

# anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

Vol. 56 No. 11

10th June 1995

FIFTY PENCE

*"There is no Western concern about oppression and atrocities, as long as there's a buck to be made."*

**Noam Chomsky**

## FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST VOICE

We are always being reminded by 'well meaning' millionaire politicians like Sir Ted Heath of the 'unacceptable face of capitalism', and we anarchists go on arguing that capitalism by definition – production for profit – is palpably 'unacceptable' for billions (not millions) of our fellow human beings worldwide for whom life is one continuous struggle for survival from 'the womb to the tomb'.

To our western critics who say that we are all capitalists in the sense that we sell our labour for a profit this, in

### LATEST TOP SCORERS

As we point out elsewhere, the public gets accustomed to the sleaze and the top earners and if they were indignant (some aren't and even admire or envy the recipients) they soon forget as more appear on the horizon. Our dossier gets more and more ... prosperous! Outstanding are the new bosses of the privatised utilities, thanks to 'share options' and other perks of which we ignore the details (you have to be in the racket to know what it's all about) but according to an *Observer* report (which the Labour Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown has communicated to John Major, for what it's worth) the directors in the water, gas and electricity companies are "all enjoying effective market monopoly" (*The Guardian*) and "had used their cheap share option to award themselves £40 million – an average of £350,000 each" (our italics).

In spite of losses in one of the group companies and Woolworth's profit slump by one third, the four 'ousted' directors in this enterprise have received a handshake of £2.7 million.

Kerry Packer's enterprises, like his fellow Australian Rupert Murdoch, are too far-ranging to describe in a paragraph, but we include his latest if only to underline the obscenity of the obscenely rich. In Las Vegas last week at the casino he won \$20 million (£12.5 million) in forty minutes at Blackjack. Yes, he also loses vast sums, but he can afford to. But he doesn't need to do either. He is a social parasite who only consumes and produces nothing.

our opinion, is a simplistic, New Labour Party type justification for arguing that capitalism is okay by Tony Blair and Co and socialism is old hat! Of course we sell our labour for a profit, but why? The answer is perhaps too elementary for an anarchist paper, but after all we always live in hope that a few disillusioned Labour Party wage slaves will turn to *Freedom*! The simple answer is that money may well be 'the root of all evil' for our church-going Blairs and millionaire royalty *et alia*, but for most of humanity it is *obligatory or one starves* (okay, in the prosperous capitalist West you are not allowed to starve even if you may be sharing a doorway for the night with a psychiatric patient who has been discharged from the hospital to make way for a 'short term' patient).

If nothing else, the capitalist media have been reminding their readers of the unequal society with all their exposures of the sleaze and corruption here and abroad. But the general public soon tire of scandals, domestic or financial, among the rich

and notorious. So much so that the *News of the World* (28th May) in spite of the fact that press mogul Rupert Murdoch publicly ticked off his editor for exposing Princess Di's family problems (Earl Spencer), regaled its ten-million-plus readers (circulation 4.7 million) with yet another 'exclusive' front page, with 'full story on pages 10 and 11' about "MY LOVE FOR THE CANNIBAL. Girlfriend stands by killer who ate his own mother."

Again *this is capitalism*. That particular issue of 80 pages included 40 of advertisements by top people (four pages by Currys) obviously unconcerned by the macabre article: "The pretty sweetheart of deranged cannibal ... vowed last night to stand by her man" with colour photos of the sweetheart and the cannibal.

One asks oneself how can we direct people in the West to be concerned with the problems not only of the 20 million unemployed in the 'prosperous' European Union, but of, for instance, the fifty million children in India sold by their parents to carpet manufacturers  
*(continued on page 2)*

### WHO WILL REGULATE THE 'REGULATOR'?

In the last issue of *Freedom* we were asking in another context "Who will judge the judges?" *The Guardian* (31st May) provides us with another titbit as to the impossibility of operating a capitalist society on any criteria based on the social value of work done. Surely a farm worker producing in the course of a season x tons of vegetables is worth more than a chap in the Stock Exchange waving his arms about selling or buying shares or currency or whatever they do? But this is not so. Not only is the opposite true, but the chap who sells the grower's vegetables makes more than the grower. That's capitalism, and alas most people accept it as well as being its victims!

Even the capitalists are a bit embarrassed by the greediness (after all, when Princess Anne is quoted in the media complaining about greed

but not among the poor, things are looking up!) hence all the publicity about the big bosses' rises (see elsewhere 'Latest Top Scorers'). But let us be quite clear about the whole business. Face the facts, as we are always saying in *Freedom*. British Gas is all the time in the news and the latest is that Cedric Brown puts two fingers up to the critics every time and his 'basic pay' and 'benefits in kind' have gone up from £492,602 in 1994 to £1,085,600 in 1995. And his chairman Giordano has also gone over the million pound mark.

But as we write the media sensation (*Guardian*, 31st May) is that the Government's Ofgas Regulator, one Ms Clare Spottiswoode, director general of Ofgas, like *Oliver Twist*, demanded more than her £70,000 a year (a mere £1,346 a week). She now wants £110,000 a year, a 65% rise in  
*(continued on page 2)*

## FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST VOICE

(continued from page 1)

who pay them 10p a day and export their carpets to the West, if they are quite obviously enthralled by the dirt 'exclusively' provided for their Sunday entertainment - presumably?

The 'serious' broadsheet dailies are on another intellectual level, but just as corrupt as the tabloids. They expose the sleaze and the corruption. What they never do is recognise that *capitalism is the arch corrupter*. After all, how can you take these papers seriously when they devote whole pages to stocks and shares, and the money markets daily, and at the week-ends advise you about your investments and your private pension funds, etc? And you will have also noticed that the media never talk about what journalists are paid (are they only paid by their employers?) and to what extent is editorial matter influenced

by the major advertisers. After all, 40 pages out of 80 in the *News of the World* almost makes them into shareholders!

We believe the time has come, and even made possible as a result of the collapse of the powerful authoritarian communist media and that of the social democrats, for an international anarchist daily paper (our alternative to the European Union, GATT, NATO, the lot - all capitalist monopoly enterprises). *Capitalism is now international*. The transnationals, the multinationals ignore governments which today can only control a fraction of the economy. Today we all rely on the efforts of workers worldwide. All exploited by the capitalist system.

*Surely is it not time for the anarchists not only to declare their internationalism but to convert it into an international anarchist voice?*

## WHO WILL REGULATE THE 'REGULATOR'?

(continued from page 1)

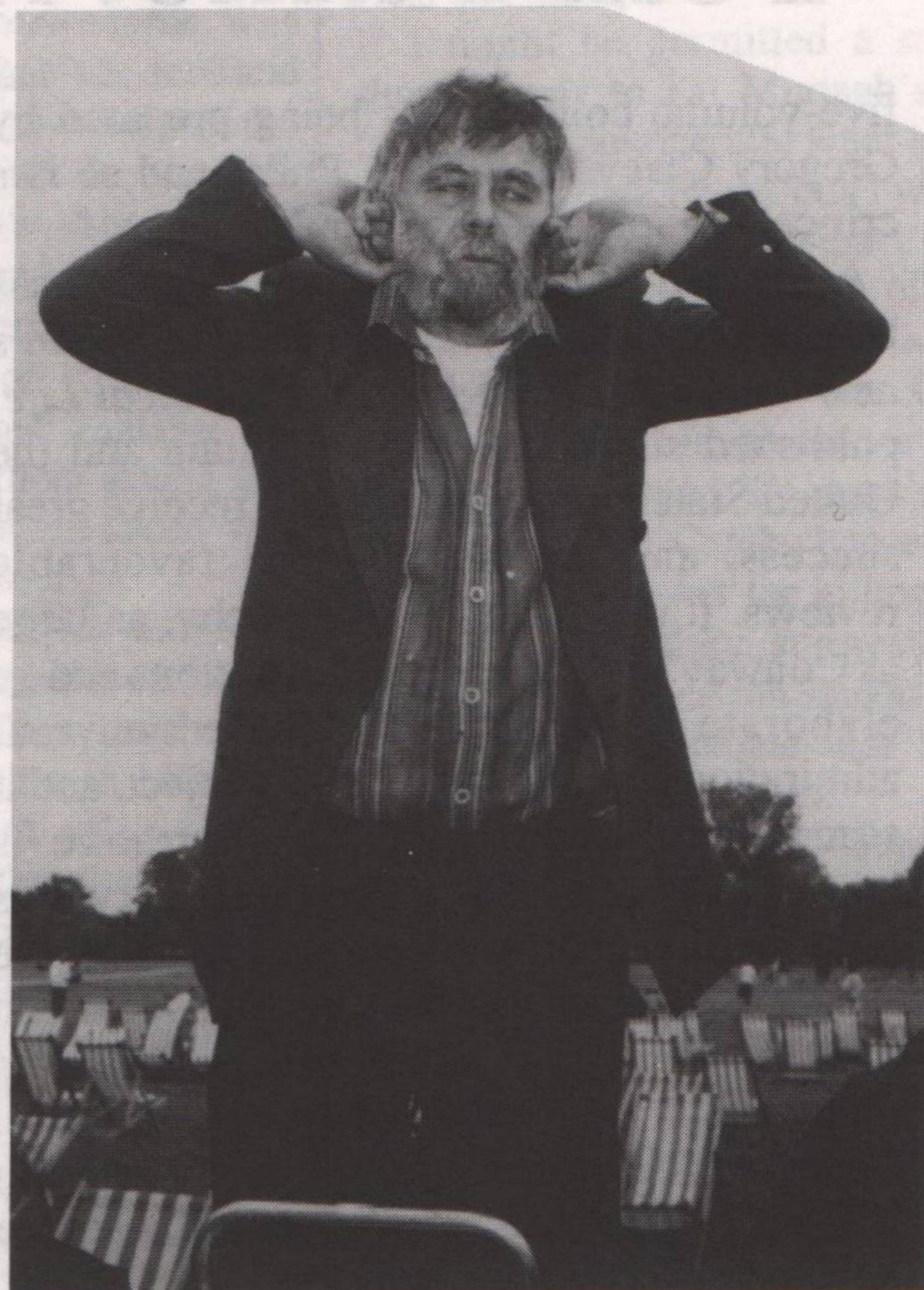
her salary, which is viewed as extreme by her employers the Department of Trade and Industry which is currently offering 3%.\*

So now we have Ms Spottiswoode, the regulator who is supposed to keep British Gas in order, and there she is now asking for her £1,346 a week to be increased to a mere £2,115 a week. After all, why shouldn't she! It's only the workers who actually see to it that the gas is produced and conveyed to the consumers, and the bills are rendered, who 'deserve' a 3% increase (if they are lucky) to match official inflation (the poor notice that their day to day purchases are more than the official inflation rate).

'Middle England' is beginning to feel the draught from the system that has so far given them all the privileges. To vote Labour next time won't help them, just as it won't help the underprivileged. Surely it is now so obvious that there is no alternative to the capitalist system other than confrontation. After all, as we write, even employees of Barclays Bank have gone on strike! What more evidence that capitalism is bankrupt?

\* We go to press before any response by the Ministry. Ms Spottiswoode may well be rebuffed. We appreciate her nerve, but her optimism in believing that the job has changed following the government's decision to create competition in the gas market is mistaken. Capitalism is fearful of competition!

## Hecklers, New Blood and Child Labour



John Rety at Speakers' Corner

Sunday 21st May: Today I spent a sunny afternoon in Hyde Park in the company of Toad, Weasel, Ferret, Scotch Mist, John Rety, three motorcycle cops and hundreds of people looking for free entertainment. Toad, Weasel, etc., were not furry woodland friends (apart from John, of course!) but the nicknames of rude and persistent hecklers, and the scene was Speakers' Corner where we tried to re-establish an anarchist platform.

The cry of 'new blood' had obviously gone out as all the well-established hecklers congregated at our stand. My initiation ceremony consisted of an onslaught of very personal verbal abuse, quibbling over etymology and general attention-seeking. It soon became a battle of wits and I now understand the meaning of the term 'pre-emptive strike'!

My earlier fears that I would be tripped up

over a point of history or theory dissolved and were replaced by a competitive scoring of points against hecklers and a courting of the crowd. I recommend Speakers' Corner as a very fine training ground for stand-up comics and masochists.

John Rety was as persevering and fearless as ever and did most of the speaking, interspersed with readings from *Visions of Poesy* to soothe the hecklers' bile. There was little exchange of ideas and much exchange of insults and the crowd went home hugely entertained. You know the saying about the toothache in rainy Wigan ...

Friday 2nd June: The recent warning that demographic imbalance will result from women choosing to remain 'child free' has been assuaged. In a debate in the current *British Medical Journal* doctors and philosophers are supporting requests for fertility treatment for post-menopausal women. The argument goes that the objection that elderly mothers might die when their children are quite young is an ethically erroneous one, suggesting as it does that it would be better not to exist than to be orphaned.

I had always thought it a women-friendly turn of evolution that only human females have a menopause whilst other female primates continue to be fertile into old age. Perhaps it is a consequence of widespread use of hormone replacement therapy that makes some women wish to continue bearing children after menopause. If the trend takes hold a knock-on effect could be that women may no longer feel the need, as so many do, to start new families while they are younger. Older women could take up with younger men without anyone thinking it odd, and many more young children could be created to spend their childhood years caring for ageing mothers and grandmothers - a natural home-grown solution to elderly care problems!

Silvie Edwards

## Sun calls for assassination

In the 1880s and 1890s a minority of anarchists advocated, and a smaller minority actually practised, the assassination of heads of state and other persons in authority. The main result was that many people confused anarchism with terrorism, and one encyclopaedia still in use, *The Golden Book*, has an article on 'anarchism' which largely consists of a list of persons assassinated.

In fact, of course, when assassinations were fashionable the anarchists contributed far fewer than nationalists, monarchs, republicans, socialists, fascists or conservatives. And governments have always gone in for individual assassinations in addition to mass murder.

According to Britain's biggest selling daily newspaper, the *Sun*, the British government is currently contemplating the assassination of the Bosnian Serb political head, President Karadzic, and his army chief General Mladic.

John Major has said they are on their way to becoming "world pariahs" and warned them in a letter that they would be held "personally responsible" for any harm to British soldiers in the UN "peace-keeping force", with the advice that his warning should "not be taken lightly". Precisely what he meant, Mr Major declines to say. But according to the *Sun*: "Senior Ministry of Defence sources" said he was referring to the possibility of having them assassinated by the SAS.

"The Prime Minister's words were far from being empty rhetoric", said one official.

"Several dramatic options have been discussed which could be used to carry out the PM's threat to hold them personally responsible. We are talking about something much more effective than merely charging them with war crimes. The SAS have been operating in Bosnia from the start and would be available if needed to do the job."

The *Sun* approves thoroughly:

"The people of Britain may wish that we had never got mixed up in the bloody mayhem of Bosnia, but of one thing there is no doubt: We'd love nothing more than to see the Serbs get what they've been asking for.

Whether it's a bullet in the back from the SAS or a missile homing in on the Serb army HQ, it will be justice.

Serbian president Radovan Karadzic and army General Ratko Mladic have let their men rape, pillage and plunder.

**They should be put down like dogs."**

An anarchist paper which advocated the assassination of a foreign head of state would probably be prosecuted. Has the *Sun* got away with it?

— OUT NOW —

### Raven 29

on

### World War Two

Section 1: includes selections from anarchist publications of the time

Section 2: contains some personal war recollections from Colin Ward, Philip Sansom, Arthur Moyse, Peter Cadogan, John Hewetson, Derrick A. Pike & Vernon Richards

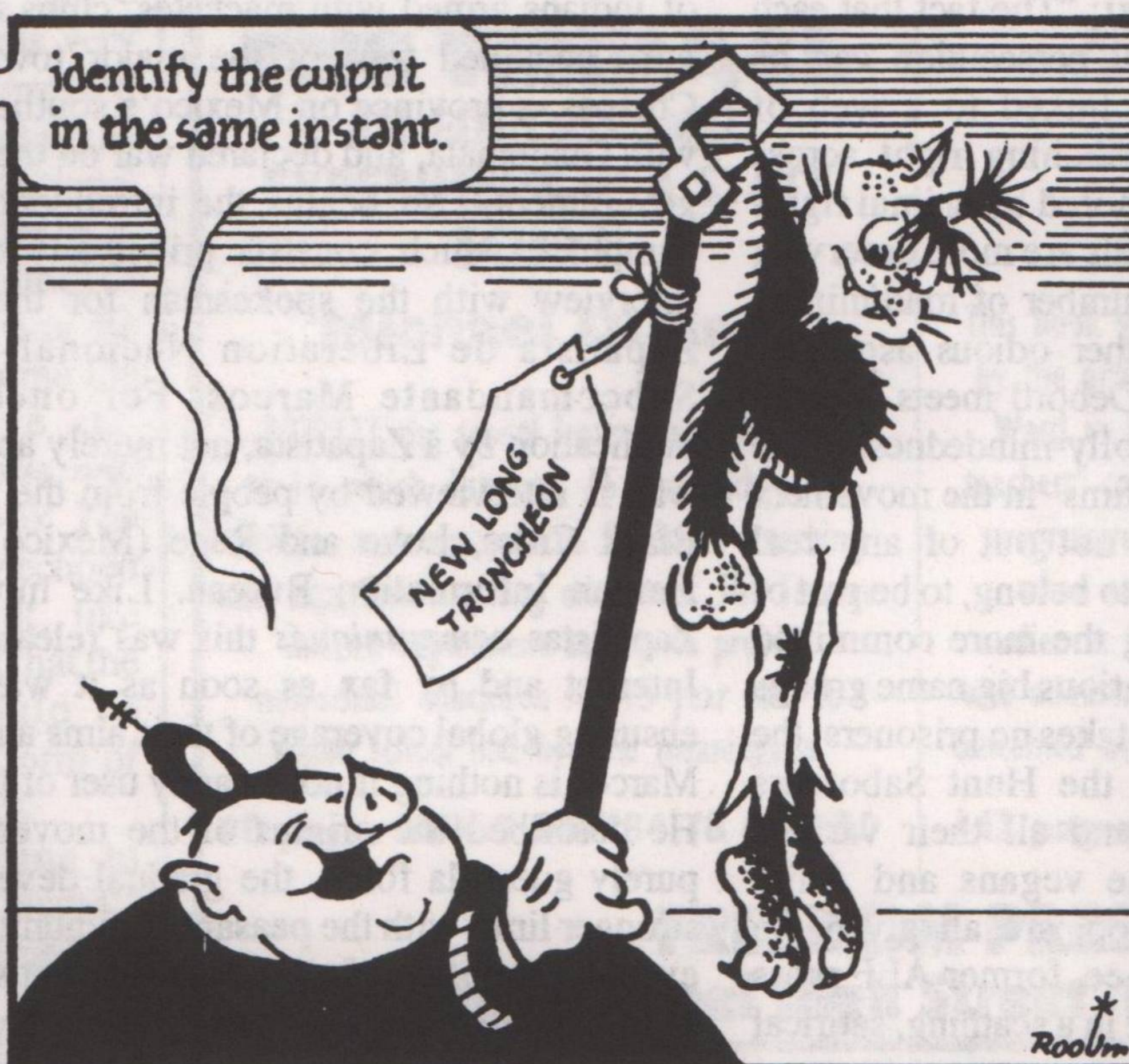
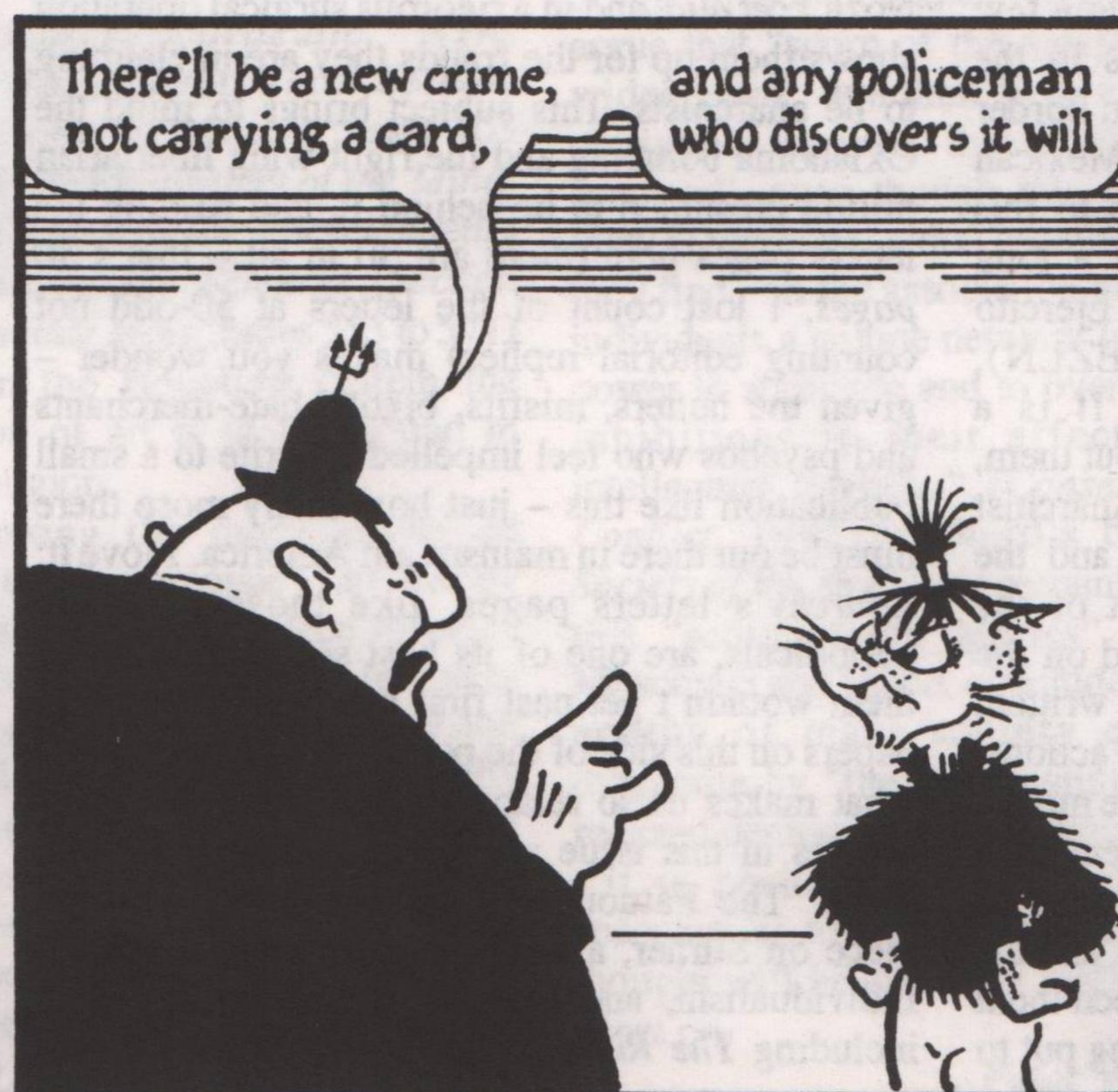
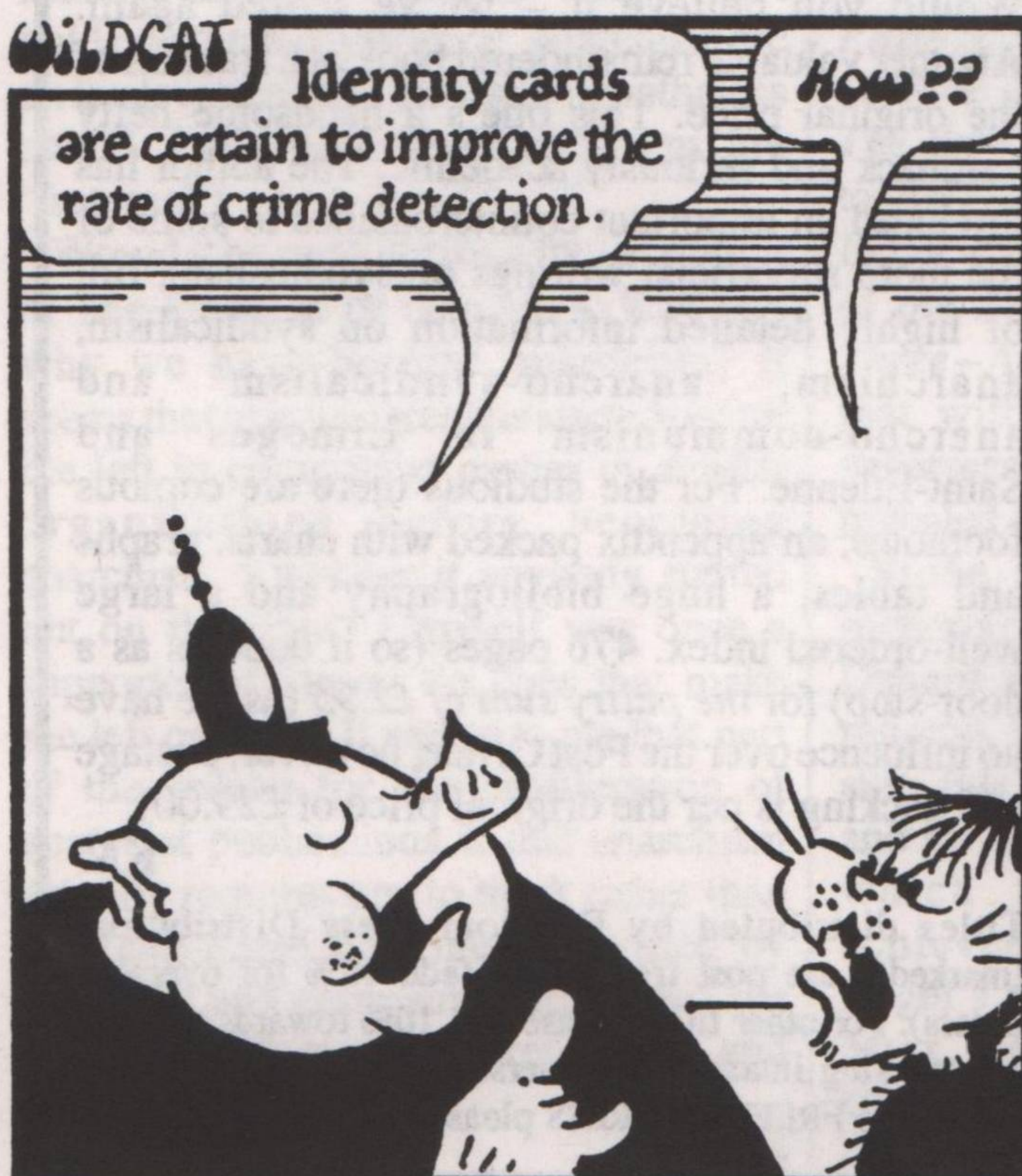
Section 3: tells of the horrors of war

Section 4: some conclusions

100 pages £3.00 (post free)

Freedom Press

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**Tom Paine: A Political Life**

by John Keane

Bloomsbury, £25.00

Thomas Paine has never had the attention he deserves. He was a man of the people and a citizen of the world; a revolutionary writer, speaker, soldier, politician (and engineer) who took a leading role in dramatic events in three countries; the author of the most clearly written and widely read defences of reason in public affairs; the prophet of national liberation, liberal democracy, and natural religion. Yet he has almost always been treated wrongly. During his lifetime and long after his death he was either revered or reviled, and later he was admired by the few and ignored by the many. His reputation suffered not just from the divisions between parties but from the failure of either party to get beyond seeing him as a hero or villain. Even the people who took him seriously treated him superficially, and it is still difficult to make sense of what sort of person he really was and what sort of part he really played.

Paine was one of the best-known Englishmen in the world at the end of the eighteenth century, yet no proper account of his career or edition of his works appeared until a century later, when Moncure Conway produced the two-volume *Life of Thomas Paine* (1892) and the four-volume *Writings of Thomas Paine* (1894-1896). These have long been out of print and out of date, but there was still no satisfactory biography or edition another century later. There have been many biographers, but all have relied on Conway and none has improved on him much. There have also been several collections, but most of them have relied on Conway and the most useful of them – Philip Foner's two-volume so-called *Complete Writings of Thomas Paine* – is itself half a century old.

However, the prospect for his writings has recently improved. A hardback collection of his main works has just appeared in the Library of America, and a paperback selection of his political writings in the World's Classics; an extensive and expensive

**Tom Paine: A Political Life**

five-volume collection is being prepared by Gregory Claeys and Mark Philp, and so is a critical bibliography by John Keane.

At the same time, the prospect for his life has been transformed by the same John Keane's new biography. *Tom Paine: A Political Life*, published simultaneously in Britain and the United States, deserves and will receive great success, and has already had favourable reviews. It is a full-scale biography, as large as Conway's, with several illustrations and an elaborate apparatus. It is based on real admiration and affection for its subject, and it sometimes echoes him. The narrative is stimulating, indeed stirring; the style is vigorous, even vulgar. But it is a work of true scholarship, involving long and deep research in a vast range of original sources, including many previously unused writings by Paine. There are occasional slips of fact or usage, but this is by far the most reliable and readable account of Paine yet produced.

To begin at the beginning, the title raises questions. Paine was called 'Tom' by his best friends and worst enemies, but he called himself 'Thomas', and so should we. And is it 'a Political Life' in the sense of an account of a life spent in politics or an account of a life from a political point of view? Keane himself is mainly interested in politics, as a professor of the subject at the University of Westminster – he plays down personal matters, as Paine did, and is less concerned with religion than his predecessors or Paine – but doubts remain.

The first part of the book covers the first half of Paine's life in 15 per cent of the space. This is the most problematical period of his career; only the superficial facts are known, and everything else is either anecdote or assumption. He was born in Thetford in 1737, his father a Quaker and his mother an Anglican; went to the local grammar school; was apprenticed at the age of 12 to his father's trade of staymaking, and worked at it in several places; first tried and then succeeded

in going to sea on a privateer; attended classes and lectures, occasionally practised as a Methodist preacher or a school-teacher; married at 22, but his wife died in childbirth within a year; became an exciseman, and worked in several places, being dismissed from and restored to the service; settled in Lewes at 31, remarried at 34 but separated after three years; wrote a protest about the conditions of excisemen and was dismissed again; tried a small business, failed, and went to America in 1774.

Keane claims that 'Paine's activities in England are here for the first time given their due weight', and attempts 'the task of understanding the English roots of Paine's political identity'. He does as much as can be done, but is often reduced to describing the personal geographical, social, political and religious background, resorting to the conditional mood, or confessing that there is no evidence. The trouble is that virtually nothing of importance has or probably ever will be established about Paine's intellectual development during the first 30 years of his life, though rather more has emerged about his time in Lewes, when he began to take part in political affairs. Even then, nothing he did or wrote in Britain explains what he did and wrote in America.

The middle part of the book covers Paine's public career of 28 years, first in America, then back in Britain, and then in France. Paine arrived in America in 1774, served a brief apprenticeship as a magazine editor, then began his major work as a pamphleteer. Keane uses the latest research in his account of *Common Sense* and the *Crisis* papers, which played a leading part in the paper war of independence and established Paine's reputation, and of his participation in the military war of independence and in the politics of the new republic; it still isn't clear how he achieved what he did. Keane also makes the best of Paine's attempts to design

an iron bridge in America, France and England; it still isn't clear how far he might have succeeded. Keane's touch is less sure with Paine's political activity in England, from 1787 to 1792, when he wrote the two parts of *Rights of Man* and various shorter pieces; his account of the radical movement is too superficial and summary. But his touch is back again with Paine's political activity in France, from 1790 to 1802, when he served in the revolutionary Convention, joined the Girondins (supporting the abolition of the monarchy but opposing the execution of the king), suffered imprisonment and nearly suffered death under the Jacobin Terror; again he uses the latest French research.

The last part of the book describes Paine's final stay in America, from 1802 until his death in New York in 1809, in 15 per cent of the space. This is a sad story of disappointment and depression, drink and disease, and he died as miserably as his enemies hoped, though he didn't repent as they claimed; Keane maintains a proper balance between the fantasies of both sides on the basis of the known facts.

Keane is good on Paine himself – the plebeian background and the rise to the top in three countries; the awkward personality and the bohemian life-style; the self-acquired erudition and the do-it-yourself style; the glorious success, with sales of hundreds of thousands and international fame, and the inglorious failure, with constant poverty and international infamy.

Keane is strongest on Paine's politics. As director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, he is particularly interested in Paine's striking and shifting ideas about what we call democracy. He mentions but shows less interest in Paine's equally striking ideas about what we call the welfare state – a system of state allowances for children, education, coming of age, work, marriage, old age, death (even disability), financed by progressive taxes on property, all carefully costed and seen not as charity but as a right. He discusses Paine's distinction between society and

(continued on page 4)

**Food for Thought ... and Action!****Recent arrivals to the Freedom Press Bookshop.**

**Animal Liberation: Devastate to Liberate? Or Devastatingly Liberal?**, Anonymous, Pelagian Press. This full-frontal assault starts by acknowledging the genuine concern of many for the plight of laboratory animals and farm livestock, but heavily criticises the holier-than-thou attitude of much of the animal rights movement. Although written before the current 'protest as spectacle' demonstrations and pickets at ports and airports (at one of which both the Bishop of Dover and a Rabbi from the University of Kent likened the export of live animals for slaughter to the Nazi holocaust!), the author rightly identifies a dire lack of solid analysis of the real nature and causes of the problem. His perspective firmly blames the class-based structure of society, and the predominantly middle-class nature of the movement – noted by the press, media and even the police and politicians – for the 'single-issue' politics approach divorced from the wider social context: "The fact that each and every aspect of animal persecution can be shown to be intrinsically linked to a web of hierarchical domination stretching right across every aspect of society is ignored by animal rights groups", and asks why animals are more deserving of attention than, say, the number of road/mining accident victims or any other odious aspect of capitalism. A sort of Guy Debord meets Murray Bookchin. He attacks the woolly-mindedness of the liberals and the 'fashion victims' in the movement – who adopt a 'lifestyle' not out of any real conviction but out of a wish to belong, to be part of a group – for disillusioning the more committed activists. Rounding on the various big name groups and personalities, the author takes no prisoners: the Animal Liberation Front, the Hunt Saboteurs Association, the BUAV, and all their various publications, including the vegans and Anita Roddick and her Body Shop, are all given the treatment. But it's Ronnie Lee, former ALF press officer, who comes off worst in a scathing, satirical

attack on his views on humans, abortion and population control. The movement is castigated for its total reliance on press and media coverage of events (to the extent that an action not covered is considered unsuccessful) and for allowing its achievements to be recuperated by the system. "One of the greatest gimmicks of all time has been created: the 'environmentally friendly / cruelty-free' commodity which charms its way into the consumer's heart (and burns a large hole in their pocket), enabling them to relate to the commodity on an emotional level because it's 'caring' (it even says so on the side)." A well-aimed, well-deserved kick in the arse for the animals rights movement. A5 pamphlet, 36 pages, £1.50.

**Zapatistas: in their own words\*** by Subcomandante Marcos, DS4A. "At midnight on 1st January 1994, NAFTA – the North American Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, the US and Canada – came into force. Barely two hours later thousands of Indians armed with machetes, clubs and a few guns occupied four of the major towns in the Chiapas, a province on Mexico's southern border with Guatemala, and declared war on the Mexican government." So begins the introduction to this pamphlet, which consists principally of a long interview with the spokesman for the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), Subcomandante Marcos. For once it is a publication by a Zapatista, not merely about them, who is interviewed by people from the Anarchist Black Cross, Love and Rage (Mexico) and the Haitian Information Bureau. Like most of the Zapatistas *communiqués* this was released on the Internet and by fax as soon as it was written, ensuring global coverage of their aims and actions. Marcos is nothing if not a canny user of the media. He described the origins of the movement as a purely guerrilla force, the gradual developing of stronger links with the peasant community, and the eventual abolition of all distinctions between them so that no decision was taken without being put to

the whole movement. The Zapatistas have resisted all attempts by the traditional authoritarian left to either dismiss them or stereotype them as clones of their own ideologies. Accompanying the interview is the Zapatistas original Declaration to the people of Mexico in October 1994, and extracts from 'Manifesto to Mexicans' by Emiliano Zapata and 35 officers from 1914. This may well be what some have called the first "post-modern revolution" – you can be sure it won't be the last. A5 pamphlet, 24 pages, £1.50.

**Anarchy: a journal of desire armed**, No. 41, BAL Press. Despite appearing somewhat late (again!) the consistently high quality of both content and writing make this magazine a joy to behold. First on centre court, in a sorely needed piece entitled 'Libertarianism: Bogus Anarchy', one Peter Sabatini (don't tell me there's no relation) serves an ace at the gurus of that right-wing cult known in the USA as libertarianism – Rothbard, Rand, Nozick, *et alia*, and in a rigorous surgical operation shows them up for the frauds they are in claiming to be anarchists. This subject brings to mind the Oklahoma bombing and the right-wing libertarian militia presumed to be behind it, and reading the letters pages here (there are 30 in all – that's 30 pages, I lost count of the letters at 50-odd not counting editorial replies) makes you wonder – given the nutters, misfits, bigots, hate-merchants and psychos who feel impelled to write to a small publication like this – just how many more there must be out there in mainstream America. I love it: *Anarchy's* letters pages, like those of many periodicals, are one of its best sections. A lot of them wouldn't get past first base, as they say, in papers on this side of the pond – but perhaps that's what makes us so relatively dull. Amongst other articles in this issue are a stimulating, if flawed, piece 'The Fatuousness of Cynicism', a turgid piece on Stirner, a brief piece on Surrealism and Individualism, and extracts from various books including *The Right to be Greedy* and a chapter

from Veneigem's book (you know the title) on "creativity, spontaneity and poetry". There's an excellent in-depth piece 'Against Prisons' by Catherine Baker and a short article on the fascinating but ultimately dead-end tactic of 'Illegalism' in France, pre-Bonnot, followed by Marius Jacob's statement to the court which sentenced him to life for murder 'Why I became a Burglar'. Anarchy through burglary? Do me a favour. Far more to the point is the 'Pundits for Capitalism' piece by Josephine Guerls who advocates frolicking in the face of authority, fucking in the streets and establishing an alternative existence outside the clutches of the economy. All unmissable, and now your 84 pages come for just £2.50 – 50p to £1 cheaper than many other outlets.

**Syndicalist Legacy: trade unions and politics in two French cities in the era of World War One** by Kathryn E. Amdur, University of Illinois Press (The Working Class in European History series). Would you believe it – we've scored again. Another valuable remaindered book at a fraction of the original price. This one's a handsome hefty hardback and seriously academic. The author has produced an important counterbalance to some of the more superficial writings on syndicalism, full of highly detailed information on syndicalism, anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-communism in Limoges and Saint-Etienne. For the studious there are copious footnotes, an appendix packed with charts, graphs and tables, a huge bibliography and a large well-ordered index. 476 pages (so it doubles as a door-stop) for the paltry sum of £2.95 (as we have no influence over the Post Office, however, postage and packing is per the original price of £29.00).

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One of the many merits of Ken Loach's latest film *Tierra y Libertad* is that it prompts a re-reading of *Homage to Catalonia*. Much of the film is, in fact, a recreation of scenes in Orwell's book: the "parade-ground drill of the most antiquated, stupid kind" (chapter 1) at the Lenin Barracks in Barcelona, the trenches on the Aragon front, the rifle that backfires, the May fighting in Barcelona.

John Cornford, a communist, fought briefly with the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista) before transferring to the International Brigade. Orwell joined because of his ILP connections. In *Tierra y Libertad* David, an out-of-work communist from Liverpool, joins the POUM because they are the first people he meets. Stafford Cottman, Orwell's friend in the POUM on whom the character of David is based, was a member of the Young Communist League. When David finally realises, after the May Days in Barcelona, that the Stalinists are betraying the revolution, he tears up his party card. Finally, when the POUM is outlawed (there is a glimpse of the infamous headline that appeared in the *Daily Worker* on 19th June 1937: Spanish Trotskyists with Franco) David's militia is forcibly disbanded and its commander arrested – surely to face, like Nin, torture and death.

Orwell (chapter 5) provides a timely reminder of who the POUM were: "the POUM militiamen were mostly CNT

## Ken Loach's new film: *Tierra y Libertad*

members". He adds: "During the first two months of the war it was the Anarchists, more than anyone else, who saved the situation, and much later than this the Anarchist militia ... were notoriously the best fighters among the purely Spanish forces. From about February 1937 onwards the Anarchists and the POUM could to some extent be lumped together."

One of the film's finest sequences is the taking of an insurgent-held village. The hand-held camera conveys all the emotion of the street-fighting and the panic caused by a priest firing from the church belfry. When capture the priest denies it but his shoulder bears the recoil bruises. He is hustled off to a summary execution for this and for betraying (breaking the secret of the confessional) the hideout of four young anarchists, among whose corpses he is shot. The terrible revolutionary beauty of the sequence is as stirring as anything in *Potemkin* or Malraux's *Espoir*.

The first thing the peasants do after seeing off the fascists is to burn religious images and paintings (when Durruti's men started doing this in the village of Pina they were turned on). Next, the villagers and the POUM militia hold an *asamblea* to discuss collectivisation, the heart of the Spanish Revolution. As Loach himself puts it: "one of the few moments in the history of mankind in which the people are seen taking control of their own lives".

*Tierra y Libertad*, a Spanish-British co-production and one of Spain's entries at Cannes, opened in Madrid on 7th April. It had some unexpected pre-launch publicity from Santiago Carrillo, the erstwhile Communist leader. He gave his opinion of the film in an article entitled '*El fascismo, olvidado*'

(Fascism, Forgotten) published in *El País* on 6th April. He criticised Loach for reducing the heroism of the Republican fight against Franco, in Carrillo's words "one of the greatest epics of the fight for freedom this century", to the differences between the POUM and the Communists. The next day Loach retorted that Carrillo had been one of those who had regarded the POUM as working for Franco.

It should not be forgotten that after Franco's death the Communist Party would again betray the Spanish workers by agreeing to the amnesiac transition that pretended the dictatorship had never existed and which left assassins in peace (notorious police torturers would be promoted under the Socialists). One current Popular Party Euro MP was a minister in the Franco Cabinet that carried out five judicial murders by firing squad in September 1975.

It is no accident, of course, that *Tierra y Libertad* opens and closes in contemporary England. Like *Hidden Agenda*, *Riff Raff* and *Ladybird Ladybird*, it is an attack on the values of Conservative Britain. Elderly David has a heart attack in his council flat in Liverpool and dies in the ambulance. His granddaughter, clearing up, finds his letters from Spain to his girlfriend, later wife. Her reading of these letters ushers in the flashbacks. The film ends with David's burial, at which the granddaughter reads some moving lines by William Morris. They emphasise the point that David was an English worker who never gave up the fight to build what Auden in his poem 'Spain' called "the Just City". As David himself says after the forcible disbandment of his militia, only

weeks before Lister's 11th Division was sent to destroy the collectives in Aragon: "If we had succeeded here, and we could have done, we would have changed the world".

Orwell's account of the POUM militias is a poignant record (chapter 8) of what it was like to be in Aragon, in "the only community of any size in Western Europe where political consciousness and disbelief in capitalism were more normal than their opposites ... Many of the normal motives of civilised life – snobbishness, money-grubbing, fear of the boss, etc. – had simply ceased to exist. The ordinary class-division of society had disappeared ... a community where hope was more normal than apathy or cynicism, where the word 'comrade' stood for comradeship and not, as in most countries, for humbug ... to the vast majority of people Socialism means a classless society, or it means nothing at all ... the Spanish militias, while they lasted, were a sort of microcosm of a classless society."

The greatness of *Tierra y Libertad* is that it articulates this, keeping hope alive. The film echoes the enthusiasm of Orwell, convalescing in Barcelona, in his letter to Cyril Connolly (8th June 1937): "I have seen wonderful things & at last really believe in Socialism, which I never did before".

The day before Orwell enlisted in the POUM militia he met an Italian at the Lenin Barracks. He never saw him again but he became for Orwell a symbol of "the flower of the European working class, harried by the police of all countries, the people who fill the mass graves of the Spanish battlefields" (*Looking Back on the Spanish War*). The poem Orwell wrote about him near the end of the Civil War ends:

"But the thing I saw in your face  
No power can disinherit:  
No bomb that ever burst  
Shatters the crystal spirit."

The "crystal spirit" of Loach's film shines out.  
Roger Mortimore

## Tom Paine

(continued from page 3)

government, but as a pioneering contribution to the theory of democracy, whereas it was also a pioneering contribution to what we call anarchism. He doesn't discuss Paine's equally interesting description of the virtual absence of government in the early period of the American republic, another such contribution.

Keane is weaker on Paine's religion. He covers Paine's relationship with various Christians during his early life, the first part of *The Age of Reason* (his classic defence of deism), and some of his later writings in America; but he misses Paine's pioneering use of 'the religion of humanity' (in the seventh *Crisis* paper in November 1778), and ignores the second part of *The Age of Reason* (his classic demolition of the Bible), and his involvement with the Theophilanthropists in France in 1797.

A final regret comes at the end of the book. After reading so much about Paine's life, it is disappointing to have nothing about his afterlife. The narrative stops with his death. There is no mention of his dismal funeral, and no account of his continuing position as the favourite radical author whose works were reprinted and repressed for decades; who became an object of worship by socialists and secularists, in whose company he would have felt uncomfortable; and who has become a subject of study by academics, in whose company he would have felt even more uncomfortable.

The symbolic fate of Paine's mortal remains is dismissed in a footnote. William Cobbett dug up his bones in 1819 and brought them to England for a memorial, which never materialised; they were kept for a time, and eventually disappeared. But his soul goes marching on. His last home in America was made a shrine and a statue was raised in his birth-place; millions of people over two centuries have read *Common Sense* and the *Crisis* papers, *Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason*; most of his ideas foreshadowed later developments in politics and religion, and are now taken for granted; many of his points are still as sharp as when he made them; several of his phrases have passed into common speech. His firm footsteps echo clearly throughout John Keane's rich and resonant book. Perhaps he will at last get the attention he deserves.

NW

## Feel free to join in the singing ...

**Brian Behan's *Hallelujah, I'm a Bum* at the Pavilion Theatre in Brighton (with Rosie Russell, John Wheeler and Steven Everington, directed by Anne Bernaus of Portfire Performers)**

*Portfire*: (noun) the device used to ignite explosions.

The words of the song, in case you have forgotten:

Oh, why don't you work like other men do?  
How can I work when there's no work to do.

*Chorus*: Hallelujah I'm a Bum,  
Hallelujah bum again,  
Hallelujah give us a hand-out  
To revive us again.

Oh why don't you pray for your daily bread?  
If that's all I did I would damn soon be dead.

(*Chorus*)

I went to a house and I knocked at the door.  
The lady said 'Bum, Bum, you've been here before'.

(*Chorus*)

I went to a house and I asked for some bread.  
The lady said 'Bum, Bum, the baker is dead'.

(*Chorus*)

Why don't you fight like a true patriot?  
If I went to fight I ought damn well get shot.

(*Chorus*)

**From our own correspondent:** I travelled to Brighton especially to see the show. It was a great night, a real first night and it went on despite the censorship attempts by an assortment of trashy busy-bodies including that reprehensible character David Wiltshire, who has a good line in poor-bashing on the radio and television, and Southern Counties Radio which would only use a pre-recorded interview. Stalin and Goebbels should be proud of the attempts by James Walsh, liaison officer at Conservative Party HQ with the job

of undermining or stopping the flowering of left-wing opinion. This last named is the equivalent of a 'D Notice' server (D = Don't print).

So much for the ballyhoo. More important is to congratulate Brian Behan and the rest of the courageous company. Portfire Performers is a cooperative organisation which aims to devise and present high quality productions which inspire, challenge and entertain, thus breaking down the 'elitist' barriers associated with the arts.

For me, the play began well before the curtain went up when a woman in a floral dress, one of the last to arrive, quickly cast her eyes around all the assembled and said in an audible stage whisper: "An excellent house". I looked around myself and could see the house was indeed full, even if it needed a lick of paint.

It was a Brighton family affair as the play bubbled on with good humour.

The play had many targets, if only one central theme: in this capitalist world there are no worthwhile jobs, so we might as well be part of the 'dependency culture' and live off the dole. The anti-hero, the aptly-named Dosser, has successfully opted out, relying on what the state or his wife dole out to him, for she does work and never lets him forget it.

There is then a Strinbergian undertone and sub-plot to this farce. The main enemy is personified in the ever-zealous DSS stooge doctor who gives Dosser a thoroughly bad time and has to be seduced by Dosser and wife before he signs the malingeringer's certificate attesting that Dosser is "too light-headed for heavy work and too heavy-handed for light work".

But then this was surely a play written in Brighton with its advanced sexual outlook; the wife preferring and fondling her full-size androgynous plastic pliable doll to flesh and blood specimens, whilst the doctor's greatest

thrill seemed to have been to strut up and down the stage with a long sausage-shaped balloon tied to his crotch. The audience lapped all this up – it was no more than what they saw at home.

The political sentiments which make up this play of refreshingly witty dialogue and repartee are anti-monarchist, anti-capitalist, anti-parliament. Politicians are walking sperm banks, parliament could easily be replaced by a second-hand computer. There was so much laughter and merriment and continuous buzz in the auditorium that I completely missed the famous lines about some Prime Minister having an affair with a cabinet minister, giving a new meaning to cabinet government.

Brian Behan's play is a worthy successor to his *Boots for the Footless* which had a successful run at the Tricycle Theatre and is interspersed with good old Wobbly songs and is a good evening's entertainment which cannot fail to captivate what remains of working class audiences.

This is the kind of play which will grow and alter in production. Even on the first night there was already a bit of ad-libbing (that very afternoon the pretender to the throne was also visiting Brighton and was seen lurking in Pavilion Gardens).

The acting is very arduous and could do with another character, perhaps a strolling minstrel with a good voice for the songs, a latter-day Long John Baldry. Dosser has relatively the easiest role and John Wheeler was admirably calm and unflappable. For me the high point of the play was his handling of shovel and pickaxe in the slowest of slow motion, unheeding the foreman's shouts in his ears to work faster. This is where our comrade Behan scores, he knows about the building site and no doubt the technical advice came from him.

The production was the best since Joan Littlewood disappeared from Stratford East. There is certainly room, and a crying need, in the theatre for an anarchist ensemble.

John Rety

## Through the Anarchist Press

Land is the big issue. I notice that the excellent and inspiring *Scottish Anarchist* (welcome, welcome, a thousand times welcome) in an article on the uses of the electronic reference library notes that certain anarchist subjects and causes are well represented. Could someone type in the Land Registry? We cannot have an anarchist society until we know how much land is available or, in common parlance, how the land lies.

Anarchists are the only people who have a proper respect for the past. Thomas More was right to say that cursed be who remove a single stone from the edifice of knowledge. I was recently reminded that all that remains of the little town of Lidice is a memorial stone in the London Borough of Hackney. The Nazis come in many guises. The worst tale I've heard recently was of the all-triumphant collective farm where the director pointed proudly around him: "This was once a mere village".

News travels slowly. I read in the June 1995 issue of that lovingly conscientious trade union paper the *Industrial Worker* (now in its 92nd year) that an International Trades Union Congress was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, last December. One of the subjects discussed by the delegates (among them the AIT and the Swedish AC) was the modern slavery of the 'Free Trade Zones' which have been installed all over Asia, where the so-called 'transnationals' enjoy complete control, and where of course unions are not allowed. There was strong interest in syndicalism among the delegates and the wording of the Kathmandu Declaration has strong echoes of old fashioned wobbly language.

George Woodcock, who died recently, received two long pages of obituaries in *Freedom*. I see in the current *Drunken Boat* (a thoroughly good read even if the art, good as it is, needs to be better printed – a smudge is a smudge) lurking on the back pages was a vicious attack on *Freedom*, this very same courageous periodical which has never wavered in either quality or in its advocacy of anarchism. Woodcock wrote this piece, unrelenting in his dying months, and it is incomprehensible to me how he could have taken this stand. Woodcock thought that *Freedom* had declined in the '60s when, in my biased opinion, it was as good as could be with limited resources. Woodcock was not the only intellectual who queried this trend but, as I now see from *Drunken Boat*, he was the most precise. Good of *Drunken Boat* to print it for now we know the exact cause of his indignation: "*Freedom* declined in quality over the years", he says, and adds "and nowadays seem to condescend to the workers who are supposed to be the majority of their readers". I wish they still did, but many of them through reading *Freedom* have become university professors.

Untiring in my efforts to educate myself, I have also had the pleasure to look at another anarchist paper, *Anarchy – A Journal of Desire Armed*, which convinces me that our comrades over there have either a larger movement or more spondulicks at their disposal. I still prefer the poverty-stricken style of the old (Colin Ward's) *Anarchy* with its real art covers by Rufus Segar which contained few articles, none of them souped up yet each of them memorable. Perhaps I'm infected by the local reserve, but I can't see why conciseness is not admired.

Abolish water charges! *Workers Solidarity*, the Irish anarchist paper, is big and bright and campaigns in direct language. The Federation of Dublin Anti-Water Charge Campaign has a very great following and its

Reproduced with acknowledgements from the June 1995 issue of *Housing* (journal of the Chartered Institute of Housing)

## How the right stole anarchist ideas

There are people around in the housing world who look back on the 1960s as the golden age of public housing, (the adjective 'social' was not yet invented). In those days government and opposition rivalled each other at election time simply in terms of the number of homes they promised to provide each year.

I was a dissenting voice, believing that we had reached a crisis in housing reflected in the insufferable paternalism and condescension of housing authorities, the neglect of maintenance and the gulf between the assumptions of housing design and the preferences of residents.

All through that decade I edited the month *Anarchy* from our kitchen table, so in the absence of a better-informed contributor, I wrote a 19-page polemic *Tenants Take Over: a new strategy for council tenants*.

This argued that a creative solution to the malaise of local authority housing was a transfer of control to tenant co-operatives.

At that time there were only two or three housing co-ops in the whole of Britain, but unlike most things I wrote, that article was read outside *Anarchy's* small readership, and I was asked by the architectural press to expand it as a book, and was also invited to address endless meetings of tenants' associations, housing managers, councillors and academics.

Since practical examples are worth a ton of theory, I had to search Britain for a single transfer of control. But although (contrary to current belief) there were examples of individual discounted sales to sitting tenants, there was nothing I could point to.

Happily Andrew Gilmour and Steve Musgrave had made a very careful study of the organisa-

strategy includes that not just every court case will be contested but hear the voice of the true anarchist: "Where water is disconnected, reconnection will be arranged!"

Great is my relief to read in the current *Ethical Record* a note by Erskine Childers on the cost of the United Nations system worldwide, excluding the World Bank and IMF staff and peace-keeping troops, with a mere 51,500 personnel, they only receive eight billion dollars a year – which in this writer's opinion is what the great British public spends on alcohol in six months. To turn the argument on its head, should the UN staff be paid in alcohol instead?

Every job has its compensations, but when you are working you cannot also be on every action. My comrades are well on their way to Stonehenge now, some by boat, some on foot, towards an exclusion zone. What efforts this so-called government exerts to stop people contemplating their ancient heritage. Keep cool and watch your tongue – it could be you.

John Rety

*Giving tenants ownership and control of estates was once a far-fetched idea, dreamed up in anarchists' kitchens. Then the right made it happen. Colin Ward believes that it's time for the political opposition to grab back the idea of dweller control*

tional, financial and sociological results of precisely such a transfer in the Norwegian capital, Oslo, which I made use of, gratefully.

I thought that in *Tenants Take Over* in 1974, I had set out a reasonable and thoroughly practical

For example, in the late 1970s, Peter Walker was saying that we should forget the economics, and give local authority housing to tenants' associations, and by the time of the Thatcher government, Michael Heseltine introduced a tenants' charter –

**Both co-ops and self-build groups suffer from the fact that the system was never geared to poor people housing themselves**

case for the transfer, with the prospect of much more job satisfaction for the employees of the housing industry, working for co-ops rather than for municipal bureaucracies. But that year, when I was given opportunity of addressing the Peterborough conference of the Housing Centre Trust, I was, according to a full and fair report in the *Municipal Journal*, greeted with astonishment and disbelief in most quarters.

But the climate was changing. Fortified by tenants' support I produced three more books arguing that dweller control is the first principle of successful housing.

I then had the chagrin of seeing ministers from the political right exploiting arguments promoted from the left.

the aim of a handful of Labour MPs for decades, always obstructed by those who believed that tenants should simply be grateful recipients of council paternalism.

And of course, we had the right to buy legislation, prompted more by a determination to get local authorities out of landlordism, than by solicitude for tenants, and the distorting of the role of housing associations, seen as the 'private sector' into providers with the same diseconomies of scale that brought disaster to local authority provision.

Today, the wrong people tell me that my arguments of 20 years ago were prophetic. My only defence is that I did have a chapter called 'One by one or all together?'

We had a chance to change the climate of housing, and we missed it. On the other hand, in the interstices of our housing duopoly we now have about a thousand housing co-ops and a self-build sector aiming specifically at the people left out through poverty and disadvantage.

These numerically insignificant sectors of the housing industry have important lessons for people who think that a change of government will bring a change of heart.

Both co-ops and self-build groups suffer from the fact that the system, whether of loans through the Housing Corporation or building societies, and the system of approvals through the planning and building regulations, was never geared to poor people housing themselves.

They would all rather deal with other large-scale bureaucracies or with commercial developers. Both these alternatives need a budget for education and training in the techniques of working together.

Neither are cheap in the short term but both offer huge long-term economies in giving members a new start in life as well as a vested interest in the success of their own housing.

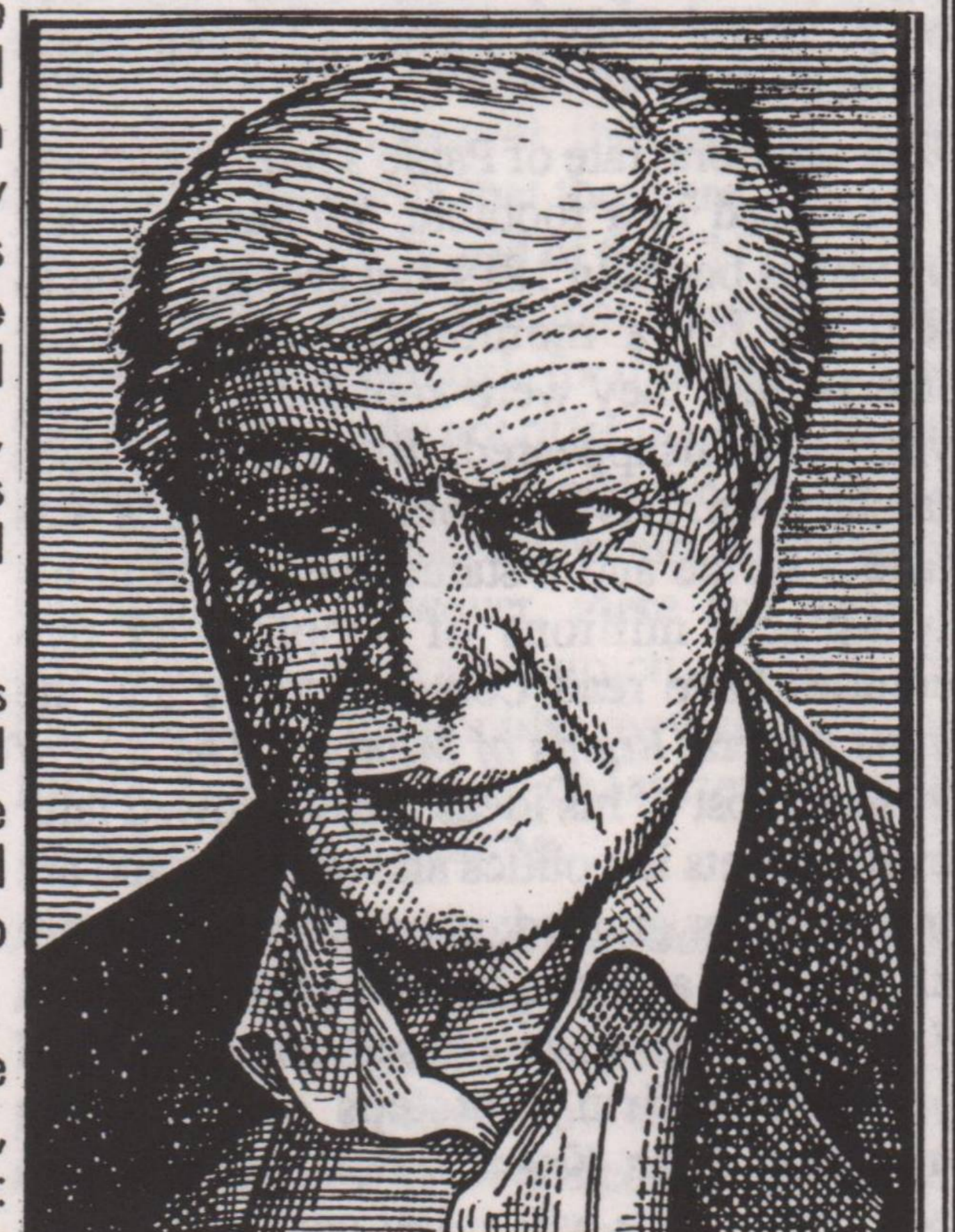
Since every TV watcher has seen heartening examples of disadvantaged people being enabled to house themselves, I'm astonished that the political opposition has unfortunately failed to take on board the increasingly popular concept of dweller control, whatever the mode of tenure.

Colin Ward is a veteran advocate of alternatives in housing. His book of ten lectures, *Talking Houses* is still available at £5 from *Freedom Press*. Tel: 0171 247 9249

**COLIN WARD** Born 14th August 1924 in Wanstead, England. Since he became an anarchist whilst serving in the army during World War Two, Colin Ward has been one of the most productive and inspiring anarchist writers and propagandists. A contributor to *Freedom* since 1947, he started and edited for ten years the legendary *Anarchy* (1961-70). Of his many books, *Anarchy in Action* is perhaps the most important one and necessary reading for everybody interested in the subject. "An anarchist society, a society which organises itself without authority, is always in existence, like a seed beneath the snow, buried under the weight of the state and its bureaucracy, capitalism and its waste, privilege and its injustices, nationalism and its suicidal loyalties, religious differences and their superstitious separatism."

The portrait, right, is a black and white copy of one of 36 portraits of anarchists drawn in three-colour line by Clifford Harper, included in a set of picture cards each with a potted biography on the reverse and published by *Freedom Press*. Other portraits include such varied anarchist figures as Errico Malatesta, Marie Louise Berneri, Emiliano Zapata, Noam Chomsky, Michael Bakunin, and many more.

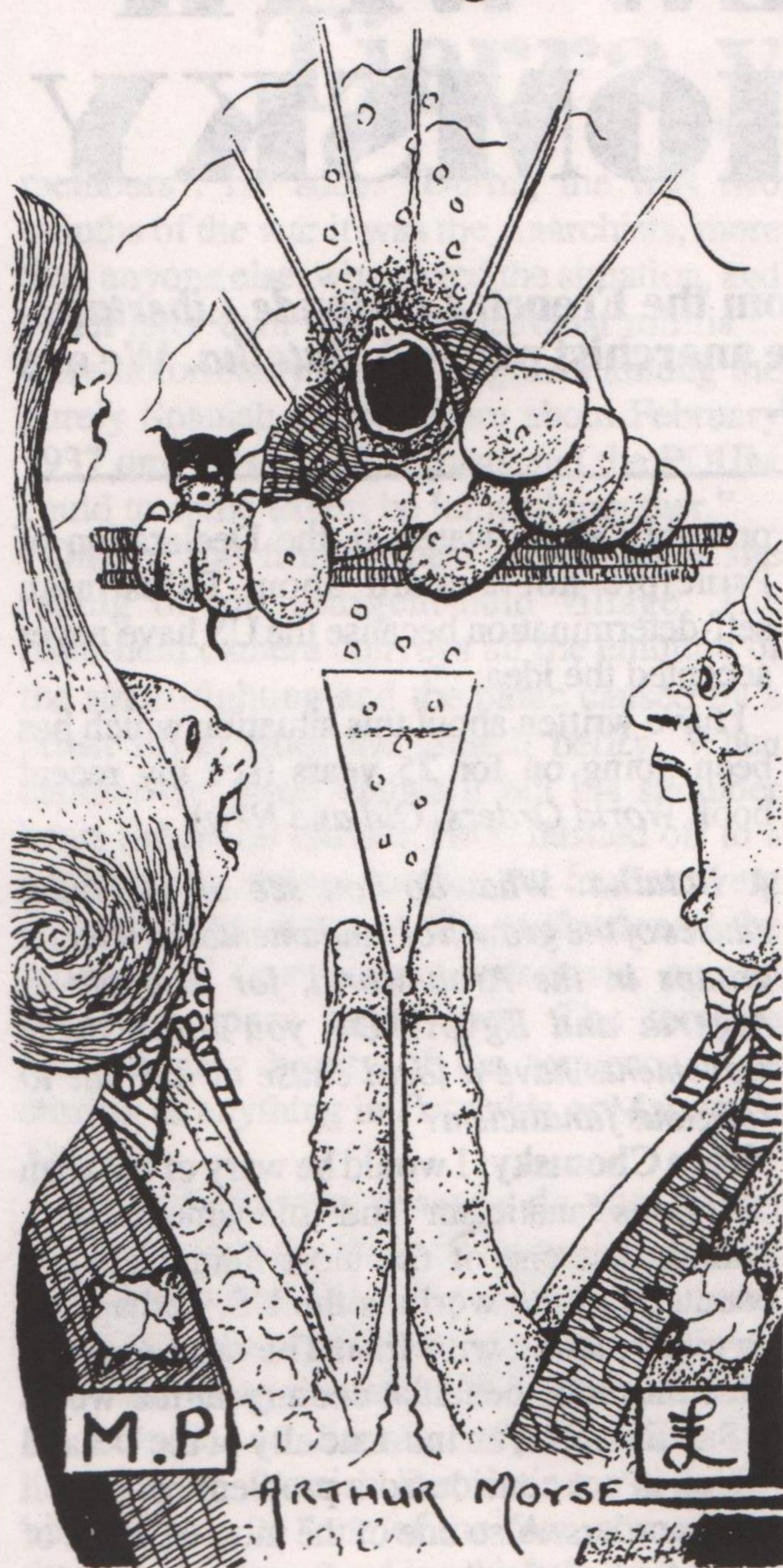
The 36 picture cards (known to collectors as trading cards) come in a neat box and are available in our bookshop or by mail order, price £5.00 (post free in UK, £5.45 including p&p abroad) from: **Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX**



COLIN WARD

# Pinky versus Perky

I am of the old faith who in the days of my innocence believed in Good and Evil. I knew that in that great Satanic political power struggle the final clean revolution, with all us good people on one side and the evil people armed by the Bank of England on the other, would be fought to a final bloodless death for good would triumph and we would create a just and humane society. Failing that, then a mass vote vote for the old red flag, the man on the platform and the speakers punching the air in their rage at the evils of capitalism would lead the street demonstrations down Whitehall and into Parliament, there to legalise the promise from a thousand platforms of our pie-in-the-sky. Condemn me not my weekend vocal, anarchists, for I was fifteen coming on sixteen and I have come to accept that fear, greed, envy, neurotic hatreds, the acceptance of one's inferiority and the poisonous obsession for authority over others corrupt and corrode every association of humans. Yet I am a socialist of the old 'from each according to their ability and to each according to their needs' as practised by the early religious men and women (with the crap filleted out) and as we drift into the plastic moneyless society within a multinational framework our needs, as Lenin learned with NEP, demand a surplus of basic foods and universal material goods, which means, comrades, a paternalist/maternalist society if it lacks the driving idealistic force of an anarchist demand for one's individual liberty as the price one pays for one's acceptance/cooperation. But I am lectured by the revisionists that politics is the art of compromise and if I never absorbed it then Tony the salesman for New Labour learned it and practises it. I doubt if we will see that just and humane socialist society within your lifetime, comrade, but to achieve it is a battle that must always be fought for to surrender is to eat one's fill of shit, sugar-coated gourmet style. The major battle has been brushed aside with all the old idealism of the street politics and the west now fights guerrilla punch-ups for noble small causes on the betting shop principle that one wins a few and loses a few, but there is always another Saturday afternoon to bring out the banner and the article so



PC-style it is the women's turn to carry the banner.

But with the leakings of the Nolan Report and small-time back bench Tory MPs charging £1,000 to ask The House the way to the loo, the matter of directors perks as related to Tory cabinet ex-ministers as they do their soft-shoe shuffle into the sweet brandy-smelling air of the major boardrooms has raised many an eyebrow among Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition who demand an answer.

But are perks really important, for whatever it is it is and must always be no more than part

of one's wages, like the canteen girl's 'right' to a 'free' meal once a day. Let us take the matter of Eugene Patrick Connell, president and chief executive officer of Nynex Cable Communications. Eugene, of the good ol' US of A, who struggles along on \$255,000 (a year) with an annual bonus of \$384,000 and will be given \$330,000 worth of shares when Nynex shares hit the London market this week, but Eugene's Christmas gift-wrapped perks are senior management non-qualified pension plan, elder care consultation and referral, educational leave, senior management non-qualified supplemental savings plan, senior management estate planning legal service program, executive severance pay plan, senior management long-term disability and survivor protection plan, long-term care plan, tuition reimbursement program, health care, disability plans, employee/children scholarship program, accident insurance, anticipated disability, medical ... dental ... vision ... chemical dependency treatment ... VDT eyecare and mental health care, adoption ... care of newborn ... family care ... personal leave ... flexible work, excess liability, financial counselling, life insurance, 1987 restricted stock award, corporation saving plan, management pension plan, group life insurance, supplementary and dependent life insurance, on a bended knee I sincerely hope and pray that includes the Gold Key to the executive loo for the straining of one's executive superior Holy Water. One reads this great list of freeloading hand-outs and reflects that in those ghastly days between the wars part of the PC street furniture was the rag-and-bone man with his sad horse and cart, and I would maintain that everything that Eugene is being given is no more than the rag-and-bone man gave to his horse.

There is one sacred principle that Moses forgot to bring down from the mountains but is carved in stone: 'fuck perks and everything on the hourly rate' for most of Eugene's junkyard perks he will never claim or live to claim. Give me the cost of the Gold Key to the loo and put it on my hourly rate and I'll use the public lavatory. The chauffeur-driven

limousine for the director and the clerk's block-booking BUPA hand-out are no more than part of the wage of the young healthy clerk who might wait twenty years before he has the good fortune to break a leg, but the clerk's free BUPA, the bus workers 'free' bus pass and the canteen girl's 'free' meal are all included in every wage negotiation and are tax included. The social dishonesty, for me, is when ex-cabinet ministers walk from Number Ten to Threadneedle Street with the secretly negotiated soft handshake in their hot sweaty little paws and the knowledge of all the worthwhile political contacts to pay for loot and perks. There is a grim inevitability in this sickness for the big money wheeler-dealers in the City of London and the politicians are to each other what the love of drunks are to each other, remove one and the other will topple over. But there is lightness in the world of law and free-flowing money in that Dow Corning of the good ol' US of A are in the same mess as Lloyds of London - saw the film Lloyds of London in 1936 but could not stand Tyrone Power and Freddie Bartholomew - in that they owe billions, but literally billions, dear, in that having become the leading makers of silicone breast implants for American women they have now sought shelter under USA Chapter 11 for voluntary bankruptcy as nearly half a million women are taking ol' Dow Corning to court with American whiplash Willies crawling out of every tiny law office desperate to get a piece of the action, for the unfortunate half million American women seeking the bloom of youth breastwise claim that they now suffer from severe health problems after the breast implants. There must be a moral in this somewhere for ignoring the \$4.25 billion that Dow Corning has tossed into the legal pot and that Dow Chemical shares jumped three-quarters of a dollar to \$74 or more by writing off its entire investment in Dow Corning it means that only the half million unfortunate American women seeking perpetual youth breastwise are the losers, and surely this must be a matter for PC in that these unfortunate women have long been conditioned to accept the male conception of the female ideal: big knockers in spite of the physical agony.

Arthur Moyses

## Governments create the social evils, not us

According to governments, the people themselves are responsible for all the social evils. Governments design their propaganda to give the impression that they are standing apart from society, like a benevolent father, always ready to give help when we get ourselves into trouble.

That is why we hear that children are not being educated properly because the teachers do not know their job and because they waste their time spreading liberal ideas. We hear that when people are poor and unemployed it is because they are lazy and do not look for work. And we are given to understand that there are crime and violence because some people are wicked and because parents spoil their children by not giving them enough discipline. Governments then appear to be dealing with these evils by changing the national curriculum, by giving us social security money and by putting criminals in prison. They perform this massive con trick, safe in the knowledge that most people will not realise that children are not educated properly because the school funding is too low and the national curriculum badly designed. People will not see that they are poor because the economy of the state and capitalism are inefficient and money is wasted on the state and on giving the privileged riches they do not deserve. Everyone will accept that there is crime because people are wicked and not because the state gives us no real purpose in life and no fair distribution of wealth.

Governments blame the people for the

starvation and poverty that exists in the third world. According to them, people starve because they breed too quickly. There are too many people to feed on the world's limited resources. They say that unless they enforce birth control, people would suffer more than ever. This is a lie. People starve because they are forced to make war and because they are exploited by the capitalists and the World Bank. They starve because governments cannot organise any venture that serves the people. They cannot ignore the fair production and distribution of food.

The idea of their remoteness is never more firmly instilled by governments than in time of war. How often are we told that Churchill saved us and lead us to victory in World War Two? Saved us indeed! We would never have been in trouble were it not for Churchill and his ilk.

We will never rid ourselves of poverty and war unless we realise that we have these social conditions because we have governments. Governments are in charge. They make the laws and they enforce them with the violence of their police, so the society we have is the result of their rule. Governments cannot evade responsibility by saying the social evils are our own fault, although they will do so as long as we allow them to exist and be in control. Left alone we shall not produce the social evils and so we must see to it that there are no governments to interfere with us. We must see to it that we rule ourselves.

Derrick A. Pike

In anticipation of VJ 50th anniversary celebrations, we reprint an editorial from FREEDOM just fifty years ago, 30th June 1945.

## 'KILL THEM LIKE FLIES'

Kill them like flies - treat them like insects - kill - kill - kill them. 'Them' are the Japanese, the Japs, the last enemies of civilisation. And they are just flies: General Slim himself, commander of the British troops in Burma, said so.

The allies bombed Germany into dust, they surrounded armies, killed men and took prisoners. But they are forced to learn how to fight the Japanese - with flame-throwers and incendiaries, hand grenades and daggers. In the Marshalls, in the mid-Pacific, tens of thousands of Japanese soldiers have been isolated for almost two years on small atolls just above the level of the ocean. They die from starvation and epidemics like flies. Meanwhile Super-Fortresses bomb Japan, burning down whole cities. The RAF dropped on Berlin 1,500 tons of explosives at a time: the US bombers hurl 4,500 tons of incendiaries on Tokyo at each visit ... civilisation is on the march.\*

The Japanese warlords are no angels, of course. They are cruel and bestial, and there may be some truth in the accounts of atrocities committed against allied soldiers and of the killing of prisoners. For many years the Japanese have raped, sacked, burned China; they have tortured in Burma and the Philippines; they will continue to do so. It is true that they have no respect for their own lives, nor for the lives of their enemies, but then they do not say: 'We fight for

civilisation'. The Japanese never signed the Geneva Convention, they do not want to be prisoners of war. In Japan a prisoner is a dead man - his family mourns him, he is dishonoured. So it is logical that in New Guinea Japanese soldiers should be hiding out, whilst in Burma they retreat dying.

Death is everywhere in Asia. The war there has no other meaning than extermination - extermination in the most cruel, inhuman way possible. We make no choice: twenty years ago Chiang Kai Shek burned his political opponents in railway engines, today his is the stronghold of culture and humanity. The Japanese will continue to kill and to die, for no one can exterminate a people of one hundred millions, no one can kill a hundred million flies.

Yes, civilisation is on the march. They will send thousands of Super-Fortresses to level the cities of Japan. Hundreds of thousands, millions of soldiers and civilians will die. The horrors of the war in Europe will appear as a pretty fairytale if the real show is put on in the Pacific. Here is a good slogan for the manufacturers of insecticides: 'Kill Japs and die for it'. After all, it is all in the name of civilisation.

\* See also *The Raven* No. 29 (Spring 1995, £3 post free) for a detailed account of the fire-bombing of Tokyo, including a photograph of central Tokyo after the American napalm raid.

**A Batalha:** You are very critical of the American media and you consider her European counterpart more democratic. What are the essential differences – in democratic terms – between the American and the European media?

**Noam Chomsky:** I don't think the European media are any more democratic than the American, neither are they any more serious. There's a greater variety, but in any case it is impossible to make generalisations.

**A Batalha:** The Middle East is one of your main concerns. The US and Israel have always opposed a diplomatic solution to the problem. Why the recent change in attitude? Do you think they are going to substitute military and political control of the occupied lands with economic control?

**Noam Chomsky:** The US and Israel have always wanted a diplomatic solution in the Middle East but under their terms. These weren't accepted by the rest of the world. For nearly twenty years the US has simply rejected any Palestinian right to self-determination. They refused to accept UN resolution 242 in the terms chosen by International opinion and – incidentally – the US between 1957 and 1971. The resolution called for peace in response to a total evacuation with minimal mutual adjustments. In order to achieve this the US had to oppose Security Council decisions; vote, along with Israel, against the resolutions of the General Assembly; block all diplomatic moves after the Sadat initiative of February 1971 to reach an agreement based on 242. Because of the power of US propaganda, the main import of these facts were suppressed and the Europeans, so under US dominance at the

## INTERVIEW WITH NOAM CHOMSKY

This interview has been translated from the French *Le Monde Libertaire*. In turn it is taken from the Portuguese anarchist paper *A Batalha*. We are unaware of any other English version.

time, forgot to defend what they had defended in the past.

That situation continued until 1990. The last UN resolution (144-2) which calls once again for a diplomatic solution was blocked by the US in December 1990. After the war with Iraq, Europe handed the region over to the US and took no independent position. The non-aligned nations found themselves in a state of total confusion and Russia found itself more or less in the US camp along with Great Britain. The US went into action in the autumn of 1991, in Madrid, unilaterally imposing their plan for the region. This was accepted in 1993-94, this time with Norway's support.

The current agreement is based on the explicit presupposition that Israel will not withdraw from the occupied territories until she wishes to do so and under her own conditions. Thus from the moment when the Declaration of Principles was signed in September 1993, the colonisation and confiscation of land in the occupied area has increased with financial support from the US. At the moment Israel controls nearly 75% of the Gaza strip, nearly 35% of the territory and

probably all its water. In the Declaration of Principle not a word about Palestinian self-determination because the US have never accepted the idea.

I have written about this situation which has been going on for 25 years (see my recent book *World Orders, Old and New*)

**A Batalha:** What do you see as the main causes of the growth of fundamentalist Islamic groups in the Arab world, for example in Algeria and Egypt? Do you think these movements have a local cause or are due to religious fanaticism?

**Noam Chomsky:** I would be wary of the term 'religious fanaticism' and 'fundamentalism'. I think that one of the most fundamentalist countries in the world is the US, perhaps on an even footing with Iran. The most extreme Muslim fundamentalist country in the world is Saudi Arabia, an intimate ally of the US and which is not considered a problem because it obeys orders. Also one of the most extreme of the Muslim fundamentalists is Gulbiddin Hekmatyar, who received, in the 1980s, from the US and Saudi Arabia, nearly \$6 million and large quantities of arms whilst he was in the process of transforming Afghanistan into a huge drug producing centre, and who today is blowing up what is left of that devastated country. In general terms the US and its satellites have nothing against fundamentalism Islamic or other. What they fear is the possibility of people acting independently. This rule applies to the Roman Catholic Church. The US are neither for or against here. Those elements of the church who 'side with the poor' must be objectively eliminated, if necessary by means of terror and violence. Those who 'side with the rich' are fine. The reason for the development of fundamentalist movements in the Arab world is simple. The secular movements were either destroyed or self-destructed. Only the Islamic fundamentalists have anything to offer the population. When you live in the slums of Cairo and your child is dying you can take it to a clinic run by Islamic fundamentalists. The governments are too corrupt to offer anything. These people offer a certain vision which takes into account the needs of the people.

That is a rather simplistic analysis given limitations of space but I think it covers the essentials.

**A Batalha:** What do you see as the main causes of the war in the former Yugoslavia and what are the possible solutions?

**Noam Chomsky:** The Balkan wars have many causes. The main ones are of an internal nature, but the actions of the outside powers have done little to help the situation, to put matters mildly. The international recognition of Croatia failed to take into account the fact that there was a lot of opposition to the move coming from an important Serb minority. Bosnia was recognised despite the fact that it was made up of three distinct parts and that even if it had had strong multi-ethnic aspects this had little impact on the Serb mountain community who were fearful of Muslim domination. It is probable that all these factors added to the behaviour of the Serb government led to war. Before it would perhaps have been possible to ameliorate the problem. But it is hard now to conceive of a solution which is not unthinkable. I haven't seen any sensible solutions to the problem.

**A Batalha:** Over the last few years we have seen the rise of fascist, nationalist and racist ideologies. Today this is not limited to the

activities of small isolated groups and with the popular support of Zhirinovski and Berlusconi perhaps we are seeing signs that we are faced with a problem of a large dimension. Do you think that the economic and social crisis is conducive to the development of anti-democratic movements as happened in Germany after World War One?

**Noam Chomsky:** For the last 20 years the world has seen society dividing itself into two camps along the lines of the Third World model with islands of great richness and privilege in a sea of misery, with a growing superfluous population which has no rights and doesn't contribute to profit creation. The proportions in a rich country like the US or a poor country like Mexico are different but the structures are very similar. The reasons are quite clear: since the '70s there has been a growing move towards globalisation with the enormous accumulation of power in the hands of transnational corporations, which are incredibly totalitarian institutions. There has also been an explosion of capital and a change in its composition. In 1970, 90% of the capital on the international exchanges came from trade and investment, from the real economy, and 10% from speculation. In 1990 these figures have to be turned upside down. By 1994 speculative capital is estimated to stand at 95% and its growth rate is the highest ever recorded. Such an evolution was already apparent in the 1970s. In 1978, James Tobin, Nobel Prize for Economics Laureate, suggested a tax aimed at reducing capital speculation which would lead to a world based on low growth, low salaries and high profits. This is what has happened, with the possibility of transferring production abroad, a powerful weapon to be used against workers. The end of the Cold War, which means that the Eastern countries have returned to their traditional third world status, offers the Western bosses' class new arms to use against the national population. In such a situation it is natural that power should wish to eliminate that which threatens it: human rights, liberty and democracy which had been gained by popular struggles over the last century. This is what is happening in a sharpened fashion in the US and Great Britain. For the vast majority it is a disaster. For example in the US salaries have gone down since the Reagan era. At the same time the review *Fortune* speaks of spectacular profit making. All of this has been organised by propaganda barrages which are quite impressive and which have left people extremely confused, hopeless, frustrated and rebellious. The liberal intellectuals and the press and also the 'left' have contributed to all of this. It is a very dangerous situation which could explode and bring about various horrors unless we see the creation of alternatives which answer to the needs and preoccupations of the people.

**A Batalha:** Many people used to think that with the collapse of the USSR and socialist regimes that there would be a fresh interest in anarchism. This hasn't happened. Do you think it is the anarchists' fault for having failed to present themselves in a good light?

**Noam Chomsky:** Who are the anarchists who have failed to present themselves as an alternative? It's true that there are a few. For example a lot was hoped of the CNT in Spain. But one must remember that there are nearly no anarchist intellectuals for the simple reason that anarchism does not offer intellectuals any position of power or privilege. Anarchists also are responsible, since anarchist feelings are too scattered. However, there are ways of articulating them in a constructive way, and in the tradition of the popular movements to put forward a libertarian character to make anarchists look appealing.

**A Batalha:** What should anarchists and the anarchist press be doing right now?

**Noam Chomsky:** Same as always: help people gain control of their lives, to understand the world in which they live and to organise themselves in order to destroy illegitimate authority – as has always been the case.

## Indon rally: \$600 fine for roof man



**Political point ... Stuart Highway (alias Shell 63) was removed by police from the roof of the Indonesian Consul's house.**

A protester who refused to come down from his perch on the roof of the Indonesian Consul's house last December was fined \$600 yesterday in Darwin Magistrates Court.

Stuart Highway, 31, who described himself as a human rights activist, pleaded not guilty to three charges, saying he had a right to be there.

But magistrate Bruce McCormack said people making a political point must do so within the laws of Australia and the Northern Territory.

The magistrate said the house was occupied at the time. Having it surrounded by a crowd of protesters must have been "disturbing if not frightening" to those inside.

Highway, of Darwin, was fined \$380 plus a \$20 victim levy on the Northern Territory charge of resisting police.

He was fined \$50 for trespassing on protected premises and \$150 for failing to leave those premises when asked, both federal charges.

Five other people also involved in the East Timor protest pleaded guilty to trespass and were each fined \$50.

One of the five, Rob Wesley-Smith, 52, of

Howard Springs, was also fined \$150 for failing to leave the premises.

Officer-in-charge of Darwin Police Station, Senior Sergeant Mick Boldiston, said he received a call about 9.45pm on 7th December. He went to the house in Gardens Hill where a number of people were in the front yard with banners, flags and crosses. Highway was sitting on top of a pinnacle on the roof.

First Constable Ian Campbell said he spoke to Highway, but he refused to come down. He and two other police officers took hold of Highway, who struggled vigorously. Constable Campbell said Highway was put face down on the roof and he handcuffed him. After he was subdued he noticed Highway had a cut on his chin.

Highway told the court he was protesting about the loss of life in East Timor and had a reasonable excuse to be there. He said: "I think police used a little more force than was necessary".

Mr McCormack said he believed the force used by the police was reasonable considering the danger on the roof.

from *Northern Territory News*, 27th April 1995

## More on Debord

Dear Freedom,  
Michel Prigent's curious letter (*Freedom*, 27th May 1995) referred to our publication of Jean Barrot's 'Critique of the Situationist International' in the pamphlet *What is Situationism?* When back in 1987 Prigent first raised his criticism that Barrot was scared of critical flak if he published it in French, I must admit that I didn't understand the significance of this. However since Debord's publication of *Cette mauvais réputation* in 1993 things have become a little clearer. In this book he limits himself to responding to "media gossip" appearing in France. Under this phrase he makes no differentiation between mainstream newspaper articles and critiques from the radical milieu. Far from any serious attempt to deal with criticism, Debord was more concerned with defending his reputation within the context of French national culture. In such circumstances, it is hard to guess why Barrot would be scared of being dismissed as "media gossip".

We have not concerned ourselves with why this text was not published in France, but would like to comment that this has been the only criticism that Prigent has made of the text in the eight years since we published it. Our aim was not to worry about whether we could worm our way into a footnote of some *History of the Situationist International*, but "that situationism be recognised as a product of the material conditions of its time rather than some transcendental doctrine that emanated from the heads of privileged geniuses". And while we agree that Debord's book *Society of the*

*Spectacle* still has its uses, we are disappointed that Prigent doesn't know how to use it.

As for the letter signed 'K. Eliot' (*Freedom*, 13th May 1995), we know nothing of it. Karen Eliot has been developed as a multiple name open to use by anyone. While we might agree that Debord could often be pompous, he was by no means an imbecile. We see his concern to shift the publishing of his *oeuvre* to mainstream publishers (Gallimard, MIT) as a personal vanity. This does little to detract from his contribution to the revolutionary movement. Situationist theory can still be used in developing the revolutionary movement, a process which requires its *criticism and supersession*. However Prigent wants to protect situationism in the spirit of nostalgia and moralism. Hence his desire to attack the use of satire in the *Green and Brown Anarchist* leaflet to which he refers. He had a similar problem a few years ago with an article in *Authority* #2. Here he made a fool of himself getting hot under the collar about a satirical article on the police in post-revolutionary society which ended up suggesting "police cars will become 'chi-chi's' ..." It is perhaps a sad irony that someone who has dedicated much of their life to preserving the mythology of a movement which placed itself on the terrain of the game and the combination of humour with the serious business of overthrowing the state, should react in such a way.

Richard Essex  
Unpopular Books

of the supersession of art is also filtered through the ideas of August von Cieszkowski, whose 1838 tome *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie* was dedicated to the notion that "the deed and social activity will now overcome (supersede) philosophy". It was this source that provided the Situationists with the material to complete their false 'sublation', allowing them to arrive back at the final category of romantic art within the Hegelian system, that is to say poetry. It should go without saying that the Neoist Alliance has advanced way beyond banalities such as these.

In a series of idiotic moves similar to Prigent's, various members of *Green Anarchist* decided that they wished to engage the Neoist Alliance in 'debate'. Since it is clear from what *Green Anarchist* have to say that they do not understand our position, it is hardly surprising that their 'arguments' quickly degenerated into a series of lies about us and our activists. In *Green Anarchist* #37 it was suggested that a member of the Neoist Alliance claimed in *The Independent* that *Green Anarchist* was still associated with Richard Hunt. It goes without saying that this was a complete fabrication, as was everything that followed in the same editorial. Neither the Neoist Alliance, nor any of its activists working in either an individual capacity or under the banner of the Neoist Alliance, have ever disputed that *Green Anarchist* has broken with Richard Hunt as an individual. Our problem with *Green Anarchist* is that they are still committed to Hunt's ideas about the creation of small communities, ideas which necessarily entail a massive decrease in the size of the population. *Green Anarchist* do not explain how this reduction in the size of the population is to be brought about but we can be fairly certain that the process will not be pleasant for those who would die if *Green Anarchist* made a serious attempt to realise this 'dream'.

The lies being spread about the Neoist Alliance and its activists by the likes of Prigent and *Green Anarchist* are a clear case of scapegoating. Prigent asserts that we are "inhuman", members of *Green Anarchist* claim the cities "are seized with a kind of madness". In the eyes of Prigent and *Green Anarchist* our activists are 'aliens' and history teaches us that this type of name-calling always precedes attempts at genocide. Fortunately, it is highly unlikely that either Prigent or *Green Anarchist* will ever be in a position to set up death camps where they could rubber-stamp death warrants.

Luther Blissett  
Neoist Alliance

Dear Freedom,  
Your reporting of the life and death of the situationist Guy Debord, and the subsequent letter of my friend Michel Prigent explaining that Debord committed suicide because he was suffering from alcoholic polyneuritis, has provoked what I feel is a tasteless and ill-judged letter from 'K. Eliot', apparently the pseudonym for the poseur Stewart Home.

The eminent social psychologists Serge Moscovici and William Doise argue that "scorn of the masses is very widespread, whether it is expressed outright or mediated through the human sciences", even though this traditional view is very one-sided because there is, they find, "in the association together of individuals a unique network having the power to stimulate and to overcome the inhibitions in their affective and intellectual qualities" (*Consensus and Conflict*, 1992). Debord's book *The Society of the Spectacle* certainly echoed this "scorn of the masses" but, like Moscovici and Doise, concluded that the apathy of mass society could be overcome by "the de-alienating form of realised democracy, the Council".

It is perhaps briefly amusing to speculate as to whether any of Home's thought will be similarly reaffirmed 25 years on.

Peter Wilkinson

## Chomsky and Third Worldism

Dear Freedom,

If I might be permitted a somewhat shorter reply to Pat Murtagh's lengthy (and rather intemperate) letter in the last issue, there are a few points I would like to make. Firstly, I suspect that this debate is going on over the heads of a lot of *Freedom* readers. What is it all about? During the Pol Pot era, Noam Chomsky (together with his co-author Edward Herman) contrasted the massive media coverage of the Cambodian massacres with the silence over the killings in East Timor, which they suggested were comparable in scale (an important point in terms of the debate that has been conducted in these pages).

Chomsky and Herman pointed out that not only was there much greater coverage of the Cambodian atrocities, there was even fabrication and lying to exaggerate their scale. For example, Jean Lacouture wrote in the *New York Review of Books* that the Khmer Rouge had killed two million people. He subsequently withdrew this claim, yet it continues to circulate. For exposing this and other lies, Chomsky (but not Herman for some reason) was vilified (and continues to be vilified) by mainstream intellectuals. It was these criticisms which I saw being repeated in Murtagh's remarks and which I attempted to answer.

Murtagh is of course correct in pointing out that Chomsky has written about Cambodia since 1979. My statement that Chomsky had written only two pieces on the subject should have been qualified with the words 'during the Pol Pot era' (not counting letters to the editor, of course). As my analogy with the Holocaust (8th April) made clear, I was referring to what Chomsky wrote at the time, not what he wrote in hindsight.

I hope that a point-by-point rebuttal of

Murtagh's letter will not be necessary. Murtagh now concedes that "Chomsky has not denied that Khmer Rouge atrocities happened". The charge is now that Chomsky "denied their magnitude". This charge too is false, as it happens, and perhaps we can debate the matter, but the central point is surely this: denying the magnitude of atrocities is not the same as denying that they occurred at all. Murtagh has in effect withdrawn the accusation that Chomsky made "elaborate attempt[s] to deny Khmer Rouge atrocities" (25th March).

My last point is the simple one that 'disproving lies about Khmer Rouge atrocities' (which is what Chomsky was actually doing for 158 pages in *After the Cataclysm*) is not the same as 'denying Khmer Rouge atrocities'. In my view, these two things should not be confused and I regret the fact that Pat Murtagh continues to confuse them.

Milan Rai

Dear Freedom,

Pat Murtagh continues to deny and disregard what Noam Chomsky has clearly stated. In the film *Manufacturing Consent* (which by the way has been shown on Canadian television so Murtagh has had a chance to tape it) Noam Chomsky clearly states that the Khmer Rouge killed at least 750,000 people. Chomsky's criticism is of the Western media that claimed up to two million killed, the same Western media that had chosen to ignore the 600,000 Cambodians previously slaughtered by the United States. Why does Pat Murtagh disregard the interview in the film in which Chomsky clearly gives the figure of 750,000 people killed by the Khmer Rouge?

Howard Marks

## Power and the People

Dear Comrades,

Thank you for sending me the edition of *Freedom* (29th April 1995) with my article in it. I confess to being pleasantly surprised as I was presented with a copy by another comrade just after our 'meaningful dialogue' with the Bath branch of the SWP.

I have been a 'naughty' boy and at numerous SWP meetings, in order to engender 'debate', I have asked questions which they have of course failed to answer. Recently however I suggest that Marxism was mistaken and that the 'socialist revolution' of 1917 was nothing of the sort. I was not lynched immediately but after the meeting various members of the revolutionary vanguard made out that I was not being 'fraternal' in my questioning and that they would make some ruling about my questions - so much for 'discussion and debate' in meetings where 'all are welcome'. They are fortunate that I am reasonably polite and indeed like most of their members and thus reserve my criticisms of their party and its politics, though the same cannot be said for their attitudes to my politics. Anyway, they have thrown down the gauntlet and challenged Bath anarchists to have a meeting about anarchism. They won't hold one themselves since 'anarchists are an irrelevance', but they will nonetheless attend. Let's hope their criticisms are 'fraternal'!

Would it be possible for a future edition of *The Raven* to be devoted to how and why we have become anarchists? It seems that many anarchists started out on the left in communist parties or similar organisations before becoming anarchists. I wonder if anybody started out on the right? I myself was once a supporter of Stalin! So does that make me left or right? It seems to me that part of the reason for the proliferation of anarchist publications is that anarchism actually requires one to think rather than the faith-based doctrines supported by the SWP and company, and indeed the right wing faith in market forces and human greed.

Jake

Dear Freedom,

Your correspondent Michel Prigent implies in a letter published in *Freedom* (27th May 1995) that a Neoist Alliance activist recently wrote to you as Karen Eliot. This is not true, we have no idea who wrote the letter but it certainly wasn't us. Prigent wrongly assumes that we are the only people who have criticisms to make of Debord and appears completely ignorant of Roberto Bui's brilliant tract *Guy The Bore* which created a sensation in Italy a month or two ago. Not only is Prigent unfamiliar with the ideas and activities of those he pretends to criticise, he doesn't understand either dialectics or satire as weapons of criticism. His assertions about *Green & Brown Anarchist* are even more idiotic than those Karl Popper makes about Hegel in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Utilising dialectics means looking at an issue from every angle, it is absurd to suggest that those who do so agree with the results they come up with during every stage of this process.

Likewise, Prigent warbles about the supersession of art without realising that by simply Hegelianising the critique of the institution of art made by Dada and Surrealism, Debord failed to move this debate forward. Debord was incapable of stepping outside the frame of reference provided by the institution of art, and instead theorised his way back to a one-sided understanding of the Hegel. It is perfectly clear from both *The Philosophical Propaedeutic* (*The Science of the Concept, Third Section, The Pure Exhibition of Spirit* theses 203 to 207) and the *Philosophy of the Mind: Being Part Three of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (*Section Three - Absolute Mind* theses 553 to 571) that within the Hegelian system the supersession of art is in fact found in revealed religion.

Since among the more advanced sections of the 'bourgeoisie', 'art' had by Debord's day come to replace revealed religion, the Situationists were forced to skip this particular Hegelian inversion and instead jump forward to philosophy which represents the highest achievement of 'absolute mind' in Hegel's system. In line with the young Marx, Debord viewed the proletariat as the subject that would realise philosophy. The Situationist conception

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**28th July** Anarcho-Syndicalism: an outdated myth? (speaker Dave Dane)

It has been suggested we continue meetings over August, a time we know many international comrades come to London and want to meet 'the British anarchists'. Anyone interested in coming, especially those interested in giving a talk or leading a discussion, please contact either Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW

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ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press  
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Printed by Aldgate Press, London E1

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