

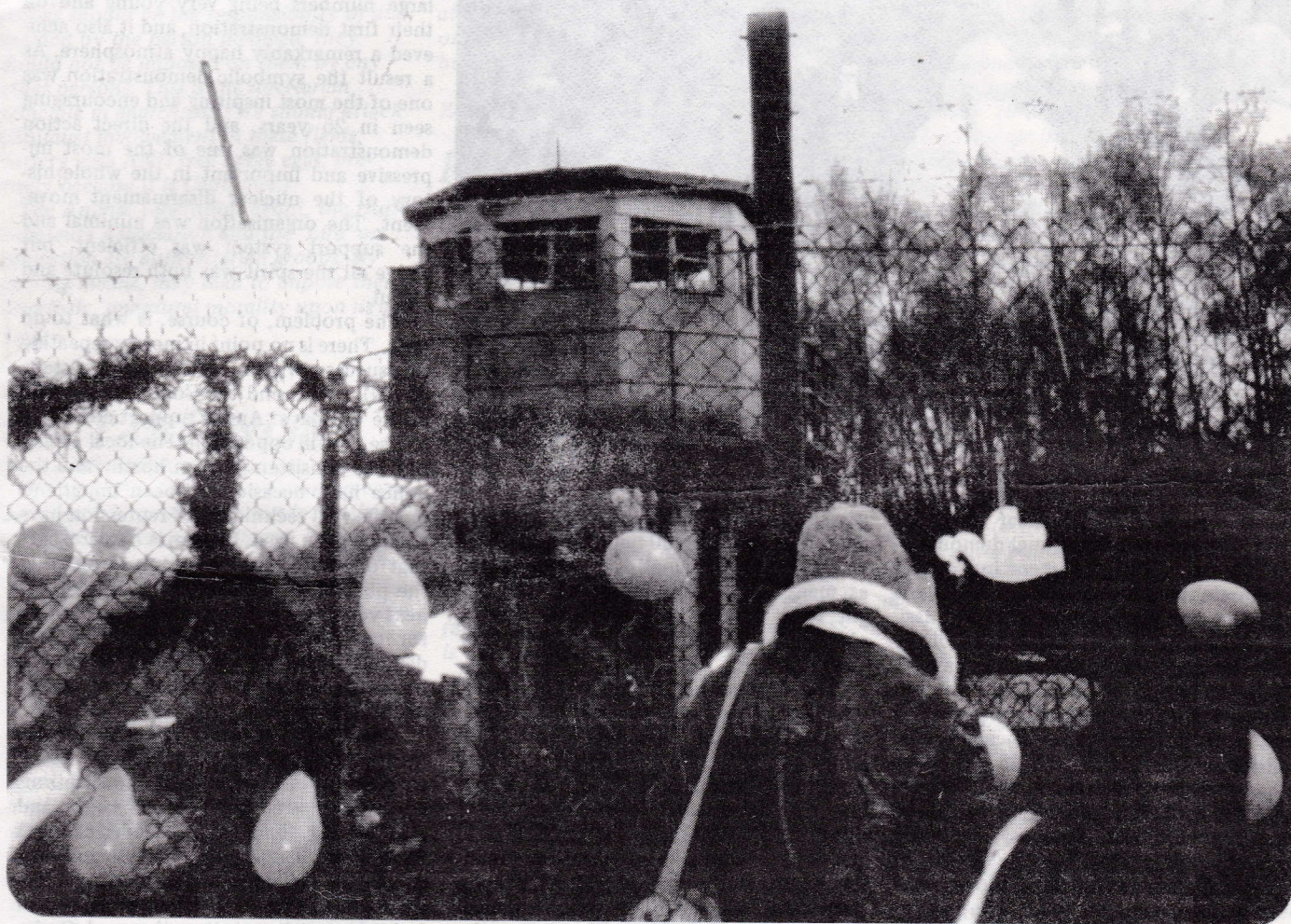
anarchist fortnightly

Freedom

30p

25th December 1982 Vol 43 No 25

RESISTANCE MUST GROW



THE last but one year before 1984 has been a pretty bad time for most people in most countries, including this one. The so-called recession has become a full-scale world depression, like the one half a century ago, and it seems to be widening and deepening with no sign of relief and no hope of control. Wars and revolutions flare up and smoulder on destructively. Currencies and commodities jerk up and down nervously. Some countries are on the verge of national bankruptcy, being unable to repay their huge loans or even to pay their interest. In Britain there are new records in bankruptcies and liquidations among companies, and in unemployment and homelessness among individuals. Once more we are becoming two nations — those who have a job and a house, and those

who don't. In the 1930s, the cure seemed to be a choice between Fascism and Communism at the extremes and a Keynesian New Deal or Welfare State in the middle, and it turned out to be a world war in the end. In the 1980s, no such choice seems available and no such cure is possible.

Yet the British population is strangely quiet. The two large political parties are both being polarised between their extremists and moderates, but the centre parties are still failing to pick up the moderates. The old fringe parties have nothing like the presence they once had, and the new ones — such as the Ecology Party and the Libertarian Alliance — are scarcely visible. Margaret Thatcher still looks almost certain to win the General Election during the coming year.

Meanwhile the victims of the system — the old and the young, the unemployed and the homeless, the underpaid and undervalued — are almost ominously calm. After the urban riots of 1981, the only outlet in 1982 was the Falklands War, a farce which nearly became a tragedy and which may yet become a scandal. There were plenty of strikes, but most of them were thoroughly and almost casually defeated, not so much by the strength of the employers or the authorities but by the weakness of the workers and the unions at a time when unemployment is officially between 3 and 4 million and unofficially between 4 and 5 million. Resistance is low.

continued on page 2

RESISTANCE MUST GROW



Only one form of resistance has clearly grown during 1982 — the resistance to nuclear weapons and nuclear alliances. After the largest conventional demonstration for nuclear disarmament in London on 6 June, there have now been the largest symbolic demonstration at a nuclear base on 12 December and the largest direct action demonstration at a nuclear base on 13 December. Greenham Common, the proposed site for American Cruise missiles next year, has entered the vocabulary of politics as Aldermaston did 25 years ago. It has attracted political and sexual smears from the hard right, ideological patronage from the hard left, and cosy sympathy from the soft centre. It is the subject of serious articles and topical cartoons in the posh papers, and the peace camp is becoming a potent myth.

There has been some controversy about the exclusion of men from an active part in the December demonstrations, both within the nuclear disarmament movement and in the press (including FREEDOM, 11 December), but there is no doubt that, whatever objections there may be in theory, the women-only demonstrations were justified in practice. On 12 December the imaginative plan to 'embrace the base' in the afternoon was fulfilled by a continuous ring of women around the nine-mile perimeter. The numbers were generally exaggerated — being nearer 20,000 than 30,000 — but they were enormous by any standards, far more than ever went to Aldermaston or the Holy Loch in the old days. On 13 December the more conventional plan to 'close the base' from dawn

to dusk was fulfilled for much of the time by determined groups of women at all the gates. Again the numbers were unprecedented — about 2,000 people present and about 1,000 participating — nearly twice as many as the Committee of 100 ever got to a nuclear base, and considerable obstruction was caused, with hardly any arrests.

The accelerating dynamic of protest at Greenham Common becomes clear when it is recalled that, only nine months ago, about 10,000 people attended a Spring Equinox Festival of Life on 21 March and that about 200 people attempted a direct action demonstration on 22 March. It would be wrong to exaggerate the feminist quality of the demonstrations. Women have taken an important part in radical politics for two centuries, ever since the women's march from Paris to Versailles on 5 October 1789 which turned the French Revolution against the monarch. Women's demonstrations began the insurrection of the Paris Commune on 18 March 1871 and the insurrection of the Russian Revolution on 23 February 1917. In the anti-war movement women have always taken an equal and often a leading part. The Direct Action Committee, which pioneered nuclear base demonstrations from 1957 to 1960, was dominated by women, and both CND and the Committee of 100 had several female officials (just as FREEDOM has had several female editors!).

It would also be wrong to exaggerate the imaginative quality of the demonstrations. The East Anglian Committee of

100 had some similar ideas 20 years ago — ploughing and planting Honington aircraft base in October 1962, and auctioning and claiming Marham aircraft base in May 1963. Similarly, there was a DAC peace camp at Aldermaston from July to September 1958 (the subject of Pat Arrow-smith's novel *Jericho*), but it got little publicity and nothing like the attention of Greenham Common and the nine other peace camps today.

But it would be hard to exaggerate the human quality of the Greenham Common demonstrations. The women-only rule may have repelled some people who might otherwise have gone, but it attracted many more who would otherwise not have gone, large numbers being very young and on their first demonstration, and it also achieved a remarkably happy atmosphere. As a result the symbolic demonstration was one of the most inspiring and encouraging seen in 25 years, and the direct action demonstration was one of the most impressive and important in the whole history of the nuclear disarmament movement. The organisation was minimal and the support system was efficient, but above all the spirit was both resolute and joyful.

The problem, of course, is what to do next. There is no point in merely repeating this success, which was the great mistake of CND, DAC and the Committee of 100 in the old days. And if support continues to rise, so will opposition. The local authority has consistently been hostile and the police have occasionally been impatient, but the real techniques of repression have scarcely been used. If there is any prospect that direct action will seriously obstruct the planned installation of Cruise missiles next year, the organisers will be prosecuted for conspiracy and incitement and the demonstrators will be forced to choose between accepting binding-over orders and imprisonment.

The whole nuclear disarmament movement, more or less coordinated by CND, is planning even larger demonstrations against Cruise at Greenham Common and also against Trident on Clydeside next Easter, and it will be interesting and instructive to see what happens. Massive demonstrations are also being organised in Italy (especially at the proposed Cruise base at Comiso) and in West Germany. Meanwhile the next direct action at a nuclear base in Britain is on New Year's Eve at Upper Heyford, the American F111 aircraft camp 12 miles north of Oxford. There has been a peace camp there since Easter, and there is to be a full day of non-violent blockage of the gates from dawn to dusk on Friday, 31 December. (For information, telephone 0869 40321 or 0865 726441). This is an old-fashioned demonstration, without the special appeal of Greenham Common, and it is at a rather awkward time and place, but it is important to keep up the pressure and it deserves support from everyone who can get there.

Then comes 1983. What about the rest of society? Resistance must grow!

FREEDOM RAIDED

ON the afternoon of Thursday 9th December, as the last issue of FREEDOM was rolling off the presses, we had a visit from a dozen plain clothes police. Most of them were from Wakefield (West Yorkshire) CID, along with a few from the Metropolitan police, some of whom we recognised from the Anti-Terrorist Squad visit in April. They were led by one inspector Harrington from Yorkshire and Detective Inspector Seacombe from London. They produced a warrant to search the premises, the apparent aim being to try and discover the original document (and envelope) from the Angry Brigade resistance movement that was reproduced in the FREEDOM of 27th November. This of course had long since been thrown out with the rest of the artwork and copy for that issue. We

have neither the space nor the desire to file away the large amount of correspondence we receive once it's been dealt with.

However, they went on to search, with a commendable lack of diligence, the entire building floor by floor. After asking for the Editorial files and being shown the Editorial Office floor piled high with (to them) irrelevant ephemera, their enthusiasm visibly wilted.

They took away with them several items for examination — copies of magazines and books that were set on a typewriter and poorly reproduced, no doubt to compare the type with that of the communiqué. They also took away the Accounts Book and Orders file of the bookshop, which of course contains nothing of value to them in this investigation, but

which they will no doubt find interesting reading, and is somewhat inconvenient to the person running the shop — and an address book some fifteen years old! These have not yet been returned.

Down in Aldgate Press they did not stop us working, but did inform us that by printing and then destroying the letter (and not reporting it to the police) we could be charged under one of the sections of one of their laws, and demanded that we tell them the names of the Editors that handled the document. They did not however push their threat of arrest when this information was not forthcoming.

After some two hours they left, only to return a few hours later. This time there were only four of them. It being a despatch night some of the Editors and readers were in folding the paper. They asked everyone's names and addresses and interviewed the Editors responsible for that issue who gave them short shrift in reply to their questions, and left after so some twenty minutes.

Just what they think they were going to achieve by coming all the way down to London to raid FREEDOM nobody knows. It does show however that either they have no leads at all and chose us as a soft target or they are taking very seriously a 'bomb' that we have heard reported as nothing more than a large firework that shattered two panes of glass.

No wonder, this is the same police force that took 3 yrs to catch the 'Yorkshire Ripper' after interviewing him twice, at this rate it'll take them that long to sort through rubbish bins and find the original letter and envelope.

EDS

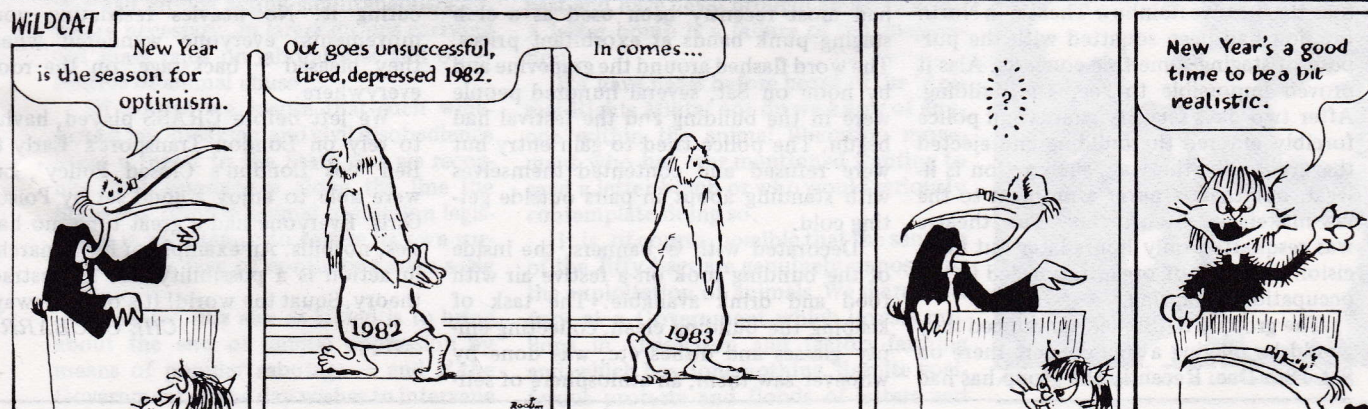
We have decided to blow up your prison officers training centre. As the situation we face becomes more desperate, people have to take more desperate measures in order to survive. Your response is to lock us up. Your prisons are packed more than ever before. The only industry that is booming is the repression industry, and we don't like it. How many thousands of us are rotting in your prisons simply for trying to survive? We are not unreasonable people, but we have been pushed too far — we have nothing left to lose. We will not sit by while you practise your torture and murder (remember Barry Presser?) No doubt you will suppress the truth of this attack, as you have with previous actions, but that will not deter us. We don't like you; we don't like the state you are a part of; we don't like the governments you serve. Look over your shoulders pigs, WE ARE EVERYWHERE. WE WILL DEFEND OURSELVES. ANGRY BRIGADES RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

CORRECTION

A Misprint in the article on Chernyshevski in the Review section makes the plot of his novel *What is to be done?* even more confusing than it already is. The following passage has been omitted between the bottom of column 1 and the top of column 2 on page 14:

leading to the fake suicide of Lopukhov and the marriage between her and Kir-sanov,

Please note that the next issue of FREEDOM will be dated January 15th 1983



Reports

THE local section of the Parti Communiste Français has distributed a pamphlet in Clichy-sous-Bois, in the northern suburbs of Paris, entitled 'Stop Immigration'. '... The arrival of a further 80 Turkish families at the "Residence La Forestiere" here poses the urgent problem of the concrete measures which must be taken to deal with immigration into our country. This is a problem which the right-wing (RPR-UDF) has consistently failed to face up to.

We have put forward realistic proposals which take into account the unemployment rate amongst our workers and which are aimed at stopping any further immigration and at encouraging the return of immigrant families to their country of origin. The overpopulation here cannot be tolerated. The communists of your town demand: Stop all further immigration!

ANNIE CLIFTON, who is to marry Doug Wakefield (see FREEDOM's passim) has sent us a letter giving us information on the latest changes in his condition. Though we have no space to print it in full, here are the main points.

Good news this time, Doug is back in 'association'. This, however, happened after Doug, in a fit of depression, attempted to commit suicide. For the last week he has been on the Psychiatric Wing at Parkhurst, together with other prisoners for the first time in five years.

Annie would like to thank all the people who've been supporting Doug's struggle over the years: 'There is no doubt that without the constant pressure from us against the inhumanity of the penal system Doug would still be in his concrete tomb'. He has been told that this is the beginning of his 'reintroduction into the usual prison system'. Normal visits are now on and no more solitary. He can now start working towards his parole which could come up in four years time.

THE squatting movement in London has mainly concentrated on housing. Itself a major task, it has left little time or energy to engage in a wider field. Therefore it was an exciting moment when we heard that the massive Rainbow Theatre in North London had been squatted with the purpose of staging some free concerts. Alas it proved impossible to keep the building. After two days security guards and police forcibly entered the building and ejected the group. By the way, such action is illegal, but that is never a problem to the law-makers and enforcers. The theatre was resquatted only hours later but indecision and lack of organization led to the occupation collapsing.

The group CRASS had announced they would be playing a free concert there on Sat 18th Dec. Recently the group has had

THE BKA (Bundeskriminalamt) in West Germany already has an impressive computer-based intelligence system, with files on 2 million citizens. Up until recently, the leading French Socialists were great defenders of civil rights, of the privacy of the individual etc, etc, and were very concerned that the 'Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés' should protect the French people precisely against the kind of massive police surveillance which is the norm on the other side of the Rhine. And yet it recently came to light that the French powers-that-be have already launched an information-gathering project. The aim is a relatively conservative 60,000 computer files. 25,000 had already been compiled at the time of the project's discovery. According to the law, the plan should have been put before the National Commission — it hadn't been.

The aim is supposed to be to counter terrorism — the base of the whole system is the 'political violence' programme, which already comprises 2,000 names. All potential terrorists, we are assured.

But the decision to start the whole programme was taken in May — before the wave of violent attacks of the summer. Surprise, surprise.

THIS is a communique from the Special Anarchist Service. Comrades who have billets in rural areas or small towns who have no HQ and have become separated and dispersed may contact us. We are garrisoned in Leeds and so our theatre of operations is Yorkshire. In liaison with a field operative we could plan and execute an event to re-unite these forces, involving a caravan and bookstall. Interaction and networking will be priority one. Our other resources — CB radios, printing, could be deployed in a local struggle. Please communicate, as a matter of urgency, directly with the address below.

Box SAS
LOP
59 Cookridge St
Leeds 2

great difficulty finding venues. However, whilst attention was focussed on the Rainbow, (perhaps deliberately?) the ZIG-ZAG club in Notting Hill, West London was taken. A former cinema, the building had most recently been used as a club staging punk bands at exorbitant prices. The word flashed around the grapevine and by noon on Sat, several hundred people were in the building and the festival had begun. The police tried to gain entry but were refused and contented themselves with standing about in pairs outside getting cold.

Decorated with @ banners, the inside of the building took on a festive air with food and drink available. The task of keeping the building clean, collecting empty glasses and dishes etc, was done by whoever saw them, an atmosphere of self-

In brief

THE authoritarian mind at work, from a teetotal methodist minister, regretting the expected decline in the number of pubs. 'Providing that public houses are responsibly maintained, it is better for young people to drink in such controlled conditions rather than where there are no controls at all except your own inclinations. In the home, sometimes children are exposed to observing the drinking habit without any inhibition.'

AN announcement by the official Romanian news agency says that citizens planning to emigrate must pay back in 'hard currency' much of what the State has spent on them, including the cost of education.

THE Home Office estimates that about 4% of those entitled to vote are not on electoral registers. This figure is based on returns in the recent census and has increased slightly since 1966. No figures are available for how many people there are who are not entitled to vote but who have managed to get onto the lists.

THE Turkish referendum has supported the new constitution with a majority of more than 91%, according to official figures.

THE Phillippines News Agency has reported that the army has successfully exploded a bomb whose charge was entirely made from coconut oil.

A CHINESE Air Force supervisor has been jailed for 15 years for accepting bribes from a factory. They were supposed to be making aircraft parts but in fact they could only produce electric plugs. The Court commented 'his crime seriously affected the combat training of Chinese Air Force Units and their flying safety.' We are still trying to visualise the air craft.

help prevailed. The bands played, some good, some not so good, but all with enthusiasm. All through the evening people came and went, no hassles at the door, just a reminder not to trip over the chain securing it! No heavies restricting your movements, everyone wandered where they pleased — backstage, on the roof, everywhere.

We left before CRASS played, having to rely on London Transport's 'Early to Bed 'cos London's Closed Policy', but were able to enjoy a good set by Poison Girls. Everyone had a great time, no hassles, no bills. An example of how anarchy in action is a possibility not an abstract theory. Squat the world! It's ours anyway.

CHE CROBARRO

ALF



OUR vision is that animal liberation will eventually come, mainly by means of the use of militant direct-action by a large number of ordinary people.

We aim for the sabotage of the industries of animal persecution — vivisection, factory farming, the fur trade etc. This can only happen if a large number of people are involved in direct-action, either in small groups acting simultaneously or, where necessary, in larger groups carrying out mass raids on laboratories and other centres of animal abuse.

Of course we realise that such widespread law-breaking and civil disobedience poses a threat to the State and we recognise that somewhere along the line the State will bring in animal protection legislation in an attempt to ensure its own survival in the face of continuing large-scale disruption.

However, our aim as stated is to bring about the end of animal oppression by means of popular sabotage — and if the Government of the day wishes to intervene

to save us the trouble then that is up to them.

In order to be successful our campaign needs the support of a large number of the general public — and we are rapidly gaining that support. In a public opinion poll carried out in August by NOP Market Research 35% of people questioned said they approved of 'animal welfare people' breaking into premises and removing animals about to undergo experimentation. In a more recent poll carried out in Bristol by a local animal rights group over 50% of people questioned said they supported the actions of the ALF.

By carrying out a campaign of militant direct-action, but without resorting to the use of serious personal violence against those who oppose us, we have successfully begun to sabotage the animal persecution industries, saving many thousands of animals from suffering in the process, and at the same time winning the support of a large percentage of the population.

We are not a pacifist organisation. We do not believe that personal violence against the persecutors of animals is always necessarily wrong. But we do recognise that such violence is a very dangerous tactic and one which is very likely to backfire, doing more harm than good to our struggle.

The letter bomb that went off inside 10 Downing Street and the others sent to the Houses of Parliament by the 'Animal Rights Militia' do not help the cause of animal liberation.

Such devices do not prevent the suffering of a single animal. They do not injure the animal exploitation industry nor even the 'targets' to whom they are sent, but are likely to scar or cripple civil servants or post office workers — and we have post office workers active in the ALF.

Such devices do not threaten the State. Only the actions of large numbers of people can ever do that. In fact, the letter bombers have done the State a favour by giving it a wonderful excuse to repress and harass suspected ALF members and other animal rights activists, and indeed such harassment has already begun.

Such devices can only serve to alienate the public from a movement which cannot succeed without massive public support.

Such devices have been used by other groups campaigning on other issues in the past and have never brought about success. A letter bomb is a failure of the imagination.

We have never before heard of the 'Animal Rights Militia' nor do we know of anyone within the animal liberation movement who has ever mentioned wanting to send a letter bomb or who would seriously contemplate doing so.

It is, of course, possible that the senders of the Jiffy-bags are genuinely opposed to the exploitation of animals. We share their fury at a Government which invests millions in vivisection and factory-farming and which has done nothing, despite vociferous protests and floods of letters and



petitions, to help to alleviate animal suffering. We can understand their anger at the leaders of other political parties which would, no doubt, do little better if elected to power. We cannot, however, agree with their methods.

On the other hand, it cannot be discounted that the letter bombs were sent in an attempt to discredit and damage the animal liberation movement. There are massive vested interests in the drug industry, the fur trade and in factory farming. A 'dirty-tricks' department of the British State, worried about the growth and effectiveness of the movement against animal exploitation, could even be responsible. Or it could be something to do with the Canadian Government who are being put under pressure by animal rights campaigners to end the annual slaughter of baby seals (it is interesting to note that a few years ago an attempt was made, by means of a suitcase bomb, to blow up a plane taking anti-seal hunt campaigners to Canada).

Whoever sent the letter bombs, we are determined to weather the inevitable period of State repression and to continue and increase our campaign until the day of animal liberation is achieved.

ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT

One day we'll get Animal Liberation — but it won't come in a Jiffy.



A.L.F. member with a liberated beagle.

Dear FREEDOM,
Unfortunately we anarchists do not have the monopoly of sainthood. Why? Because 'we are human, only too human' (Nietzsche). Why then is there such a difference between theory and practice? One good argument could be that the society in which we survive impregnates us with its seeds of self-destruction.

Some tried to escape this by forming communes, collectives or whatever, usually in the countryside so as to escape the 'pollution'. Where are they now? Some are gone with the wind, others have adapted to the changes or try to subsist. Surely this cannot be the blueprint of anarchism — for at that rate anarchism will be a reality in only 50,000 years if we are optimistic.

Maybe this view is too pessimistic but let the reader judge or take note of the following facts:
Washington DC: anarchists belonging to the IWW are scabbing a weekly paper that recently fired its entire staff due to a labour dispute. Some of these 'scabbing' anarchists publish Emancipation, publica-

tion of the AAA — American Anarchist Association ...
Paris, France: Radio Libertaire of the FA (French Anarchist Federation) — most of its time is spent on publicity and criticisms of 'artists', for instance how difficult it is to sell their records. By publicity I mean 'nepotism' like inviting a 'guest' to talk about his book, record, etc, while not saying that he was invited because he is your 'copain' (friend) etc . .

Montreal, Canada: the self-appointed collective of Librairie Alternative, an anarchist bookstore, has decided to be Canada's new censors of morality. A publication that I put out, Civil Disobedience was banned because of a drawing that this collective judged pornographic. It represented 1/500th of the said publication. I asked them if they put all the publications that the bookstore got to such an intensive anarcho-analytic cipher. I was told that, well it will be done eventually ... curiously I seem to be their main target, maybe the fact that I am not an anarcho-collectivist like them is the reason. They told me that since they were a collective they would decide collectively what they wanted to have in their bookstore. Awkwardly Civil Disobedience is also available

*in leftist bookstores (marxists) and I have no such troubles.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada: the 'Anarchist community' has excommunicated the people of Focus Books and Art as being not anarchists anymore, for this collective also sold non-anarchist literature and each member of the collective has the freedom of bringing books, zines (within certain limits I suppose) to his liking, which included marxist stuff. So much for openness ...*

Strike, St Catherine's, Ontario: this paper is nepotism at its best; witness the latest issue — nearly all the 'letters' to the editor are from members of the Strike collective or their friends. The same goes for the articles. They refuse to print in contacts or magazines sent to them on an exchange basis for various reasons — lack of space, not to their liking ... Well since they do not agree 100% with your magazine — as anarcho-communists they cannot even mention it ...

So that was a brief review (not complete by any means) of how real (?) anarchists conduct themselves. No doubt with such examples marxist sects and other authoritarians have great futures ahead of them.
R Yves Breton

Your next issue of **FREEDOM**
will look something like this.
See you next year.

EDS

[illegible]

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

LANTY'S
LAST WORD

Dear FREEDOM,

I have attacked the ALF on the grounds that they are ignorant and inept in certain ecological matters.

They (and their like) should be attacked on political grounds as well. This has not been made clear.

Whether or not an individual eats battery eggs or takes drugs first tested on animals, whether a woman should abort a living sentient foetus, whether I should help rear sheep for slaughter or kill foxes, all these complex and often difficult decisions should be the responsibility of and decided by the person involved, they should not be imposed on them by any other persons. This is the libertarian principle in anarchism. (We should attack Capitalist involvement in these fields, battery eggs AND free range eggs, precisely because it is Capitalist.)

The Animal Liberation Front, the Hunt Saboteurs Association and the 'Life' organisation are authoritarian groups. By varying means, they seek to impose their simplistic, unnatural morality upon us all. Lanty.

FOR
SECTARIANISM?

Dear FREEDOM,

Although the Greenham Common campaign may be good propaganda for the inconsistent Peace Movement, I don't think that it has very much in common with either anarchism or libertarian politics as a whole. Therefore I think that FREEDOM is giving it far too much coverage in the name of libertarian politics.

Maybe I'm looking at it from a sectarian point of view, but given the fact that it is history repeating itself, anarchists ought to be sectarian and analyse its implications, ie have we learned nothing from the 60s? At least anarchists have been consistent in our opposition to the state and warfare including those of us who aren't committed pacifists.

Just because there are women at the forefront of this campaign, it does not make it a different or more meaningful event — all it means is that females will become the Paul Foots and Tariq Alis of the 80s. Sexist statements saying that war is a male thing etc are absolutely ridiculous in the light of the contribution the Suffragette Movement made towards the Great War in the form of handing out white feathers and working in munitions in order to obtain their precious vote! Also, one has to live in a military town such as mine in order to witness the amount of egging on and cheering given by female factory workers as the troops marched off to the Falklands. The whole thing implies that only women can be non-violent and oppose war — what sexist rubbish that is and it's about time these

sexual divisions are challenged — remember similarly the smug, ageist attitude of the 'young generation' of the 60s. Also cops have beaten, and will beat, women if they have to; when the state makes up its mind to do something it will allow no-one to stand in its way.

It would be folly to believe that the Greenham Common campaign is libertarian just because it is female inspired. It is either a feminist wank, or, even worse, an attempt (successful at this stage) by the Women's Movement to control all channels of radical, political activity.

Non-sycophantic male and female anarchists who are moved to take action at Greenham Common should do so without taking orders from pompous, power hungry feminists.

Sincerely

Zeno Evil

REICH WAS RIGHT

Dear Eds,

The drivel purporting to be a book review of Colin Wilson's book on Reich (FREEDOM review December 11) has so many mistaken assumptions it would take an issue of FREEDOM to cover them all adequately.

Could readers however be referred to David Boadella's excellent books Wilhelm Reich: The Evolution of his work and In the wake of Reich, plus Ilse Oltendorff Reich's personal biography of her husband with excellent introduction by Paul Goodman. May I quote one observation by Goodman: 'Reich detested pornography ... For him sex and love were one.' Indeed as PN admits: 'It is hardly Reich's fault that any form of sexual promiscuity is totally valid.' So why the hell drag up such a futile point and preach a sermon about marriage?

Next to Durruti, Reich is the most important person to have lived in the 20th century for anarchists, in my view. He went mad, OK, but that was hardly his fault either.

J W

NUCLEAR
FREE ZONES

Dear FREEDOM,

The more I consider the nuclear free zones now being set up in this country, mostly by Labour Councils, the more disturbed I become. The financial advantages from such an arrangement are more than beneficial to the peace campaign but a dreadful thought occurs to me, if a Labour government is returned to power could we not be in the position of the Russian Peace Campaign? The government who makes the bombs also takes responsibility for the protest against those weapons.

Everyone knows that a labour government will not get around to keeping its promises on nuclear arms but the labour controlled local authorities will diffuse

the protest through the nuclear zones and see that it does not get out of hand.

It only goes to prove that the bomb-makers always win even when they pretend to be in the business of banning the things.

Yours in anarchy, Pat Isiorho.

UNREASONABLE
FAITH

Dear FREEDOM,

If there is one major fault of the majority of anarchists it is this: YOU FAIL TO UNDERSTAND YOUR ENEMIES. The Vikings, who were the beginning of Britain's ruling class, to a fair degree, were inspired by the idea of FREEDOM — this meant LAND. Thus to be free one had to be powerful and to own property. Don't fling your hands up and say 'How terrible!' Herbert Read had the courage in his Philosophy of Anarchism to say something like — the cream of society rises to be the ruling class. (I have misquoted him but the sense is there, I haven't got the book handy.) It is an idea that most anarchists would choke on — but it is true. Of course there are exceptions but often the desire to be free is behind many an ambitious person.

Proudhon encapsulated the paradox: Property is theft, but property is freedom. I spend a fair amount of my life talking to people detained at Her Majesty's pleasure who have concluded that — yes, property is theft and it is the source of freedom — so they steal.

This is the philosophy of the ruling class. It is good sense. The mistake they make is in believing that it is in their long-term self-interest and for the freedom of one and all for society to be divided between haves and have-nots.

But to say anarchism wouldn't work, although a pre-judgement, is a fair assumption. We continue because of an unreasonable faith.

UNFORTUNATELY?

Dear Editors,

I hope the use of the word 'unfortunately' in your report on the Leeds raids (December 11), does not imply that your correspondent approves of the theft of library books. Librarians (of whom I am one) get little enough as it is to spend on books, and when they are stolen, the cost of replacement means that the money available for purchasing new books is reduced even further. In these days of high unemployment, libraries have a more important part than ever to play in the education and entertainment of the working classes, and those who deliberately steal from their shelves are doing a grave disservice to their comrades and the community.

J H Broom

FREEDOM CONTACTS

international

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Research and Resources Centre for Libertarian Politics and Alternative Life-Styles, 7/355 Northmore Ave, Lynham, ACT 2602.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney Anarcho-Syndicalists, Jura Books Collective, 417 King St, Newtown, NSW 2042.

Tel. 02-516 4416.

Freedom, K153 Haymarket, Sydney 2000

Redfern Black Rose Anarchist Bookshop, 36 Botany Rd, Redfern NSW 2015

QUEENSLAND

Black & Red Bookshop, 5A Browning St, West End, Queensland 4000 tel: 07 (4479884)

Libertarian Socialist Organisation, PO Box 268, Mount Gravatt, Central 4122.

Self-Management Organisation, PO Box 332, North Quay.

VICTORIA

Resource Centre 215 Victoria Parade, Collingwood, Victoria.

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desires

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The Lucas Plan – A New Trade Unionism in the Making?
By Hilary Wainwright and David Elliott. Allison & Busby,
£2.95. Available from Freedom Bookshop (Please add 60p
for p + p)

LUCAS AEROSPACE is one company within the Lucas Industries Group, which includes CAV, Lucas Electrical, Lucas Batteries. About 20 per cent of the Group's activities are devoted to aerospace research, development and production of fuel systems, flying control, instrumentation and electrical equipment. The company has been involved in work on the A300B Airbus, the Lockheed Tristar, the RB211, the Anglo-French Jaguar, the European Multi-Role Combat Aircraft, the Sting Ray missile system and both the Concorde and its Russian rival, the TU144 supersonic airliner.

Of this aerospace work, about 43 per cent is with military aircraft, and 7 per cent with other defence work – with nearly half their orders coming from Rolls Royce and just over a quarter direct from the Ministry of Defence. It has 'very small' interests in medical technologies.

It follows that the workforce that produces the goods for Lucas Aerospace is very highly skilled indeed and is developing and producing the most advanced and sophisticated products in their field. Over one third of the total workforce consists of research staff, design technicians, draughtsmen and skilled engineers, who, together with the production workers, are very highly unionised.

Lucas Industries operate 15 factories in Britain, from London through the Midlands to the North. It also has factories right through the Americas from Canada to Argentina, taking in the Caribbean and Mexico on the way, to say nothing of Europe, Middle and Far East, West and South Africa and Australia. It can truthfully be said that Lucas products are now going where no man has dared to go before; not a bad bit of industrial empire-building from that little workshop in Birmingham where Joseph Lucas himself started off making cycle lamps called 'King of the Road'.

Most of this industrial empire was built up by Joseph Lucas Ltd swallowing up its competitors, thus establishing a near, if not complete, monopoly in its field of operations – a fact not lost on Harold Wilson in 1970 when, the white heat of the technological revolution gleaming in his eye, he decided to use his Industrial Reorganisation Corporation to 'rationalise' Lucas. After all, all this Hi-Tech is essential to modern armaments, to communications, missiles, etc. That means essential to the State.

So Wilson's IRC pumped £3 million into Joseph Lucas Ltd and Lucas Aerospace was born. But it was not exactly an immaculate conception, as the workers soon found out. For rationalisation read redundancies.

The authors of this fascinating book drily remark:

'The contrast between the company's Labour parentage – and continued close relations – and its treatment of the workers has made its shop stewards doubt whether state intervention in their industry necessarily represents a step towards socialism.' Well, well. Shall we go back to Bakunin for the first warnings on that point? Or only to the first anarcho-syndicalists?

The workforce of the factories which became Lucas Aerospace numbered 18,000 when it was set up in 1970. By 1977 it had been reduced to 13,000 and now stands at 12,000. So the £3 million of taxpayers' money has been used to rationalise away one third of the labour force, by introducing automation and robotic methods and closing 'uneconomic' plants – and all without consultation with the workers involved, 6,000 of whom lost their jobs with Lucas, to be, in their turn subsidised with public money – redundancy pay and/or the dole. How rational can you get?

THE CHALLENGE

THAT is the background to the events described in Wainwright and Elliott's book, which takes the reader step by step through the setting up of the Lucas Aerospace Shop

THE LUCAS PLAN A NEW TRADE UNIONISM IN THE MAKING? Hilary Wainwright & Dave Elliott

Stewards Combine, which first of all set out to challenge the whole decision-making process for 'rationalising' out of existence whole factories and thousands of jobs.

It was not long of course before the Shop Stewards found themselves discussing not merely how to hang on to their jobs, but also the social responsibility involved in the running of a workplace – both in the respect that it was subsidised by public funds and in respect to the wealth represented in the skill of the workers and the public waste and irresponsibility if they were simply thrown on the scrapheap of unemployment.

Eventually they decided that it was not only important *what* people make, but also *how* it was made. From that point on they set out co-operatively to use their skills to design and produce a series of socially useful products. Utilising their own abilities and calling on others where necessary, the Combine has already produced some prototypes, and have also put forward designs for many others, like an improved life-support system for use in ambulances; improved artificial limb control system; sight-substituting aids for the blind, using radar-technology as used in 'blind' landing systems in aircraft; the development of a portable kidney machine – and the stepping up of production of standard kidney machines by the Lucas subsidiary, G E Bradley's.

They have also been looking at new ways of using energy – both economising in the use of fossil fuels and developing new sources of energy. Thus they have advocated the

development of a heat-pump which acts 'like a refrigerator in reverse' which would provide cheaper heating in council estates, blocks of flats, etc. Lucas expertise in aerodynamics would make windmills a much more efficient source of energy and heat than most people realise, and fuel-cell technology – as used in spacecraft – which is already being developed for domestic use in the USA.

In the field of public transport, the Lucas shop stewards propose the development of a road-rail vehicle which will be capable of running on both rail and road, by the addition of a guidewheel under the chassis of a more-or-less ordinary coach, to keep the rubber-tyred wheels on which it runs, smoothly and quietly, accurately on the rails. This would eliminate the nonsense of destroying railway tracks in country districts and, by combining the social wealth and the best features of both systems of transport, provide the public with the most convenient method possible.

At the same time, drawing from the experience of the Ground Support Equipment Group of Lucas Aerospace, the Combine offers another hybrid system in a power pack for a car combining a small petrol engine continually running a generator which charges the electric batteries which actually drive the vehicle.

The Lucas Combine holds that this hybrid (a good example of lateral thinking?) could well save 50 per cent in fuel, thus reducing toxic emissions and noise pollution.

And much, much more. From a modernised, insulated, version of the old hay-box, for slow cooking using no fuel, to a new invalid chair, to oceanics and airships, the Lucas people are bubbling over with ideas and burning to work on them as responsible producers:

The Lucas stewards are not the first to have challenged the social values behind product decisions. The disarmament movement challenges the production of the bomb; feminists have identified and challenged the degrading assumptions made about women in the decision to make, for instance, vaginal deodorants and in the marketing of many other cosmetics; and the anti-nuclear movement regards decisions about energy production as politically and morally loaded. The newness of the Lucas workers' initiative is that they are challenging these values as producers as well as as citizens, users and consumers. It is for this reason that their notion of socially useful production refers not only to products but also to the production process itself ... At least one quarter of the Plan's proposals insist on an 'employee development programme'. In particular the Combine called for the creation of working organizations 'in which the skill and ability of our manual and staff workers is continually used in closely integrated production teams, where all the experience and common sense of the shop-floor workers would be directly linked to the scientific knowledge of the technical staff'.

ANTICIPATING CLOSURE

DO not forget that the Lucas Shop Stewards did not wait until redundancies were declared and closures carried out. They could see what was coming and started putting forward their proposals for switching production and keeping the labour force together well in advance.

Both the Lucas management and the Labour Government – then in Office – were astonished at these proposals coming up from the factory floor. Gerald Kaufman was at that time Labour Minister at the Department of Industry and has bequeathed us this lovely quote:

You really are quite often in the position where the shop stewards in the company can only see the tree trunks because they are by definition very low down. They are grassroots workers and they can't see the wider problems.

The fact that it is from down among the grass roots that the tree draws its strength and its sustenance – and that the trunk is really quite an important part of any tree, since it is holding up all the branches and the pretty foliage that lives up there in the sun – apart from that, isn't that a typical attitude from one of those who live on top of

society, totally contemptuous of those who prop them up?

But it is not only your smarty-pants politician, with his over-all view of the important bits, who reacts with deepest suspicion against any movement from 'below'.

As was to be expected, the management looked on the Shop Stewards' initiative with distaste. Is it not the function of management to manage? Is it not *their* job to make proposals and take decisions? And if their decision is that everything goes out of the window and the workers must just take the money and run, leaving behind a life-time's skilled and prideful work to 'look around for something else' – well isn't that what management is there to see to?

Gerald Kaufman was, of course, advised by those permanent civil servants who do in fact effectively run the country. But who advised the civil servants? You've guessed it: the management.

But the advice could just as easily have come from the trade union side. Having been told that their proposals must come through 'the proper channels' – ie, 'the established trade-union machinery' – the Combine very soon found that what was in fact the properly established body for the control of the workforce was just as disturbed by grassroots activity and initiative as the Labour politician.



Response to the Combine's proposals varied from union to union, but the Government wanted any dealings with the Combine to be filtered through the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. As Kaufman said: 'There are some people with exceptional ability in the Confederation', which should have told the Shop Stewards what to expect from the start. At the worst obstruction, at the best indifference.

Mind you, the Confederation was not without its strength and at times its flexibility. As the authors point out, the Confederation leaders had been able to respond to major redundancy crises such as in British Leyland, but:

There are two important differences between these cases and Lucas Aerospace; first, the Lucas Aerospace shop stewards were proposing action before a major redundancy crisis broke. Their Plan was an attempt to anticipate management plans with positive bargaining policies. Most trade-union structures are reactive, and the Confederation perhaps more deeply so than any other. Secondly, the role in which trade-union leaders were brought into most of the redundancy crises of the late 1970s was to negotiate the final redundancy settlement, when whatever shop-floor resistance there had been had petered out. In the case of Lucas Aerospace they were being required to support a shop-steward initiated campaign. A third factor explaining why union leaders did not improvise to provide that support is that the leadership of the union with the largest number of

members in Lucas Aerospace – AUEW-TASS – was hostile to the Combine Committee and other more sympathetic unions such as the TGWU and ASTMS had not at that time (1976-7) recognized the importance of the alternative Plan.

FINDING OUT

ONE of the remarkable actions the Combine did was to send out a fact-finding delegation around the country to gather information about all the sites in the Lucas Aerospace group. You would think that this was part and parcel of normal trade union activity – but it almost seems that the union leadership consciously and deliberately wants the workers to remain ignorant of what is going on elsewhere. Could it be that trade union leaders consciously operate a policy of divide and rule among their own members? Or is it just instinctive?

Whichever, the 14-man committee from the Combine learned a lot about dissemination and deception – and even stupidity – on the part of the managements they came in contact with, and how – for their own reasons, whatever they may be, management fail to take advantage of opportunities to keep their plants working.

For instance, in one factory, the managers had told the committee that there were no markets for a small gas turbine – but trade unionists in the Costing Department said that a 'very large' order from the Post Office had been turned down. John Swarbrick from Liverpool ASTMS said:

The whole experience was quite new for us. For nearly six weeks we were investigating and going round the country full time. What I learnt during those six weeks makes my 26 years on the site seem like nothing.

One justification for rationalisation is always that technicians have moved on, making a particular plant out of date or uneconomical – arguments that can fool the general public, journalists or politicians. But workers so often know better:

One justification (given) for the closure of the Victor works was that the whole fuel-control systems business 'is moving from hydro-mechanical to electronic systems'. But the committee answered:

'In our view this is a deliberate attempt to mislead and confuse. An engine fuel system can never be electronic – unless it is possible for fuel to flow through a chip. What is meant is that the control of the engine system is electronic; the major components of the system must, of course, remain hydro-mechanical.' *

The Combine ultimately set up the Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems (CAITS) to help to collate and publish the work of the Combine.

The present book helps to expose the hierarchical nature of our society, in which the various facets of the establishment – political, bureaucratic, financial, management and official trade union – are intertwined and which combine when any shift of power towards the workers is threatened. For instance, when the Lucas Combine sought university facilities for their work, they found just how far this permeation goes:

By their seemingly simple request that at least some of the resources of academic institutions should be available to trade unionists, the Lucas stewards were walking into a minefield of vested interests and hidden assumptions about the purpose of education. Often they were taken unawares by what their initial proposals had led them into. The minefields sometimes exploded in their face. Usually they found allies who, in their own way, were questioning the purposes and power structure of the institutions concerned. The initiative of the Lucas stewards gave much great potency to that questioning because it revealed the nature of the connections between academic institutions and private industry; and it illustrated in a very practical way the possibility of a connection with those who work in industry.

Why were they seeking university facilities and what were they? It arose out of the need for the Combine to extend

their facilities for making prototypes, as well as spreading the idea of 'socially useful products'.

Their first success came from Bradford University, when students took up the idea and, together with stewards from the Lucas factory in Bradford and money from the Rown-tree Charitable Trust, started a small research and information centre – Alternatives in Technology & Employment Centre (ATEC).

From there it spread to other colleges and polytechnics, while in the great big world outside academic institutions, a deep impact has been made on radical trade unionists (yes, there are some) not only in Britain, but in Sweden, Germany, Australia and the USA.

What has now been made clear is that the Lucas shop stewards are challenging the whole concept of the subservient position of the productive worker in a competitive, indeed, authoritarian, economy. In 'our' 'free' economy, the aims of industry and the aims of society are often at loggerheads. As a study of 25 large British firms in 1971 found:

None of the companies had any doubts that their primary objective was to be efficient and profitable and that being socially responsible would serve no useful purpose if it hindered these overall company goals.

The Lucas Plan – A New Trade Unionism in the Making? tells us how it was the misuse of resources and human skill that the Lucas stewards set out to challenge – not just by railing against market competition, but by identifying socially needed products.

It is a productive struggle that has taken them up against entrenched power and privilege in every corner of authoritarian society.

The authors of this book, Hilary Wainwright and Dave Elliott, have been careful to give no party political flavour to this book, beyond describing the Lucas Combine's activities as 'this new socialist politics'. But they do add:

There are many ways of becoming involved in shaping this new socialist politics. It does not take the form of a political party. Members of the Left of the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers' Party and of no party are active in creating it. Rather its creation is taking place at the base of the trade union in parts of the women's movement, the movement against nuclear power and the disarmament movement ... This book has been only about one of the initiatives contributing to this ... end.

A A/P S

The Lucas Plan is very well indexed and carries at the end a country-wide list of local contacts on workers' and users' plans and community research, as well as copious notes almost amounting to a bibliography.

A full list of publications produced by the Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems can be obtained from:

CAITS
Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards Committee
North East London Polytechnic
Holloway Road London N7 8DB
(01-607 2789. Ext 2498)

* The word 'electronic' is thrown about like confetti these days and is often used to confuse the public. Many domestic appliances (like video and audio recorders) may have electronic features to send signals to a moving part, but those parts themselves have still to be mechanical. You can 'tell' a sewing machine what to do by pressing a button, but the operating of the needle, the shuttle, the cams that give each individual stitch, are mechanically driven. But they may be sold as 'electronic'. — P S

THE MAN WHO DID

What is to be done? By N G Chernyshevsky. Virago Press, £3.95 paperback.

CHERNYSHEVSKI is a key figure in Russian political and cultural history, and *What is to be done?* is a key item in his work. He was a leading journalist in the mid-nineteenth century who expressed more clearly than anyone else the views of his generation at a crucial stage in the development of the revolutionary movement and who exerted more influence than anyone else on later generations down to the Revolution of 1917. He deliberately gave his life to and risked his liberty for this task at an early age, and as a result he spent nearly half of his sixty years in prison and forced exile. He is little known in this country and deserves to be much better known.

Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky was born on 12 July (24 July in the Western calendar) 1828 in Saratov, a large town on the Volga river halfway between Moscow and the Caspian sea. Like many later Russian revolutionaries, he came from a middle-class clerical family. His father and grandfathers were prominent priests in Saratov, and he was educated at the local seminary. But he was so gifted that instead of becoming a priest himself he went on to the university at St Petersburg in 1846.

Physically he travelled a thousand miles to the cosmopolitan capital of the Russian Empire. Mentally he travelled much further. By the time he graduated, four years later, he had abandoned all the ideas he was brought up with, and had adopted philosophical materialism, scientific positivism, and political utilitarianism. He learnt little from his teachers, something from his colleagues, but most from books and current events. He called himself 'a self-taught man', he was a complete intellectual, and he became a considerable scholar. He taught himself ten languages and read omnivorously, and he was one of the few really learned people to join the revolutionary movement.

He was most influenced by Ludwig Feuerbach, the left-wing follower of Hegel who became a leading theorist of



Н. Чернышевский.

atheist humanism in Germany and Charles Fourier, the left-wing follower of Saint-Simon who became a leading theorist of utopian socialism in France. Of Russians he most admired Alexander Herzen, who wrote *Who is to blame?* about social and sexual problems, emigrated to Western Europe in 1847, but was soon to turn back to the Russian revolutionary movement. Chernyshevsky became a thorough 'Westerner', saying of the West Europeans, 'They are men, and we are children.'

He was deeply affected by the revolutionary upheaval throughout Europe in 1848, and by the reactionary party played in it by the Russian authorities and armies. He began to turn towards the theory of socialism and the hope of revolution, following Herzen's line that the communal institutions of the Russian peasants (the *obshchina*) and the Russian artisans (the *artel*) could enable the country to avoid Western capitalism and move directly from feudalism to 'Russian socialism' — what was later called Populism. He was never an anarchist, but he shared the traditional Russian distrust of the central state as an alien imposition (coming from Vikings in the north or Tatars in the east or Turks in the south or Germans in the west), and he expressed the common view that 'anarchy from below is far better than anarchy from above'.

Towards the end of his university career he began to take a personal part in political activity. He was in touch with members of the influential Petrashevski circle, the moderate socialist group which was smashed by the authorities in 1849, and in closer touch with the similar but smaller Vvedenski circle. But he was less interested in discussion and action than in educating first himself and then his fellow-citizens to prepare for socialism.

In 1850 he graduated in history, philology and literature. He returned to Saratov, and worked as a schoolteacher for a couple of years. But in 1853 he married Olga Sokratovna Vasilieva, the emancipated daughter of a local doctor, warning her of the risks she was taking. They settled in St Petersburg, and he set out to begin his public career. He worked

for a master's degree, which he eventually obtained in 1858, and also worked as a schoolteacher for a time. But increasingly he turned to journalism.

In 1855 he began to work full-time on the monthly *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary), one of the leading 'thick magazines' which dominated Russian literary culture. The main editor was the great poet, Nikolai Nekrasov, but Chernyshevski soon became his indispensable assistant and an indefatigable contributor, and he turned the paper decisively to the left, quarrelling with such distinguished contributors as Turgenev and Tolstoi in the process. He also became a well-known character, ugly and clumsy, afraid of draughts and fond of jokes, always reading and writing, writing, writing.

Chernyshevski's journalistic career began at a significant moment. Herzen, who had settled in London in 1852, started the Free Russian Press in 1853, beginning his double work of printing material sent out by contacts in Russia and the West and sending the results into Russia. In 1855 Tsar Nicholas I died after maintaining a rigid tyranny for 30 years, and Herzen began his first periodical, *Polyarnaya Zvezda* (The Pole Star). The Crimean war against Turkey, Britain and France was going from bad to worse, and the new Tsar, Alexander II, was relatively open to new ideas. 'Public opinion made giant strides,' Herzen wrote later. 'Russian literature grew ten years in two years.' At the end of those two years, in 1857, the Tsar announced that serfdom would be abolished, and Herzen began his more popular periodical, *Kolokol* (The Bell).

As Herzen and his circle were the mouthpiece of the radical intelligentsia outside Russia, Chernyshevski and his circle became the mouthpiece of the radical intelligentsia inside Russia, and *Sovremennik* emerged as the main forum of the left, considerably increasing its circulation and eventually its profits. Because of the official censorship, political and social problems couldn't be discussed freely in the open, so writers generally had to express their views through theoretical and critical articles and reviews. When Chernyshevski's thesis was published as a book, *The Aesthetic Relations between Art and Reality*, he wrote a pseudonymous attack on it in his own paper, arguing explicitly that aesthetic problems weren't really important and referring implicitly to 'other more important problems'. He wrote a collection of *Essays on the Gogol Period of Russian Literature* to give not a history so much of literature itself as of its political and social significance in Russia. He wrote a biography of the German writer Gotthold Lessing to show how the intellectuals of the German *Aufklärung* (Enlightenment) in the previous century had brought Germany up to the level of Britain and France.

But underneath Chernyshevski was leading the intellectual pressure on the authorities to make the emancipation of the serfs as complete as possible, and then the intellectual protest against the authorities for making it so incomplete. From 1857 to 1862 he was probably the most influential journalist in Russia. Kropotkin, describing this period in his *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (1899), said that 'all intellectual St Petersburg was with Herzen, and particularly with Chernyshevski'.

Chernyshevski's special contribution was to provide not so much arguments as facts. He shared the common belief that enough facts would not only prove his case in theory but help to get it put into practice. He produced detailed accounts of the economic and social history of Russia and the rest of Europe, with the double implication that peasant communism was the goal for the future and the total emancipation of the serfs was the path for the present. Gradually he became disenchanted by the way the censorship mutilated the message of his writing (the process can be followed in the standard Russian edition of his works, where the original manuscripts are contrasted with the published articles) and the way the authorities mutilated the process of emancipation. As a result he diverged from the Russian liberals and even from Herzen, who reacted in 1859 by publishing an article calling him 'very dangerous!!!'.



Olga Chernyshevskaya

Chernyshevski travelled all the way to London in June to explain his position and Herzen apologised, but the division was permanent.

When the final unsatisfactory emancipation of the serfs was proclaimed in 1861, Chernyshevski became the leader of the radical opposition inside Russia, and accepted the line of his main assistant, Nikolai Dobrolyubov, that the time had come to 'call for axes' – to arouse a peasant insurrection. Of course this couldn't be done in the press, and there wasn't yet any serious organisation, but Chernyshevski did what he could to encourage the growing movement of protest and resistance, taking advantage of a slight relaxation of censorship.

He knew the danger of his position. In 1861 a censorship report summarised the official view of *Sovremennik*:

Its articles on religion are empty of any Christian doctrine, on law are opposed to the present system, on philosophy are filled with crude materialism, on politics are inclined to revolution, denying even moderate liberalism, on society show a contempt for the upper classes, a peculiar idealisation of women, and an extreme devotion to the lower classes.

Chernyshevski was subjected to close surveillance and frequent provocation, and attempts were made to persuade him to leave the country or accept an academic post. He continued his work, and at the beginning of 1862 wrote an important article called 'Letters without an Address' (ie to the Tsar), warning that if radical reform were not encouraged from above, pressure for revolution would increase from below, and society would collapse into chaos. The article was forbidden by the censorship, and not published until Pyotr Lavrov printed it in London in 1874.

Instead the authorities decided to suppress the embryonic reform movement. In April 1862 an official list of 50 dangerous individuals was headed by Chernyshevski. During the summer unexplained fires in St Petersburg were used as a pretext to attack the opposition, and in June *Sovremennik* was suspended for eight months. Chernyshevski had not

СОВРЕМЕНИКЪ

ЖУРНАЛЪ

ЛІТЕРАТУРНЫЙ И ПОЛИТИЧЕСКІЙ

ИЗДАВАНІЕ

Н. А. НЕКРАСОВИЧЪ

ТОМЪ ХСѸ

САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ

ВЪ ТИПОГРАФІИ КАРЛА ВУЛЬФА

1863

Sovremennik

broken any law, since he had written only for legal publication, and he had joined no illegal organisation – though he certainly had contacts with the people who were forming the first *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Liberty) in 1862 and possibly had a hand in drafting underground manifestos – but the authorities soon found another pretext. Herzen carelessly tried to help Chernyshevski by sending a message offering to print *Sovremennik* in London; the messengers were arrested, and so, in July, was Chernyshevski.

There is a revealing passage about this in Kropotkin's *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. Returning to St Petersburg from military service in Siberia at the end of 1863, he recorded the following conversation with a senior bureaucrat:

'Do you know that Chernyshevski has been arrested?'

'What for? What has he done?' I asked.

'Nothing in particular, nothing! But, mon cher, you know – state considerations! Such a clever man, awfully clever! And such an influence he has upon the youth. You understand that a government cannot tolerate that: that's impossible!'

Chernyshevski was held in the Peter-Paul fortress for nearly two years, awaiting trial for whatever charges could be fabricated. He was treated fairly well, and he was able to write as much as ever, and even to publish. From 14 December 1862 to 4 April 1863 he wrote the book for which he is best known – *Chto delat?* (literally: What to do?).

The novel's subtitle is *From tales about new people*, and the question in the title is answered by an optimistic account of the new socialist and feminist people in St Petersburg in the late 1850s. It is the story of a new woman, Vera Pavlovna, the marriage between her and Lopukhov and the triangular relationship between them and Kirsanov,

Трудъ и любовь
Въ двухъ частяхъ.
Первая часть.
Въ первой части романа описаны жизнь и деятельность одного изъ главныхъ героевъ, Кирсанова, въ то время, когда онъ еще не знаетъ, что такое любовь. Въ второй части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ третьей части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ четвертой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ пятой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ шестой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ седьмой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ восьмой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ девятой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь. Въ десятой части описаны жизнь и деятельность той же группы людей, но уже въ то время, когда Кирсановъ уже знаетъ, что такое любовь, и уже знаетъ, что такое жизнь.

Manuscript of *What is to be done?*

leading to the quadrilateral relationship between them and Katerina Vasilievna and 'Charles Beaumont' (who is Lopukhov in disguise). It is also the story of Vera Pavlovna's struggle to become a doctor and of the women's sewing cooperative she organises on Fourierist lines. And it is the story of Rakhmetov, the ideal type of revolutionary – based on Pavel Bakhmetev, who in 1857 left Russia to found a communist colony in the Pacific and disappeared after giving half his fortune to Herzen in London – who became the model for several generations of revolutionaries (Alexander Berkman used the name when he went to assassinate Frick in 1892).

The situation is drawn partly from the relationship between Chernyshevski and his dominant wife and his young colleague Dobrolyubov, and partly from the relationship between his friends Pyotr and Maria Bokov and Ivan Sechenov. The tone derives from similarly tendentious novels by Rousseau, Herzen and Turgenev, all intellectually dominant but sexually submissive men like Chernyshevski. The manner derives from the English novelists Thackeray and Dickens, copying the authorial intimacy of the former and the sentimental fantasy of the latter, Vera's four feminist dreams resemble Scrooge's three dreams in *A Christmas Carol*, and the wildly surrealistic conclusion bewildered Chernyshevski's readers and critics.

It is not a very well-argued or well-written novel, but it is both moving and amusing, and despite the strictures of literary commentators it is very readable. It may not be one of the great classics of Russian fiction, but it deserves its place as a minor classic of political and social utopianism. Above all, it is a historical document of 'Nihilism', the name which was disapprovingly given to the new revolutionaries in Turgenev's novel *Fathers and Children* (1862) but which was approvingly adopted by the radical critic

Dmitri Pisarev. Kropotkin, who knew and liked Turgenev, nevertheless recorded in his memoirs how the revolutionaries preferred Chernyshevski: 'In the nihilists of Chernyshevski, as they are depicted in his far less artistic novel, *What is to be done?*, they saw better portraits of themselves.' Its message was that liberty, equality and fraternity must begin now, not wait until after the revolution.

Like all his writings in prison, the manuscript of *What is to be done?* was examined by the prison authorities and passed on by them to the commission investigating Chernyshevski's case. But then it was passed on by them to the censorship authorities, by which time the manuscript already had so many official stamps on it that the censors assumed it must already have been censored, so it was passed on to his relations and by them to the editors of *Sovremennik*, which had been allowed to resume publication. A further twist is given by the story that in February 1863 Nekrasov actually lost the first part of the manuscript in the street, and had to recover it by advertising in the police newspaper! Whatever the truth about these bizarre adventures, the novel was published in *Sovremennik* in three long instalments in March, April and May 1863, and then immediately reprinted as a separate volume. (For comparison, imagine Solzhenitsyn publishing one of his books while he was still in prison and Stalin was still in power.) Yet another twist is added by the fact that Pisarev, who was also being held in the Peter-Paul fortress, was allowed to publish a long favourable review of the novel in *Russkoye Slovo* (The Russian Word).

The book had an enormous impact – so much that some officials wanted to interrogate the author all over again – and it was quickly suppressed, as was *Sovremennik* once and for all. *What is to be done?* couldn't be reprinted in Russia for another 40 years, but there were many emigre editions and several foreign translations.

Meanwhile Chernyshevski's real agony was beginning. In February 1864 he was at last tried, in secret. The police admitted that there was 'no legal evidence on which to incriminate Chernyshevski with encouraging rebellion and arousing

subversive activities against the government', so evidence had to be manufactured with the help of an agent provocateur, Vladislav Kostomarov. As a result Chernyshevski was sentenced to fourteen years' forced labour and perpetual forced exile in Siberia; in April the prison sentence was reduced to seven years. There was some discussion about the advisability of keeping him in a fortress in Russia, like Bakunin before and Nechayev after him, but in May he was subjected to the ceremony of public degradation in front of a sympathetic crowd, and taken 3,000 miles to the east in southern Siberia.

He was imprisoned in penal settlements near Chita until the end of 1871, and then forced to live 1,000 miles to the north, in the small town of Vilyuisk near the Arctic Circle, until 1883. There were several attempts to rescue him during the 1860s and 1870s, but none was remotely successful, and he never tried to escape. In 1874 he was asked to ask for a pardon, but he refused. After nineteen years in Siberia, he was at last allowed to return to Russia, after secret negotiations between the authorities and the remains of the revolutionary movement which had assassinated the Tsar in 1881. He was allowed to live in Astrakhan, 400 miles south of Saratov, where he was joined by his family, and earned a precarious living by translations. He wasn't allowed to return to Saratov until 1889, 27 years after his arrest. He died there a few months later, on 17 October (29 October in the Western calendar) 1889.

During both imprisonment and exile, Chernyshevski managed to read and write a great deal, though not as much as before. Virtually none of the surviving material has any value, except for various autobiographical items written in 1863 and 1884, and especially a novel called *Prolog* (The Prologue), which was written between 1867 and 1871 and describes the *Sovremennik* circle during the late 1850s. The first half was published anonymously by Lavrov in London in 1877, and the whole book in St Petersburg 30 years later; it is said by critics to be possibly the best thing he wrote, and certainly better than *What is to be done?*



The Peter-Paul fortress



Chernyshevski in Siberia

Yet it was *What is to be done?* which preserved his fame, when his pedagogical and pedantic journalism was forgotten and when he himself disappeared and eventually died. As Kropotkin said in his book on *Ideals and Realities in Russian Literature* (1905), 'No novel of Turgenev and no writings of Tolstoi or any other writer have ever had such a wide and deep influence upon Russian society as this novel had. It became the watchword of Young Russia, and the influence of the ideas it propagated has never ceased to be apparent since.' Tolstoi himself appropriated and altered Chernyshevski's title in one of his most influential pamphlets, *What then must we do?* (1884), and Lenin used it again in one of his most influential pamphlets, *What is to be done?* (1902). This was symbolic of the way Chernyshevski was adopted by the Russian Marxists as one of their predecessors, although they ended by destroying his conception of socialism; the only good effect of this is that the Communist authorities have always kept his novel in print.

Other Russian reactions have been less favourable – from Fyodor Dostoyevski's *Notes from Underground*, published in 1864 as a pessimistic answer to *What is to be done?*, emphasising the irrational and destructive side of human nature, down to Vladimir Nabokov's last Russian novel, *The Gift*, written in Germany in 1935-1937 and first published in full in the United States in 1962, and containing an imaginary but scholarly biography of Chernyshevski, emphasising his absurd combination of humorous humourlessness. After more than a century, he remains a live presence in Russian culture, right and left, at home and abroad.

In the English-speaking world, however, Chernyshevski has been almost completely neglected, and the new edition of his novel follows the pattern. No book on him appeared until a brief guide to his writings and an academic thesis on his career were published in the United States in 1967 and 1971 respectively. The best discussion is still a chapter in Franco Venturi's *Roots of Revolution* (1960). Little of his literary or political work has ever been translated. The *Prologue* has never been translated, and even *What is to be done?* has appeared in only two American translations which are nearly a century old. A *Vital Question: or What is to be done?*, translated by Nathan Haskell Dole and S S Skidelsky, was published in 1886; and *What's to be done?*, translated by Benjamin R Tucker, was serialised in his anarchist paper *Liberty* from May 1884 to May 1886 and published in book form in 1886. Neither version was entirely complete or even really competent, but no new translations have appeared since then.

In 1961 Tucker's translation, revised and abridged by Ludmilla B Turkevich, appeared as a Vintage paperback in the United States, with Tucker's original short preface and a new short introduction by E H Carr, the leading historian of Russia who died earlier this year. The new Virago paper-

back – though the publishers don't bother to say so – consists almost entirely of a reproduction of the Vintage paperback, together with its preface and introduction. The only additions are another short preface by Cathy Porter, and her translation of some of the passages omitted by the original translator or the previous reviser or both.

The new preface is unreliable factually (like Cathy Porter's biography of Alexandra Kollontai in 1980), being consistently wrong about the composition, publication and translation of the novel, and politically, over-emphasising the Marxist feminist line at the expense of the broader appeal of the book. The impression is given that the cuts were all made in the original translation and have all been restored now. In fact, although both the old translations omitted the more sexually explicit passages, most of the cuts were made in the 1961 revision, and only half have been restored in the new edition. About 25 pages have been added to the text – very clumsily, page 193 being particularly messy – but as much more material was omitted at one or both stages and is still missing – not just occasional paragraphs and pages, but whole sections and the entire conclusion!

The result is a strange way to treat an important and influential book – over nearly half a century, three people have contributed to a translation which still remains incomplete and imperfect, and three people have contributed editorial material which still fails to give a proper account of how the book was written and published.

To take a simple example, there is no explanation of the dedication 'to my friend O. S. Ch.', who was in fact Chernyshevski's wife. To take a more complex example, one thing which has always been ignored is that the manuscript of Chernyshevski's original rough draft of the novel was preserved by the Tsarist authorities, discovered in the official archives after the Revolution, preserved by the Communist authorities, and published in 1939 alongside the final text in the standard Russian edition – Volume 11 of the *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinenii* (Complete Collection of Works). There are many variants, several being significant, and some suggesting cuts by the author, the censors, or the editors. One is as follows. Vera's fourth dream has eleven sections, but the seventh, in which the secret of future feminist success is to be revealed, is left blank in the published version. The obvious inference is that the secret was too subversive to be published; but the draft version suggests that it was just too banal:

What she said, I don't know. I can guess what she said – but I don't know – I am sure that I am not mistaken about this, that I am guessing right – but I don't know. The person from whom I heard it, from whom I heard this dream, and who is here called Vera Pavlovna, said to me: 'I swore to keep silent, and I shall keep silent.' 'I know, it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter.' 'Maybe,' she answered. 'You were told what it was,' I said to her. 'Maybe No, maybe Yes, I don't have the right to tell you whether it is Yes or No – and why should you know? It is still not for you, it is still impossible for you to know. But what happened next, that isn't secret, that I can tell you.'

The fact is that this new edition of *What is to be done?* is completely unsatisfactory. With its Modern Classics the Virago Press has achieved one of the few successes of current publishing, but its ventures into Russian literature have been disappointing, and this particular item is a sadly missed opportunity. The obvious solution would be a Penguin Classics edition, and the ideal solution would be a scholarly translation with full introduction and notes. The latter is said to be coming from the United States, and meanwhile a cheap translation is coming from Russia in the Progress Publishers Russian Classics, so English-speaking readers will soon be able to read the whole of *What is to be done?* for the first time, more than a century after it was written.

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