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BLACK CHIP

A Radical Journal of New Technology

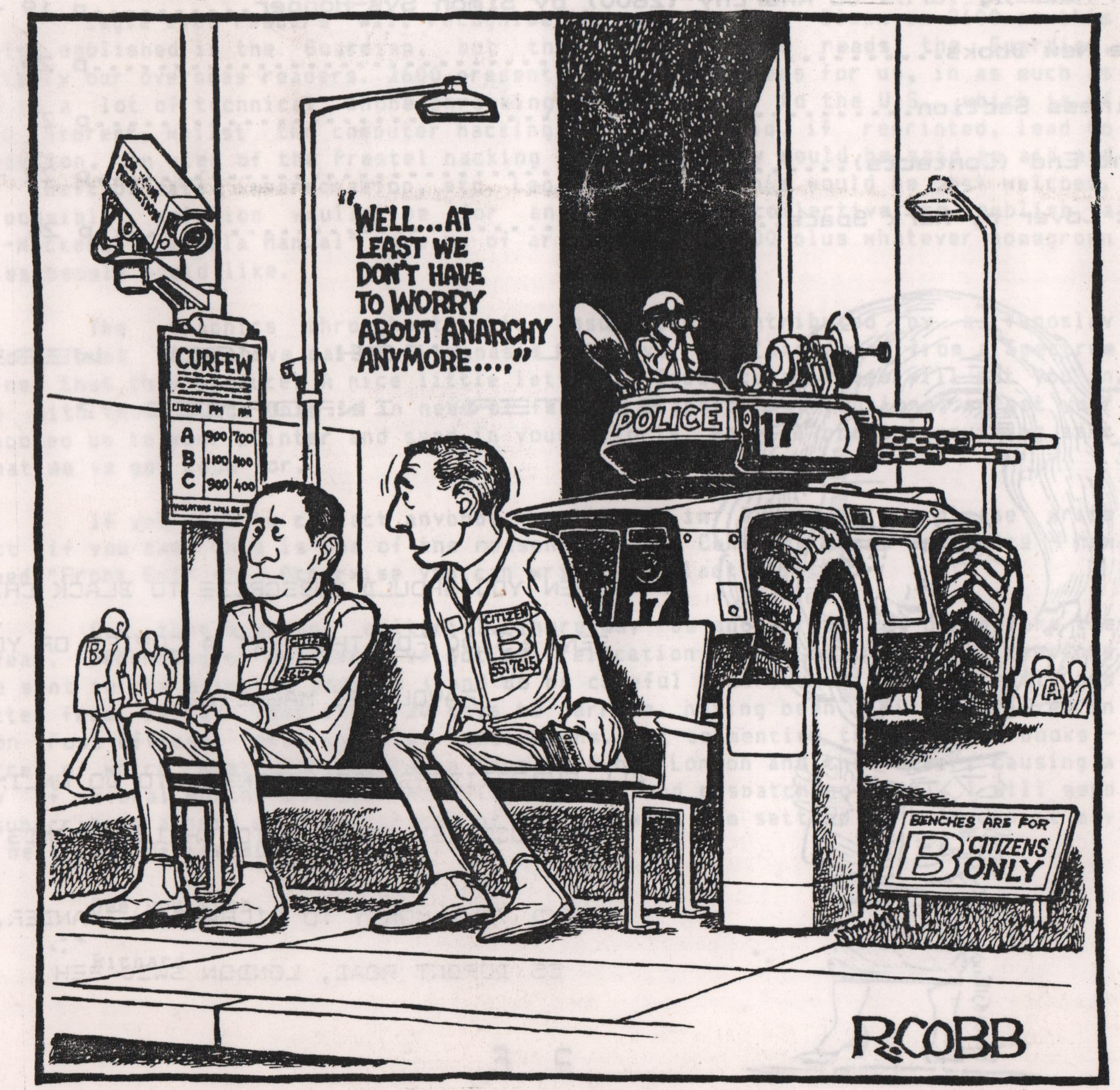
Issue 86:3

75p

Late 1986

OLD HIPPY CLICHES #7:

"IF IN DOUBT, PUT A RON COBB
CARTOON ON THE COVER!"



WILLIAM GIBSON NEUROMANCER



RASTAS IN space?
Strange new drugs,
Gothicks v. Kasuals, Voodoo
deities operating within
matrices of computer data,
oblique little jokes about Christian
White and the Aryan Reggae
band, spare body parts grown in
labs as part of the leisure services
provided by Japanese megacorps
... just everyday cultural furniture
from the work of one of the
young SF writers hip
now that the
tion was

B Gibson is a tall (very
38-year-old American wi
hair, enormous horn-rim
glasses, a slow country s
drawl and a predilection f
drab casualwear. For the part
he has lived in Canada
feel Canadian
something

that mattered and the style was the same.
The Moderns were mercenaries, practical
jokers, nihilistic technofetishists.
The one who showed up at the loft door
with a box of diskettes from the Finn was a
soft-voiced boy called Angelo. His face
was a simple graft grown on collagen and
shark-cartilage polysaccharides, smooth
and hideous. It was one of the nastiest
pieces of elective surgery Case had
seen. When Angelo smiled, it was a
razor-sharp canin
Case was a
trans

... come from a very tiny town, a
backwater called Wytheville, Virg
like nowhere, two thousand peop
nothing going on. So my initial
experience of Los Angeles, which
when I was 16, was like going to a
planet. I went into benevolent cu
shock with this first glimpse of Bi
but it left me with a feeling that I w
able to absorb it or digest it: I was
suffering from information sickne
was just too much coming at me
older I realised that a lot of peop
me were suffering from that cr
so sci-fi fiction beco
into a water worl
you
ac

... met his first Modern two days
d screened the Hosaka's pred
terns, he'd decided, were a
porary version of the Big
s of his or
gho

... Brunner's
... Stand On
... setting for his new
... Count Zero and a fistful of fast,
... ng, hot-wired short stories.
... me is William Gibson and he's
... too good to be true. Listen.

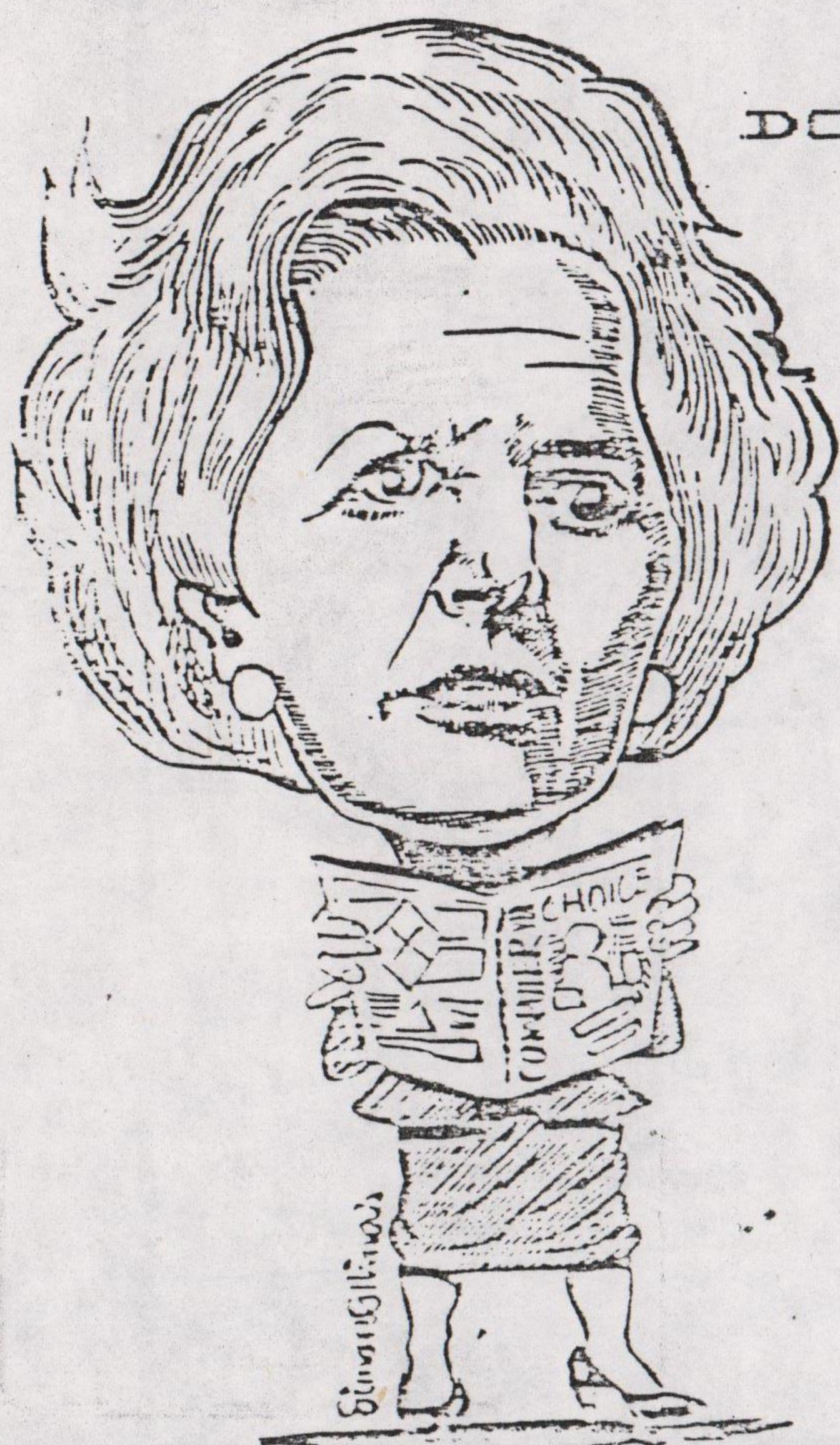
I bought this little Apple and
took it home. I thought I was
going to have this pristine
technological artifact, but I
pressed the button and it made
a noise like a farting toaster.

 **Apple**
The power to succeed.

WINNER OF THE HUGO AWARD,
THE NEBULA AWARD AND
THE PHILIP K. DICK
MEMORIAL AWARD

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55 DUPONT ROAD, LONDON SW20 2EH

editorial

Welcome to the third issue of Black Chip for 1986 and apologies for the delay in getting this issue out. As usual I won't bother readers with the full story behind the delay, suffice to say that D.U. study, full-time work, house hunting and selling and injuries sustained whilst decorating are not 100% compatible with producing the magazine. Another problem has been the delays experienced by prospective contributors in getting their material to me. From now on I shan't bother suggesting what might be in following issues, you'll just have to wait and see, like I do.

The article that forms the theoretical core of this issue is by Sam Dolgoff, a well-respected anarchist militant from the U.S., and has been pinched from the new journal "Libertarian Labor Review". I shall be very interested in replies to the article - I was going to do one myself, but then that would pre-empt readers' input, (you might also have wondered why I published the article in the first place!). Suffice to say that there have been criticisms from certain quarters that the paper has lost its revolutionary perspective, so I thought I'd let you see what mainstream anarchist writers have to say. Suggestions for further theoretical articles are most welcome, as indeed are those dealing with applications - both workplace and personal.

Eagle-eyed readers will recognise the article from Simon on 2600 as this was also published in the Guardian, but then not everyone reads the Guardian, especially our overseas readers. 2600 presents certain problems for us, in as much as there is a lot of technical phone-phreaking data specific to the U.S. which is of little interest, whilst the computer hacking programs could, if reprinted, lead to prosecution, in view of the Prestel hacking case, i.e. they could be said to aid and abett theft of data, impersonation, etc. Legal advice on this would be most welcome. One possible solution would be for an anonymous collective to publish a "Mini-Hackers Guerilla Manual" made up of articles from 2600 plus whatever homegrown goodies people would like.

The graphics throughout this issue are contributed by a Yugoslav anarchist/punk collective called Euthanasia and have been extracted from a Spectrum fanzine that they produce. A nice little letter to Spectacular Times will put you in touch with them. Black Chip is in need of further graphic contributions, so get your kit hooked up to your printer and send in your efforts. We will print everything sent in that we've got room for.

If you wish to contact anybody mentioned in Black Chip, please write direct if you can. This is one of the reasons why the Contacts pages are there - now renamed "Front End" (!). Otherwise you can write c/o Black Chip.

O.K. that's enough editorial. There may be another issue out before the new year, depending on whether I've got my relocation sorted out. Post can continue to be sent to the existing address (and do be careful what you write. I recently had a letter from Belfast that took 20 days to arrive, having been twice retransmitted in London Post Offices - draw your own conclusions. Not to mention the Boy Igor books - a parcel of which went astray between one side of London and the other, causing a delay of several months between receiving orders and dispatching them). I will send all subscribers a note with the change of address when I'm settled in - though it may only be a Post Office Box.

See you soon,

Richard

UNION RESEARCH GROUP

The Union Research Group has been active among unions in Bombay and Poona for at least five years. By now we have built up an extensive and wide-ranging contact with well over 100 unions. We highlighted the need for unions to have a solid research back-up for their bargaining activities - started a lot of the basic research - went back to the unions with this - and today we are starting to organise regular workshops where a new level of interaction is emerging.

The unions we work with are of the most diverse types, internal and affiliated, but concentrated largely in the newer areas of manufacturing where international companies started their operations from the 50s, and where collective bargaining seriously established itself for the first time. We decided we were going to relate to trade unionism as a whole and promote a new bargaining culture cutting across political conflicts and divisions in the union movement.

Early in 1983 we started the BULLETIN OF TRADE UNION RESEARCH & INFORMATION, an English-language quarterly designed to give unions hard information/sensible analyses on issues like pay, employment conditions, workloads and automation. In 1984 we began publication of a popular Marathi version designed to raise the same issues among a larger group of workers. This publication ASMITA (Aspirations) and the BULLETIN are priced strictly to cover production costs. In 1985 we brought over 40 unions together in an Inter-Union Workshop to define a union stand on management's attempts to curb dearness allowance.

Research Areas

I WAGES & CONDITIONS On average unions reach a settlement every 3-4 years, and since these have been major areas of union concern, there has been considerable evolution in terms and conditions of employment. This includes pay, fringe benefits, occupational allowances, working hours, leave, medical benefits, housing loans, company transport, retirement benefits, etc. Much of our work has involved detailed and intricate pay analysis presented in the form of 'pay rankings' which have enabled unions to form a more precise conception of where they stand in the wage escalator. Yet this is one area where the need for a rapid, ie. computerised, information service is most obvious.

II RATIONALISATION/MODERNISATION The more experienced a workforce the more obvious is its ability to establish autonomy on the shopfloor. Existing work practices embody such elements of union or worker control. Modernisation and rationalisation are both aimed at breaking this whole structure of control, using new technology to reorganise job structures, manning levels and employment ratios - the relative strength of management cadre/union categories and using the attack on 'restrictive practices' to increase flexibility, enforce tighter discipline and raise production targets. Today there is an increasing tendency for managements to present unions with 'charters' incorporating their own demands. Without a clear and well-defined strategy on new technology and without more control over manpower planning unions have no basis for a sustained fight. What kind of new technology agreements should the unions go in for? What impact is office automation having on staff jobs? And what initiatives can the unions start taking, given the experience of unions in different countries? A HANDBOOK ON NEW TECHNOLOGY which helps unions to develop a line of attack of their own is long overdue and would meet with an obvious response from unions faced with management demands on computerisation - wider applications, new models, subcontracting and so on.

UNION RESEARCH GROUP

III GRADING AND DEPLOYMENT The structuring and control of jobs are secured mainly through the systems of job classification used by managements and through the rules governing the mobility of labour within the plant. Because these are areas which impinge directly on work relationships and on notions of the status and comparative worth of jobs, deployment and grading account for most of the conflict and grievance on issues other than pay. On the one hand the sustained drive for flexibility in deployment means increased management control over the utilisation of skills; on the other hand the actual design of jobs in terms of minimising versatility, autonomy, etc. implies the progressive destruction/dilution of skills. Grievances on grading are partly an expression of deeper dissatisfactions with the nature and content of the jobs actually performed in most large-scale industry. And just as clauses on 'no retrenchment' are simply no basis for unions to tackle the issues of new technology, union demands for 'upgradation' which have become increasingly widespread in recent bargaining are not a viable response to the decline in job satisfaction, not only because this form of upgrading is actually only job enlargement in disguise but also in the sense that the root cause of the problem remains unions' unwillingness or inability to challenge or alter the existing principles and practices of job design. But this kind of more radical awareness needs much more than case studies or research: it needs a whole union culture which leads them to accept the need for training and initiatives on a more fundamental group of issues.

IV WOMEN WORKERS Women experience the situation at work and in unions differently from men. Historically men have dominated both areas, work as well as trade unionism. One result of this, as we've found in Bombay, is that managements practise various forms of discrimination against women in employment, with respect to promotions, recruitment, grading etc. and unions simply do not respond let alone actually fight actively on this issue. Other practices in the plant which reinforce the sexual division of labour - like creches only for children of women employees - are likewise left unchallenged. The failure of unions to make a serious kind of response may also be obvious specifically in those areas where women are affected more than men, such as increasing work-loads on mass-production lines. That women were dissatisfied became obvious because we met them regularly, and they had positive suggestions which had never been expressed earlier for the simple reason that they had never met each other as women employees! In the factory or in the union there are no opportunities for women to meet each other as women employees or women unionists. Where they do meet each other, they do so in the company of male colleagues or unionists and as unionists or as employees.

V HAZARDS AT WORK AND HAZARDOUS PLANTS The Factories Act, 1948 remains the main piece of legislation directly governing the whole area of health & safety in employment, yet the safety officer of a large engineering concern stated quite casually that 95% of all accidents which occur in industry today fall outside the wording of the Act. The fact is that governments only pass this sort of legislation where they are compelled to do so, and the lack of any significant union pressure for control over hazards is decisive here. But for unions there are two highly significant lessons to be drawn from the MIC gas disaster in Bhopal; in the first place, how safe plants are depends partly on how well plants are designed and how they are operated; for unions or workers to fight for safety within plants is to fight for control on areas like the design of plants or of a specific machine, training and recruitment policies, standards of maintenance and supervision, manning levels, deployment, etc. But all of these are areas which managements consciously define as 'Management Rights'. Secondly, Bhopal has shown that there is no basis for eliminating hazardous plants until workforces and local communities fight together for unified popular

control, which means a trade unionism which is essentially open and receptive to influences from the outside. In any case, what has happened in Bhopal could happen in Bombay tomorrow since a fundamentally similar set of management practices prevails throughout the chemical industry and there are no significant differences in safety levels among most plants. We feel it's vitally important to get unions involved in documenting the chemicals they actually handle, investigating storage and handling practices, trying to decide how far management practices actually contribute to the hazardousness of operations, and then going in for struggles on health & safety. In other areas of manufacturing we've already started a detailed study of accidents, to identify jobs and processes that are most accident-prone, try and see why and then work out a basis for 'safety reps' or groups of workers to take action.

CIE - Computerised Information Exchange

Considering the areas in which we are working, our activities obviously presuppose a vast data base. But because we have almost no resources our methods of documentation and storage remain at a level where access to information is a lengthy and cumbersome procedure. To give an example which occurs frequently: a union might be about to start negotiations and wants obviously to consult a whole number of agreements from companies in the area or industry; now it knows that we have probably one of the best collections of copies of settlements anywhere in Bombay - excepting the Bombay Chamber of Commerce which is an employers' organisation; so the next step will be for the committee to write us a letter which will probably reach us 3 or 4 days later; on getting such a letter one of us would have to agree to put together the relevant copies and deliver them in person: if the letter comes from Thane-Belapur, just going there to hand the agreements over could mean a whole day's work; and finally, it could be months before we ever see those agreements again because returning to the union in question might depend on having other work in the company... In contrast, we feel it's time to go for some arrangement which allows unions to gain access directly and for the retrieval of information to replace its constant physical transfer! CIE would incorporate the following functions at least:

- 1) Extensive coding, data processing & data storage
- 2) Techniques and statistical functions required for evaluation of an issue
- 3) Self-teaching packages so that trade unionists can learn accessing, running comparative studies, evaluation of proposals and formulation of proposals
- 4) Theoretical modelling for our own clarity

International Information Exchange

This would be a new activity but flowing from attempts we have already made in collaboration with individuals in Britain and Germany to promote an exchange of information on conditions in specific transnational corporations like Unilever, Metal Box, ICI, Philips, etc. and to get unions within these companies to start communicating directly. So far this whole network is barely in existence but the scope for regular and systematic exchanges is tremendous! Here are some obvious areas where unions here would probably want to promote contact: what considerations primarily govern the company's investment decisions internationally? what's the progress on working hours in the company internationally? how far are fringe benefits standardised within the company? what agreements on new technology has the company made or been forced to accept? which chemicals are no longer handled because of pressure from the union? can you tell us anything about the following chemicals? does the company advocate a single job evaluation method or plan in all its factories?

New Journal launched.

Edinburgh Computing and Social Responsibility Group have started their own newsletter. The only issue I've seen, July 1986, looked quite interesting if brief (16 pages A5). No price on it so send a generous donation to EC+SR, 3 Buccleuch Terrace, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH8 9NB. They also tell of a companion journal about to be launched from the Sussex group. No doubt Black Chip readers at Falmer will keep this journal posted!

Ribbons Re-Inked.

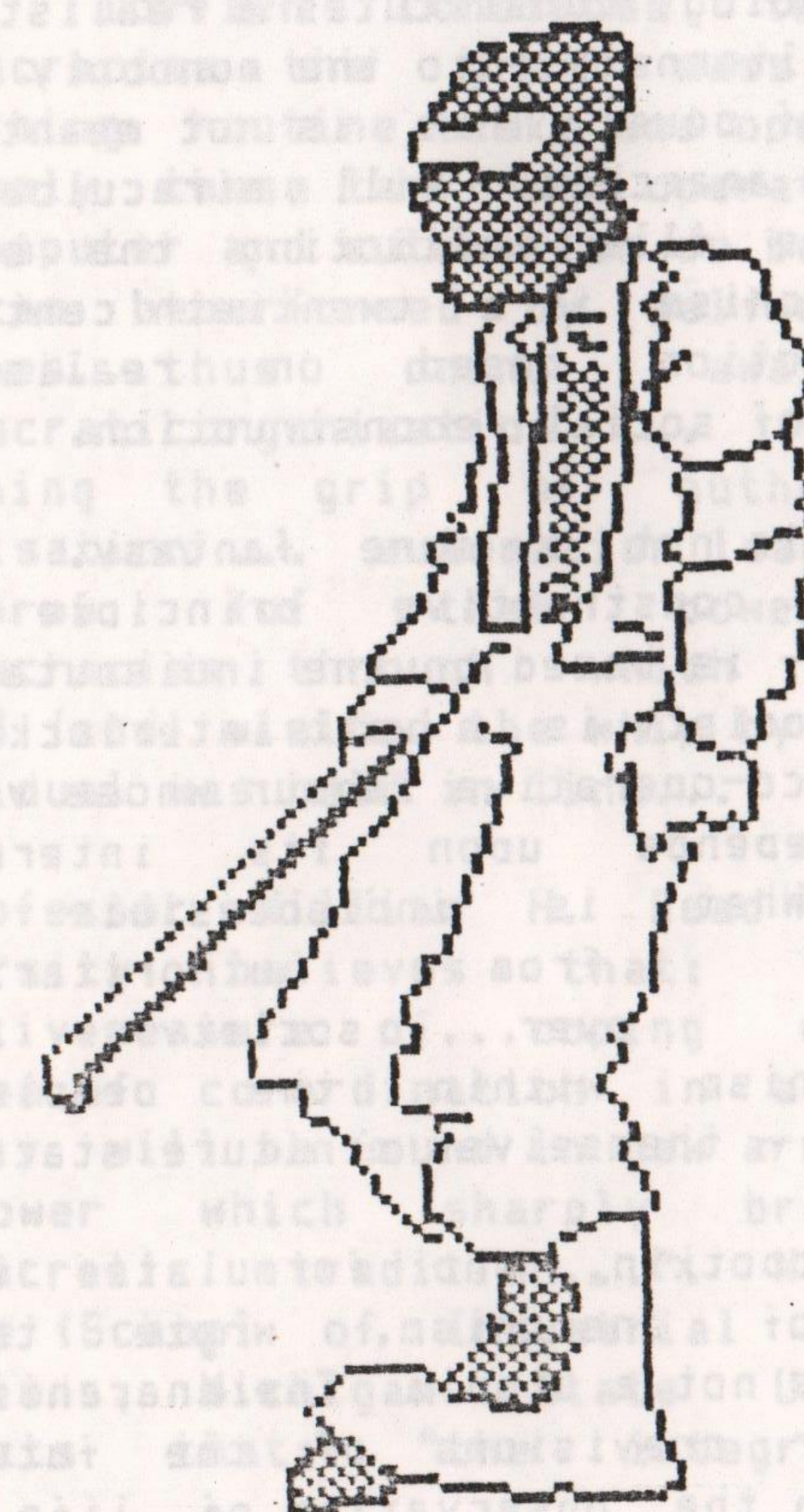
If, like the publisher of this journal, you make heavy use of your printer (if you have a printer!) then you'll probably be cursing the fact that ribbons don't last forever. In accordance with Sod's Law they only get ropey when you're busy getting the copy ready for paste-up. (vide the previous issue of Black Chip!). To our rescue has come Aladdink (sole proprietor N.E. Godwin (no relation)) who are offering to re-ink your ribbon for a figure about a third less than the cost of a new ribbon. Having sent my ribbon away, and having had it returned very speedily, the only problem has been the amount of time it takes to get the excess ink off the ribbon. So if you can maintain a three generation set-up of ribbons - one away being re-inked, one wearing-in and the other just right, you should never be short of a decent ribbon again. Also if you send several ribbons in together you are entitled to a further price reduction. Contact Aladdink at 1 Hurkur Crescent, Eyemouth, Berwickshire, Scotland, TD14 5AP (0390 - 50965).

Liberating Education

Lib Ed. are in the process of forming a Network for Mutual Aid and the Liberation of Learning. In a letter I've received I have been told that the organisation of the information in the network will be done using pooters and DBaseII. If anyone has any experience of using DBaseII they would be grateful to hear from you. Also wanted are peoples experiences with using new technology in educational settings. Contact them at The Cottage, The Green, Leire, Lutterworth, Leics LE17 5HL. I'll print any further details I get of this project.

Free Software

Readers of the Pooter Press will probably have come across the idea of Public Domain Software for which one pays very little. Dann fine idea too. Well if you contact P.D. SI6 at Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 1UL (08926-63298) they'll give you more details. Membership is '19.00 p.a. in the U.K. and there is a copying charge of '2.00 per volume and also a charge for postage. They hold a massive library of software, currently 1600 disks of MSDOS and CP/M material, mainly for business and scientific uses. Unfortunately most readers of Black Chip will probably have BBC's, Commodores or Sinclair machines, being the cheapest and these are not catered for. If you have a 128K+ Amstrad capable of running CP/M or MS-DOS however they are well worth getting in touch with. QL users are probably aware of QUANTA which has a 40 m/drive library and Beeb users can contact Beebug. Commodores I know nothing about. If any readers have further information on getting good cheap of free software let me know! PD-SI6 are also contactable on the following FIDO Boards on 08926-61149 nad 0767-50511 from which, I believe one can download software direct.



MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND ANARCHISM

BY SAM DOLGOFF

the present time...". If we want to build the new society, the new materials are here.

DECENTRALISATION

When Kropotkin wrote, in 1899, his classic "Fields, Factories and Workshops" to demonstrate the feasibility of decentralizing industry to achieve a greater balance and integration between rural and urban living, his ideas were dismissed by many as premature. However, it is no longer disputed that the problem of making the immense benefits of modern industry equally available to even the smallest communities has largely been solved by modern technology. Even bourgeois economists, sociologists and administrators like Peter Drucker, John Kenneth Galbraith, Gunnar Myrdal, Daniel Bell and others now favour a large measure of decentralisation, not because they have suddenly become anarchists, but primarily because technology has rendered anarchistic forms of organisation "operational necessities" - a more efficient device to enlist the co-operation of the masses in their own enslavement.

Peter Drucker writes, "Decentralization has become exceedingly popular with American business...decisions have to be made at the lowest possible rather than highest possible level...it is important to emphasize the concept of functional decentralization." With respect to the emergence of highly qualified trained scientists, technicians, engineers, educators, etc. (whom Drucker calls knowledge workers), he remarks, "We must let them manage their own plant community." ("The New Society", pages 256, 357)

John Kenneth Galbraith, for example, writes, "In giant industrial corporations autonomy is necessary for both small decisions and large questions of policy...the comparative advantages of atomic and molecular power for the generation of electricity are decided by a variety of scientific, technical, economic and planning judgements. Only a committee, or more precisely, a complex of committees can combine the knowledge and experience that must be brought to bear...The effect of denial of autonomy and the inability of the technostucture (i.e. corporate

MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND ANARCHISM

centralised industry) to accomodate itself to changing tasks has been visibly deficient operations. The larger and more complex organizations are, the more they must be decentralised.." ("The New Industrial State", page 111).

The engineering expert Robert O'Brian, (Life Publications, 1985) explains that "because electricity...can be piped almost anywhere...borne by high tension lines across mountains, deserts and all manner of natural obstacles...factories no longer need be located near their source of power. As a result, the factories have been able to relocate at will..."

The following quote from Marshall McLuhan's "Understanding Media", reads like an extract from Kropotkin's "Fields, Factories and Workshops", "...electricity decentralises...permits any place to be a centre and does not require large aggregations...By electricity we everywhere resume personal relations on the smallest village scale...In the whole field of the electrical revolution this pattern of decentralisation appears in various guises..."

The cities in what was once the industrial heartland of America now look like abandoned ghost towns. Steel, auto, agricultural machinery, mines, electronic plants, and other installations are rusting away. But the industrial corporations did not go out of business. They simply built new plants abroad or here in the U.S. in remote, non-industrial, non-union areas where wages and working conditions are poor. Automobiles, clothing, shoes, electronic equipment, machinery; almost everything formerly manufactured in the United States is now being made abroad even in "third world" countries like Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria, Korea - though many of these countries lack essential natural resources. For example, Japan with very few natural resources is nevertheless a first class industrial power exporting and competing with the United States and other industrialised nations in the production of steel, automobiles, electrical products and other goods. General Motors promised to build a new plant in Kansas City but will build it in Spain. The Bulova Watch Corporation makes watch movements in Switzerland, assembles them in Pogo Pogo and ships them to be sold in

the United States. And so it goes on.

EXTIRPATING BUREAUCRACY

Bureaucracy is a form of organization in which decisions are made at the top, obeyed by the ranks below, and transmitted through a chain of command as in an army. A bureaucratic regime is not a true community, which implies an association of equals making decisions in common and carrying them out jointly.

A major obstacle to the establishment of the free society is the all-pervading bureaucratic machinery of the state and the industrial, commercial and financial corporations exercising de facto control over the operations of society. Bureaucracy is an unmitigated parasitical institution.

Highly qualified scientific-technological experts, economists and other academics, who accepted bureaucracy as an unpleasant, but indispensable necessity, now agree that the byzantine bureaucratic apparatus can now be dismantled by modern computerised technology. Their views (to be sure unconsciously) illustrate the practical relevance of anarchistic alternatives to authoritarian forms of organization.

In his important work "Future Shock", Alvin Toffler concludes that: "In bureaucracies the great mass of men performing routine tasks and operations - precisely these tasks and operations that the computer and automation do better than men can be performed by self-regulating machines...thus doing away with bureaucratic organization ... far from fastening the grip of authority on civilisation ... automation leads to the overthrow (of the) power laden bureaucracies through which authority flowed (and) wielded the whip by which the individual was held in line..."

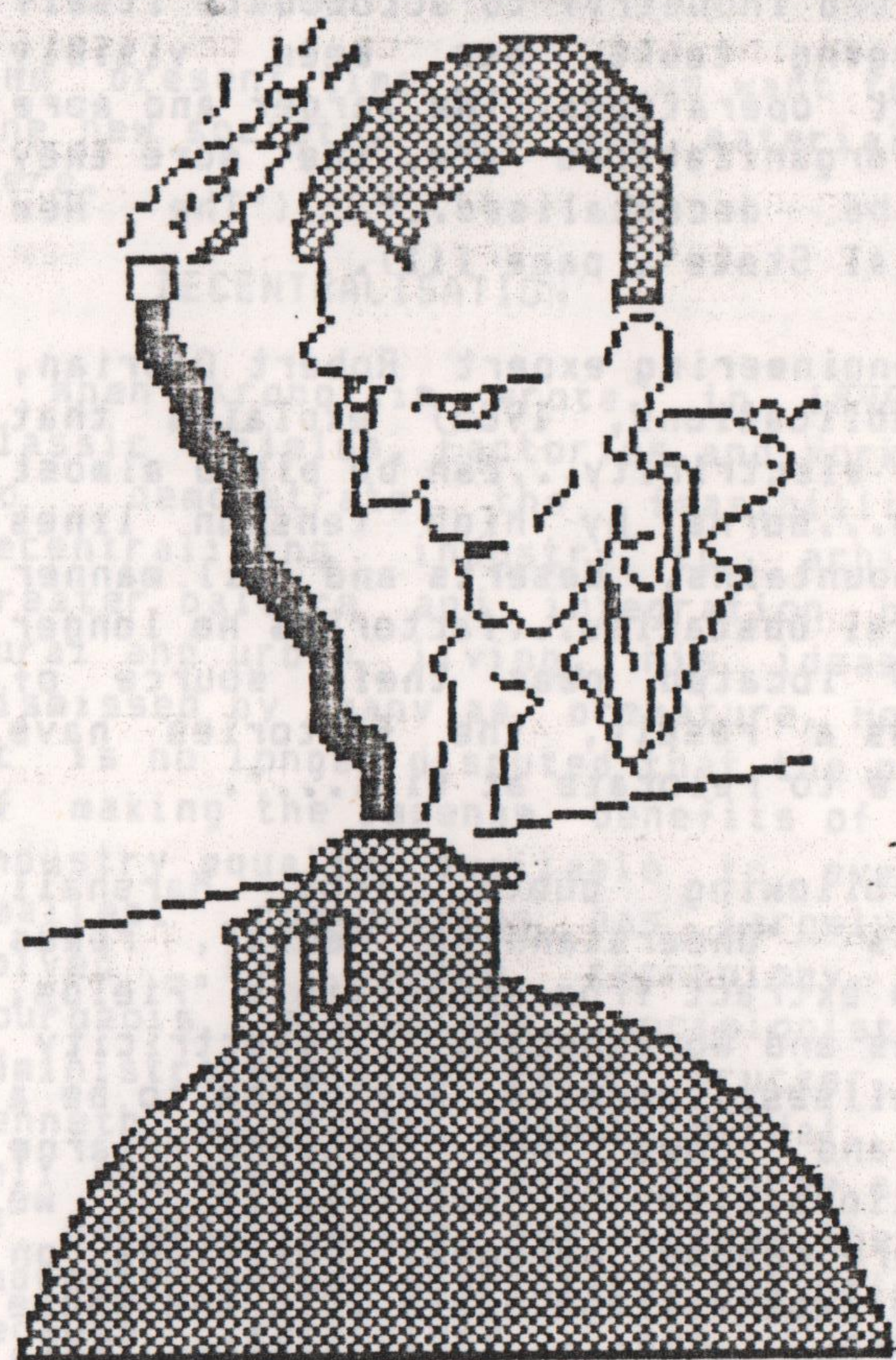
Professor William H. Read of McGill University believes that: "the one effectiveness of...coping with the problem of co-ordination in a changing society will be found in new arrangements of power which sharply break with bureaucratic tradition...". William A. Faunce (School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Michigan State University) predicts that: "the integration of

information processing made possible by computers would eliminate the need for complex organizations characteristic of bureaucracies." Faunce sees conflict between professional workers and bureaucratic administrators. The workers do not need "hierarchical superiors." They are perfectly able to operate industry themselves. He advocates workers self-management, not because he is a radical, but primarily because self-management is more efficient than the outworn system of bureaucracy.

INDUSTRY BEST ORGANIZED ANARCHISTICALLY

The libertarian principle of self-management will not be invalidated by the changing composition of the work force or by the nature of the work itself. With or without automation the economic structure of the free society must be based on the people directly involved in economic functions. Under automation millions of highly trained technicians, engineers, scientists, educators, etc who are now already organized into local, regional, national and international federations will freely circulate information, constantly improving both the quality and availability of goods and services and developing new products for new needs. Every year sixty million pages of scientific-technical information are freely circulated all over the world! And these voluntary organisations are non-hierarchical.

Many scientific and technical workers are unhappy. Quite a few whom I interviewed complain that nothing is so maddening as to stand helplessly by while ignoramuses who do not even understand the language of science dictate the direction of research and development. They are particularly outraged that their training and creativity are exploited to design and improve increasingly destructive war weapons and for other anti-social purposes. They are often compelled, on pain of dismissal, to perform monotonous tasks and are not free to exercise their knowledge. These frustrated professional workers already outnumber relatively unskilled and skilled "blue collar" manual workers rapidly displaced by modern technology. Many of them will be receptive to our ideas if intelligently and realistically presented. We must go all out to reach them. Even bourgeois academics like Joseph A. Raffaele (Professor of



Economics, Drexel Institute of Technology) are unintentionally and unconsciously writing like anarchists! Raffaele writes: "we are moving toward a society of technical co-equals in which the line of demarcation between the leader and the led become fuzzy." Management consultant Bernard Muller-Thym emphasises that: "within our grasp is a kind of production capability that is alive with intelligence, with information, so that it will be completely flexible on a world-wide basis."

The progress of the new society will depend greatly upon the extent to which its self-governing units will be able to speed up communication - to understand each other's problems and thus better co-ordinate their activities. Thanks to modern communications technology, computer laundromats, personal computers, closed-circuit television and telephones, communication satellites, and a plethora of other devices, direct communication is made available to everyone: even visual and radio contact with the moon! A stranded motorist can contact Ford dealers for help in an emergency by communicating with a Ford Motor Company satellite.

Marshall McLuhan concluded that advances in printing technology have reached the point where "everyman can be his own publisher." All this adds up to a workable preview of a free society based on direct democracy and free association. The self-governing units that make up the new society would not be miniature states. In a parliamentary democracy the actual rulers are the professional politicians organised into political parties. In theory they are supposed to represent the people. In fact they rule over them - free to decide the destinies of millions. The anarchist thinker Proudhon well over a century ago defined a parliamentary democracy as; "a king with six hundred heads." The democratic system is in fact a dictatorship periodically renewed at election time.

The organisation of the new society will not, as in authoritarian governments or associations, emanate from the "bottom up" or from the "top down" for the simple reason that there will be no bottom or top. In this kind of free, flexible organisation, power will naturally flow like the circulation of the blood throughout the social body constantly renewing its cells.

The optimism kindled by the libertarian potential of modern technology should not mislead us to underestimate the formidable forces blocking the road to freedom, including a growing class of state, local, provincial and national bureaucracies; scientists, engineers, technicians and other professionals - all of them enjoying a much better standard of living than the average worker. A class whose privileged status depends upon accepting and supporting the reactionary social system, immeasurably reinforcing the "democratic", "welfare" and state "socialist" varieties of capitalism.

They extoll the miraculous labour-saving benefits of the technological revolution, but they prefer to ignore the fact that this same technology now enables the State to establish what is, in effect, a nationalised poorhouse, where the millions of technologically unemployed - forgotten, faceless outcasts - on public "welfare", will be given enough to keep them quiet. They prefer to ignore the extent to which computers immeasurably increase the power of the State to regiment every individual and obliterate human values.

All of them echo the slogans of self-management and free association but they dare not raise an accusing finger against the holy ark of the state. They do not show the slightest sign of grasping the obvious fact that elimination of the abyss separating the order givers from the order takers - not only in the state but at every level - is the indispensable condition of the realisation of self-management and free association, the very heart and soul of the free society.

RING.

O DE DUN DUN

RINGS FIRST CASSETTE
ALBUM... 50 MINUTES
LONG, CHROME TAPE,
CONTAINING LOTS OF TUNES
EXCELLENT SOUND QUALITY
AND ITS ONLY 2 QUID (NO
CHEQUES PLEASE) FROM
RING MISSION CONTROL
6 GREVILLE AVE
SELSDON
SURREY
CR2 8NL

GO FOR IT
(LIMITED NUMBER COME)
WITH LITTLE YELLOW
BADGE... DO IT NOW...
TIME FOR TOMORROW

REVIEW : Duncan Campbell and Steve Connor On The Record, Surveillance, Computers and Privacy - the inside story. Michael Joseph (1986) £12.95. 0 7181 2575 4 (hbk) , 0 7181 2576 2 (pbk)

This relatively innocuous sounding title actually hides the fact that this book is the (currently) definitive work on the State apparatuses use of computers for surveillance of the civilian population of this country. It is well written and easy to understand. The coverage centres on the police and secret services but it also shows, as can be seen by the diagram reproduced below from the book, how these parts of apparatus link into other state apparatus. Although no government has ever agreed to implement the creation of a single databank which brought together data on individuals from different sectors of the state, and indeed most pay lip-service to the notion that this would be a danger to civil liberties, the book shows that the ability of certain privileged sectors to construct a dossier on individual members of the public from already existing databases is almost complete and will certainly become very easy within the next 10 years.

The core of the book covers the use made by the Police and the Secret Services of computers for keeping track of information on individuals and groups, including, of course, the anarchist movement. There is little here that will not be familiar to regular readers of Duncan Campbell's work, but it is useful to have the information neatly presented and updated in one place. By the way did you know that anarchists are linked together with Trotskyists, feminists, pacifists, black power advocates, nationalists and fascists by the Security Services? We are all covered by F7 Branch. Be careful of associating with anyone from F6 Branch though, for

ON THE

this section deals with agents and informers in the above organisations. A small prize will be awarded to anyone who can positively identify the mole in Black Chip!!! (To make this a little more difficult the editorial board will remain at its present strength for the time being!). However the book covers far more than this, as it links the police and secret services to other state apparatuses.

Probably the most likely linking device to be used will be the National Insurance Numbers rather than any specifically police identification system as it already covers most people that the state is interested in: anyone who has ever been employed,

RECORD

anyone who has claimed benefit since the late 1970's, all pensioners, anyone attending school in or after 1975, and everyone born after 1965. All this data is held on a central index which combines National Insurance and DHSS files. Giving everyone a "numbercard" without which they will be unable to obtain either a job or benefits will be yet another step towards the totalitarian state. The fact that this information is already routinely made available to the police and secret services means that it is almost impossible to evade detection in our society unless one adopts subterfuge. And to the police anyone in future caught without a numbercard could easily be assumed to be either a

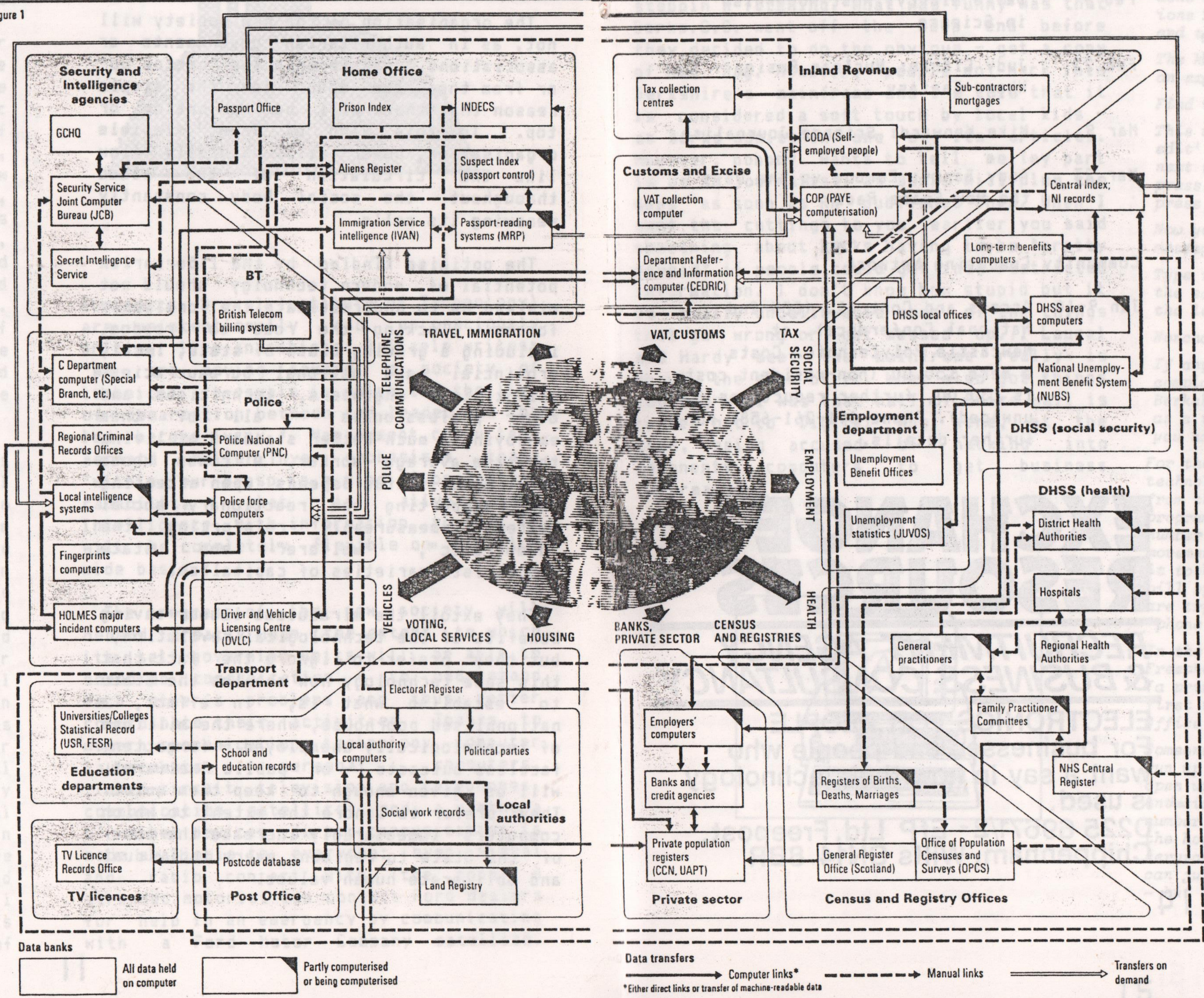
criminal or an "illegal immigrant" and should be picked up on the spot. Very handy!!! Not only this but also this information will be available on demand to anyone with access to a DHSS terminal (all 25,000 of them by the mid-1990s) and if they use public phone lines they can be hacked. Privacy in this context becomes little more than a sick joke.

And talking of sick jokes, all NHS data on individuals may eventually come within reach of anyone's terminal. However the combined forces of NHS cutbacks and professional disquiet has kept this area of our lives relatively clear of any central data bank, although some practices and hospitals have been experimenting with using computers for data analysis and records. Here at least the process has, to an extent, been monitored by a groups who have a certain professional commitment to privacy - but for how long?

Another area of our lives that can be linked into surveillance networks are the T.V. and Vehicle Licence records. The former, when linked to the Post Office post code records (which incidentally are about to be offered for sale at £2500 for the entire country on CD-ROM) can generate a list of all addresses without a recorded T.V. licence. They are also a useful cross-check on the names of people living at addresses. Better known are the links between the police and the Vehicle Licensing Centre in Swansea. The two are in constant communication with each other, and when associated with the police tactic of random road-blocks and motorway cameras can be used to monitor the movements of car owners.

Communications of another sort are also becoming more amenable to surveillance. In particular British Telecom's plans to produce computerised itemised phone bills, whilst giving the user a convenient guide to their own phone use, can also be used by surveillance services to construct friendship and political networks by seeing who is phoning who.

Figure 1



ON THE RECORD

Which would make the targeting of phone taps more selective and "accurate". Talking of phone taps has anyone got any up-to-date info on the current state of play, in particular ways of avoiding phone taps, apart from installing scramblers at each end?

The book is rounded-off by a discussion of the Data Protection Act (1984) - what timing! This ill-named and ill-conceived act was originally supposed to protect the individual from official misuse of personal data. The government (and Campbell and Connor note that both Labour and Conservative have equally bad records on this whilst in office) however changed it around until it is designed to give the government the power to inspect, seize and destroy any data files on living subjects that are not registered, unless of course they held by the government itself!!! It does not take much imagination to work out that the act is a nonsense as it stands. In a way we should be grateful that the anti-quango Tory mentality has so understaffed the Agency administering the act that it has proved totally incapable of even dealing with the mountain of registration forms sent to it, let alone roaming the streets looking for unregistered data bases. However the law remains as yet another potent part of the state's armoury which could easily be activated against anyone using new technology in ways the state does not approve. Campbell and Connor go into quite a lot of detail to distinguish between information and data when it comes to data protection, and why, with the ability to index free-text files, the distinction between word processor and database files becomes increasingly meaningless in this context.

Anyway, I hope I have given you enough incentive to go out and either buy, borrow or otherwise obtain a copy of this book. Whilst it may be very thin on how to actually combat surveillance, by the very act of documenting the structures and processes it can give enterprising thinkers plenty of food for thought.

Richard.

FOORTHCOMING EVENTS

Diary Dates

This is another new feature for Black Chip. I hope to improve the regularity next year which will encourage more contributions.

1987

BSSRS: The Marquis of Granby, Chandos Place, London, WC2. all 6.30pm.

Jan 12 Dr David Elliott: Energy - there is an alternative

Jan 26 Cynthia Cockburn: Women and Technical Know-how

Feb 9 David Albury: Post Modernism in Science

Feb 23 Judy Clarke: Nuclear Fusion - Whose Fantasy

Mar 9 Mike Kenward: Science Journalism

Mar 23 Andy Barry: Europe vs the US - the New Space Race

Community Computing Network

Jan 9-10 Access and Control. (CCN 2nd National Conference). at Newcastle Polytechnic. Costs a mere £50.00 (non-resident cost is £30.00, further reductions for unwaged). Phone 091-261-6581 for further details.

EXCHANGE RESOURCES

RECRUITMENT AGENCY & BUSINESS CONSULTANCY

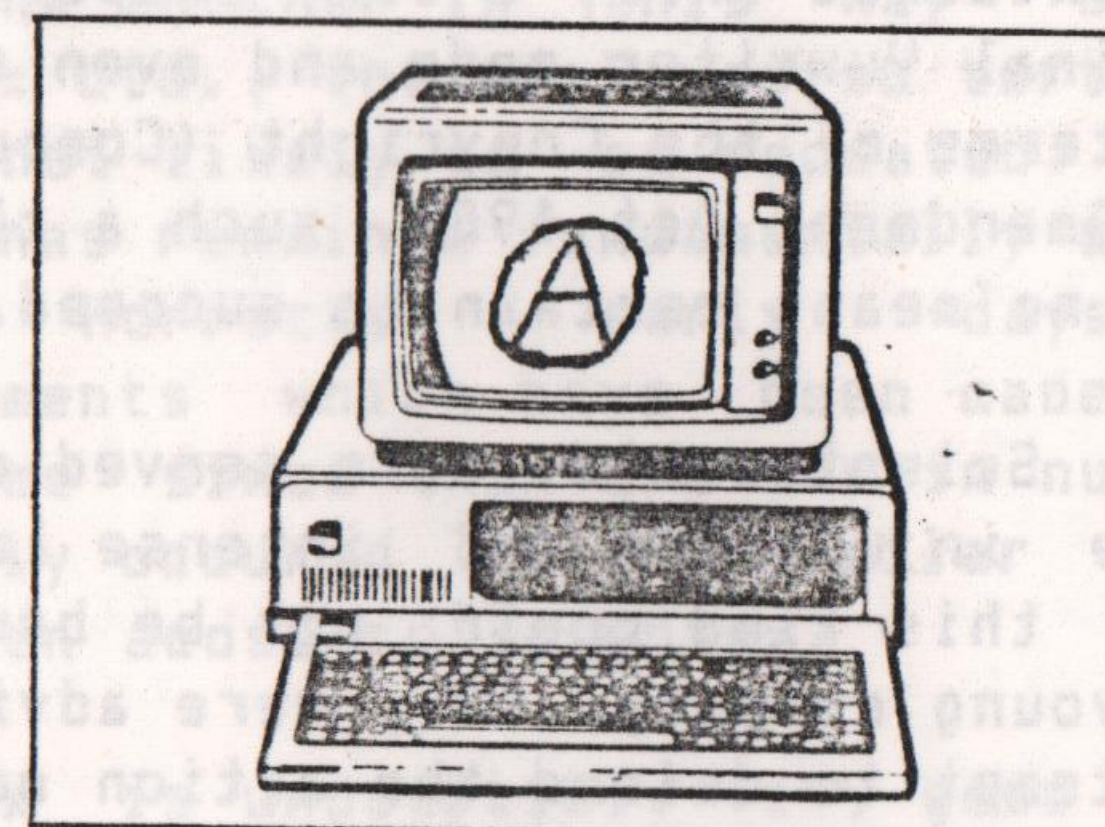
ELECTRONICS FOR PEOPLE

For businesses and people who want a say in how their technology is used.

0225 69671/2 - EFP Ltd, Freepost, Chippenham, Wilts SN14 8BR

Hi-Tech Fun

Dear Richard,
Thanks for the copy of Black Chip. Enclosed is a copy of the Red Rag article "Hi-Tech Fun". As you can see it wasn't really a hack but unauthorised use of their own equipment...but the point was to show that anyone with a minimum of knowledge and a degree of spontaneity can get out there steppin'n'fetching. What was funny was that Berks.C.C. went off the deep end before they decided to do the obvious - get a copy of Red Rag. However, people do hack into Berkshire's mainframe and I'm told that it is considered a soft touch by local kids - as Berks admits in one of its articles. However, nobody wants to tell me (my part is as RR journalist) as Berks will plug the gaps as soon as RR publishes them. When I sent the cuttings to you earlier you said something about Berks having to be "pretty stupid" if people could get into restricted information. I don't know how stupid but it is really unbelievable some of the things that go wrong or get messed up... Laurel and Hardy meet the mainframe really is about the size of it. What also got things cooking well was that half of Shire Hall is rented out to Digital who were, at the time, being accused of hacking into opponents computers to get business information!



The Berkshire Viewdata Service is a growing network run from Berkshire County Council's mainframe computer at Shire Hall. As well as supplying information on sport, entertainment and local events the service also gives access to a wide range of non-classified public information held on Berkshire's mainframe. Three weeks ago a Viewdata subscriber was astonished to find the Berkshire County computer expressing praise and admiration for the activities of Reading Anarchists. (An incident believed not to be unconnected with a shutdown of the Viewdata service on the 27th January. Anyone attempting to access the service on that day met only a blank screen with the flashing words 'Security Alert'.)

You don't need to be a computer whizz-kid to fool around on Berkshire's mainframe computer. The terminal at Reading library is available for public use free of charge. It will give you experience in finding your way around a databank and, with a bit of imagination..... well, lets say you'll be pleasantly surprised. Even those with absolutely no computer knowledge whatsoever can play games on the Shire Hall computer. There is a public access terminal for Viewdata in the Shire Hall foyer. This is what you do....

Assuming it is switched on, you will see a not very well done computer graphic of the BCC logo and some instructions (if it isn't on, press the button marked 'standby' and the terminal will come on).

The keyboard is just like a typewriter keyboard but with an extra row of command keys along the top.

Find the key marked 'local edit'. Press it.

This will give you a screen with the heading 'local edit' and a numbered list. Some numbers will have words next to them, some won't. Pick a number that doesn't and press that number on the keyboard (if nothing happens press the return key).

Now you have a blank screen on which you can type your message to the world.

Type in your message. (If you only use the top half of the screen then press the enlarge/expand key to bring the letters up to double size).

Nonchalantly stroll out of the building.

If anyone interrupts you, hit the escape (ESC) key or complain that it was like this when you found it - Berkshire's computer security is about as watertight as a teabag, so they won't be able to blame you. Anyway - you haven't done anything illegal.

For those who are daunted by even this level of technology, there is still a lot of fun to be had from the simple telephone. In the USA, Edward Johnson programmed his home computer to telephone the Freephone number of Jerry Falwell's right-wing 'born-again' movement - every thirty seconds! During the nine months it took them to track him down he increased their 'phone bill by an estimated half a million dollars! Now they are trying to sue him - but if you invite people to 'phone you.....

In the UK things aren't so advanced, but direct dialing Freephone has recently been introduced by British Telecom (a private corporation). And - whoopee - one of the first to go on to it is the Territorial Army Recruiting Office on (0)800 555555!

Someone, somewhere wants a call from you, and you can run up an enormous bill for whoever is paying - or even open up a dialogue on militarism. We are told that some enthusiasts can't pass a 'phone box without dialing this number and then forgetting to put the receiver back on the hook. It doesn't interfere with the public callbox service as the next person who wants to use the 'phone can just replace the receiver and continue as normal - but that could be hours later.....

'Hello, I'm Vuwriter...the wordprocessing program with character.'

THE BRITISH DISEASE - A CASE HISTORY

Simon Sheppard relates the sorry tale of an outbreak of the British Disease in academia.

What precisely is the British Disease? What are its effects? Is there a cure? The time-honoured medical practice is to examine a case history; this tale is a particularly sorry saga because those involved should be in a position to know better.

Word-processing is the single most popular application of microcomputers, but academics as well as many other distinct groups require specialised software which enables them to reproduce the myriad of scientific and technical notation used in such fields as mathematics and engineering. This has led to the genre of the specialised 'scientific' word-processor. The most popular programme of this kind in the U.K. is called Vuwriter; it is marketed by Vuman, a company formed as the commercial arm of the University of Manchester.

However many hundreds of academic workers and others using Vuwriter are unaware that they are using old and out-dated software, that the individual who originally developed Vuwriter is being prevented from supplying a dramatically improved programme and that a promising young software company has been driven into the control of a giant American corporation.

In 1981 a very exceptional student, Ian Horrocks, graduated from the University of Manchester with a first class honours degree in Computer Science. Horrocks continued at Manchester University as a research assistant and, working on his own initiative, developed what was later to be known as Vuwriter. It was very probably the first programme of its kind.

Vuman realized that Horrocks' work had commercial potential and began marketing it to other universities as the Vuwriter scientific word-processing system. Horrocks, although he had reason to believe he would be rewarded should his programme be successful, received nothing. He stayed within the confines of the University but began work on a completely unrelated project.

During this period Horrocks began making improvements to the programme at the behest of two individuals, Peter Walsh and Don Manning, who had received a large volume of feedback from early users while distributing Vuwriter. Relaying information and fees to Horrocks via Vuman was found to be slow and unwieldy and, when suggestions were made that a modernisation of Vuwriter should be undertaken, Vuman categorically refused to allow its development in the mistaken belief that this was impossible. The combination of these factors led to Horrocks, Walsh and Manning forming a new company to develop it themselves; the programme and the company were to be called Scientex.

This was where, with hindsight, the company made a fatal mistake. It was not to be forgiven. Horrocks' original programme was completely revised, the bulk of it was rewritten and the modernised version completed. However the computer code was not entirely rewritten in entirety and although Vuman were known to be aware of the forthcoming emergence of Scientex it was not until it had been openly sold for almost three months that they expressed disquiet. It came without warning in late 1983 in the form of a letter from solicitors demanding that the company "cease and desist" selling Scientex "within 14 days".

The basis of Vuman's claim was that Horrocks had developed Vuwriter while in the employment of the University. In making this claim Vuman and the University were attempting a rather rigid enforcement of their rights; but in respect of the new Scientex programme there is little doubt that such a claim would have failed. Scientex contained only a tiny proportion of the original Vuwriter code and even now, under the terms of the Copyright (Computer Software) Amendment Act 1985, such a claim would be by no means certain to succeed.

Nonetheless Scientex Ltd. were served with an ex parte injunction and intense legal pressure of this kind could not be borne by such a young company. They were advised that any attempt to defend the action would be likely to drive them to bankruptcy. The company had little choice but to acquiesce.

The constraints which were subsequently placed upon them were wide ranging and

VUWRITER CONT'D

severe. Under the terms of the first agreement Scientex Ltd. may only supply Scientex to Germany and the U.S. and must pay a large royalty to Vuman for every copy sold. In addition the company must submit audited sales accounts to Vuman each month.

During these troubles Scientex Ltd. made several attempts at conciliation with Vuman but all either met with rebuttal or landed them in deeper trouble. Anxious to be able to meet U.K. requests for Scientex, the company entered into the disastrous three-way contract with Vuman and the giant American Sperry Corporation. Scientex will run on several different types of microcomputer but under this agreement Sperry alone has the rights to supply Scientex; it chooses to sell the programme only to those who have installed Sperry equipment.

Sperry's motive in coming to this arrangement is clear - in a market crowded with many rival, often virtually identical computers, any success in differentiating their product from those of their competitors is a considerable advantage. The agreement also means that if Horrocks and company wish to sell a copy of Scientex they must actually buy it back from Sperry, that consent must be sought from Vuman and that the name 'Scientex' must not appear in any promotional material, on the computer screen, nor in the accompanying documentation.

In fact there is one University using Scientex; University College London preferred Scientex to Vuwriter so much they went to great lengths to obtain it independently of Sperry. University College managed to obtain copies from Manchester "By pleading that Universities shouldn't treat one another in this way" but, say Scientex Ltd., the deal was so tortuous that it is not likely to be repeated. Vuwriter itself has remained fundamentally unaltered since Horrocks' early days; the improvements which have been made to the programme since then are few in number and have only occurred after similar features have been added to Scientex.

Scientex is undoubtedly very good - it won a major European award recently as the best scientific software. In its own specialized field Scientex has the potential to become the 'brand leader' among scientific word-processors world-wide, in the same

way as the well-known American programme WordStar is the leader among conventional word-processors. The lack of a large and varied 'user base' at home and the constraints upon the company prevent this. Indeed the royalties which must be paid to Vuman - described by Scientex Ltd. as "punitive" - are so high that Scientex may disappear altogether.

Nowadays Scientex Ltd. is concentrating its efforts on a new product, a high quality computer typesetting programme. However the affair between Manchester University and its ex-student has created many problems for Scientex Ltd., problems from which they have yet to fully emerge.

The attitude of the University of Manchester towards Scientex Ltd. raises wider issues; universities are charitable institutions and do not exist to make a profit. The University formed Vuman, a company in which it owns the issued share capital, to do just that. But which takes preference when there is a conflict between the commercial interests of such a company and the goals of the university? In this case, the latter seems to have taken a very definite second place.

IBM

The world-wide economic recession has hit the the company that dominates the world computer business. IBM, with its "third-quarter" net earnings, globally, in 1986, falling to a paltry \$1.077billion, (or \$1.077.000.000). Fortunately IBM still has certain areas where it makes reasonable profits, e.g. UK Ltd where in 1985 it made £521.000.000 in pre-tax profits, an increase of 60%. (that's equivalent to £10 per person in mainland Britain). Currently the only cloud on IBM's horizon in Britain is the recently launched Amstrad IBM compatible PC series, which despite reports of over-heating problems and a slight question mark over the reliability of its hard-disks (not to mention its poor screen display for word-processing) looks like selling in huge numbers. Indeed it looks likely that at least one anaerobic-network will be based around the Amstrad. Which means plenty of profit for the man who is reported to have said that if there was a market for portable nuclear devices he would sell them, making Sir Clive Sinclair look positively saintly by comparison.



"BOMB BOY FOUND HANGED IN CELL". was how the Sun put the tragic death of Jimmy Heather-Hayes in Ashford Remand Centre. They went onto to repeat the police description of him as a punk rocker who had wanted to lead the revolution. He had been put in prison for the petrol bombing of Teddington Police Station in March 1982. After being picked up, Jim was to spend the next seventeen weeks awaiting trial. Recently a film has been completed which documents these events, and through interviews with friends and family, Jim's tale is told. We have included seven of his poems and dramatised the notes he made in his diary. There is no doubt that he was made to suffer for anti-authoritarian views, twice he was placed in solitary confinement for breaking petty and minor rules. It is a sad story, but one that must be recounted, and here it is done entirely in his own words.

"All you lot out there
Don't make the same mistake
That revolution glory
It's all a bloody fake.
Know the system before you fight,
Suss out what it's like.
Till then bide your time
Wait before you strike."

(Jim, 5th day at Ashford).

"Shine on Jim" lasts 35 minutes and is available on VHS. We have kept costs down and are charging £10.00, or for hire, £2.00 (£8.00 deposit). Available from Phil Stebbing, 20b Kelliett Road, London SW2.

SPERRY TRASHED

Readers of Black Flag (162) will have read about the exemplary action of Danish comrades recently. During a nine day uprising by autonomist squatters the Sperry building was set on fire. Sperry were much resented in the area, partly for having taken over previously residential space but also because they are involved in the production of computers for Cruise and Pershing missiles.

Yes. I know that a million and one books have been churned out by well intentioned lefties after the miners' strike, usually putting forward their sectarian viewpoint, but here is a book that is different.

"A Year of Our Lives" is a book written by the inhabitants of three mining villages dependent on the Hatfield Main pit in Doncaster. It goes not so much into the drama of the police/picket conflicts, but more into the question of how several thousand people managed to feed and clothe themselves on next to no money over the space of a year.

With contributions by women's support groups, children and the miners themselves, with pictures, poems, etc, it gives a vivid insight into one of the most militant mining communities in Britain, and the real reasons and feelings behind the conflict, without the usual 'analysis' we get so often from the plethora of left groups that jumped on the miners' bandwagon.

All in all, a refreshing book that leaves you feeling as if there is a little hope left for us in Britain today.

If you fancy a copy, send £2.00 (+ p+p) to Hooligan Press, 3M Box Hurricane, London, WC1.

Ian



WHEN HACKING TURNS TO ANARCHY by Simon Sys-Hopper

Anarchy is a philosophy that is growing in popularity. Look in any 'alternative' bookshop and you will find an assortment of anarchist literature from an ever-changing body of titles such as 'Class War', 'Stuff It' and 'The Brighton Bomber'.

Today's modern anarchists are able to transcend the mere chant of "Smash The State". They are able to engage in a wide range of issues freed from the constraints of political dogma. But the main thrust of anarchism is action, not words - and anarchists are turning their attention to computers.

Recently copies of the American hackers news-letter '2600' have become available in Britain. '2600' is by far the most direct and single-minded computer anarchist publication to appear to date - the latest issue features an extensive treatise on 'Violating a Vax'.

The article includes examples which demonstrate many of the techniques available to computer anarchists. Most extensively discussed is the method known as the 'Trojan Horse'. In this scheme an unobtrusive programme is slipped into the files of a user who has access to system privileges. If the code is placed into a Login file, for example, the hidden code is run when the unwitting user next gains access to the system. The Trojan Horse masquerades as part of the login procedure and executes to grant special privileges to another less fortunate user. After execution the Horse deletes itself to remove all trace of the alterations made.

The largest problem with this method is actually installing the Horse; in all but a handful of systems this does not pose any major difficulty. A refinement of the technique is to merely install a pointer to the illicit code, or to tuck the code away in compiled machine language form complete with an unobtrusive sounding name. Both of these ploys make chance discovery of the Trojan Horse less likely.

Another fiendishly simple and rather more direct technique for gaining unrestricted access to a computer system is to employ a Password Grabber. This device simulates the

log-in procedure on an unattended terminal. To quote 2600, "unsuspecting dope then enters his username and password which are then written to some useful location for later retrieval". The Password Grabber may then deceive the "dope" that some mythical error has occurred or continue to operate, passing each command directly to the operating system. In either case the bona-fide user remains completely unaware that his every movement is being monitored by an alien programme.

The full might of the computer anarchists' arsenal becomes apparent with the outbreak of a Virus, alternatively known as a Worm. The main purpose of most strains of Virus (2600 includes a fully worked example written in VAX/VMS) is to replicate themselves. The Virus becomes a monster, ever growing in size, consuming large amounts of disc space and taking increasingly greedy gulps of processing power. Viruses may also be programmed to infect other computer systems connected to the host through networks.

In the words of the anonymous 2600 writer, "A good Virus does something slightly more interesting like plant a small bomb in the system to go off after some time period or after some event occurs or burn a hole some-where so that a certain command will do something else or insure that certain usernames will always work or dedicate all system resources to calculating the millionth digit of pi - you get the idea. It can do anything".

In fact the techniques of computer anarchism share many common features with that more traditional abuse of computer power - unadulterated theft. Probably the best known method is the Salami Technique: an illegitimate programme trims every one of a large number of accounts held on computer by a miniscule amount. These tiny slices are transferred electronically to a dummy account created for the purpose by the computer criminal. Such an account, if undetected, can accumulate large sums and by the time the process is discovered it is often too late. What is more, the act frequently goes unreported as large companies are too embarrassed to admit that they have fallen victim. Other techniques of the computer criminal include "The Trap Door", "Rabbits", "Foxes" and the method known as "Piggy-Backing".

A further sphere of interest to 2600 is 'phone phreaking' - however the information is not relevant here as around half of the British telephone system is made up of old Strowger relays, while the remainder is a notch-potch of just compatible systems. Telephone hackers in the U.K. have to be content with a circuit published, in censored form, in the Hackers' Handbook and, it must be admitted, the Hackers Handbook is pretty tame compared to 2600.

It is unusual to see an expression of the motives of the new-age anarchists in their publications devoted to technology. The political motivation is normally assumed from the mainstream anarchist press, from "The single most obvious emotion in the anarchist press is anger" (Stuff It) to the classic Class War piece "Why I Hate The Rich". This last item appeared in the same issue as a heated repudiation of the charge that Class War is allied to the National Front - it most definitely isn't. Whilst the motives of the leather-clad anarchist on the Clapham omnibus can be somewhat difficult to define, those of the technological variety are more straightforward. The overwhelming motivation of the computer anarchist is to see egg on the face of authority.

Another 2600 article devoted attention to the Pick operating system. Pick is growing in popularity as a multi-user system suited to data retrieval applications, but it is almost embarrassingly easy to hack. Details are given on how to break into the system in order to peruse data, how to crash the system and how to "destroy and render useless" an entire Pick data bank with a simple one line command. It seems that, in their current state of development, multi-user operating systems are highly insecure and extremely vulnerable. They should be warned.

Two new books should have found their way onto the bookshelves of your local shops and libraries recently and may well be worth having a look at. One is by "Hugo Cornwall" called "Datatheft: the hazards of the insecure computer" and is published by Heinemann at about £12.95 and the other is by Trevor Taylor and is called "Computer Crime", published by Hamish Hamilton at about £9.95. These books should be a mine of information for would-be hackers, though the more serious of the fraternity (them being mainly male) will doubtless be already reading the specialist press for more up-to-date information. Reviews welcome on these two.

FICTION

Those people who read modern Science Fiction will need no introduction to the work of William Gibson, who features on our back page. "Neuromancer", now out in paperback, reads like what I suspect a lot of people would like to see in Black Chip, i.e. hackers taking on the might of the industrial and informational corporations. I hope to have proper reviews of William Gibson's books (check out "Burning Chrome" and "Count Zero" as well) in forthcoming issues.

People preferring a more sedate setting for the novels, together with a more philosophical approach should try to get hold of Christina Brooke-Rose's new novel "Xorandor", published by Carcanet at £8.95 (which is expensive to buy, so get it from the library). This lacks the speedy punk feel of Gibson's books but makes up for it in the problems it poses on a higher level. It also features extracts on programs written in a fictional computer language "Procom". Again a full review would be appreciated, if you get time.

HELPLINE

Running a magazine like this I occasionally get letters asking for assistance with a variety of new technology problems. This can take the form of information regarding particular technologies: robotics or satellite TV; queries regarding machines: using the Amstrad PCW; or languages: DBaseII. Unfortunately I'm not an expert in all matters new technology, my experience is limited to using Spectrums and QLs with just a nod at WordStar. But I'm certain that among the readership of the journal there are many readers who would be only too happy to help with such enquiries. For this reason future issues of Black Chip will run a helpline service, so I would be grateful if anyone who has problems, or can offer advice, or who would simply like to be put in touch with others facing the same problems could send their details to Black Chip. Confidentiality can be maintained by making your address c/o Black Chip, in which case don't forget to enclose an s.a.e.!!!

REPRINTS

I have decided to do limited reprints of Black Chip and other magazines' articles. These will feature articles from previous issues, texts submitted that were too long for inclusion, and useful reprints from other magazines provided that the publishers don't object. This way I hope to keep the better stuff always available.

Currently available are:

Mavros Black: A Syndicalist Response to New Technology (4pp) originally published in Black Flag.....10p

Les Levidow and Bob Young: How do Technologies Embody Values? (8pp) originally published in this form in Black Chip.....20p

David Lodge Parnas: Software Aspects of Strategic Defence Systems (12pp) originally published in Communications of the ACM (v28/12)30p

SMALL ADS

In future issues of Black Chip I hope to be able to run a column of Small Ads for readers and subscribers. There will be no charge for this, but if anyone ever manages to make a sale this way then the publisher is also grateful for rewards! So lets be having your wants, swaps, sales and What Have You.

FOR SALE

Sinclair QL, Boxed, 128K with software together with a monochrome monitor and cables. Comradely offers will be forwarded to Mark Space. QL comes with bundled word processor, database, spreadsheet and business graphics software. (This magazine is printed using a QL!)

Rotronics Wafadrive, twin wafadrives, RS-232 and Centronics ports plus word processor, toolkit and copying software together with spare wafas is available from Richard Alexander, 55 Dupont Road, London SW20 8EH. Boxed with manuals etc. The ideal companion to your 48K Spectrum. Offers welcome. I've also got some games for the Spectrum and QL for sale or swap.

Jupiter Ace software. The publisher also has some left-over REMSOFT games and utilities for people lumbered with an ACE. send s.a.e. for list.

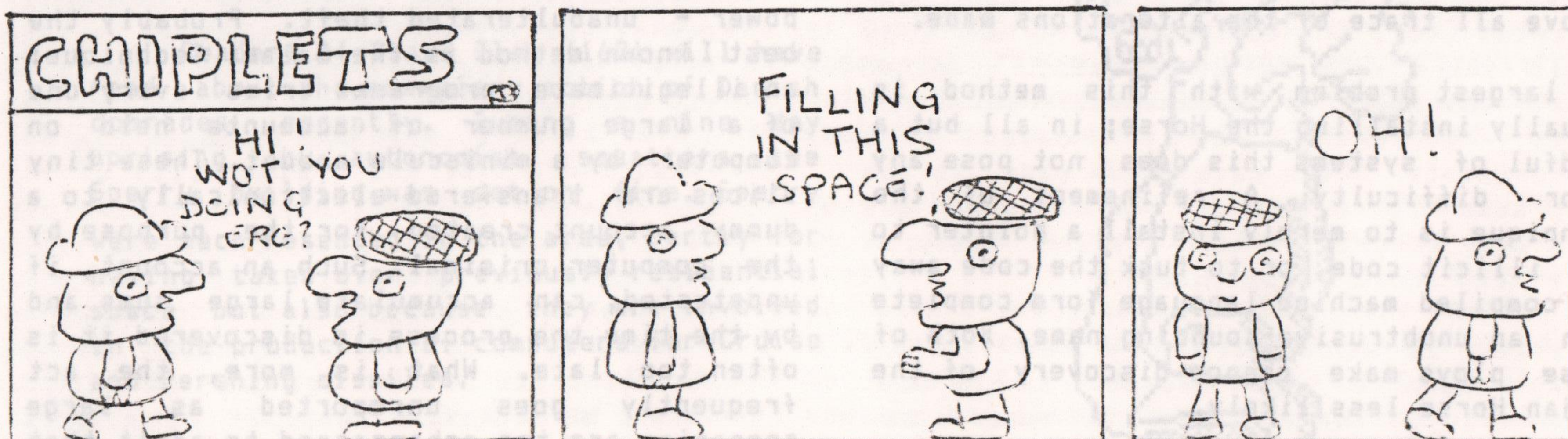
William Morris: A Factory as it might be (4pp)10p

Murray Bookchin: Self-Management and the New Technology (12pp) reprinted from Telos20p

Event Horizon Industries: The Videodrome, the thing in Room 101 (12pp)30p

When ordering please enclose a stamped addressed envelope, or at least an 18pp stamp.

Suggestions for further items to be reprinted, or new texts to be distributed to the usual address please.



This column is an attempt to list all those organisations, newsletters and networks which may be of interest to readers of Black Chip. If you know of any other new technology orientated groups who should be included please let me know. I am happy to exchange Black Chip with anyone who sends me copies of their papers.

INTERNATIONAL

Australia : Australians for Social Responsibility in Computing, School of Maths and Physics, Macquarie University, North Ryde 2113. (02-88-9160)

Australia : Computers in Society, Department of Commerce, Australian National University, Canberra 2600.

Australia : Compuskill, 496 Bunnerong Road, Matraville 2036. (02-694-1033)

Australia : John Englart, PO Box 122, Erskineville, NSW 2042. (John publishes an Australian supplement to Black Chip)

Canada : INPUT, (Initiative for the Peaceful Use of Technology), Box 248, Station B, Ottawa, K1P 6C4 (613-230-6678)

Denmark : Folkedata, Elmagade 52, Copenhagen. (02-40-90-79) (Establishing a community memory style open town meeting via computer)

France : Terminal 19/48, 18 Rue de Chatillon, 75014 Paris (Excellent journal)

France : Pogonip, BP 195, 75665 Paris Cedex 14. (Publish pamphlets)

India : Union Research Group (Bombay), c/o Harsh Kapoor, Combaillaux, 34980 (par St Bely du Fesc). (67-842759)

U.S.A. : Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility, PO Box 717, Palo Alto, California 94301 (415-322-3778)

U.S.A : Econet, c/o Farallones Institute, 15290 Coleman Valley Road, Occidental CA 95465. (707-874-2441) Bulletin Boards

U.S.A : Greenet, 1053 Williamson Street, Madison, WI 53708. (608-256-4158) Bulletin Boards

U.S.A. : Libertarian Labor Review, (A Journal of Anarchosyndicalist Ideas and Discussion), PO Box 2824 Station A, Champaign, IL 61820

FRONT END

U.S.A. : NADA, (New Art for a Dangerous Age), 195 Garfield Place, Apt.2L, Brooklyn, NY 11215 (Irregular journal)

U.S.A : Newbase, 1035 Guenero, SF, CA 94110 (415-824-8767). Radical Bulletin Board.

U.S.A. : Overthrow/Y.I.P.I.S., PO Box 392, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013 (212-533-5028) (Publish Radical journal)

U.S.A. : Processed World, 55 Sutter Street, £ 829, San Francisco, California 94104 (415-495-6823) (Publish excellent journal, we excerpt just a few of the many good articles!)

U.S.A. : Reset, 90 East 7 St, Apt. 3A, NYC, NY 10009 (212-254-3582) (Publish irregular but useful journal, in process of constructing a directory of alternative computer groups)

U.S.A. : Resurgence, Box 2824, Station A, Champaign, Illinois 61820 (publish syndicalist journal)

U.S.A. : Silicon Daze, 365 Adelphi Street, £2, Brooklyn, New York 11238 (Publish journal)

U.S.A. : 2600, Box 752, Middle Island, New York 11953 (516-751-2600) (Publish regular paper, we're hoping to arrange for British readers to have access to this paper, especially for its hacking hints)

BRITAIN

Archives for Fortean Research, 1 Shoebury Road, London E6 2AQ (Database project on anomalous information)

British Unemployment Resource Network, c/o CAWTU, 318 St.Pauls Road, London N1 2LF. (01-359-8403). Run an electronic communications network

Centre of Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems, Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, London N7 8DB (01-607-2789 ext 2318 or 01-609-4530) Run trade union and community information service and publish newsletter.

CONTACTS

Communications Campaign, c/o 125 Gossops Drive, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 8LF (0293-515320) (Publish series of pamphlets)

Community Computers UK, Inter-Action Trust, Royal Victoria Dock, London E16 1BT (01-511-0411/2)

Community Computing Network, c/o LITRU, 68 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JR

Edinburgh Computing and Social Responsibility Group, 3 Buccleuch Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 9NB

Electronics for Peace (London group), c/o 89 Acre Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 6ES

Electronics for Peace (national group), c/o Townsend House, Green Lane, Marshfield, Chippenham, Wilts SN14 8JW (0225-891-710) (Have a well-developed network of contacts nationwide)

Exchange Resources (Recruitment Agency & Business Consultancy), EFP Ltd, Freepost, Chippenham, Wilts SN14 8BR

Geonet, Planet Tree Communications/Mitra, 17 Mackson Road, London NW3 (01-267-0188) Access point to Green-net, Econet etc.

Here and Now, Box 2, c/o Changes, 340 West Princes Street, Glasgow, Scotland G4 9HF (Publish radical journal)

ICL Trade Union Combine, 8 Madison Street, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs ST6 5HT

Interface Associates, 5 Christchurch Drive, Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey GU17 0HA

Lib Ed (i.e. Libertarian Education), The Cottage, The Green, Leire, Lutterworth LE17 5HL (Useful contacts for those interested in the educational use of new technology)

Microsyster, Women's Computer Centre and National Women and Computing Network and Newsletter; all c/o Wesley House, 70 Great Queen Street, London WC2 (01-430-0655). PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE ARE ALL WOMEN ONLY.

Netreach, c/o 89 Mayfair Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey. (01-337-3747)

POPTEL, Soft Solution, 25 Downham Road, London N1 5AA (01-249-2948) Federation of groups and individuals promoting wider public access to computer based communications.

Radical Science Journal, 26 Freegrove Road, London N7

Science for People, 25 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL

Sheffield Computers for People, 7 Hawthorne Terrace, Sheffield, Sth Yorks S10 1BT

Spectacular Times, Box 99, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX (Situationist publishers)

Also the Community Computing Network, with which some of you may be familiar, has a substantial membership among the voluntary sector, so rather than duplicate their list of ITECs etc. I suggest you write to them if you want to make contact there.

ALTERNATIVES TO PRESTEL

Libertel	01-733 7730
(Alternative politics, new technology and education)	
Communitel	01-968 7402
Cyclops	0908 643298
(Open University)	
Think-Link	01-247 0043
(For shop stewards, unions, tenants, community & labour movement)	
The Gnome at Home	01-888 8894
OwlTel	01-927 5820
(Information for BBC Micro owners)	
Metrotel	01-941 4285
Health Data	01-986 4360
Swafax	0622 850440
Swafax 2	0440 820002

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