich in minerals and tropical forests. The misery of militarisation is the order of the day. This situation is particularly serious in my country, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia where the government has launched a programme of colonisation at the expense of the indigenous peoples."

(continued on page 7)

Inside India

Squatting in the courtyard of her small brick and mud house in a South Indian hamlet, Sunanda, a rural housewife, expertly slices open a pumpkin gourd with a large knife and scoops out a fistful of seeds.

After cleaning them she puts them to dry in the sun. A few days later the seeds are carefully mixed with the leaves of the neem tree, a natural insect repellent, and stored in a small earthen pot to await the next sowing season.

The scene from the documentary *Patent Pending* by Indian film maker Meera Dewan vividly portrays an annual ritual which keeps hundreds of millions of mostly small Indian farmers going from harvest to harvest.

Dewan's film is a protest against the Uruguay round trade agreement, which was adopted by the world's trade ministers in Morocco earlier this year, and its debilitating clause on Trade Related Intellectual Property (TRIP).

The TRIPs regime, included at the insistence of the industrialised countries, demands that modifications to living organisms like seeds will have to be protected by patents or similar forms of intellectual property protection.

Patent Pending, which is being screened in India and abroad by activist groups, shows what GATT will do to small farmers like Sunanda.

Dewan has said that she was inspired by the Indian activist Vandana Shiva, the 1993 winner of the Swedish Right Livelihood Award whose book *Staying Alive* demystifies the western development concept and addresses the centuries-old knowledge of traditional Indian farming practices.

"When last year the GATT issue came up, with the farmers' protests against the patent laws, Shiva and I thought it would be important to give this a contemporary scene and set it against the western linear mindset" says Dewan, who spent a year filming in the villages of Karnataka state.

Under the new rules patent protection can only be provided to private and corporate knowledge. "TRIPs places the contribution of the seed companies over and above the intellectual contribution of generations of third world farmers in areas of conservation, breeding, domestication and development of plant and genetic resources" says Shiva.

Opponents say this is unfair since it is the

world's poor communities who have supplied us with biological information for deriving livelihoods from the bounties of nature's diversity. The Andean Indians introduced the potato to the world, alfalfa was discovered in Africa, the Amazonian Indians supplied rubber, and rice and wheat were introduced by the farming communities of Asia.

Patent Pending shows that traditionally Indian farmers have practised sustainable agriculture using their methods which have not disturbed eco-systems. They have selected and bred plants which have best suited their manifold needs.

In their role as scientists the farmers have not only discovered pest-resistant varieties but also repellents like neem leaves or the seeds of kosarka tree and plant nutrients such as the oil seed cakes of peanut, castor and mahua.

An enormous variety of plant life still survives because traditional Indian farmers exchange this knowledge and share their seeds and produce.

Critics fear, however, that the new GATT will stop farmer-to-farmer sale of seeds, which was an important factor in the spread of new varieties.

It is estimated that of the six million tonnes of seed for Indian agriculture, one third is met by formal agencies like the national and state seed corporations. The rest is what farmers save for the next planting season.

As shown in the film, the exchanging of seeds is a centuries-old ritual performed by women of different villages within regions, which keeps alive the different varieties thus protecting genetic diversity. Farmers argue that once the seed is patented, cultivators will lose their right to modify, retain or use their seeds. If the farmers lose control over the seed, they end up as merely the wage-labourers of the corporation, tilling the land, using the seeds, fertilisers and pesticides of the corporation and giving the harvest to the corporation.

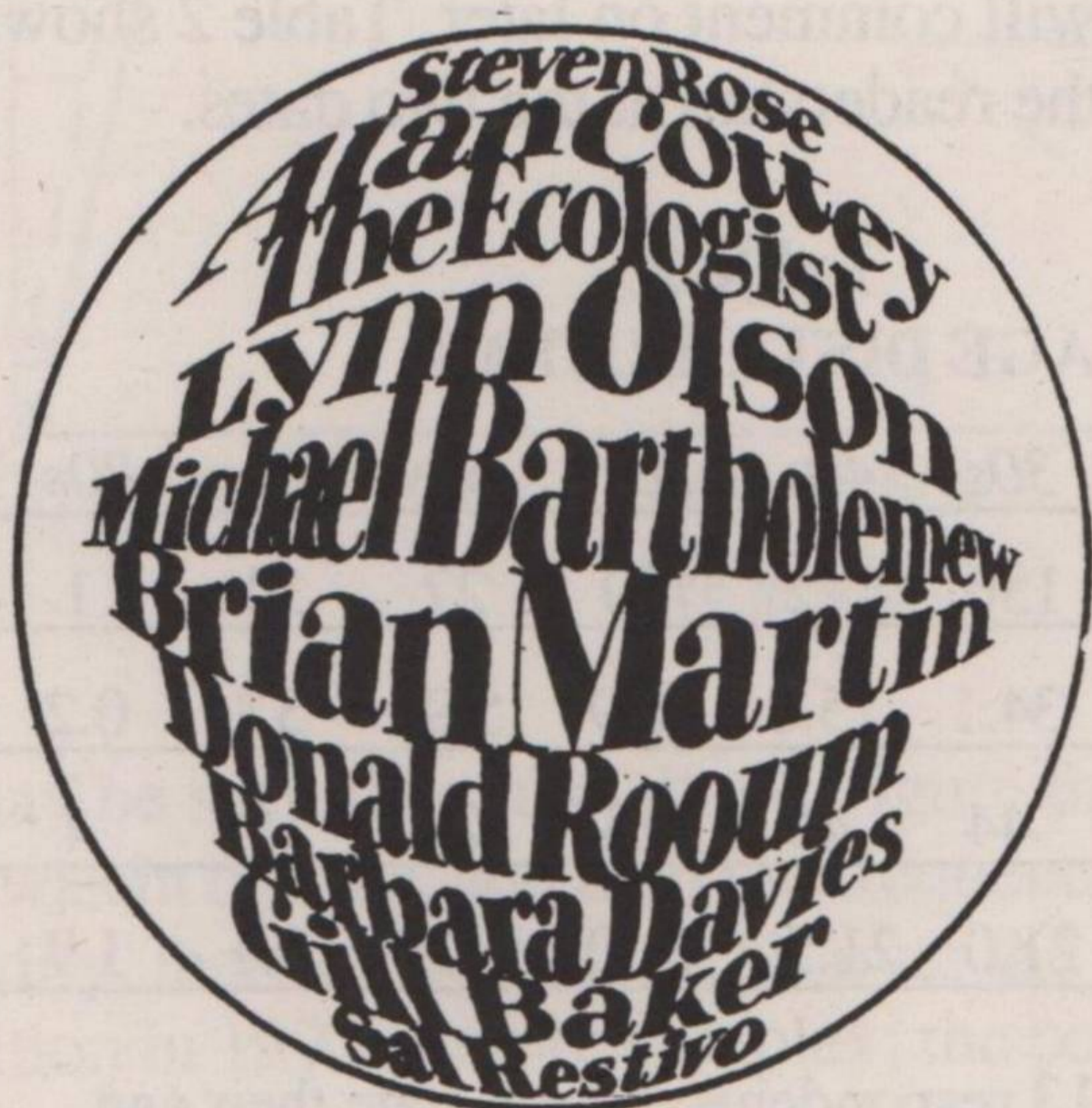
This will wipe out the majority of India's tillers, who are already poor enough, turning farming into a completely capital-intensive industry. *Patent Pending* attempts to put the record straight. It is also part of the fight back. If anyone is interested in obtaining a copy of the film please write to me at 18 Nizamuddin East, New Delhi 110013, India.

John Shotton

Raven 26

on

Science – 2



100 pages £3.00 (post free anywhere)

— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

Marshall circumnavigates Africa

Like most of us (fortunately for the environment) I'm content to let other people do my globetrotting for me, reporting back in a section which the bookshops label as Travel Writers and our county library, less concerned with the cult of personality, simply classifies geographically. But my trouble is that I seldom like the personalities, the world-view and the automatic assumptions of my proxy voyagers. Often the wrong people get hired to tell me about the outside world.

That's why it was a delight to hear that Peter Marshall had been commissioned to sail all round Africa "from the Pillars of Hercules to the Strait of Gibraltar" using whatever coastal vessels were available, whether container ships or traditional dhows, and that neither he nor his publishers would starve as he would be met at key points in his journey by a camera crew for a television series.

From their point of view his credentials are perfect as he is one of those people who has spent a lifetime messing about in boats, and at 18 went round the world as a P&O cadet and in 1986 crossed the Atlantic in a small yacht. He has frequently visited Africa and ten years ago wrote a book on his *Journey Through Tanzania*. And for anarchists too, his record is impressive. He wrote a biography of Godwin and edited the Freedom Press book of *The Anarchist Writings of William Godwin*, and followed this with his Freedom Press study of *William Blake: Visionary Anarchist*. After this came his vast history of anarchism *Demanding the Impossible* (HarperCollins) and *Nature's Web: an exploration of ecological thinking* (Simon & Schuster).

His account of his latest journey appeared in August as *Around Africa* (Simon & Schuster, 404 pages, £12.99) and covers seven months, 17,000 miles, fifteen countries and four seas. As you might expect, it is a very readable account of his mishaps, encounters and endless problems with bureaucracies, self-doubts and self-discovery as well as a nagging guilt about leaving his family back home in Wales.

I'll say nothing of all this. Read the book if you want to know. But I would like to quote some of his observations and conclusions. At

the outset of his journey he rehearsed the facts about the continent:

"Civil war was raging in many countries, notably Somalia, Sudan, Angola and Mozambique. As a result of the cold war, the continent was awash with arms. There was widespread ecological devastation, largely man-made: expanding deserts, cyclical drought in savannah regions and dwindling tropical rainforests. Harsh governments and dictatorships ruled over the troubled land. The gap between rulers and ruled, rich and poor was forever widening. Cities, which hardly deserved the name, were breaking down. Food production declined while populations were soaring."

The results of this were inevitable:

"African countries, south of the Sahara, suffered the greatest human deprivation in the world ... Africa had the lowest life expectancy, the highest infant mortality rates and the lowest literacy rates. Its average per capita income fell by a quarter in the 1980s. Two-thirds of all Africans are denied access to clean water each year for cooking and drinking. Over four million children die each year from malnutrition, while another thirty million are underweight. Most citizens have become worse off in real terms since independence, and every year they are getting poorer."

But needless to say, his voyage of discovery uncovered other things besides misery. In Cameroon, a country with artificial boundaries imposed by colonialists on more than 240 ethnic groups with many languages, he asked Jean-Victor Nkolo about tribalism as the scourge of African politics.

"Well, it has a positive and negative side. The positive side is that all members of an ethnic group are expected to help each other; in a country without a welfare state or social security, that can mean the difference between life and death. Everybody feels that they belong to a family, a clan and a tribe. The negative side of course is nepotism and the rivalry between tribes which can lead to civil war."

It was in the equatorial forest of Cameroon

that he was taken to meet a hunting-and-gathering society with no chiefs and no concept of private property:

"In fact, pygmies are the world's greatest anarchists. They have no hierarchy or domination in their society, no leaders, law-makers or government. They have a deep-seated reluctance to lead or to be aggressive; if someone pushes himself forward, everyone else feels embarrassed. They have customs and rituals, as every people in the world, but no laws, judges, police, courts or prisons. If some members fall into dispute or harm others, then the whole group tries to restore the harmony and not wreak vengeance. In the end, the forest itself will deal with any serious disruption of the natural order. For them, the forest is God and God is the forest."

Marshall's other anarchist encounter was of a quite different kind. He was in South Africa in the period leading up to the huge shift of political power, and in Cape Town met the former professor of philosophy, now in his eighties, Martin Versfeld, who had several famous radicals among his former students:

"Versfeld told me he was an anarchist at heart because he believed that the only thing necessary for society to hold together was to develop right relationships. 'The state has always been a burden. If there is to be any peace in South Africa, it will only be achieved on the principles of decentralisation and regionalism' ... It was the most sensible thing I had heard so far."

For people like us, by far the most interesting of the post-colonial politicians was Julius Nyerere. His aims and hopes were very much like ours, claiming that African socialism drew on ancient traditions of mutual aid and self-reliance, but of course his means were to be their enforcement by the machinery of state. Marshall is an authority on Tanzania and it is worth quoting his summary of the history of independence.

"Soon after the unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar to form Tanzania in 1964, Mwalimu (Teacher) Nyerere launched the policy of Ujamaa (familyhood) in order to create an egalitarian commonwealth in which all would hold their head up but none would rise too far above the crowd. While his aims were idealistic, his means were disastrous.

At the end of the '60s, Nyerere forcibly moved the scattered population into communal villages, using the army to impose his will where necessary. The plan was not properly thought out - villages were often established far from water and fields - and the use of force only alienated the farmers. Agricultural production dropped; factories closed down. Although Tanzania continued to receive the largest amount of foreign aid in Africa, especially from Scandinavian countries, it became one of the poorest countries on the continent.

While capitalist Kenya had prospered, socialist Tanzania floundered. In frustration Nyerere closed the border between the two countries in 1977, thereby destroying the East Africa Community. Corruption in the state-run enterprises became rife. The costly invasion of Uganda in 1979 to depose Idi Amin further crippled the country's economy. Tanzanians found an empty pot of maize meal at the end of the rainbow. And despite Nyerere's rhetoric of freedom and opposition to apartheid, he allowed no free press or opposition in his own country. There were more political prisoners in his one-party state in the '70s than in South Africa.

At the time of my arrival, Nyerere had resigned - the only African president apart from Léopold Senghor of Senegal to do so. He had been replaced by the former president of Zanzibar, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, who was busy introducing political reforms and loosening market forces. Nevertheless the difficult socialist years had left some benefits: unlike Kenya, the two hundred or so tribes in Tanzania were welded into one nation with a rare sense of common purpose. By establishing schools throughout the country - even if they had few books - it meant that every Tanzanian understood Kiswahili. While countries in Central and East Africa were falling apart, Tanzania appeared united and stable."

Travel writers are not obliged to draw political conclusions from their kaleidoscopic impressions. But Marshall is a serious thinker and tried to learn from the places he saw and the people he met. He says that "after thinking long and hard about the issue, I believe that Africans should be left to themselves to sort out their own conflicts and

There have been two surveys of the readership of *Freedom*, and it is instructive to see what changes have occurred in the 32 years that elapsed between them. The analysis of the 1960 survey was published in the monthly journal *Anarchy* of February 1962.

First it should be noted that there were significant differences between the two surveys. The questionnaires of 1960 were sent out only to the subscribers of the paper, but in 1992 questionnaires were sent out with all copies of the paper, including those in the bundles sent to libraries, bookshops, etc. I have been unable to ascertain exactly precisely how many questionnaires were dispatched in the recent survey, but I am informed that it was approximately 1,100. In both surveys a small number of forms were received that were so inadequately completed that they were not worth including in the analysis, so the figures I will deal with concern only usable questionnaires. In the first survey an accurate account was kept of where the readers lived, but no such account was kept in the second survey. Table 1 shows an analysis of the responses.

Table 1

	Number of questionnaires sent out	Replies received	Percentage
1960			
Britain	1031	358	34.7
USA and Canada	523	68	13.0
Australia and New Zealand	53	19	35.0
Europe	166	16	9.6
Elsewhere	90	9	10.0
Total	1863	470	25.7
1992			
Britain and abroad	1100	209	19.0

Thus of those who received the questionnaire in 1992 only

The Freedom Readership Surveys:

19% took the trouble to complete and return it. This is so low a response rate that any conclusions that can be drawn from the results must be very tentative indeed. In all surveys those who reply are people who are more literate and more interested in the subject of the survey; one cannot draw any firm conclusions about the general readership of the paper either from the 1960 survey (where the response rate was only 25.7%) or the more recent one. However, since the same biases will have operated in both surveys, it may be meaningful to compare their results.

It has been remarked above that the earlier survey was confined to the subscribers to *Freedom*, but the more recent one was distributed generally. Analysis of the recent results shows that of the 209 respondents, 47 were not subscribers but people who acquired the paper, and hence the questionnaire, from other sources such as bookshops; the number of subscribers responding was 162. I am told that in 1992 the number of subscribers to the paper was approximately between 700 and 800, and therefore their response rate was between 23% and 20%, which is not a great deal lower than that obtained in the 1960 survey.

The 'FREEDOM READERSHIP SURVEY' was sent out with the issue of *Freedom* dated 12th December 1992, and a 'First Impressions' analysing answers to such questions as 'How many people read your copy of *Freedom*?' and 'How successful do you think *Freedom* is for anarchist propaganda?' from the first 100 replies appeared on 9th January 1993 and a second report on 6th March 1993.

Both of these back numbers are still available at 50p each (overseas £1 each).

It should be remarked here that the quite drastic drop in the number of people subscribing to *Freedom* over 32 years (1893 compared with 700-800) does not necessarily reflect any change in the quality of the paper. At the earlier date it was far less easy to publish papers, and hence for quite a while various groups of people persistently tried to seize control of the press, on one occasion a gang arriving equipped with hammers, axes, etc., to break up the printing press because they had failed to obtain control of it! Technical advances over the last three decades have made it relatively easy for any group to publish their own paper, hence the plethora of anarchist and fringe-anarchist papers on display at the annual anarchist bookfair. In 1960 some of the subscribers were subscribing very reluctantly simply because there were very few alternative outlets for anarchist ideas and commentary.

One of the interesting changes in the readership of the paper over the years is its age, and this, of course, reflects the changing age-structure of the general population as well as other factors that I will comment on later. Table 2 shows the age distribution of the readership at the two dates.

Table 2
AGE DISTRIBUTION

	-20	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	80s	Total
1960	10	127	156	72	50	27	14	1	457*
%	2.2	27.8	34.1	15.8	10.9	5.9	3.1	0.2	100
1992	2	48	44	45	23	24	19	4	209
%	1.0	23.0	21.0	21.5	11.0	11.5	9.1	1.9	100

* In the 1960 survey 13 respondents did not state their age.

It will be apparent that the readership in the 1990s is now considerably older than it was 32 years ago, and this may be

problems ... In my view there are three things, mainly negative, which the outside world can do to help Africa recover from its mess."

The first of these is the cancellation of overseas debts, now running at over 174 billion dollars. Marshall says:

"The money loaned lavishly by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and other Western banks and governments can never be repaid. The payment of the interest alone is in many cases greater than the country's income. Africa is spending more servicing its debt than on its total budget for health and education."

He knows that all that money had dribbled away on a vast scale in corrupt presidential offices and central banks, and argues without much hope that:

"Ideally, the north should be willing to improve the terms of trade with the south. Since independence the industrialised countries have continued the colonial policy of buying raw materials and primary products cheap and selling manufactured and consumer goods dear. The result has been that a third of the world in the north has become richer, while two-thirds in the south have become poorer. Since an appeal to goodwill seems unlikely to reverse this trend, the countries of Africa should form cartels to increase the price of their products. At the same time, they should with other countries on the peripheries of the world market gradually disconnect themselves from the centre in the north and trade between themselves. The model of development of the industrialised countries - whether capitalist or socialist - is inappropriate in Africa since it assumes expanding markets and resources which no longer exist. There can be no such thing as 'catching up' for Africa, either through the kind of centralised state ownership and command economy tried out in Egypt and Algeria, or the *laissez-faire* economies of Kenya and the Ivory Coast. Africa cannot expect the high living standards of the north because they are based on the exploitation and impoverishment of the south. Above all, there are simply not enough resources in the world to go around. Africa should therefore aim at self-sufficiency and self-reliance as far as possible, within a context of regional co-operation."

The second thing that he thinks outsiders can do for Africa is to end all aid, which in the past:

"... has only supported dictatorial governments, entrenched corruption and encouraged uneven development. It feathers the nest of the urban élites

and enables politicians to enhance their power and wealth by using aid as a political weapon. Western aid experts develop strategies which assume that wealth trickles down to the poor; in reality, it is invariably sucked up by the rich and powerful."

Naturally he makes an exception with the kind of aid provided by voluntary organisations at the village level, "but even this continues the myth that the foreign expert knows best. Like all aid, it checks local initiatives and solutions, self-help and self-reliance and encourages a dependent mentality."

The third and, needless to say, least likely thing that the outside world can do to help Africa is the imposition of a strict arms embargo.

"Before the arrival of the slave traders and the colonialists, violence in communities was contained. When competing clans or tribes fought each other with bows and arrows only a few died. When they shoot it out with tanks and automatic weapons many more get in the way. When elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers. Africa is awash with arms and ammunition as a result of the Cold War during which it became a battleground for superpower rivalry. Vast amounts of money were borrowed by dictators to buy their deadly toys and the arms sellers in the West and East scrambled over each other to oblige. Revolutionary Africa has collapsed into civil wars which are more tribal than anything else. With the social fabric torn apart, the old moralities destroyed, gangs of armed youths answerable to no one but their warlords have been on the rampage in the Congo, Uganda and now in Somalia and Liberia. Having won independence, different factions in Angola and Mozambique continued to destroy each other. Today the greatest scourge of Africa is the rulers and their military forces."

These are the political messages Marshall hopes his audience will learn. For the sheer visual excitement of his voyage of discovery, we have to watch for the television series.

Colin Ward

— BOOK REVIEW —

Anarchism: Left, Right and Green

Anarchism: Left, Right and Green

by Ulrike Heider
City Lights, £11.99

This is a peculiar work of political journalism by a German academic, now resident in New York. It purports to examine the differences in philosophy and outlook of the various personalities and sections of the anarchist movement, from the 'left' with anarcho-syndicalists such as the late Sam Dolgoff, libertarian socialists such as Noam Chomsky, eco-anarchists such as Murray Bookchin, to the 'right' with so-called anarcho-capitalists such as Murray Rothbard and fellow travellers of the Libertarian Party.

However, a more accurate title for the book might have been 'American Anarchism: Left, Right and Green', for while it may be true that the American anarchist movement has a large 'individualist' element of the *anarcho-capitalist* tendency, this philosophical outlook is nowhere near so significant within the anarchist movement in the rest of the world, especially in the UK and Europe. The philosophy espoused by the anarcho-capitalists, which Heider describes and which occupies fully one-third of this book, is *not anarchism*. It has more in common with Thatcherite Conservatism, Manchester Liberalism and the advocates of a 'night-watchman state' than with the anarchism of the syndicalist, mutualist, collectivist or communist traditions. While it may be interesting to examine the philosophies espoused by so-called anarcho-capitalist, while they may sound 'libertarian' on a limited range of issues, such as drugs and

sexuality, their motivations for such positions are usually related to some aspect of *laissez-faire* philosophy, and not the the anarchism of Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin and more contemporary figures such as Paul Goodman and Herbert Read. To include 'anarcho-capitalists' in the mainstream of anarchism is a mistake: in this country and in most of Europe they are to be found in right-wing parties such as the Conservatives or racist parties such as the Italian Fascists.

The work is worth reading if only for its examination of left-wing anarchism and anarchists. Some of the comments are uncomfortable. For example, Murray Bookchin is criticised for aspects of municipalism and for elements of his 'social-ecology' which Heider labels 'proto-fascist'.

Given the American bias of the work, it should perhaps be no surprise that contemporary European and British anarchists do not get a single mention. Colin Ward's *Anarchy in Action*, which has been translated into dozens of languages and has a wide influence among anarchists, surely deserved examination. No *living* European anarchist is mentioned in the book, though several long dead, though still influential, ones are. If this work were to have lived up to its title, it should have looked at the wider non-American movement. Perhaps the saving grace of the book is the personal portrayal of individual anarchists, which is somewhat unusual. It is interesting to know what comrades are like, not just what they have written. Nevertheless, the abiding disappointment of this book is that fully one-third is given over to describing crypto-fascists, Conservatives, racists *who are not anarchists* and have *nothing* in common with the core beliefs of anarchism, namely its humanity and compassion, as if they were part of the movement.

Jonathan Simcock

— HOW ANARCHISTS DIFFER —

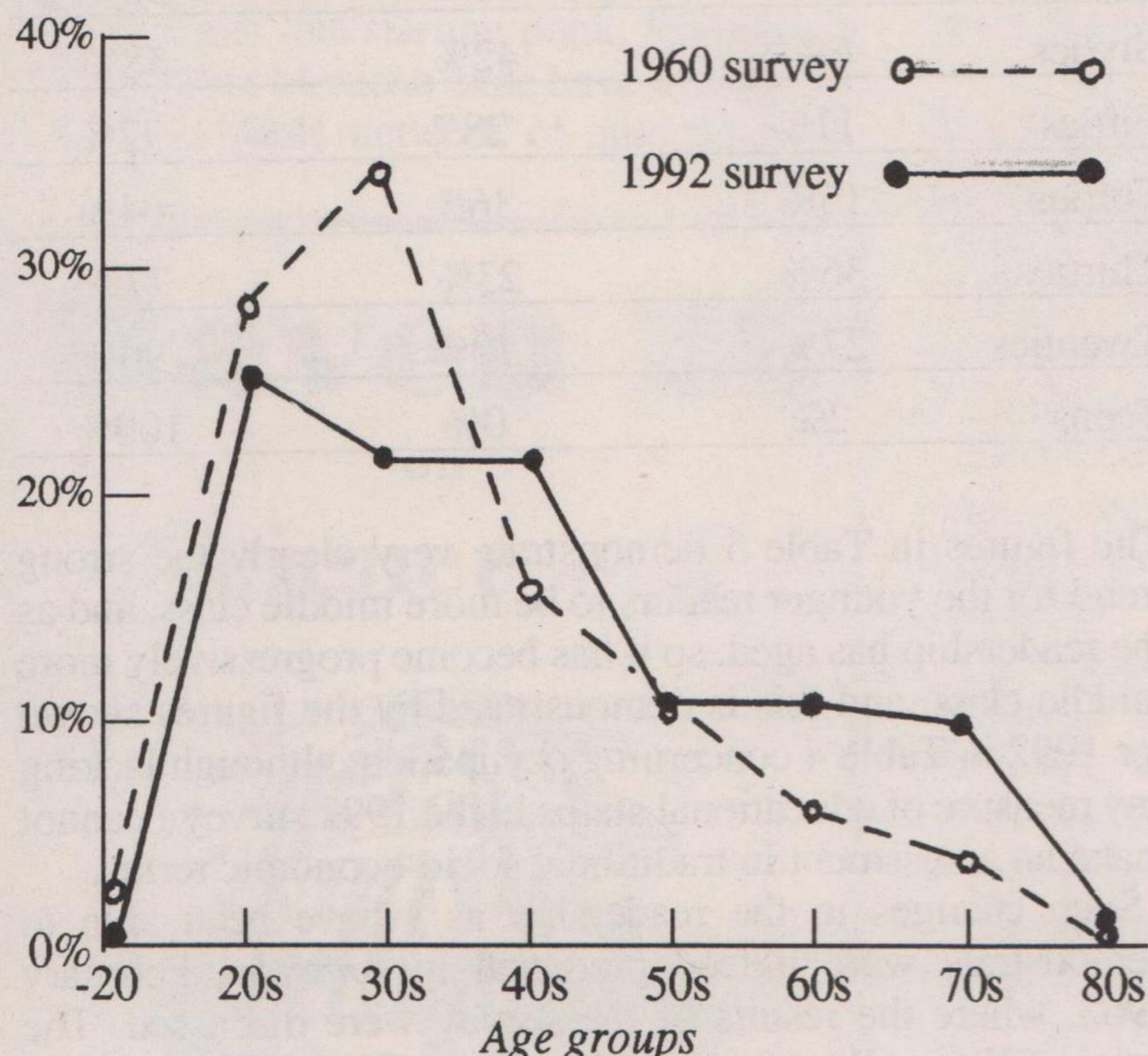
"Let me not give the impression that anarchists never quarrel. There are deep and damaging splits, in which anarchists slag each other off as cheats, liars, thieves, agents of the secret police, and repulsive persons generally. But the basis of such splits is personal antagonism, and it is rare in the anarchist movement for personal quarrels to be masqueraded as doctrinal disputes." — Donald Room

1960 and 1992

seen more clearly if the statistics in Table 2 are represented graphically as in Figure 1.

Figure 1

AGE DISTRIBUTIONS IN THE 1960 AND 1992 SURVEYS



It may be seen from the above Figure than in 1960 the peak age was in the 30s, and then the frequency of readers dropped steadily, there being only 9.2% over the age of 60 years. The position in 1992 is more complex; the percentages in the 20s, 30s and 40s being very similar, and at the older end of the age scale there are 22.5% over the age of 60 years. This implies that a significant proportion of the readership are now 'old faithfuls' who have continued to read the paper for a

considerable number of years. When most of these oldies die off, as they must do in a decade or so, the paper will have a considerably reduced readership unless it manages to attract a greater proportion of people in the younger age groups. The fact that the largest group in 1960 was in the 30s age range reflects the fact that these were mainly the generation who had come into the anarchist movement a decade or more before because of the conscription for the war and the immediate post-war National Service, which revived the anarchist movement in Britain. The very active Ban the Bomb movement of the immediate post-war era also attracted quite a number of younger people to the anarchist movement.

Sex

Of the 470 respondents in 1960 only 58 (12.3%) were women; this reflects the traditional male/female imbalance that has always characterised the anarchist movement and other political activists. One might have expected that now that women are far more active in society and living in greater equality with men in many ways, this sexual imbalance would have decreased. On the contrary, the 1992 survey shows that only 16 (7.8%) were women, and in addition the sex of 4 respondents is unknown because they were coy about revealing it. This drop in the proportion of female readers may

indeed be due to the propaganda of the extreme of the feminist movement, for if all the ills of society are believed to be simply due to one single cause - MEN - then the various and complex factors associated with our authoritarian society that are discussed in *Freedom* will be brushed aside in favour of an over-simple analysis that is divisive between the sexes. With regard to the 4 people whose sex is unknown because of their coyness, I do not think that there was any such reluctance to reveal sexual identity in the 1960 survey. I find this an interesting sign of the times that is evident in the 1990s. There is now a sort of neo-Victorian prudery abroad which affects a fringe of people who read the paper (as is evident from their letters) and they shy away from the word SEX. I note with interest that in the 1960 survey 13 respondents did not reveal their age, but in the more recent one everyone stated an age. Fashions in coyness change.

Employment

The questionnaire that was issued in 1960 was considerably more detailed than that of 1992, and an elaborate breakdown of occupations was reported, but such a breakdown is not really feasible for the recent survey. However, one striking contrast may be made on the question of employment, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	Employed	Unemployed	Housewife	Student	Retired
1960	400	7	12	30	21
%	85.1	1.5	2.5	6.4	4.5
1992	125	32	2	13	37
%	59.8	15.3	1.0	6.2	17.7

It should be noted that the percentage of students is virtually unchanged, but because of the ageing readership there is now a huge increase in the percentage of readers who are retired.

(continued on page 7)

HERBERT READ
A One-Man Manifesto
and other writings for Freedom Press
edited and with an introduction by David Goodway

The complete texts of all the articles, broadcasts, reviews, poems and speeches of Herbert Read published in the anarchist journal *Spain & the World* and its successors *Revolt!*, *War Commentary* and *Freedom*, plus the pamphlets *The Education of Free Men* and *Art and the Evolution of Man*.

208 pages ISBN 0 900384 72 7 £6.00
FREEDOM PRESS
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Focus on Indigenous Peoples

(continued from page 4)

"Burma is suffering from civil war. The terrible military dictatorship which seized power in 1962 cut off all contact with the outside world and massacred the peoples (Karen, Akha, Shan, Kacin) which were fighting for self-determination" said Sein Win, the leader of the exiled government. It is the same situation, according to Kok Ksor for the Degas, a people from the mountains of Vietnam who fought the pro-US southern government and now fight the communist

regime. Their situation is one of the most dangerous, given the encirclement and militarisation of their territories by the government in Hanoi.

Nabin Mondu, a Munda and leader of the Indian Council of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, said "in India forced integration is the agenda. Some of us descend from peoples who settled in the Deccan before the Aryan invasions. We are many and neither Hindu nor Muslim. We have no caste system. Our religions are other. The central government exploits our resources without thinking of the consequences."

Different again is the situation of those from the Pacific Basin, such as the Ainous of Japan or the Kanaka Maoli in Hawaii who, under the

domination of industrial democracies, suffer other problems. Pauline Tangiora, a representative of 500,000 Maoris from New Zealand (sic) claimed that the western civilisation, by liquidating the traditional ways of life, was killing the spirit of the indigenous peoples, which was illustrated by the high levels of suicide and criminality.

Epilogue

At the end of the summit, with little international attention having been received, one question stands out. What chance of success can these peoples' struggles have in a post-industrial IT age? More than a superficial glance may reveal. "The old opposition

between modernity and custom is obsolete. To the extent that traditional wisdom is rediscovering a certain credibility we must also reconsider the ethnic factor which is at the source of tradition" writes *The Economist*, hardly a champion of Indianism. The rehabilitation of knowledge founded on a different way of seeing nature is today admitted by scientists. On the other hand, the crisis in the history of ideas and progress shakes the convictions of western civilisation's sense of superiority.

There is nothing in the idea of autonomy – the basic demand of the indigenous peoples – which must necessarily lead to the break up of national unities. A real integration would be the product of free association and not coercion. Ethnic conflicts which are shaking Europe and other parts of the world could be the products of other ills, such as state centralism, of those problems – never resolved – between the state and religion.

"It is easier for an indigenous person in Alaska to understand another in Ecuador than for a worker to understand a peasant in his own country" claimed Bishop Samuel Ruiz. "In a world growing ever smaller, it is technological development itself which is bringing them together: now we can communicate with each other and share our common problems" said the Cuban Miguel Alfonso Martinez.

For their part, the indigenous peoples do not reject the modern world and they do not seek to isolate the countries where they live. They wish to participate in development and find their place at the heart of multi-ethnic nations of a new kind. Is it utopianism? Perhaps, but it's one of the last at this end of an unsettled millennium.

Claudio Albertini

translated from Spanish by Georges Nuissein (abridged English version Freedom Press) Série Action et Contractions, March 1994

The experiences of the last few years have allowed us to conclude that the established or institutionalised left is totally incapable (on either a theoretical or practical level) of responding concretely to the needs and demands of the people. The rugged debate around the themes of federalism and use of language by groups who have nothing to do with such concepts and the continual attempt to present oneself as 'new' in order to cover up past skeletons provide us with the general framework within which has fermented the experiences and movements which, over the years, have started to redefine, in practice and with a self-managed development, new ways to face up to the demands of daily life. In this way people began to turn to craft, agricultural and entertainment activities which either used modern technology or reproduced more traditional modes of production, but always had as their final objective the effective control of people's work and their lives. Social centres, alternative banks, self-managed schools, squats, producer or consumer co-operatives, self-managed musical productions – such are some of the phenomena which have been adopted by the self-management method. In the 80s, such practices were recognised by a denial of the 'projectual' and political dimension to which was opposed a kind of minimalism which can be summed up in the small is beautiful slogan. Over the following years these groups began

ITALY

Italy has recently seen much debate within the anarchist movement about the question of self-management. Here we bring you a contribution to this debate. We feel sure that the Milan group would be interested in hearing from readers of *Freedom* interested in and/or involved in this area.

to realise that shutting yourself off in your own cocoon was pointless; in fact it ran the risk of bringing with it a progressive implosion that would wipe out or denaturalise the experience, giving ground to market forces and those of profit (or quite simple extinction). In addition a long and painful process was begun (still today in its early stages) of confronting and opposing to similar groupings which had usurped the self-management label. It was in this way that the first exchanges began, the first contacts: we were painfully seeking to escape from the margins, a kind of ghettoisation to which the dominant society would send these ideas which in the long run could put the organisational terms and conditions of the state in jeopardy, which in itself reveals a fragility and more and more clearly an incapacity to answer to, in an acceptable fashion, the demands of ordinary people.

Thus, after a meeting which took place in

Bologna, over the last few months we sought to verify in a concrete fashion the potential for a movement both divided and contradictory but also full of energy and potential. That is to say that we thought the value of this exchange, of concrete experiences as abstract elaborations, would be that it could provide a new springboard for expansion and bring about the opportunity for further exchanges and the spreading of the movement. Moreover, if the economic crisis (and above all the question of employment) brings to light the inability of capitalism to answer to the primary needs of a large part of the planet ... then it seems to us that the moment has arrived for us to begin to set up the opportunities for dialogue between the different tendencies which exist amongst those concerned with self-management. In essence, our ambition is to develop an atmosphere in which the different groupings concerned can be put in contact with one another so that opportunities for dialogue can be brought into being and nurtured concerning the fascinating if difficult area of concrete utopias. This is a necessary first step for those who wish to escape from the marginality of the ghettos into which those with power would condemn us, contributing towards the opening up of new political and social spaces of co-operation and exchange outside of the market.

Anarchist Federation of Milan
Le Monde Libertaire, 28th September '94

Freedom Readership Surveys: 1960 and 1992

(continued from page 6)

The most striking change is in the percentage who are gainfully employed. The year 1960 was a time of high employment in contrast with the position today.

Although it is not feasible to give the elaborate occupational breakdown that was reported in the 1960 survey, some meaningful groupings may be made of the 1992 results, and this is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4
OCCUPATIONS OF THOSE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED IN 1992 SURVEY

Education (schoolteachers/lecturers in higher education)	26	(20.8%)
Manual workers	24	(19.2%)
Administrative and clerical	26	(20.8%)
Librarians	5	(4.0%)
Writers	9	(7.2%)
Health professionals	3	(2.4%)
Artists	3	(2.4%)
Miscellaneous non-manual	24	(19.2%)
Ambiguous and not stated	5	(4.0%)
Total	125	(100%)

The results of the 1960 survey were not presented in a manner that enabled one to distinguish between manual and non-manual workers; they were presented by trade or industry. Thus in the 'Building Industry' the figures for architects and surveyors were lumped together with bricklayers and labourers, so no meaningful comparison can be made with the figures in the above Table. However, in

certain categories a comparison can be made; thus in 1960 52 people were engaged in 'Education', that is 13% of the total of those gainfully employed, as compared with 20.8% in the more recent survey. This indicates that the readership has become considerably more 'intellectual' over the past 32 years. In the 1960 survey there were 40 people (10%) engaged in 'Administrative and Clerical' work, and this figure has now increased to 20.8%, indicating a trend in the same direction of a readership less concerned with the affairs of industrial and manual workers.

The questions asked in the two surveys were somewhat different in emphasis. The 1960 survey was very comprehensive, asking about such matters as the readers' marital status, educational background, religious affiliations, family life and so forth. It aimed to establish what kind of people the readers were, but this was not attempted in 1992. The later questionnaire was more concerned with their likes and dislikes about the matter appearing in *Freedom*, and those producing the paper have no doubt benefited from the guidance offered by the replies, even though the response rate was so meagre.

Because the 1960 questionnaire asked about both education and occupation it was possible to assess individuals according to the traditional division between 'Working Class' and 'Middle Class', and the relationship between age and

class-status is shown in Table 5, which is reprinted from the journal *Anarchy* that has been referred to earlier.

Table 5
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS IN THE 1960 SURVEY

Age	Proportion of readership	Working class	Middle class
Seventies	3%	50%	50%
Sixties	6%	42%	58%
Fifties	11%	28%	72%
Forties	15%	36%	64%
Thirties	36%	23%	77%
Twenties	27%	10%	90%
Teens	2%	0%	100%

The figures in Table 5 demonstrate very clearly the strong trend for the younger readers to be more middle class, and as the readership has aged, so it has become progressively more middle class, and this is demonstrated by the figures shown for 1992 in Table 4 concerning occupation, although lacking any measure of educational status in the 1992 survey I cannot make an assessment in traditional socio-economic terms.

Such changes in the readership as I have been able to demonstrate were indeed predicted in *Anarchy*, February 1962, where the results of the survey were discussed. The article 'Who will be the anarchists?' by Colin Ward (writing as 'Tristram Shandy') that appeared in that issue made some very accurate predictions as to the future. I would add that 'the anarchists' referred to the type of people who read *Freedom*, and there are now a great number of people who regard themselves as 'anarchists' of one sort or another, who read the many papers that have come into being since the 1960 survey and are competitors for *Freedom*, and this is a question that invites further research.

Tony Gibson

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Clause 4 not anarchist

Dear Freedom,
New readers of Freedom may have misunderstood the front page headline on 15th October, "What's so outdated about Clause 4?", taking it to mean that Freedom is about keeping the Labour Party socialist, like Tribune or Red Pepper. This is to correct any such misunderstanding.

Freedom, being an anarchist paper, aims for workers' control in the sense of each workers directly controlling his or her own job, in voluntary cooperation with others but in obedience to nobody. Clause 4 of the Labour Party constitution may be interpreted as compatible with this aim, but only by construing it in a way never intended by those who drafted it on the Labour

Party's behalf, the authoritarian socialists Sidney and Beatrice Webb. For them "common ownership" and "best obtainable system of popular administration and control" meant ownership by the whole population, and control on behalf of the whole population by state appointed managers. The Labour Party has always abided by the Webb's interpretation.

Anarchists do not want the workers to have ownership without control. Rather the opposite. So long as those carrying out the functions of production, distribution and exchange have effective control of the means, we do not much care who has the ceremonial distinction of 'ownership'.

Those who aim for ordinary people to

have ownership but not control are well on the way to achieving their aim. For most big firms, including the privatised utilities, are already more than half owned by 'industrial investors' - pension funds and the like - who do not own the money they control but invest it on behalf of the masses who are its legal owners.

Donald Room

Dear Freedom,

Your editorial of 15th October 1994, 'The Labour Party at Prayer', included the request that anarchist critics of Freedom Press "tell us, help us to communicate more effectively".

Far be it from me to tell any anarchist collective, group or individual how to conduct their activities, but I do offer the following comments in a constructive, if critical, spirit. It may be anecdotal evidence, but most of the anarchists I meet, perhaps five out of ten, at demos, conferences, meetings, etc., do not subscribe to or regularly read Freedom. The obvious conclusion I draw is that there are a lot more anarchists out there than Freedom subscribers. Yet Freedom, because of its contributors and the regularity of publication, is the most effective means of communication

available to anarchists in Britain. It could become more effective in this role. To do so, Freedom needs to reach as many as possible of those within the 'movement' as well as reaching out to a wider public.

How to do this? As far as the movement is concerned one means might be to establish a regional network of readers groups to write for, to sell Freedom and to find new shop outlets for the journal. This would involve more of its readers in not only writing for Freedom but also in practical support activities.

For the wider public? More use of adverts such as the recent New Statesman and Society advert would be a start, as funds allow. The method employed by the SPGB might be followed, i.e. small but regular (fortnightly?) adverts in one of the mass circulation papers such as The Guardian. This need not cost a fortune. A three-line advert I placed in The Guardian for 'Red Rambles' cost all of £12 and produced a respectable response.

Another tactic at times of higher than usual media coverage of anarchists, i.e. post-poll tax and CJB demos, would be to issue press releases on the wider aspects of anarchism to the less bigoted papers in the hope at least of some positive coverage.

Jonathan Simcock

Northern Ireland: time to go?

Dear Editors,
You say editorially (1st October) that Freedom, like other British anarchists, has always supported the troops out campaign in Northern Ireland. Does that signify comparable support for unification either now or in the short term? And do you realise that if that is the case then the only possible outcome will be a bloody civil war on a scale undreamt of?

Following the vast strides made by Adams and Co. over recent months and the apparent success of the pan-nationalist front with Hume, Reynolds and the Americans, the Unionists feel besieged and the situation today is worse, in inter-communal terms, than it was before the ceasefire. Young loyalists have queued up to join the UDA.

The situation has been steadied by the Taoiseach saying that unification was a generation away and by Mr Major declaring for an eventual referendum, but Sinn Fein has in no way relented. The drive for unification is still very much on.

We are now in the middle of a three-month breathing space as we await the Framework Document from the two prime ministers and what it does for the future of talks including those with Sinn Fein. The present signs are that Sinn Fein will stand uncompromisingly on two issues: 1) unification and 2) the release of prisoners. A major factor in the present situation, little noticed by the press, is that a very high proportion of the IRA leadership is behind bars and they want out.

British euphoria, engendered by the press, is not shared by the people of Northern Ireland. They know that the last 25 years are not going to depart overnight. There are traumas ahead.

For the ceasefire to yield a lasting and just peace there has to be a meeting of hearts and minds across the great divide. There is no sign of that - quite the contrary.

What the British government could do is to declare that when a settlement has been agreed and is seen to be working, then the troops will come out. This involves a process that needs to start now:

- a) with progressive demilitarisation on a piecemeal basis starting with Derry;
- b) the drastic reconstitution of the RUC to make it equally acceptable to both communities;
- c) the gradual release of paramilitary prisoners;
- d) grassroots conciliation over the Peace Line and all other points of friction.

Northern Ireland is an extraordinarily complex place and the probability is that the Americans are about to burn their fingers. We should take steps not to burn ours.

Peter Cadogan

Anarchism and Science

Dear Freedom,

I am sorry that no one seems yet to have come to the defence of Brian Martin's Strip the Experts, described by Tony Gibson as "that ridiculous pamphlet" (Freedom, 17th September 1994). I think it is, on the contrary, one of the best and most important things from Freedom Press that I have read in recent years. Tony Gibson's brief contemptuous description of it is false.

Brian writes in his introduction: "I've been asked, 'But surely you don't mean to encourage challenges to every expert?' Why not? The experts have all the advantages: degrees, status, salaries, connection, position ... In my opinion, the more open debate the better." It is such open debate that is largely lacking, as I should have thought most anarchists would agree. I know from personal experience how experts try to suppress it. If they do not deliberately ignore critics who attempt reasoned argument, they rubbish them as absurd ignoramuses.

Brian seems mainly concerned with the status and shortcomings of experts in natural science, and these are dangerous enough. But whatever the natural scientists' weaknesses, they normally agree on basic principles and have to base their arguments on the evidence of facts. In contrast, 'social scientists' are engaged mainly in the construction of theories based on little or no evidence. (Hence the permanent conflicts between any number of different theories.) Probably the most disastrous influence is that of the economists. Their 'expertise' not only bolsters and spreads - if it didn't actually help to invent - the present system. It is used by governments and politicians of all hues to justify the system's oppressive absurdity as if, by law of nature, there was no alternative. Until millions of people all over the world can be persuaded that the economics experts are talking nonsense, there is no hope of humans being able to change their way of life - and to determine that change for themselves. If

social scientific experts (and not just economists) claim their work has relevance to our lives, they have no excuse for not explaining it clearly to us and engaging in respectful debate with non-experts on their basic assumptions and ideas.

DR is usually perceptive, so I was surprised by the distorted picture of Strip the Experts he too gave in his short notice on it ('Handbook of Dishonesty' in Freedom, 28th May 1994). The emphasis in the book is mainly on rational argument, and in 62 pages of text there are only one and a bit pages (48-49) on ad hominem attacks - unless (surely justifiable?) criticism of scientific fraud is to be regarded as ad hominem. Nor is the book morally neutral. Brian makes his position quite clear, again in the introduction, where he writes: "My aim is to describe how establishment experts can be attacked. I certainly don't personally recommend every one of these techniques. Indeed, I oppose dirty personal attacks and prefer calm, fair-minded discussions of issues. Unfortunately, there are lots of nasty attacks and all too few calm discussions. Therefore, it's important to understand the common techniques, even if you never use them, because you are likely to encounter them, whichever side you support."

Amorey Gethin

Dear Editors,
Brian Martin's letter (Freedom, 15th October 1994) exemplifies very succinctly his utter incomprehension of the nature of science. His proposition that there should be an 'anarchist science' is on a par with Lysenko's idea that there could be such a thing as 'marxist science', an idea that found great support from Stalin of course. Martin simply does not know what he is talking about, and should not continue to make a fool of himself.

The mystery remains why he should have been invited to contribute to the Raven issue on Science 2 alongside contributors such as Lynn Olson and Alan Cotter, who do know what they are talking about, when he had already demonstrated his utter confusion in that ridiculous pamphlet Strip the Experts (the Smart-Alec Heckler's Handbook).

Tony Gibson

America and Iraq

Dear Comrades,

Some Freedom readers will now doubt, as I, be mystified by why the Americans suddenly decided that because Iraq was moving troops within her own borders, as she had done frequently before, should have been the cause for the present fuss.

May I suggest a possible reason which just might make sense - though it's unlikely to be admitted to be the reason by our rulers.

During the earlier war against Saddam Hussein the western powers were very embarrassed to find that the dust of the desert rendered a lot of the most modern tanks and other vehicles inoperable. Could it be that these have been replaced, altered, and the powers wished to check that the changes were adequate?

Laurens Otter

Yuppiedom and the Limits of Rationality

Dear Editors,

Denis Pym (Freedom, 15th October) seems to be either a victim or perpetrator of the main tenet of capitalist 'culture', i.e. bullshit baffles brains.

What I thought might be an interesting piece demystifying some of the nonsense of present day society rapidly degenerated into another load of irrationalist waffle whose effect, whether intended or not, was to flatter the gangsters responsible for most of humanity's problems by equating their values with 'reason' or 'rationality'.

Denis seems surprised that economists and 'financial experts' are unwilling to question assumptions. Well, if he seriously expects middle class professionals to question the system that is the source of their privileges I can only think he is sadly ignorant of human nature.

The problem is not reason, rationality or science but a society that uses rational means for irrational ends, i.e. the enrichment of an already over-privileged minority at the expense of the rest of us. If the system delivers the essentials of life to a declining number of people it's hardly surprising. It was not evolved for that purpose.

Anarchists are fond of saying that means are inseparable from ends. Surely it is obvious that if we want a rational society we won't get it by irrational means.

I suggest Denis follows his own advice and takes a lesson from history. Remember the 'counter-culture' of the '60s and '70s. The road to liberation, it was thought, lay in mysticism and dissolving your brain in chemicals. A fat lot of good it did. Do we really need to go through all that old crap again?

Denis Pym suggests we 'exalt the mysteries' of the human brain but that does not stop him indulging in psycho-babble about those of us who believe in reason and rationality. Apparently we are experiencing a 'crisis of faith'.

Well, anybody can play that game. Perhaps the problems many people seem to have with science are due to their privileged middle class background. When mummy's little precious finds that the universe is not organised for their personal benefit they experience a profound shock. Some look for comfort in religion and mysticism. Those of us born into less exalted sections of the population, being made aware since birth that society is not meant to benefit us, can

take revelations about the scale of the cosmos in our stride.

Now we come to the emotional bit. Not because I feel my 'faith' is being threatened but what makes me bloody angry is being expected to share the blame for society's ills with Denis and his £1,000-a-day 'consultant' friends. All this arrogant 'we' and 'our' stuff. Blaming the victims along with the criminals may go down well in the Tory-voting villages of Suffolk or wherever he lives, but I can assure him that spouting such drivel in the dole queues of the East End would be a quick way of getting one's fucking heads kicked in. (That wasn't meant as a threat - just medical advice)

John Wood

Elite Companies

Dear Freedom,

Rather than waiting for a pie-in-the-sky revolution to divest the world of the multinationals ('Elite Companies Rule World of Trade', 17th September) we can do something about it now. With anarchism the revolution starts immediately, not like with the secular religion called marxism, in some unknown and distant future. The TNCs are not merely late versions of nineteenth century J.P. Morgan top-hatted, big-bellied capitalists, but are institutions whose shareholders include pension funds, mutual funds, banks and insurance companies, to name but a few institutional investors. If you have any sort of savings, which most working people do, you are most likely supporting the TNCs. Encourage people to put their money in credit union accounts or mutuals, retirement savings plans and insurance companies owned by credit unions. This way the capital stays at home. If you have a pension plan, find out what happens with the money and organise to get democratic control of the fund. If you belong to any public institution, again check where the cash goes and, if it's going in the wrong place, do something about it. Furthermore, the 'prosperous two-thirds' can be appealed to in this manner, something endless moralising won't do. (And you are not going to get much of a revolution with only 30% of the population, even if most of them were for it, which they aren't.) Remember, don't moan, organise!

Larry Gambone


Our Claim

Dear Freedom,

Good to see that our journal Aufheben is being acknowledged as something anarchists might want to read, and that the bookshop is at last stocking it ('Food for Thought ... and Action', Freedom, 1st October, page 6). I suppose the description of Aufheben as "autonomous Marxist" is just about okay if it helps people get a handle on what we're doing (though I personally find it less than satisfactory). But "pretentious" and "at times somewhat dogmatic"? Is pretentiousness always a bad thing? And I'd be grateful to have our dogmas pointed out so we can eliminate them! After all, we don't want to regurgitate theory as ideology, do we? All ideas stand to be corrected at a later date!

Yours for anarchy, communism, self-critique, pretentiousness, etc., etc.

Johnny Yen

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