

# INDEXEDOMI

anarchist fortnightly

Vol. 61 No. 2

29th January 2000

50p

On the new Prevention of Terrorism Bill ...

## More about terror

It is taken for granted by most people in this country that we have freedom of thought to decide what we think, freedom of speech and writing to say what we think, freedom of association and assembly to share what we think, and freedom of movement to say and share what we think where we want. In fact our freedoms of speech and writing, association and assembly, and even movement, have always been limited to various extents, by the law and other means. It is only through a process of protest and resistance against the authorities over several centuries that we are able to enjoy what freedoms we now have. And it is only through the practice of watchful vigilance of the authorities at all times that we will go on being able to do so.

The new Terrorism Bill, which was discussed in the last issue, shows how the authorities are all too willing to halt and even reverse this process if they think they can do so. Further study of the Bill provides further examples of authoritarianism run mad which would be hilarious if they weren't horrifying. Thus the section on 'support' of 'terrorism' makes it an offence not only to invite support for a proscribed organisation, but to have anything to do with a private or public meeting of three or more people which supports a proscribed organisation; it also makes it an offence to have anything to do with a private or public meeting of three or more people which is merely addressed by a member of a proscribed organisation.

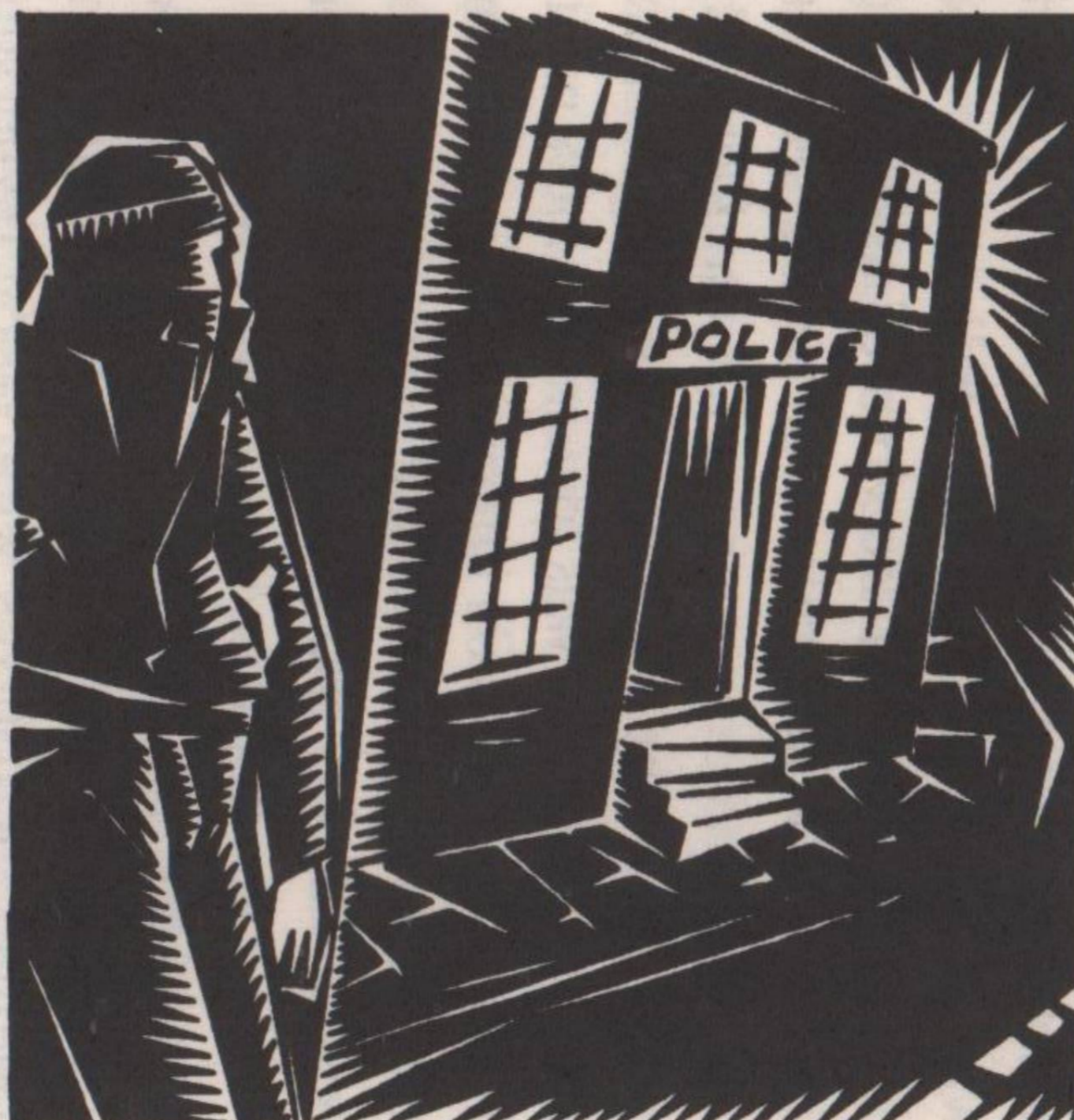
So it would be a serious criminal offence to be present at a meeting where one of the speakers is an alleged terrorist or even to take part in a debate against an alleged terrorist. I have been to a public meeting at which suspected IRA members spoke, and I have opposed a Sinn Fein speaker in a student debate; in

the past this was legal, at least outside Northern Ireland, but under this Bill it would be illegal everywhere in the country, and I would be liable to ten years' imprisonment.

Many much more prominent people than me have had much closer contacts with members of so-called terrorist organisations, including members of both Houses of Parliament and representatives of the army and police. Would they now be arrested, tried and imprisoned? Or would the law apply, as usual, only to little people?

One problem the Government is going to have with the Terrorism Bill is that under the Human Rights Act of 1998 it must be compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, has attached to the Bill the statement that in his view it is compatible. His views don't carry much weight at the moment, in the light of several recent decisions, and it will be interesting to see the views of other commentators as the Bill goes through Parliament, and the views of the European Commission on Human Rights when the first cases begin after it becomes law.

There were several hostile comments



Picture by Clifford Harper

on the Terrorism Bill in the liberal press last year, and there will be many more this year. Thus the current issue of *Index on Censorship* (January/February 2000) contains a short, sharp attack by Frank Fisher. He reminds us that the Labour Party opposed the Prevention of Terrorism Act for several years, but remarks that "to focus outrage on the break this makes with previous Labour arguments is pointless – New Labour has disavowed so many shibboleths of old that even Keir Hardie must have stopped spinning in his grave by now".

He questions the extension of emergency legislation in time, making it permanent after the emergency is over, and in space, making it apply to the whole country rather than just Northern Ireland, and he challenges the extension of the legal definition of 'terrorism' to cover violence against property and even mere disruption. He points out that "extra-parliamentary actions are not just the preserve of mad bombers" (one wonders whom he means), and that "street protesters and direct actioners have had a powerful and generally positive effect on society". And he concludes: "In large part, popular rights in the UK have been won by popular, not executive, action. Throughout the last millennium when the executive has introduced universal suffrage, jury trials, the rights to assembly and association, it has done so under pressure – often after serious disruption, and worse. As we approach the next millennium, let's not forget what we spent most of this one fighting for."

This looks like being a long, hard fight. Let's be ready for it.

NW

# Freedom

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The National Health Service ...

## It makes you sick

**"She waited thirteen hours in casualty before getting a bed in a mixed sex ward – a place we said we would abolish. None of her drugs were given on time, she missed meals and she was found lying on the floor when the morning staff came on. She caught an infection and she now has an ulcer on her leg ... it is normal. The terrifying thing is that we accept it"**  
(quote from Dr Robert Winston in *New Statesman*, 17th January 2000).

The NHS is in crisis. No one, not even William Hague and his health spokesperson, Liam Fox, dispute the fact. The cause of the crisis, though, goes unsaid. Any debate as to the reasons for the fault-lines in the health service is stifled by New Labour's ever more frantic attempts to spin the acknowledged crisis as simply the result of years of Tory maladministration, and also a flu epidemic. When IVF specialist Robert Winston tried to widen the terms of the debate, he was hauled off to Downing Street and forced to recant his earlier statement, in a *New Statesman* interview, that: "We still have an internal market, but instead of commissioning by local health authorities, we have primary care groups. I think we've been quite deceitful about it. We haven't told the truth and I'm afraid there will come a time when it will be impossible to disguise the inequality of the health service from the general population" (ibid).

The flu crisis – which led to a high rate of bed occupancy when intensive care beds and trained nurses were low – forced New Labour to act. It responded in much the way we've come to expect. Faced with a choice of acting in the interests of ordinary people or lying to them, it chose, not surprisingly, the lie as its weapon of choice. According to Tony Blair, the recruitment crisis which has hit service provision would be solved by a pay award to health service staff – 7.8% for E grade nurses and 3.6% for health workers on average. What Blair failed to mention was that the government had no intention of funding the pay awards; the money would have to be found from existing NHS resources (approximately a quarter of the additional resources previously allocated would be used up in funding the awards). No one could begrudge health workers such an award, nor dispute that it is barely sufficient (a flat rate increase for the lowest paid health workers, which was the minimum necessary to start to address the problem of low pay in the NHS, has found no place in Blair's plans). Nevertheless, it is clear that New Labour, a government and a party opposed to the principle of redistribution of wealth, has no objection to the redistributive principle if it involves not the transfer of wealth from rich to poor but from patients to poorly paid workers.

NHS Direct, the telephone triage system, is, we are told, also part of the miracle cure for the health service, and will be extended across the country in light of its success. A recent Kings Fund report (D. Florin and R. Rosén in

*BMJ*, 3rd July 1999) noted that, for all its purported provision of 24-hour advice and information, NHS Direct was essentially used as an out of hours service. Researchers presented 120 dummy cases at three pilot sites and recorded sizeable differences in advice given. Little evidence yet exists of the appropriateness of NHS Direct referrals to other primary care services. The Kings Fund paper further notes that the extension of the scheme will impact adversely on the nurse recruitment crisis, and that the anonymity of the service will lead to potentially inappropriate advice given the lack of continuity of care and knowledge of patient history endemic to the scheme.

All the talk of crisis from Downing Street has neglected to acknowledge that a substantial cause of the parlous state of health service provision lies with the manner in which NHS infrastructure is resourced.

Before 1948, the hospital and community health service was primarily a local government responsibility; local authorities were forced to borrow in order to invest in health care. At the point of nationalisation, in 1948, the hospital infrastructure was described as a "ramshackle and largely bankrupt edifice". No major hospital investment plan was adopted until 1962. Only a third of the 224 schemes proposed in 1962 have been completed. As Declan Gaffney, Allyson Pollock, David Price and Jean Shaoul observe in their series of reports on the Private Finance Initiative (in *BMJ*, 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th July 1999): "The pattern of relatively low or declining capital investment has created severe problems. Today, the infrastructure still retains many pre-NHS features and a significant proportion of the stock predates the First World War. Capital spending has been insufficient to either

replace or maintain outworn and outmoded buildings". Since 1992, most new capital investment has involved the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), wherein the private sector designs, builds, finances, owns and operates services. Hospitals funded by PFI are leased back to the public sector for periods of up to sixty years. Thirty-one new hospitals are to be built through PFI. As Gaffney, Pollock and their colleagues show, "the 'largest hospital building programme in the history of the NHS' will be funded through extensive hospital closures and resources generated by NHS trusts, not by new government funds". The PFI is a government scam to redirect public money into private hands (the committed socialist GP Julian Tudor Hart once coined the 'inverse care law' – the availability of good medical care tends to vary inversely with the need for it in the  
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The double whammy

## Ship owners mug the public - twice

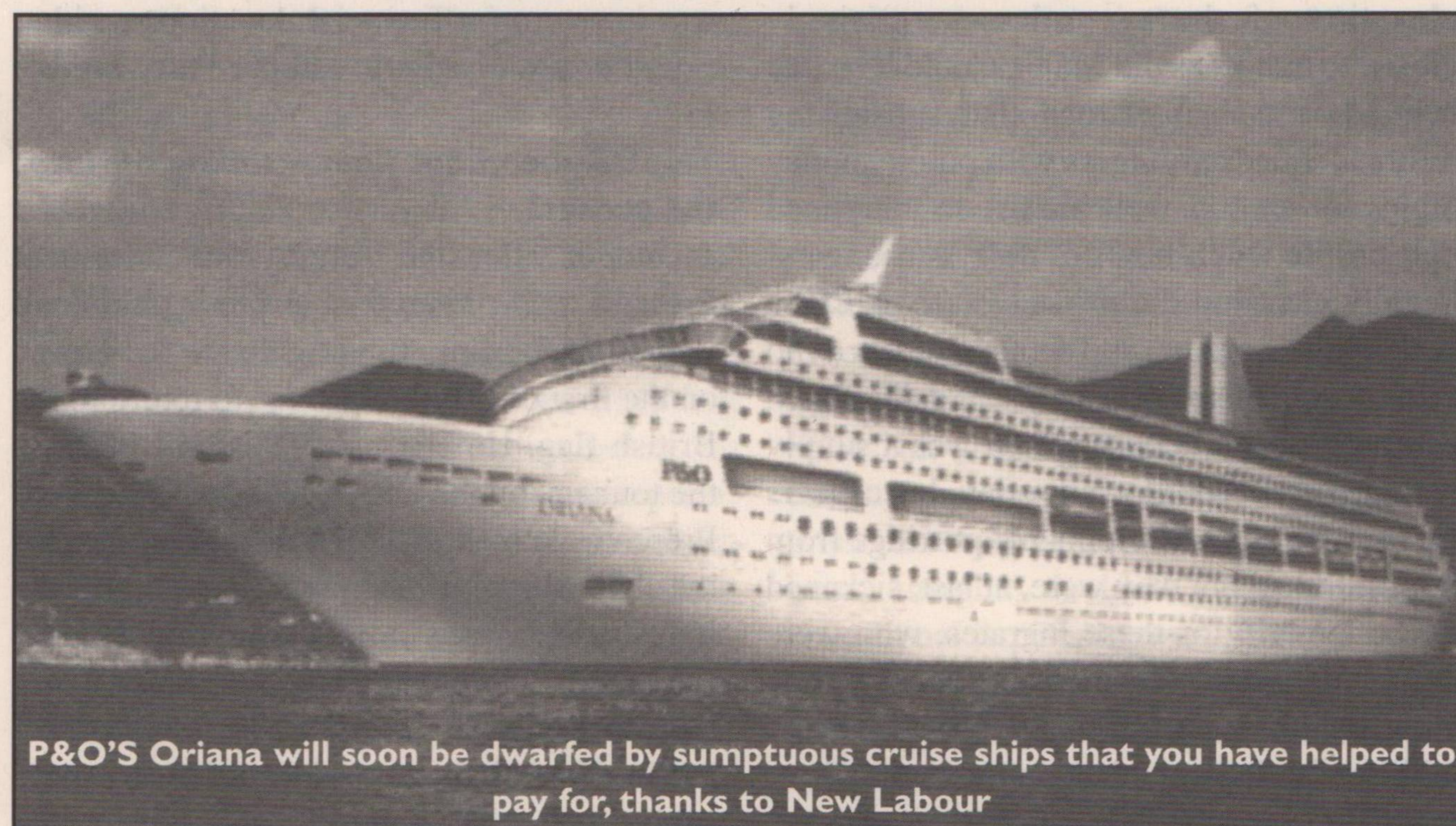
For centuries the British merchant navy has been the chief means of moving goods and people to and from these islands. The Industrial Revolution brought with it mechanisation and reduced crew numbers, and increased both the size and range of the fleet. Now the electronic revolution has brought automation, containerisation, even smaller crews and enormous ships.

need to see what's happened to London's docklands, now the biggest redevelopment area in Europe, to understand the enormity of the changes. This has been driven by the desire of shipping companies to maximise profits by cutting costs and avoiding taxes. Over the last few decades the surviving British companies have opted to sail most of their vessels under flags of convenience,

registering them usually in developing countries like Liberia or Panama where the company name is little more than a nameplate on an office wall, where crews are afforded scant legal protection over wages and conditions, and where maritime safety rules are notoriously lax. The registering countries are grateful for the nominal taxes and registration fees – understandably, given their tiny, desperate economies. And for years most UK car and passenger ferries have been registered in wealthier tax havens like Bermuda and Barbados. The next time you're on one, take a look at the registration certificate. Meanwhile, the company directors are seemingly unconcerned to be using UK public services to which their withheld taxes are not contributing.

### Coming back for more

Throughout the recent eighteen years of Conservative governments the shipping companies put pressure on both Margaret Thatcher and John Major to concede tax breaks on their profits in order, they said, to 'allow' them to bring ships back onto the UK Shipping Register and reinvigorate the ailing industry. They claimed that a reduced tax burden would make it easier for them to employ more British seafarers and buy new ships. This in turn would result in more goods and people  
(continued on page 2)



P&O's Oriana will soon be dwarfed by sumptuous cruise ships that you have helped to pay for, thanks to New Labour

Most of the people-moving function is now done more cheaply by aircraft, but there is a highly profitable and rapidly growing sector of luxury cruises, now classed as leisure rather than transport, which only the wealthy can afford and which accounts for only 2% of holidays. Some of the freight, especially perishables, which could not be containerised is now also handled by the airlines.

### Plundering the public coffers

All these developments have led to a massive loss of jobs and destruction of communities both at sea and in ports worldwide. You only



The average UK-flagged merchant ship is nineteen years old

## Notes in the Margin

Readers of *Freedom's* column of 'Food for Thought ... and Action' and bookshop visitors will recall that there was an excellent anarchist quarterly from Toronto called *Kick It Over* and will wonder what happened to it after No 35 in 1996.

Last year it reappeared from a new group at a new address (PO Box 1836, Guelph, ON, Canada N1H 7A1, fax 519 822-7089). The former editor, Bob Melcombe, is still involved with the group that have taken over the headaches and, in the winter of 1999, issue no. 36 provides a few thoughts that are a reminder that all anarchist editors have their own problems and disappointments. He is full of apologies, and remarks that "nor am I happy about the fact that it took me as long as it did to realise that I wasn't going to be able to pull another issue together by myself." He adds that, "Bringing out no. 35 depleted not only the magazine's bank account, but also Maria's and my personal account. While the fundraising letter was very successful (we paid off all the bills owing from no. 35, and have a substantial fund to pass on to the new folks), it didn't ease the sense of depression and burn-out that came with our financial problems. It was only moving from part time to full time work that made me feel some hope about our monetary situation. Ironically, of course, it was the resulting lack of time and energy that led me to realise that I could no longer continue with the magazine, and that I needed to find someone else to take it over"

Happily he succeeded and no. 36 was full of interesting material. Let's hope that the group in Guelph manage to keep up the impetus that began again last year.

### A veteran reader

A veteran from the wartime readership of Freedom Press publications died on 9th January, aged 81. He was Harry Ward the industrial designer, not a relation but a long-term friend of mine. He worked for many years in the partnership Stephenson/Ward in Macclesfield in Cheshire. When his library was sold last year by a York bookseller, it included Freedom Press publications from 1942 onward as well as the usual range of texts from the Arts and Crafts Movement, Gimson, Lethaby and Morris, of design classics like those of Herbert Read and Norman Potter, and of texts by and about radical educators.

For Harry managed to combine his professional concerns with the advocacy of a simple life in a sustainable pattern of settlements, and of a green, post-industrial economy. What held these concerns together was a faith in the importance of freedom in education and in anarchism as a social philosophy.

I have vivid memories of one occasion when I enjoyed the hospitality of Harry and Barbara Ward. They took me to the Festival at a nearby village in order to show me the doctor's surgery built by the patients since the Health Authority had run out of money. The celebration of mutual aid and self-help exemplified their interests.

CW

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population served; New Labour appear determined to practice alongside a principle of inverse wealth redistribution). As Gaffney and his colleagues contend, the scale of the new investment is constrained by hospitals' ability to generate resources to pay for the new asset. The higher costs (of PFI) have created an affordability gap – the gap between what the trust and purchasers can afford and what the private sector charges. There are, potentially, four sources a trust can tap to pay the private sector:

- The revenue used by trusts to pay for capital charges;
- The proceeds of selling assets;
- Costs savings in service delivery;
- Income generation (retailing, private patients etc).

These sources have proved insufficient and the government has stepped in to ease affordability problems by providing external subsidy from the Treasury (the 'smoothing mechanism'), by redirecting capital intended for NHS trusts, and by allowing PFI trusts to retain without charge the proceeds of sales of their assets. PFI is the only resource available for structural investment. PFI costs impact directly on revenue budgets. As a result of PFI costs, bed numbers are to be reduced by 31% over the next three years (*BMJ*, 17th July 1999, page 179). By 1998 a third of health authorities were in serious financial difficulties, with capital charges and revenue pressures adversely affecting clinical spending. With New Labour's commitment to PFI, things, as the song doesn't say, can only get worse. Under PFI, trusts work on the assumption that they can generate external income by increasing private patient beds and admissions as a proportion of total beds and admissions. Under current legislation, the NHS must give priority to NHS patients and can convert private beds back for NHS care. Under PFI, this option will be lost. Further, as Gaffney and his colleagues note,

(continued from page 1)

carried around the world, and thus bigger profits, meaning higher wages for more and better trained crews. All to no avail. Thatcher, a close friend of P&O chairman Lord Sterling, who continually called for relaxation of the tax rules, surprisingly refused to budge, as did Major. Could it be that their advisors had warned that subsidising millionaire tax scroungers with public money might not sit too well alongside continued high-profile witch-hunts of dole 'scroungers' illegally claiming the princely sum of £50 a week whilst working, and single mothers (who were 'getting themselves pregnant deliberately, just to get council houses')? Or was it simply that having seen the latter-day buccaneers run off with annual helpings of porridge from the communal pot they were, at last, sickened by the temerity of these ingrates, who were now coming back for more at the very time when the Tories were trying to privatise every publicly-funded organisation they could?

### Subsidies by the ship-load

Whatever the reason, the ship owners got no joy from the Conservatives. So when, last summer, the Labour government's Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions, John Prescott, announced a generous but little reported tax reduction for shipping companies, they must have thought Christmas had come early. What they had spent 18 years pleading for under the Tories was suddenly handed to them on a plate, by a Labour government, in only two years. The move means that instead of paying tax on their profits ship owners will now be able to pay a

"the most common way of balancing the books is to cut the workforce. The workforce plans for the new Edinburgh and North Durham hospitals under PFI show that the projected clinical staff budget will be 17% less than in 1996 for Edinburgh and 22% less than in 1994-5 for North Durham. The policy of cutting clinical labour to pay for the higher costs is fundamental to the private finance initiative". A consultancy firm, Newchurch & Company, which advises the government on PFI, has estimated that "each million pounds of incremental PFI capital costs anything from £100,000 to £170,000 per year, requiring the elimination of four to five jobs to pay for it".

PFI represents a clear move towards the private provision of public services, and the dismantling of the NHS. A 1999 Cabinet Office White Paper, *Modernising Government*, concludes that "distinction between services delivered by the public and the private sector are breaking down in many areas, opening up the way to new ideas, partnerships and opportunities for devising and delivering what the public wants". PFI schemes already operate in health, environment, transport, defence and education. The New Labour vision is entirely transparent – the shrinkage of public funding for public services, to be replaced by private money – a piecemeal privatisation by stealth. As Gaffney and his colleagues put it: "The private finance initiative provides the conditions and the mechanisms for reversing the principles that health care should be funded out of general taxation, that public services should remain in public ownership, and that health services should be free at the point of delivery".

Capitalism makes us sick. Health inequalities in Britain have just been declared the worst ever. The life expectancy gap between professional and unskilled workers is now 9.5 years for men and 6.4 years for women. Andy Haines, a University College Medical School professor, GP Iona Heath, and *BMJ* editor Richard Smith argue (in *BMJ*, 1st

simple tonnage tax, which will greatly increase their profits at the expense of ordinary taxpayers. The reason for Labour's generosity is not clear, other than it being just another example of their adoration of capitalists. What nobody seems to have asked is whether it was in return for financial donations – either actual or promised – to Labour Party funds.

### The UK merchant fleet – sailing off into the sunset?

A month after the August announcement Prescott was pictured in a press photo-call with Lord Sterling, running up the red ensign on the first of fifty P&O ships to return to the British flag. He boasted: "This will increase the tonnage on the UK register by 75%". And Prescott claimed that "this is a great day for the UK shipping industry and shows the industry is serious in its commitment to the flag. I look forward to many more ships flying the red ensign" (*Guardian*, 17th September 1999). He added that this would create more jobs for British seafarers and hoped that vessels from other countries would also register in the UK.

Unfortunately for both these gentlemen, two months later someone with a firmer grip on reality was able to explain the true situation to London's *Evening Standard* (9th November 1999). The article, headed 'Fewer New Ships to Fly Red Ensign', emphasised that although more ships are being built globally than at any time in the last twenty years – 57.3 million tonnes – only 0.4%, or 201,000 tonnes, will be UK-registered, the lowest figure ever, and the merchant navy took on fewer officer cadets this year than at any time in living memory.

January 2000) that "ill health and poverty are mutually reinforcing and can generate a vicious cycle of deterioration and suffering ... health should be the pre-eminent measure of the success or failure of development policies in the next century".

Recent studies have shown that poverty and unemployment increase the duration of common mental disorders; that socio-economically deprived patients are more likely to develop coronary heart disease, less likely to be investigated, less likely to be offered surgery, and de-prioritised once surgery has been recommended. New Labour, meanwhile, remains committed to keeping the poor poor, but through the creation of a low wage economy rather than continued provision of benefits. The NHS is nothing like an effective solution to the sicknesses engendered by capitalism. As Keir Hardie once noted (of the 1911 National Health Insurance Act): "We shall not uproot the cause of poverty, but we shall give you a porous plaster to cover the disease that poverty causes". The NHS is under-resourced, and undemocratic. It is nevertheless the case that, faced with its destruction, we have a duty to seek to defend the bare protection it offers, and in so doing seek its extension, and the control over it of those who work in it and depend upon it. As trade unionists and as NHS users, we should seek the return of all private beds to the NHS, the abolition of PFI and the resourcing of the capital building programme and the new pay deals from public funds. As the TUC has observed, the government could spend an extra £31 billion on public services in the next three years, without breaking the treasury's rules for balancing the books.

It may well be true, as Oscar Wilde contends, that "a map of the world which does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at", but the path to Utopia will be lost completely if we cannot defend the limited gains wrested from capital in the years just gone.

Nick S.

### Cruising all the way to the bank

So the strategy of the UK shipping industry is clear. First they take their ships off to be registered in banana republics to escape the comparatively higher costs and stricter regulations in Britain, thus effectively helping themselves to large public subsidies, and then they demand a bribe in the form of further public money before they will bring them back to the UK register. The sums they have made from this double whammy have been extremely useful in helping to fund their expansion into the minority luxury cruise market, which is where the real money is, and which they've been buying into with abandon. P&O, for example, after the tax break was announced went straight out and bought a quarter of the entire German cruise ship industry (£49 million) and is ordering new vessels, mainly luxury liners, to the tune of £2.5 billion. True, it has sold its Bovis construction group and the famous London exhibition centres at Earls Court and Olympia, but these together only netted about £500 million. So they are no doubt extremely grateful to the British public for their unwitting contributions. Every little helps.

By the standards of international theft the communal muggings carried out by the shipping companies make the pirates of old look like positive philanthropists. Surely the only flag they're fit to fly on their ships is the Jolly Roger.

Old Salt

Additional information from *The Guardian* (8th December 1999), *Metro* (13th January 2000) and *Evening Standard* (29th September 1999).

# Making out in managerial society

Members of Bury Unemployed Workers Association (BUWA) raised the issue of interference by management consultants in democratic organisations, as well as workplaces, at the Northern Anarchist Network conference in Hebden Bridge in January. That the BUWA is troubled by the hiring of a management consultant to re-jig the Bury Unemployed Centre is interesting, but it is only a local feature of a phenomenon that is sweeping the land.

The recent disputes and strikes at the BT call centres are a reaction against the latest examples of managerialism. We know that the world of work in the new banks (formerly Building Societies) is being made impossible with ridiculous targets and work systems for the staff.

Last week, Nick Cohen in *The Observer* wrote: "Reckitt & Coleman pollsters said they had found that 84% of women and 75% of men were terrified of the consequences of taking to their beds and went to work when they had a cold or the flu". This is one remit of our management driven society. Mr Cohen concludes: "If their figures are roughly right, and your experience might confirm that they are, it would mean that our emasculated unions and weak protections for employees allow the exploitation of the nervous sick".

Even the latest bout of the flu bug may have demonstrated the deficiencies of management in the National Health Service. With patients being shipped around the country, and even abroad, in search of hospital beds. One gets the impression of an NHS top heavy with managers.

### Danger: managers at work

The latest issue of the *Harvard Business Review* declares: "Many leaders of dominating businesses today have what psychoanalysts call a narcissistic personality. The problem with these productive narcissists in management is, according to Michael Maccoby in the *Harvard Business Review* article, that they have two strengths – great vision and scores of followers – and these strengths tend to ultimate disaster.

The snag is the more successful the visionary manager is, the more followers he (and occasionally she) collects. Thus the road to decline and fall begins. The more invincible the manager feels, because of his fawning followers, the less he is likely to listen to criticism. Because the managers with the narcissistic personalities have in the past always been right to ignore criticism, they feel justified in continuing to ignore it. This leads to extreme risk taking and eventual catastrophe.

It would be possible to cite Hitler as an example in politics. In 1940, intelligent Americans like James Burnham in his *The Managerial Revolution* was taken in by what George Orwell called "the strength, vitality and durability of Hitler's crazy regime".

For Burnham, Germany was expanding rapidly, and "rapid territorial expansion has always been a sign, not of decadence ... but of renewal". For Burnham, Germany "inspires in millions of persons a fanatical loyalty. This, too, never accompanies decadence".

Within five years of Burnham's adulation of Hitler's 'dynamism', Orwell writes: "this young, new, rising social order had smashed itself to pieces and become, in Burnham's usage of the word, decadent". The reason for this collapse was, in large part, the managerial structure that Burnham then admired, and some in a modified form in business, still do.

The kind of mad managerialism, of which Nazi Germany was an extreme form, which

led to disaster is outlined by Orwell: "The immediate cause of the German defeat was the unheard-of folly of attacking the USSR while Britain was still undefeated and America was manifestly getting ready to fight. Mistakes of this magnitude can only be made, or at any rate they are most likely to be made, in countries where public opinion has no power. So long as the common man can get a hearing such elementary rules as not fighting all your enemies simultaneously are less likely to be violated."

### Corporate heroes

Now we have, not Hitler, but corporate heroes like those in the USA. Jack Welch at GE, and Bill Gates. Hamish McRae in *The Independent* asks: "How do you make best use of the enormous strengths these people bring to the organisation, but make sure they don't self-destruct, or when they step down, leave an unmanageable business behind?"

Like Hitler, many of these corporate heroes are driven by the urge to expand. In doing so there is the constant danger that their vanity or over-confidence will result in them opening too many fronts with consequent disaster and decline. Hamish McRae claims these kind of people are touchy about criticism and "are

poor listeners, have a lack of empathy (and are often disliked), have a distaste for mentoring and an intense desire to compete". He adds that "they see everything as a threat" and in their world "only the paranoid survive".

A democratic approach advocated by the Bury Unemployed at the Northern Anarchist Network conference would produce a forum in which different views could be aired. The managerial approach tries to push one view: the one that the manager, the boss, proposes and enforces.

BB

— COPY DEADLINE —  
**The next issue of Freedom will be dated 12th February, and the last day for copy intended for this issue will be first post on Thursday 3rd February.**  
**If possible contributions should be typed using double-spacing between lines, or can be sent as text files on disc (with a print-out please).**

## Seattle Battle: ripples reach Nestlé

Last month, the *Hebden Bridge Times* reported that sixteen people had been charged with conspiracy to commit burglary during an occupation of the Nestlé factory in Halifax, West Yorkshire, as part of the international demonstrations against the WTO summit in Seattle. Protesters, objecting to Nestlé's marketing of baby food to third world countries, were held by police for fifteen hours after they scaled the building in Halifax and hung up a protest banner.

All those charged were remanded on conditional bail until February 22nd, and are then set to appear again at the Calderdale Magistrates Court.

Nestlé was stung into defending its sales policy: "Nestlé firmly believes that it markets baby foods ethically and responsibly where it operates" declared the company. Nestlé declared it was "thoroughly appalled" at the protesters acts, claiming there had been serious breach of security which had caused damage. "This type of disruption achieves very little other than to intimidate and harass otherwise innocent members of our staff" said a spokesperson.

Four of the arrested protesters from Todmorden wrote to the *Hebden Bridge Times* denying the Nestlé claims that their staff were 'intimidated and harassed'. They said: "The workers we saw were waving at us enthusiastically and in no way were they

intimidated". A local anarchist spokesperson told the *Hebden Bridge Times*: "It has long been one of the less desirable characteristics of British law that when there is clearly no evidence to sustain a charge of burglary, damage, or whatever, the law nevertheless allows a charge of conspiracy to commit the offence to be found proven".

This month's Northern Anarchist Network conference in Hebden Bridge discussed the Halifax Nestlé protest in relation to the WTO demonstrations; a full conference report will be in the next issue of *Freedom*.

Mack the Knife

## Philip Sansom

Very sorry to miss Philip's life celebration. Can there be an old Malatesta's meeting time and place in the next Anarchist Bookfair?

Ilyan

[Any old comrades from the Malatesta Club days, please write in and we'll put the idea to the organisers of this year's anarchist bookfair – Editors]

## Correction

In the article 'Disciplined Obedience' in *Freedom* for 15th January 2000, on page 4 in the quotation from Pierre Bourdieu's *Acts of Resistance*, for 'rear' read 'fear' (provoked by the threat of losing employment).

At the foot of the first column on page 5, the line should read "by the fine internationalists whose humanitarian interventions cost thousands of lives ..."



As many of you know, after the heyday of student protests and revolutionary guerrillas during the seventies, there was a violent and bloody succession of military dictatorships organised on an international scale.

Many comrades died in combat as well as in the repression, before and after the dictatorships. Notorious are the cases of 'disappearances' in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.

Later, already in the 'democracy' (the dictatorship in Uruguay lasted from 1973 to 1985) the assassins and executioners of the people enjoyed legal freedom and shelter. Therefore, in 1989 we tried to change this the legal way, according to their rules of the game ... those of the assassins. We collected signatures and against the various impediments thrown in by the government we obtained the necessary number for a plebiscite against the impunity, in order to bring the guilty ones to justice; the ruling party at the time, the very same one who dissolved the parliament and opened the way for the military to grab the power in a campaign of terror, methodically using the basest terrorism, prevented the achievement of the necessary votes, showing once again that with their rules ... only they win.

Today those who murdered our comrades command the Armed Forces. The left wing parties clustered in the 'Ample Front' that

# ANARCHY IN ACTION?

## Number 17

### Escraches: Alternative popular justice against the impunity of those on top

yesterday struggled against impunity and injustice, today, seeing the possibility of becoming the government so near, have abandoned this struggle and are busy reassuring the big capitalists.

Faced with the reality of impunity and complicity in all the political sectors the need comes up to search for alternatives ... to make popular justice, and this is the source of the *escraches*. The idea came from Argentina, although it had already been put to practice in Europe, for instance in Germany against the nazis.

This method of protest was taken up here by HIJOS (children of prisoners disappeared and assassinated).

With the *escraches* we bring to light the faces and the crimes of the murderers. Their pictures appeared posted all over the city and in particular in large posters in the

neighbourhoods where they live. Then we gather and go to their homes. That way the people know who really is their neighbour. Let him be treated for what he is: a murderer of the people, an executioner ... Let the baker not sell him bread, the cab driver not give him a ride, let him be insulted by his neighbours, not be received in their homes, let the doctors not treat them, nor the grocer sell him vegetables, etc. Because if 'justice' doesn't want to do justice and put the killer in jail, the let society, his neighbourhood be his prison ... We also publish their address and phone number.

*Escraches* can take different forms ... for instance in Argentina they went up to the assassin's home and sprayed red paint (symbolising the blood of their victims) over the walls of his house.

Here we haven't done so yet, we have done three *escraches* so far. The first one in December '98, we went up to the home of one of the torturers and assassins of the dictatorship, we kind of caught him by surprise, we didn't advertise widely - on the contrary, we gave word a couple days in advance, in spite of the half secrecy, police

barricades and many men in uniform prevented us by threats from getting to the torturer's home, so the second time, on 30th June, we did a better propaganda job, putting up posters and handing out leaflets with their picture and their crimes in key areas of the city. Many more people came, but it was also interrupted by the police, again without the use of physical force.

The third one was different, since it was not against an assassin of the dictatorship, but against one of the 'democracy'.

In 1994 hundreds (thousands at times) of people were demonstrating around the Filtro Hospital demanding political asylum for three Basque citizens being deported to Spain accused of belonging to ETA, the demonstration was violently suppressed, the police shooting to kill and leaving a balance of hundreds of wounded, many by gunshots, and two dead.

The then Minister of Interior was *escrached* this past 15th September, by several social groups. We emphasise that *escraches* are alternatives against impunity and gradually must become more radical, their purpose is to unmask the assassins, so that people will know who they are, because if Justice is on their side, and all the political parties are accomplices ... the people doesn't give up, it fights, it fights for liberty and justice.

We are the ones who must come out on the street to get what is ours and not expect anything from those on top ... because they'll never give us anything.

Salud, comrades from El Libertario!

Matias da Misa

MilFuegos in Montevideo, Uruguay  
(translation by Luis)

## Most anarchists are not masked rioters



A woman covers her face with the Stars and Stripes after police fired teargas at protesters in Seattle

mechanism for their own purposes. Anarchists reject government in principle. Beyond this there is a great diversity of opinion, and we also differ on what the best method is to achieve these goals. Some favour organising labour unions as the core of the new social relations, others favour a mass political movement capable of pushing aside the old social structures, others the organisation of voluntary producer cooperatives and communities, which would co-exist within the current society and gradually replace the old structures, and on and on. What we *do not* propose is the imposition of our

The recent anti-WTO protests in London and Seattle may have given the public the false impression that the black-clad, masked rioters who went on a rampage are representative of the anarchist movement as a whole, instead of being a small, extremist group, whose understanding of anarchism is apparently weak or inconsistent. Most anarchists, today and historically, believe that their objective is the transformation of human society into a form based on individual freedom, equality and cooperation, as opposed to the authoritarian, hierarchical and competitive situation that humanity currently suffers and dies under. The core values of anarchism are opposition to coercive authority, and that all people should have access to the earth and to the products of our cooperative human labour. We feel most governments are mechanisms for maintaining the current disparity in political power and wealth. Revolutionary governments, while seeking to impose some other distribution of power and wealth, use the same coercive

point of view on society. Social change must be voluntary and consensual, and any revolutionary activity must have massive popular support. The authoritarian strategy of imposing change on society through the use of violence, with minimal popular support, and at the direction of a small group of extremists, is not compatible with anarchism. While we laud the peaceful protests against the WTO that have brought attention to the authoritarian nature of the organisation, and to its biases against labour, consumers and the environment, we feel, in general, that it is a violation of individual liberty to obstruct or break up meetings, destroy literature, silence speakers, damage personal property, riot, block public movement on the streets, etc., in an attempt to coerce or intimidate our political opponents when they are not actively engaged in coercive action. Not only are these tactics ethically wrong, they also foster a never-ending cycle of repression and counter repression.

Ed Stamm

## Thatcher's Legacy

The simple political description of Thatcher's legacy would be that New Labour is just another conservative government by another name. After all, Blair's lot admit taking over conservative economic policies, and much of the rest is the same old cake with a slightly different icing.

But it isn't that simple. Thatcher's children, those raised on her myopic cultural cocktail of careless greed and social indifference, are now in many positions of influence and power - and not only in New Labour. Wherever they pop up, the ethos of only relating to somebody who is 'one of us' fits in very well with the British traditions of old school ties, same university, same regiment, same social class exclusivity. (Notice that when New Labour wanted to make Britain more inclusive in certain respects, their Freudian slip let them down when they formed not a social *inclusion* unit, but a Social Exclusion Unit. Oh dear.)

My particular concern with Thatcher's legacy is in the media. Lest any sharp reader thinks this may be heading towards a bunch of personal sour grapes, e.g. difficulty in getting books published, I admit there may be the flavour of a few such fruits. But what set me thinking about the effects of Thatcher's children was some interviews I heard. One was with an ex-Monty Python member. The usual 'any chance of getting back together?' question was asked. The reply, similar to that of the other interviewees, was that there was no way the men in suits would allow that sort of thing now.

And this is a general fact. 'Now', compared with pre-Thatcher 'then', is marked by a sterile lack of anything novel or confrontational. Debates are predictable, in politics Tweedledum and Tweedledee recite their over-rehearsed lines and indifference spreads. Every aspect of the media is dumbed down,

the assumption of the mass reading age has moved down from twelve a decade ago to ten today.

Thatcher's legacy is a *de facto* cultural immune system, where only the safe and previously tried is allowed. That way everything is kept as it is. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, as someone correctly observed. With a global economy and free market ethos we are all lizards caught in the same cultural bottle. Security is the prize, reinforced by the fear of change which motivates Thatcher's children, but conformity within an illusion of freedom is the price.

Globally what we confront is Nerd World culture. Thatcher's legacy fits in perfectly with the spreading dependence on computers designed by nerds from within the Microsoft monopoly. It all serves to channel the structure of human thought into particular ways. Culture is that which is repeated, the more the present wisdom and structure of thought are repeated the more established the culture they project becomes. As Thatcher so often said, 'there is no alternative' - or that is what they all hope. I don't want you to think this is a conspiracy theory, it's not. It is as Gore Vidal put it: "Not a conspiracy, it's just that all these people think the same way".

As the global cultural bottle of governments and multinationals which contains us all becomes ever more oppressive, anarchy and free thinking become ever more important. If humanity is ever to significantly break out of those ubiquitous chains in which Rousseau found it, we must all be active viruses in every part of the bodies political and cultural. Only by overwhelming the cultural immune system and the Nerd World mentality it protects can we create change and the possibility of freedom.

Colin Johnson

# An elementary but once pedagogically useful taxonomy of the now increasingly arcane left

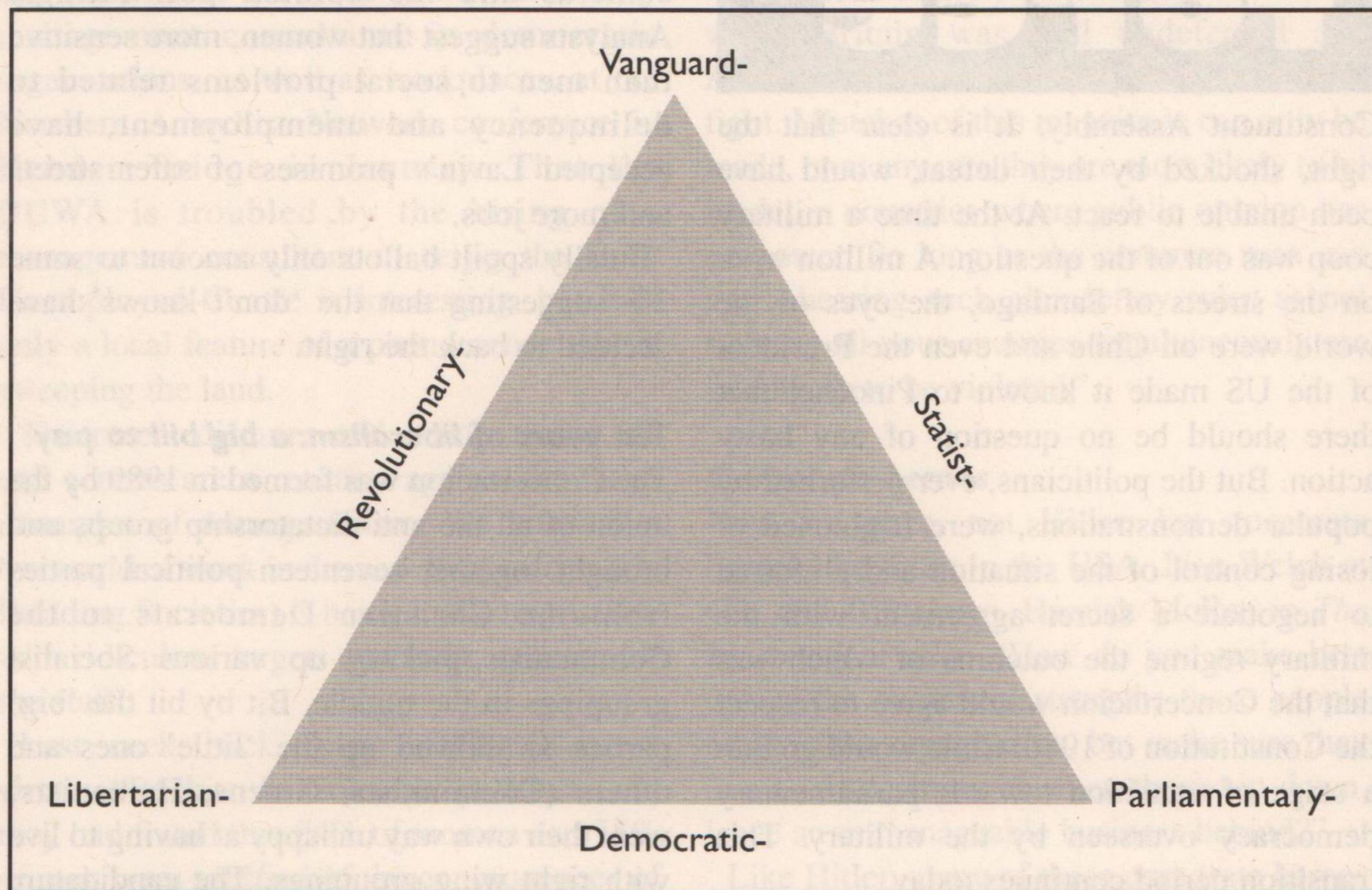


Figure 1: A taxonomy of the left in the form of a ternary mixture diagram (each hyphenated adjective is a modifier for 'socialism')

The '60s, especially within the First World, were an era of revived interest in the possibility of a fundamental change in the social order. Socialism, which at the present historical moment is in organisational, ideological and political disarray, was in that era a serious contender for the loyalties of young people everywhere, especially those in the universities.

The term 'socialism' has different meanings to different people and, as a world movement, has been many-pronged and multi-dimensional. It has also been misused, by both its ostensible friends and its enemies, to describe an oppressive social system (such as that in the former Soviet Union) which is (or was) diametrically opposed in its aims and values to those of its nineteenth century advocates. However, supporters of the status quo are not inclined to make distinctions when considering the enemy, and even the western Left itself has, since the ill-fated Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917, tended to oversimplify its self-characterisation.

Typically, both opponents and adherents of First World socialism, the public ownership and democratic control of the means of production in order to replace production for

private profit by production to meet pluralistically determined human needs, have applied a linear right-to-left categorisation of socialists, their organisations, their methods and their aims. A commitment to moderation, reform, gradual and partial nationalisation, legality and a loose party structure all denoted the right-wing of the socialist movement, while an espousal of militancy, revolution, abrupt and total nationalisation, necessary violence and tight party discipline defined the left-wing. Any individual, sect, party or movement could be located along a right to centre to left straight line according to their degree of 'radicalness' as defined by criteria such as these. This classification corresponded in part (but only in part) to the divisions which developed within the German Social Democratic Party at the beginning of the century, and in part (but only in part) to the Menshevik-Bolshevik divide which developed at the same time within the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party. Subsequently it was used to differentiate 'social democrats' (right) from 'Communists' (left).

Not only did this simplistic categorisation fail to do adequate justice to the wide variety of political tendencies, usually of Marxist

origin, that could be found within both the social democratic and (small c) communist spectra, but it excluded social-anarchists of all varieties including, for example, the wobblies, the once powerful anarcho-syndicalist movement of Spain and the eco-anarchists or Left Greens of more recent vintage, as well as council communists and other Marxists dubbed 'infantile' by Lenin after World War One; and other socialists who might or might not relate to the Marxist tradition.

An alternate classification scheme, which I first proposed in the late sixties, is triangular rather than linear and is analogous to an equilateral-triangular phase diagram for a ternary (three-component) system used by physical scientists and engineers. It is illustrated in Figure 1. In such a diagram, the three vertices each represent one of the three components in unadulterated form, while any point on one of the sides represents a binary mixture of the two components corresponding to the vertices at the extremities of the given side, i.e. a binary which is free of the third component represented by the vertex opposite to that side. Any point within the triangle represents a ternary mixture. The shorter the distance between a point and a given vertex, the higher the proportion of the component represented by that vertex. Conversely, the shorter the distance between a point and a given side, the higher the proportion of the two components represented by that side.

The triangle of Figure 1 purports to represent western 'socialism' in its many varieties or mixtures. The three vertices, labelled *Parliamentary-(socialism)*, *Vanguard-(socialism)* and *Libertarian-(socialism)*, respectively, represent the three quintessential wings of the Left, sometimes referred to as social-democratic, Leninist and anarchist, respectively. *Parliamentary-* and *vanguard-socialists* have, or once had, in common their adherence to centralised government control of the economy, and their parties attempt to achieve state power by one means or another. The side of the triangle joining the *Parliamentary* and *Vanguard* vertices is therefore labelled *Statist*. *Vanguard-* and *libertarian-socialists* (not to be confused with *Libertarian* free marketeers) have in common their commitment to a thoroughgoing political and social upheaval. The side between the two vertices is in this case therefore designated *Revolutionary*. Finally, *libertarian-* and *parliamentary-socialists* are committed to democracy (including freedom of expression in its various forms) in a sense quite different than that advocated and practiced by *vanguard-socialists*, whose 'democratic centralism' is a euphemism for top-down authoritarianism. The remaining side of the triangle is therefore titled *Democratic*. It should be noted that the label on each side is directly contrary in its portent to that of the opposite vertex: thus *libertarians* oppose *statism*, *parliamentarians* oppose *revolution* and *vanguard-socialists* stand opposed to *democracy*.

Although some individuals or groups may designate themselves as pure *Parliamentary*, *Vanguard* or *Libertarian* socialists, many in their practice would not be located at a vertex nor even on a side of the triangle. Their location within one or another region of the triangle therefore characterises their peculiar mix of the three elements represented by the vertices, or of the three characteristics

represented by the three sides. Marx, for example, was closer to the *Statist* side of the triangle when he co-authored *The Communist Manifesto*, but moved temporarily towards the *Libertarian* vertex at the time of the Paris Commune. Bakunin was probably always located on the *Revolutionary* side of the triangle, but, despite his avowed libertarian ideology, his practice put him some distance on this line towards the *Vanguard* (or authoritarian) vertex. Luxemburg, like Marx, was always located somewhere within the triangle, in her case more consistently closer to, but certainly not co-incident with, the *Libertarian* vertex. Lenin, on the other hand, epitomised the *Vanguard* vertex, except for a brief opportunistic period in 1917 when he masqueraded as a libertarian to write *State and Revolution* ("every cook can govern"). Trotsky, in his earlier days, could be located near the *Democratic* base of the triangle, and it was only after he joined the Bolsheviks in 1917 that he moved towards the opposite vertex.

Each individual socialist reader, if she or he is so inclined, can similarly locate him/herself within the triangle, and any self-styled socialist group or sect or party can also be so located. That such categorisation at the present historical moment may seem like a purposeless exercise is a measure of the fact that the socialist vision, even in its most libertarian form, is presently at low ebb. There is also no guarantee that, if and when the tide turns, the same categories will continue to be relevant. Figure 1 may therefore represent the discordant versions of socialism which motivated large numbers of people during one relatively small period of history (the past century) in one part of the world (the more industrialised regions).

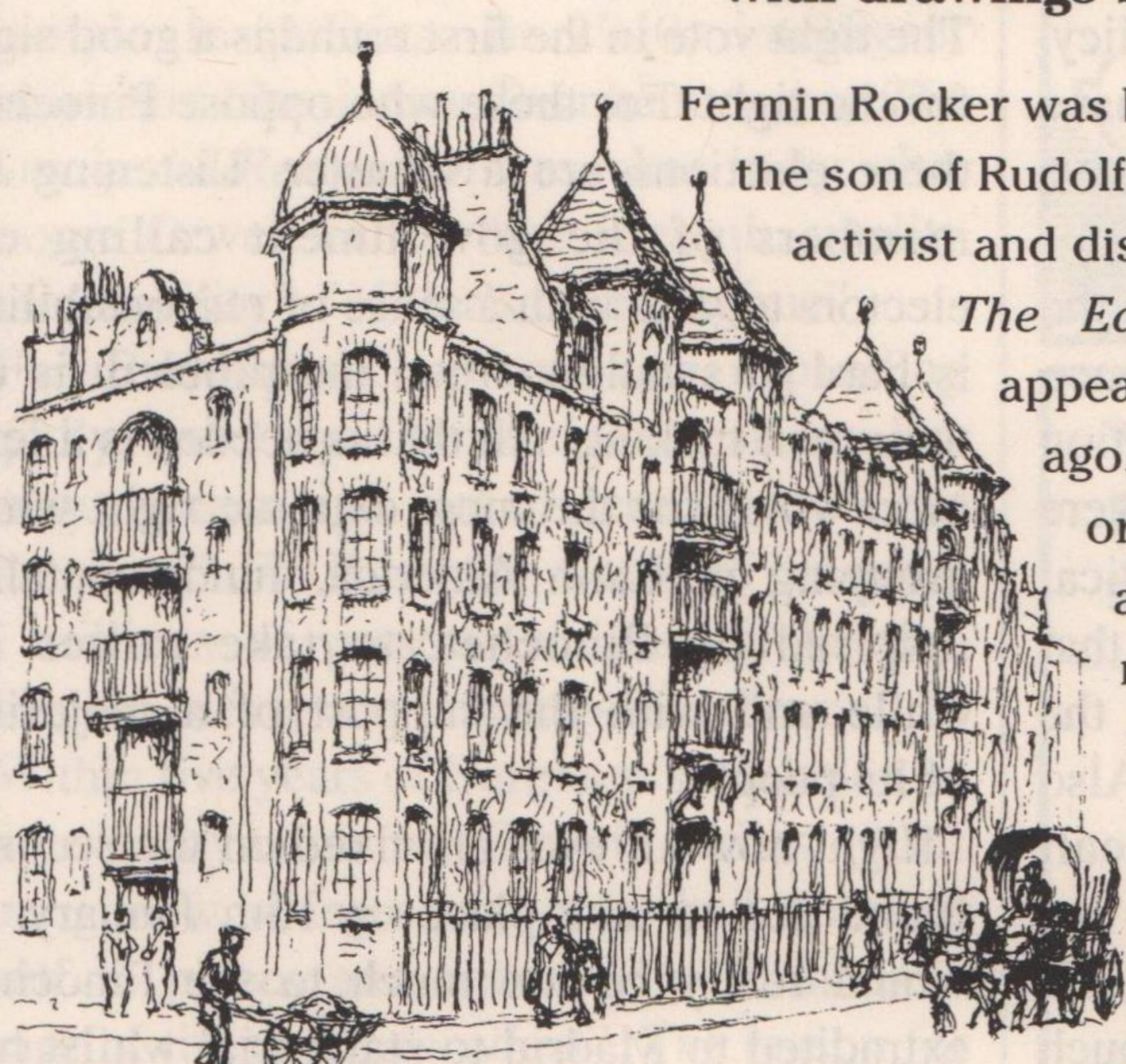
Norman Epstein

Fermin Rocker

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# Chile: the hard right come back in force

In order to understand why the ideology of Pinochet has polluted politics in Chile since the return to democracy ten years ago we have to go on a trip down the side streets of the past.

In 1980, at the height of his power, Pinochet replaced the 1925 Constitution with his own. There was no public debate and no opportunity for amendments or modifications. This Constitution included a series of Articles which were to become no more than shackles around the feet of democracy. They were known as the anchor laws.

Firstly, the new Constitution affirmed that Pinochet would remain President until 1988. In that year there would be a referendum so that the people could decide if they wanted the military regime to continue. A 'yes' response would ensure that there would be no elections until 1997. A 'no' would bring about elections in 1989. It is clear that at the time Pinochet seriously believed that he had the support of the majority of the Chilean people and that his opponents were no more than a bunch of subversives the secret police could happily annihilate.

Second anchor-law: so as not to run the risk of a future democratic Parliament reforming the Constitution it was deemed necessary to keep control of the Senate where the fate of

any proposed legislation was to be decided. To this effect Pinochet set up ten 'institutional Senators' appointed every eight years by the President of the Republic that is to say, in 1980, himself, the armed forces, the university rectors (appointed by him), the President of the Revenue Court (appointed by him) and by the judges of the Supreme Court (appointed by, you've guessed, him). In addition he appointed 'life Senators' which is to say anyone who had been President of Chile for at least six years – he was the only person to fit the bill.

Thus the Senate was made up of 28 elected members (eleven of whom were from the right of the political spectrum), ten who were appointed and one life member. Any important reform required a two-thirds majority. In this way control of the Senate was assured.

Another law saw that 10% of the total revenue from Chilean copper (one of the main sources of US dollars) was to be handed over to the military which was at liberty to spend them as it wished with no state control.

But in 1988 there was a surprise. The regime had miscalculated the depth of discontent among the Chilean people. He lost the referendum. Then he lost the elections in 1989. When the Concertacion coalition won the elections it had the power to call a new

Constituent Assembly. It is clear that the right, shocked by their defeat, would have been unable to react. At the time a military coup was out of the question. A million were on the streets of Santiago, the eyes of the world were on Chile and even the President of the US made it known to Pinochet that there should be no question of any hasty action. But the politicians, ever perturbed by popular demonstrations, were frightened of losing control of the situation and preferred to negotiate a secret agreement with the military regime the outcome of which was that the Concertacion would agree to respect the Constitution of 1980. Chile would go into a stage of transition towards parliamentary democracy overseen by the military. This transition period continues today.

## The first round

Thus, 12th December last, Chileans voted in the first round of the election of their third President since the end of the dictatorship. Six candidates representing four small parties and two coalitions fought over the vote of eight million electors.

The two large coalitions are the right wing Alliance for Chile and, in the centre, the Concertacion of Parties for Democracy who have been in power since the end of the dictatorship in 1990.

Lagos, the Concertacion candidate, won the first round by the narrowest of margins with 47.96% ahead of Lavin with 47.52%. Clearly a right wing President is on the cards for the year 2000.

How is this possible scarcely ten years after the end of the military regime? The first thing to note is that those registered electors voted massively for the two big coalitions sweeping the other candidates from the competition. Secondly, the right has gone well beyond its normal 35% of the vote and the Concertacion has missed its expected share by some 12%. Such results in the first round point towards a victory for the right.

## The hard right in a strong position

Pinochet's involuntary absence in London has allowed Lavin to put himself forward as a young managerial type without any political baggage. He has carefully avoided any rhetoric which could associate him with the old regime and has distanced himself from personalities associated with it. He has also succeeded in attracting support from the Christian Democrats whose extremists have always refused to 'vote for a socialist' even if that meant going against agreed party policy. It is equally clear that a number who have been disenchanted with the ruling party have allied themselves with this grouping.

Another source of support comes from the Mapuche Indians. The region of Arauco voted solidly for the right. One explanation of this is that the Mapuche Indians, who were never involved in the anti-Pinochet political parties, didn't suffer the fierce repression that those parties did suffer. For this group the two coalitions are simply two options. Also the ruling party, having violently dealt with the demands of the Indians over the last few months, could hardly expect much support from this quarter. Not having much faith in the smaller parties the Mapuche voted for Lavin in large numbers (56% in this region as against 40% for Lagos and 1.2% for the Communists who had actually supported them).

Another surprise source of support is women. 53% of women voted for Lavin. He has always appeared in public with his wife and seven children giving the image of the ideal young Chilean family – good for the cameras and his opinion poll ratings. Analysts suggest that women, more sensitive than men to social problems related to delinquency and unemployment, have accepted Lavin's promises of safer streets and more jobs.

Finally spoilt ballots only amount to some 3% suggesting that the 'don't knows' have decided to back the right.

## Ten years of liberalism: a big bill to pay

The Concertacion was formed in 1989 by the union of all the anti-dictatorship groups and brought together seventeen political parties from the Christian Democrats to the Communists picking up various Socialist groupings in the middle. Bit by bit the 'big' parties swallowed up the 'little' ones and others (Communists, Greens, Humanists) went their own way unhappy at having to live with right wing groupings. The candidature for the elections was easily won by Ricardo Lagos (70%) when, in the primaries, he ran against the Christian Democrat, Andres Zaldivar. But he drew the wrath of the right of the Christian Democrats who refused to 'vote for a Socialist'. The latter have massively supported the right – their natural home. The flight of votes to Lavin may well herald the death of the Concertacion.

In general the policies of the ruling coalition over ten years of government have landed the country with a heavy bill to pay given its unquestioning acceptance of uncontrolled neo-liberalism.

Despite a handful of positive social reforms and an undeniable reduction of mass poverty it was the ruling coalition which sold off the water and electricity industries, put down the Mapuche who were struggling against the multinationals and deforestation, provoked strikes in various sectors, proved itself incapable of democratising the country's political institutions and led calls to bring Pinochet back to Chile. To this should be added the rise of unemployment these last eighteen months since the Asian crisis, a policy of co-operation with the right not to mention a proposed reform of labour legislation which was finally thrown out by the Senate partly because it didn't have the full support of the Christian Democrats.

High abstention during previous elections has suggested a growing disillusionment among the electorate although such voters were still not prepared to vote for the right. The ruling coalition in its somewhat arrogant isolation didn't see what was coming. Power blinds those who hold it.

## Not a very bright future

The tight vote in the first round is a good sign for the right. For those who oppose Pinochet these elections are a disaster. Listening to members of the government calling on electors to vote with a sense of responsibility is hard to swallow when the problem is of their own making. All that is needed is a few more votes for the most extreme right wing grouping in Latin America, fundamentally inspired by Pinochet, to take power in Chile and with the support of a majority of its people.

Right now all eyes are fixed on the second round due to take place on 16th January. It would really be too much to see Pinochet extradited to Madrid to stand trial whilst his successors win the Chilean elections. This is not political fiction but, unfortunately, a real possibility.

Translated from *Le Monde Libertaire*, 5th January 2000

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Donald Rooum

## Twenty Year Millennium Wildcat



The cartoonist Donald Rooum is perhaps best known as the political cartoonist of *Peace News* during its heyday in the 1960s. An anarchist since 1944, since January 1980 he has been contributing the Wildcat strip to the anarchist fortnightly *Freedom*. The cartoons are copied and translated from *Freedom* (and the Wildcat books) by various anarchist publications in other countries.

"I must admit that my heart sank when I discovered that Matt had sent me a collection of anarchist cartoons to review. I thought I'd find them unfunny, obscure and pedantic. In fact, I found them humorous to the point of laughing out loud."  
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# Battle of Seattle

Dear *Freedom*,

I'm not, I think, all that easy to offend but Ed Stamm's comments in *Freedom* of 15th January, 'Battle in Seattle', struck me as drivel of the first order.

"Blockading the WTO meetings was even worse than anti-abortion protesters who blockade clinics, because the WTO meeting was just a meeting"? In Ed's concern to defend the right of freedom of assembly of those who would rule over us, he seems to have omitted any concern for the facts. The purpose of the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle was to establish new multi-lateral agreements on international investment, government procurement and competition policy. The US and European countries were seeking to introduce new rules to make it mandatory for all WTO countries to give foreign investors the right to enter and establish themselves with 100% ownership. On competition policy, the EU was seeking a new agreement which would look unfavourably on domestic laws or practices in developing countries that favour local firms, on the basis that this impedes free competition. Also on the agenda in Seattle was the implementation of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, a system of international law intended to expand private enterprise involvement in public services such as healthcare, housing, education. The WTO has stated that "if market monopolies in public services cannot be avoided, then regulated private ownership is preferable to public ownership". The Seattle discussions had as their basis the continued opening up of poor countries to Western capital, and the dismantling of the provision of public sector services. The consequences of these should be obvious to anyone who purports, as Stamm does, to believe in 'freedom and justice'. In the real world the rest of us are forced to inhabit, that suggests not 'just a meeting', not just a cosy fireside chat between WTO delegates.

Stamm says that after Seattle the "general public now firmly associates the anarchist movement with smashing shop windows, looting stores" etc. From what I've seen, the impression left after Seattle was that the anarchist movement, and all those other elements of the Seattle coalition, were prepared to put themselves on the line in pursuit of the values Stamm claims to hold. The moral case against capitalism has been put for as long as the capitalist system has been in place - those who profit from it don't appear to have given up the game riddled with guilt. Stamm appears to think that every act of physical resistance to capitalism leads to, as Malatesta put it, "the erecting of gallows in the public square". This is, clearly, nonsensical. If we are to flinch at the broken shop windows in Seattle while those we purport to oppose preside over a system based on organised violence ("command and compulsion" as Bakunin had it) we will be defeated at every turn. Or maybe Stamm doesn't want to see the back of a system based on violence and poverty, he just want to feel morally superior to it? Maybe that split isn't such a bad idea!

Nick S.



Dear *Freedom*,

Why do we always have to put up with the hoary equations of 'damage to property = violence' from liberals like Ed Stamm (Oh, those poor windows!).

I don't know what planet Ed Stamm is living on, but it's not the same one as me. Here's another equation: 'property = violence'.

In case Mr Stamm doesn't know, these people meeting in Seattle were talking about how best to rape and pillage the world. Look, a social revolution means taking power from the ruling class, the violent minority. The blockades in Seattle were an attempt to halt this. Already untold damage has been done to the planet, not to mention the famine, wars and poverty that the mass of the people on it have to face. It's already late in the day and any attempt to stop this is just. Instead of dwelling on the 'violence' of anarchists in Seattle, perhaps Mr Stamm would be better employed looking at the violence of the state and its Robocop employees. The images of Judge Dredd enforcers, in ludicrous armature brutalising unarmed demonstrators were potent images broadcast around the world.

Incidentally, it really is devious of Mr Stamm to quote Luigi Fabbri on the question of rioting. Fabbri was very much in the tradition of Malatesta, who believed in insurrection to overthrow the violent ruling minority. His essay was an attack on the individualist bombers and expropriators, not on the concept of revolution itself. Why did *Freedom* print an excerpt from Fabbri without explaining this? Do you endorse Mr Stamm's comments? I sincerely hope not, as you have previously given excellent coverage and commentary on the J18 events.

Mr Stamm offers us the choice of abandoning the anarchist movement or mounting a counter-attack against the 'anarcho-hooligans' (how many tabloids do you read, Mr Stamm?). In return I offer him two choices: drop this liberal and pacifist twaddle and give backing to the real and living anarchist movement, or follow your second option to set up a 'Free Cooperative Movement' and leave us all alone.

Yours for anarchist communism.

Nick Heath



Dear *Freedom*,

It wasn't long after becoming an anarchist that I first noticed a strange phenomenon in the movement. To be fair, this phenomenon is probably present in all walks of life, but I can't help noticing its prominence amongst many of my comrades (and, dare I say, even in myself on occasions). The phenomenon to which I refer in this context might be termed 'political projection'. I've lost count of the painfully self-centred egotists who attack anarchist individualism, likewise the 'herd animals' who defend it and attack social collectivism. It seems that quite often the best way to discover the true position of a commentator is to closely examine what they attack. What they reject in themselves, to give the popular psychoanalytic interpretation. In a previous edition of *Freedom* (15th January 2000) two articles appeared which amply demonstrated this phenomenon.

In one the notorious liberal Ed Stamm wields the term 'pseudo-anarchist' against his opponents. This is not a term I would use myself as it implies some sort of privileged epistemic position on what anarchism 'actually is'. For me anyone declaring themselves anarchist, whose politics are focused on social freedom, political equality and the abolition of the State, *is* an anarchist. This seems to be the only rational standpoint compatible with political freedom. The problem begins when those holding one anarchist position start to regard themselves as the centre and exclude others. Then the term pseudo anarchist may begin to take on significance (for both parties). Only then perhaps can we defensively examine the claims of such 'real' anarchists to be such,

either historically or intellectually. And as we shall soon see, Stamm is on a shaky foundation here.

A similar problem emerges in Luigi Fabbri's article. While this is undoubtedly a much more intelligent commentary, it is none the less flawed. Like Stamm's article it issues an image of what anarchism 'is' and excludes those external to it. I share Fabbri's denunciation of mindless destructiveness but am not so willing to apply the label in situations I am not privy to.

The main problem with Fabbri's approach, however, is not this. It is, ironically, his bourgeois bias. His declared ideals of logic, philosophy, sociology and economics are all products of the bourgeois Enlightenment, and as disciplines are largely based on the ignorance and self-deception of middle class academics. Various lone voices may exist within this camp that approximate an anarchist position (ranging from Chomsky to Foucault), alongside more numerous Marxists, but all are ultimately undermined by their position within the bourgeois order. In taking this bourgeois anarchism seriously it is Fabbri who is under bourgeois influence.

But enough of theory, in order to change society we need to be engaged and active in the world, and sometimes thought is the enemy of action. Now I imagine that both these authors have been spurred into writing by recent events in Seattle and Euston. Certainly Stamm openly focuses on this and it is probably behind Fabbri's polemic as well. The common theme being a fear that 'negative' developments here, what Stamm calls 'pseudo-anarchism' and Fabbri denounces as reactive, bourgeois anarchy, will discredit us and alienate us from the public. Now what happened at these events was what happened at these events, a necessary response in the contemporary situation. At the earlier J18 Carnival in London I was (and still am) like most participants in favour of relatively non-violent, carnivalesque disruption (aimed at positive demonstration and the 'deconstruction' of bourgeois life), if others have aggressively different ideas that is their choice and a matter of self-responsibility. As it turned out such a stance became impossible and a different response was elicited (for which it was fortunate some were more prepared). A response that had its necessary consequences at Euston too. We cannot be free of the influences of the society in which we act, we can only respond effectively. I obviously wasn't present at Seattle but no doubt a similar development occurred there too. I see nothing wrong with the non-violent blockade of those whose actions infringe the freedom of others. Liberty is a conditional state not an inherent right. Its condition is its mutuality. Ideals of universal, unconditional freedom are at best dreams that pose no threat to the existing order and at worst insane. As Nietzsche, with great insight, declared, "everything unconditional is pathological".

Protesting against single issues and 'concrete acts of aggression' is merely fighting the symptoms rather than the disease, capitalism and the bourgeois order. The WTO is not the core of this disease but it is a major part of its modern manifestation. Stamm's account of

freedom in his critique is closer to the negative freedom of the bourgeois liberal than the anarchist social liberation initiated by Bakunin and his contemporaries, and historically continued by most anarchists from Kropotkin to the present day. Not even Stirner, the father of anarchist individualism, would support Stamm on this. His approach seems far from that of historical anarchism, though alas one familiar from the liberals that have been infiltrating the movement since the '60s.

The concern that disruptive and 'illogical' action discredits the movement seems one based on the context of bourgeois intellectuals and a middle class public concerned with 'civility'. Stamm's horror at reappropriative acts (an anarchist tradition) further identifies his bourgeois concerns. Most 'ordinary people' I know were greatly supportive of the events as they occurred, seeing the demonstrators as courageous individuals prepared to 'fight back' rather than hooligans. In the 'riots' I have witnessed I have always been impressed by the ethical discipline and focus of the 'rioters', who often rightly turn on any jobs in their midst. We have nothing to gain by appealing to the bourgeoisie, they are part of the problem not the solution. If this 'marginalises' us great, better 'marginalised' than recuperated and impotent. One day the 'marginalised' will be the majority, then we will achieve major change rather than insignificant reforms. If the distorted media coverage attracts thugs who cares, they will either soon depart after discovering authentic anarchism(s) or develop into useful agents of our cause. Those attracted by 'bourgeois propaganda' images of 'violent anarchists' are not a problem. We too can recuperate the ideas and images of our opponents. Besides these are not always so far from the truth as many great historical anarchists have exemplified. Not all actions may be in-line with our ultimate goals, it is naive to think that means and ends are identical. The world is more complex than that. And besides ends and goals are another fixed bourgeois concept, real life involves open ended processes, and such processes move through phases in response to real conditions.

As for Stamm's call for denunciation or separation. I think both would be a mistake. If our movement is to be effective it must be a strong, pluralistic alliance of anarchisms and fellow travellers. Schism will be counter-productive. It is obvious that one purpose of the new UK anti-terrorist laws is to terrorise the faint hearted anarcho-pacifist and liberal into disassociating from anyone conceivably effected by them. No doubt similar policies apply elsewhere. Anarchists don't care much for laws, but if we were to adopt a prime directive it should be one of solidarity, even with those whom we disagree.

Steve Ash

[What all three of these letters, despite their differences of emphasis, seem to us to have in common, apart from their shared hostility to Ed Stamm's point of view, is that they consist mostly of highly emotive reactions which have little to do with what Ed Stamm actually wrote, the point of which was, surely, to question whether the tactics adopted by some of the protesters at the World Trade Organisation meeting, and the resultant press and media coverage, furthered propaganda for anarchism among those *outside* 'the movement' but who would be receptive to the ideas of anarchists when clearly and rationally presented. Incidentally, all three of our correspondents (as well as Ed Stamm) use the term 'anarchist movement' without ever defining it. Is there in fact, or was there ever, any anarchist *movement* to be split? These are questions to which we shall be returning in future issues - **Editors**]





**FREEDOM** fortnightly  
ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press  
84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX  
Printed in Great Britain by Aldgate Press,  
London E1 7RQ

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### The London Anarchist Forum

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

#### — PROGRAMME 2000 —

**28th January** Anarchism and Trade Unionism  
(speaker Richard Griffin)

**4th February** General discussion

**11th February** Anarchy, Psychotherapy and  
Psychological Well Being (a symposium led  
by Steve Ash)

**18th February** General discussion

**25th February** What is Situationism?  
(symposium)

**3rd March** General discussion

**10th March** Effective Action: what do you  
think we should do on May Day?

**17th March** General discussion

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

Peter Neville for London Anarchist Forum

### Mayday 2000

A festival of anarchist ideas and action from

**28th April to 1st May**

Mayday 2000 will be a four-day gathering of  
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We would like to hear from groups and  
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co-ordinating the activities.

Mayday 200, BM Mayday, London WC1N 3XX

[www.freespeech.org/mayday2k](http://www.freespeech.org/mayday2k)

[mayday2000-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:mayday2000-subscribe@egroups.com)

### South Place Ethical Society

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1

**Sunday 30th January at 3pm**  
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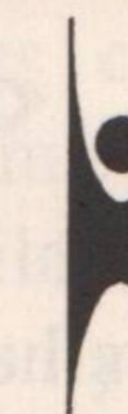
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Joint meeting of the  
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