

# anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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FIFTY PENCE

**"VOTE: The instrument and symbol of a free man's power to make a fool of himself and a wreck of his country."**

**Ambrose Bierce  
in *The Devil's Dictionary***

## **THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS A VICTORY FOR APATHY?**

**T**he turnout at American elections is always very low, and the recent presidential election was no exception, and in spite of the millions of dollars from all kinds of suspicious sources did not succeed either in bribing the American people to vote or to vote for a particular candidate. Multi-millionaire Perot managed to get 7% of the votes with his own millions (as Goldsmith will be doing with his – already £20 million have been used in boosting his Referendum Party). Clinton's 49% was described by some of the media as a 'landslide' in spite of the fact that old man Dole got 41% and that both the Senate and Congress for which political elections were held at the same time still have a Republican majority – though slightly reduced.

But let's now come down to the nitty-gritty of these percentages with

which the media bamboozle their readers. In fact just under a half of the American electorate did not vote. So far from Clinton having received 49% of the vote – that is of the electorate who actually voted – he only got 49% of those who voted, which is just under a quarter of the registered electorate.

**A**s anarchists all our propaganda is directed to people to run their own lives, and obviously we are delighted that, in spite of the millions of dollars that have been supplied by all the vested interests in their own interests, they have succeeded in getting barely a half of the electorate to cast a vote.

Needless to say we are not convinced that the abstainers are anarchists. They are in the main apathetic people for whom Clinton or Dole are a Hobson's Choice. *But at least they start by having no faith in the*

*politicians. Anarchist propaganda is therefore to make them have faith in themselves above all, and then to realise that there are millions not just here but throughout the world who are in the same situation, and by joining forces they could in a generation change the whole socio-political-economic situation worldwide.*

The French revolutionaries used to say *L'union c'est la force*. It is even more true today that if the real producers of wealth – our food and the material services that are essential to a civilised and happy existence – joined forces, not just by signing a membership form *but by participating in demonstrations, in local activity for the commonweal*, the Murdochs, the Saudi billionaires and not least the multinationals and transnationals could be eliminated.

Apathy, in a sense, is as bad as voting.

### **THE REAL ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT**

**A**ccording to *The Independent* (28th October) is that "thou shalt not pass the buck", but then they summarise the situation as "Tories blame family values – opponents blame the Tories". It is left only to the anarchists to blame the *capitalist system* for all our woes, including what we are, as individuals, as communities.

Surely one cannot escape from the corrupting effect of capitalism, the money and profits systems

As we write these lines the trial of a top tax inspector involved in a whole series of bribes by powerful tax-evaders is proceeding on its costly journey through the courts, and elsewhere "more than a hundred prison officials have been interviewed in connection with allegations that thousands of pounds in expenses was claimed for hotel stays that never took place" (*Independent*, 29th October). These are just minor incidents. What goes on in the City is nobody's business!

### **JOKE OF THE MONTH**

**T**he government's propaganda is that everybody's getting more prosperous, unemployment is at its lowest in years, etc., in spite of the fact that every day one reads of the big enterprises either amalgamating (which invariably means redundancies – after all, that's the point of amalgamation!) or, as one of the supermarkets announced as we write, that they are closing a hundred of their premises with losses of a thousand jobs. Their profits had dropped a few million from the hundreds they are still making.

And, according to even informed forecasts, "half the extra 1.6 million jobs to be created over the next ten years will come from greater self-employment with the other half coming from the growth in the number of part-timers" (*Guardian*).

But the joke of the month is surely the announcement that "more than 1,750 jobs to be cut at the Employment Service as part of a three-year cost-cutting programme" (*Guardian*, 1st November 1996).

What this means is that more than half the government agency's

headquarters staff will be axed. These are the people who are supposed to be the brains, the ones who are thinking up how to create jobs, including, of course, implementing the government's plans to force the unemployed to work for their dole plus £10 a week or else.

Today another 1,750 salary slaves have learned that no jobs under capitalism are secure.

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

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**and much more...**

# LUST FOR THE CANE

## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

We are in favour of spanking, so long as the participants are both adult, and both having fun.

Erotic delights are more varied than the prudish care to admit. Abelard and Eloise, the famous medieval lovers who got into trouble for publishing the intimate details, enjoyed occasional whippings. So did and do many lovers who prefer to keep the details private. As the old saw has it, unnatural practices is only natural.

What is indefensible is getting one's kicks by spanking an unwilling victim, and this is especially true when the unwilling victim is a child.

The current enthusiasm for restoration of corporal punishment in schools is difficult to understand except as erotic desire. Yet the current debate, on both sides of the argument, is wondrously coy about it.

Of course it is not the case that every practitioner of spanking enjoys it. The loving parent who clouts her child in a temper feels no joy at all, erotic or otherwise, but only remorse. She will be forgiven, because children know what it is like to have a tantrum, but it is ridiculous to say that such blows are given with love. They are given in spite of love.

Readers old enough to remember when every teacher had a cane or tawse will remember that it was used more often when a teacher was in a ratty mood, taking revenge on the kids for something which had nothing to do with them. Sir or Miss obtained some relief from this bullying, but the joy was not of a sexual nature.

There was also the genuine belief that corporal punishment of children acted as a deterrent to unacceptable behaviour. Although in practice the same children appeared for punishment again and again, and the deterrent effect was indiscernible.

George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, contributes his opinion that slaps administered with love have a useful deterrent effect, but as the journalist Francis Wheen wrote in *The Guardian* (31st October):

"I find it inconceivable that George Carey would take a swipe at an Archdeacon who had been 'misbehaving'. The disciplinary code observed by grown-ups doesn't allow recourse to physical assault. Why, then, do we believe we are setting children an example, and preparing them for adult life, by whacking them every time they stray from the path of righteousness?"

The answer is depressingly simple: because we know we can get away with it. If George Carey saw a pet poodle piddling on his carpet at Lambeth Palace, perhaps he would administer one of his 'loving slaps'; if the miscreant was a sabre-toothed rotweiler, he might think twice. It is nothing to do with 'discipline' and everything to do with the balance of power."

So there are various reasons for causing pain to children. But perhaps the most important,

reason, the sexual gratification of the torturer, is the one least mentioned.

During the debate on corporal punishment in the 1970s it was suggested that naughty children might be tortured by means of mild electric shocks from a cattle prod. This would have advantages over the cane, that the amount of shock might be measured and the child not hurt more than intended, and that it would not leave marks. The advocates of corporal punishment were angrily dismissive of this suggestion (which was indeed made by opponents), but did not explain why.

The likely explanation is that there is something erotically satisfying about the swish of a cane. There is in fact a pornographic magazine called *Swish*, though this deals with 'corporal punishment' or 'CP', which in the jargon of pornography means men beating women. Women beating men is called 'correction'. The considerable pornographic literature of adults beating children has no particular name, because the pornographic description, like the political debate, is wrapped up in nonsense about beating the child for the child's own good.

The best-known cases of caning freaks come from the memoirs of famous men who attended posh boarding schools in their youth. The late Dr Chevenix-Trench, in his day a highly respected public school headmaster, did not even pretend that the beatings he loved to give were punishments. He told applicants for admission to his school "I'm afraid you did not quite pass the entrance exam, but I will let you in if you will agree to take a beating". Another keen flogger of children was Dr Fisher, later to become one of George Carey's predecessors as Archbishop of Canterbury.

But the privilege of being beaten for teacher's pleasure was not just for fee-payers. Anyone old enough remembers teachers, men and women, who got a buzz which we perceive by hindsight to be a sexual buzz, from causing pain and fear. We have to suspect the motives of Education Minister Gillian Shepherd, and all the other politicians who want corporal punishment back in schools.

Alternative sanctions for unacceptable behaviour are difficult for anarchists to discuss, since we object in any case to people being forced into school against their will. But anarchism is compatible with 'exclusion', not as punishment but as allowing people to do what they like, provided this does not interfere with the activities of other people.

Children enjoy learning, which is how they manage to learn so much even in hostile environments like rigid, sadistic schools. Disruptive behaviour usually indicates that pupils are not enjoying the lesson, so their own education, and everybody else's, will be better served if they are allowed to go and find something which interests them more.

The story so far... Coronation Street is fast losing ground to EastEnders. Bet and Reg have gone; now it's the turn of Raquel.



Coronation Street

Meanwhile, there's incest on Brookside, adultery in Emmerdale, and, in the Street's main rival, EastEnders: affairs, attempted murder,

teenage pregnancy, alcoholism, Ecstasy and homosexuality. The Street needs a miracle — or a tragedy



Emmerdale



Brookside



EastEnders

## VIOLENCE AS ENTERTAINMENT

Why blame the young for violence, threats and bullying when the media have nothing but violence to offer. Not only that of the third world emerging countries going through the same process as their former European colonial masters did among themselves (when the media raise their hands in horror at the atrocities in Africa today they forget the much greater atrocities of the two World Wars with possibly some 75 million dead, apart from the maimed, and not just in this century but all the fratricidal European struggles in the previous centuries).

But now violence in the 'civilised' European community is all about handguns, the size of knives and other dangerous weapons (incidentally, there are probably more murders by strangulation than by guns and knives). But all this is beside the point. It is violence as entertainment that is the greatest influence and danger to young people — more so since one knows that much of their leisure time is spent either on the arcade machines or watching television where violence is the order of the day. On 2nd November we consulted the *Radio Times* to see what was on offer on a Saturday night's entertainment. BBC1 had *A Child's Cry for Help*, "a medical thriller". BBC2 *Look Me in the Eye*, "a Screen Two psychological thriller". ITV Anglia had a "blockbuster thriller". Channel 4 had three programmes, from 9pm *ER Tragedy*, 9.55 *Flight into Terror*, and at 10.25 *NYPD Blue* where "the main

suspect in a shooting turns out to be just 11 years old".

*The Guardian's* magazine (7th November, cover reproduced above) gives us a summing up of the soaps which we assume are part of the lives of millions of our fellow citizens.

And what about the three Sunday tabloids with a circulation of nearly ten million copies. Do you think the children are meekly attending Sunday School or singing hymns looking angelic in their Sunday best? They too are lapping up the violence and the unhealthy sexual relations of the adults. Just observe the front pages of the *News of the World*: "Exclusive: Sizzling spice girl burned me out of bed (turn to centre pages)"; "World picture exclusive — Boycott did this to me" over a photograph of his mistress with two black eyes, "full shocking story and photos on pages 4 and 5" and the headline across pages 4 and 5 was "His eyes were wild, piercing and manic. He was in a frenzy and completely lost control". In the *Mirror on Sunday*: "Di's new love — I want to marry him and have his babies" plus pages 2 and 3 full of it plus photographs. "I want a little sister for Wills and Harry ... Diana finds her caring King of Hearts ... now the words she wants to hear are: marry me".

We had to end on a romantic note, in spite of the fact that we are sure that the quoted passages are the invention of a tough media hack.



# GROUNDSWELL: SHEFFIELD CONFERENCE REPORT

## GROUNDSWELL'S NEW RESISTANCE STRATEGY

Last month the latest Groundswell conference in Sheffield considered a new radical 'resistance strategy' proposed by Brighton to confront the Job Seeker's Act to go with their 'Three Strikes' procedure, and the possibility of extending the highly successful 'Three Strikes and You're Out' scheme into a crack-down on quacks who are shunting people off invalidity benefit.

This Sheffield-based Groundswell conference was attended by claimant and anti-JSA groups from North West Against the JSA, Nottingham, Manchester, Haringey Solidarity Group, South London, Brixton, Oxford, North London, Brighton, East London, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Mansfield Unemployed Workers' Centre, Bury Unemployed Workers' Association, Tameside Anti-Child Support Act Group, Huddersfield, Leeds, Rochdale. Short reports were received from Tameside Unemployed Workers' Alliance, Liverpool, Inner London - Walthamstow, Bradford, Newcastle, and Glasgow Anarchists (who were not present).

## CLAIMANT SURVIVAL GUIDE

A draft of the survival guide for people signing on under the Job Seekers' Act was issued to the conference. It states that the Job Seekers' Agreement is the key to the Act. It declares: "Don't be forced into agreeing to something that you're not prepared to do". It is a legal contract.

When will you have to sign the Agreement? All new claimants will be signing it from 'A' Day - 7th October. Others already signing-on should sign the agreement at their first Restart Interview after 'A' Day, but this could be delayed by resistance from local dole workers.

To get the dole you will have to be 'available for work' and 'actively seeking work'. This was always so, but the Job Seekers' Agreement and Job Seekers' Directions will make it easier to keep tabs on you. They might try to force you to go on training schemes or put in for low-paid jobs. They reckon you are 'not available for work' if you:

- Refuse, without good cause, to apply for or take a suitable job.
- Wilfully spoil your application or job interview.
- Fail to take up a 'reasonable offer' of local short-term work.
- Put unacceptable restraints on availability in terms of hours, days and/or pay.
- Fail to go to an interview with a Client Adviser.
- Fail or refuse to fill in forms about availability for work.

The Job Seekers' Direction is a new feature of the JSA. This can be used where, even if you have met the 'actively seeking work' rule, they feel you are not doing enough. Job Seekers' Directions can force you to:

- Apply for a specific job, advertised through the Job Centre or in the local press.
- Approach one or more named firms or groups of employers, providing they are within a specific industry, trade or profession.
- Prepare a CV and submit it to a number of named employers.
- Register with a named job agency.
- Attend an interview at a given time at a local Employment Service Office about an existing job vacancy.

If you refuse to carry out a direction you face being thrown off benefits for between two to four weeks.

The *Claimant Survival Guide* says:

"Take care: under the JSA, and especially with Job Seekers' Directives, the Employment Service can say that you deliberately spoil your chances of getting a reasonable job by:

- a) Wilfully writing a crap application.
- b) Making unreasonable conditions for accepting a job.
- c) Creating an unfavourable impression at an interview by being deliberately aggressive, obstructive, apathetic or appearing to be under the influence of alcohol.
- d) Refusing to give references.
- e) Delaying acceptance of a job if offered."

## RESISTANCE

The *Claimant Survival Guide* is there to help people get by on the dole while they put in for the decent jobs they want.

The Resistant note at the end is an afterthought designed to slay the JSA. It says:

"Challenge them at every step, insist on them following the law not their own targets and bonuses. Get the name of the person dealing with you if you think they are being unreasonable. Don't let them bully you. Demand to see the supervisor and get their name too.

*Complain* - get a copy of the Job Seekers' Charter. It sets things out, like they're supposed to see you within ten minutes for signing on, interviews, etc. Complain officially if they don't.

*Slow down* - the Employment Service has a problem. They aren't getting extra staff, but they've got all these interviews to do and regular signing is going to take longer ... So, if you can stomach it, take as long as possible over interviews, especially when a change to your Job Seekers Agreement is being discussed. If enough people do this the whole system will start to fall apart."

The conference urged everyone to get stuck into resisting the Job Seekers' Allowance, wage slavery and all the rest of the crap.

## WORKFARE, FRAUD AND THE SINGLE MOTHER

The Sheffield group reported that the Benefit and Employment Services were planning a massive blitz on fraud in twelve towns. The aim was to investigate soft targets, like single mothers and people on child support.

This attack on certain areas is designed to frighten folk off their dole benefits. The idea is not to go for prosecutions, but just to cut down the register by catching claimants doing bits of jobs on the side.

The scheme starts at the beginning of November, and Sheffield is one of the towns to be targeted.

There was some discussion of Project Work. Part of the *Freedom* (19th October) report 'Workfare: Kicking the Poor Harder' was read out at the conference.

It was reported that the pilot schemes for Workfare were to be expanded from Hull and Medway to five major cities. It was proposed that Hull be contacted and asked to send someone to the next Groundswell conference to explain the resistance to Project Work.

## HIT BACK STRATEGY

Brighton proposed a resistance strategy to hit at benefit cuts. The scheme is a sanction-busting operation devised to block benefit withdrawal by staff seeking to hit

targets and draw bigger incentive bonuses.

The project hasn't been tested yet, but the plan would be to move into the dole office concerned and embarrass the manager by buttonholing him/her. A rapid response would be vital to overturn a decision to take someone off benefits.

Edinburgh insisted that the Groundswell reaction to a bad benefit decision would have to be more or less immediate to be effective. It could be used against the Job Seekers Direction.

Representatives of North West Against the JSA argued that claimants would have to telephone in something like Tameside's 'Dole Bully Hotline' and then, in places like Manchester, we could bring in our 'rapid response units' to besiege dole managers in their offices. If we failed to overturn the verdict on the dole-house floor, then the matter could be handed over to the green form solicitors for processing to an appeal.

But first, it was thought, we must have the eyeball-to-eyeball actions with those Employment Service bosses who wield the power to cut benefits on the dole-house floor.

Brighton claimed that the JSA was not yet functioning fully. Employment Service workers are still trying to get a ballot for strike action on some JSA-related issues. Their aim was to get joint action between Benefit and Employment Service staff.

London reported on a union publication called *Disconnect*, which was advocating a work-to-rule by staff, but copies of the document were not available to the conference.

## CRACKDOWN ON THE QUACKS

There was widespread enthusiasm when Rochdale proposed the 'Three Strikes' procedure to be extended to members of the medical profession who have been prostituting their talents for the Department of Social Security to take people off Incapacity Benefit. Many, if not most, of the complaints at unemployed centres are about these unsavoury quacks.

Many claimants on statutory sick pay have to face, when their entitlement runs out, the all work test - an examination by a DSS doctor.

The BMA has already criticised the Incapacity Benefit procedures.

Many at the conference called for a 'One Strike' strategy against these DSS witch doctors. Someone shouted "Let's incapacitate the quacks!"

The matter was referred back, and it was suggested that Groundswell liaise with the group Incapacity Action.

## MAKING LINKS

The conference ended with a discussion of links between Groundswell and other groups. The 'Three Strikes' policy has been the main focus for disagreement between Groundswell and sections of the left and the trade unions. 'Three Strikes', aimed at discouraging Job Centre staff from implementing the JSA, is supported by most groups involved in Groundswell - although Brighton Against the JSA, who have good relations with local CPSA members, have argued that any direct action should be aimed at management and not at other Job Centre staff.

On the left Militant have been the most vocal group opposing 'Three Strikes' - although Militant members in some areas are working with Groundswell groups and some are reported to be unhappy about their organisation's national policy. The SWP are openly hostile to some local Groundswell groups.

The CPSA, representing the lower grades of Employment Service and Benefit Agency staff, is also officially opposed to Groundswell and 'Three Strikes'. The Employment Service section of the CPSA is controlled by the Militant-influenced Broad Left - which perhaps helps

to explain the convergence of views. The CPSA has backed industrial action for security screens to protect its members from claimants. It hasn't been willing to take action against the implementation of the JSA, although it claims to oppose it on the ground that the JSA is causing chaos for Job Centre staff who see themselves as being forced into policing claimants rather than helping them. Privately many say they support anti-JSA activists and are critical of the CPSA. Nationally the TUC refuses to put Groundswell on its mailing list and doesn't acknowledge letters.

On a more positive note, some of the smaller groups on the left are sympathetic to Groundswell. Greater Manchester Socialist Alliance has invited Manchester Anti-JSA Group to take part in organising a demonstration against the JSA, either in December or some time in the new year. The Alliance comprises various left groups, including Militant. The organisation of the demonstration is under discussion within the Alliance. Some members want it to be jointly organised with other campaigns. The conference agreed that Groundswell should support the demonstration nationally if it goes ahead on this basis.

The conference also agreed that Groundswell should make links with workers involved in strikes, disputes and casualisation who are directly affected by the JSA - an advice leaflet will be produced. The sacked Liverpool dockers are already under pressure from the JSA. In the last issue of *Dockers' Charter* the Mersey Docks Shop Stewards' Committee stated that the forces "lined up ... in our support" include "the thousands leading the fight against the government's Criminal Justice, Anti-Asylum and Job Seekers' Allowance legislation". It was agreed that the dockers should be invited to take part in the next Groundswell conference to be held in London at the end of January.

## RECLAIM THE STREETS

Since the conference Reclaim the Streets activists in Manchester have also expressed interest in joining a national anti-JSA demonstration. Links between Reclaim the Streets and the Liverpool dockers appear to be opening new horizons all round. The small Marxist group Workers Press is reported to be disbanding and handing over its assets and printing facilities to Reclaim the Streets. A Reclaim the Streets newspaper is planned.

Freedom correspondents

## CONGRATULATIONS TO HELEN AND DAVE

They have battled on in the High Court against the McDonalds burger giant for a record 292 days. The McLibel trial, as it has come to be known, goes on. A few more million dollars for the lawyers means nothing to McDonalds, and it costs nothing to Helen and Dave who won't lose anyway since even if McDonalds were to win they have no money to pay so-called 'damages'. They have earned massive favourable publicity and I gather from a very sympathetic *Independent* feature (with a colour photograph of the 'defendants') that according to the McLibel committee who have been supporting the defendants "two million copies of the allegedly libellous leaflet have been handed out in the UK alone since the case began". As I have just said, money is no object for McDonalds but to have spent so far a few million dollars to prove their virginity as mass burger producers has surely misfired. But apparently the farce goes on and only the lawyers get richer. Helen and Dave are not only candidates for the *Guinness Book of Records* for the "longest ever trial", they have cocked a snook at one of the most powerful enterprises: the "\$30,000 million a year McDonalds corporation".

You see, it can be done - this is only a first step.

Libertarian

## BEST EVER ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR

The fifteenth annual Anarchist Bookfair on 19th October 1996 was the most successful so far by several standards - highest number of stalls, highest number of visitors, highest value of sales. Regular stall-holders all reported increases in sales (with the single surprising exception of AK Distribution). All the meetings were well attended. We hope this indicates a rise in interest in anarchist ideas.

The next Anarchist Bookfair will take place on 18th October 1997, when it is hoped to break the records again. Further information from New Anarchist Review, care of Freedom Press Bookshop.

# ENGLAND'S HISTORIC PROBLEM

Two crucial comments have appeared in the last two issues of *Freedom*. One proclaimed the necessity of sustained effort submerged in the humdrum activities of what we used to call 'shopfloor syndicalism'.

Declaring itself for "fighting management/union collusion and fomenting grassroots disputes and resistance", the Norwich & Norfolk Solidarity Federation claimed convincingly: "But none of this [humdrum shopfloor syndicalism] seems to be of much interest to come, or hold much glamour or excitement". Concluding, also convincingly, that "the net result being that the labour movement is left to the marxists and reformists ..."

That view represents a micro-syndicalist account and was expressed in a letter in the issue of *Freedom* dated 2nd November 1996.

A more macro-anarcho-syndicalism is revealed in the report of Guy Cheverton on the Liverpool dockers' dispute in this issue of *Freedom*. Contrasting the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool with the 'Anarchy on the Waterfront' on Merseyside, he says: "Ideologically a million miles away in Liverpool, the locked-out dockers gave us their Alliance for Social Change as thousands of Anti-JSA, CJA, eco-anarcho activists joined the dockers on their 30th September rally, effectively combining militant middle-aged dockers with the most active working class youth".

By instinct, inclination and by practice, I am committed to micro-shopfloor syndicalism. As an anarcho-syndicalist involved in the strikes of the engineering apprentices in the early 1960s, through the campaign for shop stewards in the Northern textile mills in the 1970s, to my time as a shop steward in the Gibraltar shipyards following the General Strike there in 1986, I have always adopted a shop-floor syndicalist approach. Nor have I ever had much taste for the various 'Schools of Melodrama' which have plagued British anarchism since the exploits of the Angry Brigade.

The question is, is Guy Cheverton right to emphasise the coming together of radical, even libertarian, social movements with what the historian E.P. Thompson has called 'Inverted Masonry' or the syndicalist tradition in England?

## DECODING THE ENGLISH DILEMMA

Whilst researching material for a forthcoming *Freedom* Press book on the anarcho-syndicalist historian Geoffrey Ostergaard's work,\* I came across an observation in *The Making of the English Working Class* by E.P. Thompson which seems to shed light on the problem. Commenting on the opposition to industrial capitalism and Utilitarianism in the nineteenth century, Mr Thompson writes: "Hence these years appear at times to display, not a revolutionary challenge, but a resistance

movement in which both the Romantics and the Radical craftsmen opposed the announcement of Acquisitive Man". He then goes on to decode the English dilemma, even as it confronts us today, when he adds: "In the failure of the two traditions [the Romantic movement and the 'Inverted Masons' or Radical craftsmen] to come to a point of junction, something was lost. How much we cannot be sure, for we are among the losers".

It is clear that, in this country, there has never since been a serious marriage between radical workers and the decentralising or libertarian left. As Pascal C, on behalf of the Norwich & Norfolk Solidarity Federation, says "the labour movement is left to the marxists and reformists" and the political left is dominated by what Ignazio Silone called 'the Jacobin tendency' of the ideological centralists.

William Morris may have made some efforts with his Arts and Crafts movement to unify the essentially libertarian intellectual tradition with the labour movement, but basically our history has been one of rigid demarcation between these two great traditions. Now with the collapse of communism and the clear intellectual and moral bankruptcy of marxism, I think Mr Cheverton is making the claim that the time may be ripe for an amalgamation between organised and unorganised labour, and the libertarian and decentralist left.

## SALVATION THROUGH MANAGEMENT?

What we have in this country now, as Guy Cheverton rightly perceives, are two paradoxical portraits of British labour. There is the kind of parody expressed at the Blackpool Labour Party conference. More the party of management than the workers' party - all suits and mobile telephones. Locked-out on the Liverpool docks, corralled in the dole queues of England and Scotland, a more ordinary face of agonised labour strains for recognition.

The importance of the dockers' dispute and the relevance of the campaign against the Job Seekers' Act is that they both relate, in different ways, to what John Pilger in the *New Statesman* calls the "struggle in opposing the spread of casual, cheap labour all over the country".

What we have now with the Labour Party, as the party of management, is the culmination of a historical current within the party which began with the Fabians in 1918 and their concept of what Ostergaard calls the 'super-intelligent administrator', at that time eager to commit acts of social engineering, and has ended with the realisation, as Ostergaard warned, that "the political elite and the managerial elite are merging".

This crisis of management - and management, bad management, is at the root of the English problem - was foreseen by Ostergaard in 1957. In his essay 'Industry and the Managerial Society' he said: "The sad truth of the matter is that the Labour Party cannot be expected to formulate any measures to prevent the emergence of a managerial order". He concludes that "of the two major parties in this country its [the Labour Party's] attitude towards the managers is ... more favourable than that of the Conservative Party, which broadly speaking still represents capitalist interests."

If the Conservative Party reflects the interests of the City, the Labour Party seeks salvation through management and planning by 'experts'.

Global markets and corporate totalitarianism in the modern world will do nothing to undermine the march of managerialism.

Any serious anarchist or libertarian movement will have to deal with these issues and these social trends in the years ahead.

BB

\* *British Syndicalism Through the Ages: Geoffrey Ostergaard Reconsidered.*

## FIELDS, FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS & OFFICES

### POSTAL VOTE: ONE IN THE EYE FOR POLITICIANS

In a lawful ballot, the postal workers last month voted for more industrial action by a massive majority. On a turn-out of 78%, they voted by more than three to two for more strikes over pay and management productivity proposals on team working.

As a bad loser, Ian Lange, President of the Board of Trade, claimed that the vote didn't give the union a mandate to 'cause misery'. He contended less than half of those eligible to vote had supported the action.

Backing the bosses, Mr Lange warned that the government would suspend the Post Office monopoly for three months. It is expected the Tories will try to get support for their idea to cut legal immunities for unions involved in 'disproportionate' action in monopoly services.

It's one in the eye for Tony Blair and 'New Labour' as well. Mr Blair told the workers to behave themselves and get back to work, at the time of the Labour Party conference.

But if the politicians think the postal workers don't have a mandate when they vote by 64,919 to 40,581 for strike action, what sort of mandate does our virtual minority government have when it was elected on a lower turn-out than 78%?

Industrial Layabout

### CHALLENGER STRIKES IN LEEDS

Workers assembling Challenger tanks in Leeds started a wave of one-day strikes last month. Staff from four unions at the Vickers Defence Systems factory fear a pay cut under a restructuring ploy by the company, which is designed to put workers on the same pay as Vickers' other Challenger factory in Newcastle.

The unions have thrown out a 3% pay deal on condition they swallow the firm's restructuring scheme. Here again, as in the postal dispute and elsewhere, it is the company which is making the demands for change.

Direct Actionist

### SERBIAN POLICE BATTER BUS STRIKERS

Belgrade police laid into public transport strikers on a protest and arrested a union leader.

At the end of last month, according to the leader of the independent metalworkers' union: "Special police forces stormed into the bus garage in Novi Beograd, beat up some of the workers and arrested the president of the drivers' trade union".

Bus and tram drivers went on strike days before federal and municipal elections in the Yugoslav republics of Serbia and Montenegro.

### MASS PICKET AT MAGNET LOCKOUT

Picket starts at 6am on 25th November at Magnet Kitchen Makers, Darlington

### MASS PICKET AT LIVERPOOL DOCKS LOCKOUT

Picket starts at 10am on 25th November. Reclaim the Future will be joining the sacked dockers on this picket.

## STANDING ON OUR OWN TWO FEET



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Two very different visions for the future were recently unveiled in Blackpool and Liverpool. New Labour gave us Middle England for the middle classes, tough on unions, the unemployed and youth, a sort of Majorism without the sleaze.

Ideologically a million miles away in Liverpool, the locked-out dockers gave us their Alliance for Social Change as thousands of anti-JSA, CJA, eco-anarcho activists joined the dockers in their 30th September rally effectively combining militant middle-aged dockers with the most active working class youth.

The Liverpool dockers just won't live up to the 'dinosaur' tag so beloved of the sneering media class. Their union principles of direct democracy, direct action and solidarity are steeped in docks tradition but their practice is innovative and truly modern.

This is the dispute which is on the Internet, which sends flurries of faxes, which has given the term flying pickets new meaning as delegates criss-cross the globe spreading the message of solidarity. They have re-built the dockers' international organisation dormant since the early '80s and have forged a new alliance between direct actionist rank and file trade unionism and the young activists who have seen action from Newbury to the Hyde Park CJA demo.

Who should other trade unionists look to for inspiration? Blair with his 'more of the same' or the

vigour and self-reliance of the Liverpool dockers?

What the scousers have learnt is that our only resource is our own action and solidarity. Insulted by Labour and snubbed by the T&G, the dockers have had to organise themselves from day one. They know the politicians and union bosses won't help, but they can count on large numbers of friends who will, from Danish dockers to the Claimants' Union, Hackney's Turkish and Kurdish textile workers to workplace trade union branches, trades councils to young people who have rightly rejected 'politics' but again rightly see the dockers' struggle as linked to campaigns against environmental despoliation or transport of live animals. They have forged a working alliance and a vision of a free society that Labour rejected decades ago.

The Liverpool dockers have strong links with the social movement, active trade unionists and their friends abroad. Wouldn't such links suit the trade union movement in general better than the abusive relationship we currently have with Blair's conservative party? Instead of paying the hand which has boasted it's going to beat us, wouldn't it be better if all our unions made alliances at home and abroad with organisations working for progress and social change? We should stand on our own two feet.

Guy Cheverton

(first published in the October 1996 issue of *Trade Union News*, bulletin of the Hull District Trades Union Council)

— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —  
**THE GIBSON GOSPEL**

Readers may have learned by now that there are two Tony Gibsons. One, well known to the anarchist press, was the author of some brilliant anarchist pamphlets from years ago, *Youth for Freedom* and *Food Production and Population*. Today, as Dr H.B. Gibson, he was the author last year of *On the Tip of Your Tongue: your memory in later life*, and this autumn, of *A Little of What You Fancy Does You Good: your health in later life*, both from Third Age Press, and of the Freedom Press book *Love, Sex and Power in Later Life* (Freedom Press, 1992, £3.50).

The other holder of the same name is Dr Tony Gibson, who must belong to the same generation since he was in the Friends Ambulance Unit in China at the end of the Second World War, and has been a China-watcher ever since. I have no idea whether the two Tony Gibsons know each other, nor how they get along together. The other Tony Gibson is also a prolific writer, and his new book is called *The Power in Our Hands* (Oxford, Jon Carpenter, £10).

His book is written in a chatty style of short sections, intended, he says, "for strap-hangers, and washing-machine-watchers and people in queues" and, like the latest two from our Tony Gibson, is illustrated with a lot of funny drawings. The two do have some attitudes in common. The first page of *The Power in Our Hands* lists just a few of the vast global problems facing us all, and on the second page the author says:

"It's not much use expecting Them – the governments, the high powered experts – to solve those problems entirely on their own. For most of this century they have been slogging it out to determine whether state power or market forces can deliver the goods. That conflict has left the Soviets disintegrating and America and its allies knee-deep in debt, with their arms salesmen off-loading weaponry to every well-heeled state villain they can find.

Neither side has managed to stop the fighting or to protect air, earth and sea from creeping pollution. In most countries the gap between rich and poor is widening. People in the bottom third of the population are nearing the end of their tether and beginning to make the better-off shit scared of the consequences."

He is a long-term advocate of local community action, not as a solution to global problems but as an approach to the endless little local issues that everybody has to confront or ignore. So he sets about analysing the factors that enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things. The first of these is the propensity to co-operate, so he re-tells the personal stories of the members of the pioneers of the co-op movement in Toad Lane, Rochdale. He is aware of the personal blockages that make co-operation hard, whether they are racial or religious preconceptions or real differences of interest. Years ago he developed a simulation exercise called *Planning for Real* that has been used all around the globe, and he firmly believes that this kind of role-playing exercise resolves these differences.

So he takes us, breathlessly, through a whole series of community ventures, some of which, like Gioscope in Hull, Lightmoor at Telford, LETS ventures or the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, will be well known to readers. He firmly believes that the information revolution of "words on faxes and over the radio; words and pictures on television and the Web" is creating "a new mindset" which Joseph Rotblat declared in January this year is "developing in each of us a new loyalty, a loyalty to mankind".

To those of us who, faced by every day's news, are sceptical about this, he responds as usual with a story drawn from recent news that supports this optimism:

"One Tuesday 30th July 1996, at Liverpool Crown Court, four women belonging to the Ploughshares movement heard the verdict on their action in planning 'criminal damage' to a military plane, part of a £500 million sale by British Aerospace to the Indonesian government, negotiated with the connivance of the British government.

Three of them had cut through the security fence and used hammers and crowbars to do their public-spirited best to render the machine harmless. They

explained that they were 'using reasonable force to prevent a crime' – the continued oppression of the people of East Timor by the Indonesian military regime responsible, according to Amnesty International, for nearly 200,000 deaths in the twenty years since the invasion and annexation.

A decade back, in the depths of Thatcherism, such acts and such arguments got short shrift. This time a jury of twelve ordinary people, seven male and five female, on a majority verdict, acquitted the women on all charges – to the great satisfaction of local Protestant and Catholic leaders and rank-and-file. A change in the mindset, perhaps?"

That particular Tony Gibson is someone it is impossible to argue with. If you raise a question about the limitations of community self-help movements, he will wave a pile of current examples from north and south America, Africa and Asia, to demonstrate that it is happening everywhere.

I bought another book at the Anarchist Bookfair last month. Thanks to the enthusiasm of the review by Silvia Edwards in *The Raven 21*, I seized the chance to buy Martha Ackelsberg's *Free Women of Spain: Anarchism and the Struggle for the Emancipation of Women* (Indiana University Press, 1991, £12.99).

In her opening chapter Ackelsberg draws attention to the particular strain in Spanish anarchist thinking associated with the journal *La Revista Blanca*, where "both Soledad Gustavo and Federica Montseny pointed to another tradition with a long history in Spain, the *municipio libre* (free commune)" in which:

"Direct action activities that arose from day-to-day needs and experiences represented ways in which people could take control of their lives. As feminists have learned, whether through consciousness-raising groups or in community organising, participation in such activities would have both internal and external effects, allowing people to develop a sense of competence and self-confidence while they acted to change their situation. Engagement of this sort empowered people and fortified them to act together again."

This paragraph could have come from Gibson's book *The Power in Our Hands*, since it expresses succinctly its whole message. And Ackelsberg goes on to stress, very interestingly, the anarchist nature of this message:

"Further, direct action not only empowered those who participated in it, it also had effects on others through what anarchists termed 'propaganda by the deed'. Often that term meant bomb-throwing, assassination attempts and the like. It had another meaning, however, referring to a kind of exemplary action that attracted adherents by the power of the positive example it set. Contemporary examples of propaganda by the deed include food or day-care co-ops, collectively-run businesses, sweat equity housing programmes, women's self-help health collectives, urban squats or women's peace camps. While such activities empower those who engage in them, they also demonstrate to others that non-hierarchical forms of organisation can and do exist – and that they can function effectively.

Obviously, if such actions are to have the desired empowerment effects, they must be largely self-generated, rather than being devised and directed from above. Hence the anarchist commitment to a strategy of 'spontaneous organisation', non-coercive federations of local groups. The aim was to achieve order without coercion by means of what we might call 'federative networking', which brought together representatives of local groups (unions, neighbourhood associations, consumer co-ops and the like). The crucial point was that neither the individual groups nor the larger co-ordinating body could claim to speak or act for others. Ideally, they would be more forums for discussion than directive organisations. Spontaneous organisation would demonstrate in practice that those who had experienced oppression were still capable of rational thought and action, able to come to know what their needs were and to develop ways to meet them."

Ackelsberg's footnote to these key paragraphs refers us again to the *Revista Blanca*, published in Madrid from 1898 to 1906 and in Barcelona from 1923 to 1936. Gerald Brenan calls it "the great anarchist periodical" and the style of thinking represented here is so closely and unconsciously echoed by the other Tony Gibson that we could claim that the message of his book is just as anarchist as that of those by the Tony Gibson we know.

Colin Ward

**SOME OF THE MORE RECENT ARRIVALS AT THE FREEDOM PRESS BOOKSHOP.**

**The Skeptic No. 10/1.** This issue of the myth-debunking magazine offers an article questioning IQ tests as a measure of intelligence; a piece on frauds in physical science, from N-rays through polywater to the cold fusion; 'The Brain and Its Self: the enduring mystery of human consciousness' laments the failure of science to make any headway in defining the relationship between self and consciousness; and the 'Cottingley Fairies' hoax is re-run. No. 10/2 has an account of how 'psychic' guru Swami Premanand failed scientific tests (though not before trying to subvert them) by two sceptics; an examination of how descriptions of 'UFO' sightings may be linked to changing cultural factors; and an investigation into 'Lucid Dreaming'. In No. 10/3 a self-confessed professional psychic trickster explains how all his performances featuring ESP, spoon-bending, etc., are the result of "fakery, cheating and similar naughtiness"; there's a long and detailed piece asking why people believe in the paranormal and reviewing the 'evidence' and suggesting many explanations for it; a short one on the lack of any proven association between high voltage power-lines and cancer (but as we all know, absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence); 'The Incurruptible Yogi' by a former near-believer; and 'UFOs and Little Grey Men'. Each issue contains a lot more fascinating information, plus letters, book reviews and of course Donald Rooum's 'Sprite' cartoons. All 28 pages and £2.00 each.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT ...

**Squall No. 14.** The Ploughshares women's spectacular legal victory after battering in a Hawk fighter destined to join in the genocide in East Timor and getting away with it is warmly reported, as is the successful appeal against a five-year jail sentence of a Sheffield man who brightened up grotty parts of the city with graffiti – or criminal damage as it's known to the authorities – and is now an art student; there's a highly useful piece on using loopholes in the JSA regulations to get around some of its worst aspects; a major article reviewing the state's multi-pronged attack on travellers, festival-goers, ravers and other cultural non-conformists; and more good coverage of the continuing anti-roads actions. The truly excellent activities of the squatters trying to save Manchester's Franciscan Monastery from decay and vandalism are sympathetically reported, as are the achievements of Brazil's rural squatting movement and the continuing travails of the Exodus Collective's squatted and restored farm in Luton. Apart from the excellent regular features on lies and distortions in the media, there is also a fine editorial on politics, the media and marketing, and the usual acres of news and other features. On a sad note, a 'Notice to Readers' announces that due to physical and financial exhaustion *Squall* has now blown itself out, at least for the time being. During their two-issue break from publishing they aim to stage benefits and other

fund-raising events, and recharge their overstretched finances, energy and manpower, hoping to re-launch in May next year. Get it while you can. A3, 72 pages for just £1.80.

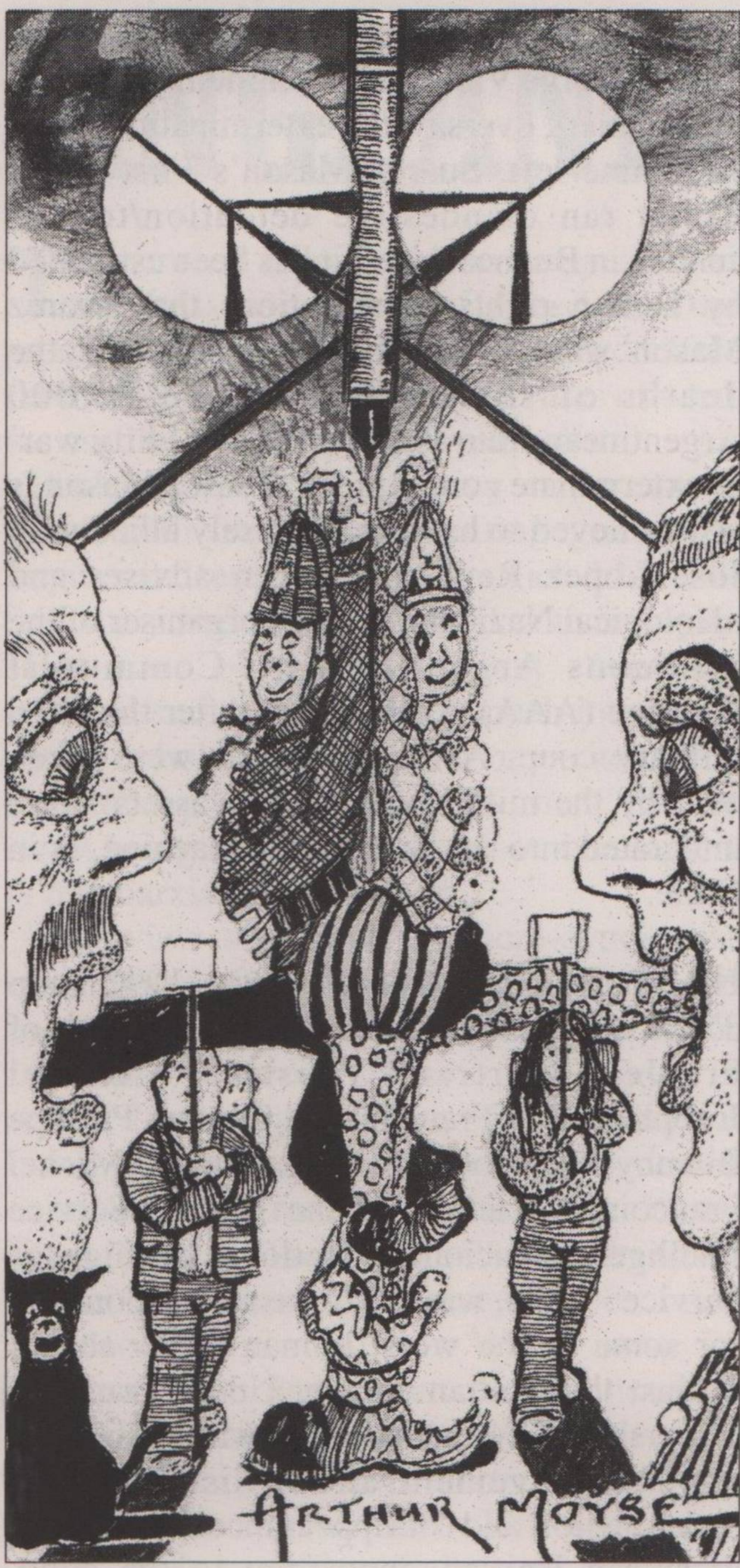
**Bypass No. 7.** A friendly magazine of reviews of hundreds of independently produced 'zines, magazines, pamphlets and books, with the accent on the anarchist/libertarian area, giving sizes, prices, addresses and ordering information – the aim is to by-pass shops and intermediaries – plus, where relevant, Internet and e-mail addresses. So whether it's *67 Boyfriends*, *28 Houses*, *Toilet Humour for Dogs*, *Organise*, or *Michael's Collected Chainsaw Cartoons* you're into, you'll probably find it mentioned here in these multi-authored, generally intelligently written and well-produced columns. And if you produce your own publication, *Bypass* is the place to send it for review, when it will be followed, hopefully, by a deluge of orders from its readers. 44 A4 pages, £1.80.

**The Freethinker:** a secular humanist monthly, or the anti-God squad, if you prefer. This stalwart publication must be doing something right as it's been going since 1881 – even longer than *Freedom* – and it's a sad reflection on the woolly thinking of so many in our society that its views are still necessary reading. Issue 116/6 boasts Eamonn McCann reporting from Derry on the Vatican as 'A

Church Still Bristling With Arrogant Certainty', and Nicolas Walter on how Anglicans are seducing leading muslims into the religious establishment. Issue 116/7 has 'H.G. Wells and the Incredible and Ugly Lie' of Catholicism, and 'Bertrand Russell – An Audacious Iconoclast', plus the transcript of Nicolas Walter's uplifting talk for the BBC World Service's *Words of Faith*: 'The Time To Be Happy is Now'. Unbelief across the arts and sciences features in issue 116/8, from Dawkins to Delius, and in No. 9, following NASA's claim that it may have found evidence of life on Mars, a timely piece by Walter asks 'Is There Intelligent Life on Earth?' There's also some very good stuff on gurus and the gullible. No. 10 has a fascinating article on the atheism of William Morris, and Nicolas 'it's that man again' Walter diagnoses a new malady among the superstitious: PMT – Pre-Millennial Tension! All contain a lot more that is very worthwhile, including book reviews and letters, and all are 16 pages for £1.00.

**International Dockers' Struggle in the Eighties (workers of the world tonight!)\*** BM Blob. This is a large and impressive collection of documents from the protracted struggles by dock workers in Spain, the UK and Denmark against containerisation of the ports, as had already happened in the US in the 1950s and '60s. They compromise rank and file articles from dockers' news bulletins,

# STOP PICKING YOUR SCAR



He rises from the back of the small room / large hall and pleads to know 'Why did you betray the Old Guard', and heads turn to view an Old Guard in all its romantic agony. Old Guards are born to be betrayed and we become Old Guards when one has attended half a dozen funerals of Old Comrades. Catholic Church, politics, surrealism, vegan vegetarianism or bird watching, all have their betrayed Old Guard. Ideologies, from the mass murder of millions to the collection and classification of seaweed, are doctored to meet an economic or political necessity and the smallest abrogation of the Sacred Stones produces its own betrayed Old Guard martyr to a cause for

which they gave their lives and the 'best night on television' while the blood from their stigmata stains the carpet for, as an obsessive joiner, I know that I could form my own collective of Old Guardian memorabilia but never betrayed, just weary, romantic, ideological, cynical.

John de St Torre's book *The Good Ship Venus* (Hutchinson, £20), the story of Olympia Press, brings back all those cheerful memories of the Swinging '60s and that age of innocence when the lunatic fringe became the lunatic front, and with Ma Thatcher's authoritarian right-wing Tory government there was a purity in all those take-over squats, demonstrations, censorship court cases, marches and days in the country with the liberal middle class to be booed at as we flat-footed through residential areas by full-bosomed matrons of both sexes to their screams of 'Go back to Russia'. God it was good to be alive and working for a wage. But time and his scythe, plus a weak bladder, dictates the order of the day. This is when the Old Guard come wheezing into the light from libraries, terminal wards, attics and sheltered housing to tell of the pleasure of smoking illegal 'grass', throwing bricks at the blackshirt army in the 1930s Cable Street, and 'buying' the banned copies of Olympia Press's raunchy publications and in doing so make triumph another cause that harmed no one, yet in that victory lay a defeat for the vicarious joy of confrontation for 'the cause, my soul, it is the cause'.

This week's Yesterday's Man to grass on the past in Don Bachardy who is publishing the 1,000,000 words of his 25-year companion Christopher Isherwood, while at the same time Bachardy's drawings are on exhibition within the National Portrait Gallery. The drawings are excellent in themselves and, as with all good craftsmanship, a pleasure to view, but it must be accepted that their viewing interest lies in the fact that they are by a 25-years intimate companion of Isherwood. Isherwood was an important part of the social and cultural mosaic of the Swinging '60s in that he created

the fantasy figures that became factual and gave Berlin sleaze its gloss. Hockney, who I hold is not the world's nor the age's greatest painter, painted the two men in his large *Visit with Christopher and Don* and Don knew Chris and Chris knew Auden and they knew Ossie and Chris knew the President of the good ol' US of A and it was the Swinging '60s and no one swung, not even swinging rag trade designer Ossie Clark who knew everybody, even Mick.

Poor ol' Ossie did not swing for, having negotiated £25,000 for his diaries, the undischarged bankrupt did the thing that no '60s swinger should do, and that was that in August at the age of 54 he went the way of all flesh and fashion by being stabbed to death, it is alleged by his gay lover Diego Cogolato who is now in a police cell, one assumes writing his own voluminous diaries in which all will be revealed, etc. Meanwhile the Don continues to read Chris's 1,000,000-word diaries in private and in public, starting from 4th January 1986 when Isherwood joined 'Mr Norris' and 'changed trains', based there, may one suggest, on the man who posed for the trunk of the statue of the late Winston Churchill, and while Mr Norris novelwise went off to hawk porn and act as a police and nazi spy in the 1930 Isherwood Berlin, Isherwood USA left the grassy lawns of an American college academy feet first for the safety of the funeral parlour and still, one assumes, that timid 'touch me or I'll scream with joy' look. Those who paw along the bookshelves seeking 'the message' that will tell them how to transform their lives outside office hours will, via the post, demand to know why the lives of 'these people' should concern 'us', and the answer is because the way that they live their lives shapes the way the state allows us to live out our lives. The Swinging '60s was a happy time, hedonistic and foolish, but it harmed no one. Poetry meetings to fill the Albert Hall and basement poetry given to grunts, screams and groans.

Abstract paintings when anyone could be a genius for the cost of a sheet of hardboard, and the Theatre of the Absurd to stage the meaningless, and the long column summer stroll from London to Aldermaston ... nay, nay little book-pawer, it was prams and beards on that first march from Trafalgar Square to Aldermaston and it was good to be of the lunatic fringe in that sun. Olympia Press and my Lady Chat and *IT* and *Oz* face the authority of the state and the dock that you may use the word 'fuck' in your public writing, if you so dare. And they broke the sexual barrier that those involved should not face prison for their desire.

These people did not do it for you or in your interests, they did it in their own self-interest and their self-interest happened to coincide with your suppressed and un-uttered needs. With the aid of a money-happy middle class eager to flex its political and social muscles, they challenged the state and for that brief happy moment in history they won the battle, but there is no terminal point in history for every victory of a full belly and a contented mind there is a demand for the renewal of the authority and the conservative right, with the backing of the middle class, desperate to guard its own private fiefdom will, as ever, demand the destruction of the liberties of the Swinging '60s. It was ever so, it will be ever so, it is the permanent revolution concerning the liberty of men and women.

If there is among us those who fear their future, then contact Simon Burgess whose 'Goodfellow Rebecca Ingrams Pearson' now insures prostitutes, Immaculate Conception Policy with 23 Anglican Scottish virgins signing up (Group £1,920), while 'Randy Mandy' (Mary Murphy) has taken out a policy against being attacked by "pimps, punters and police", followed by over six hundred other ladies of the evening. And a must for many, protection for men against castration. Maybe the Swinging '60s are on the return.

Arthur Moyses

## AND ACTION!

leaflets, papers to dockers' conferences, reports by observers of various actions, and magazine articles and analyses by the compilers of the pamphlet, the same people who brought you *Like a Summer With a Thousand Julys*. It adds up to an impressive account and one which will help those not familiar with the history of the situation to understand what is behind the Liverpool dockers' current fight to get their jobs back (as reported in *Freedom* on 19th October and 2nd November), why they have been virtually abandoned by this union, ignored by many other workers and why that vacuum is being filled now with the help and support from the unemployed, Reclaim The Streets and other environmental activists and anti-JSA groups – people whose parents wouldn't have been seen dead in the company of, or even passively supporting, dockers in the past. The pamphlet chronicles how an ecological consciousness gradually permeated through dockers' organisations in various countries – class consciousness was already very strong – leading to boycotts of toxic cargoes, and also mentions, *en passant*, what Arthur Scargill would have done well to note in 1984, that Nicholas Ridley, former Transport Minister, was the brains behind the 1978 counter-insurgency plans against the dockers and the miners. Scargill wouldn't listen to those who said the miners were walking into a trap – but that's another story. Photographs

throughout, plus an introduction and glossary. 68 A4 pages, previously £1.00, now just 75 pence.

**Workers' Solidarity No. 49**, WSM. The murder of journalist Veronica Guerin, the sixtieth anniversary of the Spanish Revolution, and anarchist attitudes to the state and democracy are the main articles. Additional topics include the Liverpool dockers' lock-out, Emma Goldman and an interview with a striking postal worker. 12 A4 pages, 75 pence.

**Jewish Socialist No. 36**. It would be nice to say that the interview with Alexei Sayle was one of the best bits here, but it's not. It's disappointing, if not surprising – he's full of himself and not at all funny. Also covered are the growing protests against the anti-asylum laws, several pages on developments in the Middle East, a long piece on German fascism, and a poem by Mordechai Vanunu. In truth, the poem is not very good and reads more like a rant of despair, but then, given his circumstances, who can blame him? 32 A4 pages, £1.50.

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## THE STATE OF THE MOSCOW CIRCUS

"Only connect" is a phrase of E.M. Forster's. I was watching enthralled in Oxford a visiting troupe of the Moscow State Circus – there were clowns, jugglers, illusionists, it was a human circus, no animals – at its best. But it was during the flying trapeze act that the phrase came into my mind. Here was science and art and physical and mental accomplishment combined.

I also thought of one Boris Yeltsin, kept alive by the combined efforts of medical science. What can be done, will be done, and the most powerful man is in the hands of others who have learnt their craft just as every performer learnt theirs in the circus.

Clubs thrown up in the air can be caught and thrown again in rotation. Once you know how, your hand is in the right place. But the ball thrown up in the air will drop to the ground if the eye and the hand stop working altogether.

The precise moment is always there, if difficult to describe. But let me try. Under the big top an admiring audience watched the incredible precision of the trapeze artists. The slowly-moving strong man's hands reached out in mid air for the hands of the other performer who was descending from the

heights after having done a fast triple somersault. The hands connected and he was taken gently into an opposite curve of flight and was then let go, making his body swing in a perfect arc upwards, and then again just as he was completing his curve his own cross-bar swung in his path – yet another connection which he could grip and by which float back to safety.

To quote from the excellent programme notes: "The people of the circus have to be physically and mentally tough. It is through daily work by which they overcome gravity by skill and daring."

The change and economic insecurity in Russia has, amongst other things, also brought about a situation which threatens the future of the circus. As such, the chances are that without public funds and support, the Moscow State Circus is soon to be no more.

It is not an 'either/or' problem. The man on the operating table had to be helped, whoever he may be. But it is his hands, not his helpers, which will either grip the cross-bar or not. But a circus, and life itself, is a troupe of people. What we can do is to pass on the little knowledge that we have. Strength is not to be despised. We see the world with the eyes of a child, astounded and inspired by all that beauty.

There was a full house of stars above us in the Oxford sky. Little Arkady, not yet two, can now say those two words 'sky' and 'star'. It is not yet a complete sentence, but one day a connection will be made in this circus of life.

John Retz

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# COUNTER-INSURGENCY, STATE TERROR AND THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS

**SAN FRANCISCO:** The US Army School of the Americas (SOA) has long enjoyed a reputation as a military training institution responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in the Western Hemisphere. Since its creation in 1946, some 60,000 Latin American military officers have graduated from the school, variously known as the 'School of Assassins' and the 'School of Coups'.

Courses in counter-insurgency strategies and tactics, psychological operations, torture and assassination have long been SOA's stock in trade. It came as no surprise to human rights activists when the Pentagon released a report on 20th September 1996 confirming these allegations. However, the Pentagon's initial findings were made in 1992 and remained a closely-guarded secret for more than four years.

The Pentagon's spokesman, Captain Michael Doubleday, admitted that between 1982-1991 SOA had used seven US Army Spanish language intelligence training manuals advocating secret executions, torture, selective assassination, blackmail and extortion against dissidents and their families.

Doubleday also claimed that the Bush administration moved swiftly to revise the training manuals when it was discovered in 1992 that some aspects of the course curriculum constituted "a serious violation of the policies that were in place in the United States at that time". Doubleday added: "This is ancient history."

But for the victims of US imperialist counter-insurgency doctrine instituted by

death squad states throughout the hemisphere, these revelations are as fresh as today's headlines. Though the Pentagon claims to have destroyed the manuals, except for one copy each "retained in the files of the Army Intelligence School at Fort Huachuca, Arizona", the legacy of a carefully-organised strategy of terror is the norm, not the exception.

**GUATEMALA:** One of the school's most infamous graduates is a former President, General Jose Efraim Rios Montt. Rios Montt, a 'born again' killer with ties to the authoritarian, Eureka, California-based Gospel Outreach/Verbo Church, presided over the creation of a Guatemalan version of the CIA's 'Phoenix Program'. During 'Plan Victoria 82', and an accessory programme, 'Fusiles y Frijoles' ('guns and beans'), entire Mayan highland villages were wiped off the map and the survivors of these massacres were herded into 'strategic hamlets'. The intellectual origins for Rios Montt's programme was a 1970s counter-insurgency document called *US Program of Pacification and Eradication of Communism*. By July 1982, an estimated 3,000-10,000 civilians had been murdered. Rios Montt is the current President of the Guatemalan Congress.

**HONDURAS:** The Honduran military in close association with the CIA station in Tegucigalpa, created Battalion 3-16, a notorious death squad. SOA graduate, General Gustavo Alvarez Martinez, a CIA Honduran military 'asset' stated: "Everything

you do to destroy a Marxist regime is moral." Alvarez Martinez and his associates ran Battalion 3-16 and created a number of torture centres. The death squad brigade operated closely with the CIA and the Nicaraguan contras. By 1984, more than two hundred Honduran labour leaders, student activists and opposition politicians had been 'disappeared'.

**EL SALVADOR:** Roberto D'Aubuisson was the SOA graduate and ARENA party founder who was the organiser of infamous death squads with names such as the Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA) and La Mano Blanca (white hand). ESA co-ordinated its work with an earlier death squad called ORDEN, founded in 1968, and with the presidential security service, ANSESAL. D'Aubuisson and his associates worked closely throughout the region with the CIA and the World Anti-Communist League (WACL), a neo-fascist outfit founded by the Taiwan government, the Unification Movement of Reverend Sun Myung Moon and the Latin American Anti-Communist Confederation (CAL). The 1980 CAL conference held in Buenos Aires, codified and began to implement the Chilean plan known as 'Operation Condor', a world-wide programme of political assassination to 'liquidate' the Latin American left. North American members of WACL included retired US General John Singlaub. During the Vietnam war, Singlaub headed the Special Operation Group-Military Assistance Command, which carried out the 'Phoenix Program'. D'Aubuisson attended the CAL conference, as did the neo-Nazi terrorist Stefano Delle Chiaie, the architect of the 1980 Bologna railway station bombing which killed 85 people, and Klaus Barbie the Nazi war criminal and CIA 'asset' who directed 'special operations' during the 1980 Bolivian 'cocaine coup'. D'Aubuisson was the organiser of the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Romero. Other Salvadoran SOA graduates organised the El Mozote massacre and the 1989 murder of six Jesuit priests in San Salvador.

**CHILE:** SOA graduate, Colonel Manuel Contreas, was the organisational director of the Department of National Intelligence (DINA). During his tenure as security chief under the death squad regime of General Augusto Pinochet, Contreas organised 'Operation Condor' in association with the Argentinean intelligence service (SIDE) and presided over the torture, kidnapping and 'disappearance' of tens of thousands of Chilean leftists. Operatives included fascists and neo-Nazis recruited from Patria y Libertad (PL). PL operatives and CIA 'assets' had worked to overthrow the reformist government of Salvador Allende in 1973. In 1976, Contreas gave the order to assassinate the former Defence Minister of the Allende government, Orlando Letelier. Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt were blown up in Washington DC by a car bomb planted by American DINA agent, Michael Vernon Townley and Cuban counter-revolutionary exiles grouped in the Cuban Nationalist Movement, a fascist outfit inspired by Benito Mussolini.

**ARGENTINA:** SOA graduate, Leopoldo Galtieri, was a principle leader of the Argentinean death squad state and an architect of the 'dirty war' which decimated the Argentine left during 1976-1982 period. A close associate, General Guillermo Suarez Mason, an ideological fascist and member of the secret Masonic organisation, 'Propaganda Due' (P-2), known as 'Pro Patria' in Argentina, was the commander of the First Army Corps. Suarez Mason, acting under

orders of SOA graduates and junta leaders, General Jorge Videla (another member of P-2) and Galtieri, oversaw the extermination of the Argentine left. Suarez Mason's First Army Corps ran clandestine detention/torture centres in Buenos Aires; it has been estimated by human rights organisations that Suarez Mason was personally responsible for the deaths of some 6,000 of the 30,000 Argentines murdered during the 'dirty war' to exterminate communism. Suarez Mason is also believed to have been closely allied with Jose Lopez Rega, the Peron adviser and ideological Nazi who was the organiser of the infamous Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA) death squad. After the 1976 military coup, AAA operations were taken over by the military and AAA 'assets' were integrated into the state killing machine, as in Chile.

**HAITI:** Principle leaders of the 1991 coup d'etat against the democratic government of Fr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Colonel Joseph-Michel Francois and Colonel Phillipe Biamby, were both SOA graduates. Michel Francois, the leader of the Haitian Service Intelligence Nationale (National Intelligence Service - SIN), was a CIA 'asset' responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses against the Haitian people. Under Francois' leadership, SIN carried out a war against the popular movement and utilised torture, assassination and 'disappearances' as a tactic to smash Haitian opposition to the coup. Following the regional 'development model', SIN transformed Haiti into a major transshipment point for cocaine from Colombian drug cartels. A close ally of Michel Francois, Emmanuel 'Toto' Constant, the leader of FRAPH, was another CIA 'asset'. Both a political front for coup leaders and a paramilitary death squad, FRAPH was organised by Constant with advice from both the US Central Intelligence Agency and Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA). By the time of the US invasion of Haiti in 1994 to 'restore democracy', more than 3,000 Haitians had been murdered. In the wake of the 1994 invasion/occupation of Haiti, the US military carried away more than 160,000 pages of documents seized from FRAPH and SIN headquarters. The US, fearing that the role of the CIA, DIA and the US Embassy would come to light, has refused to hand over these documents to the Haitian government. Constant was released from INS detention and is currently living somewhere in the United States.

The US Army School of the Americas along with the Central Intelligence Agency, continue to be the primary ideological and tactical linch-pins of US counter-insurgency operations throughout the hemisphere. While the collapse of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism in Russia and Eastern Europe presumably ended the Cold War, the machinery of repression which grew out of Washington's relentless campaign against socialism remains firmly in place.

With the expansion of insurgent movements in Mexico, and increased military aid to the Zedillo regime by imperialism, strategic and tactical counter-insurgency training of the Mexican Army by the US will almost certainly result in an increase of human rights violations against Mexican workers and peasants. As with so-called 'anti-drug interdiction' military aid programmes to the repressive Colombian and Peruvian armies, such US offers of assistance and training will inevitably lead to massive repression.

The strategic interface among US national security state policy planning elites, counter-insurgency warfare specialists, and 'off-the-shelf' operations which utilise neo-Nazi 'assets' certainly continue. Regardless of which bourgeois party exercises power in Washington, the primary role of institutions such as the School of the Americas, is the repression of popular movements which threaten US corporate global hegemony.

Tom Burghardt  
editor of *Antifa Info-Bulletin*

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**Max Nettlau**

## A Short History of Anarchism

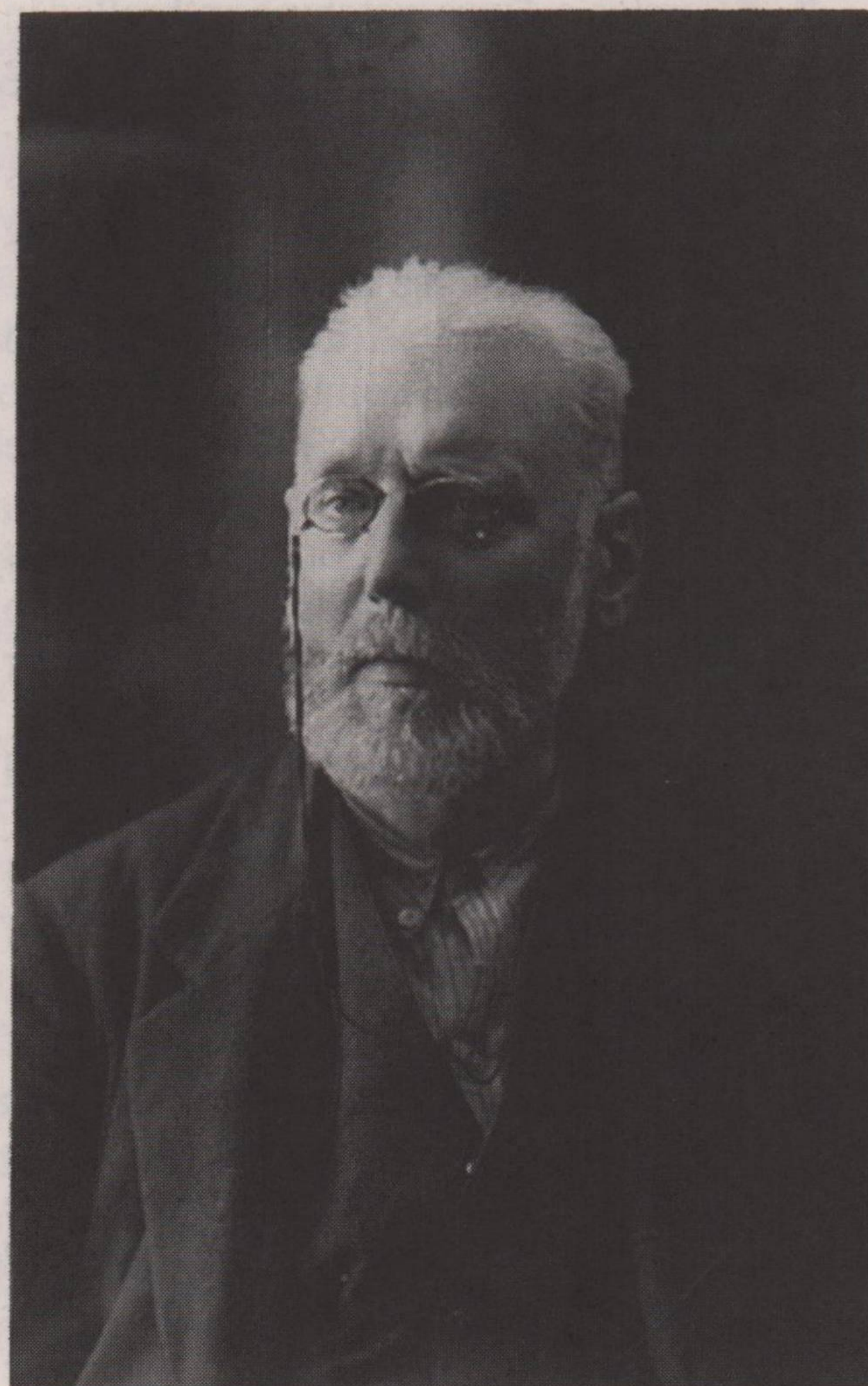
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Max Nettlau (1865-1944) has been called 'the Herodotus of Anarchy' - its first and greatest historian. From his youth he was involved first-hand with socialist movements in Europe, and from the 1890s he devoted his time to studying and collecting material on the history of anarchism: his collection now at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam is the most comprehensive in existence, and his *Bibliographie de l'Anarchie* (1897) is still the standard work on its subject up to that date.

Of his monumental nine-volume 'History of Anarchy', written in German, only three volumes were published in his lifetime, because of the economic crisis of the 1920s and the advent to power of Hitler in 1933. This condensed version was written in 1932 and revised in 1934: the author was prevented from continuing it by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and subsequent political events.



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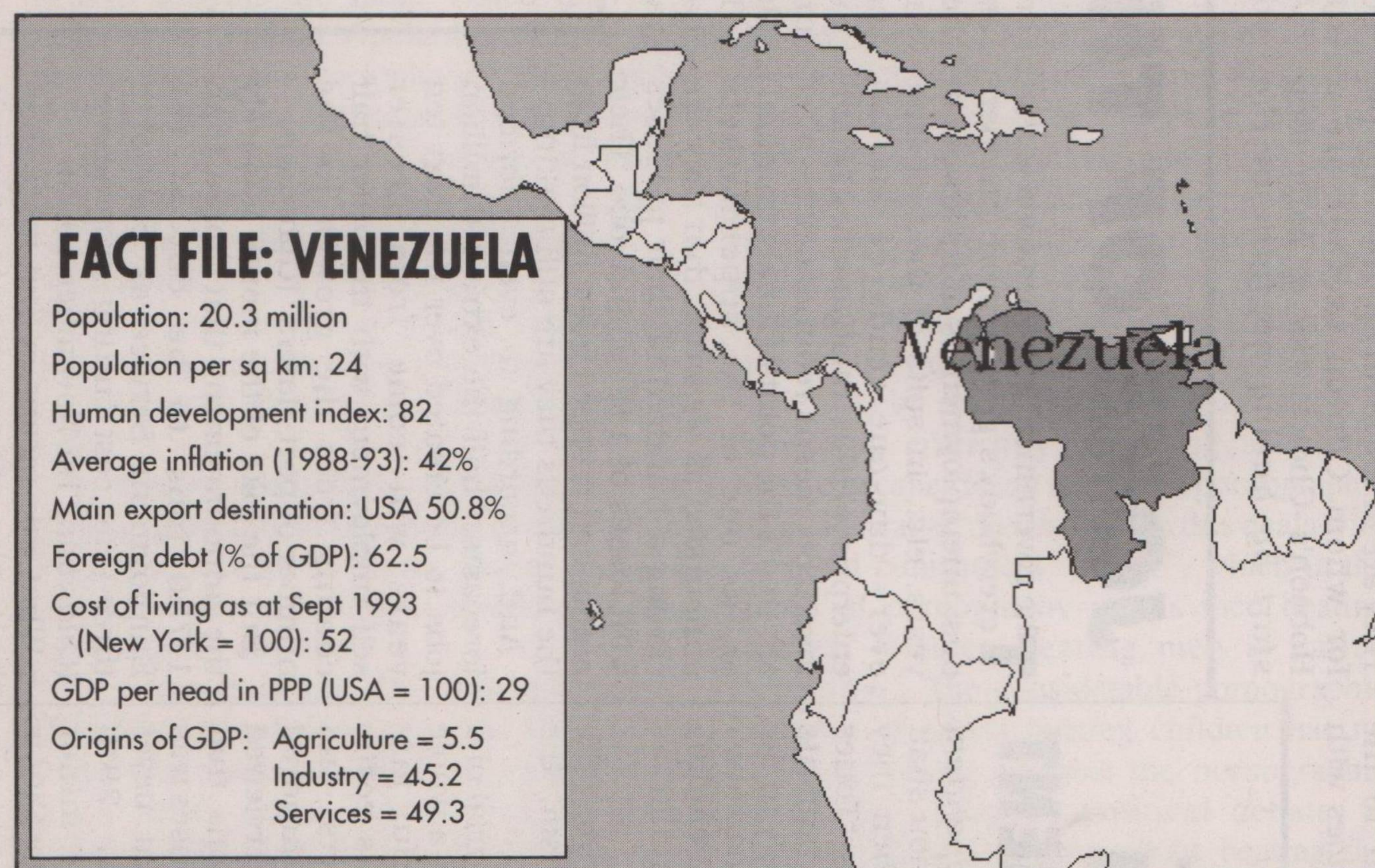
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# FOCUS SPECIAL ON ... LATIN AMERICA

— PART TWO —



## VENEZUELA 'only eight so far'

Sabaneta – which holds the record in Venezuela for penal violence – is in the town of Maracaibo in the petrol state of Zulia which in turn holds a record: the richest state in the country.

In 1958, when the prison was built, it was to be a tribute to the re-establishment of democracy – Western style. On the 3rd January 1994 a massacre occurred in the prison instead. At least 106 were killed in rival feuding between gangs of inmates. The warders wasted four hours before giving the alarm after a fire – generously fuelled by petrol – was started. Indeed a journalist with the television channel Venevision claimed that the National Guard sent journalists away claiming, “the inmates were simply burning some rubbish”.

The new governor Giancarlo Di Martino has rolled up his sleeves and is intent on getting to the heart of the problems the prison faces: “We have repainted the building and improved the lighting”.

Perhaps this is indeed why murders within the prison walls have gone down from 79 murders in 1993 to ‘only eight so far’ in 1996. However, 1993 was something of what we might call a bad year with 600 deaths and 6,000 injuries in Venezuelas prisons. 1995 halved the death rate but it was still half.

Who can be surprised when at Sabaneta 2,500 (according to figures given by the National Guard or 3,000 if you choose to believe the Ministry of Justice) are in a prison built for 800.

The law demands, in Venezuela, that inmates should go to trial within 8 months of arrest – bad enough. The reality is worse. Again, according to Mr Di Martino, 70% of inmates at Sabaneta are awaiting trial of whom he estimates 15% are for ID papers irregularities and the like. Many are arrested under the ‘Vagabond Law’ which allows imprisonment without trial of those with neither work nor accommodation for up to five years. Thus a national prison population of some 25,000 includes about a third who await trial and they are incarcerated in prisons that were built to house only 15,000.

A bad situation and perhaps it is worse for the Guajiro indians who have the misfortune to end up here and who are a hate target for warders and inmates alike. For this reason they are relocated to an ‘education’ centre which isolates them from outside contact. However, some have managed to get word out beyond the walls. One said, “it’s worse when a guardia is shot. They come and take our food and smash our TVs and air conditioning

systems.” Another, speaking of a fellow inmate, claimed he has been ill for nine months but had received no medical treatment: “You must get medical treatment from outside the prison and even if you can afford it you still have to pay the warders to let it in”. A third warned, “our situation is intolerable. This is the reason for our violence”.

Of the ‘only eight so far’ this year three murders have occurred very recently. They are again related to the internal feudings between gangs. There are renewed fears that Sabaneta will see another outbreak of violence sometime in the not so distant future and the rest of the Venezuelan prison system has no reason to presuppose immunity.

## ARGENTINA

Today, when economic measures announced by the government constitute the main concern of the social collective and the solution to those serious problems which threaten us in our daily lives depend to a large extent on the decisions of international organisations, the spirit of individual revolt as a means of self-affirmation faced with the reigning uncertainty takes on a new form.

The above could have served as the opening paragraph to any article whose theme was the analysis of the economic situation that we Argentines are currently facing. However, thanks to globalisation we were able to take it directly from a Venezuelan anarchist journal – the reality and the analysis being identical as is the hunger and the ‘adjustment policies’.

Here we have a new finance minister and his main concern is to eliminate the fiscal debt. Inflation has already been defeated thanks to a terrible recession which stopped prices going up due to under-consumption.

On the other hand official unemployment figures – the more tangible reality – will please nobody apart from the government which is seemingly always able to put a gloss on the facts to show us how well off we are, although we know the opposite to be the case.

On top of all this the pressure continues to be put on those lower down the social ladder presumably to discover how much they will put up with without protest. Family benefits are cut for those whose salaries are above 1,000 pesos, knowing, as the ex-minister himself has said, that such a salary can’t be reached by just anyone, whilst on the other hand claiming that those who are to benefit are the majority who have salaries half that figure. In other words those who are already deep in poverty are to be given a few meagre crumbs

from the table.

Another grave problem which is being covered up is the question of economic growth or more to the point the necessity of GDP to grow in order to stabilise the economy – the famous ‘growth of the cake’ to be shared out and to which the media give so much attention giving rise to debate between those who say it is growing and those who say it isn’t and that it is a governmental illusion.

Aware of some of the facts we believe that talk of growth or no growth is fruitless since with a few simple facts we can see how this growth is being achieved – who is paying and who is benefiting. A few instances:

- the biggest manufacturing companies made 3,500 million pesos in profit in one year.
- among those whose ranking has risen to the top 97, 29 are consortia linked to the newly privatised public services (that is to say the immediate friends of those who made the decisions), private medicine (which has benefited from deregulation), supermarkets and mobile phone companies.

We begin to see the direction the economy is taking and where our leaders are taking us. On the other hand we can also see more clearly the relationship between the state and capital, the function of government ministers and the degree to which they are dependent on their real masters: the international monopolies.

All this is no more than a demonstration of the fallacy of ‘democratic representation’ within a system based on domination and exploitation.

### MARKET COSTS

From our point of view it is important to underline that which has grown disproportionately in relation to the values which we consider to be material. We are talking of the quantity of money which is circulating in the world economy.

The so-called oil crisis of the 1970s doubled or tripled stocks of capital which were already the most significant in the world and can be referred to as a seizure of power by the market.

Whilst at any given moment in history capital has been measured by production, today there are many services that have little to do with production. On the other hand the cost of products has little to do with their material cost, that is to say from the traditional economic analysis based on the cost of raw materials plus labour costs and the amortisation of industrial equipment plus general costs

plus profit accruing to capital. Now to all this must be added a market cost which is quite arbitrary since it is dependent on the greed of the consumers at whom the product is targeted.

It is at this point that we can see the absurdity of it all if we analyse things from an everyday point of view. For example, in a bar you can pay 10 pesos for a coffee because it is hoped that only those who can afford it will frequent the premises and thus the clientele is select. Here also we could mention boxes at football matches for VIPs (and it is within such a climate that one can pay millions of dollars to a football player, an actor or perhaps royalties for a medical product).

Having got this far we can begin to ask ourselves what significance money has in our age.

The only answer which makes sense from an anarchist point of view is that money is the basis of all power since it gives prestige (the power to consume products carrying a high price tag) and allows one to climb the social pyramid and show who can have what they want... To have is more important than to be. For this reason, with globalisation, power is a permanent feature of the show, the spectacle, the obscene charade and leads to impunity with money able to buy justice, a world famous ballerina or a football star.

The reality is different for those who do not have access to this money and at the same time much less to power but who are constantly bombarded by those who try to show them that they can also achieve and that if they don’t it is due to their own ineptitude.

Well known are the statistics of infant mortality and the growth of poverty in places where twenty years ago it would have been unthinkable.

On the other hand also known, though perhaps less well, is the world situation with regard to poverty and unemployment.

Between one and two thousand million people live in poverty, 800 million are malnourished, 1,300 million have no access to drinking water, 900 million are illiterate and a further 400 million children are destined to reproduce the figures due to a lack of access to basic educational needs. Also it has been calculated that there are more than 120 million unemployed in the world and a further 600 million who need a second job to survive.

Extract taken from *Desalumbrar 5*,  
September 1996

## FOOD NOT BOMBS

Keith McHenry spoke on 1st November at the London Anarchist Forum, and on 2nd November to a *Peace News* meeting, and was interviewed on BBC radio on 3rd November. This was at the end of a speaking tour of Europe, publicising the anarchist campaigning organisation Food Not Bombs.

By coincidence, *Freedom* for 2nd November reported, from the *Washington Post*, the case of Robert Kahn, released as a nuisance in jail after only 27 days of a 60-day sentence for distributing food to the homeless in San Francisco. Keith McHenry is of the same anarchist group as Robert Kahn.

The name Food Not Bombs is useful, because any news report of the organisation’s activities, however hostile, is bound to include a three-word statement of its aims. It originated in Cambridge, Massachusetts, but the San Francisco group is now better known.

Partly this is because there is a city law in San Francisco prohibiting the distribution of food to the poor without a permit (ostensibly for public health reasons), which allows the group to publicise the scandal of homelessness by getting themselves arrested for being public spirited. Partly it is because San Francisco was the site of the founding of the United Nations and therefore of the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the United Nations, for which Food Not Bombs organised eleven days of demonstrations. Comrades from all over America kept on preparing soup, giving it away and being ostentatiously arrested in United Nations Plaza.

Between 15th June and 26th June 1995 there were six hundred arrests of demonstrators in San Francisco, including 150 for giving food away. They were held mostly for less than a day, released, and allowed to return to UN Plaza to be re-arrested. Only one, Robert Kahn, was actually sent for trial and awarded sixty-days in jail more than a year

later.

Keith McHenry brought with him a well-made video compilation of the eleven days of demonstrations. He told us that some videos had been confiscated, but enough survived to be very impressive. San Francisco police apparently handcuff the hands behind the back of anyone they arrest, for whatever reason. Much of the time they were dressed in quite unnecessary riot gear. But they allowed people to be interviewed on video even as they were being arrested, and occasionally answered questions themselves. Asked “Why is it a crime to distribute food?” one cop answered “I don’t know, but my sergeant will be here shortly and you may ask him.” A sergeant, told that it was immoral to spend on bombs while people were homeless and hungry, said “I agree with you” (Keith said that the same sergeant organised a fifteen-strong snatch squad the following day). Local television news reports, which were included in the video, were quite fair.

Keith told us he had earlier been held for six months in custody waiting to raise bail set at \$100,000. He was called to court on the same day that the O.J. Simpson murder trial started. His trial was postponed until 31st October (when supporters were arrested for giving away Halloween candies), and again on 14th February (when supporters were arrested for giving away chocolate love hearts), when he agreed to be registered as a felon for a year, the Californian version of being bound over to keep the peace.

Freedom Press has a small supply of Food Not Bombs leaflets, and while stocks last we will send them to anyone who specifically asks for them with a book order or sub renewal. Further information from **Food Not Bombs, 3145 Geary Boulevard, apt 12, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA.**



## COMMUNITY BOOK FAYRE

organised by  
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## Dales Red Rambles

A series of free guided walks in the Yorkshire Dales for Anarchists, Greens, Socialists and Libertarians. All walks are on a Sunday unless otherwise stated.

**17th November - Ribblesdale:** Attermire Scar and Caves. Meet car park before viaduct, Settle, at 10.45am. Length approx 7 miles.

**15th December - Airedale:** Kildwick to Farnhill. Meet outside White Lion Inn, Kildwick, at 10.45am. Length approx. 5 miles.

On all walks bring walking boots, waterproofs, food and drink.

Telephone for further details  
01756-799002

## London Anarchist Forum

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

### - 1996 PROGRAMME -

**15th November** Vacant slot

**22nd November** General discussion

**29th November** Vacant slot

**6th December** The Pure Genius of Urban Occupation (speaker Andrew Lainton)

**13th December** Anarcho-nihilism (speaker Steve Ash)

**20th December** Christmas Party

**3rd January** General discussion

**10th January** Towards a Stateless Economics: the Case Against Anarchist Communism (speaker Dave Dane)

**17th January** General discussion

**24th January** Vacant slot

**31st January** Speakers from *Green Anarchist* talking about their court action and showing the video *Exit Stage Right*.

Anyone interested in giving a talk or leading a discussion, please contact Peter Neville at the meetings, or at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW, giving subject and prospective dates and we will do our best to accommodate.

Peter Neville  
London Anarchist Forum

## Red Rambles

A programme of free guided walks in the Midlands for Greens, Socialists, Libertarians and Anarchists. All walks are on a Sunday unless otherwise stated. Bring walking boots, waterproofs, food and drink.

**December 1st:** Walk leader John. Wirksworth Market to Alport Hill. Meet 11am at Market Place, Wirksworth, Derbyshire, for a four-mile circular walk to Alport Hill.

Telephone for further details  
01773-827513

## ACF DISCUSSION MEETINGS

Discussion meetings open to the public are convened by the London group of the Anarchist Communist Federation on the first Thursday of every month. They start at 8.00pm at the Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont Street, London WC1 (nearest tube Russell Square). Disabled access. Free entrance.

## Thursday 5th December at 8pm NATIONAL LIBERATION? IS IT REALLY LIBERATION?

We look at the whole sorry mess of national liberation movements and nationalist parties. We look at the theories of anti-imperialism developed at the beginning of this century, the experience of national liberation movements and their records once in government, in Africa and Asia. Nearer home, we look at the politics of the Irish Republicans and the nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales. We also look at the new regionalist movements like the Northern Leagues in Italy. Are they at all progressive, in the sense of breaking up the nation state and encouraging local culture and language, or are they deeply reactionary and xenophobic, designed to defuse class struggle?

## PUBLIC MEETING NORTH WEST AGAINST THE JSA

speakers include  
Alec McFadden, North West TUC, JCC  
A speaker from North West Against the JSA

at

The Hare and Hounds  
46 Shudehill, Manchester

on

Tuesday 19th November  
Starts 8pm

## ANTI-JSA NW CONFERENCE

Saturday 30th November 1996

at

TG&WU, Islington, Liverpool

Chair: Alec McFadden

speakers include

Alan Simpson (MP/Sec Socialist Campaign Group)

Derek Pattison (NW Against JSA)

Trade Union official from CPSA

Trade Union official from PTC

Kathy Sandbach (National Union of Students)

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