

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

"Liberty is not a gift that one receives from the state or a leader."

Albert Camus

CROCODILE TEARS FOR THE POACHER TURNED GAMEKEEPER

We write only days after the assassination of Israel's Prime Minister Rabin by a young Israeli who believed (and added that he was possibly inspired by God) that Rabin was a traitor to the state of Israel. We don't know about 'God' but Rabin was a traitor. For most of his life he was involved as a militarist, ending

up as a General. Has everybody forgotten that he was involved in all the wars after 1948 against the Palestinians in which the Israelis occupied the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and chunks of the Lebanon. Rabin 'the peacemaker' was now involved in handing over the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and who knows,

perhaps the occupied bit of Lebanon to Arafat and some of his Palestinians. What hypocrisy! And not least the hypocrisy of another generation of the 'world's leaders' who gathered in Israel to give Rabin a right-royal send off in his larger-than-life coffin wrapped in the flag of Israel and transmitted by the media hacks worldwide.

When will *the people*, the victims, say enough is enough? Television presents us with Rabin's sweet 17 year old granddaughter lost for words by her genuine tears, and the roll call of the hardened politicians falling over each other to pay their tributes to the 'martyr'. The 'martyr' who allegedly gave the orders for the assassination of Fathi Shqaqi, the leader of the Palestinian 'fundamentalists', got his reward from an Israeli 'fundamentalist'. Poetic justice!

(continued on page 2)

SHELL INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NIGERIAN MASSACRE

Ninety per cent of the revenue of the military government of Nigeria comes from the Shell International Petroleum Company, as payment for oil extracted. Most of the oil comes from the Rivers State, a region of the Niger delta whose six million inhabitants see their smallholdings and fish stocks devastated by pollution, and are demanding a large share of the oil revenues by way of compensation. Or perhaps they have now been frightened into submission by the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists in MOSOP, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, which was fronting the demand.

Nigeria's oil has long been the subject of conflict among Nigerian tribes, notably the Biafra independence war of the 1960s which started when the central government decided to scrap the three states set up by the British - Northern Nigeria, Eastern Nigeria and Western Nigeria - and set up ten states instead. The oil reserves would then be in the new Rivers State beyond the reach of General Ojukwu the prime minister of Eastern Nigeria, who responded by declaring Eastern Nigeria's independence.

Ojukwu lost, but the inhabitants of Rivers State did not win. In other parts of the world Shell have negotiated with local government to provide schools, electricity or other goods by way of compensation. But in Nigeria they negotiated only with the central government, to whom they applied for protection against the Etche people, Rivers inhabitants who demonstrated peacefully against Shell in 1990. The central government sent in the Mobile Police Force, who killed eighty Etche people and destroyed

about 500 homes. There was no concerted protest at the time from the British Commonwealth. Malicious people might allege that even democratic politicians tolerate massacres of ordinary people, but become furious when fellow politicians are bumped off.

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People is (or was, if it is now destroyed) a political party and the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa a well-rounded politician. There were protests three years ago when he was arrested with others on suspicion of murdering four Ogoni chiefs not of his political persuasion, international condemnations a couple of weeks ago when he was sentenced to death by a military court, and utter fury when the death sentences were carried out as the Commonwealth heads of government were arguing about whether to appeal for clemency through private diplomacy or whether to threaten expulsion from the Commonwealth.

Among the most furious was Nelson Mandela, the President of South Africa, who had advocated quiet diplomacy. He led the call for suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth pending the restoration of democracy, which was agreed by all the other heads of government except for the two other military dictatorships, The Gambia and the Solomon Islands. But General Abacha's regime in Nigeria has already amply demonstrated its contempt for the Commonwealth, so the suspension is quite unlikely to have an effect.

What might possibly have an effect is 'market forces'.

Part of the argument in favour of 'market forces' is that ordinary people can influence the activities of inter-

national capital through their buying behaviour. The Shell International Petroleum Company has already this year changed its mind in response to buying behaviour (much to the annoyance of people who advocate the 'market forces' argument) when they reversed the decision to dump the decommissioned Brent Spar oil platform in the Atlantic because people in Germany were boycotting their products.

Shell, supplying 90% of what the Nigerian government spends on armaments and palaces and (probably) salts away in foreign banks, calls the tune in Nigeria and could destabilise the Nigerian government, if it so wished, by stopping the purchase of Nigerian oil for a time. If enough people in Europe decide to boycott Shell products until Shell put economic sanctions on Nigeria, Shell would do just that.

The pessimistic view would be that the petrol buyers of Europe either do not care about the inhabitants of Rivers State to the extent they care about the Atlantic, or that they do not realise the extent to which Shell is involved in the atrocities. So the nasty military dictatorship will suffer no more than an embargo on arms sales (already imposed by the United States) which market forces will ensure is ineffective, as long as they have the income to pay for arms.

CROCODILE TEARS FOR THE POACHER TURNED GAMEKEEPER

(continued from page 1)

One can feel for his family, but the likes of Rabin deserve all they get in the end - if it had been sooner thousands of Palestinian lives might not have been lost. The *Independent* obituarist quotes him when Defence Minister in the 1984-90 government as "ordering his troops to break the Intifada uprising *with might, power and beatings*" (our italics).

One the night of his death he told the gathered 100,000 supporters of 'Peace Now' that his government had to give peace a chance. "I was a military man for 27 years. I waged war as long as there was no chance for peace. I believe there is now a chance and we must make the most of it."

As the *Independent* obituarist, Eric Silver, points out:

"What wrought the transformation was the realisation that Israel could not batter the children and mothers of the Intifada into submission without compromising its own humanity and alienating the civilised world with which Israel identified itself."

We agree with our italicised passage but as to world opinion?

The Rabin funeral was the ultimate worldwide political hypocrisy. There were some sixty 'heads of government' and royalty with bowed heads or making extravagant assessments of the dear departed colleague, the 'man of peace', the 'martyr', blah, blah. And needless to say when Major had a spare moment for mourning the world's great loss, he had a chat with the Irish Prime Minister about other matters as they both had with Bill Clinton. Funerals are excellent occasions for families to meet relatives they don't normally see. For politicians it's an excellent occasion to talk business while wearing black ties for the late lamented colleague.

We referred to the 'political hypocrisy' of the politicians. The British are the hypocrites *par excellence*. But for them it is doubtful if the state of Israel in 1948 would have been created. And thereafter but for the financial backing of the USA (not only thanks to the American wealthy Jewish lobby and their votes but also the United States concern for the Middle East oil and the exports of arms to the oil-rich Middle East in return) the state of Israel would have been driven into the sea by the Intifada and the growing fundamentalist Islamist movement.

When Rabin's term as Chief of Staff came to an end in 1968 he wanted and succeeded in being appointed to the post of Ambassador to the United States. According to the *Guardian's* obituarist he turned "the special relationship between Israel and the US based on cultural affinity and common values, into an even closer strategic partnership". And "particularly valuable were the links forged by this rough and unpolished diplomat with President Richard Nixon and his national security advisor, Dr Henry Kissinger. An argument vigorously pushed by Rabin was that Israel

represented a major strategic asset for the US in the Middle East, an asset in checking Soviet advances and curbing Arab radicalism."

As we pointed out years ago in the Freedom Press title *British Imperialism and the Palestine Crisis*, which we recommend to all readers concerned about politics in the Middle East:

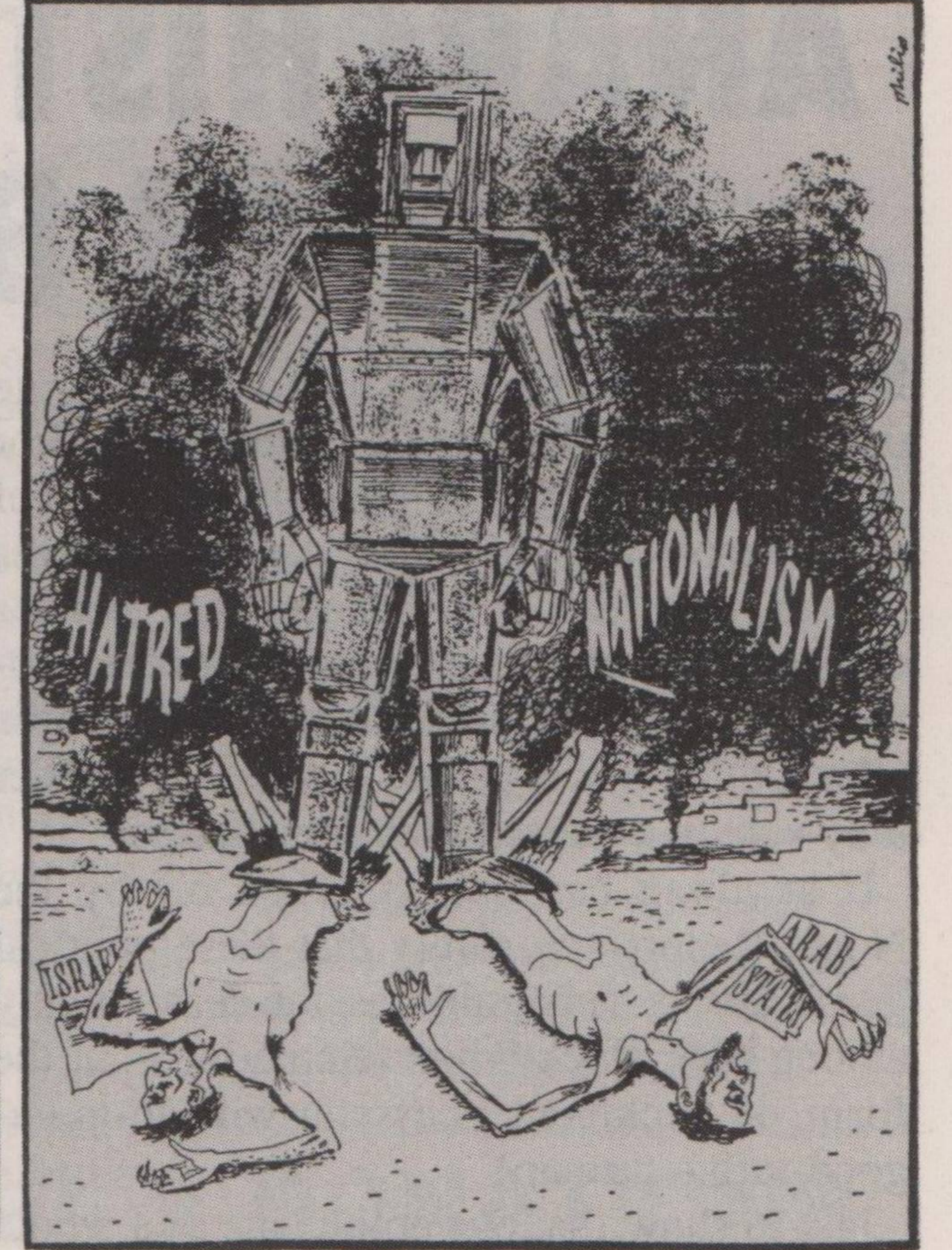
"The USA has for so long been Israel's paymaster that few people realise Britain's responsibility in what has been happening in Palestine these past forty years [1989]. After all Palestine and much of the Near East was under British rule - spoils of World War One which were not relinquished until after World War Two."

One of the contributors to that volume, Reginald Reynolds, who knew as much as anybody about the politics of the Middle East, in an interesting polemic with Emma Goldman. Writing in 1938, that is ten years before the state of Israel was artificially created at the expense of the Arab *fellahen* who were driven off the land and even into exile, he explained his attitude to Palestine:

"The prime question is not whether I approve of Jewish immigration, but who shall decide on its extent. At present, it is determined by a foreign government - our own - whose decisions are enforced upon an unwilling population at the point of the bayonet. The alternative of Madagascar would present the same problem (though Emma confuses it with the problem of Australia, as though both were self-governing and autonomous). Hence my suggestion that a little constructive thought should be devoted to discovering 'some part of the world where they (the Jews) can live at peace with their neighbours by mutual agreement'. This is what my dear friend calls



"OH, THOSE IMMORAL TERRORISTS!"



A STATE IS BORN

These two cartoons by Philip Sansom were originally published in *Freedom*, the cartoon on the left in August 1946, the one on the right in 1948 when the Israeli state was created in Palestine. These cartoons are included in the Freedom Press volume *British Imperialism and the Palestine Crisis 1938-1948* (104 pages, £1.95, ISBN 0 900384 51 4) which was published in 1989 with an introduction and a 10-page postscript, 'The New Master Race in Palestine', which helps to put the present 'crisis' into perspective.

'denying these unfortunate people a chance of taking root in new countries.'

The basic problems, both of Palestine and Northern Ireland, remain unchanged in spite of all the so-called peace initiatives. Recent events in occupied Palestine are an indication of the intractable nature of the problem.

As Reynolds put it: "And just as I am opposed to the Moors when they appear as conquerors in a fascist army [a reference to Franco's use of the North African troops in his takeover attempt in Spain in 1936 - Editors] so I am opposed to the Jews when they appear as colonists in a British scheme to create an 'Ulster' in Palestine."

What has Sir Michael to hide?

Members of Parliament have ruled that from next year they will have to disclose all their MPs emoluments, in addition to their parliamentary salaries. They need not declare their takings from shareholdings, business and extra-parliamentary jobs, but they will have to say how much they get from perks which depend on their being MPs, such as parliamentary consultancies.

The motive of those who voted for disclosure is easy enough to guess. They wanted to counter the perception, arising from so many recent 'sleaze' cases before and after the Nolan Report, that MPs are only in the job for the money on the side.

Much more interesting are the motives of those MPs who voted against disclosure, especially Sir Michael Neubert, MP for Romford, who said after the vote "I do have to think very carefully about whether I observe this new rule of the House. It's not the law of the land."

Obviously Sir Michael has something to hide. But what? There might be an unexpected answer in the British class system.

In traditional British pubs refined people

meet in the saloon bar, and vulgar people in the public bar. There are good manners appropriate to each bar. It is not done to make business deals in the public, or to describe one's visit to the dole office in the saloon. Sometimes the bar staff will remind customers of what is proper, as in 'If you can't hold your liquor better than that you'll have to go in the other bar' and 'We normally only serve beer this side'.

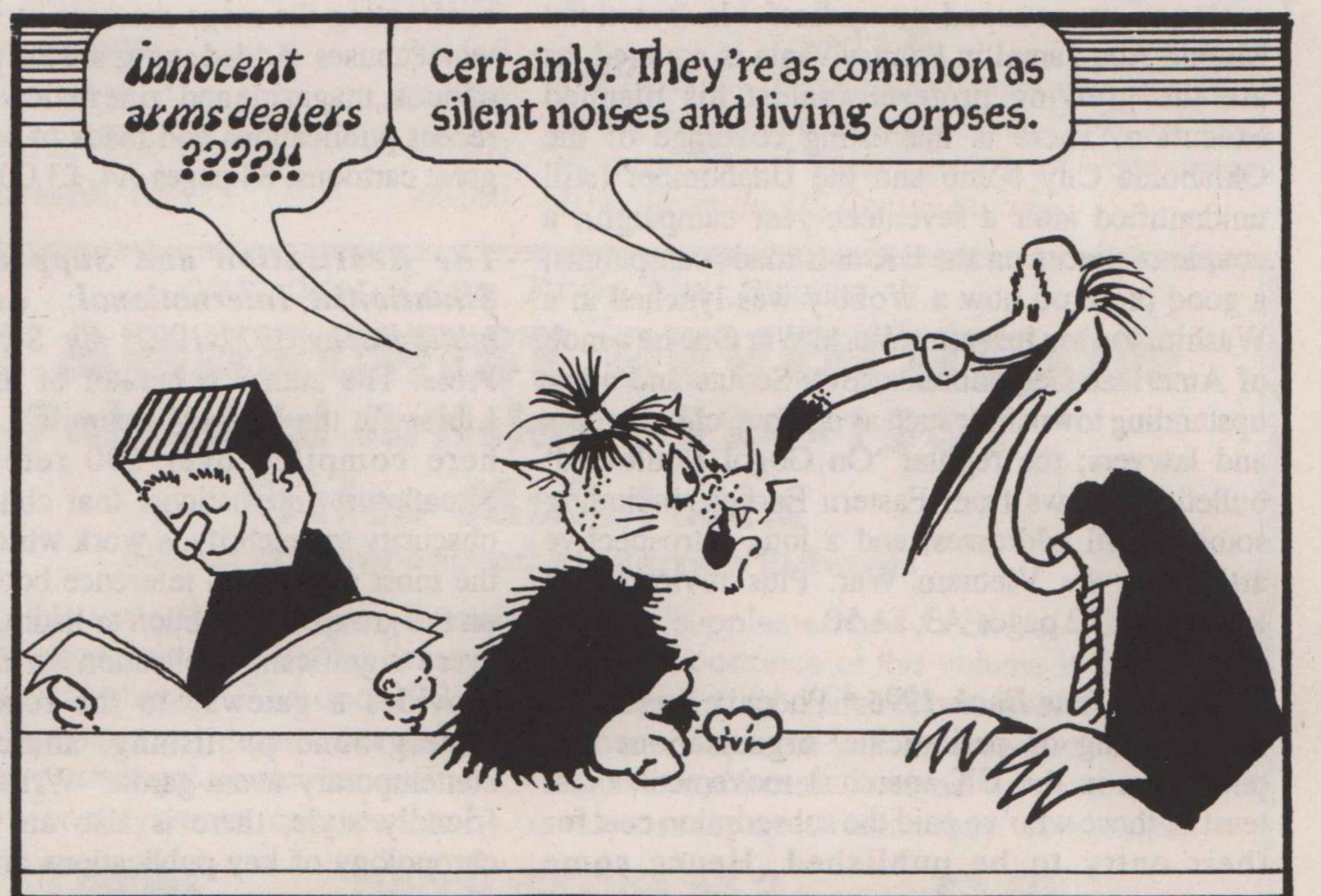
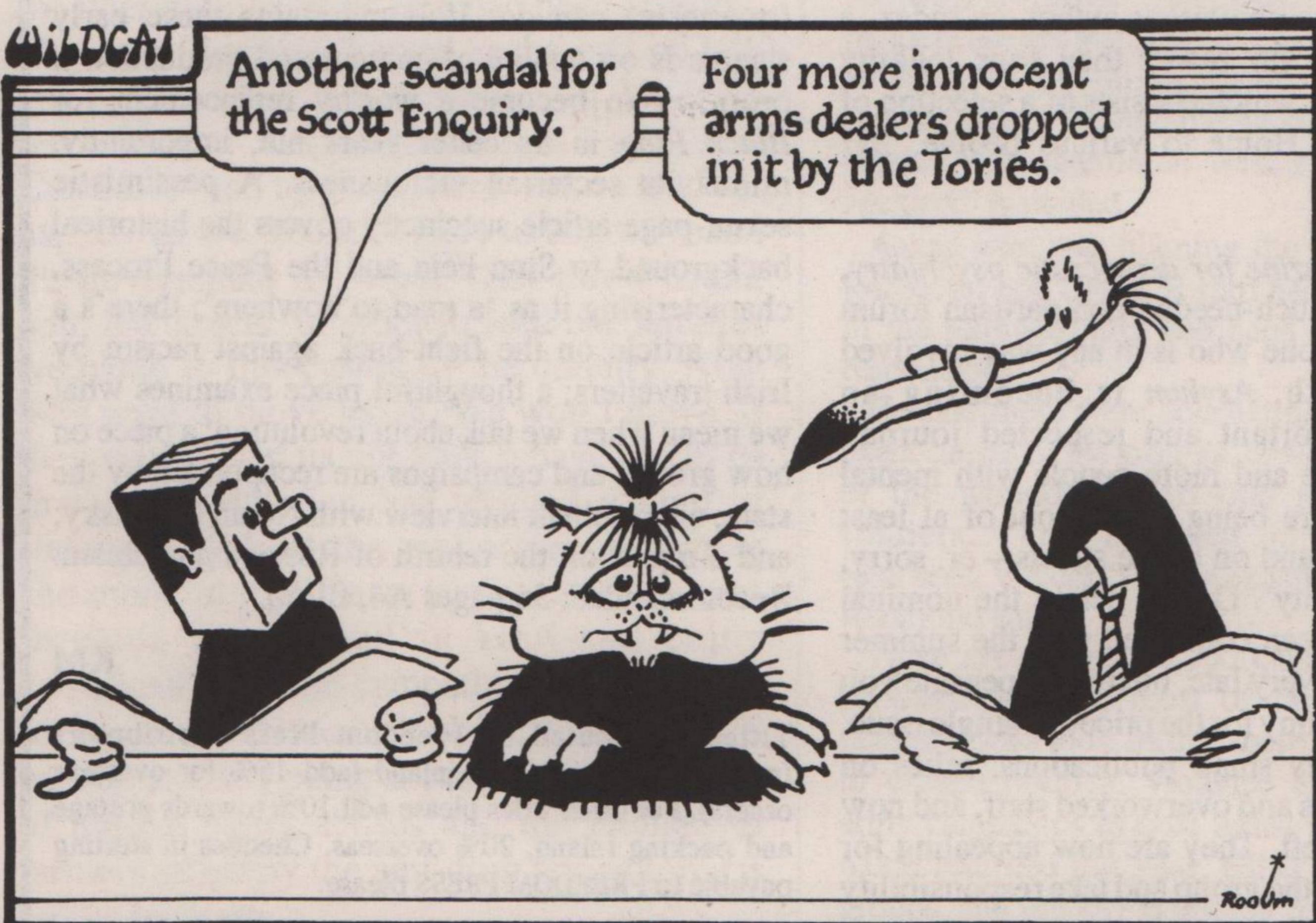
Prices, however, are the same, and usually the same staff serves both bars. So although there is a presumption that saloon bar people are wealthier than public bar people, customers choose for themselves what kind of people they are. Everywhere has class distinctions of wealth, ranging from the super-rich to the destitute. Britain also has a class distinction of manners.

This is the subject of the television comedy series *Keeping Up Appearances* whose heroine, magnificently acted by Patricia Routledge, aspires to refinement but is constantly and hilariously betrayed by her indefatigably vulgar origins. Viewers

unfamiliar with the British class system would miss at least half the jokes.

Among the refined, it is bad form to speak of money in actual monetary terms, except when it is strictly necessary. Anecdotes about financial negotiations use evasions like 'x pounds' so that they convey whether the speaker is pleased, disappointed or angry, but give no idea whether the sums involved are in tens or millions. It is impolite to distinguish between 'upper class' people who are genuinely rich and 'upper class' people who are constantly at their maximum permitted overdraft, and this is not to shield the genuinely rich from envy so much as to shield the comparatively poor from embarrassment.

Could the prospect of embarrassment be what worries Sir Michael Neubert? We know nothing about Sir Michael's own parliamentary sidelines, but consider the case of a fictitious MP who boasts all sorts of post-looking consultancies in the Register of Members' Interest, none of which pays him more than a pittance. 'Parliamentary consultant Vastco Verrirrich International Finance, £5 per annum'. The poor chap will have to give up all his consultancies to avoid becoming a laughing stock.



ANARCHIST COMMENTS IN BRIEF

BUSINESS POLITICS My dictionary tells me that politics is the 'art of government'. For anarchists 'government' is the presumption of some people who think they can run our lives better than we can ourselves. Under capitalism (including from-the-womb-to-the-tomb welfare capitalism) most people (alas!) think this is probably true. No wonder they vote in a majority for their 'gurus'!

If anything has been sparked off by the Nolan Report it is surely that these political gurus are as vulnerable as the least saintly among their flock when temptation – in the form of backhanders if-you-will-do-me-a-good-turn – turn up!

Just to show that our politicians as a whole ('unlike Mr Major's government') are Simon Pure they had a brief debate on the Nolan Report and the Labour amendment was accepted by a majority of 50 votes, made possible by 20 Tories who voted with the opposition and another 20 who didn't vote or stayed at home. I haven't yet understood what MPs will now be expected to declare. Does it really matter much? As *Freedom* is repeating all the time, the real power is with the transnationals, the multinationals and the multi-millionaires. After all, when the pop 'musician' Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber is "looking very closely" at the idea of a £300 million flutter purchasing the *Express* newspapers group, the politicians' sleaze is surely chicken feed.

What first of all is important for anarchists to stress in their propaganda is that no politician – even assuming that anarchists could be voted into parliament – would do anything to change the system, the capitalist system, because it operates outside the control of governments.

The sleaze is obviously profitable for a whole number of MPs and they will get around any legislation to stop them from hawking their so-called 'expertise' or 'contacts' – for instance their wives or mistresses could start a 'consultancy', just one more to the millions advertised daily – and the 'better' half will 'advise' her without charge.

A 'GOOD NEWS' SECTION Some time ago it was suggested in *Freedom* that we should include a 'Good News' section which would depend on contributions from readers. I find that the local daily or weekly, rather than the nationals, provide one with 'good news', not of governments but of ordinary people, probably without any political views – least of all anarchist! – who nevertheless react generously.

Two mothers, both of Trimley St Martin in Suffolk, hoped to fill 500 shoeboxes "with gifts so that youngsters in countries like Bosnia and Romania would have a present to open for Christmas". Result: "Thanks to children and adults all over the area ... more than 1,000 boxes have been collected". And *Freedom* I hope has the space to quote the two mothers whose radiant faces are reproduced in the *East Anglian Daily Times* (11th November):

"The response has been tremendous, unbelievable. It has really caught the public imagination and it is lovely to think that as our children open their presents, these children will too", said Sharon of Brick Kiln Close.

Debbie said: 'We have been overwhelmed by people's generosity. We have gone to houses expecting to collect three or four boxes and come away with fifty. It's been incredible.'

And what about another *East Anglian Daily*

Times news item with a photograph of Carol Amsden, Suffolk Coastal Council's Rights of Way Officer, with a group of young volunteers of the Ramblers' Association who had hacked their way through 'jungle' in the Woodbridge, Suffolk, area for some 172 hours of work to clear the way along a 250-yard path?

And as an anti-boxing propagandist, I nevertheless cannot ignore Lennox Lewis, "former world heavyweight champion boxer, who has given £1 million to fund the Lennox Lewis College in Hackney which has twelve specialist staff and aims to give disadvantaged boys aged 16-18 a chance to avoid criminal activity by providing 'the skills and training necessary towards living lives of self-respect and fulfilment in employment, family life and citizenship'."

Successful or otherwise, what I like about the gesture of this ex-brain-bashing obviously nice man who was born in the poverty stricken East End are his generous remarks:

"I would like to give something back to the community. I hope the centre will help some of London's most deprived teenagers. I know what it is like to struggle."

Last but not least is Joanna Page, a nine-year-old whose birthday was celebrated and all the presents and cards were put in her parents' car and after all the goodbyes when they went to their car it had gone, and all the presents and cards with it. Reported in the *East Anglian Daily Times*, it produced the expected response with interest from staff and readers. And nine-year-old Joanna, according to her mother, says "it restores my faith in human nature". Dear Joanna!

WHY NOT MORE GOOD NEWS? A postscript to the foregoing. I take three dailies, apart from weeklies and Sundays. It's the local (Ipswich) daily that publishes most of the 'good news' items. Hence if, as I would hope, *Freedom* can publish a 'good news' feature every issue it depends on all of us who live in

the 'backwoods' to provide the material from our experience and our local papers. This 'good news' is about the simple life; it's not the revolution but it's mutual aid and that's a first step in the anarchist revolution.

FROM GOOD TO BAD NEWS ... BUT? The *Independent on Sunday* (6th November) makes a fuss about the doctor who has removed three children from his patients list because their parents refused to have them immunised against a range of diseases. And obviously his consideration was purely financial because the health authorities' consideration was also financial: namely that he would receive a maximum payment if he achieved a 90% immunisation of children of a certain age. When medicine, health, etc., are linked to money and percentages only doctors who are 'saints' and are only concerned with their patients can ignore the instructions from the centre about 'percentages'. The double-barrelled-named Dr John Goodall-Copestake is a good capitalist-minded doctor and how can you contradict him when he argues:

"Being a doctor has changed a lot since my great uncle was in practice. Whether you like it or not, it is now a business, the bank manager leans on you and if you don't pay your tax you get into trouble. You have to make ends meet."

I'm in tears for poor Dr Goodall-Copestake! The reason why he chucked out the immunisation refusals was that if he had kept them on his list he would have "dropped under the 90% by one child and I did not receive the £500 [per quarter] I would have had".

I a world where money rules why assume that doctors are above the rest of humanity? Like all the specialists – whether they be plumbers or surgeons, electricians or dentists, mechanics or doctors – they are all concerned with getting as much money as they can squeeze from their victims! I only grow vegetables for home consumption and a few for sale!

Libertarian

Food for Thought ... and Action!

Recent arrivals in the Freedom Press Bookshop.

*How to Create the Free Society, told in a conversation** by Derrick A. Pike. A self-published pamphlet by a long-standing anarcho-pacifist which aims to lay down a blueprint for creating a free society. He draws heavily on Tolstoy and writes in a rather pedagogic and simplistic style which may be all right for newcomers to the ideas or hard-line pacifists (there must be no resistance at all to the state, either violent or nonviolent – not even by damaging military property or sailing into nuclear test zones, nor any civil disobedience as this is all 'violent'), but it is not likely to appeal to many actual anarchists as a practical or sensible way forward. And for an essay whose watchword seems to be 'ignore the state and it will go away' there are an alarmingly large number of rules, instructions and prohibitions, but it is better produced than some of his earlier pamphlets and a bit cheaper. 64 pages A4, £2.50.

Fifth Estate vol. 30/1. The background to the death sentence pronounced on radical black activist Mumia Abu-Jamal in Pennsylvania is covered, as are the growing protests against his planned execution. There is interesting coverage of the Oklahoma City bomb and the Unabomber (still unidentified after a seventeen-year campaign); a couple of pieces on the UK anti-roads campaigns; a good piece on how a Wobbly was lynched in a Washington town just after World War One by a mob of American Legionnaires, Boy Scouts and other upstanding townfolk such as doctors, churchgoers and lawyers; the regular 'On Gogol Boulevard' bulletin of news from Eastern Europe, including some e-mail addresses; and a long retrospective article on the Vietnam War. Plus reviews and letters, etc. 32 pages A3, £1.50.

*Anarchist Year Book 1996** Phoenix Press. The latest listing of periodicals, organisations and publishers in the UK anarchist movement, or at least of those who've paid the subscription cost for their entry to be published. Hence some

well-known groups have no information against their names. True, some may not have paid for an official entry, but it seems a pity not to at least print their addresses so that people can find out for themselves what they do. There is also a section on newly published books and pamphlets which mentions five of Freedom Press's most recent books. 20 pages, £1.50.

Alternative Press Review, summer 1995. It may be late but at least it's here. Following on from the last issue – whose editorial 'What's Wrong with the Media?' was even reprinted by the *Guardian* over here – this edition focuses heavily on the trials and tribulations of mass communications and mass culture, with three long articles on the topic, and an excellent editorial on the media's coverage of the Oklahoma City bomb outrage. There's an upbeat and encouraging interview with Zapatista women, and a sensible analysis of last year's Congressional elections, reaffirming the traditional anarchist stand of boycotting all elections, and continuing instead to build communities of resistance and confronting the mega-machine at the points of its worst abuses. Added extras are the pages and pages of book, magazine and 'zine reviews, excerpts from recent publications and loads of letters and some great cartoons. 84 pages A4, £3.00.

*The Realisation and Suppression of the Situationist International: an annotated bibliography 1972-1992** by Simon Ford, AK Press. The author is curator of the National Art Library at the V&A Museum in London, and has here compiled over 600 references to the Situationist International that chart its rise from obscurity to celebrity, a work which is claimed as the most substantial reference book yet produced on the group. "In addition to listing and describing every significant publication on the SI ... it also provides a gateway to the related worlds of underground publishing, anarchism and the contemporary avant-garde." Written in a reader-friendly style, there is also an introduction, a chronology of key publications and an index. As

with all such bibliographies, the reader should be aware that many of the publications will be out of print and only available – if at all – in well-stocked reference libraries. 150 pages, £7.95.

*Neoisim, Plagiarism and Praxis** by Stewart Home, AK Press. The publisher's blurb on the back says: "This book is concerned with what's been happening at the cutting edge of culture since the demise of Fluxus and the Situationists. It provides inside information on the Neoists, Plagiarists, Art Strikes, London Psychogeographical Association, K Foundation and other groups that are even more obscure. Rather than offering a continuous narrative, the text is made up of articles, manifestos, lectures and essays." At the front of the book we find the enigmatic comment: "Much of the material in this volume has previously appeared elsewhere", but the source of all the reproduced pieces appears at the end of the article concerned. Ironically this book does not appear in Ford's bibliography (above), probably because they were being prepared at about the same time. There is an introduction by the ubiquitous author, an index, a bibliography and no fewer than four lengthy appendices, one of which consists of a selection of letters written by Home to various people. 207 pages, £8.95.

Asylum: the magazine for democratic psychiatry, double issue. A much-needed non-partisan forum for debate for anyone who is in any way involved in mental health, *Asylum* is becoming an increasingly important and respected journal, especially as more and more people with mental health problems are being thrown out of at least some sort of care and on to the streets – er, sorry, 'into the community'. Due to delays the nominal spring issue has been combined with the summer issue and sent out very late, but to compensate you get a double-whammy for the price of a single issue. *Asylum*, like many small publications, relies on precarious finances and overworked staff, and now one of them has left. They are now appealing for new people to join the group and take responsibility

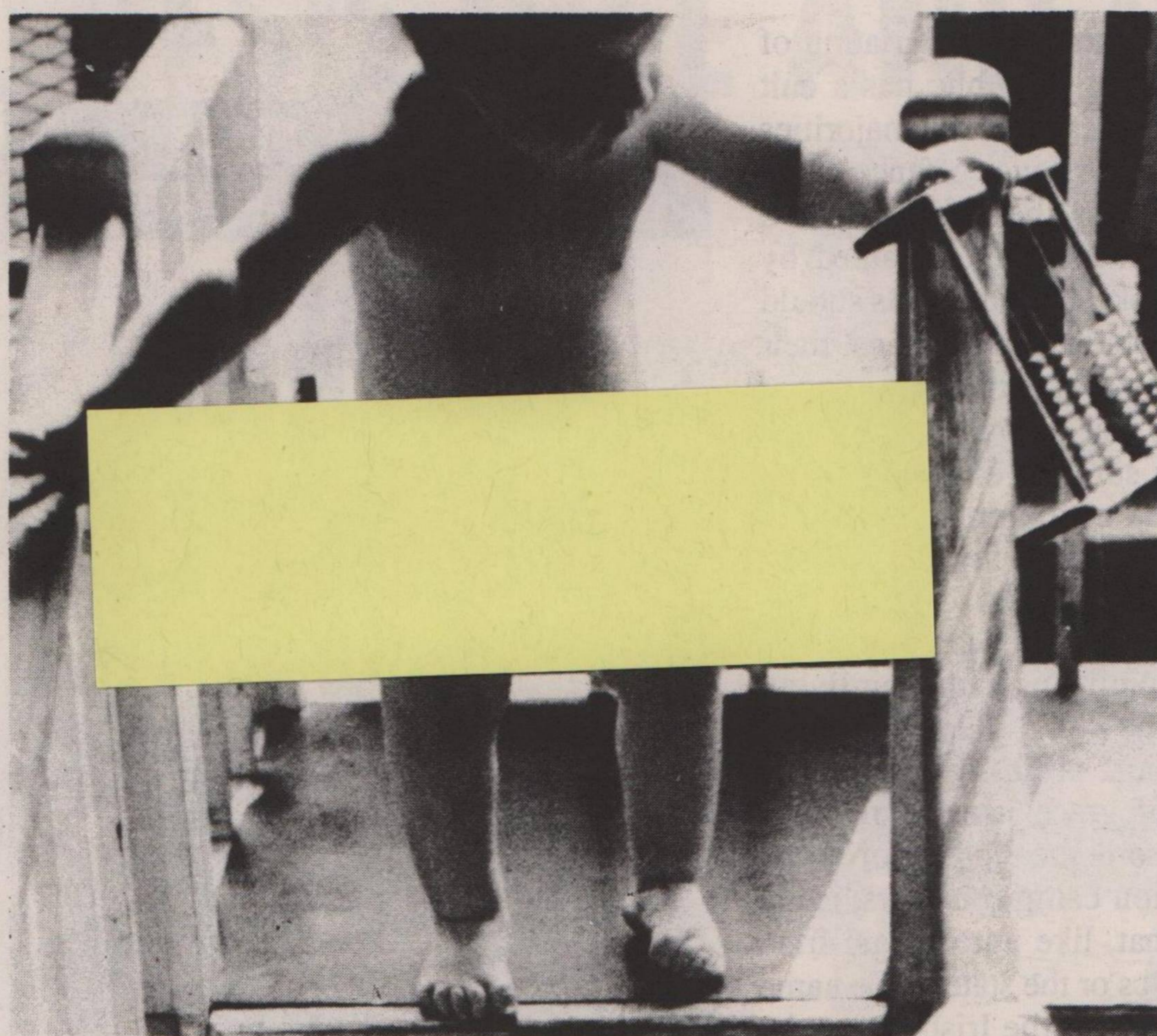
for production, and they also need urgent help with distribution, so if you have some spare time and could help then get in touch. This issue continues the investigation into abuse in therapy; reports on the campaign against ECT (electro-convulsive therapy); and on tougher controls on the mentally ill proposed by Virginia Bottomley before she lost her job as Health Secretary; there's an article on the plan to allow psychiatrists to force people to take neuroleptic drugs (the ones condemned as 'mind obliterating drugs' when used by the former Soviet Union); plus other pieces on Shaman, holistic therapy aversion (!) and a lot more, including book reviews. There's also a great story about a vegan trying to get rid of a mouse in his flat – in a cruelty-free way, of course – and some excellent cartoons. 40 pages A4, £1.50.

Red and Black Revolution: a magazine of libertarian communism, no. 2, Workers' Solidarity Movement. A new twice-yearly magazine which covers issues in greater depth, and with a greater theoretical input than *Workers' Solidarity* (quarterly) can do. If it maintains these early standards on quality of content and production it promises to become a worthy replacement for *Black Flag* in its better years but, importantly, minus its sectarian viciousness. A pessimistic seven-page article succinctly covers the historical background to Sinn Féin and the Peace Process, characterising it as 'a road to nowhere'; there's a good article on the fight-back against racism by Irish travellers; a thoughtful piece examines what we mean when we talk about revolution; a piece on how groups and campaigns are recuperated by the state; an excellent interview with Noam Chomsky; and a report on the rebirth of Russian anarchism. Recommended. 36 pages A4, £1.50.

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IMAGES OF CHILDHOOD



Photograph from the cover of the Freedom Press book *Children in Society: a Libertarian Critique* by Stephen Cullen, (48 pages, £1.20, ISBN 0 900384 62 X)

It may be a faulty recollection but I remember a brand of pipe tobacco in the 1950s called Baby's Bottom which had a picture of a naked cherubic baby on the tin – 'smooth as a baby's bottom' went the slogan. It is difficult to imagine such an advertising ploy in our present vigilant social climate. What has happened to a society where men are afraid to show too much affection to small children, even their own, and teachers are being advised not to cuddle or comfort children in their care in case such actions are misconstrued?

The sexual abuse of children has probably always gone on and it may well have been more common when living conditions were more overcrowded, but the general public either knew nothing about it or refused to acknowledge the signs or believe the evidence. Even with the many instances that have come to court during the '90s we have been eager to find comfort in false memory syndrome to explain away some of the numerous accusations and go some way towards restoring our belief in the sacrosanct respect for the innocence of childhood.

This week's press exposure of a television newsreader's arrest over photographs reported by 'Boots' of her seven-year-old daughter posing in the bath, which were taken by the mother's boyfriend, has highlighted the dilemma in which many parents and other adults find themselves regarding children, nudity, abuse and affection.

Readers' letters and most articles in the press express astonishment that our family snaps are being checked for obscenity as well as over-exposure and that in the absence of adequate guidelines photographic technicians have in some cases become the arbiters of public morality. We have not seen the photographs but if they are as innocent as the mother claims then the same could happen to any family anywhere and there will be fewer and fewer photos to embarrass our children with when they grow up.

It is inevitable that attitudes to child nudity will become more circumspect in the light of proven child abuse and exposés of paedophile groups and sexual abuse of children by foster parents as featured on ITV's *The Cook Report* last week. The old radical feminist premise that every man is a potential rapist seems to be

extending into every man is a possible child abuser. Many women will not now consider male au pairs or babysitters, just in order to minimise the risk for their child. No one thinks that abusers are exclusively male, but as a very high percentage are then it is an easy and immediate precaution to take.

In my own family setting, which I like to think of as open-minded and freewheeling, our attitudes have shifted. My daughter said she would think it inappropriate for her four-year-old daughter to pose naked for photographs and knows that she wouldn't want anyone, male or female, friend or relative, taking similar photographs when her daughter is seven. She thinks it is safer not to put anyone in a situation where their intentions could be misconstrued – either now or in the future.

Ten years ago I would have said that there was nothing wrong with children being proud of their bodies and choosing to walk naked until they chose to do otherwise, but the ethos has

changed regarding children, as it has done so many times throughout history, and we are all affected no matter how strongly we want to resist the restriction such caution imposes.

The reasons for some people's sexual attraction towards children are manifold and complex. A large proportion are said to suffer from trichophobia, which is an abhorrence towards body hair. Others find equal relationships impossible to maintain. Some

form of therapy for these people and a confidential helpline might help some.

Another alarming item this week is from doctors at children's hospitals throughout the country who say that cases of anorexia nervosa among children are increasing. Girls as young as six are having treatment for eating disorders, some of whom begin attending clinics at first because they are overweight for their age.

Whilst doctors do not lay total blame for this condition at the door of advertisers, they do regard the current idealising of the skinny body image in the fashion world as an important contributory factor in some cases.

Even a casual look at the dolls which manufacturers advertise and which girls often play with show an even more unrealistic, and for most unattainable, body shape than the adolescent fashion models that young women strive to emulate.

Barbie dolls have legs which are abnormally long in terms of real women and their waists

are about the same measurement as their necks. As a result little girls especially step onto the treadmill of body perfecting earlier and earlier, and if the playground at the local school is any indication it seems that the boys are busy perfecting the art of becoming convincing Power Rangers.

Must we limit our children's exposure to this type of advertising and merchandise? Do we refuse them these toys and make them yearn even more for these garish plastic images? If we throw out the television then children come home with second-rate renditions of other children's impressions of television characters and advertising jingles – and anyway 'if the television don't get them then the supermarket will'. There are Power Rangers drink cartons and Pocahontas fromage frais tubs, Flintstone crisps and Caspar jellies.

If they won't take an intricately explained 'no' for an answer we can always resort to the final sanction – or the first in some family groups I've seen – the short, sharp slap.

The commission on children and violence in childhood has brought out a report linking violent offences among young people with violence experienced in early childhood. They have called for corporal punishment at home, including smacking, to be made unlawful and debates have been taking place in the press very much in the same vein as all previous debates on disciplining children.

Some parents seem to think they have the right to physically chastise their own children, others say that if you set a precedent that you can control a situation through a violent act then this lesson, learnt young, will be learnt well and form lasting patterns.

I smacked my two children once only, and at the same time, and they can both remember it and tease me about it from time to time. They remember it not for its severity but because of my attempts to explain why I'd weakened. My daughter, in turn, has never smacked her daughter. Perhaps we've been blessed with sweet-natured children. Perhaps we should strive to seek out the sweet natures among those who are difficult.

Silvia Edwards

Thoughts on the Budget

In ancient times the vagaries of human existence were interpreted for the masses by a closed and secretive group of individuals who claimed sole understanding of the universe based on the secret teachings of ... the same closed and secretive group of individuals. These people achieved this by a combination of careful study, secret languages, stage-managed events and outright fraud. Slowly, over time, these people consolidated their position within their society, increasing their power, their prestige and their own personal comfort until society was totally organised by them, for them. These people were called priests.

Today a new group controls and orders society for their own benefit. This new priesthood uses the same methods, the same techniques, the same lies to achieve the same aims as their long dead forebears. These people are called economists.

In the past the priesthood invented gods – powerful, ethereal figures who were said to control the natural world. The priesthood claimed that only they, by virtue of their secret training, their secret knowledge and their devotional practices, could interpret the actions and wishes of these gods. By claiming perfectly natural phenomena as omens or communications from the gods, these priests could shape and direct society into all sorts of bizarre activities. Foodstuffs and other produce flowed from the productive farmers and artisans to the unproductive priests because the 'gods' wished it so. Huge monuments and palaces were built because the 'gods' commanded it. Wars were fought and whole civilisations destroyed because the 'gods' demanded tribute or redress for imagined slights.

Today economists invent new gods: the Global Market, Exchange Rates, the all powerful Profit and the demon Inflation. By the use of secret language – Retail Price Index, Share Issue, the FTSE-100 – these new priests claim the ability to interpret the thoughts and actions of the new gods,

and only by following the instructions of the priesthood can we hope to be protected from the wrath of these huge, powerful and uncaring deities. Our work, our leisure, our standard of living is decided not by us, the ones actually doing the working, the playing, the living, but by the new gods helpfully interpreted for us by their devoted acolytes, the economists. The new priests appear before us to warn of the calamity that will ensue if we fail to pay this tax, sacrifice that hospital, build that road. We hand over our lives, our children, our future, because the Economy needs them. We destroy our environment because it is necessary to the Economy that we do so. We fight wars, kill and die so that the Economy may flourish. All threats to the safety and well-being of the Economy must be rooted out and crushed. The Economy declares that we must be lean and efficient so we cut here and slash there, bear the pain, ignore the tears, for the Economy will look after us. We know this because the economists tell us so.

'Now hold on a minute!' I hear a reader cry, surely those early priests relied on superstition and myth to fool their gullible populace whereas modern economics (all hollow be its name) is a science? Oh yeah, says who? Modern economists say that modern economics is a science, but then they would, wouldn't they? Ask a hundred economists a question and you will get a hundred different answers. Hardly scientific! Modern economics is entirely based on superstition, myth and even outright fraud. When the high priest rises before parliament to announce the new levels of protection money that we must pay, he will use many terms from the secret language of economics. These terms will sound scientific, they may even be derived from science, but they will not actually be based on any solid empirically proven fact. The collapse of Barings Bank was caused by the belief that continued gambling with larger and larger amounts of money could not fail to succeed

(superstition). The 'law' of Supply and Demand says that the supply of goods is dependent upon the demand for them (myth). The Chancellor and the City would have us believe that inflation (increase of the money supply) can be controlled by variation of the interest rates (the charge levied for money already supplied) (outright fraud). Economics is the new religion and economists are its priesthood and like the priesthood of an earlier time they are crooks, charlatans and snake oil merchants to a man (or woman).

Anarchists argue that religion is unnecessary in order to explain the world about us and that religion is used by the ruling class to control the ruled. In the same way Economics is unnecessary in order to organise social activities and is used by the ruling class for their benefit. A simply stated anarchist economic theory would be ... no to economics and down with economists.

Technowobbly

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TRUSTEES UNFIT TO HANDLE METHODIST FUNDS

Britain is to have a Playboy Television Channel, with contents similar to *Playboy* magazine (whose contents are said to be very varied, but nobody denies that it is bought chiefly for its pictures of young women with no clothes on). Playboy Television is to be carried by Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB. When this was announced, the Methodist Church announced that it will withdraw all the capital it has invested in Mr Murdoch's enterprises, and the Church of England followed the Methodist example.

Did the trustees of the Methodist Church's money think until now that Mr Murdoch's media empire was devoted to bettering the world, or do they think that lying for political purposes is morally acceptable while sexual titillation is not? If the former, they are amazingly ignorant of where they invest the funds, and if the latter, they have an amazingly cockeyed moral sense. Either way, they are plainly unfit to have charge of the Church's funds, and we presume they will be asked to stand down.

The Church Commissioners, who administer Anglican funds, may have an excuse. They almost bankrupted the Anglicans in the 1980s through injudicious investment in morally doubtful property deals, while the Methodists made a profit. So if they now choose to imitate the Methodists, it may be simple recognition of their own incompetence.

Pumping Iron

One accepts that the medical profession long ago handed over the Hippocratic Oath to the warm-up stand-up comedians on the comedy circuit for the lads with the cold-tipped stethoscope accept the universal truth that their first ad infinitum morés is to their bellies the statè, the employers of we the rabble, the distributors of book-kept charity to the great unwashed and the rustle of banknotes in the private hospital ward with the pretty nurse with the small watch. Ma Thatcher's contribution to her age was to take Restoration comedy from off the world's stages and shit it into the public arena as an acceptable way of life.

"We are no longer the groundlings in this black comedy but its actors strutting or crawling according to our economic role and whose fish-like palm one can press, but as they screw the lid down on one's coffin one can give a final hysterical sad, mad laugh for somewhere there is a funny sick joke waiting to be told.

Ours is an age when evil and stupidity coagulated to become the state and in country after country small pockets of human liberty that one felt were of no importance to the state became suspect, be it the prayer, the poem, the song or the book from Swinging America, parading Germany to sweating Russia. I write you nothing that you should not know in that in America men and women were hounded out of their employment for guilt by association, in Germany the books were burned and minorities and majorities were bureaucratically slaughtered by the state, while in Holy Mother Russia a hand-written poem was state treason. We are the age of the Bleeding Hearts and in between saving the whale and slaughtering the huntin' shootin' and fishin' set they demand that all national Top Brasses should stand and publicly eat crow for deeds of the late lamented. The old routine of 'forgive and forget' was never a crowd-puller but this new Bleeding Heart PR take-off of getting someone in unimportant High Office, through

public pressure, to go through a variation of dropping one's trousers in public has a cult following from the sanctimonious majorities to use as a salve for whatever offences they may have inflicted on their fellow men, women and children. Nothing is gained by retribution for all I ask is that the evils should be known and we should guard against their being repeated. In the concentration camps of the Second World War teams of 'beloved' doctors carried our surgical experiments on the conscious bodies of the prisoners in the interest of science and for the physical welfare of 'the lads' on the eastern front. In 1995 there are still victims of those macabre surgical experiments still haunting us with their living mutilated bodies. The moral question for the white-collared medical profession is, should they in this year of grace use the medical information torn from the bodies of those tortured concentration camp prisoners, and I have no illusions that, like unto illegal Irish poteen, it defies ethics or the state in the name of the greater good. Only the Irish cannot be faulted in that they contribute to the general welfare. But a year or so ago one of our major public art galleries mounted an exhibition of a hundred years of contemporary German art and deliberately left a huge blank by omitting visual works of art produced during the Nazi period, and we of the small minority protested that that was an act of censorship or PC that should not have taken place for, to applaud Oscar, there is no morality in art.

Within the concrete slabs of the Hayward Gallery is an exhibition worthy of your attention in that it poses the question if one does not conform to those in authority over one, can one produce worthy works of art – and the answer is that the good academic can and the experimental artist no. For the good academic one sits the flower arrangement, the party official or those in High Places, on the studio dais or tastefully arranged, dip the brush onto the palette, click the heels and

Through the Anarchist Press

It has been said in print and is frequently heard at gatherings that the year-old Criminal Justice Act is proving ineffective. It is a shoddily written document which has radicalised the grassroots opposition.

Nevertheless there had been a tendency to accept further curtailment of civic liberties.

It is also rumoured that Mr Howard's Home Office plc is busy at work producing yet more laws to complement the CJA.

It is a useless exercise. You cannot contain a very large section of population between the restricting walls of poverty, homelessness and minimum financial aid to be enforced by maximum force of the law.

The law itself is no more than a set of rules which have to be interpreted. When the law is really an excuse for something else and is badly phrased, and even wrong in grammar, it becomes ineffective.

To give just one instance, there is now no legal definition for the occupation of buildings.

A large building held in trust by the University of North London has been vacated by them and was left empty since the summer. Naturally, as old students of the North West Poly would be glad to inform you, nature abhors a vacuum and the building was occupied. The University of North London, in its wisdom, put in security guards to protect their property. They also issued a writ for an Interim Possession Order.

At a recent court hearing the University's petition was dismissed by a judge who was described by a lawyer as a "particularly nasty specimen". However that may be, the same judge said that as the owners were not excluded from the building and although he was unhappy about "encouraging trespassers" he had to dismiss the petition. For those who are interested to follow this case it will be

continued at the High Court in the Strand on 20th November. The joke of it is that, as the law stands, technically speaking the Prince of Wales Road building "has never been squatted at all" according to the ASS (Advisory Service for Squatters).

For me the most important aspect is the fact that a large designed-for-the-purpose building can be left empty by academia. There are many other buildings of comparable size which are left empty: town halls, libraries, cinemas, not to mention office blocks and warehouses.

In France the word for squatting is requisitioning. Interested groups may inform the corporations which leave buildings empty that as they have no use for them they'd be delighted to take them off their hands and requisition such buildings. *Politesse oblige* and all that.

The number of activities and occupations has greatly increased, and the free information and other networks have multiplied. The free gatherings and festivals, however, have been badly affected because of road-blocks and similar measures.

The free festivals are now more frequent in Spain and in Ireland where there is less harassment.

This against the backdrop of opulence and wealth side-by-side with people living in the siege of poverty.

For the anarchist movement this is the period of living out your anarchism. Whole sections of the population are doing this. But again it is ironical that it was not the advocacy of anarchism by our tracts and exhortations which has galvanised the population, but response to the screws of oppression which have become too tight.

John Rety



collect the medal and the money. But for the experimental artist all authority is Philistine, suspect and conservative. Every authority believes that big and classical clichés based on a long exhausted sell-by date Parthenon thrown up by Iktinos and Kallikrates in 447BC is a safe little money-earner for immortality, and in one's heart one cannot condemn them for acting on fashionable advice, but in the end we are left with the glowering free-thinking concrete slabs that house the exhibition of authoritarian bad taste which forms both their cenotaphs. There has been much air of the vapours as critics stagger around with the back of the hand pressed against the furrowed foreheads, weeping over the evil infamy of the work within this exhibition, but it is neither better nor worse than that in the pre-war Royal Academy summer exhibition. The bulbous-breasted blonde nudes as masturbatory

BRIAN BEHAN IN BRIGHTON

The Begrudgers

by Brian Behan

at The Nightingale Theatre, Brighton

Those of you who weren't able to see Brian Behan's new play at its first performances in Brighton will be able to catch up with it at the Pavilion Theatre in May as part of next year's Brighton Festival. This is Brian's third play and follows on from *Barking Sheep* and *Hallelujah I'm a Bum*.

The theatre, according to Lope de Vega, is a person, a platform and a passion, and certainly these three essentials are on stage in *The Begrudgers*. Peter Brook, the theatre director, wrote a book called *The Empty Space* which suggests that when anyone, anywhere, has a place where one person sits down to watch another do anything previously anticipated, then you have theatre. This could of course be said of a church service or a public execution, and though that used to attract a large audience, it wasn't what he meant.

The Begrudgers could be said to be about the fierce literary rivalry that existed (and probably still does) in Dublin in the immediate post-war period. It was then dominated by three writers: Brendan Behan, Brian O'Nolan (a.k.a. Flann O'Brien and Myles na Gopaleen) and Patrick Kavanagh. On stage we have Patrick Kavanagh and Brendan Behan, and a young student who asks questions about their lives and quarrels. Brian Behan takes on the role of Kavanagh, John O'Donahue plays Brendan Behan and Corrina Costello is the student.

The dominant, not to say dominating part, is

fodder, the official portrait of the Leaders in lieu of the British Prime Minister of the day and the smiling old farm worker one degree short of Alzheimer's disease are what authority wants and what you get, and the artists churn it out, good, bad or indifferent. The crime of authority is that it denies any freedom or innovation no matter how brilliant, crude or stupid, and the day that someone is officially forbidden to dunk a dead cow in a glass tub of aldehyde and a gallery is officially forbidden to publicly exhibit it as art is a time to take to the streets. That is the crime and not the dead cow in aldehyde on public exhibition in a major state art gallery.

Threatening us at the entrance of the Hayward Gallery is Vera Mukhina's huge 'Industrial Worker and Collective Farm Girl', all forward with the mass, farm implements as weapons and flowing skirts behind Uncle Joe, but try as they might all authoritarian statues appear immobile and passive for they never achieve the grace and the mobility of Pythokritos's 'Victory of Samothrace'. Carved over two thousand years ago, light appears to shine through the thin draperies as they give an air of elegant flowing movement that has never been surpassed by the Royal Academy Summer Show, the dead cow dunking squad or the manifestos carved in stone or cast in bronze. They are the soft-sell for promises that will never be kept. After the First World War an understandable forest of monuments were erected 'To the Fallen' and it is curious that the heads were bowed and figures stood immobile on village greens and town squares seeking no applause in a world still awash with tears. In these things one should listen to the voice of an outraged man at the back of the hall, Brian Sewell, the national press heart-cry of the puzzled 'man in the street' artwise, who declaims that the Hayward exhibition "is the 23rd Council of Europe Exhibition and the worst I have ever seen ... It is confusingly displayed, badly lit, and apart from the entrance room, damned dull and disappointing". While for the professional Bleeding Hearts Takami Eto, 70, chief of Japan's management agency and a cabinet member, apologised for causing "a misunderstanding" by saying Japan "did some good" in its 35-year colonisation of Korea up to 1945!

Arthur Moyses

that of Patrick Kavanagh and the playwright draws skilfully from his poems and prose to give life to the character. The culmination of the discord between Behan and Kavanagh was a famous libel action brought by Kavanagh against a magazine which suggested that there was a friendship between the two of them. Kavanagh denied this, maintaining that his relationship with Behan was simply in employing him as a painter to decorate his flat. When Behan's counsel handed him a copy of his novel *Tarry Flynn* and asked him to read what was inscribed on the flyleaf, he was confronted with a dedication in his own hand 'to my friend Brendan Behan'. This was the collapse of the case, and it was followed immediately by his collapse into hospital for the removal of a cancerous lung. He survived this and was born again, he tells us in a poem, on the banks of the canal.

Brian Behan uses the platform for many witty observations of his own about the state of Ireland today and on the whole it is a most entertaining evening, enlivened by songs by both Behan and Kavanagh, sung by Corrina Costello. What it could do with is some professional direction, cutting and quickening of pace. Let's hope these will be seen to when it is performed in May.

Martin Green

BOOK BARGAINS

Our next issue (2nd December) will include details of more reduced price books suitable for Christmas gifts.

— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

BOTANICAL RESOURCE AND POPULAR PARK

I mentioned not long ago George Melly's plaintive little television film about the haunt of his childhood, Sefton Park, Liverpool, with its once-flourishing botanic gardens and its now sadly-dilapidated palm house modelled on the magnificent structure at the parent institution at Kew, which Pevsner called "one of the boldest pieces of nineteenth century functionalism – much bolder indeed, and hence aesthetically much more satisfying than the Crystal Palace ever was".

Unlike Sefton Park, Kew has adapted itself to continual changes in the role of botany in the British economy and in the countries that were once called colonies and are known as the 'developing world'. "The seeds of potential crops for deserts and semi-arid lands, the home of some twenty per cent of the world's population, are stored in the Seed Bank. SEPASAL (Survey of Economic Plants for Arid and Semi-Arid Lands) has now documented (with funding from OXFAM) some 6,000 species of under-used plants."

I learn this from a sumptuous book I was sent for review in another journal, *Kew: The History of the Royal Botanic Gardens* by Ray Desmond (Harvill, £25).

The place began as desirable residences for the endless progeny of the Hanoverian monarchs, but was gradually prised out of their hands by a series of great botanists: Sir Joseph Banks with his "strategy for discovering and developing the natural resources of Britain's expanding empire" and the two Hookers, Sir William and Sir Joseph. They were responsible, for example, for the transfer of breadfruit from the Pacific to the West Indies and the shift of rubber and cinchona (the source of quinine) from South America to India.

The role of Kew as a garden for public enjoyment crept up against rigid opposition from the Hookers. When William took over as director in 1845, he wrote:

"I could wish these gardens were not thrown open on Sunday. But they always have been so: it will be impossible to take this privilege away from the public: after all, it is better for them than going to the public house."

His son and successor was more intransigent, fearing for the future of the gardens as a scientific institution, and built walls to keep out visitors until the afternoon, even though "many of these excursionists were poor people who only obtained a holiday once or twice a year".

But from 1866 Kew not only supplied bedding plants for London's parks, and also for 'the poorer inhabitants of London', a social obligation honoured for some twenty years. The spread of the railway network had resulted in Kew becoming rated as "one of London's most popular attractions for the poor of the East End". Hooker referred to "a swarm of filthy children and women of the lowest class who invaded the Gardens" and complained that "they resorted to the woods for immoral purposes in great numbers".

The issue came to a head in 1882 with a series of protest meetings urging that since the public paid for the upkeep of the gardens it was entitled to use them outside the restricted



opening hours. The battle for access was won, slowly, and as late as 1907 the director was answering a request for longer summer opening from the local council with the disdainful reminder that "the Royal Botanic Gardens are primarily a scientific institution maintained for the benefit of the whole Empire". So, from 1916, an entrance fee of one penny was charged.

Ray Desmond's book is essentially an institutional history, full of marvellous botanical and architectural illustrations. What I miss is an account of the place of Kew in the folklore of London.

For example, every London schoolchild of the pre-war generation can remember a poem which was chanted aloud with the refrain 'Come down to Kew in lilac time / It isn't far from London'. I tested this statement with

various elderly anarchists by telephone and learned more than I bargained for, as they told me of various trysts at Kew Gardens. The verses were called, appropriately, 'Barrel Organ' and were written by a forgotten poet Alfred Noyse in 1912.

They alleged that Kropotkin and Rudolf Rocker would take a trip to Kew to demonstrate the potentialities of intensive horticulture, and reminded me that every London primary school was provided with a bundle of tickets to get there on LCC trams, and that Kew Gardens was the last-but-one stop on the Broad Street to Richmond train line, while on the District Line it was only 29 minutes from Charing Cross (Embankment) and that in those days Frank Pick of the Underground commissioned marvellous posters to advertise the trip to Kew.

My phone-around reminded me of the huge impact of public services on our lives, not only in transport but also in the importance of the public park, whether a specialist institution like Kew or the recreation ground around the corner starved of funding under the impact of current worship of market values.

For there's a sting in the tale of the evolution of Kew Gardens. One of many appendices to the history of Kew tells the saga of the entrance charges. The one penny fee had been introduced at the suggestion of the Committee on Public Retrenchment "in the interests of national economy". In the inter-war years it was alternatively dropped and re-imposed. In 1980 it was increased to 10 new pence and by 1994 it had crept up to £4.

Nowadays you have to think twice before taking a trip to Kew.

Colin Ward

KEW GARDENS GRIEVANCES.

AN OPEN-AIR

INDIGNATION MEETING

Will be held on a Plot of Ground in Ennordale Road.

OPPOSITE THE TEMPERATE HOUSE GATE

OF KEW GARDENS.

On SATURDAY AFTERNOON NEXT, OCT. 28th,

PUBLICLY PROTEST

Against the late hour at which the Gardens are opened, and the increased restrictions now being placed upon the entrance of the public by bricking up and closing gates.

CHAIR TO BE TAKEN AT THREE O'CLOCK BY
JOSEPH BEAUMONT, ESQ.

Several Gentlemen, including Members of Parliament and Representatives of the Kew Gardens Public Rights Defence Association, are expected to address the Meeting.

Edward King, "Times" Steam Printing Works, Richmond.

How to Defend Yourself in Court

How to Defend Yourself in Court

by Michael Randle

Civil Liberties Trust, £4.99

Michael Randle and Pat Pottle were prosecuted in 1991 for organising the escape of the Russian spy Georgé Blake in 1966. The prosecution appeared to have an incontrovertible case – Randle and Pottle had actually written a book about how they did it, *The Blake Escape*. But they defended themselves in court and were found not guilty. There could hardly be a better qualification for writing a book on the subject.

As additional qualifications, Randle has a lot of experience of the English court system (the book does not cover the Scottish system, which is of course different) and has a concise and lucid writing style he developed as a journalist. As a reporter on *Peace News* he discovered the 'Regional Seat of Government', an underground bunker at Warren Row near Wargrave in Berkshire where the government was to be housed in case of nuclear war, so that although the country might suffer almost total devastation it would not suffer anarchy. His discovery led to the famous 'Spies for Peace' incident of the 1960s.

The book is a useful guide – useful even to people who do not anticipate being defendants – to the way the English courts work. It includes a comprehensive and lucid glossary and accounts of several relevant cases. The only one of these which led to a ruling from the House of Lords, which judges must follow, is a case in which Randle himself was

convicted, with others, of organising a non-violent demonstration and was sent down for eighteen months, during which time he met George Blake. So he did not get acquitted every time.

The actual advice which emerges about defending yourself is in most cases, don't. In most cases where one pleads not guilty, one wishes to convince the magistrate or the jury that the prosecution evidence is to be dismissed, and in general this is best done by a professional advocate, if you can find a reliable one.

When you have to defend yourself is where you plead not guilty on the grounds of justification. In the Blake escape trial, for instance, defence evidence began with the statement "we do not contest any of the prosecution evidence" and proceeded to the successful argument that the defendants should be acquitted because it is right to rescue anyone from an appalling sentence of 42 years imprisonment. A professional advocate would not be able to argue such a case under the terms of his profession. Nor would he be able to mess about like one who can pretend to unfamiliarity with the law.

Where there are several defendants, it is more or less recommended that some should be defended by lawyers and others defend themselves, so that both types of defence may be offered.

This is a valuable handbook which is also worth reading for fun, and might make a useful Christmas present.

DR

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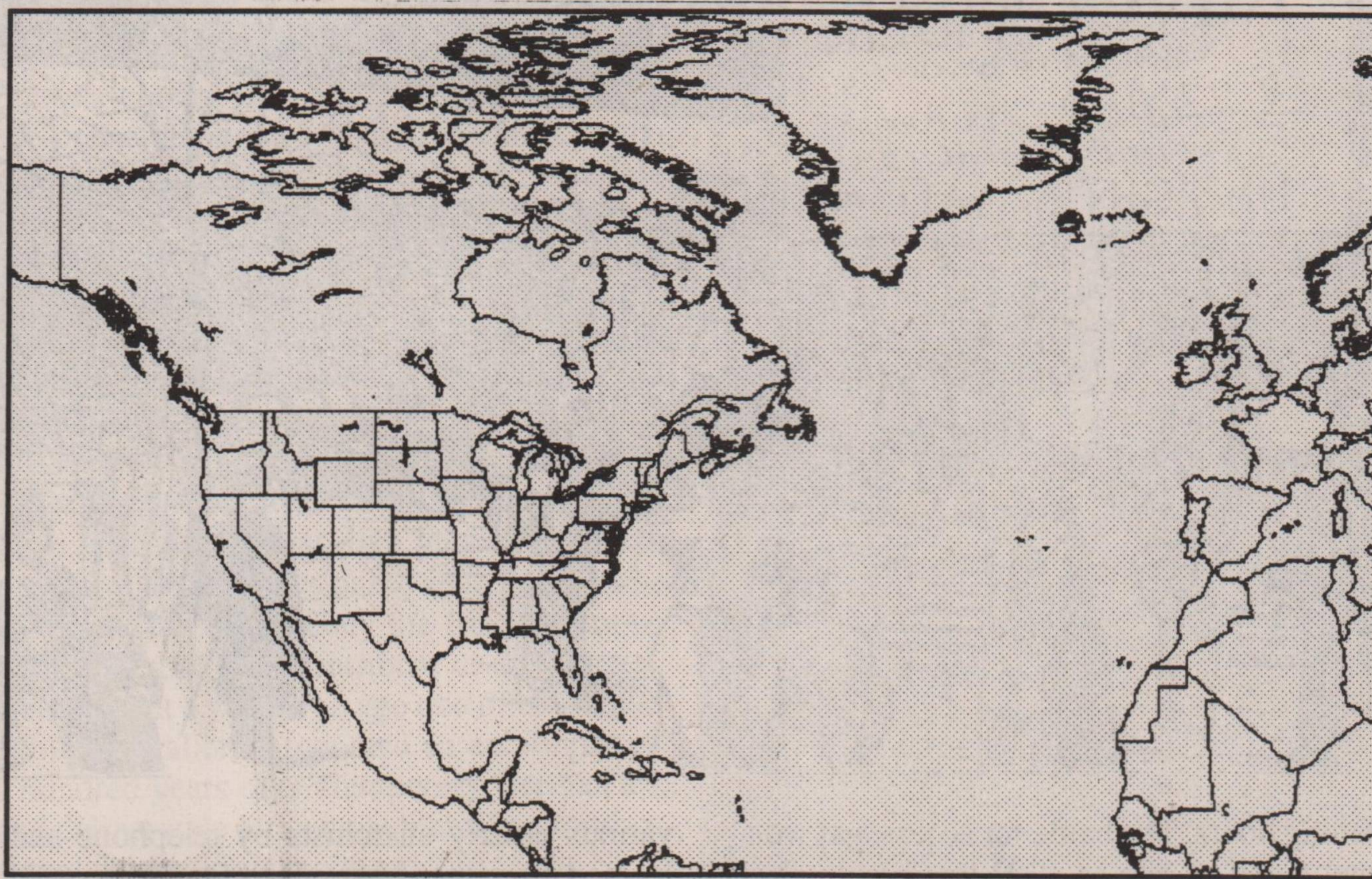
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FOCUS ON... THE AMERICAS

US foreign economic policy is quickly developing the idea of a Free Trade for the Americas (FTAA). At a meeting which was held in Denver, Colorado at the end of June the date of 2005 was set for negotiations to be concluded ...



American Common Market.

The UK also had a taste of this medicine not so long ago. The idea of economic union (be it EU or FTAA) is supposed to help stop these kinds of crisis. It didn't help Mexico and it didn't help the UK – the two cases are not so dissimilar. Although both have now reached some kind of stability (for how long is unclear) the whole affair has awoken some others who may find themselves shedding similar amounts of blood to the dangers of this kind of integration and exposing themselves to foreign capital (here today gone tomorrow) and running out onto an uneven playing field. Mexico tried to pretend the earth was flat. She paid her price and she took a fall. Unfortunately it's always the little folk who pick up the bill.

BOLIVIA Gunning for the Cocaleros

One of the new bogey men for Western governments these days is of course the 'narco-trafficker' and the West demand of those governments in the producing countries a certain firmness towards their peasantry. What does this all mean in practice? Bolivia gives us an example where, under pressure from Washington, the security forces have set out to destroy the coca plantations. Fair enough? These same peasants were miners until the mid '80s when the IMF reconstruction projects began to bite. Growing coca seemed the only logical solution to their plight.

Filemón Escobar a former member of the

FSTMB Bolivian miner's federation points out the difference between coca and cocaine: "The Andean world was born with the coca leaf thousands of years ago and the coca leaf and coca chewing are part of our culture", he says. "The transformation of coca leaf into cocaine is a problem of the industrialised countries who discovered that cocaine could be extracted. Yet we Bolivians are the victims". In 1991 the coca growers of Bolivia held huge demonstrations trying to persuade their government not to give in to US pressure to allow military personnel into the country to train the Bolivian soldiers in anti-drugs activity. As Escobar says, "the aim of the US is not to fight drug trafficking but to destroy the raw material. It is easier and cheaper for them to destroy coca in Bolivia than to reduce domestic demand for cocaine. The US president says that he agrees with alternative development plans but that he has no money to fund them. But, hell, can they afford military solutions!" Pressure from the US embassy in La Paz continues in 1995. According to the Americans, in January 1992 45,000 hectares were being used to grow coca and this figure has now risen to 48,000 whilst the Bolivian legal system allows for only some 12,000 hectares for production for traditional consumption, mainly in the Yungas region. The Americans maintain that this surplus will produce 93 tonnes of Cocaine. So an 'offer you can't refuse' was delivered to the Bolivian authorities on 8th March this year: the Bolivian government was to eradicate 1,750 hectares before the end of June, come up with medium and long term plans for further eradication and sign a new extradition treaty. Otherwise she could look

The Level Playing Field

	Mexico	USA	UK
Population	80.5m	255.4m	57.7m
Population per sq km	48	27	238
Human development index	81	98	96
Average inflation p.a. 1988-93	31%	4.1%	5.5%
Main export destination	US	Canada	Germany
Foreign debt (as % of GDP)	35.2	*	*
Cost of living as at Sept 1993 (New York=100)	86	100	104
GDP per head:			
in purchasing power parity (USA=100)	28	100	74

Source: The Economist PWIF 1995

* figures not given

Mickey Kantor, the US trade representative, pronounced the Denver meeting "a marvellous start". Here the joint declaration was seen as "an essential step in laying the foundation of the FTAA" whose principles "will ensure that all play by the same rules". However, Denver was not quite the beginning of the process. Some six months earlier 34 heads of state had met in Miami and agreed to work for 'Free Trade' over the coming decade. Two weeks later the Mexican peso collapsed.

Mr Enrique Iglesias of the Inter American Development Bank said after the Denver meeting that, "it was important to have a success to erase the perception that Miami was wiped out by the peso crisis". Mr Iglesias' apparent optimism that Mexico would prove a one-off is not seemingly shared by some ministers from the other 33 countries involved. Brazil in particular seems anxious about linking itself too closely to the North American economies. The NAFTA countries would account for 82% of the overall market against the 11% of the Mercosur countries and, despite US protestations that the FTAA would be consistent with global trade rules, Mr Luiz Felipe Lampreia is still concerned about the fact that since 1989 Brazil's exports to the US have not risen, largely because of US protectionism in the agricultural sector.

Brazil is clearly concerned about whose rules all will be expected to follow. Indeed NAFTA seems to be in trouble at the moment for reasons which compliment Brazilian concern. The *Financial Times* says they have "quietly shelved" plans for further customs tariff reductions and Canada seems to think that the US has "lost interest in the exercise". Apparently no further talks have been planned.

MEXICO

At the back of it all is the still reverberating economic crisis in Mexico which began 19th December last. According to the *Financial Times* (6th October 1995) the current recession after the peso's collapse has been deeper than any expected it to be. Economic activity 'plunged' 10.5% in the first half of this year. More than 1,000,000 jobs have gone in a country that needs to create the same number every year to account for a growing labour force.

The main winners have been what the *Financial Times* calls the big corporations who have low debt and established export markets. Exports – unsurprisingly – are up by a third. So an export led recovery? Starting to sound familiar?

On the other hand small businesses – heavily in debt to the banks – have gone into a tail spin due to a rise in interest rates from 30% to 120%. Indeed the number of bankruptcies was threatening the very system. The state had to come to their rescue with a bail out package representing some 3% or 4% of GDP. Meanwhile 10% has been slashed from public expenditure to pay for it all.

As we say the hope is that Mexico will prove to be a one off. This seems unlikely. It is more a question of who and when. This is seemingly realised by those economists who advise the IMF and G7 etc. They are currently discussing how to deal with such crises when they happen. Thinking seems to be moving towards giving the IMF a higher profile in these situations – going in to bail out the economies which end up on the rocks in return for acceptance for the usual austerity programmes which are forced upon these countries. The expectation would seem to be that something will happen sooner rather than later with perhaps the next crisis somewhere in Eastern Europe.

But also fault lines have been showing up in other parts of Latin America, particularly between the more successful trading partners. In the first half of this year similar difficulties to those which hit Mexico have occurred between Argentina and Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela and also within the Central

forward to an international economic embargo from the IMF, World Bank and indeed all those organisations where the US enjoys a near veto on policy decisions. Perhaps unsurprisingly the government of Señor Sanchez set about to do what was demanded and it was left to the peasants to try to stand up to the blackmail. As the government announced its short term eradication plan on the 8th of April, 850 self-defence peasants committees were set up and immediately took possession of the access routes to the coca production zones in order to resist militarisation.

NARCO-TRAFFICKERS

Senator Bob Dole is going to find it hard to sell Bolivian peasants to the US public as evil narco-traffickers who simply intend to get rich at the expense of the bored American youth who turn to drugs as an answer to the social problems they have to live with. We are not talking about drug barons and we are not talking about evil individuals seeking to poison the American youth. The reasons the peasants produce the leaf are, however, equally comprehensible to all those who consider their plight over the last few years. Bolivian land reform in 1953 gave the peasants some land on the Altiplano, but not enough to feed their families. The choice was therefore a simple one and the peasants moved south to spontaneously take over land in the forest of the Amazon basin – a terrain which gave control problems (and still does) to the authorities. In the 1980s a number of factors came together. Droughts in the Altiplano pushed more peasants south; tin mines were closed as part of neo-liberal economic policy putting 23,000 of the 27,000 miners on the economic garbage heap and an explosion in the demand for cocaine took place. According to the laws of Comparative Advantage the solution was obvious: as the peasant organisations got their act together and parcelled out the land each family was given one or two hectares, a third for their own needs and the other two thirds for the leaf the income from which would mean the difference between getting by and starving. The only other solution would have been a revolutionary redistribution of land in favour of the peasants allowing them a development away from the system of international trade which is founded on neo-liberal economics. Such a solution is, however, unthinkable. The idea of some form of independent development for the Bolivians cannot be permitted. Firstly, the peasantry must suffer the internal inequalities of land ownership, as is the case throughout Latin America, which is necessary for Big Brother's interests to the North – who can then have in place a reliable ruling class who will keep the people in check and enslave them to the over-reaching economic demands of the global market. Secondly, they must be made to provide the primary goods and commodities at low cost on which the North depends. In its attempt to achieve these ends the military option is the preferred one.

PEASANTS RESIST

When the Bolivian government announced its capitulation to US demands tension and anger began to mount. The Cocaleros organisations announced they wouldn't uplift a single plant unless alternatives were on offer. The authorities were only offering compensation of between 2,000 and 2,500 dollars per hectare less than what could be got from coca production in a year and the future would be one of producing goods for foreign markets where the prices were insulting to the farmers.

(continued on page 8)

Malatesta and the Platform

Dear Freedom,
In the most recent volume by Freedom Press (*The Anarchist Revolution* by Malatesta) Vernon Richards states that Makhno did not respond to Malatesta's further article on the Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists. In fact he did. In *Le Libertaire* (paper of the French Union Anarchiste Communiste Revolutionnaire), No. 269 of 16th August 1930 (quoted in *Autonomie Individuelle et Force Collective*, Alexandre Skirda), he noted: "I believe that a properly social movement, which is how I conceive the anarchist movement, can have no positive politics without having first found more or less stable forms of organisation, which will give it various means of necessary struggle against the different authoritarian social systems. It is the absence of these means which make anarchist action, above all during the revolutionary period, come to degenerate into a sort of local individualism, all because the anarchists, declaring themselves enemies of 'all constitutions in general', have seen the masses distance themselves from them because they inspire no hope of any practical realisation. To struggle and win, there must be a tactic whose character must be explained in a practical programme of action ... In the realm of practical realisation, the autonomous anarchist groups must be capable, faced with each new situation which presents itself, of formulating problems to resolve and the responses to them, without hesitation, and without altering the anarchist ends and the anarchist spirit" (my translation from French). One has to remember that the debate that took place between Malatesta and the supporters of the Platform (and it's a shame you didn't translate Arshinov's letter to Malatesta on the subject, which is very lucid) was hindered by him being under house arrest. Malatesta did not get to read Makhno's first letter for more than a year. Malatesta's isolation, and the problems of translation from Russian to

French and then to Italian, must have had an effect on Malatesta's understanding of what the Platformists meant by collective responsibility. It may be wishful thinking, but I feel that under more favourable circumstances the grand old anarchist communist veteran would have understood what Makhno, Arshinov, Mett, et al, were attempting to explain to the international anarchist movement. Certainly Pierre Besnard, the French theoretician of anarcho-syndicalism, in his article 'Responsibility' for the *Encyclopedie Anarchiste* edited by Sebastien Faure in 1933 wrote approvingly of collective responsibility: "Like federalism itself, of which it is one of its principal elements, collective responsibility exercises itself in two ways - upwards and downwards. It makes an obligation of the individual to explain their acts to the collective, and for the latter to explain their acts before the individual ... Collective responsibility consecrates and clarifies individual responsibility" (my translation). Certainly in the organisation of which I am a member (the Anarchist Communist Federation) collective responsibility is practised in a way of which Malatesta could not have failed to approve. As he says: "Certainly I accept and support the view that anyone who associates and cooperates with others for a common purpose must feel the need to coordinate his actions with those of his fellow members and do nothing that harms the work of others and, thus, the common cause; and respect the agreements that have been made - except when wishing sincerely to leave the association when emerging differences of opinion or changed circumstances or conflict over preferred methods make cooperation impossible or inappropriate. Just as I maintain that those who do not feel and do not practice that duty should be thrown out of the association."
Yours for libertarian communism.
Nick Heath

How do we get there?

Dear Freedom,
Peter J. Whitfield's letter (4th November) raises valid doubts about anarchism as a theory - the theory that society without government is a practicable proposition. But there is also a non-theoretical anarchism, expressed in Peter Lumsden's article in the same edition of *Freedom*: "Even if it could be demonstrated conclusively that a free society is both unnatural and irrational, we should still pursue it by all effective means, simply because that is what we want". Among the writers of anarchist classics, Kropotkin thought of anarchism as a scientific theory, but Malatesta was of the non-theoretical persuasion: "I protest against the charge of dogmatism, because, though I am unflinching and definite as to what I want, I am always doubtful about what I know" (*Life and Ideas*, page 40).

As a social attitude rather than a social theory, anarchism is opposition to all institutions in which people impose their will on other people by means of threats. If we strive against all kinds of coercive institutions, we must logically be striving towards a society without coercive institutions. Is the free society a practicable possibility, or is it no more than the logical endpoint of a continuing struggle to make society freer? Which we choose to believe will make little difference to the way we behave. Our vision of a free society in the future follows from our dislike of injustice in the present, not the other way round. Anarchists tend to be optimistic about what can be achieved, but it is not necessary to be an optimist in order to be an anarchist. Could this be the light at the end of Peter J. Whitfield's tunnel?
Donald Room

Briefly ...

Dear Editors,
I cannot possibly reply in kind to NW's weird assault on my record and character. What is so extraordinary is the amazing contrast of his letter with his other contribution in the same issue. His appraisal of Ken Loach's film about Spain is perhaps the best thing to appear in print, to date, on this subject. "Opposition is friendship" said Blake, so I am not worried. The harm he does is to himself, that is the pity of it.
Peter Cadogan

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The Limitations of the Enlightenment

Dear Freedom,
In his article 'The Limitations of the Enlightenment' (*Freedom*, 4th November), Peter Lumsden maintains that Chomsky's "idea of 'essential nature' ... is in danger of taking the place of god as a basis for norms or values". Chomsky is optimistic, he clearly believes that good will prevail over evil, but it is necessary to recognise that such a condition is not inevitable and that time will heal all wounds. A passive quietist response to our 'essential nature' obscures a fundamental aspect of libertarian socialism - namely participation. This is not the response Chomsky advocates. 'Essential nature' is not pre-determined, unlike god. Anyone familiar with Achbar and Wintonik's film *Manufacturing Consent* will recall an interview sequence between Peter Jay and Chomsky. In response to a question regarding the degree to which the success of libertarian-socialism depends on a

fundamental change in the nature of man, Chomsky replies: "I think it not only depends on it but in fact the whole purpose of libertarian socialism is that it will contribute to it. On the one hand it requires that spiritual transformation, on the other hand its purpose is to create institutions which will contribute to that transformation". Lumsden is concerned of the risk that we will be "dictated by nature". It is a risk to those that fail to recognise the extent to which we must actively participate in the provision of those conditions necessary for our decent impulses, our 'nature', to be realised. It is a risk to those content to use unthinkingly concepts such as 'essential nature' and 'god' as a crutch by which to support their own apathy. Lumsden offers tentative criticism of an approach to 'essential nature' that is precisely the opposite of the approach taken by Chomsky: it requires contribution not acquiescence.
Andrew Harmer

FOCUS ON... THE AMERICAS

(continued from page 7)
Confrontation was in the air. On 11th July military units moved into one of the coca producing areas and the Cocaleros decided to resist. Their underground committees were already well used to siege tactics. Three days later about 100 peasants and committee members were arrested. The situation grew worse. The Cocaleros cut off the access routes. The military re-opened them using force against resisters. Someone threw a home made bomb. Twenty-one police and civilians were injured. The usual kind of police response followed. Homes were raided, folk were beaten up and children were pressurised into revealing names of sympathisers. The people took to the streets and marched to Aroma to demonstrate peacefully demanding the liberation of those who had been arrested. This they finally achieved at the end of July but the situation is still tense: "In 1985 we were kicked out of the mines" says one Cocalero, "and up there there was no land for us. So that we wouldn't have to beg we asked the government for work. They threw us out onto the streets. In order to feed our families we came to this corner of the country. Now they want to move us on. We won't move. If they want to get us out they'll have to kill us first". The situation has reached a kind of stalemate. Whilst the authorities rely more and more on strong arm tactics the Cocaleros threaten to respond in kind and enjoy considerable public sympathy. The prospects for a peaceful outcome look bleak with the US backed military being accused more and more of human rights abuses and the number of farmers killed by the anti-drug police force is on the increase.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE
GUATEMALA USA

GUATEMALA
GENEVA, 6th October (Reuter) - The United Nations cited staff reports on Friday that Guatemalan soldiers killed at least ten returned refugees in a remote northern region in the Central American state. Troops were reported to have shot and fired grenades at a refugee gathering, Ron Redmond, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said. He said President Ramiro de Leon had expressed his personal concern about Thursday's killings and told the UN he would set up an inquiry. "Yesterday, Guatemalan army soldiers reportedly shot and lobbed grenades at a meeting of Guatemalan returnees held in the resettlement community of Xaman," Redmond told a news briefing. "UNHCR staff report this morning that at least 10 villagers were killed and a further 18 people seriously wounded ... The events leading up to this incident are unclear at the present time but UNHCR is appalled by this violence and we are very concerned that it could have a serious impact on the return of Guatemalan refugees from southern Mexico," he added. Asked who was blaming the Guatemalan army, Redmond said UNHCR staff had interviewed some of the returnees and had been told the army was responsible. He said there were conflicting reports about the exact causes of the killings, however, and said three of the wounded were said to be Guatemalan soldiers. "This is based on accounts by the returnees. We don't know exactly what happened," Redmond said. There are around 40,000 Guatemalans living in southern Mexico, most of them Mayan Indian peasants who took refuge there in the early 1980s to escape political violence and scorched-earth army campaigns against leftist guerrillas. Some 6,000 returned last year, either individually or in groups, and the UN is hoping for a total of 10,000 this year.

USA
March of a Million
WASHINGTON (Reuter) - Following are estimates by the National Park Service of attendance at other major demonstrations, rallies and events in the nation's capital.
Martin Luther King's civil rights march, 1963: 250,000
Anti-war march on the Pentagon, 1967: 200,000
Vietnam War moratorium rally, 1969: 600,000
Vietnam War 'Out Now' rally, 1971: 500,000
US Bicentennial Day fireworks, 1976: 1 million
Washington For Jesus religious rally, 1980: 200,000
Welcome home for Americans held in Iran, 1981: 500,000
Anti-Reagan administration rally, 1981: 250,000
Washington Redskins Super Bowl parade, 1983: 500,000
Civil rights 20th anniversary march, 1983: 300,000
Gay rights march, 1987: 200,000
Abortion rights march, 1989: 300,000
Anti-abortion march, 1990: 200,000
Abortion rights march, 1992: 500,000
Gay/Lesbian rights march, 1993: 300,000

Statistics reflecting the state of America's black men:
EDUCATION - In 1993, there were 499,000 black men enrolled in undergraduate college classes and 789,400 black women. *From the US Department of Education.*
PRISON - In 1994, 30.2% of black men aged 20-29 were in prison or jail or on probation or parole, compared with 4.8% of black women; 6.7% of white men; and 1.4% of white women. *From the Sentencing Project*
MURDER - The rate of homicide victims per 100,000 black men is 72.0; for black women, 14.2; for white men, 9.3; for white women, 3.0. *From the US Census Bureau*
EMPLOYMENT - Average annual unemployment for black males, 12.0%; for black females 11.0%; for white males 5.4%; for white females 5.2%. *From the US Census Bureau.*
POVERTY - Percentage of black men ages 18-64 living below the poverty level, 20%; of black women 32%; of white men 7%; of white women 10%. *From the US Census Bureau.*

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24th November Arguments in Favour of Governments (discussion led by Michael Murray)

1st December topic to be announced (speaker Don Howard)

8th December General Discussion

15th December Christmas Party

22nd - 29th December no meetings

Anyone 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 (telephone number 0181-847 0203, not too early in the day please) giving subject and prospective dates and we will do our best to accommodate. A collection is made to pay for the £15 cost of the room. Donations are accepted from those who cannot attend regularly but wish to see the continuation of these meetings.

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