



HOUSING IS THEFT
HOUSING IS FREEDOM

COLIN WARD

AND MAYBE IF OUR BLINKERS SLIP A BIT
by Dave Cunliffe

Didn't we search each forest morning
for food and clothing, before embracing
caves of night for warmth and shelter.

Didn't we join with tribal hunters.
Share spoils of fruitful gatherers.
Celebrate open communal feasts.

So, which of us thought up slum ghettos.
Grim streets of sad and lonely dying rooms.
Stink of dust and grime; despair, decay.

Who keeps on shoving people into a mess
so sticky, it hurts to crawl away:
as if bees grew fat on soured jam.

And maybe if our blinkers slip a bit.
And granite ears turn towards new winds.
And indifferent restraining hands unclaw . . .

ISBN 0 907123 05 8

£1

AN OLD HAMMOND PRESS / MUSHROOM PAMPHLET

OLD HAMMOND PRESS

Published by Old Hammond Press, 19 Hangerhill Road, Nottingham NG5 4NB, England with Mushroom Bookshop, 10 Heathcote Street, Nottingham

HOUSING IS THEFT

HOUSING IS FREEDOM

COLIN WARD

Anarchism, like many other political ideologies, grew out of the ferment of ideas from the time of the Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, though its roots go back to the ancient Greeks. And like all the other ideologies, it has evolved over the centuries. Anarchism has its dual origins, philosophically, as either the ultimate destination of individualism or that of socialism, is not because of this dilemma of emphasis.

Anarchism originates as a word in the Greek phrase meaning 'without a ruler', and as an ideology it seeks a self-organising society, a society where the individual is free to satisfy his or her needs. For it that anarchist society, I suppose that every kind of anarchism would agree with the definition of anarchism as a society where individuals are free to do as they please, so long as they do not harm others. It is when we come to the problems of living in the world that our individual liberties add difficulties arise. As individuals we make every kind of compromise between what we believe in and the way we get by in the organized system of the world we live in. But if we think it important to make some progress for anarchism we are faced with decisions as to what to support and what to oppose.

We can declare that nothing will change until one day, but the fact is that the conquest of state power would bring the advent of socialism but it would destroy every country where anarchism exists - whether by revolution or by other means. We must therefore find a way to live in the world without entering the world of the state. We must find a way to live in the world without entering the world of the state. We must find a way to live in the world without entering the world of the state.

OLD HAMMOND PRESS

Published by Old Hammond Press, 19 Hungerhill Road, Nottingham NG3 4NB, England with Mushroom Bookshop, 10 Heathcote Street, Nottingham NG1 3AA, England. (tel 0602 582506).

Credits: cover photo, Alan Parkinson; poem by Dave Cunliffe reproduced courtesy of SHELTER.

Inside photographs: page 18, *Architects Journal*, page 22, Rod Hackney.

HOUSING IS FREEDOM

COLIN WARD



ISBN 0 907123 05 8

Trade distribution:

Scotland, Ireland and the North of England; Scottish & Northern Distribution, 4th floor, 18 Granby Row, Manchester 3.

South of England; Housmans Distribution, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX.

Australia; Redfern Black Rose, 36 Botany Road, Alexandria, Sydney 2015, Australia.

Printed by Russell Press Ltd, Gamble Street, Nottingham.

FREEDOM? THEFT?

Anarchism, like many other political ideologies, grew out of the ferment of ideas from the time of the French and American revolutions at the end of the 19th century, though of course anarchist concepts can be found all through history. And like all the other movements of the Left, we inherited the splendid catchphrase, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. These resounding aspirations may go together marvellously on French postage stamps, but in real life, inside or outside the anarchist movement, most of our ideological arguments relate to the differing emphases we put on each of these values, and to our perception of the different obstacles in the way of getting closer to them. Anarchism with its dual origins, philosophically, as either the ultimate destination of liberalism or that of socialism, is not immune to this dilemma of emphasis.

Anarchism originates as a word in the Greek phrase meaning contrary to authority, and as an ideology it seeks a self-organising society, a network of autonomous free associations for the satisfaction of human needs. Put in that minimal way, I suppose that every kind of anarchist would agree with the definition as well as a lot of people who would never dream of calling themselves anarchists. It is when we come to the problems of living in the actual world that our difficulties and differences arise. As individuals we make every kind of compromise between what *we* believe in and the way we get by in the organised system of the way the society we live in works. But if we think it important to make propaganda for anarchism we are faced with decisions every day on what to support and what to oppose.

We can declare that nothing will change until one *big* change. But the faith that the conquest of state power would bring the advent of socialism has been destroyed in every country where socialist parties have won - whether by gaining a parliamentary majority or by riding the wave of popular revolution or by entering the capital city in the wake of Soviet tanks. What has happened has been exactly what the nineteenth-century anarchists, Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin said would happen. At best we have a veneer of social welfare as a substitute for social justice, and at worst we have states and the state machinery involved in a war against its own people. I agree with the view expressed by Simone Weil in the 1930s that "The great error of nearly all studies of war, an error into which all socialists have fallen, has been to consider war as an episode in foreign politics, when it is especially an act of interior politics, and the most atrocious act of all." This can easily be demonstrated by considering the proportion of civilian casualties in this century's wars. In the first world

war 5 per cent of those killed were civilians, in the second world war 48 per cent, in the Korean war 84 per cent. You can make your own estimate for a third world war.

On the other hand, life goes on. I used to know a woman in 1948 who gave up her medical training because it was pointless since nuclear war would eliminate us all in a year or two. Every ten years or so I meet her on a demo and we talk, not about nuclear holocaust, but about the problems of the Health Service.

In a way this epitomises our difficulties, as anarchist propagandists. Take the Health Service itself. Its origins do not lie with Aneurin Bevan, as Labour Party mythology has it, but with the South Africa War in 1899, and the discovery that so large a proportion of the eligible cannon-fodder was physically unfit (a discovery made afresh with every war of the last hundred years) that led the state to take measures to improve its population's physical health, through the medium of national health insurance, which was coupled with unemployment insurance by Lloyd George, a Liberal politician, over 70 years ago. After the post-second-world-war Labour government universalised the service, it was the same Labour government which introduced prescription charges, leading to Bevan's resignation.

1,000 CUTS

I take it for granted that health care is an issue in our concept of the way in which an anarchist society would function, but, in spite of the fact that there have been plenty of anarchists among doctors, nurses and medical statisticians, I have never since 1948, come across an anarchist statement of the principles on which such a service should be run. The political Left has put itself in the position of defending the grotesque bureaucratic and technocratic structure of the health service, while the former chief architect from the DHSS is now convinced that half the public expenditure on hospital building in the 60s and 70s has been mispent, and while the former members of McKinsey's, the managerial consultants who advised on reorganising the service years ago, think that they gave the wrong advice. (see Colin Ward: "Making More Mean Better" *New Society* June 7 1979).

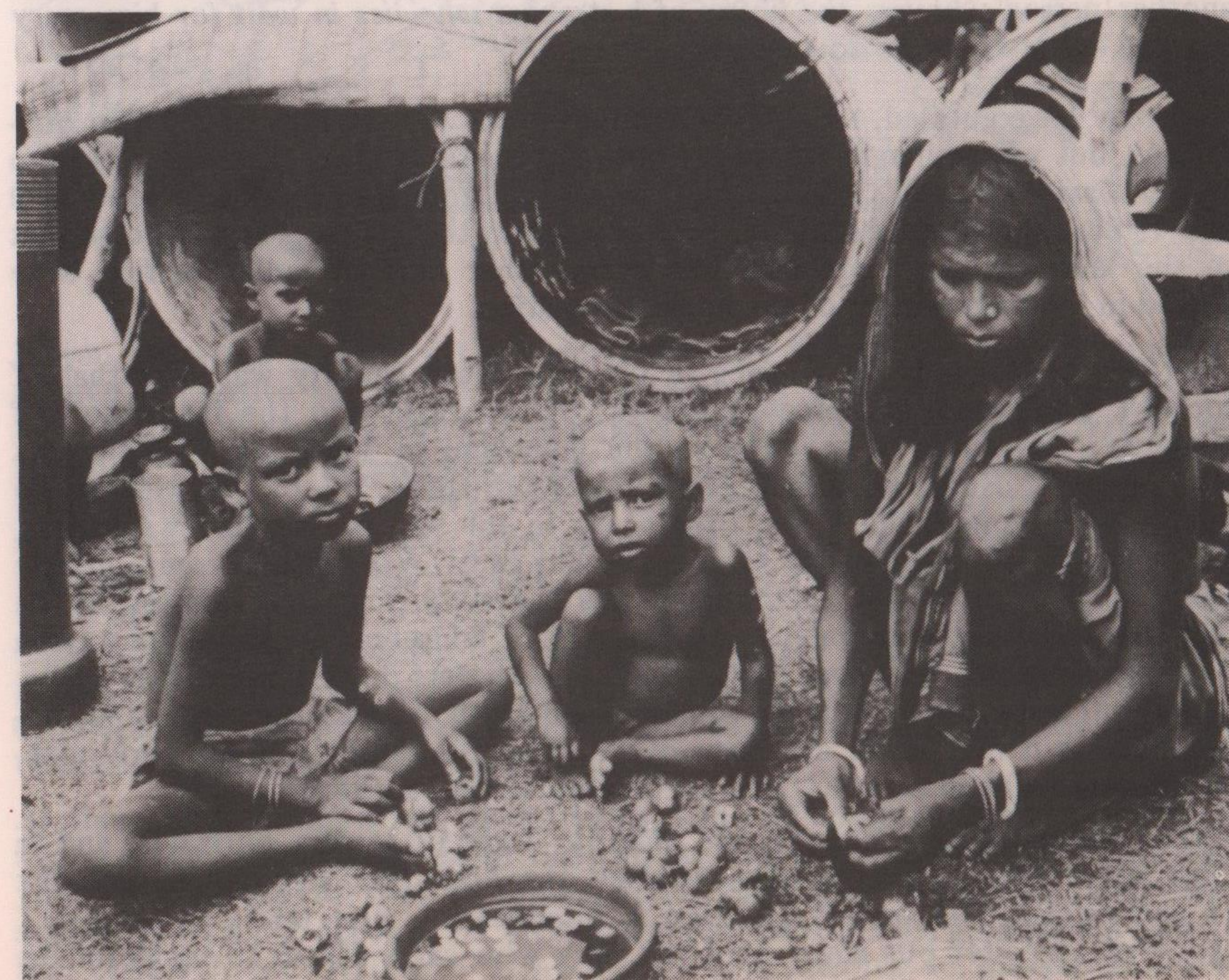
For decades there was an ideological consensus between the two major parties about the health service, and about the welfare state in general. This has been broken by the present government with its ideology of laissez-faire liberalism alarmed by the fact, as they keep reminding us, that the NHS is the biggest employer in Europe. Before I demonstrate against the cuts, I need to remember that it was during the Wilson government in 1976 that it was not a conservative nor an anarchist, but Professor A H Halsey, who wrote that "We live today under sentence of death by a thousand cuts, that is, of all things except the body of bureaucracy". And Peter Townsend during the Callaghan government period wrote that "services for consumers or clients are much more vulnerable than staff establishments".

The reason why I make this particular point about the health service is because, as an anarchist, I *am* interested in the way in which a self-organising society would arrange this kind of fraternal provision. If we don't think this a question worth answering, we won't win the support of our fellow citizens.

Health of course is an intensely complicated, emotional and moral issue, made ever more so by every development in medical high technology. I always wonder how many of us actually want to stay alive with the aid of transplant surgery at enormous public expense, instead of slipping quietly out of life identifying ourselves with the ideal of ordinary basic universal health care?

OIL DRUM ARCHITECTURE

Housing, which is my subject today, is infinitely simpler. It raises none of these issues. Just to get it in perspective, I should remind you that through ninety per cent of human history people have housed themselves, and that the marvellous ingenuity and creativeness of the way they did it has never ceased to be a source of admiration for architectural historians. Since people have to house themselves, whether they live in a desert or a jungle, a speculator's jungle, a people's democracy, a fascist dictatorship or an anarchist paradise, it is a subject of universal interest. The most widely used building material in the world today is grass or straw, and the second most widely used building material is earth or mud. There are vast areas of the Southern hemisphere, Latin America, Africa and South East Asia, where the great majority of homes are built by their occupiers, with these materials and with the recycled left-overs of modern industry: packing cases, steel sheet, cardboard or oil drums. Even in the United States, the richest country in the world, at least twenty per cent of new housing is built by owner builders.



In the nineteenth century the people who were left out in the natural task of self-help housing, because by that time the space, materials and the means of subsistence, belonged to some one else, emigrated to the cities in search of work. I want to give two quotations from nineteenth century writers, describing the result. One is from a Marxist and the other is from an anarchist, of the individualistic school, and you will find it hard to say which is which:

"In the large towns and cities where civilisation especially prevails, the number of those who can own a shelter is a very small fraction of the whole. The rest pay an annual tax for this outside garment of all, become indispensable summer and winter, which would buy a village of Indian wigwams, but now helps to keep them poor as long as they live . . . On the one side is the palace, on the other are the almshouse and 'silent poor'. The myriads who built the pyramids to be the tomb of the Pharaohs were fed on garlic, and it may be were not decently buried at night perchance to a hut not so good as a wigwam. It is a mistake to suppose that, in a country where the usual evidences of civilisation exist, the condition of a very large body of the inhabitants may not be as degraded as that of savages."

That is my first quotation. Here is the second:

" . . . Man is regressing to the cave dwelling, but in an alienated, malignant form. The savage in his cave (a natural element which is freely offered for his use and protection) does not feel himself a stranger; on the contrary he feels as much at home as a fish in water. But the cellar dwelling of the poor man is a hostile dwelling, 'an alien, constricting power which only surrenders itself to him in exchange for blood and sweat.' He cannot regard it as his home, as a place where he might at last say, 'here I am at home.' Instead, he finds himself in another person's house, the house of a stranger who lies in wait for him every day and evicts him if he does not pay the rent."

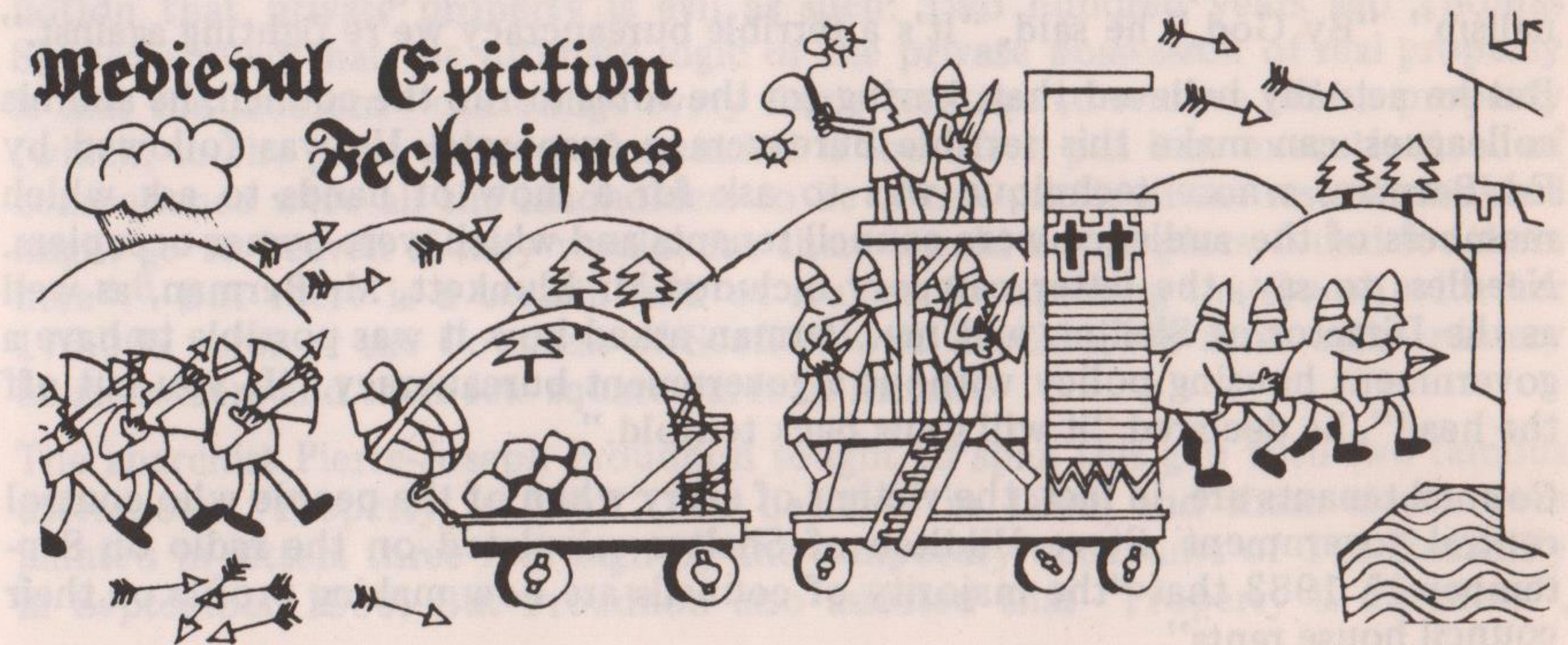
You may have guessed, on stylistic grounds, who wrote which of my two quotations, but you will agree that they both say the same thing. The first was from Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* and the second from Karl Marx's "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts", both written in the 1850s. They indicate that in the last century, anarchists, like every other kind of radical critics, were agreed in their assessment of the housing situation.

Anarchist propaganda on housing in the nineteenth century was, like that of socialist propagandists, directed against the landlord and the institution of property. Ravacnol, as he went to the guillotine in 1892 said, "Si tu veux etre heureux/ Nom de Dieu!/ Pends ton propriétaire." — if you want to be happy, hang your landlord. In Britain, up to the end of the first world war, the normal mode of housing tenure, (90 per cent), was renting from a private landlord. The revolution in tenure in the last sixty years has resulted in the fact that today, little more than 10 per cent of households in Britain rent from a private landlord. Well over half are owner-occupiers, having been financed by long-term loans by a building society (non-profit organisations founded, improbably as it may seem, as organs of working-class self-help in the early nineteenth century) and another third are tenants of local authorities.

Owner-occupation has become the majority form of tenure, both here and in most other European countries, whether the dominant ideology is capitalist or communist. The private landlord is disappearing, and tends to be not a capitalist exploiter but some poor old lady who can't afford to maintain the

house properly.¹ The disappearance of the private landlord brought into existence whole categories of people who were not catered for by the crude housing duopoly of council tenantry and owner occupation. Hence the rise of squatting, hence the widespread use at enormous public cost of bed-and-breakfast accommodation for the homeless, usually in cities with a great deal of empty property already in the hands of the local authorities. Hence too the belated interest in alternatives in housing.

The whole tragedy of publicly provided non-profit housing for rent and the evolution of this form of tenure in Britain is that the local authorities have simply taken over, though less flexibly, the role of the landlord, together with the syndrome of dependency and resentment that it engenders. I have even argued that one of the lost freedoms in housing that we never talk about is the freedom to move easily which applied when private rental housing was the almost universal norm, and I have provided evidence for this contention.² This is not a recommendation for private landlordism, it is a criticism of the rigid monopoly of rented housing provision that local authority landlordism represents, with its bureaucratic procedures and its attitude to tenants as second class citizens.



Eleven years ago I wrote a book called *Tenants Take Over* which, I thought, offered a creative solution for the dilemmas we have made for ourselves in local authority housing. When I described the humiliating and arbitrary paternalism of councils' approach to their tenants, people in the housing industry told me that my criticisms were out of date. But my misgivings were confirmed much more recently by the commendably frank account of his experiences as chair of the Housing Management Committee of the Greater London Council, by a life-long socialist Tony Judge, from 1974 to 1977. He says that "The impression, often confirmed as accurate on deeper examination, is of a vast bureaucracy concerned more with self-perpetuation than with either efficiency or humanity" and he bitterly criticises "the insufferably paternalistic attitudes of councils and officials to their tenants".³

At the risk of losing a few more friends, I should add that there are places in this country where the house or flat you are offered depends upon which way you are expected to vote in some Labour Party pocket borough, and there are places where it depends on your attitude to various local government unions like NALGO and NUPE. I was present at a meeting to discuss the very

mild proposals of a councillor for tenant involvement in housing management, where the outraged representative of one of the local government unions got to his feet and said "We're not going to be dictated to by a bunch of tenants".

Now I want to push home this point that people on the left are *wrong* to think that the desirable future of housing lies in recovering the idea that direct provision by councils is a progressive step.

SHELTER

I was present in order to try to make this point at the conference held in Nottingham in July 1983 by Shelter, the National Campaign for the Homeless. But they weren't in fact concerned with the homeless but by the squabble about the sale of local authority houses to local tenants. The opening speaker was David Blunkett, leader of Sheffield City Council, who was concerned to ridicule this absurd aspiration to own one's own home. But being an honest man, he voiced many of the same opinions that I hold myself. He talked about what he called, "the iron grip that many councils have on the throat of their tenants" and about the way that, as he put it, "welfarism has degenerated into paternalism". "By God," he said, "It's a terrible bureaucracy we're fighting against."

But he actually believed that, having got the votes to run the council, he and his colleagues can make this terrible bureaucracy evaporate. He was followed by Ed Berman, whose technique was to ask for a show of hands to ask which members of the audience were council tenants and which were owner-occupiers. Needless to say, the latter category included Mr Blunkett, Mr Berman, as well as the Director of Shelter, and me. Berman asked how it was possible to have a government housing policy without a government bureaucracy. "If you cut off the head", he declared "it will grow back tenfold."

Council tenants are, in fact, the victims of every whim of the people who control central government. Steve Hilditch of Shelter calculated on the radio on September 15 1983 that "the majority of councils are now making profits on their council house rents".

FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

As an anarchist and a believer in freedom and autonomy I don't see why I should be pushed into the position of defending the corporate state of the left against the corporate state of the right. I want people to escape in whatever areas of life they can, from being pushed around. The fact that in Britain the owner-occupiers are a majority of households means that no elected government of the left will antagonise them by removing the undoubted advantages they enjoy by comparison with other modes of tenure, since governments depend on the marginal votes in marginal parliamentary constituencies in the owner-occupation belt.

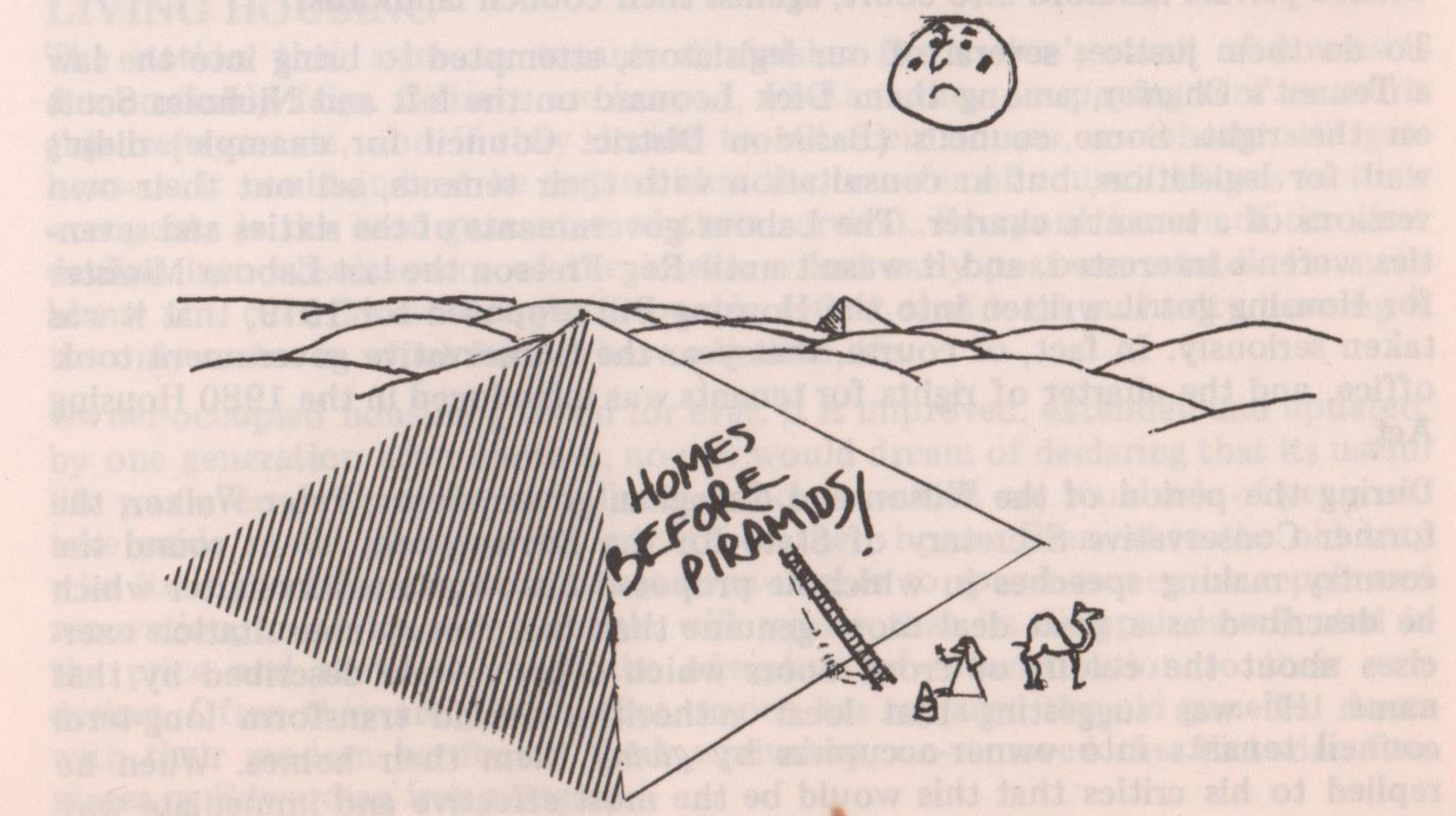
Now I detect among anarchists, just as I do among Marxists, a certain antipathy towards owner-occupation, and particularly towards its spread among working class families. I think this antipathy has two sources. The first is the fear that "the workers" will be at home papering the parlour when they ought to be out in the streets making a revolution. I find this a grotesque unsympathetic approach

to other people's aspirations, like that attitude that hopes that other people's social conditions will worsen so as to hasten the day of whatever particular rising we fancy. I am reminded of the murdered film director Pasolini, who wrote a poem about visiting the grave of Antonio Gramsci, "in the course of which the rational Communist finds that he does not want his beloved working class to change . . . and who felt betrayed by the new liberality and the embourgeoisification of the proletarian youths he desired".⁴

The answer to those ideologists for whom "the people" are merely the raw material for the history of the future was given well over a century ago by Alexander Herzen: "Do you truly wish to condemn all human beings alive today to the sad role of caryatids supporting a floor for others some day to dance on . . . or of wretched galley slaves, up to their knees in mud, dragging a barge filled with some mysterious treasure and with the humble words 'Future Progress' inscribed on its bows? An end that is infinitely remote is not an end, but a trap; an end must be nearer — or ought to be at the very least, the labourer's wage, or pleasure in the work done. Each are, each generation, each life had and has its own fullness . . ." ⁵

A more solid ground for opposition to the growth of owner-occupation is the notion that private property is evil as such. Two hundred years ago Thomas Spence argued that the ultimate logic of the private possession of real property is that the landlord "can oblige every living creature to remove off his property (which, to the great distress of mankind is too often put into execution); so of consequence were all the landholders to be of one mind, all the rest of mankind might go to heaven if they would, for there would be no place found for them here".⁶ But there is a certain lack of realism in equating the Queen with her 176,000 acres or the Countess of Seafield with her 231,000 acres with ordinary householders and their few square yards of Britain.

The anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon sought to span this gap with two famous utterances. "Property is Theft", he declared in 1840, and these words were painted in letters three feet high by the temporary occupants of 144 Piccadilly in September 1969. But Proudhon also asserted that "Property is Freedom",



asserting anyone's right to the house they inhabit, and the land and tools needed to work and live. Most of us, unless we are monks or ascetics, make a distinction between real property and personal property, and it is worth noting that in the countries where Marxist governments have attempted to evolve a communist society, house-ownership is not an ideological issue: the owner-occupied house, like the peasant's private plot, is personal property like clothing, not real property like the landlord's estate.

I asked a Yugoslav economist why house purchase was so actively encouraged in his country and he replied that personal investment in the dwelling was thought desirable since it both reduced the disposable income available for scarce consumer goods and reduced the enormous charge on the state's budget for housing provision. The dissident Hungarian writer, Janos Kenidi, in his book which hilariously describes how he built his own house in the informal economy, claims that since the government had taken on itself the awesome task of housing the whole population, he, in shouldering the burden of his own house, was patriotically enabling the state to concentrate on more deserving cases.⁷

On the other hand, in Roumania, the government obliged tenants to buy their state flats or houses individually, or face rent increases of up to 100 per cent.⁸ Even Michael Heseltine when he was Minister of Housing would not go that far. He claimed that the statutory right to buy included in the 1980 Housing Act "will transform the personal prospects of millions of citizens, and will establish their rights as individuals above the bureaucracies of the state." What the political left finds hard to swallow is the grain of truth in all that hyperbole.

ON THE LEFT AND ON THE RIGHT

It is characteristic of the atmosphere of charitable paternalism that surrounds the local authority tenant, that the attempt to codify and establish his or her rights came much later than the legal establishment of the rights of the private tenant, just as it came as a surprise to the municipal establishment when tenants began to invoke those clauses in the Public Health Act, intended to bring the wicked private landlord into court, against their council landlords.

To do them justice, several of our legislators, attempted to bring into the law a Tenant's Charter, among them Dick Leonard on the left and Nicholas Scott on the right. Some councils (Basildon District Council for example) didn't wait for legislation, but in consultation with their tenants, set out their own versions of a tenant's charter. The Labour governments of the sixties and seventies weren't interested, and it wasn't until Reg Freeson the last Labour Minister for Housing got it written into the Housing Bill proposed for 1979, that it was taken seriously. In fact, of course, that year the Conservative government took office, and the charter of rights for tenants was introduced in the 1980 Housing Act.

During the period of the Wilson and Callaghan governments, Peter Walker, the former Conservative Secretary of State for the Environment, went round the country making speeches in which he proposed his own tenants charter which he described as a great deal more genuine than the phoney consultation exercises about the colour of front doors which other people described by that name. He was suggesting that local authorities should transform long-term council tenants into owner-occupiers by *giving* them their homes. When he replied to his critics that this would be the most effective and immediate way

of achieving a radical redistribution of property in this country, he was calling the bluff of the sanctimonious hypocrisy that surrounds the politics of housing in Britain. His view was shared, in those days, by Frank Field, then director of the Child Poverty Action Group, and subsequently Labour MP for Birkenhead.⁹ I, at the time, agreed with them, for by the late 1970s we were beginning to experience the farcical situation where, in several London boroughs, the cost of management and maintenance exceeded the rent income.

My own view of the choices before local authorities was expressed in the title of a chapter "One by one or all together?" in my book *Tenants Take Over*, which was urging the transformation of council estates into co-operatives, and in the late 1970s the first faltering steps were taken in this direction by councils (the Greater London Council and Glasgow) which might have been thought the least susceptible to such a change of direction.

In 1980, Michael Heseltine upstaged us all with the Housing Act, giving tenants the statutory right to buy, at a discount, their council houses. I am opposed to his policy for the simple reason that I would like decisions to be made locally rather than centrally. Not just because circumstances vary in different places, but because on local issues, local councils should make their own decisions, right or wrong, right or left. What would have been obvious to Paine, Jefferson, Tocqueville or Bagehot, can't be grasped by our better educated modern politicians. But the opposition to Heseltine's Act hasn't been on these grounds.

The sale of council houses to sitting tenants is no new thing. It wasn't invented by the dreadful Thatcher-Heseltines. "A total of 95,900 council houses were sold between 1974 and 1979, for most of which time Labour was in power at Westminster".¹⁰ Even earlier, visiting estates on the outskirts of London, Cardiff and Birmingham, I used to fear the socially divisive effect of individual sales, and was intrigued to find that in fact they had pushed up the standard of environmental maintenance all round.

LIVING HOUSING

The notion that sales to tenants diminishes the nation's stock of houses is demonstrably false. Citizens are housed, whether they are paying rent or mortgage repayments, and if they decide to sell their houses, somebody still gets housed. It could indeed be argued that the transfer of council houses to their occupants is the best guarantee of their survival. Everyone knows of the slow decline into obsolescence of the inter-war and early post-war estates. Councils blame the cuts. More thoughtful people reflect that local authority housing is the only sector in which houses have a limited life.

Owner-occupied housing goes on for ever. It is improved, extended and updated, by one generation after another, no-one would dream of declaring that its useful life was over. In fact, the rich, living in houses which are hundreds of years old take pride in the changes and growth of their home. Even when the old lady who lived there for generations has been unable to spend money on repair and renovation, some incoming couple will rejoice that its disrepair is reflected in the price and they set about the adventure of reconstruction to their own desires. Often they are pleased that no-one has replaced the old panelled doors with their modern hardboard flush equivalent, or removed the Victorian fireplaces or Edwardian ironmongery.

In the council sector everything is different. For many years many councils would threaten tenants with eviction if they dared to replace the pea-green distemper with wall-paper. Nowadays the enormous cost of employing anyone to do anything has ensured that most councils are only too pleased if tenants redecorate and sometimes reward them with a rent holiday. But when the council does get around to modernising the estate, it does it in one go, whether the tenant likes it or not. In one city I visited my host took me to see the dump where improving owner-occupiers were looting the vitreous-enamelled cast iron baths which the council was removing from the whole estate to replace them with the up-to-date, flimsy fibreglass kind.

Selling-off is one guarantee of survival. I think myself that a co-operative take-over would have the same effect, or even an improvement allowance paid, without strings, to the tenants, but in practice, knowing the enormous obstacles put in the way of other forms of dweller control, I think individual sales are a guarantee that *someone* is going to benefit from all that public investment in housing.

The reason why the argument that council house sales reduce the pool of housing at the council's disposal is only half true is the curious inflexibility of letting policy. The houses being sold are never likely to join the pool because the tenant taking advantage of the offer is seldom a candidate in the open market. If he/she didn't buy he/she would remain a tenant of the same house, and so would the surviving spouse or resident children at his/her death. (Unlike some commentators, I regard this "inheritance" of a tenancy as a desirable thing which would be taken for granted in other sectors of the housing market).

But there is an enormous disparity between the different sectors of the housing market. Inflation — an economic situation we have lived with ever since the war — makes life easier for the owner occupiers. However big a proportion of their income goes on mortgage repayments in the early years, it gets smaller, with a slight hiccup if they have a baby, all through the life of the mortgage and becomes trivial when the tenant pays off the last installments and lives happily ever after. Council tenants are in the opposite situation. Whatever the council's policy (especially since central government has decided that it can enforce its will on councils in every respect) their rent rises continually over the years, in ways which have no relation at all to the paying off of the original cost of the building. And at the end of a working life, as they shuffle along to join the queue for a rent rebate, they have nothing at all to show for a lifetime's investment in the home, except a full rent book.

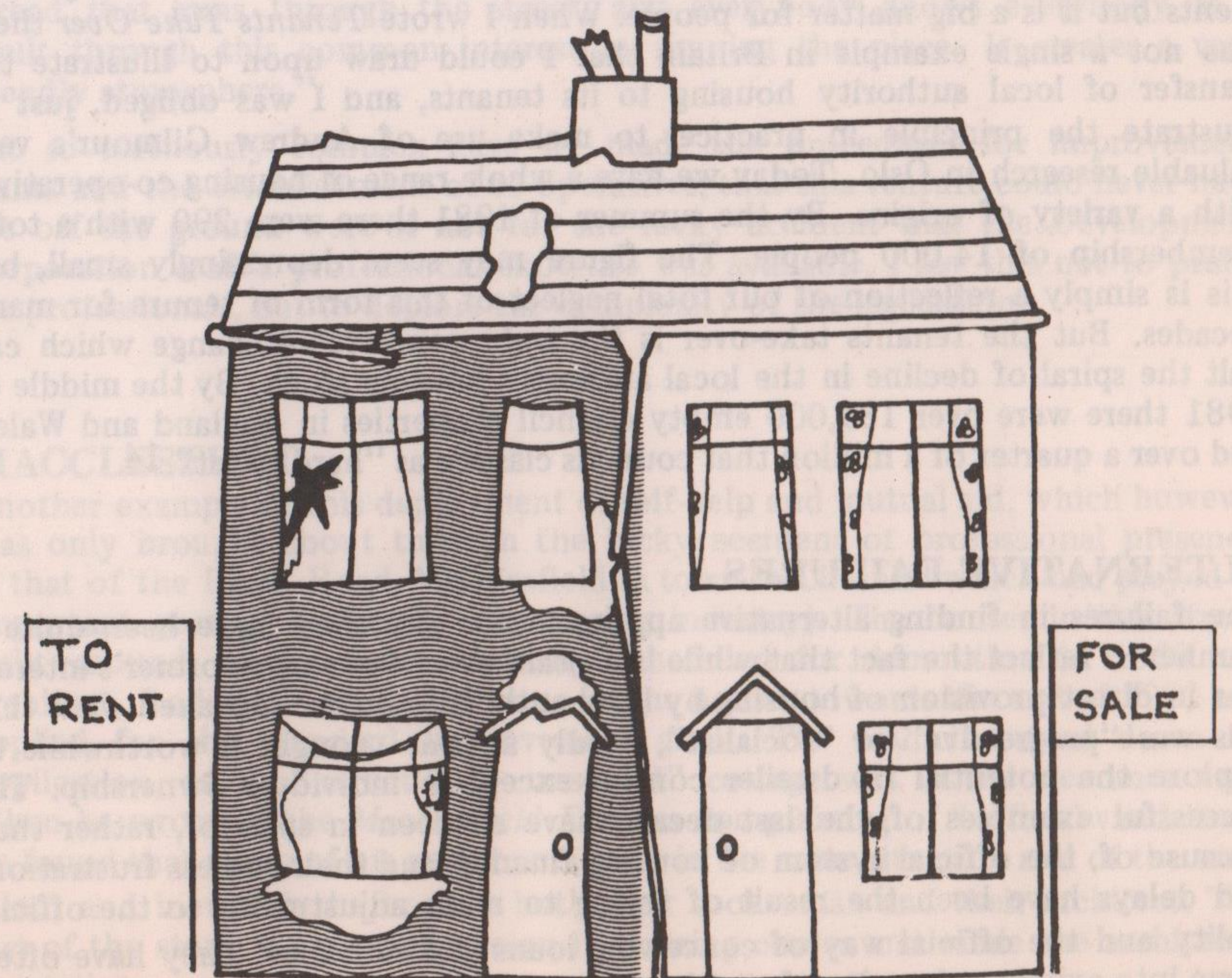
What readers, acquainted with the facts of housing finance, would not advise any council tenant of their acquaintance to buy while they have the chance? And if this is the advice we would all give privately, why don't we say the same thing publicly?

There is a genuine problem for councils that the tenant's right to buy poses. In their housing revenue accounts they operate a pooling arrangement of rents and subsidies so that their older properties, let at figures way above the economic rent or historic cost, subsidise the newer ones built at astronomical cost in the 1970s. In other words, the tenants of old council property, who may well have lived there for decades, are subject to a continually rising rent to help keep down the rents of tenants in new council property. Under no conceivable ethical system can this be considered just, and it presents not an argument against sales but an argument for changing the system of housing finance. No

private landlord could get away with such a policy. A rent tribunal would say that the investment in new property was not the old tenants' concern. If old tenants were acquainted with the facts of the way the housing revenue account was manipulated, they would lobby for a total ban on new council building, which is the situation the present government has engineered.

In a running argument in the journal *Critical Social Policy* on the topic of council house sales, Sidney Jacobs had the temerity to ask whether, from a socialist point of view, it mattered, and got soundly trounced by those who thought it did. For he dared to condemn the attitude pressed on local government officers by the authors of the pamphlet *The Great Sales Robbery*. He remarked that "their tactics are designed to delay, frustrate and ultimately to undermine individual attempts to buy council houses and, short of organising pogroms against prospective buyers, it would be difficult to devise a strategy more certain to individualise, personalise and alienate. For instance, local authorities are advised to 'ensure the highest possible valuation for each dwelling'; 'refuse to finalise completion of a sale . . . until forced to do so by the tenant obtaining an injunction'; 'ensure high service charges as a deterrent to those buying flats'; and so forth. It seems that, in the name of protecting working class housing, the opponents of sales intend to inflict upon workers who want to buy their council houses the kind of treatment which in other circumstances they would be among the first to denounce as bureaucratic despotism."¹¹

I am desolated, if unsurprised, by the response of the authoritarian left to the crisis of housing policy, and its extraordinary willingness to equate public ownership with socialism, especially when hardly a week goes by without some



council deciding to demolish, as spectacularly as possible, housing it built at enormous cost within the last twenty years and which it won't have finished paying for until well into the next century, while a continual series of reports from pressure groups like Shelter draw attention to the very large numbers of dwellings, empty and decaying, belonging to local authorities.¹²

HESELTINE MORATORIUM

We ought to have been using what became known as the Heseltine Moratorium, not in a phony crusade against the sale of council houses to sitting tenants, but as a time for reconstructing housing policy for the future on the principle of dweller control. But why do I, as an anarchist, bother to urge people in the hierarchy of government, to adopt a particular approach to housing policy? The answer is that I am in the same situation as John Turner, whose two books reflecting his own experience of housing issues I would recommend to any reader.¹³ We live in the real world, and however much he and I would envisage a different kind of society, we know that in our world resources are in the control of governmental or propertied elites. Consequently he concludes that "while local control over necessarily diverse personal and local goods and services — such as housing — is essential, local control depends on personal and local access to resources which only central government can guarantee."

In any country of whatever political complexion governments happen to be, they are going to deploy a proportion of their revenue income to the provision of housing. They might as well do it in a way that enhances, rather than diminishes, the autonomy of the citizen. Housing may be a small matter for governments but it is a big matter for people. When I wrote *Tenants Take Over* there was not a single example in Britain that I could draw upon to illustrate the transfer of local authority housing to its tenants, and I was obliged, just to illustrate the principle in practice, to make use of Andrew Gilmour's very valuable research in Oslo. Today we have a whole range of housing co-operatives with a variety of origins. By the summer of 1981 there were 290 with a total membership of 14,000 people. The figure may seem depressingly small, but this is simply a reflection of our total neglect of this form of tenure for many decades. But the tenants take-over is the only conceivable change which can halt the spiral of decline in the local authority housing stock. By the middle of 1981 there were over 135,000 empty council properties in England and Wales, and over a quarter of a million that councils classify as "hard to let".¹⁴

ALTERNATIVE FAILURES

The failures in finding alternative approaches — and there have been quite a number — reflect the fact that while in Britain every housing reformer's interest was in direct provision of housing by local authorities in the mistaken view that this was "progressive" or "socialist", hardly anyone thought it worthwhile to explore the potential of dweller control except in individual ownership. The successful examples of the last decade have all been in spite of, rather than because of, the official system of housing finance, and their endless frustrations and delays have been the result of trying to make adjustments to the official reality and the official way of conceiving loans and subsidies. They have often come into existence in spite of, not because of, the local authorities.

The little Buckinghamshire town of Wolverton exemplifies this point dramatically. It grew up in the railway boom of the last century, with the district called New Bradwell being built by the railway company to house the people employed in the railway workshops in streets of little terrace houses characteristic of any industrial town. By the 1950s the local council, dominated by retired railway workers, saw this housing as mean and obsolete, redolent of the bad old days in nineteenth-century capitalism. Several streets were demolished and on their sites were built blocks of three-storey municipal flats (which were neither better nor worse than those of any other local authority).

RAINBOW CO-OP

By the 1970s it had become evident that many people actually preferred the old streets to the new blocks, and there was fierce local argument about the wisdom of the policy of demolition. Finally, thanks to the sympathetic attention of members of the staff of Milton Keynes Development Corporation, the very oldest of the railway cottages (by now, such is the capriciousness of the cycle of taste, regarded as a little gem of nineteenth-century industrial architecture) were rehabilitated for the Rainbow Housing Co-operative which leased them collectively from the Corporation. They are now seen as the most attractive and desirable houses in the whole town.

When I asked a co-operative member there what the adventure meant for him, he replied, "Well, we're in a position where we have more control over the houses that we're living in, how to decorate them, the way we'd like the street to look. There's more interest, more involvement and this provides a sort of common thread that runs through the street, and everybody knows everybody as a result through this common interest in running the place. It creates a very friendly atmosphere."

But so tortuously complex have we made the procedures for improvement grants and the establishment of co-operatives, that this venture could never have got off the ground were it not for the lucky accident that the Development Corporation staff's professional expertise was available. I say this not to praise the professionals, but to deplore the complexity of the legislation.

MACCLESFIELD

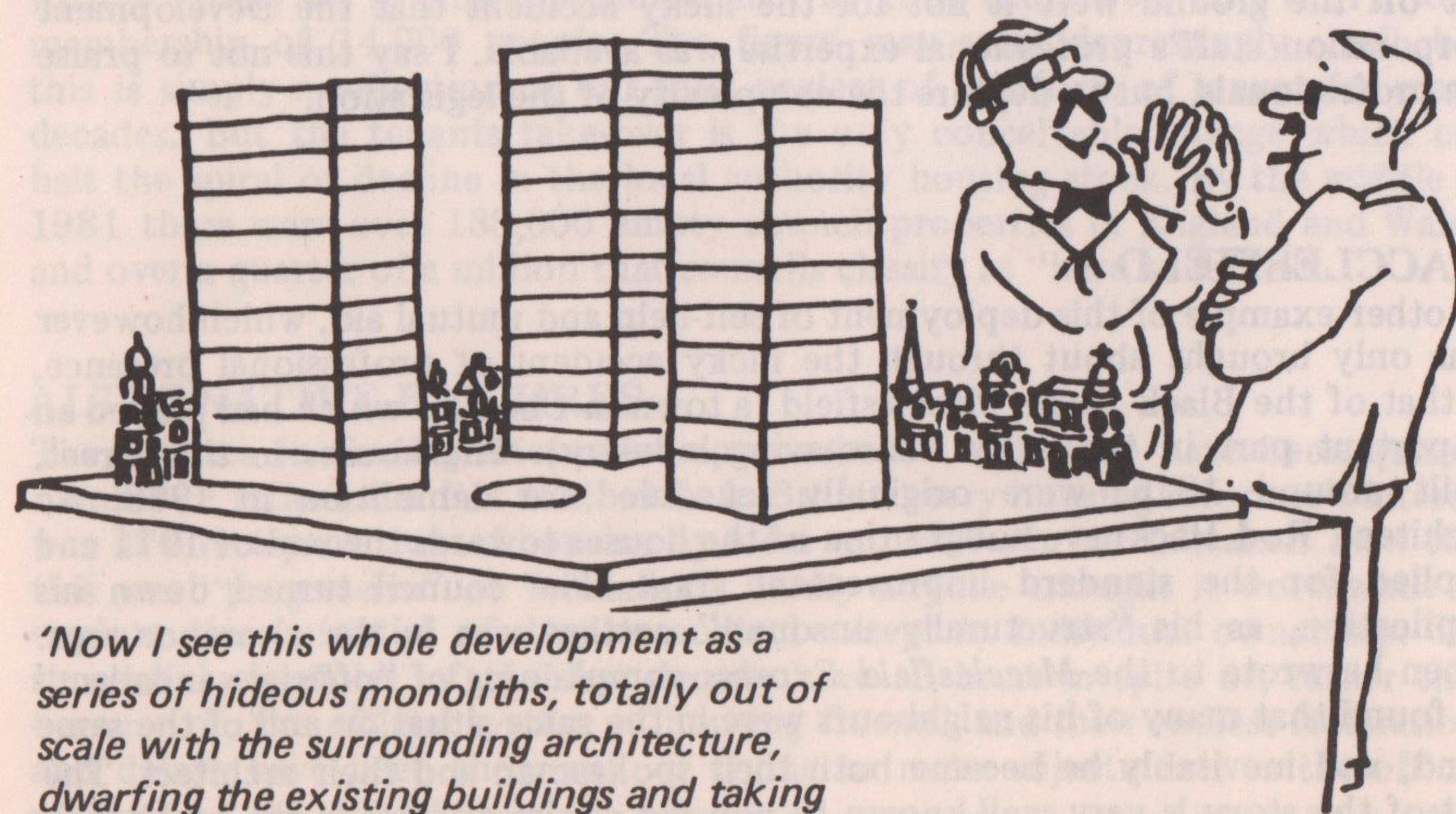
Another example of this deployment of self-help and mutual aid, which however was only brought about through the lucky accident of professional presence, is that of the Black Road, Macclesfield (a town in Cheshire which had played an important part in the early silk-weaving industry). The houses in this street, built around 1815, were originally scheduled for demolition in 1968. An architect, Rod Hackney, bought one of the houses towards the end of 1971 and applied for the standard improvement grant. The council turned down his application, as his "structurally unsound" cottage was in the clearance area. When he wrote to the *Macclesfield Express* complaining of "official vandalism" he found that many of his neighbours were in the same situation and of the same mind, and inevitably he became both their spokesman and their architect. The rest of the story is very well-known in housing circles and made the architect's reputation.

But Black Road has certain special features which make it the archetypical example of self-help and mutual aid in housing renovation. It became, for instance, the first General Improvement Area in the country to be proposed, implemented and subsequently managed by the residents themselves. It was also the first example of that supreme irony of the crudity of official designations of places: of a Clearance Area being transformed into a Conservation Area. From being worthless the houses became priceless.

The Black Road Action Group succeeded in winning over the council's officers so that the rules could be relaxed in a most sensible way. For example, the rules specify that self-help is penalised in the sense that the dweller's own labour cannot qualify for grant. The authorities would rather pay a firm of building contractors than pay you or recognise your contribution. So at Black Road neighbours set up as contractors for each other, so that they might qualify for grant aid. Poor and elderly tenants were enabled to become owner-occupiers, again just to qualify, through what Hackney called Robin Hood financial arrangements, and each tenant got the improvements actually wanted, rather than those which the regulations or the architect thought were good for them, so that no two houses are by now alike. This marvellously intimate approach to the creative adventure of house improvement is symbolised by the fact that the building workers left their plant on Friday night at the most convenient places for the residents to take it over at the week-ends.

It is only fair to add that some of the new tenant co-operatives have been sponsored by councils. Other housing co-ops (like Stephen and Matilda in East London) have had to fight all the way to reach some kind of accommodation with the council, or (like the Seymour Housing Co-op in Westminster) have been the "legitimisation" of the squatter groups.

One of the most interesting of all the new ventures is that of the Lewisham Self-Build Housing Association. This experiment in dweller-built public housing



'Now I see this whole development as a series of hideous monoliths, totally out of scale with the surrounding architecture, dwarfing the existing buildings and taking no heed of what people really want.'

(something which a decade ago would have sounded like a contradiction in terms) has taken a long time to come to fruition, but it would have been smothered at birth had it not been for people's willingness to put aside the assumptions about the politics of housing which they had accumulated over the years. Walter Segal is an architect (brought up on an anarchist commune in Switzerland, incidentally) who for a long time has been developing a system of light-weight timber-framed house-building for private clients who did most of the building themselves, and by 1975 was yearning to see it applied in public-sector house building. Brian Richardson was then the assistant borough architect, seeking alternatives to what he regarded as the failure of council housing. Ron Pepper (a comprehensive school headmaster) was the chair of the borough's housing committee, and Nicholas Taylor (author of *The Village in the City*) was chair of the planning committee.

It is reasonable to assume that these four people had very differing views of the role of local authorities in housing. Brian Richardson, for example, says "If the Lewisham Labour Group has a fault, it is the conviction that if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth the council doing it for you." Taylor, on the other hand, speaks of "Lewisham's libertarian vision of a socialism which is neither of the managerial right nor of the authoritarian left, but which uses state intervention to release the creative energies of ordinary people".

In 1976, by a single vote, the council decided to explore the possibility of promoting a self-build scheme for families on the council's waiting or transfer lists. A lot of people expressed interest: 168 attended a first meeting, 78 a second, and finally 14 families were successful in a draw for places in the first scheme. "They were a miscellaneous bunch of ordinary south Londoners who were alike only in their passionate desire to escape from their present housing conditions . . . into something that would make their lives more generous and free." 15

The scheme suffered interminable delays because it didn't fit the procedures of the Department of the Environment and had enormous difficulties with the Building Regulations Division of the Greater London Council (GLC). The families formed themselves into an association, and in order to qualify for subsidy, they contracted to build the houses for the council which then granted them 99-year leases and 50% mortgages. The other 50% of the house is "rented" from the council but can be purchased in installments so that the builders eventually own the whole property. The residents declare that the experience has completely changed their lives.

LIVERPOOL EXPERIENCE

But the most significant of all the new initiatives in housing comes from Liverpool. Here is a city where in decades of *folie de grandeur*, every kind of housing policy has been inflicted on the population at a terrifying social cost. The geographer Peter Hall, asks, "Didn't it, unbelievably, result in an environment much worse than the one we had before?" He goes on to ask what would have happened if we had spent all that money quite differently. Suppose, in the Liverpool of 1955, we hadn't said "a problem of replacing 88,000 unfit houses", but rather: "a problem of making 88,000 houses fit", we could have given very generous improvement grants, encouraged small builders, opened DIY shops. The whole environment would have been



Liverpool housing co-op members march against threatened council funding cuts in July 1983.

improved piecemeal. It wouldn't have been very efficient — small scale work never is — and besides, a good deal of the basic infrastructure would have had to be renewed. But it would have involved ordinary people in fixing up their own houses and helping improve their own neighbourhoods. It wouldn't have caused the enormous disruption, physical and social, that gave us the Everton Piggeries and the vandalised streets of Kirkby.

I don't agree with Peter Hall about the inefficiency of smallness of scale in housing: after all, bigness of scale multiplies errors and misjudgements until they are quite irremediable. The dozen or more housing co-operatives that grew up in Liverpool in the 1970s to take over old housing which formerly belonged to private landlords have deliberately kept their membership numbers well below a hundred each, precisely because "Once a co-operative gets too large, decision-making appears to become too complicated and ordinary members feel out of touch with their elected committee".¹⁶ When they get too big, they divide. They have already developed a series of secondary co-ops to serve their needs.

The new development in Liverpool, claimed by Nick Wates to be the most important step forward in British housing for decades, is for newly-built housing to be funded by the council but actual development to be in the hands of co-operatives of the prospective tenants. "Liverpool City Council no longer uses its own architect's department to build on spec, new public housing for rent — apart from a small amount for special needs. Instead it funds the people who need new housing to organise the design, construction and management of it themselves through self-generating self-reliant co-operatives."

"Liverpool's first new-build co-operative scheme for 61 houses was funded by the Housing Corporation and is now two-thirds occupied. Nine more, involving 341 families, have been approved and are at various stages of design and construction, and several more are in the pipeline. All but one are being financed by the city council."

"It works like this. Local authority tenants living in slum clearance areas or deteriorating tenements organise themselves into groups — so far ranging from 19 to 61 family units — and obtain the management services of one of Liverpool's co-operative development agencies: Co-operative Development Services, Merseyside Improved Houses or Neighbourhood Housing Services. With its assistance they register as a 'non-equity' housing co-operative with limited liability, locate a suitable site and negotiate to buy it. (So far nearly all the land has come from Liverpool City Council or the Merseyside Development Corporation.) They then select a firm of architects with whom they design a scheme which is submitted to a funding body. The scheme is then submitted to the Department of the Environment (DOE) for subsidy and yardstick approval as on all local authority funded housing association schemes. When the houses are built, the co-op members become the tenants of their homes, paying standard fair rents, but they are also collectively the landlord, responsible for management and maintenance."¹⁷

Hemmed in as they are by the usual top-heavy absurdities of the way in which housing finance is managed, the first of the new Liverpool co-ops at Weller Street, demanded a great deal from its members. But their experience represents an enormous step forward from the kind of housing provision which the political left is so anxious to defend.

In 1983 Liverpool changed hands politically, and the first act of the new militant Labour controllers of the council was to withdraw support from the housing co-operatives, and even to determine that the latest co-op designed housing should, when completed, be run, not by its tenants but by the council. They have evidently learned nothing at all from the decades of Labour Party paternalism that brought so many housing disasters to the city.

I, like you, am simply an observer from the outside, of the way the politicians fiddle about with housing policy, but I do know what the first principle of housing is. It was set out by another anarchist, John Turner, and it applies to housing in every kind of society, including an anarchist society. Turner says in *Freedom to Build*: "When dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contribution to the design, construction or management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being. When people have no control over, nor responsibility for key decisions in the housing process, on the other hand, dwelling environments may instead become a barrier to personal fulfillment and a burden on the economy."

The whole history of housing in this country and elsewhere, supports this anarchist conclusion.

Following this talk Colin was interviewed by *Old Hammond Press* on various points in his talk.

OLD HAMMOND PRESS: Colin, how did you get involved in the housing issue?

COLIN WARD: I suddenly became a housing pundit in the 70's. With John Turner I was on the round of tenants associations, housing managers and conferences. We talked to councillors about the notion of dweller control and to our horror and amazement I found that the councillors who agreed with me were Tories, and those who bitterly disagreed were Labour. It's as though the left wanted tenants to remain in a serf type situation. There they are, busy defending all sorts of aspects of the welfare state which don't get organised support from the working class — a curious and amusing paradox.

OHP: If you are saying we should all own our own home, how is that anarchist view different from the Tory view?

CW It probably isn't! No, but the Tories haven't exactly always been advocates of a "property owning democracy". Some of them still believe in the "rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate". There is, though, a whole anarchist tradition of supporting property owning. Proudhon thought that the peasant of his time with a few acres and tools to till the soil was much freer than the wage slave, and certainly that individual owner is much freer than the modern Soviet serf on a collective farm. The history of all Marxist regimes is coming to terms with this and the enormous proportion of Soviet agricultural production from private crops compared to collective farming.

But house-holding is not an issue there. The owner-occupied house is like the clothes that you wear, or your toothbrush — it's personal property not "real" property. In most East European countries owner occupation is about the same level as here. I'm not opposed to the sale of individual council houses, it's been going on longer than you would think, it wasn't invented by Thatcher or Heseltine. But I'm urging the notion of tenants co-operatives taking over housing.

OHP: Surely though, tenants shouldn't take over things like high rises?

CW: I wouldn't argue with you about a co-operative taking over high rise flats, I think they'd be taking on a lot of problems. Obviously the sensible thing to do would be to flog them off to any speculator who would agree to make a go of them, like Barratts or people like that who are actually doing this with those flats that got the name "Everton Piggeries".

OHP: But largely sales will be to their own occupiers not to people getting together to buy.

CW: Well things are not yet set up to do this as I'd like . . . but a co-operative takeover is sensible and feasible if you've got the agreement of a large proportion of a street or an estate, although there'll always be the individualist at no. 59 who still wants to own it or be a council tenant. I wouldn't mind that. I am opposed to the right to buy legislation simply because local decisions should be made locally. So I must accept for example Liverpool's decision to stop co-operative housing, but let's learn from what *Militant* are doing. They want to destroy working-class co-operation.

But tenants will buy. From the Callaghan period onwards they've had enormously steeply rising rents. From the 70's position where management and maintenance costs were bigger than the rent income and the Tory line was

look at all those tenants being subsidised by the rates, according to SHELTER there are now vast numbers of councils where the council house rents are actually subsidising the rates. The tenants are absolutely helpless in this situation, of course they want to buy, it's only rational. In Rumania the government were even more forceful, they said to their tenants either buy your house or flat or you face a 100% increase in rates, as I said in the main text.

OHP: Why do you think socialists tend to be so against sales?

CW: Perhaps Labour people have got this deep rooted feeling that most working people who own their own house are going to vote Tory, perhaps the Tory Party have got this deep feeling as well. There is something really nasty about this whole business of building up an ideal type for the proles and then demanding that they stick to it. What I always used to say in this connection was that you ask any council tenant if they have a good word for their council house and the highest praise that can be given to it is, well, that it doesn't look like a council house does it?

I think that the history of housing is worse than we make it out to be, when you think of the awful arrogance of architects imposing a housing design which is a smack in the face for peoples aspirations about what a house is like. No wonder tenants end-up calling their places Alcatraz and names like this, defenceless people having these things imposed on them and expected to be grateful that their number has come up on the waiting list.

The question often arose in the 70's as to how the most disadvantaged people would do out of co-operative housing. A lot of people in the Labour Party then used to regard housing co-operatives as a trendy middle class lefty affair. Reg Freeson was the only Minister for Housing who was ever sympathetic and he used to point out that the most successful co-operatives in those days were formed by very disadvantaged poor people in need of housing, the Holloway tenants co-operative or the original tenants co-operatives in Liverpool which were not newly built but rehabilitated stuff taken over from private landlords. The actual business of doing it as a co-operative was something which altered their world view including the attitude of men towards their wives, because the wives were equal members of the co-operatives too.

The Lewisham Self-build Housing Association was actually council housing built by the tenants themselves. You could say this is the ultimate line in Toryism — let the buggers build the places themselves, but it wasn't quite like that. The Lewisham houses had very lightweight foundations and were quite capable of being built by the occupants themselves. The council agreed by one vote and there was a certain sympathy from some of the officers of the council but then they discovered there was nothing in the legislation to allow people from the waiting list to get a subsidy for building housing which would belong half to them and half to the council. It took about 2½ years to get off the ground but the experience has completely altered the lives of those who took part, and they made a very impressive video tape about it. The alternative to this sort of thing is that if and when there's a new government and new public investment in housing another lot of architects will bring along their modish ideas about housing and people will be pushed around by the same bureaucrats as before and the awful syndrome of dependency and resentment will apply to a new generation of council tenants. It's as though some people will have learned nothing from the last 60-80 years of local authority housing.

When you go to Denmark or Sweden and admire their Co-operative housing they think that it's an English invention and owe it all to our Rochdale Pioneers! In fact we just took the wrong turning back with the Fabians in London who equate a Municipal landlord with socialism, this is really the tragedy. All the other alternatives have never been tried.

What we really need is a rich variety of ways in which people can house themselves. Years ago there was a piece of research which showed with our modes of tenure there are fewer ways of getting a house in this country than in any other country in Europe, with the exception of Ireland, Greece and probably Portugal. With the decline of the private rented sector we're even less mobile than before. To get a council transfer you have to queue as a supplicant and some bored person will say, the council doesn't have just you to think about, you'll need to wait your turn. It's humiliating isn't it?

Co-operatives are still few and far between and the most mobile are owner-occupiers. The average life of a mortgage is 6-8 years. In the days of the wicked private landlord it was dead easy to move, that is such an important freedom in life and now it's ever so hard in the rented sector because councils are so awful.

OHP: There's so much red tape too in the private building sector — developed with good reason because you don't want rooms too small or with no windows.

CW: The rules in this century also exclude poor people from the adventure of building themselves. A legal judgement a few years ago made building inspectors just as responsible as builders and architects so they want things like foundations twenty times deeper than they need to be. It used to be worse than it is now until it was discovered that excessive use of rules and closure orders was destroying our architectural heritage, especially older cottages in rural areas. Funnily enough now that people are aware of insulation and fuel-saving all these cottages with little rooms and small windows are back in fashion as being ecologically sound.



Black Road residents after their 'rehab' (see opposite)

OHP: Is there still a radical architecture movement?

CW: As a movement it seems to have died, but the people are still around. Community architecture seems to be the phrase that is used — even the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) are putting money into community architecture, the notion being having an architects shop on the corner where people can come and have instant assistance. Of course the criticism that the professions are all a conspiracy against the laity applies certainly to architects too!

One interesting character is Rod Hackney from the Black Road improvement in Macclesfield, which again I mention in the main text. He bought a little old house and then he and his neighbours discovered that the houses were to be declared unfit and knocked down, and he wrote to the papers using words like "official vandalism". His neighbours agreed and with him being an architect he knew how to work the system, the corporation was willing to bend the rules and the residents did their own rehabilitation together. People would employ their neighbours as contractors and if some people had difficulty getting a grant, well, outside contractors could be persuaded to leave their plant in the right place and the occupants would get on with it over the weekend.

All sorts of semi-legal devices were used to qualify for grants or get the work done and it was nice rubbing over the divisions between the builder and dweller. This became very famous and Rod got a lot of commissions to do rehabilitation jobs in other places. This was slightly resented by other radicals, for making a bit of a career out of it, but I think that they are not quite fair to the fellow. The joke is that three years after the place was declared a clearance area it became a Conservation area and the most interesting thing of it was the way in which the rules were sensibly fiddled. But once again to get anything done you need to bend the rules.

Housing is Theft, Housing is Freedom was given as a talk to Nottingham Anarchist Group in November 1983. Some of the text has appeared in the second edition of *Housing: an anarchist approach* (Freedom Press), which also includes a selection of Colin's writings over many years, and in *Emergency* no. 2.

Colin Ward is a prolific writer and reviewer, his books include *Anarchy in Action* (Freedom Press) and *The Child in the City* (Architectural Press) and he formerly edited *Anarchy* magazine and the *Bulletin of Environmental Education*.

NOTES

1. for all the unnoticed facts about housing see David Donnison and Claire Ungerson: *Housing Policy* (Penguin 1982).
2. see C.Ward: "Lost Freedoms in Housing" *New Society* 12 May 1977, and C.Ward: *The Child in the City*, chapter 4 (Architectural Press 1978).
3. Tony Judge: "The Political and Administrative Setting" in Hamdi and Greenstreet (eds): *Participation in Housing: No 1: Theory and Implementation* (Oxford Polytechnic Dept of Town Planning, Working Paper No 57, Oct 1981).
4. N.S.Thompson: "Poet into Man" *Times Literary Supplement* 8 October 1982.
5. Alexander Herzen: *From the Other Shore* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1956).
6. Thomas Spence: "A Lecture Read at the Philosophical Society in Newcastle on November 8th 1775, for Printing of which the Society did the Author the Honour to expel him". Reprinted in M.Beer (eds) *The Pioneers of Land Reform*, (G.Bell and Sons 1920).
7. Janos Kenidi: *Do it yourself: Hungary's Hidden Economy* (Pluto Press 1981).
8. Jonathan Steele: "Roumania's socialism in a flat spin" *The Guardian* 6 April 1974.
9. Frank Field: *Do We Need Council Houses?* (Catholic Housing Aid Trust 1976).
10. Donnison and Ungerson: *op cit*.
11. Sidney Jacobs: "Socialist housing strategy and council house sales" *Critical Social Policy* Vol 1 No 3, Spring 1982.
12. see Antony Fletcher: *Homes Wasted* (Shelter 1982).
13. John Turner: *Freedom to Build* (Collier-Macmillan 1972), *Housing by People* (Marion Boyars 1976).
14. *New Society* 4 June 1981.
15. from Charlotte Ellis's report on the Lewisham Self-Build Housing Association which gives all technical and financial details in *Architects Journal* 17 December 1980.
16. Tom Clay: "The Liverpool Co-ops" *Architects Journal* 5 July 1978.
17. Nick Wates: "The Liverpool Breakthrough: or public sector housing phase 2" *Architects Journal* 8 September 1982.