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**Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

*"We anarchists do not want to emancipate the people. We want the people to emancipate themselves."*

**Errico Malatesta**

**"War is the health of the state" – Randolph Bourne**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT IS THE HEALTH OF CAPITALISM**

**S**o far as the G7 prosperous states are concerned, war on your doorstep is too expensive. War in the third world is good business for France, Britain, the USA and the money-lenders, while maintaining a healthy 'defence budget' at home. The Cold War may be over, but who knows what Japan's military/political ambitions may threaten the West?

Today in the G7 industrial world, whatever the politicians may mouth about aiming for full employment not only is this *not possible* so long as the economy is capitalist (that is that *profit* is the main objective), but neither is it in the *intentions of employers* – large and small, transnationals, multinationals, supermarkets and corner shops – that there should be jobs for everybody needing a job to provide the wherewithal to survive in a capitalist society where you get nothing if you haven't the means to pay for it.

**E**very technological advance results in unemployment – that is the machine replaces human labour. And as anarchists we welcome any technical innovation that dispenses with routine human labour. But in a capitalist society those who have not been made redundant are expected to work more intensively, and do so because *they* are beginning to ask themselves whether when the next bit of technology is introduced more redundancies will result and the first to go are the less 'cooperative' wage-slaves on the company's books.

This situation will inevitably get worse unless it is recognised that the working week to produce all we need and more is, say, at most 20 hours. And we are talking of the present set-up. For, bear in mind, that more people in employment today produce pieces of paper only of importance in a capitalist economy. If we eliminated the book-keepers, the armaments industry, the imports-exports racket (that is only imported what we could not produce and exported our surplus which other countries needed) we could certainly make something of this wonderful thing

called LIFE which today for an overwhelming majority in the world is HELL!

**S**o long as the political parties are seeking votes to get them into office in order to, they think (we don't), operate the capitalist system for the benefit of 'the people' we will go on saying, as the anarchists have been saying for more than a hundred years to the socialists, you will never legislate against the capitalist system. Unlike the anarchists, the bolsheviks in Russia were revolutionaries but also authoritarians, and they produced a

dictatorship in which the anarchists were the first of their victims. And the Russian experiment has finally failed and it would appear that it is being replaced by a free-for-all capitalism which has produced a harvest of millionaires (drugs mafias *et alia* in a flash) and the rest of the community either worse off or about the same as before.

**A** correspondent elsewhere in this issue of *Freedom* attacks us for never letting up on the fundamental evil that is capitalism. But socialism  
*(continued on page 2)*

**TOWARDS THE COLLAPSE OF THE RAILWAYS**

**T**he Railway privatisation saga proceeds every day more crazily towards complete collapse. We have seen in person on television the regulator – a smug lawyer who made it clear to the gogglers that he did not receive orders from the politicians. He was our man. Actually he gave the impression that he was too big for his boots and even the Tory government may have to cut him down to size.

On the controversial question of core ticket stations (the prospect is of less than 300 of the 1,300 stations at present operating will be able to issue tickets to cover the network) he has only said that it was one of the three options but said nothing about the other two! And he dropped a bombshell in Downing Street by reducing the kind of charges Railtrack will demand from the franchisers using their track thereby reducing what the government hopes to recoup from the sale of Railtrack, which is an open secret repeated daily by the media, the government will use to bribe the voters at the next election with a tax reduction – for those who already 'earn' more than enough.

**T**he Labour Party politicians are afraid of their own shadows! The word 're-nationalisation' forces them like ostriches to bury their stupid

vain heads in the sands. If they had any imagination (they talk about the New Labour Party but they only seek to pander to a smug section of the middle class for votes) they could destroy the whole privatisation shambles by declaring that anything being done by the Tories so far as railways and public transport in general would be reversed *without compensation*. Instead there they are worrying about the cost of undoing the government's privatisation of the public services. With the railways they have no problem: just state that they will take them back into public ownership at whatever price was paid by the purchasers. Blair & Co talk about whether the finances would be available. If between now and when the Labour lot hope to win, private speculators have coughed up the billions of pounds then surely this will be available to buy back these assets. If the Tories have squandered it on their friends let the Labour lot clobber the Tories' friends!

Needless to say, anarchists will not vote for any bunch of politicians whatever they promise. What we have pointed out is that Blair & Co are no less part of the capitalist system and mafia as their Tory and Liberal opponents. They are all part of the capitalist racket.

# UNEMPLOYMENT IS THE HEALTH OF CAPITALISM

(continued from page 1)

and anarchism *only have meaning* in so far as they propose a society from which capitalism - *production for profit* - has been replaced by *production for needs*. Not only that, *but a society where there will not be rich and poor*. Unlike even the most genuine socialists, anarchists maintain that we will never abolish the privileged society, that is capitalism, through Parliament. We believe that the victims of the capitalist system, who are a majority of the population even in the industrial nations of the West, will never reverse the stranglehold not only of the entrenched property and land-owning aristocracy but of the multinationals, transnationals, banks, pensions funds and the Soroses of this world through Parliament.

For the victims there is only one answer: we are many, they are few! But also their power depends on our labour and our acceptance to serve their interests instead of our own. Don't tell us this is simplistic nonsense. Anarchists have been saying day in, day out, that we the victims of the capitalist system are producing the real wealth - the food, the builders to build our houses, the workers who make it possible for us to switch on the services that make daily life easy and not time consuming as they might otherwise have been. The parasites listed earlier are the exploiters. They produce nothing and live off the fat of the land. The Labour leadership has no *intention* of changing this situation. Even if it did, it couldn't. The outburst of Labour European MP Ken Coates recently both in the media and on television was of considerable interest since he underlined what anarchists have been saying year in, year out. To our minds his most important statement was:

"Nowhere in the drafts which have been circulated through the Labour Party does the word 'capitalism' feature."

And he develops his argument by pointing out that:

"Mr Blair offers us pleasant phrases about equality and social justice, but he will put no robber barons in the dock. Indeed, he explained with great candour why he could make no consequent policy on anything until after he had been elected."

We could easily be tempted to go on quoting Ken Coates, this former miner involved in all kinds of interesting initiatives. We limit ourselves to verbatim references from his *Daily Telegraph* article (13th January 1995):

"Common ownership is more and more the necessary response to runaway private acquisitiveness, and the infinite destruction wrought by greed. It will advance through the democratisation of pension funds and similar forms, and through joint and common international action to match and pace the multinationals."

The fact is that it will not. And so long as people like Ken Coates and Tony Benn and Denis Skinner go on making the right criticisms of the capitalist system and at the same time seek the votes to put them

in Westminster or Brussels as their spokesmen, they are being as dishonest as the politicians who use Parliament as a *entr e* for a few profitable directorships.

The Labour Party politicians are in the power game like the others *for office* and the kudos and the perks. (Look at old Hattersley now making money hand over fist writing for the capitalist media and at the same time a freelance Labour Party Member of Parliament!) Ken Coates is absolutely right when he says that:

"Global capitalism is more powerful than it has ever been and its power is more concentrated in fewer major centres."

And he is also right, in our opinion, when he declares that:

"The short truth is that there is a fundamental political disagreement between socialists: all socialists, any socialists, on the one side, and the Leader of the Labour party on the other. He is, quite simply, a Liberal."

# UNEMPLOYMENT: THE HEALTH OF THE MARKET ECONOMY

We oldies remember the election poster used by the Tories in their successful election campaign of 1979: 'Labour isn't working' with a photograph of a long queue at an unemployment office, of employees of the Saatchi & Saatchi advertising agency being paid model fees in addition to their full-time salaries.

Unemployment figures issued by the last Labour government were indeed shocking, but they were low in comparison with current figures, even though, as everyone knows, the figures issued by the present lot are dishonestly lowered. Even the news broadcasts announce the monthly figures as 'people unemployed, looking for work and claiming unemployment benefit', declining to collude in the fraud that they represent the total unemployed. During the past fifteen years there have been dozens of edicts excluding this or that category of unemployed persons from the official statistics on one ground or another.

There are obvious political reasons for massaging the unemployment figures downwards. As the 1979 election showed, voters tend to be frightened of unemployment. But from the Thatcherite point of view (and the Tory government is still dominated by Thatcherites) the chief thing wrong with other people being unemployed is that they get unemployment benefit and so cause expense to 'the taxpayer'. Apart from that 'a pool of unemployment' (not only not working but desperately seeking work) would be an advantage.

'Thatcherite' means having a quasi-religious faith in 'the Market', that is, thinking all's right with the world if we buy commodities at one price and sell them at a higher price. By

So we agree, Tony Blair is a Liberal. But we ask Ken Coates *et alia* what they are doing other than creating false illusions to rank and file socialists as to what the Labour Party can achieve assuming it wins the next elections? If they do they are than faced with not only the billion pound deficit they inherit, as they always do (see *Freedom*, 14th January 1995) and have to tax the poor, but they cannot do anything to STRIP THE RICH *which should be the first article of faith of any socialist government which meant business*.

But to repeat ourselves, no socialist or *B*so-called socialist government has ever intended to strip not just the rich but to strip *privilege* - this is the disease of our society and anarchists are the only propagandists who seek to overturn existing society by the will of a majority of us so that the society that will emerge will be one of *equals who are also individuals, personalities in their own rights*. In the anarchist society there will be neither rich nor poor. At the same time each of us will be him or herself to live our lives to the full!

# COMMENTS IN BRIEF

An interesting titbit from the *Tribune* (2nd December), the editor's interview with the new General Secretary of the Labour Party, Tom Sawyer. Son of a labourer who on leaving school became a fitter "only to be made redundant" and at 21 he emigrated from Darlington his birthplace to Coventry which was "something of a boom town at the time" and got a job in the motor industry. The titbit which we quote verbatim:

"After becoming a shop steward, he confesses to a youthful dalliance with syndicalism, heavily influenced by Tom Mann, William Morris and Georges Sorel. In between mouthfuls of pizza, conversation even turned briefly to the merits of Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops*."

Presumably only too 'briefly' because:

"I was quite interested in how you could get power through the trade unions", he reflects, "but if you ever want to do anything, you end up back in the Labour Party".

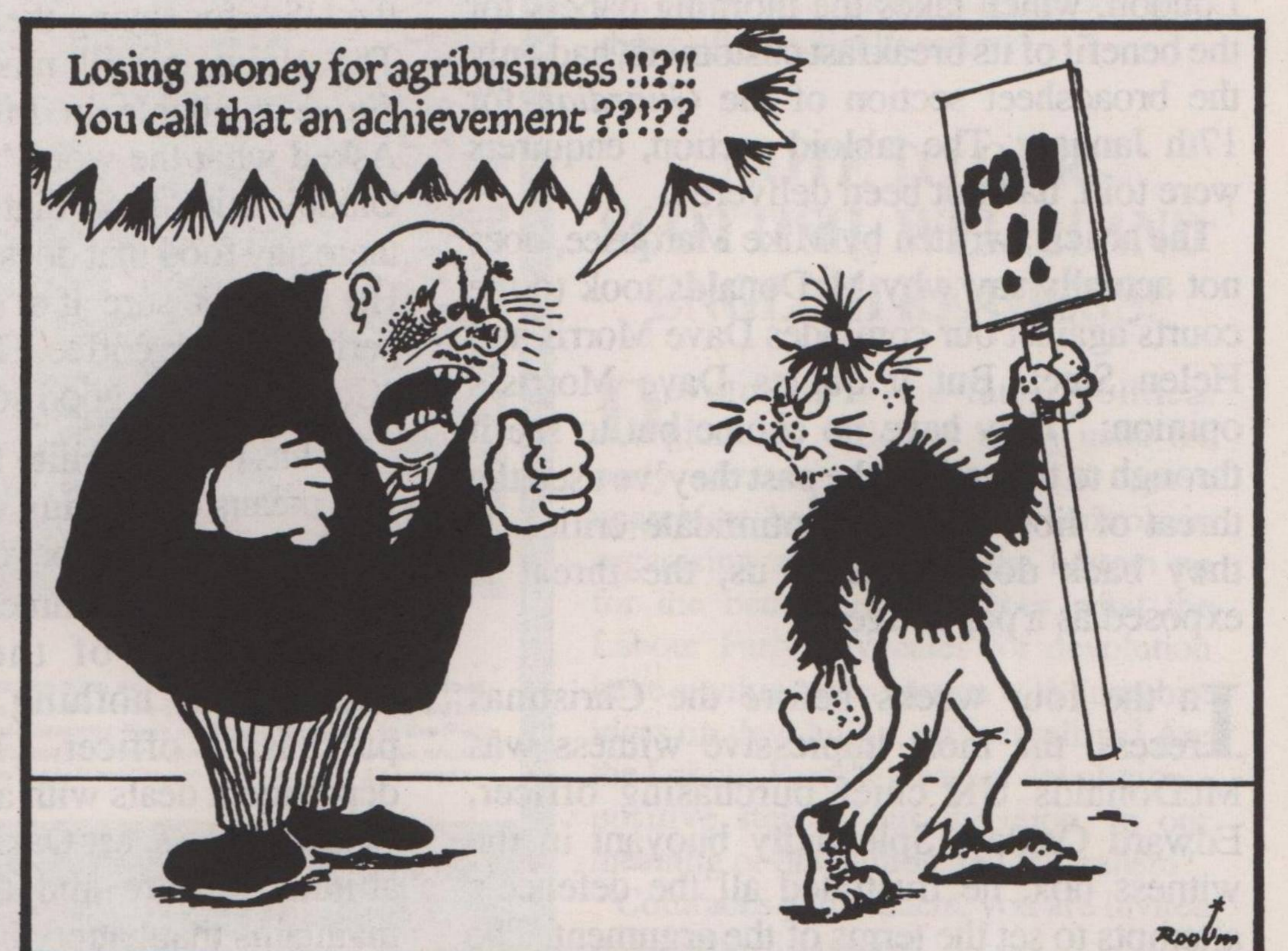
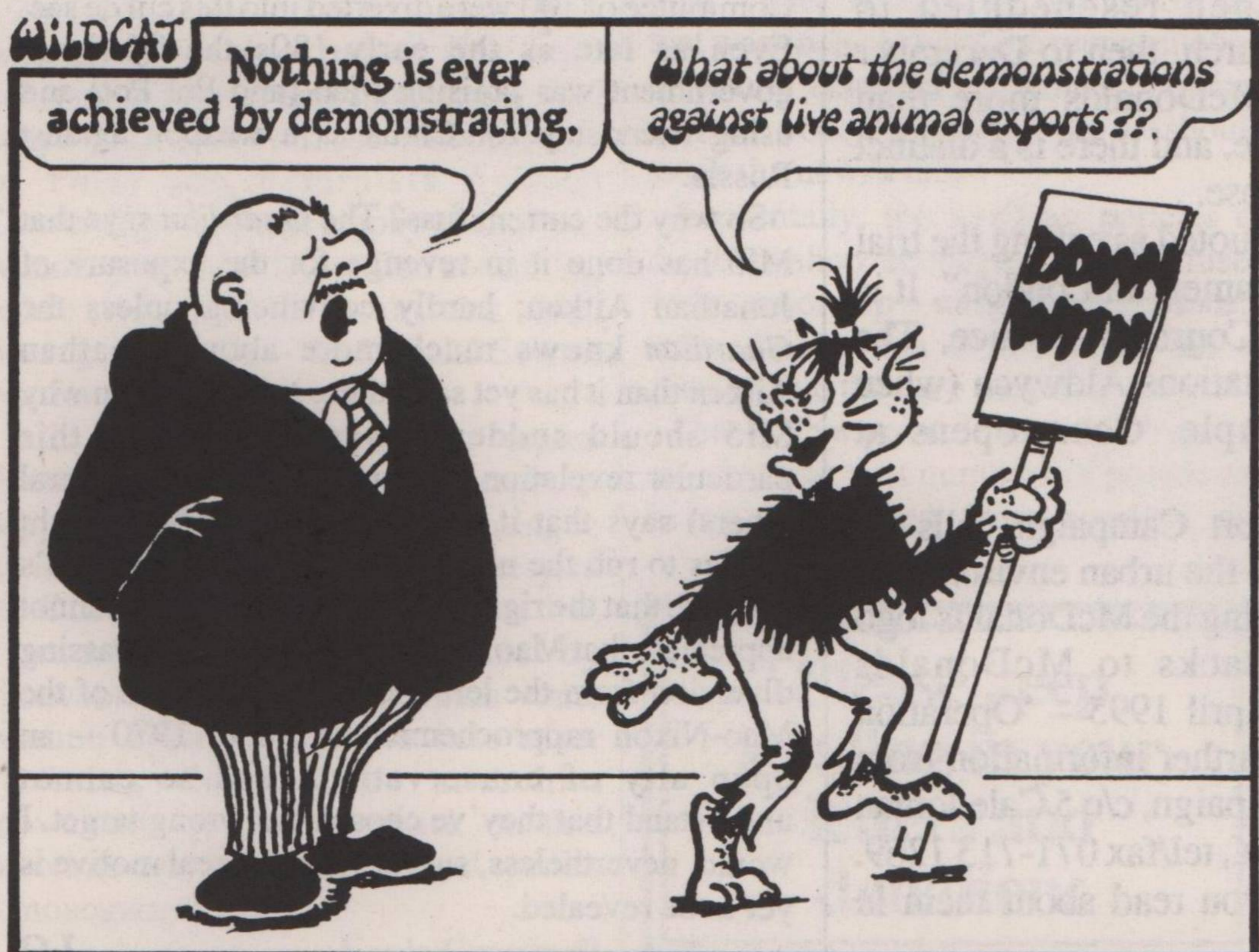
After all, what else could the candidate for the Labour Party top job say?

Who believes the government's monthly figures which for more than a year have shown a decrease in unemployment? Apart from the fact that everybody surely now must know that these figures are of the number who actually draw the dole and don't include those who have been unemployed for more than a year (and shortly the Portillo gang will for the 25th time move the statistical goalposts and only those up to six months unemployed will be entitled to the dole, and the statistics of the government's official unemployed). The other millions just don't exist - statistically.

The Labour lot, being in opposition, can afford to expose the government's 'fiddle'. Harriet Harman, Shadow Employment Secretary (who will also have to fiddle the figures if the Labour lot win next time), recently wrote to the Prime Minister "demanding" that the government should now find a "new and more credible definition" for compiling the unemployment figures since she claimed the current method was "discredited".

Surely one only has to see the financial pages of the broadsheet dailies to produce all the evidence to show that the government's figures are fiddled. For every item, such as that McDonalds are proposing to open another 200 feeding troughs which will give badly paid jobs to more hundreds, one can quote half a dozen firms and institutions sacking between them thousands every week.

What the government statistics won't reveal is that the number of part-time jobs are on the increase - the kinds of employment where the employer has neither to pay National Insurance nor guarantee the workers any of the perks to which full-time employees are entitled.



Now is the time. Wicked fairy Thatcher lies in her well-feathered nest, exhausted from years of passing the family silver to those already rich. Now she hides as the homeless roam the streets and the poor eat crap. Her fat dwarfs, still picking from the till and mining their various morning, noon and night jobs, know not what to do.

It is not, as the silly political commentators believe, that they are running out of steam. The problem is they are running out of oil. Oil which enabled them to finance their great economic miracle, oh yes, any fool could have done what the wicked witch did with such riches, but conservatives and their voters aren't just any fools, are they?

So now we have a slight problem. All the silver has been sold and the oil has practically gone. And there are all these poor people, many of whom loved the wicked witch, who now have no jobs, no schools, no hospitals, no hope.

Now is the time. Positive anarchist economics to the rescue. What is required are economic structures which fulfil the following functions:

- To reward the individual for talent and enterprise (Tory cheers).
- To respond to the needs of society (Labour cheers).
- To promote individual freedom and independence (Liberal cheers).
- To stop the rich exploiting the poor (despair all round).

And by being transparently manageable within human scale, they will also change the social and economic structures of the country. (Apoplectic fits, pale countenances, visions of redundancy all round. Anarchist cheers off.)

Let's start with the individual. Everyone should belong to a local LETS (Local Employment and Trading Systems). These exchange goods and services among members. It is a form of barter extended by a 'local currency' (our local currency unit is the Teifi, pronounced Tivy, named after the local river and its valley bio-region).

The advantages of LETS schemes are that your talents and surpluses become the means of directly fulfilling other needs and wants. Not only does this exclude parasitic entrepreneurs,<sup>1</sup> it also breaks the control of money over social interactions. More important, it allows the group to express social

1. Entrepreneur, person in control of commercial undertaking (*Concise Oxford Dictionary*).

## Positive Anarchist Economics

values in their economic relationships. For example, if someone has needs which others can fulfil, the lack of money is no problem, they can simply go into as much long-term Teifi deficit as the group decides. It becomes a social question, not a financial disaster, and 'poverty' need not break up communities.

LETS groups also promote jobs. Our local group is directly responsible for four full-time jobs. These have been created at the Haverfordwest inland revenue office, where special officers have been recruited to try to bring LETS inside 'the system'. As their colleagues have failed everywhere else in the world, we look forward to a long and fruitless career for these institutional clones. They are right to be worried: LETS schemes, with their own currency, have the potential of freeing whole areas of the economy from state involvement. They are a significant step towards that desirable objective of the maximum standard of living with a minimal income.<sup>2</sup>

Anarchists have long supported the idea of industrial cooperatives, that is enterprises owned and controlled by those who work in them. For enterprises involving more than one person, cooperatives allow equality of status. Crucially it give equality and control unconnected to investment. Outsiders can't buy shares in a cooperative,<sup>3</sup> but investors (the community) can buy loan-stock. This amounts to a fixed rate loan to the cooperative. It is also another potential means of pumping money out of the state system and putting value into the community. Cooperatives should also be a means of linking industry to the local community, that is linking production to need.

Although following in the wake of pioneers such as Robert Owen (1771-1858), the background for cooperative community ventures was set by Kropotkin nearly a hundred years ago. His work is one of the anarchist classics.<sup>4</sup> In the early 1960s there were five firms organised as new-wave

2. LETSLink UK Network, 61 Woodcock Road, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 9DH.

3. For legal/technical reasons each employee holds one non-transferable share.

4. *Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow*, Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921), edited by Colin Ward, Freedom Press, £4.00.

workers' cooperatives (excluding the hybrid John Lewis Partnership). In total they employed less than a thousand people. Today, despite the effects of the recession, the number of industrial cooperatives is in the thousands. There are also infra-structure support and enabling organisations.<sup>5</sup> So, despite the slow start, we have been burrowing away inside their system.

The most commonly raised objection to cooperatively organised industry is that it would not work on a large scale. It was once put to me by a Labour MP,<sup>6</sup> now very worried about the loss of the traditional meaning of Clause 4, that "it may be alright for a few women with sewing machines, but you couldn't organise British Rail as a cooperative". I could not see why then, and I cannot now.

There are two things about large industries. First, most of them do not need to be large. Second, those that – like railways – are large of their nature, also tend to be about communication (movement of goods, people, information). The revolution in electronic communications is producing networks as the natural and most effective form of communication. If electronic networks are acceptable, why not of networks of railways? The same principles which produce one can cover all networks, except the more tangible the things moved through the network the greater the human involvement. It is one of the absurdities of politicians that, while trusting signalmen with thousands of lives every day, they do not believe such people are capable of organising the mechanism which moves those lives. British Rail was halfway there; regional networks, run as democratic cooperatives, could solve all the problems the politicians find so terribly difficult. And, of course, the same applies to the Post Office and practically everything else.

The strange thing is that LETS and Permaculture, at least in my experience, involve many people who have hardly heard

5. ICOM (Industrial Common Ownership Movement), Vassilli House, 20 Central Road, Leeds; or Wales Cooperative Centre, Llandaff Court, Fairwater Road, Cardiff CF5 2KP.

6. Michael Meacher.

of anarchism. Whatever new finds of Atlantic oil may be found, people realise that the boom is over and anyway new oil will just be poured down the old drain. The impossibility of the old dreams is slowly dawning. The miracles of Thatcher, with their rush to pollution, industrial chaos and social breakdown, are increasingly seen for what they were: a means to the degenerate success of an increasingly irrelevant minority. More people now accept that they must act for themselves.

Perhaps we may, as the cover of Kropotkin's book puts it, achieve small-scale production as the pattern of future industry, set in bio-regions with extensive small farms which would give a high standard of living with fewer working hours. It would, now as then, require education which provided practical life-skills as well as intellectual pursuits, and, of course, the desire to work and direct the purposes of particular community enterprises.

Now is the time. Much of this is happening, are you sure you are not being left behind, comrade?

Colin Johnson

## The Latest Gott-cha

In these days when failure to declare any contacts with agents or suspected agents of other powers can render one liable to exposure, I had better begin by declaring a very slight interest.

Mrs Gott (Richard's mother) was an official of the Notting Hill CND (as far as I recall, treasurer) in the early '60s; though she'd been a wartime anti-militarist she was a great admirer of (and something of an expert on) Garibaldi, and her belief in colonial emancipation overrode all else. (I remember that the Notting Hill CND arranged a debate between her and Sybil Morrison, which turned out to be very much a dialogue of the deaf, both asserting things vehemently which rightly struck the other as totally irrelevant to the discussion in hand.)

I don't recall Richard Gott attending the Notting Hill CND meetings, though some years later Celia said he'd been there occasionally. He was not, as far as I remember, active with the Committee of 100 and he only later gained a reputation as a leftist in 1963. The first time I heard him speak (though in recollection he refers to himself at the time as a *fidelist*) the speech was shot through with references to Garibaldi and the argument owed more to his mother than Castro.

He was in South America most of the time I worked at the *Guardian*, though I remember him visiting on one occasion (my department boss not knowing the difference between a leftist and a stalinist, was surprised that I didn't want to meet him). I only once took copy from him dictated from South America, as stories from abroad were generally routed to Manchester.

It should not need to be said in the columns of *Freedom* that his Maoism was perverse, his claim that it showed he was always a leftist critic of Russia equally so when one remembers how well Mao and Nixon were hitting it off when Gott was admiring Pol Pot. It also has to be said that in the '60s the British Establishment was very glad of Maoism's appeal to younger socialists, and the fact that a very large number of people who had come into the movement through CND and the Committee of 100 were diverted into this cul de sac. Even as late as the early '80s the Thatcher government was praising Mao (and Pol Pot) and using friendship for China as a weapon against Russia.

So why the current fuss? The *Guardian* says that MI5 has done it in revenge for the exposure of Jonathan Aitken; hardly convincing unless the *Guardian* knows much more about Jonathan Aitken than it has yet said, there is little reason why MI5 should suddenly want to revenge this particular revelation. Gott himself (as also several others) says that it seems that a triumphant right wishes to rub the noses of the left in the mire. It's possible that the right are so foolish that they cannot appreciate that Maoism was at best an embarrassing diversion from the left and – from the time of the Mao-Nixon rapprochement in about 1970 – an open ally of conservatism, and so cannot understand that they've chosen the wrong target. I would, nevertheless, suspect that the real motive is yet to be revealed.

LO

Since the last issue of *Freedom* there have been two or three mentions of the McDonalds libel case in the national press, the best publicity since the first week of the trial last June.

Most notable is the cover story of the *Guardian* tabloid section for Tuesday 17th January, "Big Mac versus the small fry. Why the fast food giant took to the libel courts", with a colour photograph of a bag of McDonalds fries.

The following day's *Guardian* reported that a McDonalds in Borehamwood, North London, which takes the morning papers for the benefit of its breakfast customers, had only the broadsheet section of the *Guardian* for 17th January. The tabloid section, enquirers were told, had not been delivered.

The article, written by Mike Marqusee, does not actually say why McDonalds took to the courts against our comrades Dave Morris and Helen Steel. But it quotes Dave Morris's opinion: "They have no choice but to see it through to the end. In the past they've used the threat of libel action to intimidate critics. If they back down against us, the threat is exposed as a paper tiger."

In the four weeks before the Christmas recess, the most impressive witness was McDonalds UK chief purchasing officer, Edward Oakley. Splendidly buoyant in the witness box, he frustrated all the defence's attempts to set the terms of the argument. The

## McLibel gets publicity

bulletin issued by the McLibel Support Campaign says he 'admitted' to this and that, but he did not 'admit' in the sense of being shamefaced about anything. When he agreed to a statement he did so with an air of 'so what?'

Helen Steel asked "You do not see reducing the fat content as a concern?" to which Mr Oakley replied "No. Why should we?"

McDonalds has been censured by courts in the USA for saying their food was nutritious. The claim is still made in the *Nutritional Guide* available in McDonalds UK shops. Asked what the word 'nutritious' means, Mr Oakley said "food that contains nutrient". Is there any food that does not contain nutrients? He was not sure if it counted as food, but perhaps black coffee. How about Coca Cola? "Coca Cola is a good source of energy".

He has responsibility for animal welfare, but that means complying with the law on animal welfare, not going beyond it. McDonalds has a "corporate environmental policy" but that is the business of the communications department, nothing to do with him as purchasing officer. (The communications department deals with advertising.)

Nevertheless, Mr Oakley has opinions about animal welfare and the environment. He maintains that battery hens are better off than

free range hens, better housed and better protected from disease, predators and pests. And the dumping of waste in landfill sites is an environmental benefit since "otherwise you will end up with lots of vast, empty gravel pits all over the country".

150 more witnesses are still to be called. The trial was originally expected to be over in September last, then rescheduled to December, then to March, then to December 1995. It will cost McDonalds more than £2,000,000 win or lose, and there is a distinct possibility they will lose.

Auberon Waugh is quoted as calling the trial "the best free entertainment in London". It is at Court 35, Royal Courts of Justice, The Strand, nearest tube stations Aldwych (when it's open) and Temple. Court opens at 10.30am.

The McLibel Support Campaign calls on persons concerned for the urban environment to collect rubbish bearing the McDonalds logo and deliver it in sacks to McDonalds restaurants on 15th April 1995 – 'Operation Send It Back Day'. Further information from McLibel Support Campaign, c/o 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, tel/fax 071-713 1269. Please mention that you read about them in *Freedom*.

I am Amado Avendano, a lawyer by training, journalist by profession and chance politico. I live in a state to the south of Mexico – Chiapas – on the border with Guatemala. 900,000 indigenous people live in the state of Chiapas out of a total population of some 3,000,000. It is an area of high population density because, whilst one of the richest areas of Mexico, it is also the area where the poorest Mexicans live. More than 50% of the country's electricity is produced here. In order to build the three dams in the area 300,000 hectares of top quality land were flooded. Thus the peasants of Chiapas have no lands to cultivate. Chiapas is also an oil producing area and a pipe connects the area directly to the USA. Of the production in Chiapas only the pollution is left behind. The population of Chiapas derive no benefit from all of this and a large section of the population don't speak the language of officialdom – Spanish. Such was the situation on 1st Jan '94 when the Zapatistas emerged in the country. The very simple demands of these people for health, housing, means of communication ... immediately drew the support of the wider population. This sympathy was indeed so great – demonstrations, marches – that the Mexican government was forced to suspend military operations. The government declared a unilateral amnesty for all those involved. They gathered together in the cathedral of San Cristobal. Here the archbishop served as an intermediary between the government and the Zapatistas. A number of propositions were put forward which the Zapatistas took back to their supporters in the mountains for consultation. Two months later the Zapatistas rejected the government's propositions. A new delegate was sent out to try and rebuild the dialogue but this proved a non-starter. A month ago the Zapatistas announced that the dialogue was definitively over. Meanwhile the electoral dialogue was taking place. The local people were trying to find a candidate to stand against the official candidate. They chose me. But I couldn't stand as I had not the mandate of any party. The Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) agreed to endorse me. The local

## Mexico's Aristide

In our 'Focus on ... Mexico' towards the end of last year we told of the attempted assassination of Amado Avendano just prior to the Mexican elections. Below we reproduce an extract from an interview with him which was broadcast by the French anarchist radio station Radio Libertaire on the 1st November 94. We do so in the interests of furthering the flow of information rather than as an endorsement of his politics ...

people thought that in this instance the government would accept the ballot box decision. When the government saw the popular mobilisation which greeted my candidature I was the victim of an assassination attempt disguised as a road accident.

**RL: Tell us about the circumstances surrounding this 'accident'?**

The government organised a meal for all the electoral candidates and were most insistent that I should attend. In the end I accepted the invitation. The was only one road to the venue for the meal and on this road a lorry smashed into the tiny car we were travelling in. Three of my supporters were killed in the crash and I was hospitalised for two months which physically prevented me from participating in the election process. With a sense of solidarity and courage the people continued the campaign. In my absence with videos, posters, cassettes ... the campaign continued to develop. Fellow journalists gave me their full support and played an important role in the campaign. On the 21st many people went to vote for me but on the 22nd the government claimed their own candidate had won and that very few had voted for Amado Avendano. Following the electoral farce there was a real mobilisation of the population who did not fully understand the situation. This civil resistance takes the form of large scale occupations of large properties, the blocking off of roads, non payment of taxes and general bills (particularly electricity), and the prevention of bureaucrats gaining access to

the region. Successive mobilisations were planned – one in October, two in November and another for December when the new government are due to take office when the people will attempt to stop them taking up their positions. Moreover, the Zapatistas announced that if the government were intent on putting their candidate in office there would be war in Chiapas and elsewhere. Things have been further complicated because the Mexican central government intervenes a lot in Chiapas but is itself split by internal strife. In effect there is a power vacuum in Mexico because since the outgoing presidents team has no mandate nobody obeys it and since the incoming bunch is still not installed a dangerous situation has arisen. Luckily, the Zapatista army has called on civil society to play a role, the role which had been usurped by the institutional parties. This group is organising to take over the decision making process which up until now had been denied to it. Today it is very hard for it to rebuild the country since the government and the party controlled everything. The people lack experience. Currently a democratic national convention is being set up. We hope to set up a veritable assembly to help organise the country. Faced with the people trying to organise themselves the powers that be are

hardly queuing up to hand over power and a very real possibility of confrontation is now on the cards. The situation is so serious that I fear the incoming government will have no chance at all of governing the region if only because of the tensions within their own ranks.

Currently, I go around the world calling on NGOs, the universities, political parties ... to pay attention to what is happening in Mexico and calling on them to be prepared to pressurise the Mexican government in order to avoid the possibility of war. The Mexican state cares greatly about its international reputation whilst ignoring the situation at home. This is why we call for actions to be taken against diplomatic missions.

**RL: Can you tell us a little more about what civil society is doing with regard to the electoral fraud?**

In order to denounce the fraud the civil society which has no political party has set up a kind of electoral tribunal – quite unofficial – which has shed light on governmental manipulations. Although all these developments are taking place outside of the legal process there will come a point when the government will be forced to recognise that there was manipulation. At the moment all Mexicans are waiting to see what the outgoing president will say. The outcome is undecided. If the government goes ahead with its decision to install the new regime there will probably be renewed violence. The risk is heightened by the fact that recruitment into the Mexican army has gone on apace with much more military equipment being installed in the Zapatista zone. The army has also taken possession of the free zone of Altamirano and is increasing aerial surveillance of territories where the Zapatistas are. This gives rise to a fear of escalation.

## IWOSP – International Week Of Science and Peace

IWOSP is a worldwide action week devoted to the topic Science and Peace. It is very much a grassroots affair. Lectures, seminars and meetings of other kinds are organised locally on themes relating to science and peace. There are national coordinators and an international coordinator whose functions are to encourage participation and to collate and publicise the events which occur. Otherwise the initiative and work are up to local concerned scientists and others.

IWOSP evolved out of peace meetings, some concerned also with science, which became numerous in the early eighties, especially in North America, and were held on or near 11th November (Veterans' Day). The coordination of this spontaneous activity into a worldwide Week was largely due to Hendrik Bramhoff, of Hamburg, Germany. He also persuaded a number of members of the United Nations to sponsor a Resolution on Science and Peace. This resolution was tabled by Costa Rica, and also sponsored by 24 other nations, all from the third world. In 1988 the General Assembly passed the resolution 'by consensus', that is, without a vote. The big states were thereby saved the embarrassment of being seen to be lukewarm about peace. A diplomat of one major state is reported as saying privately that the resolution was 'irrelevant'.

IWOSP reached a peak around 1987, with thousands of events worldwide. The great majority of these were in the Soviet Union and its satellites, where there was official support from science and education ministries. Events in the West and Japan combined were in the hundreds. In few third world countries, however, was the connection between science and peace a public issue. With the thawing and end of the bipolar cold war the scale of IWOSP declined for a few years.

Is the resolution irrelevant? It notes that science and technology have profound links with international peace and security, economic and

social development, respect for human rights and many other aspects of civilization and culture. It affirms the need to "promote greater awareness among scientists world wide of the usefulness of science to increase international peace, security and co-operation, the social and economic development of mankind, the promotion of human rights and the protection of the environment". High-minded, yes, but surely better than the cynicism of many diplomats and the power-lust of many political leaders. The question is – do only power elites matter? If we let them, yes; but we don't have to. Historically, such progressive movements as the labour movement and the slavery-abolitionists have had significant successes. Environmentalists have in recent decades changed societal norms substantially. The peace movement in the eighties had a more modest success, but did restrain some very aggressive hawks. All these movements are grassroots movements. Those calling for the responsible use of science are small in number but the matter is of the highest importance. One aim must be to ensure that biotechnology is not applied as irresponsibly as was nuclear technology.

IWOSP is now increasing again, as people see that the post-Cold War world is as dangerous as before. Although the dangers now are different, the UN Resolution remains valid. This is not by chance; it was designed to address fundamental problems and not just symptoms. Further, because it was a resolution of the General Assembly, and the big players just let the little ones get on with it, the problems are addressed from an egalitarian and global perspective.

In 1994 the events reported to the International Coordinator numbered more than fifty (over seventy distinct meetings) and took place in eleven countries. The countries most strongly represented were Austria, Japan and the UK. No events have been reported from Russia and one (in Hungary) from Eastern Europe; even allowing that there were

### Great Moments in the History of Religion

O GOD, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home!



Beneath the shadow of thy throne  
Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is thine arm alone,  
And our defence is sure.

Associated Press

#### How the Pope Will View Manila

Jaime Cardinal Sin of Manila blessed an armored car for Pope John Paul II yesterday. The Pope will see the Philippines this week through a 4-inch-thick glass bubble that can withstand grenades and machine-gun fire.

probably unreported events, this is a remarkable fall-off. It is of course obvious why the states and satellites of the former Soviet Union should now have become concerned with their own problems to the exclusion of a global perspective. The question is, will these countries mature into a more global outlook, or regress to nationalism?

The 1994 events covered a wide range. Topics on which attention was particularly focused included plutonium, landmines, the arms trade, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the atomic bombings of Japan.

The IWOSP Coordinators hope that IWOSP will have more events in more countries in 1995, which is an important year for Science and Peace. Most prominent will be the commemoration of the 50th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima (6th August) and Nagasaki (9th August). There will

also be other anniversaries relating to the end of the Second World War. In addition, the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review starts in mid-April; and vigorous efforts to secure a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty will be continued.

The 1995 Week is 6th-12th November. Those involved in, or considering an event which might be suitable for inclusion in IWOSP in the UK are invited to contact me at telephone 01508-492464(H); email [a.cottey@uea.ac.uk](mailto:a.cottey@uea.ac.uk). Those interested in non-UK events should contact Professor Shigeo Ichiraku in Japan at fax +81 45 787 2202; email [ichiraku@yokohama-cu.ac.jp](mailto:ichiraku@yokohama-cu.ac.jp). He will advise them about the appropriate 1995 National Coordinator.

Alan Cottey

## — ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

## Simple Men and Complex Realities

On 3rd January we settled down to watch the Film on 4, presented by courtesy of Prudential Assurance. It was *Simple Men*, directed by Hal Hartley in 1992, set somewhere at the furthest end of Long Island, New York, at some time like the present. The paper explained that the McCabe brothers, played by Robert Burke and William Sage, "are two very different brothers searching for their missing father in this delightfully quirky, witty comedy, a third feature by the cult American film maker".

Dad turned out to be an old gent, nearing 70, who was on the run from the police having allegedly blown up a building which he wrongly thought was unoccupied at the time. His sons encountered him at a little harbour where he was about to embark in a yacht with a young girlfriend. Before departure he arranged the three young people into a sort of Sunday School class and read to them a lengthy passage from a current Freedom Press edition of Malatesta's *Anarchy*, which they repeated in unison, phrase by phrase, like children of the cultural revolution in China learning the thoughts of Chairman Mao.

The film itself was certainly delightfully quirky, enveloped in the kind of self-absorption, self-doubt and anxiety rather more sharply portrayed at a different level of New York society by Woody Allen. Even the local law-enforcers pause to reflect on the state of their souls.

But from the specialist point of view of this journal it was interesting to see how this cult movie conflated two stereotypes of the anarchist. One was the century-old image of the detonator blowing up buildings, an activity more current among local authorities demolishing the tower blocks they commissioned in the 1960s, and the other is the new stereotype of an old man imposing on another generation the wisdom of a century-old pamphlet, where the essence of

the passage he selected was one which, in effect, repeated the lesson that, as primary school children learn, is associated with a Scottish king of the fourteenth century, Robert Bruce, who when incarcerated after an unsuccessful insurrection, watched a spider constructing its web with many a failed effort and concluded "if you don't succeed at first, try, try and try again".

Malatesta's version of this admonition, dictated by old man McCabe to the sons he had neglected all his life, included the precept that, provided you made no compromises, ultimate success was inevitable.

In the circumstances of Hal Hartley's film, this was the worst possible advice, not only because no revolution was conceivably on the horizon, but because the most valuable thing that could happen to those two sons would have been to find some niche in the informal economy which would remove the necessity of living off the labour of others. The scriptwriter seemed to be hinting at this since one of the put-upon women in the film had begun to plant seedlings and saplings with the intention of establishing a tree nursery, and one of the McCabe brothers reckons he might join her. But to do so would have been too much of a commitment for his concept of personal freedom.

Meanwhile Dad was living out his personal dreams of insurrectionary gestures. He was an example of the comment of the playwright Alan Bennett in his recently broadcast diaries that the problem about revolutions was that

"they always attract the wrong people". I would modify his remark to suggest that every popular insurrection of the twentieth century has ended with the dominance of the authoritarian left, usually followed by that of the authoritarian right.

A different style of New York anarchist to that of the fictional McCabe was Paul Goodman. In the last of his articles published after his death he remarked that:

"For me, the chief principle of anarchism is not freedom but autonomy, the ability to initiate a task and do it one's own way ... The weakness of 'my' anarchism is that the lust for freedom is a powerful motive for political change, whereas autonomy is not. Autonomous people protect themselves stubbornly but by less strenuous means, including plenty of passive resistance. They do their own thing anyway. The paths of oppressed people, however, is that if they break free they don't know what to do. Not having been autonomous, they don't know what it's like and before they learn they have new managers who are not in a hurry to abdicate ..."

Autonomy has a complex relationship with politics. An obvious instance is the claim of the new Conservatives in Britain since 1979, and their American equivalents, that their policies were 'setting the people free' and 'rolling back the frontiers of the state'. These claims were the precise opposite of the truth, but the ideology and even the language of the religion of the market has profoundly affected the public mood and even the world of personal relations. Compare this with the public mood of the late 1940s.

Also on Channel 4 in November and December was Peter Hennessey's perambulation through post-war Britain, *What Has Become Of Us All?* In the first and most interesting programme he was on a hillside above Tredegar in South Wales talking to retired miners who recalled that period.

The old miners had been reared in a culture of poor people who nevertheless lived in a society built around the values of self-help and mutual aid. They might work for a capitalist mine-owner but had built up their defences in the trade union movement, the cooperative society, religious non-conformity and a multiplicity of miners' institutes, choral

societies and a firm faith in education as the key to a better life. They explained that on the day in 1946 when signs were erected outside the pit saying "This colliery is managed by the National Coal Board on behalf of the People", they thought that this would mean miners on the board, not the same management hierarchy as before.

Hennessey was questioning them beside a monument to their one-time MP, Aneurin Bevan, who as Minister of Health was regarded as the architect of the National Health Service in 1948. One of them explained that "We thought he was turning the whole country into one big Tredegar. He was taking the message of Tredegar to everyone". What he meant by this was the fact that under the old system of Health Insurance, only employed people qualified for automatic medical care, so that in Tredegar all the miners subscribed weekly to a fund to guarantee care to women, children, the old and the unemployed. It was local, voluntary, universal, and the health professionals were directly responsible to the population that employed them. As he recalled it, it was a model for the nation and was not at the mercy of the politicians and policies of central government.

By the 1990s the public mood has made enormous shifts. The power of the unions has been broken and the result is that all employers, whether public or private, whether in vital utilities or in the consumer-junk business, can divide and rule their employees. Thus Will Hutton wrote in the *Guardian* (27th December 1994) under the headline "Psychological black hole at the heart of capitalism", that:

"Friendship is under assault. Across the industrialised world there is a rise in clinical depression — and the single best protection against it, psychologists find, is the presence of friends and family solidarity. But we are making fewer friends than we did. The consumer society and too much exposure to market relations, it seems, are part of the process of losing us friendships, weakening bonds of kinship and bringing less happiness."

He says that this was the message of a new publication by Robert Lane, *The Path Less Chosen: Giving Friendship Priority Over Commodities* (Yale University Press, 1994), citing statistics of depression in nine countries among people born before and after 1945.

Maybe this is the message I should have picked up from *Simple Men* — the old man, too wrapped up in revolutionary fantasy to relate to the world around him, and the sons too wrapped up in themselves to relate to the art of getting by without exploiting others.

Colin Ward

## Mental laziness enslaves people

Most of us understand how propaganda controls people. Governments use the media to implant false ideas into the heads of those they rule as a supplement to their violence and rewards. This is something we cannot control, but their propaganda is effective only because people do not think. Most are mentally lazy. They think only to practise their trade or profession; otherwise they drift along in a cerebral haze, often just moving a ball about or watching others do it.

If people thought at all, they could not accept the ridiculous thoughts and arguments circulated by governments and their privileged groups. These are a few examples:

Our rulers tell us that we should export armaments to warring countries because if we did not someone else would. This was an argument put forward by Hitler's minions and rejected by the British government. Soon people will believe that, although governments are good and necessary, a particular government may fail. People will believe that if they put Labour into power their troubles will be over. They do not realise that all political parties behave in the same way. If they thought at all, they would know this.

Because people do not think, governments can deceive them by using misnomers to describe the state activities. People are never unemployed, they are redundant; there is never a slump, only a recession; and they are never poor, only economically deprived. All countries have a ministry of defence, never a ministry of war. It is a miracle that there is any way when every country is only defending itself when attacked.

When rulers and others talk about economics their ignorance and deceitfulness is hidden by the complexity of the subject. This is a headline from the *Guardian*, "Chancellor turns to tobacco and petrol again to help recover lost revenue". The loss referred to was the money he did not get because he did not increase the VAT on fuel to 17%. How could the Chancellor lose something he never had? Saying that he had to make up the loss is like saying that a mugger, on finding his victim's wallet empty, had to make up his loss by stealing his victim's watch.

It is with war that the most illogical beliefs are expounded. A soldier will believe that he is fighting for his country when he has none of it. Perhaps he has a house and a garden, but a bank or building

society may own that. He will tell you that he is fighting to protect his girlfriend from rape by the enemy who is committing atrocities. And while he fights, his girlfriend is enjoying sex with someone else. When the soldier died, they tell us that he gave his life. This is far from the truth. He was conscripted and only went to war because he could not get into a reserved occupation quick enough. And how did he die? He fell. Probably tripped over a pebble. The horrors of war are always kept from the people who do not want to think about them. When soldiers and civilians are killed in war, they rarely die with a single shot as seen on the videos. Parts of them are blown away so that they expose their brains or intestines, and often their limbs and other parts of their body go flying through the air to kill their comrades.

Every statement by a government is illogical and untrue and should be questioned. People must think and understand what it is like to be poor, to live on the streets, to starve and to take part in war. They must understand the true purpose of governments and how they rule. They must learn how to dismantle the state and build the free society. As anarchists, we must help them do it.

People cannot control their government, but they can control the way they use their intelligence. Therefore they need only deride and reject the official propaganda and start listening to the anarchists to solve their social problems.

Derrick A. Pike

New from Freedom Press  
Visions of Poesy

An anarchist poetry book including over 200 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

## Through the Anarchist Press

As anarchist circles are getting more numerous, gone are the early days when it was possible to have most of the activists within the confines of one or two meeting rooms.

Anarchist literature reflected the necessities. Most articles concerned themselves with outside events, drawing attention to difficult situations in remote parts of the country where a show of solidarity was needed. It was not unusual to see the London Anarchist Group banner (does anybody know what happened to it?) in Faslane or the Glasgow Anarchist Group's banner in Whitehall. They were there fluttering from all parts of the country and from abroad (the FIJL's in particular). Where the flags fluttered they always achieved something. Some encroachment was made not to succeed, some concession however small was gained, perhaps they opened the jail doors for somebody. My favourite banner was the Oxford Anarchist Group's (do they still exist?). Most flags were black or red and black. Oxford's was a pinky blue.

The marches achieved a lot and comradeship

was tremendous. Authority did not have it all its own way.

It can never be estimated what was the effect of worldwide protest against the Vietnam war.

The Aldermaston marches started with one man sitting down in the middle of Whitehall, his one placard brought out a cordon of police. The following year there were hundreds.

Even the manner of finding out about the Aldermaston secret atomic establishment showed how one observant person cut across the veil of secrecy perpetrated by government and their lips-sealed stooges.

The man was a bus spotter and he noticed a bus, ordinary London Transport bus, with a number which was unknown to him. He followed this bus out of curiosity and ended up in Aldermaston and saw with his own eyes this fenced-up horror story.

We all have brains and brawn (not to mention bairns). We can use both, either or none. There is honesty in all three.

There were also songs such as those quoted in *Visions of Poesy*. I don't know what the tune is to Paul Goodman's 'Flags, 1967' — "... my

**Society of the Spectacle**

by Guy Debord

published by Black & Red, Detroit, 1983, £5.00

DIY instant oblivion has always had a cult following for though it solves no problems it guarantees a few minutes of instant fame. Be it Socrates, Jesus, Hitler, the Koestlers, Frederick West or the clowns who douse themselves in petrol and strike a flaming match for de' cause, for de' cause, there will always be those who during the lull in the conversation will always praise and demand to know why the dearly departed took the short haul out of life's fitful fever. It is of public interest that to read Roger Stéphane of the Society of the Spectacle put a bullet through his skull becoming the self-elected member of that Holy Trinity, or Three Card Trick, to bemuse or amuse the French pseudo-intelligentsia, arse-warming the tourist café seatings, by acting out their role as blowflies of the fashionable cult of the day. It is a pleasant way to spend the idle hours rabbiting publicwise, presswise, caféwise as the boulevard jetsam honing, like unto the New Yorker phonies, their rehearsed ad libs, God I wish that I could have joined them and paid for the next round. Stéphane fought an honourable war and within the resistance movement spent two years in a Gestapo prison, but come the dull days of peace there is only public entertainment and the Situationist International that it is claimed survived and won a readership out of the May 1968 major street confrontation with the French government and its authorities.

Gérard Voitey, Guy Debord and Roger Stéphane took a foolish exit out of life's camera call, for I will hold that if one is in good physical and mental health and economically solid with one's social background then life is too interesting to brain-spatter the wall-hanging Picasso prints with the amoral bullet. In the end we are judged by our writings, our art or the lies or praise of those who knew us, and Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* makes dull reading for a dull day. Debord is a master of the obvious and he serves this out in pages of intellectual salami in which he maintains that we are but creatures of socially and cynically produced spectacle, be it television, films, stage, commercial adverts or political propaganda. And this has a universal belief with but two sensible exceptions, you and I comrade for, claims Debord, "the spectacle cannot be understood as an abuse of the world of vision, as a product of the techniques of mass dissemination of images. It is rather a Weltanschauung which has become actual, materially translated. It is

black flag the sovereignty of no man or law!" – but if you play it I'll sing it.

*Visions of Poesy* is dotted with references to the black flag. You may look at George Woodcock's, which is the final poem in the book. For me the flag is no more than a symbol, a presence, a warning, but as the poet says (and he should know): "For out of black / soul's night have stirred / dawn's cold gleam / morning's singing bird."

The contribution of the anarchist movement is of historic importance and our record on civil rights, in the defence of communities, in defeating and in the organisation against oppressive laws speaks for itself.

Today the movement is stretched, spread out to its limits. For those who say there has never been an anarchist society I'd say there have been many colonies of anarchists who have stayed together, despite the change of generations, for almost a hundred years. It is only a question of size, but even in my own lifetime I have noted that anarchism in practice is both enduring and liberating.

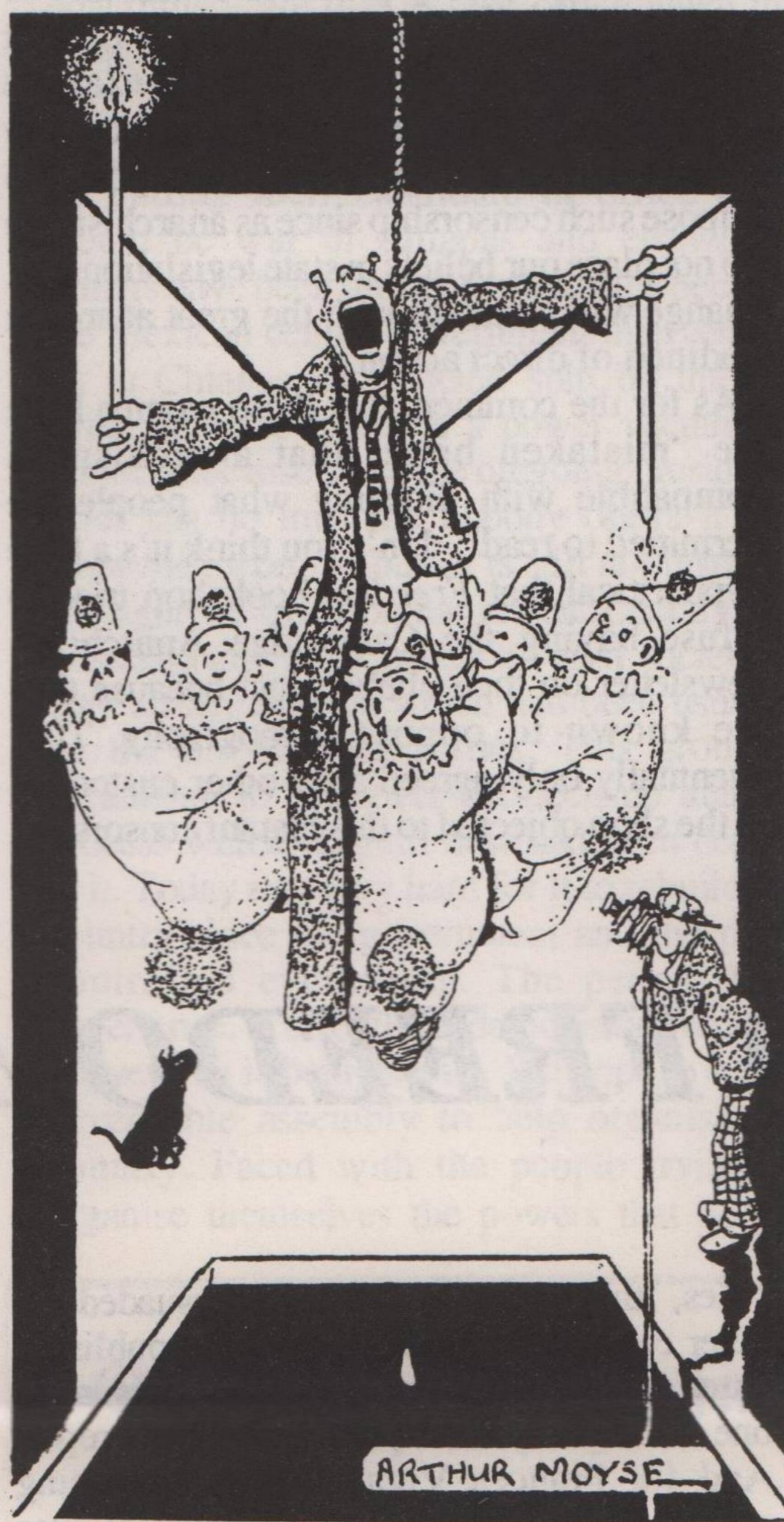
There is no other movement in the country or anywhere in the world which operates as does the anarchist, openly, spontaneously and altruistically. We do not resign to superstition, bigotry, chauvinism of any kind. We are not afraid of power, neither master nor slave.

John Rety

world vision which has become objectified." And if you disagree, then fax Hollywood or the Pope or hand the publishers the revolver with the single honourable bullet. It is fair that one should give Debord the last bang-bang word with "the anarchists, who distinguish themselves explicitly from the rest of the workers' movement by their ideological conviction, reproduce this separation of competences among themselves; they provide a terrain favourable to informal domination over all anarchist organisations by propagandists, defenders of their ideology, specialists who are in general more mediocre the more their activity consists of the repetition of certain definitive truths ... Furthermore, the refusal to take into account the opposition between the conditions of a minority grouped in the present struggle and of a society of free individuals has nourished a permanent separation among anarchists at the moment of common decision, as is shown by an infinity of anarchist insurrections in Spain, confined and destroyed on a local level."

At a time when the world mourns the Spectacle, violent leave-taking of the lads and the horror of the Charles and Maurice Saatchi uncivil war, the Town and his breathless frau are standing queuewise to pay to view the genius of the week at the Royal Academy. "Who else but" they cry as they thumb the expensive catalogue *Nicolas Poussin 1594-1665*. Poussin is a painter the academics love for, like contemporary abstract painting, they can read into his cluttered canvases whatever they wish to enhance their own small reputations. Like the Victorian painters, it was a case of every picture tells a story and the man who was deemed to be second only to Raphael fills up the walls. Until the next 'major exhibition'. It is claimed of him that he was disliked by his contemporaries. He maintained

no studio and employed no assistants, but let it be recorded that Anthony Blunt, the ex-Keeper of the Queen's Paintings and well-dressed spy, told in his Mellon Lectures that to understand Poussin "it is essential to understand the intellectual climate in which he worked and the ideas – religious, philosophical or aesthetic – in which he believed and which affected his method of



work" and surely, comrades, the same can be said of Stalinist Social Realism and all over second rate garbage with the message.

It is fitting that running in harness with the Royal Academy Poussin exhibition is 'Worlds in a Box' within the Whitechapel Art Gallery. The Whitechapel must always be praised for their exhibitions and this exhibition, so very trivial, has won the hearts if not the minds of the academics in that they can rabbit on Rauschenberg, Duchamp, Man Ray, Schwitters, the Dadaists and anyone who has a small empty box to fill for display. Brian Sewell, whose baggy trousers and floppy sweaters puts the fear of your particular god into the hearts of the Establishment, loved the Boxer exhibition and as a long-time friend of ex-Sir Anthony Blunt they shared a common approach to what they hold and held to be the good and the bad. Be it the Boxers or Poussin in the soft pink hands of the academics, it is metaphysical ham. My unsought advice in how to succeed in a small box exhibition is to house a used French letter or a human turd and, apart from the *Sun* publicity, it will be defended culturewise.

After Damien Hirst's pickled sheep it has been left to a Danish 'artist' to slaughter five live puppies for his exhibition in Copenhagen and, to their credit, animal rights activists protested outside the city council's 'art' gallery. The 'artist' wished to exhibit stuffed babies but no hospital would supply them! Next on the list must surely be cannibalism for from crime it has become social, political and now tourist oriented in that Guillaume Potiez killed and ate part of his friend after falling out with each other in a discussion concerning the humanitarian and political situation in that ol' war-torn Rwanda whole the brow-sweating Colonel Javier Salado, chief of the Cuban military police, has issued an official denial in the official rag *Rebel Youth* that it is untrue that tourists are being taken and slaughtered and sold meatwise on the black market. Concentration art 1995? And would it be defended!

Arthur Moyses

## Food for Thought ... and Action!

Recent arrivals at Freedom Press Bookshop.

**The Anarchists of Casas Viejas** by Jerome Mintz, Indiana University Press. Good timing or what? This is a brilliant first-hand account of one of the 1933 anarchist uprisings in Spain – i.e. before the revolution, as mentioned in the last issue of *Freedom* by Colin Ward in his 'History from the Underside'. Not only is this account made up in large part of interviews with some of the participants over three years, but it unearths the background and history of the events as far back as 1874. This is oral history come to life. Even today, ordinary Spaniards with no knowledge of anarchism recognise the name of Seisdedos, one of the victims of the state massacre, as representing a turning point in recent Spanish history. Nicolas Walter said of this book in the *New Statesman*: "demolishes both liberal and Marxist myths about the Spanish anarchists, and compellingly depicts their real world in a classic and revolutionary historiography". New edition with index, glossary, bibliography and 16 pages of photographs, 336 pages, £13.99.

**Prolegomena: to a study of the return of the repressed in history**, edited, introduced and illustrated by Clifford Harper, Rebel Press. According to the blurb: "This collection of 'ultra' prose and poetry contains 300 years of outrage, passion, sarcasm and wit". It certainly contains plenty of the former two, a fair amount of sarcasm but not much wit. Most of it is pretty strong stuff, consisting of inflammatory denunciations of various manifestations of the state and the bourgeoisie, usually taken from speeches or published articles. Many of the authors are anarchists, but others are Republicans, Social Democrats, Chartists, participants in various local rebellions and even a highwayman. Probably no more than passing interest, and heavily tainted with the image of the romantic, bomb-throwing, knife-carrying 'anarchist' which was so much a creation of the bourgeoisie in the first place (see *Bourgeois Influences on Anarchism\** by Luigi

Fabrizi, £1.00). The illustrations are both disappointing and tiny, but it is a nice piece of production. 38 pages, £4.50.

**Anarchy in the UK Programme**. A few copies (4) left if you want a late moment of those heady days. Lists all the events that did take place – and not a few that did not. First come first served. (When ordering either indicate an alternative if you miss out or we'll hang on to your money until your next order.) 60 pages, £1.00.

**A Time to Travel? an introduction to Britain's newest travellers** by Fiona Earle, Alan Dearing et al, Enabler Publications. Another timely publication, this time not so much oral history as oral here-and-now, described on the cover thus: "This is not an academic book, or a research study. It is the words and opinions of travellers themselves ..." Most people probably don't have much idea about what being a traveller involved, apart from what they glean from high profile media exposés. Most of the commercial, and even small press publications on the subject, are written by non-travellers. In this book everyone involved with the project is part of the travelling scene. Both the main authors are involved with trying to resolve the problems of travellers' children and education and as such have helped to set up and run various mobile schools and other educational projects for travellers, so there is a substantial chapter on welfare and education. All kinds of travellers are covered from Romany gypsies to tinkers, from water people to circus people and new Agers. Relations between the various groups are discussed as well as life on the road (or canal), the origins of the travelling lifestyle, the changing culture and the future. As you might expect, one of the largest chapters deals with legislation – criminalisation and confrontations with the blue meanies, including the impending application of the Criminal 'Justice' Act. The progressive denial of civil and even human rights comes through as a continual refrain throughout the book, and is occasionally described in detail, such as the sending

in of the army – 1,500 troops – against 100 or so people peacefully encamped on the (empty) RAF Molesworth base in Cambridgeshire in 1985. This was the operation from which Michael 'Flak Jacket' Heseltine (Minister of Defence and panting hotly after Margaret Thatcher's job as PM) got his nickname, descending in full combat fatigues from a helicopter rather like Barbara Streisand arriving at a concert, but trying to look manly and in control. The army erected a double fence of razor-wire around the entire base perimeter of seven and a half miles as they evicted the Rainbow Village and their vehicles. The *Daily Telegraph* described it as "the largest single Royal Engineer operation since the Rhine crossing in 1944"! A lovely book, smartly produced and embellished with scores of photographs and delightful drawings. Large format, 177 pages, £7.99.

**Squall: magazine for assorted itinerants**, no. 8, quarterly. Still on the anti-authoritarian alternative lifestyle theme, the former publishers of the *Squatters Handbook* have decided that, due to continual action or threatened changes to the law, a periodical would serve a more useful function than a one-off pamphlet as far as keeping squatters, travellers and ravers informed of ongoing developments is concerned. Hence the *Squatters Handbook* has been allowed to go out of print in favour of this extremely well-written and professionally produced magazine. There are good articles on a range of issues, not just confined to squatting: the gerrymandering on Westminster Council, the nationwide anti-roads protests, the international squatting scene and the 'pirate urbanisation' of illegal shanty town squats, the British media and the Criminal Justice Bill Rally, land ownership in Britain, plus letters and much more. Recommended. A4, 56 pages, £2.00.

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## READERS WRITE . . .

### 1. Censorship at Freedom

Dear *Freedom*,

I find it deeply ironic that in your article 'Anarchy in the UK: the down side' (26th November 1994) you complain of a caption that was in *Time Out* which in your view "misrepresented anarchism completely" whilst you do just that in your own article. Whereas anarchists are usually a little sceptical of the reportings of the mainstream media, you use it unquestioningly to bolster your highly deficient argument. A big chunk of your criticism is that a group of "censorious jobs" (women, to the rest of us) tore up every magazine with a woman on the cover. This of course would be understood by many women as not such a bad idea, but the point is it didn't happen. Only the entire section of pornographic magazines were destroyed. *Time Out* got it wrong and hence *Freedom* got it wrong, so it might be better to get your facts right next time because basing your argument on a lie only weakens it.

I find it enormously hypocritical that whilst complaining of censorship you impose it yourself by dictating that anarchists should have only one point of view on something, in this case they must be pro-pornography, or

else they're not allowed to call themselves anarchists. Some people would find it hard to understand how anarchism could be compatible with protecting women-hating, racist propaganda which is responsible for violence against, and in some cases actual murder, of women and children. Anarchist women involved in action against pornography are not furthering "a campaign for censorship to be imposed in this country". This country already practices censorship of many people and issues, so unlike you I do not feel it necessary to point to Iran for an example of repressive media control. I wonder how you think anarchist women will have the power to impose such censorship since as anarchists we do not place our beliefs in state legislation. No, change will come through the great anarchist tradition of direct action.

As for the comment that these women have the "mistaken belief that anarchism is compatible with dictating what people are permitted to read", don't you think it's a little hypocritical that *Freedom* bookshop tried to refuse having the Cambridge Anarchists' newsletter on their shelves just because they are known to oppose pornography. They eventually only agreed after other customers in the shop objected to this blatant censorship.

Be interesting to see if they're still there.

It's obvious that the censorship argument is only dug up when it appears someone is trying to take away something you want to hold on to. We don't hear cries of 'censorship' from anarchists at direct actions against Macdonalds (yet surely such activists are trying to 'dictate' what people can eat because what they are eating is made from cruelty and exploitation). The same people who shout about censorship of pornography are quite happy to take down BNP posters and stickers (oh, but of course that's not censorship but a noble act of anti-fascism).

The anarchist movement clearly has a lot of sorting out to do. With the present condition of this country's anarchism 'freedom' seems an inappropriate word to apply in relation to it.

Frances Vigay

### 2. The mysterious writer of Angel Alley

Dear 'this writer',

I have been comparing your contributions in the *Freedom* I have just received and in the previous one in which our Prime Minister is taken to task for his repeated use of the first person singular. 'This writer's' particular contempt for the 'I' word is something new in my experience and has set me wondering how

far it is shared, etc. Anyway, 'this writer' is clearly not going to be caught out using it, let alone revealing his/her/its true identity. Or are they?

To be honest, I had somehow formed an image of 'this writer' as a machine spewing out text once a few random ideas – like capitalism not being much cop, etc. – had been fed in. But with this present issue I have been forced to undergo a re-think. It emerges that 'this writer' is in receipt of a pension, which 'this writer' considers inadequate. What is it that has prompted this tantalising lifting of the mantle of disguise? And what now prevents them from going the whole hog? I appreciate that 'this writer' has somewhat quirky views – like a return to the enforced rote-learning of arithmetic tables and to £.s.d. But there is no need to be unduly bashful about that. Most anarchists have strongly held views that are totally at variance with anarchism.

I suggest that when 'this writer' finally reveals their true identity once and for all, then perhaps readers will better be able to assist with what seems to be 'this writer's' major problem – supplementing their pension. In the meantime may I suggest that a career in anonymous journalism has not been the most promising of approaches.

Comradely feelings, etc.

This reader

## . . . AND FREEDOM ANSWERS BACK!

The two letters from dissatisfied (!) readers would not have been published but for the fact that they provide an opportunity for 'this writer' on behalf of the *Freedom* group to clarify some basic facts so far as *Freedom* Press and its activities are concerned.

*Freedom* is an anarchist propaganda periodical which has been published year in and year out by unpaid groups who have no 'party line' but who above all respect and trust each other's determination not only to put over anarchist ideas but also to expose the capitalist system in all its rottenness. For well-meaning socialists who seek to reform the capitalist system, we anarchists can only say that they are the 'utopians', not the anarchists.

Since *Freedom* is an anarchist paper but directed to non-anarchists, we will not let up on our constant attack on the capitalist system and our support for those gestures against the system by the people (not by would-be leaders) even if they don't call themselves anarchists.

We can quite understand those anarchists who 'know it all' and have nothing to learn or enjoy in *Freedom*. To them 'this writer' has been saying for years that just out of solidarity and as good active comrades they should go on supporting our work and should pass on their copy of *Freedom* to a 'victim' of capitalism who hasn't a clue about the capitalist racket!

Any propagandist paper, socialist or anarchist – and indeed capitalist! – must inevitably be selective. We don't expect *Freedom* or *The Raven* to get notices in the capitalist press, even to attack us. And in spite of the fact that we send out review copies of *Freedom* Press publications to the capitalist press, it is a source of rejoicing in Angel Alley if one of them gets a paragraph! Most of the non-capitalist press (especially the other brands of anarchism) only review *Freedom* Press titles when they can attack them. This is an inevitable aspect of the propagation of ideas in a society divided socially, economically, morally and ideologically.

For the time being, therefore, a group such as *Freedom* Press must be selective as to what it publishes. After all, we are not publishers, we are anarchist propagandists.

Yes, 'this writer' could have persuaded the other comrades in the group not to publish a letter and had already on seeing it persuaded one of the group *not* to publish without a reply. And for Frances Vigay this is 'imposing censorship'. Before we try to unravel Frances Vigay's confused thinking, we should make one thing quite clear.

*Freedom* is published by a group of people who give their time and energies unpaid to produce this anarchist propaganda paper. Assuming that any member of the group were opposed to abortion, we would give space to their point of view, just as it is more than obvious that the pacifist, non-pacifist (meaning that while all agree that anarchism will not be achieved by violence or terrorism, in a situation where the public will is resisted by armed force the only response, surely, is not sweet reason but superior force) points of view are given full rein in our journal.

Unlike the 'animal rights' militants we emphasise that the cruelty to animals for food is all linked to the capitalist system of profits above all else. Indeed it is being pointed out that so many of the animal lib folk are well-dressed middle aged ladies who haven't a word of sympathy for the homeless, the unemployed and the 'ethnic minorities'.

The editorial writer (not 'this writer') of the article 'Anarchy in the UK: the down side' which Frances Vigay attacks for its inaccuracies of fact, replies: "Apologies for copying inaccurate information from *Time Out*. The 'pornographic' magazines sold by W.H. Smith, on of whose branches was attacked, are 'girlie magazines' or 'wank mags' with pictures of pretty women in the nude. They do not sell anything featuring violence against women, and there is no evidence that what they sell is responsible for violence. In any case, we are against censorship and do not see how pro-censorship is compatible with anarchism."

In case Frances Vigay missed the last sentence, we must underline that on the one hand she accuses *Freedom* of censorship\* and on the other is clearly suggesting that so-called pornography should be banned, presumably, to quote her, by "direct action".

That *Freedom* Press Bookshop sells the

books that *we want to sell* has nothing to do with censorship. We wonder whether Frances Vigay would consider to be censorship the fact that *Freedom* Bookshop refuses to sell pro-Nazi, pro-fascist, pro-flagellation, pro-Islamic publications? Of course it is! But this simple lady assumes that a bookshop must have everything that has been published. Look here lady! Commercial bookshops only sell what they think (thanks to the reviewing mafia in the media) will sell. An anarchist bookshop is not concerned with the profit motive, but of making propaganda for anarchism and freedom and 'down with capitalism'. The anti-abortionists, the anti-pornographers, they are by definition *anti* what you and I may want. If we don't want them we are free not to have them. Frances Vigay and her ilk are authoritarians on her own admission.

As to the communication from the other 'mysterious writer' who, after all the criticism of 'this writer's' anonymity signs himself 'this reader' (joke understood, and we know him as a good English expatriate in the Far East who has never contributed anything other than his subscription renewal to *Freedom*), his letter would not have been published except for the fact that it provided 'this writer' with ammunition to knock him down. Not just that. It was especially to try and explain to *our sympathetic readers* a little bit about how a paper like *Freedom* can continue to expand not only in circulation but also in influence.

'This reader', that is our correspondent with far from comradely feelings to 'this writer' ("the mysterious writer of Angel Alley"), reveals his main concern with the editorial comments when he pinpoints our reference in the *Freedom* editorial to Major's wishful thinking (10th December) in which we emphasise Premier Major's repetition of "the first person singular" and this writer's not infrequent use of those two words: 'this writer'.

Our correspondent, turned sleuth-hound, was able to transform his image of 'this writer' as a "machine spewing out text once a few random ideas – like capitalism not being much cop, etc. – had been fed in", to an old age pensioner with a chip on his shoulder over the size of his pension!

Obviously the first reaction 'this writer' can make to our correspondent's joke letter is that as one who has been on our paid-up subscribers' lists for a number of years and presumably making a more profitable living in the Far East than in the West (a teacher perhaps?) and has for the first time ever written a letter to *Freedom*, has a bad conscience and is salving it by wanting to take the piss out of the editors, and 'this writer' in particular!

As we said in the opening paragraph, such letters as his give one the opportunity of talking to all our readers.

More than ever today *personalities* count more than *ideas*. This writer, and our correspondent-sleuth is quite right, is not only a 'senior citizen' but long past 'sell by date', certainly by our correspondent's standards, and like most people of his generation he judges 'this writer' not by what he says but by who he is! 'This writer' (we emphasise, as does our correspondent) in his youth as a propagandist observed that the most prestigious weekly journal of book criticism was the *Times Literary Supplement* and *not one review was signed*. Today all has changed, but not for 'this writer' in whose opinion too much influence is given to names and not to arguments.

As to the last paragraph of our correspondent 'this reader' in which he suggests that when 'this writer' gives his name and "identity once and for all" then "perhaps" you the readers will be able to "better assist" with what our correspondent assumes to be 'this writer's' "major problem – supplementing his pension". Dear sane readers, he also suggests "that a career in anonymous journalism has not been the most promising of approaches". The poor chap doesn't know that I have been engaged in "anonymous journalism" as he calls it for more years than he has been on this planet, only my anarchist journalism has been unpaid. I've earned my bread elsewhere!

London Anarchist Forum asks us to mention that they will be discussing pornography and censorship on 10th March, with Avedon Carol of Feminists Against Censorship, and on 5th May with Tuppy Owens, publisher of the *Sex Maniac's Diary*.

\* Her attack on *Freedom* Bookshop is answered by the bookshop group elsewhere in this issue.

# Freedom Bookshop workers' reply

Dear Freedom,  
As a part-time worker at Freedom Press Bookshop, I would like to comment on aspects of F. Vigay's letter.

Whilst I wasn't at the bookshop when the Cambridge 'Anarchists' brought copies of their magazine in, I can categorically state that the rag is still available. Of the three copies that they left, one remains after more than three months – not exactly a best seller! I have it on good authority that the story about the bookshop (i.e. a worker at the bookshop) not wanting to stock the rag is a fairytale.

More interestingly, two representatives of Cambridge Anarchists came to the bookshop a few weeks before the 'Anarchy in the UK' festival whilst I was there, with the specific intention of attempting to persuade us into not stocking a book they disapproved of. I wasn't aware of who they were at first, but alarm bells started ringing when one of the two asked why we stocked a book "funded by the pornography industry" – this was a reference to the book *Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures* edited by Alison Assiter and Avedon Carol, both committed feminist activists. When asked what proof they had of this assertion, none was forthcoming; which isn't surprising given that the claim is a complete falsehood. (Not that I would consider this grounds for not stocking the book anyway. All sorts of books are stocked by the bookshop, many of which are published by mainstream publishing houses owned by, for instance, Rupert Murdoch's media empire.) Even worse, both individuals admitted that they hadn't even read the book in question! When asked to define what they meant by 'pornography' our neo-feminists were unable to answer.

The fact is that these anti-porn feminists from the Cambridge Anarchists had more than one opportunity to debate the 'problem' of 'pornography' during the 'Anarchy in the UK' festival (during the 'Smut Festival' debate they could have publicly debated with contributors from the book they attempted to have removed from the bookshop shelves), but chose instead to spend this time attempting to persuade radical bookshops into not stocking a book they hadn't even read. So, F. Vigay, get your facts right! It is the Cambridge Anarchists, along with yourself, who are the censorious hypocrites. I notice that you have nothing to say about the disgraceful action undertaken by a group of unidentified thugs at the 121 Centre.

Various writers have dealt with the hysterical puritanism that has taken hold of a faction of neo-feminism, including

Claudia in her pamphlet *I, Claudia*, Bob Black in his essay *Feminism as Fascism*, Alison Assiter and Avedon Carol in *Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures* and recently Avedon Carol in *Nudes, Prudes and Attitudes* (all available from Freedom Press Bookshop). The truth is that the coercive academics and intellectuals, such as those throwbacks to the 1970s Catherine Mackinnon and Andrea Dworkin, and their super-intellectual and student fans are completely uninterested in rational debate as they would have to prove their many absurd claims, which would be very difficult given that they are based on so much gross exaggeration and outright falsehood. They prefer to create a climate of panic and hysteria so

as to further their careers and the power of their class in general.

A last observation: of the two Cambridge Anarchists who visited the bookshop whilst I was there, one did all the talking whilst the other stood quietly by the other's side saying little or nothing. Needless to say, the individual who did all the talking was a male, the quiet one was female. It seems wimmin need male hyper-feminists to stand up for them, or that is what such 'new men' like to think. The 'anarchist movement' clearly does have a lot of sorting out to do!

Yours for anarchy, sexual freedom and fucking in the streets!

J. Clark

Dear Freedom,  
Where does Frances Vigay get the idea that Freedom Press Bookshop "tried to refuse having the Cambridge Anarchist newsletter on their shelves"? Either she was not there and was given this fairytale by someone else, or she was there and should listen more carefully to conversations she wishes to report on. I was there as a bookshop volunteer, so just for the record here are the facts.

During the 'Anarchy in the UK' festival a man we recognised as being from Cambridge Anarchists came into the shop. On a previous visit he had tried to persuade us that we shouldn't stock a particular book – which he admitted he hadn't even read – from where a discussion developed on censorship and pornography.

On the second meeting, by way of conversation we playfully asked him whether or not he was going to the Smutfest. This precipitated a further – not unwelcome – discussion on the same topics. At some point during the conversation (which was somewhat disjointed due to the sheer number of people eager to get their hands on uncensored reading material from the bookshop during the festival) he reluctantly pulled some copies of the newsletter from a bag and said that he presumed we wouldn't want to stock it. After looking at it I replied that I didn't see why not – how many had he got? He said "only three" and I said, "Sure, we'll take them all, sale or return". We agreed terms and I put them on the periodicals rack. What may have confused him and/or Frances Vigay is that it was also pointed out to him – somewhat mischievously – that if we had decided not to stock it (our prerogative in any case) he could hardly complain given that he himself favoured actual censorship.

Hence Ms Vigay's allegation that the bookshop "only agreed after other customers in the shop objected to this blatant censorship. Be interesting to see if they're still there" is obviously nonsense. From the (visual) reactions of the other people in the shop it was clear that most disagreed with the 'Cambridge Anarchist'. Only one person – another man – intervened in the discussion and that was on the issue of the representation of sexual acts and on violence against women, not on whether or not we should stock the newsletter.

Incidentally, the stocking policies of the bookshop should not be confused with censorship – although it obviously suits the agenda of some people to pretend that they are the same thing.

One further point. In case Ms Vigay is worried that vast numbers of people are being prevented from reading the

Cambridge Anarchist group's newsletter, of the three copies we took last October we still have one unsold.

Lastly, the P.S. to her letter asks that it be published unedited "in the spirit of anarchy and free speech". Truly one does not know whether to laugh or cry when a plea for free speech for one group is accompanied by demands for censorship of others.

K. McFaul

# Left, Right and Green

Dear Freedom,

Thanks to Jonathan Simcock for clarifying his views on so-called right wing libertarians. I would agree there are probably some who do endorse racism and 'revisionism' but have yet to discover any. Definitely they are not in the A-cap mainstream which abhors such views as much as we do.

I would like to ask Peter Drew to consider what I am really saying. I am not suggesting that serious differences do not exist between right-libs and us. However, we must take them seriously and not dismiss them with swear words or clichés. There are a number of important areas where we can work together, and we should do so: After all, we worked with out and out *authoritarians* – leninists, feminists and

social democrats in the anti-war movement, etc. – didn't we?

Peter's fear of even "a seed of capitalism" makes me nervous. Who indeed in future anarchist society is going to make sure that none of these seeds exist – the *anarchist-communist police*? Are people to be prosecuted for trading garden produce over the backyard fence? It's time Peter realised that all economies are mixed economies and that a 'pure' society without even a grain of capitalism is an intellectual pipe dream.

Quoting Bakunin out of context won't do either. The state is the main prop of capitalism – indeed, there is evidence that capitalism would have never existed as a dominant economic system without the aid of centralised government. Hence, if you want to attack capitalism, you must attack the state, or in other words liberty is a necessary condition for achieving libertarian socialism.

Larry Gambone

**Industrial action by London postal workers this week has meant that several articles intended for this issue were not received in time, including an important feature on the current dispute in the fishing industry which will appear in our next issue.**

## YOU CAN HELP! More readers for Freedom

We have two suggestions as to how comrades who think *Freedom* should have a wider readership can help.

1. Very simple. Introduce your friends and workmates by passing on a copy of *Freedom*. We have a good supply of 1994 issues of *Freedom* which we are offering for propaganda: 10 assorted issues for £1 (post free inland) which barely covers the postal charges!

2. What about a mini bookfair in your town? Or if that is too ambitious is there a newsagent or a bookseller who would stock Freedom Press publications on a sale or return basis, and we would be prepared to advertise in your local paper. If so, ascertain what are the display advertising rates and send us a copy of the newspaper and details of the bookseller/newsagent.

3. Mini bookfairs are not all that difficult. The Hadleigh comrades hired the large room over the Public Library, which also had an annexe with facilities for producing refreshments and not only did they sell a worthwhile quantity of literature but it was an occasion for making new contacts with sympathisers.

Obviously we are asking those comrades and friends who consider that the Freedom Press group are doing a worthwhile job towards an alternative society to contribute some of their energies and time to introduce others to anarchism. We don't ask them to pay for the initiatives we are suggesting. Thanks to the late Fred Yates and an anonymous donor from somewhere up north, we are in a position to finance these initiatives. But they will only be a success if the initial initiative comes from you our comrades and sympathetic readers.

We are anxiously waiting to hear from you with your ideas, suggestions and, above all, practical projects!

## NOTE TO OUR SCOTTISH, WELSH AND ENGLISH READERS!

Devolution is the latest political gimmick which is being used for party advantage and abuse. Of course anarchists believe in local control, in organising society from the bottom up for the benefit of all. Does what the Labour Party advocates for devolution have anything in common with anarchist ideas on devolution, on federalism? Are the Labour Party's ideas on devolution a positive step in our direction, in our meaning of devolution and federalism?

Comrades and readers, you are invited to join the discussion.

## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!

### BOOKSELLER THE BOOKSELLER 21 JANUARY 1994 Fascists attack bookshop



Devastation in the Mushroom Bookshop after an attack by neo-Nazi skinheads.



**Porn protest**  
An international group of feminist anarchists wrecked the magazine section at a branch of WH Smith's in Oxford Street last week in a protest against pornography. Every magazine with a woman on the cover was destroyed by the 35-strong group, which included women from Spain, France and Germany. They attacked the shop, in the Plaza shopping centre, because they claim WH Smith is an important distributor of porn magazines. Two women also chained themselves to shelves and it took several hours to remove them from the store. There were 17 arrests but all were later released without charge.

Above from *The Bookseller*, 21st January 1994, and below from *Time Out*, 2nd-9th November 1994

## Against Censorship

Dear Editors,  
Re Peter Neville's letter (10th December 1994), of course official censorship is wrong. It is also futile. The only censorship open to anarchists is personal censorship. However, the concentration of Peter and Feminists Against Censorship on pornography makes me wonder why they do not find something more worthwhile to attack than pornography laws – the Official Secrets Act for example.

It is a fat lot of good having 'sexual freedom' (if that is what pornography is supposed to promote) if we are going to be involved in another war, courtesy of the Official Secrets Act. Apart from that, I wonder what Peter means by "conventional marriage", which some women apparently lapse into after "passing through the anarchist movement". Is this an attack on that favourite choice of many animal species – monogamy?

Ernie Crosswell

**Please keep sending in your letters and donations**



**East Midlands Anarchists**  
— MEETING —

**Saturday**  
**28th January 1995**  
10.30am - 4.30pm

**Castle Community Rooms**  
**2 Tower Street, Leicester**

**Agenda**

- Introductory Session
- Workshop on Environment
- Networking and Communications

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**PUBLIC DEBATE ON**  
**ANARCHO-TERRORISM**

A debate arising from recent correspondence in the *New Statesman & Society* will be held between **Peter Cadogan** and **Nicolas Walter** in the Small Hall at Conway Hall Red Lion Square, London WC1 on **Friday 17th February 1995** beginning at 8pm under the auspices of the London Anarchist Forum.

**FREEDOM**  
fortnightly

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**Anarchist Forum**

Meets Fridays at about 8pm at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL. Admission is free but a collection is made to cover the cost of the room.

**— 1995 PROGRAMME —**

- 27th January** General discussion
- 3rd February** Employment, Unemployment, Further Education and the State (speaker Peter Neville)
- 10th February** General discussion
- 17th February** Anarcho-Terrorism – a debate between Peter Cadogan and Nicolas Walter
- 24th February** General discussion
- 3rd March** Creation Science (speaker Donald Room)
- 10th March** Feminists Against Censorship (speaker Avedon Carol)
- 17th March** General discussion
- 24th March** An Appreciation of George Walford (speaker Adrian Williams)
- 31st March** General discussion
- 7th April** Vacant slot
- 14th April** General discussion
- 21st April** The Anarchist Barometer (speaker John Rety)
- 28th April** General discussion
- 5th May** Pro-Sex Feminism and Sexual Freedom For All (speaker Tuppy Owens)

Many meeting slots are vacant, although a number of invitations have gone out and we are waiting for specific dates. If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, overseas or out-of-town speakers especially, please contact either Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (telephone number 081-847 0203, not too early in the day please) giving subject and prospective dates and we will do our best to accommodate. These could be instead of a general discussion but the latter are not merely unfilled slots but popular occasions in their own right so we are unwilling to relinquish too many.

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**— 1995 —**

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**Sunday 5th March:** Edale and Kinder Scout. Meet 11.00am at Edale Railway Station Café. Bring waterproofs, walking boots, food and hot drink. Length 8 miles.

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