

## Danger ... the misappliance of science kills

This spring India and Pakistan have made it clear that they each have the nuclear military capacity to wipe each other out umpteen times over. The English-language Asian newspaper in the North of England, *Friends*, claims credit for this must go to the Pakistani scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer and to the Indian scientist Dr Abdul Kalam respectively.

This north-west edition of *Friends* declares that "the crowds which celebrated first in India, then in Pakistan, were celebrating not only the prospect of the deaths of enemies should they dare to attack, but the greatly increased standing in the world in which, ultimately, their countries will be held". The Asian paper then adds that "the brute fact is that, where global influence is concerned, one nuclear weapon is worth a thousand Gandhian hunger strikes".

### Science and power politics

It is interesting that this Asian paper presents the tussle on the Indian sub-continent as a clash between two men of science – Dr Qadeer of Pakistan and Dr Kalam of India. What the philosopher Wittgenstein saw as "the darkness of this time" even in the 1930s was the worship of the false idol of science.

Scientists historically put themselves at the service of politicians and governments. As Orwell wrote in 1945: "In England, a large proportion of our leading scientists accept the structure of capitalist society, as can be seen from the comparative freedom with which they are given knighthoods, baronetcies and even peerages". In Nazi Germany it was science in the service of the values of the Stone Age; Orwell argued "a number of German scientists swallowed the monstrosity of 'racial science'."

The Asian paper *Friends* claims that "peace is not preserved when one side has the talons of a hawk and the other the plumage of a dove". But commenting further on the conflict between the Asian nuclear rivals, it says that "these two countries derive much of their sense of national identity from hatred of and rivalry with the other: an undesirable state of affairs, no doubt, but one which is likely to continue in the foreseeable future."

It does not follow, of course, that because the bomb may have helped keep the peace in Europe these last fifty years that a nuclear-armed Indian sub-continent will experience the same. India and Pakistan have gone to war

three times in the same half century and, as *Friends* points out, "their respective armies are obsessed with one another".

### Undoing the worship of science

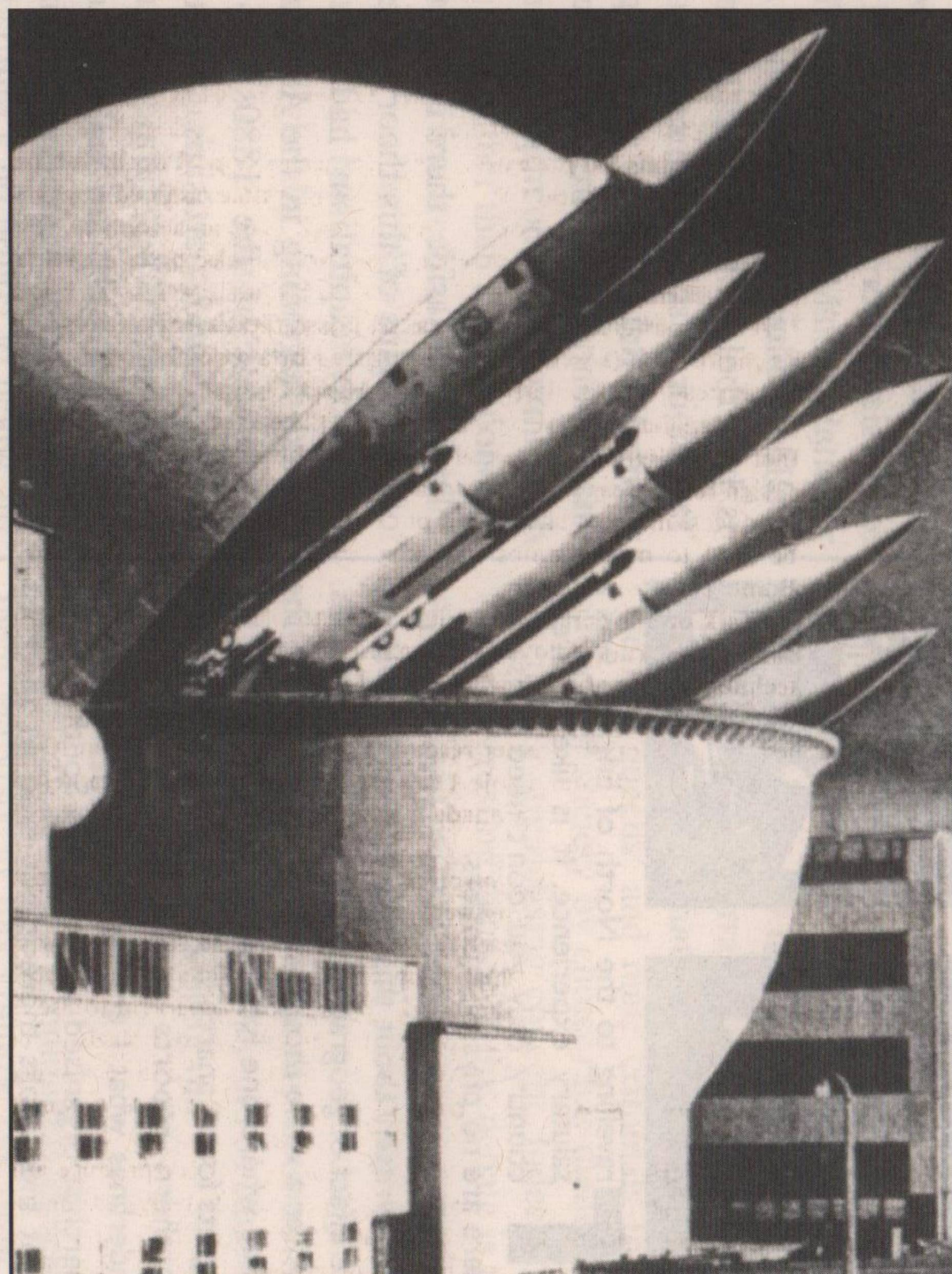
Can we seek comfort in a science which produces such weapons? Many of us seem to expect rather too much of science, although Wittgenstein did write: "For science and industry do decide wars, or so it seems".

One thing that is clear is that a scientific education, even when combined with, say, the gifts of Stephen Hawking, does not guarantee a humane outlook. As Orwell wrote in 1945, "the physicists of half a dozen great nations, all feverishly

and secretly working away at the atomic bomb, are demonstration of this".

Wittgenstein himself almost welcomed the bomb because, as Ray Monk writes, "if only the fear of it could do something to diminish the reverence with which society regarded scientific progress". The decline in the idolisation of science has been slow, but it is observable. A play like Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* with the scientist as hero would be less plausible today, than the compromising scientist in Bertolt Brecht's *Galileo* or the mad scientist in *Doctor Strangelove*.

Arturo Ui





# Freedom

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## Greed is Good!

This newspaper has recently been discussing some features of the age of corporate capitalism. Corporations do not develop all by themselves, however, there are different groups, each with their own role, who create the environment within which corporations can grow up and extend their influence. One interesting niche is occupied by those who 'advise' great corporations. Chief amongst these servants to corporate power are the investment banks, and foremost among investment banks is the bank of Goldman Sachs, which has received intense media attention in recent weeks because of the astonishing self-enrichment of its senior partners.

Goldman Sachs declared a profit of \$3 billion last year, and made \$1 billion in profits in just three months last winter. These achievements were outshone on 15th June when the

say ... that the trouble with investment banks specialising in market trading is that they are, in a very real sense, the ultimate service industry. They don't make anything; it's all



paper. Goldman Sachs would reply that what they make is money."

The *Financial Times* has condemned the flotation of the company as contributing to "the less impressive social purpose of adding froth to the Wall Street bubble". The question many ordinary people with ordinary jobs and ordinary pay slips will ask is whether the phenomenal salaries and bonuses earned by such superstar bankers are justified in any way, or whether all of the activities of the bank are actually little more than froth on the bubble of speculation.

The bank's senior 'partners' were already highly-paid for their work in these fields before they decided to float the company. Much media attention in Britain has focused on Gavyn Davies, senior partner and chief economist of the London branch, who has worked for Goldman Sachs for twelve years, and who is a key adviser and old friend of Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Davies, already on a salary of £2 million a year, will be benefiting by either £50 million (*Guardian* estimate) or more than £94 million (*Daily Telegraph*) from the transformation of the partnership into a more conventional company, owned by shareholders rather than by the partners themselves.

Davies, married to Sue Nye, Gordon Brown's political secretary, is widely regarded as one



of the Chancellor's closest economic advisers. The economist is therefore at the heart of the New Labour project. His participation in the billion-dollar bonanza is therefore revealing about the values of New Labour. He told the *Sunday Telegraph* last year: "You would have to do badly in the City not to make money - and it has never been on my agenda

to do badly. I have always believed aggressively in equality of opportunity but I don't think you can have a market economist who believes in equality of outcome." Davies, economic adviser to James Callaghan in the 1970s, was also one of Kenneth Clark's 'wise men' advisers in the last Tory government.

The *Financial Times* regretted the passing of the partnership as a sign of the times, as part of the trend of "the death of communal ownership among banks, stockbrokers and insurers, and an end to the collective management that goes with it". "To partners of a previous generation - as to the managers of a mutual institution or the nominal owners of a football club - the business they ran was in some sense in trust for a future generation. They might profit from it during their stewardship, but the idea of transforming its ownership was, literally, unthinkable". To such women and men, advancing growth by sacrificing the essence of the company "would have seemed pointless".

Management in these institutions was never 'collective', as a large number of secretaries, cleaners and technicians will testify. However, the *Financial Times*'s musings do have significance for those not committed to the continuation of capitalism. If it is possible for financial advisers (and doctors and lawyers) to own and manage their own partnerships, why can't other workers also work in self-managed entities? Why

shouldn't shipbuilders or computer assembly workers or teachers? Why should they be under the control of shareholders and externally-appointed managers? Why shouldn't all management be truly 'collective'? Why shouldn't the economy be entirely made up of mutually-owned and operated organisations?

Why shouldn't the notion of 'stewardship' (expanded from the very narrow focus adopted by financial advisers) be of paramount importance to any company? All economic institutions affect the natural



environment and society in general - why shouldn't they all be governed by a concern for future generations (again in a wider sense than used above)?

The shocking riches of the Goldman Sachs partners contrasts brutally with the deepening poverty and insecurity of workers around the world, exploited by the economic empires served so faithfully by multi-millionaire advisers.

Milan Rai

## The boffin knows best!

Anything that induces hypochondria ought to be avoided. Anarchism has more than its share of hypochondriacs, so a report in last month's *New Scientist* will cause some disquiet.

Last year, my seed merchant told me that though the farmers he suspected did send BSE-infected beef to market as soon as they spotted signs of the disease, he said it was the boffins who gave the go-ahead to the use of animal protein in the first place. Now in the *New Scientist* article by Debora Mackenzie, she claims that according to Swiss data "hundreds of thousands of apparently healthy cattle could be infected with BSE".

The Swiss date showed that "for every case of mad cow disease in Switzerland, more than a hundred animals may be 'silently' carrying the infection". It seems that if this pattern holds up in Britain, the number of British cattle carrying the disease last year will have exceeded 450,000, claims Ms Mackenzie.

In general only one or two cases of BSE typically occur in each affected herd in all countries in which the disease has shown up. Markus Moser of Prionics, a company in Zurich, says: "The official theory is that only the sick cows ate a lump of infectious feed, but other cattle may be infected and just haven't shown symptoms".

The sensitive Swiss Prionics tests are showing that apparently healthy cattle to the tune of "more than 100 times Switzerland's

1997 rate of clinical BSE", had the disease. There has been no testing for subclinical BSE in Britain as yet. If British herds have more than a hundred infected animals for every one with obvious symptoms, then the number of sub-clinical cases in 1997 would have been about 460,000.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) claims that only older cows are likely to pose any risk of infecting people. Since 1996, all British cattle older than thirty months have been put down. MAFF says "this removes the possibility of any animal harbouring infectivity from entering the food chain".

The fear of silent infection remains. And some government scientific advisers remain anxious about the risks of subclinical infection. John Collinge, of Imperial College London, last month told the official BSE Inquiry of his worries that cows may be carrying a silent infection that could be more dangerous than overt BSE: "It may be that there is rather more infectivity in muscle or other tissues in those animals and that is why they do not have brain disease".

John Collinge has tried to get MAFF to look into the problem of subclinical or 'silent BSE' using tests like the one introduced by Prionics. *New Scientist* says MAFF is now thinking about studying subclinical BSE but as yet has provided no details.

Albert Shore



firm's partners voted to turn the company from a private partnership into a publicly quoted company, selling shares on the stock market. The 190 partners in the investment bank stand to gain something in the region of \$100 million from the flotation of 10-15% of the company on the stock market this autumn.

Publicly, the staff of the Wall Street-based firm were calmly focused on the strategic importance of gaining access to external capital to help secure the bank's growth in a globalised world. Privately, some were a little more excited about their personal good fortune. The *Financial Times* report on the affair ended with a quote from 'one candid executive': "It's wonderful. I'm rich".

What have the bankers done to deserve such rewards? Goldman Sachs has been described by the *Financial Times* as "the pre-eminent adviser of blue-chip companies around the world". The *Guardian* described its speciality as "leap[ing] to the defence of companies facing unwanted takeover bids, helping, for instance, ICI to shake off the advances of Hanson". The bank has been involved in more than half of the hostile bids valued at more than £1 billion in the past decade in the UK.

In other words, the bank buys and sells corporate assets, and either facilitates or hinders mergers between giant companies. The *Independent* commented: "Critics of international finance, especially on the left,



# The underclass/excluded debate

One thing most of the commentators engaged in this debate are agreed upon is the existence of a new kind of poverty in the industrialised societies of the West. What differentiates it from other earlier forms of poverty is its multi-dimensional nature – unemployment, underemployment (low pay and chronic job insecurity), poor health, low educational achievement, poor housing, family strains, breakdown of community, high levels of crime and delinquency, and, all too often in this region, concentrations of problem drug use and attendant social and individual harms. Its other major feature is the way in which it is spatially concentrated in particular urban areas, especially inner cities and outer estates. What we are talking about then is a new form of poverty that is urban, group based and has many different dimensions.

What is less clear is what we are to call this new phenomenon. Various terms are competing with each other in academic and media discourses – ‘underclass’, ‘the ghetto poor’, ‘the new poor’, ‘the excluded’ and so on. In this potted guide to the language around urban poverty we will concentrate on the two most commonly used terms – ‘the underclass’ and ‘social exclusion’. ‘Underclass’ is the term that dominates American debates on ‘the new poverty’. ‘Social exclusion’ is the term that will come to dominate such debates in this country. Witness the recent formation of the Social Exclusion Unit by the government.

So let's take you on a tour of this new linguistic minefield.

## Underclass

Originally coined in the early '60s by the Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal to describe what he saw as one consequence of trends in future US economic development. Improvements in technology and production would require fewer workers, Myrdal thought. Already he saw such processes creating “an unprivileged class of unemployed, unemployables and underemployed who are more and more hopelessly set apart from the nation at large and do not share in its life, its ambitions and its achievements” (Myrdal, 1963, page 10). Thus Myrdal's underclass were victims of economic change. Picked up by commentators and other academics, it enjoyed a vogue as a term used by liberals and those on the left.

But by the end of the 1970s, the concept

was being claimed by right-wing journalists who applied it as a behavioural description to poor (mainly black) people who behaved in criminal and deviant ways. Its most famous academic proponent is perhaps Charles Murray, who has used the concept in his analyses of what he saw as the failure of welfare policies in America and, most recently, Britain.

Murray sees the underclass in the USA as the product of a welfare system that has undermined not only the work ethic but also the institution of the family. The group most affected by this process are black, urban Americans. The underclass is seen as being made up of lone mothers on welfare and young males who live on the borderlands of crime. According to Murray, single mothers in America make a rational choice to live independently on welfare rather than working or living with the fathers of their children. Given the nature of these men, women perceive themselves to be better off with a welfare cheque than a wedding band.

Murray brought his views on the underclass to Britain. “The difference between the United States and Britain”, he stated, “was that the United States reached the future first”. Using terms like ‘disease’ and ‘plague’, he argues that an underclass defined by rising illegitimacy, crime and labour force drop-out is increasing in the UK and will continue because a whole new generation is being socialised into this alternative subterranean existence. Whereas his American analysis located the underclass among US blacks, his analysis at the UK lacks a racialised component.

A contrary view of the American underclass comes from William Julius Wilson. Like Murray, Wilson locates the underclass amongst urban blacks but his explanation is couched in structural rather than behavioural terms. Wilson's argument is a sophisticated one and difficult to do justice in a brief article, but essentially his position is that poorly educated, unskilled blacks in urban areas have been left behind. The achievement of formal equality by Afro-Americans in the '60s enabled educated, skilled blacks to escape the ghettos, leaving behind a heavily disadvantaged minority. Structural changes in the economies of American cities have then worsened the labour market position of these groups. The results are the criminality, high rates of single parenthood and welfare dependency noted by Murray.

As you might imagine, the concept of the

underclass has been hotly debated and contested in the US. Wilson himself thinks that we should abandon the concept and use the term ‘ghetto poor’ (1991) and many other academics have followed a similar line in disavowing the concept.

In this country, rejecting British sociologists' obsession with class, much of the debate has centred around questions like, ‘does this grouping display class consciousness’, ‘is it a class subculture, rather than a class in itself’. Race, where it has featured in the UK debate, has tended to be incidental to discussions of class. On the whole, however, UK academics have tended to fight shy of the term as it is used in conservative American thought. “British intellectuals”, wrote Murray, “still disdain the term” (1990, page 3). As well they might, given the usages to which Murray and other American conservatives have put it.

Nonetheless, the recognition of the new urban poor and the possibility of this grouping forming an ‘underclass’ in British cities goes back as early as the mid 1960s where we find Richard Titmuss (1965) arguing that “the problems of the underclass in our cities require positive discrimination in a unrealistic welfare system. Not a plea likely to be made today. After the riots in British cities in 1981, David Donnison (once chairman of the Supplementary Benefit Commission) commenting in a Fabian Society Lecture on the consequences of the decline of British manufacturing industries, noted that: “We are witnessing the exclusion from the life of the city whole groups and neighbourhoods” (1981, page 3).

It is the theme of exclusion that we wish to follow.

## Social exclusion

As we noted earlier, the concept of ‘social exclusion’ is a European, more properly French, term. Republican political thought in France stresses the notion of social integration. Concepts like ‘solidarity’ and ‘the social bond’ express this desire to achieve an integrated and harmonious society. Hardly surprising in a country that has experienced so many social and political upheavals in its history. Exclusion is seen in French thought as a breaking of the social bonds that tie individuals to their society.

The discovery of the new urban poor in French cities in the '70s led to the identification of exclusion with poverty. Again, the emphasis was on the multi-dimensional nature of the new poverty characterised by long-term unemployment, family breakdown and single parenthood, social isolation and the decline of traditional working class communities and institutions such as trade unions.

In Britain, exclusion discourse is growing, partly because of the influence of European Union policies and European academic writings on race and immigration and partly because the term ‘social exclusion’ is favoured by our current government. The emphasis in UK discourse, however, is not on ideas of ‘solidarity’ but on notions of equal citizenship. An idea that fits in easily with British social democratic thought which emphasises ideas of basic political, social and economic rights to which all citizens have equal access.

## Underclass or excluded

Whether we talk about an ‘underclass’ or the ‘excluded’ to characterise the new urban poor is very much a matter of where we stand politically and ideologically. But such terms do not have entirely unambiguous meanings

and, to some extent, the terms are available to anyone who wishes to use them and place particular meanings upon them. As Herbert Gans, a long time analyst of urban America, has pointed out, the term ‘underclass’ had a certain shock value when it was first minted as a piece of radical terminology. The problem with it now is that it is used by writers such as Charles Murray (with its connotation of a racialised deviant residuum made up of ‘welfare queens’ and male criminals living outside of society by choice) has made it an essentially stigmatising concept. Indeed one of the interesting themes in this debate is the way in which underclass discourses reproduce earlier conceptions of the ‘deserving’ and the ‘undeserving’ poor and ideas of the ‘dangerous classes’ (Morris, 1994). Alarmist notions may have a shock value but we should be cautious about such terms in the long run.

## Social inclusion

One strategy adopted by community development activists in this country has been to reject both labels and opt, instead, for the notion of ‘social inclusion’.

“Social inclusion moves away from placing people in pigeon-holes. Community development is committed to working with oppressed and marginalised people, and in doing this it looks to support the strengths and capacities of people. It is opposed to labelling groups of people – that is why, when discussing the goals of community development, we feel more comfortable with the term ‘inclusion’ than ‘exclusion’. ‘Inclusion’ captures the purpose of community development better than the more analytical term ‘exclusion’.” (Community Development Foundation, 1998).

Our view is that although ‘exclusion’ has its problems it is the most useful concept (focusing as it does on processes which create urban poverty) for the kinds of discussions we in Greater Manchester are seeking to engage in around drugs, crime and communities.

Ian Smith

(Development Officer,

Trafford Substance Misuse Services)

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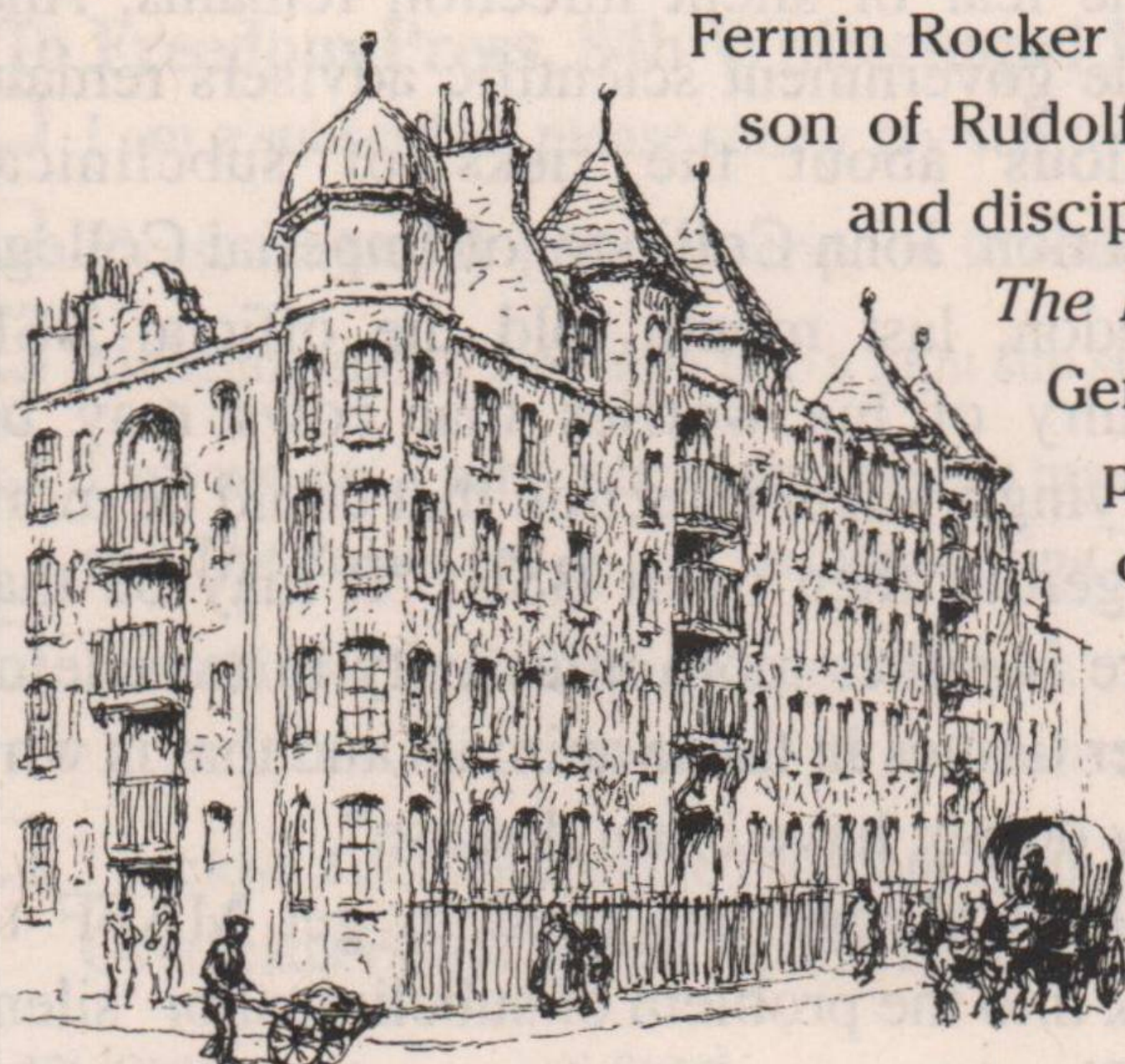
Fermin Rocker

## The East End Years A Stepney Childhood

with drawings by the author

Fermin Rocker was born in the East End of London in 1907, the son of Rudolf Rocker the famous anarchist theorist, activist and disciple of Kropotkin.

*The East End Years: A Stepney Childhood* appeared in German translation a few years ago. This is its first publication in the original English. In exploring his origins as an artist, Fermin Rocker conjures a moving and colourful picture of his remarkable father, anarchism and of the Jewish East End. Rocker's story reminds us that the visionary topography of his paintings has its roots in a lost world.



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## NET WATCH

### Bookshop flooded

Comrades inform us that the Lucy Parsons Centre in Davis Square, Boston, has suffered flood damage with all their books destroyed in the basement of their shop, which is one of the best known radical bookshops in the United States.

They have been going for thirty years, but of course, being true anarchists, they are not insured and all their stock will have to be replaced.



## Tameside, Greater Manchester Roy Oldham's Republic of Sin

Such is the bullying going on in Tameside Borough Council, led by Roy Oldham, that it is tempting to call it the kingdom of megalomania. Such is the mismanagement of services and cronyism that perhaps the Republic of Sin would be more appropriate.

When last week I spoke to the secretary of Mr Fielding, Tameside Council personnel officer, and asked about attempts to hinder members from attending a UNISON meeting in June, she said immediately "I don't know, was it something to do with Tameside Care Group?" Terror reigns, it seems, in all council departments as the Labour authority, run by Roy Oldham, grapples with 240 sacked care workers and their UNISON union.

As I write, Roy Oldham and his Labourite gang are threatening the care workers with police action if they hold a rally on the Town Hall steps in the Market Square. A letter informing the union of this ban was shown to the Strike Support Group last week.

Other members of staff have been bullied, including the local libraries where they are being prevented by special command from displaying material supporting the sacked strikers. Even part-time union officials working for the council who are supposed to be representing the care workers are being warned that they will be disciplined for breach of contract if they say or do anything in breach of the Labour Council's policy.

### No one dare speak out

How can one represent fairly one's members and not be in breach of council policy, when Tameside Council itself is a major shareholder in the group that sacked those members in the first place?

It is clear that Labour Council policy is against the dismissed workers. This is underlined by the President of the Tameside Trades Council, Derek Pattison, in a press statement issued last week: "Although Tameside Council is a major shareholder in Tameside Care Group, no Labour councillor or local MP in Tameside has spoken out publicly in support of the striking care workers".

In the glaring absence of the support of the Labour establishment Mr Pattison says: "We are asking members of the public who oppose low pay and who want decent council services, to show their support for striking care workers". Hence a public meeting is being held in Ashton-under-Lyne on 30th June where strikers, union supporters, tenants, resident inmates and their relatives will speak.

The 240 care workers were booted out in May because they opposed a pay cut. Pattison adds that "as a trade union organisation, we believe that the quest for profit and the drive for low wages by Tameside Care group are being put before the needs of the elderly in care".

Members of Mr Pattison's Trades Council helped to start up the Tameside Strike Support Group, which comprises care workers, service users, trade unionists, pensioners and members of unemployed groups.

### Megalomania

Megalomania seems to sum up what is happening in Tameside, where Roy Oldham is long-time leader of the long-term Labour-controlled council. My dictionary describes megalomania as "a psychopathological condition involving fantasies of ... power".

Part of the reason the reign of terror is so effective is that modern unions, particularly UNISON, have got so intimate with the bosses like Tameside Council and accepted so many

of the employer's facilities that they have become dependent on them and find it hard to mount resistance. In the UNISON office today in Ashton one has to be careful which photocopier one uses for fear of trespassing on council property and being in breach of council policy.

UNISON is now paying the price in Tameside for the kind of hobnobbing and accepting favours from councils like Tameside that it has done in the past. Amongst ordinary folk this is now causing a reaction to what they perceive as state socialism across the board.

### Suspicious socialists

The care workers themselves are suspicious. When Derek Pattison turned out on picket duty outside a daycare home early in the strike, someone asked him who he was. He answered that he was from the Trades Council, to which someone shouted "He's a bleeding councillor". Then another asked "Are you a socialist?" to which he responded "Well yes, kind of". He was then asked if he was going to sell them a newspaper. "No" he said, "I'm not that kind of socialist, and I'm not a newsagent either".

Then someone confided to him that "the thing we hate here are the three 'S's" and when pressed about what the hated three 'S's stood for the picket retorted "Spies, Scabs and bleeding Socialists!"

Roy Oldham and those who run Labour councils have a lot to answer for.

Mack the Knife

## March against the EuroSummit

This march, dominated by Stalinists and Trotskyists and with the usual tired old reformist slogans, took place on the eve of the summit of European Union leaders in Cardiff on Saturday 13th June. Comrades from South Wales Anarchist Communist Federation marched with ACF members from London and Leeds behind a black banner (with 'Anarchist Communist Federation' in Welsh) and three huge black ACF flags, along with other anarchists - at the rear of the demo as usual. The ACF handed out a thousand leaflets with a clear, revolutionary message on a small march of less than six hundred. It didn't go down too well with the assorted Leninists, but a bit better on the Reclaim the Streets party that occupied a bridge over the River Taff later in the day. This passed off with little incident.

## Picket of the Italian State Tourist Office

The London Anarchist Communist Federation initiated a picket of the Italian State Tourist Office from 3-5pm on Friday 19th June, supported by members of the London Anarchist Black Cross, Italian and American anarchists living in London and a lone member of the Revolutionary Communist Group. In all twenty people attended the picket and a thousand leaflets explaining the purpose of the picket were handed out. Over sixty Italian anarchists have been imprisoned over the last year and the picket was meant to bring attention to Italian state repression of the anarchist movement.

## The Rape of Socialism

*The Rape of Socialism: how Labour lost the millennium* by Donovan Pedelty, which was reviewed in our 20th June issue, is still on offer to Freedom readers at the reduced price of £10 (postage 10% inland, 20% overseas). Those readers who have sent orders in the last two weeks should receive their copies soon.

— COPY DEADLINE —  
The next issue of Freedom will be dated 18th July, and the last day for copy intended for this issue will be first post on Thursday 9th July.

## Fermin Rocker at the Owl Bookshop

Fermin Rocker's *The East End Years*, published by Freedom Press, was celebrated at the Owl Bookshop in Kentish Town, London, on 23rd June. Some twenty people sat among the bookshelves, some on chairs and some on the floor.

In some places the event was billed as 'a reading', but in fact it consisted of Fermin Rocker sitting at a table with his interlocutors John Rety and Anthony Rudolf, answering questions about his life and work as an illustrator and a painter, and about the anarchists he knew as a little boy in the East End.

He delighted in telling us again some of the anecdotes in his book, for example how his Jewish grandfather recited family prayers to three daughters who were atheists, three sons-in-law who were gentiles to whom the daughters were not legally married, and the grandchildren.

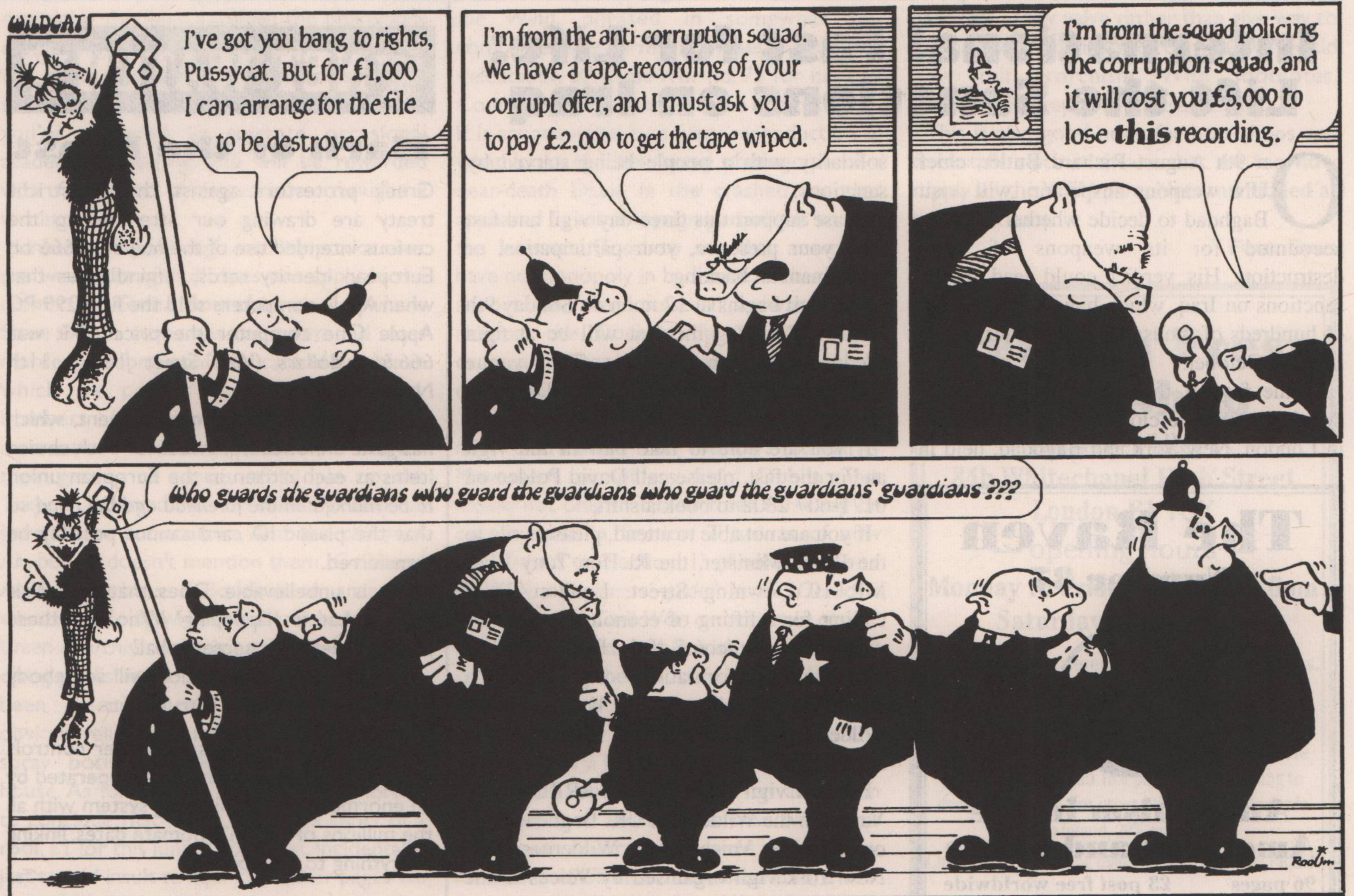
In answer to "Why aren't your paintings in the Tate Gallery?" it emerged that one of the Tate's curators has a Fermin Rocker painting in his private collection. Someone suggested that his work does not make the Tate because figurative painting, whatever its painterly merit, is unfashionable.

Proud of being "a creator", he told us that it is no good waiting to be inspired. He paints every day and if he has to scrap what he painted then he will at least have learned something. At the age of ninety, he is not yet ready to retire. DR

## NET WATCH

### Freedom on the World Wide Web

This is a tremendous job and has brought in thousands of 'callers' to the site. One of the most popular sections is reprints from *Freedom* and *The Raven*. It's well worth looking at on [www.tao.ca/freedom](http://www.tao.ca/freedom). More details will be in our next issue.





# The man without a face: Chapter 7

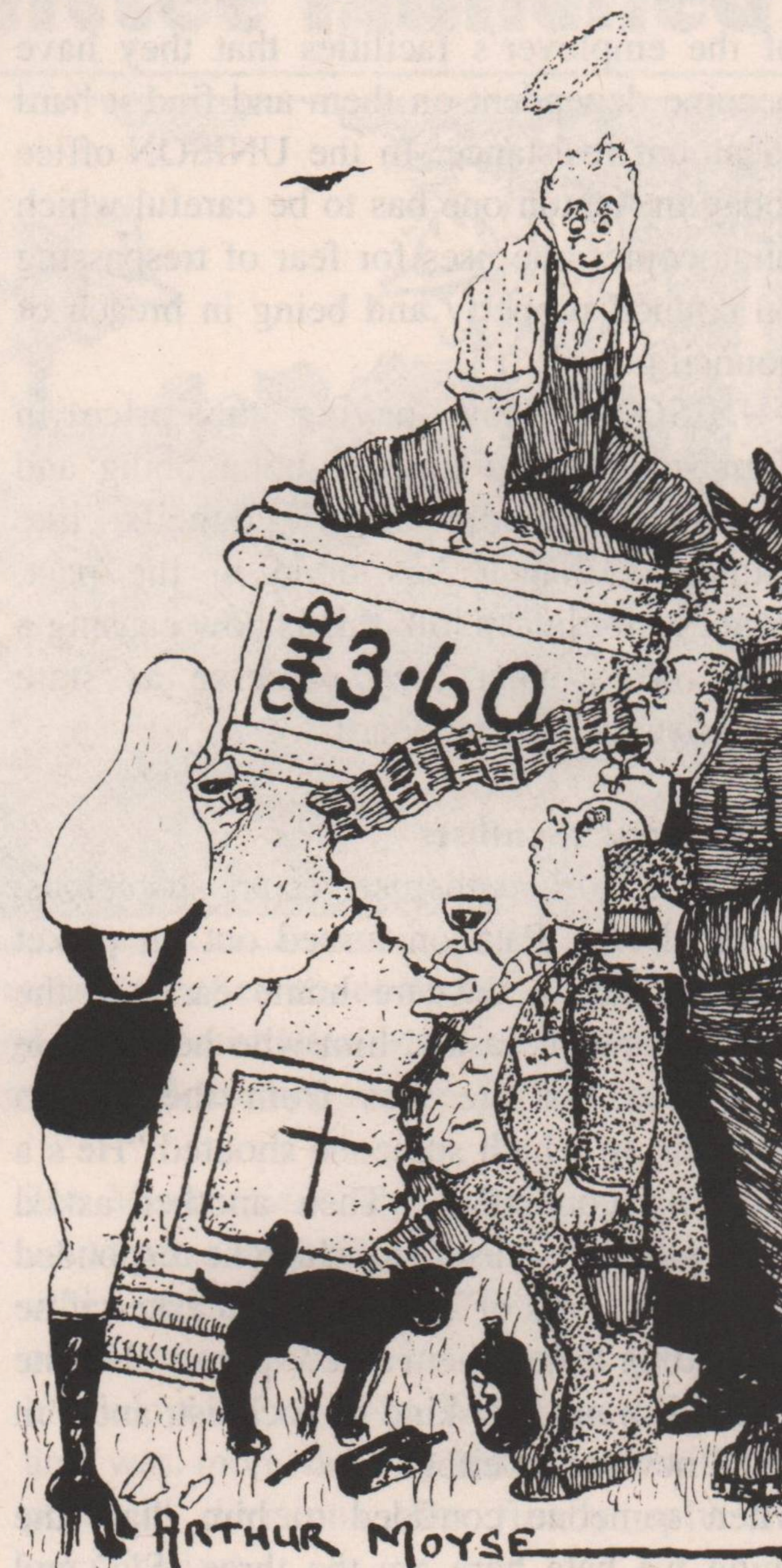
No one dare accuse Peter Mandelson of being the recipient of the lunatic adoration from the mentally unstable herd that followed Princess Diana beyond the grave, but then Peter and I may earn the adoration but we are both capable of dealing with it beyond an occasional breakdown in the Blue Anchor beer house. Mandelson is one of politics curiosities cursed with a dead-pan face that can empty a pub bar quicker than the bar man (person) can pour the pint. He has always been one of that ghastly majority, the 'back room boys' drop the gender at the door. Dir. of Co. for the LP, 1997 LP Cam. Man. for E1 and MP for Hart. since 1992, he will be remembered, nay must be, when he joins Di to the sound of synthetic applause in that great echoing chamber of the BBC for the arid circus shambles that PR call the Dome.

I am forever for Shakespearian cakes and ale and dancing on the village green, which for we the labouring class meant street parties and the jam sandwiches, but like unto CND, New Labour, tarted up high priced ex-working class terraced houses and the assassination of Clause Four, the Dome circus, by virtue or vice of its public costing, will be no more than another middle class ploy farmed out as another shallow 'victory' for socialism. One must ask why and where does poor old Pete fit into this diatribe by a sour geriatric and it is that in August of 1997 Mandelson bit the cucumber sandwich and delivered the 581 Fabian spiel to the Fabian Summer Fest. For those who are not interested, Fabian was a Roman general who in about 200 BC fought every battle on General Montgomery's principle of 'slowly slowly' and the Webb's and the Shaw's and the Victorian middle class bleeding hearts decided that that way lay utopia but not in their lifetime. Pete's spiel can be contained in a few brief lines of his own coinage in that "Social exclusion is one of the great scourges of modern times" and to the 1997 Fabians Pete scared the shit out of the cucumber-eating Fabians by stating the revolutionary

manifesto of new life under New Labour: A new Social Exclusion Unit to be based in the Cabinet Office, and chaired by the Prime Minister. Pete tackled "the allegation that only by spending more money can Labour achieve change".

And he makes it clear that New Labour will bring every part of government together to make Britain a better place to live. A spectre has long haunted the Labour Party, and it was and is that of Ramsay Macdonald the ancient Labour Party leader who loved the empty cloak of power so much that he became the Judas Goat for the Tory National Government. We are the labouring class, we are the great unwashed and we see that dividing line between the rich and the poor monthly becoming wider and wider for the middle class, as always, demand their payment for their support of those seeking power and what the middle class have always demanded throughout recorded history is less paying of tax, more physical control over the labouring class and less minor liberties for the labouring class. And you ask why are they called the labouring class? Because, my innocent, you will be told that 'my daddy is a multi-millionaire director of international companies and he works, therefore he is a worker' but we, my innocent, are the great unwashed, unloved labouring class and no one, not even daddy, wants and no one loves us in that we don't even love each other.

The US of A is a world power with a surplus in everything from basic foods, a working force and armaments, and a social jungle attitude to humanity in that if you do not survive in the accumulation of money then you self-destruct, and that without mercy. The Economic Policy Institute - that I accept, in good faith, as a supplement to *Beano* comic records - records that between 1979 and 1996 in the US of A for the middle classes with two wages coming in, the increase of 8% in income work grew by 19% to 3,851 hours a year. The American worker now works 163 hours more a year than he did



"Well done, thou good and faithful servant"

twenty years ago, and the US of A is striving through Congress to bring in new laws wherein work that is done for an employer on 'weekends' shall not have to be paid for.

Little Abby Cohen, who pulls that barge as Goldman Sach's top market whizz-kid, boasted that she works on Sundays and grunts and groans on a twelve-hour day. Britain, never slow to drag her arse behind American lifestyles, recorded that they hope to change the thirty-five-hour week to a 1,826-hour working year so that, deep thinking, Saturdays can be included in the working week and without having to pay overtime. The American ideas are quickly coming across the Atlantic, but then sadly why not for wealth and the workers are international currency, be you a South

American peasant or a New York clerk. American banks, with a few State exceptions, get five hours more work out of their staff than ol' NatWest does, while the American bank gives (!) the clerks two weeks holiday compared to the British banks four to five weeks holiday, but don't sweat on it little comrade in the old British family bank, for the Time and Motion grim reaper is eyeing the work-sheets. We are caught in this trap of the consumer society in that we are preyed upon to consume more than we need, and I offer no sanctimonious raising of the left eyebrow for the supermarket shelves are open to pander to our greeds and desires and while others in our small world starve we throw the unwanted foods from the fridge.

The answer to the problems of this age do not lay in romantic talk that we all believe we know the problems and each one of us believe we know the answers of how to clothe, feed, house and attend to the sick and the aged, and it will range from the beastliness of Ma Thatcher's crude ideas to that of the bleeding hearts of solving every problem by holding hands. Always for the labouring class the cutting of their claims for part of the wealth of their society in that they created it. If you work then your lowest wage will be £3.60 an hour, but £44 a year will be deducted as various taxes. Mr X, a factory worker, (Blue Anchor pub), £5.50 for 39 hours but after taxes a take-home of £170.09 a week. Myself, an OAP and industrial pension gives me £110 a week. Divide by forty hours (a week) gives me £2.75 an hour, and as an inverted snob I am proud to boast that I am below the poverty line. Some years ago in a deep discussion with a woman who worked in an anarchist bookshop, I said that I thought there were more nutters, fruit-cakes wierdoes and mentally unstable within the anarchist movement than any other groupings of peoples, but she said "No Arthur, I once thought that but I went to a Fabian open air lunch and there were more sad, mentally unstable people and genuine odd cases than we could ever find in the anarchist movement". Peter Mandelson, why were you at that cucumber-chewing lecture, apart from giving it, or was it a demonstration of New Labour's 'slowly, slowly' Fabianism.

Arthur Moyses

## International Fast for Life: Lift the Sanctions on Iraq

On 9th August Richard Butler, chief UN weapons inspector, will visit Baghdad to decide whether Iraq has accounted for its weapons of mass destruction. His verdict could lead to the sanctions on Iraq, which have cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians, being lifted in October.

As the fate of the Iraqi people is being decided, round-the-clock fasts will take place in London, New York and Baghdad, held in

solidarity with a people being starved by sanctions.

Please support this three-day vigil and fast with your presence, your participation, or your financial backing.

The vigil begins at 12 noon on Sunday 9th August. Breaking the fast will be at 6pm Wednesday 12th August. The venue throughout the fast will be 10 Downing Street, London

If you are able to take part in the vigil and/or the fast, please call David Polden on 0171-607 2302 to book a shift.

If you are not able to attend, please write to the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Tony Blair MP, 10 Downing Street, London SW1, calling for a lifting of economic sanctions, whatever the outcome of the Butler visit.

For more information, or to make a donation, please write to Voices in the Wilderness UK, 1 Hertford Road, London N2 9BX.

London vigil organised by ARROW and Voices in the Wilderness UK. Baghdad vigil organised by Voices in the Wilderness UK. New York vigil organised by Voices in the Wilderness (US).

## NET WATCH

### Mark of the Beast

Greek protestors against the Maastricht treaty are drawing our attention to the curious intended use of the numbers 666 on European identity cards, reminding us that when Apple computers sold the first 299 PC Apple One computer the price of it was 666.666 dollars (*Wall Street Journal*, 11th November 1981).

This time the Schengen agreement, which has gone unnoticed, provides for such choice items as each citizen in the European union to be marked on the forehead and the hand so that the plastic ID card cannot possibly be transferred.

This is unbelievable. Does that fool Blair know what is happening? Who are these people meeting in secret cabal?

Unless all this is fabrication, will somebody verify the following. Is it true that:

a) The agreement refers to border controls and border transfers. This to be operated by an enormous electronic filing system with all the millions of citizen's intimate dates, linking everything to Strasbourg.

b) At any moment the control headquarters

can know anything about the private life of each citizen. Here is totalitarian superpower, the new electronic dictatorship. Sovereign rights are violated. Assault on personal freedom. Legalisation of electronic filing. *Reduction of the human factor* and converting it to 'subject-object' useful to information collecting. Cows came first (and sheep) now humans with nice little tags. Tony Blair no exception.

c) Assignment to the 'proper mediums' of the right to surveillance within the borders of a country without prior approval. The agreement in Maastricht allows (pages 29-30) for several violations of the regulations granting asylum, and of the Geneva convention. It also calls for the issuing of electronic IDs without which the Schengen Information System cannot operate. Each citizen to have one unified coded number which fits into a 666 design.

The phrase 'the lunatics have taken over the asylum' comes to mind. But will people tolerate this nonsense which intends to take away any dignity of private life and will constrain even further the information availability to the private citizen. JR

[We understand the protestors are Greek Orthodox Christians, but none of us knows what the Maastricht Treaty holds in store - Editors]

## The Raven Number 37



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— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

# Liberating civil society

I had the great pleasure of meeting a visiting professor of sociology whose particular field of interest was a libertarian approach to civil society theories. It isn't an area that I have the right vocabulary to discuss, even though it is central to anarchist ideas and, according to Scruton's *Dictionary of Political Thought*, it is based on something I first learned from the social writings of Martin Buber, the fact that: "many political theorists now distinguish 'civil society' from 'state', using the first to denote forms of association which are spontaneous, customary, and in general not dependent upon law, and the second to denote the legal and political institutions which protect, endorse, and bring to completion the powerful but inarticulate forces of social union."

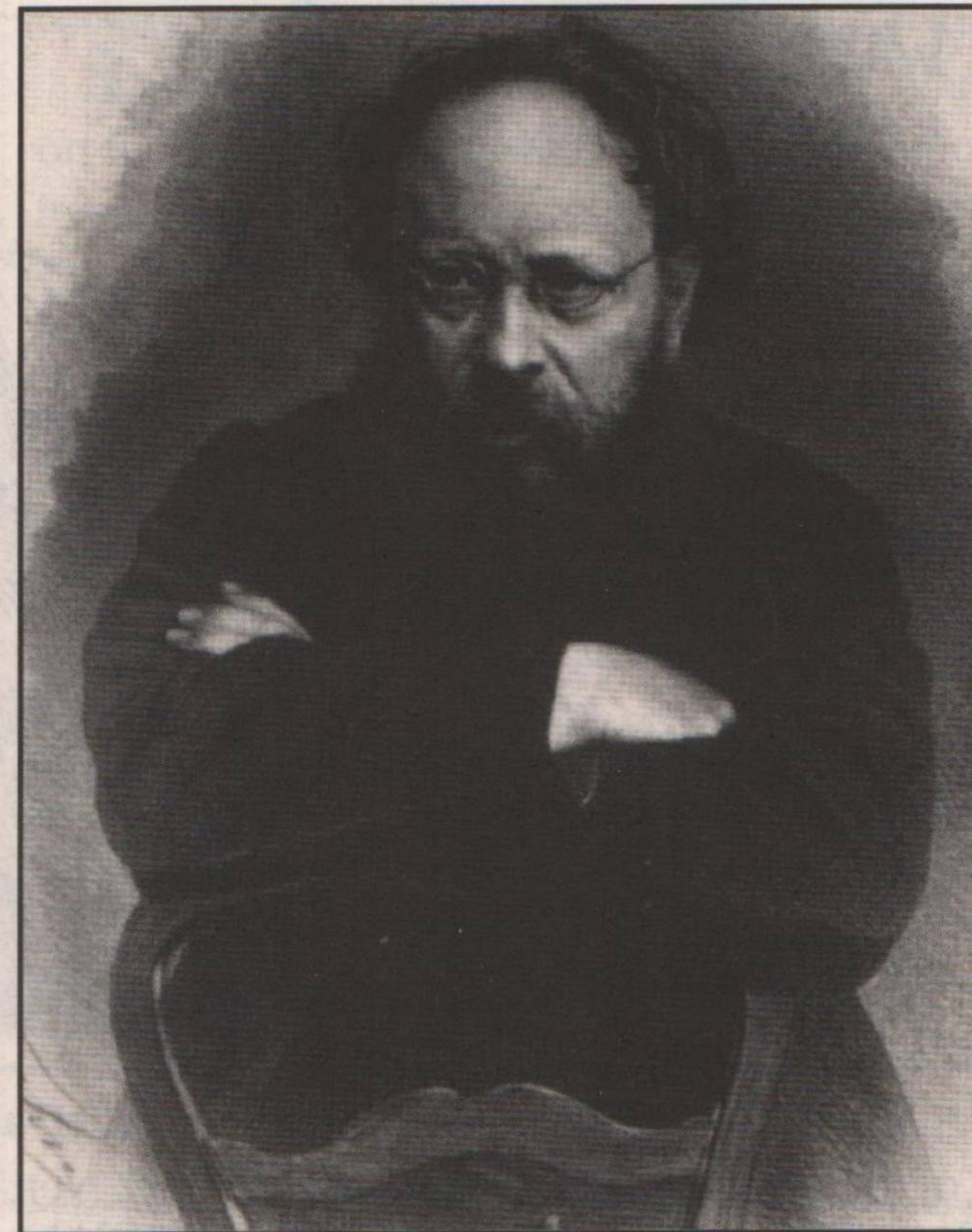
Anarchists, I assume, would be more censorious in their description of the state.

Now even I have noticed a big increase in the use of the term 'civil society' in the last decade, attributable to several factors. I imagine that the first is the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire which brought platoons of Western advisers moving in to explain about what was missing in Soviet society. I am certain that another has been the free market rhetoric of Thatcherism with its highly misleading rhetoric about "rolling back the frontiers of the state". The interesting thing here is that the present Labour government stresses its break with the state socialist programme of Labour's past, using language that evokes community action, mutualism and voluntarism, as well

as 'partnership'.

Somewhere beyond the circles we move in, there is an academic debate on this upsurge of interest, in which my new friend's role is to argue for what he calls "a libertarian radicalisation" of civil society theories. He is aware that in the past the terms anarchist and libertarian have been used interchangeably, but that today various ideologists of the right have adopted the term. So he cites other authors who propose the term 'left-libertarian', explaining from a writer called Herbert Kitschelt that: "they are 'left' because they share with traditional socialism a mistrust of the market place, of private investment, and of the achievement ethic, and a commitment to egalitarian distribution. They are 'libertarian' because they reject the authority of the private or public bureaucracies to regulate individual and collective conduct. Instead they favour participatory democracy and the autonomy of groups and individuals to define their economic, political and cultural institutions unencumbered by market and bureaucratic dictates."

Undoubtedly, among the would-be government advisers there is a whole range of labels for the next Labour Party policy. A few years ago it was Communitarianism, propagated from America by Amitai Etzioni, and discussed by me in this column for 25th



Pierre Joseph Proudhon

March 1995. A more subtle answer came from the sociologist Ray Pahl (*New Statesman*, 10th March 1995) who remarked that: "in embracing a mythical idea of community, the Labour Party may be making a grave error by ignoring the very real support networks that people build among themselves".

More recently, after the Labour Party's electoral victory, a pamphlet appeared from Demos by Charles Leadbeater, *Civic Spirit:*

*The Big Idea for a New Political Era*. This was advocating *Mutuality* which, it explained, "brings together four key principles: justice, decency, community and choice" as opposed to Communitarian thinking, which the author believed, "veers between the vapid and the authoritarian".

And more recently still, a long article by Peter Kellner in the *New Statesman* (22nd May 1998), was called "a new 'ism' for our times: Forget socialism. Dump Thatcherism. Try mutualism." A sharp letter was sent by someone from Freedom Press to remind readers that this was not a new 'ism' at all: "*Mutuellisme* was advocated by Pierre Joseph Proudhon a century and a half ago as the economic aspect of his ideology – a third way between capitalism and communism – and the libertarians in the French labour movement and in the First International were called *Mutuellistes* for several decades before they were called Anarchists, If New Labour needs a new label, let it invent one itself, rather than borrowing an old one."

Who do we blame for the fact that we anarchists have drifted into our own private backwater of political philosophy? My attempts to find an answer to this question lead me to rejoice to find someone teasing out the arguments for a libertarian radicalisation of civil society theories.

Colin Ward

## Freedom Press Bookshop readers' round-up

As part from a famous dish involving chicken, Maryland USA is also the home of the decidedly less appetising National Security Agency (NSA) which gets \$10 billion a year of US taxpayers' money to spy on electronic communications worldwide, of which \$1 million *per minute* is devoted to eavesdropping on the UK, Germany and France. *Squall* no. 16 features a piece on the huge spy base in North Yorkshire laughably called 'RAF' Menwith Hill but in fact owned and run by the NSA under a highly secret agreement with the UK government in 1956. They never troubled parliament to approve such a cosy deal, and few people have much idea what goes on there. In the last thirteen years the number of giant radomes – which look like huge golfballs but conceal radar scanners, microwave and satellite dishes and radio antennae – have multiplied from four to 27. The 1,200 American staff, twice as many as the British, carry out routine interceptions of all radio, microwave and telephone traffic, including civilian. This covers not just telephones of all types but faxes, e-mails, pagers and the Internet. Two million such transmissions an hour can be intercepted by this "the largest regional intelligence station on earth" and relayed to Maryland.

Other reports in the first *Squall* for over a year include the countryside march and the vested interests behind it, the growing opposition to 'free' trade and the globalisation of capital, and no less than three articles on Freemasonry in Britain. Your 52 outsize pages are a mere £2 (note the price increase) for which you also get some sharp poetry and some clever anagrams of assorted establishment names: how about 'My dear Hitler poser' for gerrymanderer Dame Shirley Porter!

Book reviews, book reviews and more book reviews, many expanded to 'review articles', are the staple diet of *Anarchist Studies* no. 6/1. Even one of the three lengthier 'features' is effectively a very detailed book review, and a very interesting one at that, but perhaps of limited use for most people since the book in question, Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, has been out of print for years and the publishers show no interest in reprinting it. Of greater use, perhaps, is the feature examining the links between the philosophy of the English philosopher John Locke and the later development of anarchism as a philosophy. If you've got £6 to spare and you're prepared to tolerate occasional academic posturing, you will be rewarded with 96 pages of provocative thoughtful writing.

Unfortunately, although certainly provocative, the word 'thoughtful' does not apply in the context of *Green Anarchist* no. 51, where Steve Booth advocates terrorism and mass murder in a long, confused rant of despair in which he praises the Oklahoma City bombers for killing "200 government automatons" and the Japanese Aum cult for their gassing of scores of people on the Tokyo Underground. Presumably also all government automatons. And the children? Ah, but he doesn't mention them. 'Collateral damage' perhaps. If Booth is an anarchist, what is he doing writing such rubbish? And if *Green Anarchist* really is anarchist, what is it doing publishing it? Since when has sarin gas been green? Booth also predicts, with obvious relish, that microlights will one day spray botulism over every millionaire's house. As for Booth's 'house', one is forced to conclude that he's a few slates short of a roof. £1 for this junk, if you must. Incidentally, just to add insult to injury, on other pages we find Booth reviewing his own books,

presumably to scotch the rumours that nobody reads them ...

At least John Moore's short and slightly ethereal perspective on Diana-mania offers some light relief. But wait! Is this not the same John Moore who writes for, and is now an associate editor of *Anarchist Studies*? Just thought I'd mention it.

From another quarter comes a different contribution to the critique of Diana fever. A spoof Elton John song called *Door Handle in the Wind*, phrased in somewhat uncomplimentary terms, is presented for our delectation by *Class War* no. 75 (or no. 2 of Continuity *Class War* as some are calling it). It is accompanied by a fuzzy reproduction of what looks like the fabled photograph of a near-death Diana in the crashed car that appeared in some foreign periodicals and on the Internet. Good to see that anarchists have no monopoly in bad taste! Other pages report on the Louise Woodward case, religion, the Countryside Alliance demo, drugs, and more. It also carries a number of quite good cartoons for your 70p.

We are pleased to announce that we are now distributors for Workers Solidarity Movement pamphlets from Dublin. This means not only that their titles currently on our booklist in 'Section 2' are as of now transferred to 'Section 1' (*Anarchism and Ireland: a beginners' guide*\* at £1; Conlon's *The Spanish Civil War: anarchism in action*\* at £1.50; *Ireland and British Imperialism*,\* £1.50) making them post-free in the UK, but also that the other titles WSM publish, and which we now have stocks of, are in the same category. These new titles are: *Anarchism and the EZLN*,\* an article on the Zapatistas and an interview with their spokesman Subcomandante Marcos by Mexican and US anarchists, illustrated, £1.50. *Organisational Platform of the Libertarian*

*Communists*\* by Arshinov, Makhno, Met et al, of the exiled Russian anarchist group Dielo Truda after their experiences in the revolution, first published in 1926 and reprinted here with a preface by the WSM's Alan MacSimóin and an introduction by the ACF's Nick Heath, £1.50.

*Chomsky's Anarchism*,\* comprising of Chomsky's introductory essay to Guérin's *Anarchism* and an extended interview he gave to WSM in *Red & Black Revolution*, illustrated, £1.50.

*Parliament or Democracy*\* by Kevin Doyle, the second edition of a well-researched bulky pamphlet showing how and why the ruling class invented parliament as a harmless safety valve rather than give way to genuine direct democracy, or what we would now call anarchism. With footnotes, illustrations, graphs and tables, £2.00.

This is also good news for bookshops and bookstalls since it means that we can now supply all the WSM pamphlets mentioned at trade discount.

Four Eyes

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# LOVE AND RAGE BREAKS UP

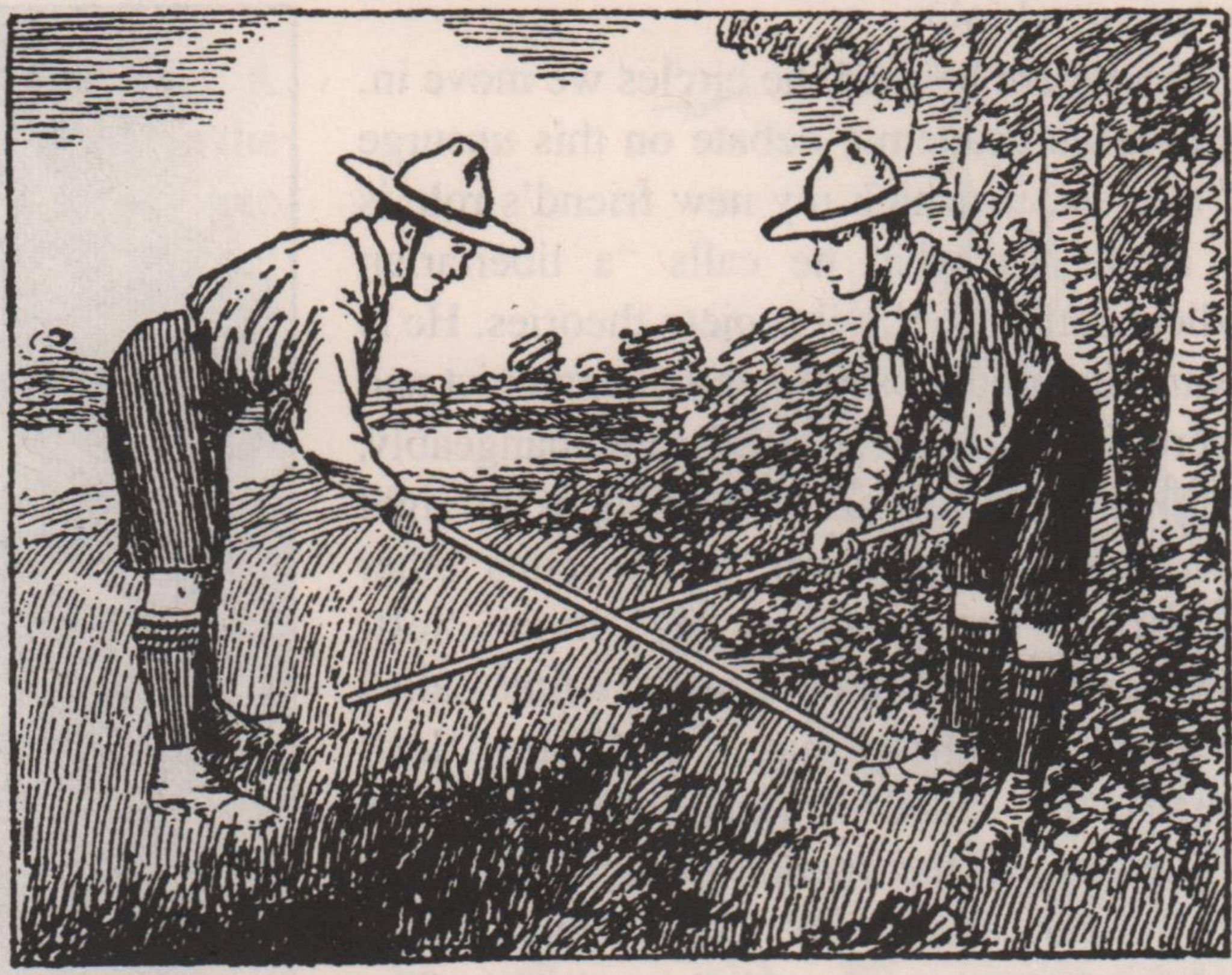
## Fire by Night Organizing Committee launched

After more than eight years of hard work, the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation voted to dissolve itself during a brief conference at Hunter College in New York City on Saturday, 23rd May 1998. Some participants in the conference spent the rest of the weekend laying the foundation for a new provisional organisation, the Fire By Night Organizing Committee. Members of another faction at the conference also announced their intention to launch a journal and a new organisation. Neither of those projects has a name yet.

*Love and Rage* started out as a continental anarchist newspaper at a conference in Chicago back in 1989. The founding group included individuals and members of anarchist collectives from across the US and Canada as well as an anarchist faction of the freshly-dissolved Trotskyist group Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL). Over the years, *Love and Rage* evolved from a loose network around the newspaper into a tighter organisation. It became the Love and Rage Network in 1991 and the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation in 1993. This desire to build a serious and committed organisation coupled with the involvement of the ex-RSL members made *Love and Rage* an object of continuous controversy within

WAYS OF SETTLING  
PERSONAL AND  
POLITICAL  
DIFFERENCES... No37

ANARCHISTS IN FULL  
DRESS UNIFORM, BOW  
POLITELY BEFORE BEATING  
SHIT OUT OF EACH OTHER  
WITH CEREMONIAL STICKS.  
THIS GAME IS CALLED:  
"FU-CK YOU BOURGEOIS RE-  
FORMIST LIBERAL BASTARDH-  
OW DARE YOU VERSION OF A-  
NARCHY NOT BETTER SAME AS-  
MINE!"



Picture taken from *A Night to Remember*, a collection of cartoons by Bob Cann which originally appeared in the now-defunct *Nottingham Anarchist News* and other publications. The book is available from the Freedom Press Bookshop at 60p (post-free).

the anarchist scene. Despite these controversies, the reliable publication of the newspaper provided a valuable source of news and a forum for debate among anarchists and activists of many persuasions.

The break-up of *Love and Rage* was preceded by a two-year-long debate within the organisation around a number of issues that proved irreconcilable. In the course of this debate, the ex-RSL members and a few others active in the Anti-Racist Action Network (ARA) signed onto a document entitled *What We Believe* (WWB), which argued that all of the practical and theoretical problems that faced *Love and Rage* could be answered from *within anarchism*. Other members raised provocative questions (How do you defend the ideals of a new society without replicating elements of a state? How does a revolutionary relate to her or his communities as an organiser?) and often found that anarchist history and thought didn't have satisfying answers. The WWB document and its backers offered vague and moralistic answers to such questions. Worse, WWB warned that this questioning was evidence of a covert plot to corrupt anarchism with Marxist thought.

A second major issue was the theory of white skin privilege, which holds that the material and psychological privileges granted to white people in the US, and not just racist ideology, is the primary obstacle to multi-racial unity among oppressed people in this country. WWB described the privileges granted to whites as petty and apparent and some members of the WWB faction attacked the theory of white skin privilege. In opposition to this position, others argued that opposition to the system of white skin privileges was central to their politics and part of what attracted them to *Love and Rage* in the first place.

A third major issue was practical work. Some of the WWB faction members had stopped doing any sort of mass organising years ago. This was reflected in their politics. Some did political work locally which often wasn't integrated into the *Love and Rage* Federation's strategic working groups. A couple were doing good work building ARA, but had failed to fulfil responsibilities to the organisation which they had taken on when the *Love and Rage* Coordinating Committee (CC) was moved to their area. The CC was the body responsible for the day-to-day decision-making of *Love and Rage*, but this CC never met after it was elected at the 1997 *Love and Rage* Conference.

While this debate was taking place, two of the main *Love and Rage* locals broke down.

The Minneapolis local became less and less active after several key members relocated to other cities and others came to see the organisation as irrelevant to their work. The breakdown of the New York local came later and was more directly associated with the political divisions that finally split the organisation.

Although many sought to keep the debate over these issues civil and focused on the underlying political questions, a number of documents sunk into personal attacks and distortions of people's actual political positions. It was in this context that many of the opponents of WWB decided that they could no longer remain in the same organisation with the WWB faction. The degeneration of the debate combined with the organisational breakdown of the CC and several locals created a general demoralisation that was followed by a rash of resignations from the organisation, though these came primarily from members who had long been inactive.

It was clear that the organisation had come to an impasse. Opponents of WWB realised that it was necessary to support a resolution to disband the organisation, in order to clear the way for launching a new organisation on a firmer foundation of political unity and commitment to actual participation in mass struggles.

This new organisation took the name *Fire By Night Organizing Committee* from the Black spiritual *Go Down Moses* which refers to the use of *fire by night* to illuminate the route of the Underground Railway during slavery times. The name also reflects our desire to root our politics in the real traditions of struggle of the society we live in. In that spirit, we have decided to form a provisional committee that seeks to build an organisation from the ground up with other groups and individuals we see as our political allies.

Several members of the new group still identify as anarchists, and the organisation is committed to anti-authoritarian politics and an anti-statist revolutionary strategy. But we have deliberately chosen not to identify as an anarchist organisation to make clear our anti-sectarianism, our openness to a range of political influences, and our determination to create a new revolutionary politics more in tune with the conditions of the twenty-first century. We look forward to continuing to work with all of our allies, both those who identify as anarchists and those who don't.

The *Fire By Night Organizing Committee* is currently composed of two local branches, one in New York City and one in the San

Francisco Bay Area. A number of other groups and individuals have already expressed interest in affiliating or working closely with the new organisation. We will continue our participation in student and poor people's organising efforts and we will carry out an intensive study and discussion process in order to clarify our basis for political unity. *Fire By Night* also plans to publish a critical evaluation of our experience in *Love and Rage* and a collection of documents from the debates that occurred over the past two years. There is a strong commitment on the part of its members that, in comparison to *Love and Rage*, the *Fire By Night Organizing Committee* will be more consistent in making sure that its members live up to expectations of membership that are appropriate to a serious revolutionary organisation, and that we will be more serious about the development of our politics through study, discussion and ongoing critical reflection on our experiences in mass organising work.

The WWB faction has begun work on two projects. The first is a journal to be titled either *Liberty* or *Utopia* and to be produced by the ex-RSL members. The second is a call to form a *Fresh Revolutionary Anarchist Group*, a federation of collectives united around firm anarchist/anti-authoritarian politics and outlook, oriented to the working classes and most oppressed, and active in building *Anti-Racist Action* as an anti-authoritarian mass movement. Some members were unhappy with the lines along which the organisation split and will not be part of any of the post-*Love and Rage* projects, nor will the small minority who actually did come to Marxist conclusions during the period of debate.

The final conference started civilly with reports on the work and future plans of the people in the room followed by a unanimous vote to disband *Love and Rage*. This tone was only broken when the question of dividing up the resources of the organisation came up, and it became clear that the debts of the organisation were greater than its assets. As it currently stands, the *Fire By Night Organizing Committee* has been shouldered with all of the debts incurred by *Love and Rage*. Negotiations are under way to see if the other projects will contribute anything to retiring *Love and Rage's* debts.

Members of *Love and Rage* expressed feelings ranging from deep sadness to profound relief at the disbanding of the organisation. The burning question for members and non-members alike was what would happen to the newspaper, which was respected by many who never supported the organisation that produced it. A final issue of the newspaper, which was almost ready to go to press at the time of the break-up conference, will be published. The *Fire By Night Organizing Committee* has decided not to publish a new publication for at least six months, to allow ourselves time to determine whether or not sufficient support exists for it and whether or not it is a politically appropriate use of our limited resources. We all appreciate the value of the newspaper, not just to ourselves but to the larger movement, and will be distressed if we end out choosing not to resume publication (under a new name of course).

The *Fire By Night Organizing Committee* can be contacted through the old *Love and Rage* Newspaper Office in New York at: PO Box 853 Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009, telephone: (718) 834-9077, e-mail: lnr@blythe.org

For further information contact: Suzy (New York City): (718) 834-9077 or Connie (San Francisco): (415) 285-6058.

## NET WATCH

### Puerto Rico strike against privatisation

A people's strike against telephone privatisation is gaining strength in Puerto Rico. 65% of the people oppose privatisation according to a Gallup poll on 18th June. The pickets have been joined by students and academics including Professor Rafael Barnabe. This has incensed the police chief who said: "We are not going to permit the spread of anarchy".

### Spanish conscientious objectors harassed

Anarchist comrades call for help regarding the plight of four 'insumisos' who are in the military jail of Alcala. They are held in intolerable conditions for their 'crime' of refusing to do national service. Their treatment is comparable to 'mental inquisition'. The telephone number of Alcala prison is +34 91 888 03 21 or full information on fractura@cgt.es

### Activate not de-activate

The Australian anarchist youth magazine *Activate* has given away all its edition at selected places in Sydney to introduce the magazine to a wider audience. This was the plan, but the authorities intervened and police pleaded with people not to break the law by "accepting an anarchist magazine". Some copies were trashed but most of the issue was successfully distributed. Not knowing the Australian situation, this laudable effort to spread anarchist ideas was frustrated by what law? Is there a blanket law in Australia for the spread of anarchist literature? Comments please by those who know.

### El Salvador killing of street walkers

The dreadful 'social cleaning' continues in El Salvador where six prostitutes have been murdered since February by the so-called Squadrons of Death and the Army. Protests must reach the president of El Salvador, Dr Armando Caldera Sol.

compiled by JR



**Rich and Poor**



**T**ravelling to the North of England was a salutary experience. It is like a foreign country, only you don't need a visa and there are no physical frontiers.

What a curious person the human being is. I have written about this before. Something about the effect of geography: latitudes change attitudes.

After a while though one has to get back to the place where one has lived all one's life. There are regrets for an anarchist like me. One glance at the northern reports which appear in *Freedom* underlines what I am saying. There is not much anarchist organised activity in the South – in this great metropolis there is not even an anarchist group.

Not that there isn't enough anarchist activity of one kind or another. But it is usually organised by sympathetic pressure groups, Reclaim the Streets for example. You recognise a lot of comrades on these demonstrations, but none of the marches I went to recently were specifically anarchist.

Whenever I can I take a few copies of *Freedom* for sale, they always go quickly. And there is always a comrade one hasn't seen for a long time to talk to.

But it is a curiosity. There were about three thousand people happily blocking the traffic by Kings Cross Station for perhaps an hour. Taking their lives into their own hands. Could be described as anarchist, but more accurately issue activists.

They make a point. They issue a warning to authority. But then they disperse into thin air until the next demo and the next issue.

When the London Anarchist Group was still active, on the CND marches for example, it was good to know that it wasn't just an ad hoc appearance, there was a reason and a hope of continuation in our presence.

And yet they are anarchists in all but name. Let me give you an example of what took place in Salisbury on 20th June during another Reclaim the Streets event.

There were about five hundred people there. We marched round in a big circle round the city centre stopping the traffic – by and large a good humoured affair.

Then came the great sit-down on one of the main roads. Then when the demo was nearly over and people were about to disperse two military tanks appeared. After all, Salisbury is a military town. This took everybody by surprise. There was no way the tanks could proceed with the throng of people sitting on the road.

Perhaps it is a long time you have seen a tank on your city street. Stopping cars is one thing, but stopping a tank! And what followed was even more amazing. A burly bloke jumped on the front tank and, before the two 'navigator' soldiers could do anything about it, he got them both by the scruff of the neck in a mighty embrace, just like those rare pictures when soldiers join arms with civilians. And within seconds both tanks were swarming with people to a huge uproar from the crowd.

Although there were photographers working away frantically, I don't suppose you have seen them in your papers. Censorship and the old boys' club d-notice (don't print) will have taken care of that.

But consider this, comrade. When people took over the tanks in Hungary 1956, or Czechoslovakia 1968, or on any other occasion, it was the culmination of a great popular movement, a signal for a change.

In Salisbury it was a brave occurrence, but no more than that. After a while the authorities regained control. Certainly while it lasted it was a great shock for some and exhilaration for others.

We have a great movement out there and a lot of good will, but besides these pressure groups there ought to be some constructive anarchist group as well, in the South that is.

John Rety

**Monopoly Money**

Dear *Freedom*,

I am afraid I don't share Milan Rai's enthusiasm for the theory of Monopoly Capital (see 'Monopoly Money', 6th June). Calling a plurality of companies a monopoly is hyperbole, like calling a conservative a fascist or a social democrat a communist. Comrade Rai is aware of this, pointing out that 'monopolies' are really 'oligopolies'. For anyone who might not remember, 'mono' = one.

Definitions aside, there is also the problem of the origins of this theory. The concept of monopoly capitalism had an honourable enough beginning in the American Populist Movement of the 1880s. At that time, farmers and artisans faced *genuine* monopolies. The farmer could borrow money from only one bank, sell to one buyer, buy equipment from one supplier and ship his wheat or cotton on a railroad monopoly. J.P. Morgan had a stranglehold on Wall Street and Rockefeller controlled all the petroleum. However, within a generation – in part due to popular struggle – the power of the mono-

polies declined and they were replaced by oligopolies. In the 1930s the Communist Party sought a rationalisation in theory for its right-turn and found it in the idea of the 'Anti-monopoly Bloc' which would supposedly separate the 'good' bourgeoisie from the 'bad' bourgeoisie. Hence a lot of bluster about monopoly when in fact there were few monopolies.

Then there are the blind spots of the monopoly theorists. Monopolies and oligopolies could not exist without the State. Indeed, plutocracy is a creature of the State. The few real monopolies we have today are State monopolies such as the postal service, minting of money, public transit, etc. Yet, the theorists don't mention these aspects to any degree, since they themselves are arch statist.

Many marxists are attracted to the notion of monopoly capitalism because it fits in with marxist teleology – the idea of evolving 'stages of history'. Hence, they want to believe that capitalism is ever consolidating, ever growing bigger, until that final wonderful day comes, when Jesus – oops, I mean the proletarian revolution occurs.

Baran and Sweezy's *Monopoly Capitalism* is a classic all right – a classic case of Stalin strained through Keynes. Among other things, it contains such gems as the belief that technological development was slowing down. This in 1966, before PCs, VCRs, the Internet, etc. An infinitely better book from a marxist perspective – *libertarian* marxist and not Stalinist – is Paul Mattick's *Marx and Keynes* which appeared about the same time, but regrettably did not get anywhere near the readership.

Larry Gambone

**Virtual Conference**

This is an international alliance bringing together independent video and television organisations and practitioners. "The right to communicate is an universal right." Participants are asked to join one of five working groups for a five-week period. Those interested should contact Bram Dov Abramson, conference director, Universite de Montreal, CP 6128 Succ. Centreville, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3J7, Canada.

**Limitation of the labour movement**

Dear *Freedom*,

John Doheny's summary of Murray Bookchin's account of the Spanish anarchist movement (20th June) includes a misleading reference to my letter about the relationship between anarchism and class struggle (24th – not 29th – January). He says: "Bookchin sees Malatesta's position at the Amsterdam Congress of 1907 as crucial and central rather than the exception which Nicolas Walter makes it". But I didn't make it an exception.

I said: "The special variety of libertarian socialism which took the form of the revolutionary syndicalist movement from the 1890s until the First World War, and which laid particular emphasis on the class struggle, was supposed by most anarchists, including the leading figures in the movement; though there was disagreement about the emphasis on working-class action – as in the debate between Malatesta and Pierre Monatte at the Amsterdam Congress in 1907."


Malatesta, like most other leading anarchists, supported the revolutionary syndicalist movement, as may be seen in his speech in Amsterdam on 29th August 1907. He said that "the labour movement has always found in me in a resolute, though not blind, defender", that it is "a particularly propitious area for our revolutionary propaganda", that "I want anarchists to enter the labour movement", that "I am a syndicalist" and "I am a partisan of syndicates" (i.e. unions), that "I am for the most active participation in the labour movement", and so on. He also said that "the labour movement is for me only a means – clearly the best means offered to us", he criticised the syndicalists who made it an end, and he explained the limitations of the labour movement from the libertarian and

revolutionary perspective. This was of course the point of disagreement with Monatte.

Far from being an exception, Malatesta's was the majority view among anarchists, and his resolution supporting working class activity but insisting on the need for armed insurrection and violent expropriation as well as the general strike was adopted by a vote of two to one the following day. This view may also be 'crucial', though that isn't certain. But it can't properly be called 'central' since a third of the delegates at Amsterdam preferred the syndicalist line, and the argument continues.

This controversy should be conducted with courtesy, as it was by Malatesta and Monatte, but not by mutual abuse; Bookchin may be right to say that the performance of the anarcho-syndicalist movement has been 'dismal', but what about the performance of the rest of the anarchist movement? It should also be conducted with accuracy; most of the syndicalists who later became fascists or communists hadn't claimed to be anarchists in the first place. Anyway, it takes all sorts to make a revolution.

NW

Please keep sending in your letters and donations ... 

**Terminator gene**

Dear *Freedom*,

Last issue's editorial assured us that the introduction of the 'terminator gene' into agriculture was an environmentally beneficial development which would prevent the spread of genetically-engineered strains of cotton, wheat, maize, and so on. "Prince Charles can instruct his minions to plant his organic seeds right next to seeds carrying the terminator gene, without fear of contamination. For any seeds which escape into his field from the adjacent field will be dead." (The terminator gene kills the seeds of the genetically-engineered crop so that they cannot be used again by the farmer.)

Unfortunately, one of the hazards of genetic engineering is what is called 'horizontal gene transfer': the random transfer of genes directly from one organism to another in the wild, in this case from one plant to another. Thus, for example, a crop genetically engineered to be resistant to weedkiller might pass on that resistance to the surrounding weeds, making them more resilient 'superweeds' (as has happened).

There are in Europe at the moment laws about which varieties of crop seeds may be sold. This is a tiny proportion of the varieties that have been developed by agriculturalists over the past ten thousand years using selective breeding. Governments are already making it illegal for us to buy or sell species diversity. The seed companies have very effectively lobbied the European Community to allow genetically modified crops to be grown and sold before safety standards have been properly developed, and before the public has had a chance to express its opinion. It will come as no surprise to us if these same seed companies do their best to ensure that it is only their genetically-engineered seeds that are available to commercial farmers.

The possible consequences of introducing a terminator gene into the world's natural or domesticated flora, and that gene spreading, might include the assassination of species and, in the very worst case, the end of life altogether.

Emily Johns and Milan Rai

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but a collection is made to cover the cost of  
the room.

— **PROGRAMME 1998** —

**3rd July** An in-depth discussion on anarchism  
led by Matt Winfer

**10th July** General discussion

**17th July** Social Darwinism and Socio-  
Biology (speaker Donald Room)

**24th July** General discussion

**31st July** Is Professionalism Dead? (speaker  
Peter Neville)

**7th August** General discussion

**14th August** Capitalism (speaker Matt Winfer)

**21st August** General discussion

**28th August** Symposium on Racism

**4th September** General discussion

Anyone interested in giving a talk or  
leading a discussion, please contact Carol  
Saunders or Peter Neville at the meetings  
giving subject and prospective dates and we  
will do our best to accommodate.

**Carol Saunders / Peter Neville**  
for London Anarchist Forum

**International  
Fast for Life:  
lift the sanctions on Iraq**

**Vigil begins: 12 noon on Sunday 9th August**

**Fast ends: 6pm Wednesday 12th August**

**Venue: 10 Downing Street, London SW1**

If you are able to take part in the vigil and/or  
the fast, please call David Polden  
on 0171-607 2302 to book a shift.

For more information, or to make a donation,  
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**Thursday 9th July at 8pm**  
**The Salisbury Pub, Grand Parade,**  
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**Friday 10th July at 8pm**  
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**The Russell Hotel, 116 Brixton Road**

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This year the Anarchist Summer Camp  
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**For details, suggestions, enrolment:**  
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