

FREEDOM

IN THE NAME OF freedom, the USA has invaded or dominated dozens of countries and regions including Vietnam, Grenada, Nicaragua and El Salvador. In the defence of freedom, Britain imposes martial law on Northern Ireland. Freedom for Hitler meant exterminating Jews, for Stalin it required the invasion of Eastern Europe. Everyone today seems to want freedom. But freedom for pro-capitalist parties cannot, surely, be the same as freedom for anti-capitalists. Has freedom any real value, except as a propaganda weapon to justify self interests?

Definitions

Anarchists take it for granted that freedom is a central goal. Yet others fear freedom, preferring security to the responsibilities that freedom gives. In capitalism, most of its citizens see freedom as the ability to consume the latest video recorder or music machine — is freedom really about acquiring consumer goods? From the above, it will be clear that there is no one acceptable definition as to what constitutes freedom.

One of the oldest ideas about freedom is that it means being left alone to get on with life without interference. Now this is all very well in a general sense, we don't want to be hindered in our actions but within the context of class societies, this demand merely serves as camouflage to justify inequality. So-called negative freedom which is so much loved by capitalist parties such as the Tories is supposed to apply to everyone. And the law is there to see that it does. This freedom, however, in practice becomes the freedom of the rich to plunder, freedom for businessmen to exploit their workforce, freedom for advertisers to humiliate women and so on. Where there are gross inequalities of

Marxists in power done any better than the capitalists? Marxist-Leninists in power have undoubtedly, as a rule, increased the general education, health and welfare levels of their subject populations.

However, without exception, they have been severely repressive. Using the rhetoric of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" a dictatorship is operated over the proletariat. Marxism is an ideology of intellectuals with special "scientific" insights (so they claim) so when given power, such intellectuals use their insights to decide what freedom "really" is for their workers. Marxist-Leninist governments from the Bolsheviks onwards have justified coercing their working class subjects in the name of proletarian freedom. Marxist-Leninist states are without exception class divided societies with severe codes of labour discipline, extensive political police networks and political repression. All Marxist-Leninist states are prison states in which freedom only exists for the ruling class.

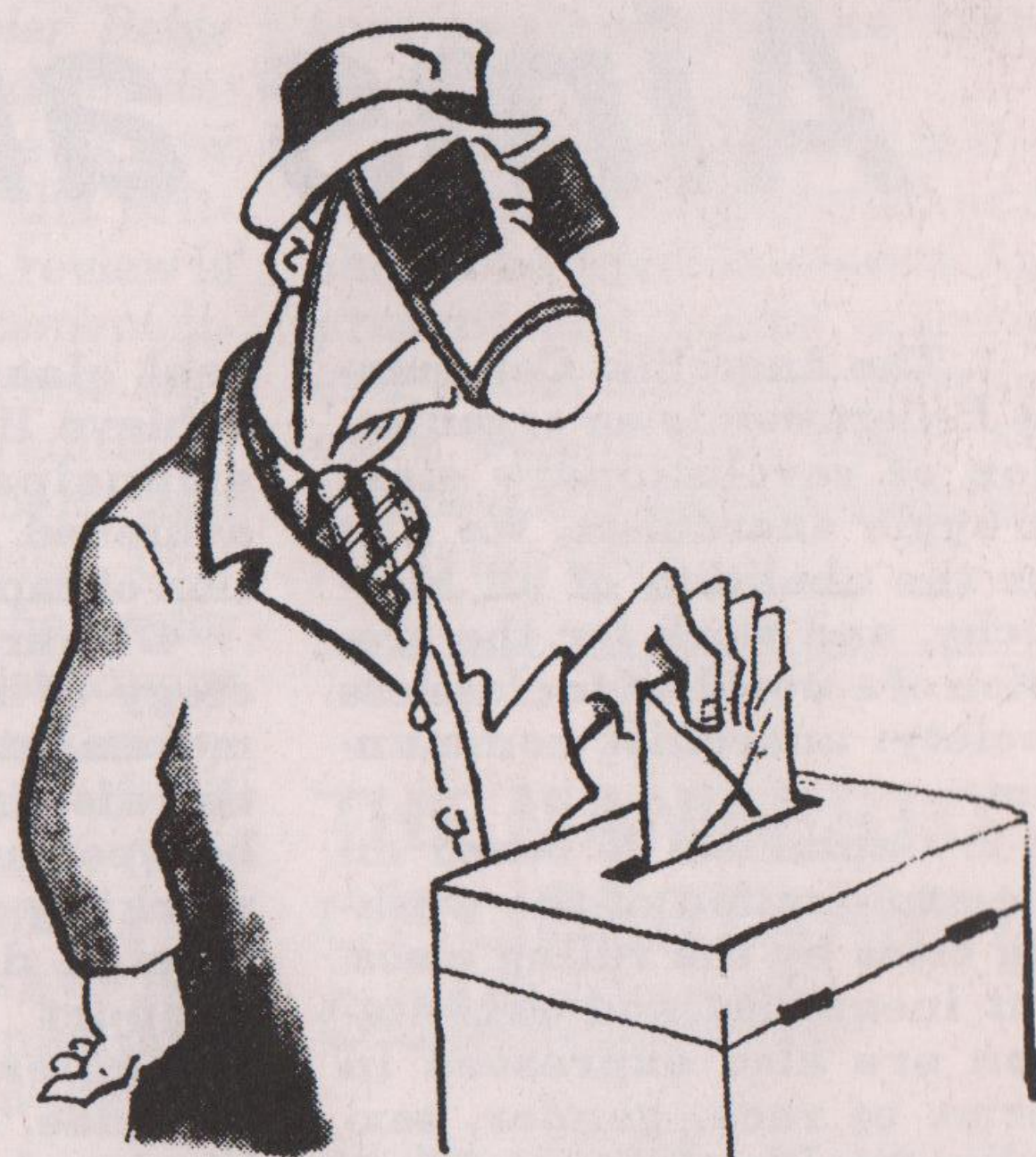
One of the strengths of anarchist communism is that it has not developed some sterile formula of freedom. Freedom is seen as a rich and vital being applicable to all areas of human activity.

(Talking of sterility, did you know that the Marxist definition of freedom is the "recognition of necessity". Make sense of that if you can!) From an anarchist communist perspective freedom is neither seen simply in individual or class terms. There is an intimate interrelationship between the two.

Coercion

Anarchists argue that wherever there are coercive or bureaucratic institutions freedom will be affected. For example, in terms of human relationships, the hierarchical family is usually a patriarchal and adult dominated institution. So called democratic organisations which institutionalise power and authority become oligarchic, either openly through the degeneration of internal structures, or covertly via informal leaderships. On the grand scale, it is the state by means of the legal, bureaucratic and military functions which most effectively curtail freedom. In contemporary society there is a working alliance between all types of coercive institution from the family upwards to maintain order.

Freedom involves the destruction of externally imposed order (and, perhaps, internally imposed self-discipline when this denies human development). To achieve freedom, government from without must be replaced by voluntary cooperation within society. Anarchists have tried to envisage a society in which individual freedom is maximised whilst preserving the freedom of others. Anarchists



argue that individuals should act as they feel fit, so long as they do not interfere to an intolerable degree with the freedom of others. Put differently, freedom has limits, the limit being arrived at when others are exploited, dominated or in some other way harmed. Anarchists generally argue, therefore, that individuals should have full control over their bodies, up to and including, the right to suicide.

It is obvious from the foregoing that individual freedom must be seen in the context of wider society. In respect to social freedoms anarchist communists see them as being integrated into community. Freedom is unimaginable outside of community. Since humans are naturally social animals, for freedom to accord with our nature, it must be in a societal context. In contemporary society, community, in the sense of meaningful social solidarity, has been largely destroyed class domination. One of the key tasks of post-capitalist society will be to recreate community to promote personal and social development.

There may arise, however, contradictions between individual and societal goals which anarchist communists argue can to a large degree be overcome through a system of federation. Individuals, local and larger groups of people agree to act in unison so long as it is advantageous. From the individual's point of view, the advantages of voluntarily joining with others are those of communal living e.g. friendships, sexual relationships, support, availability of goods and services. So long as the individual gains more from participating in society it will be advantageous.

When the disadvantages become intolerable, the individual has the option of "dropping out". From the community's point of view, it has the "right" to defend its collective freedom from individual saboteurs and can seek recourse in expulsion of the anti-social individual.

Freedom in the real world of capitalism and the state is an illusion. In an anarchist communist society with its social equality and solidarity, it at last becomes possible.



power, freedom serves to maintain that inequality at the expense of the great mass of the population.

Socialists and particularly the Marxist variant are more likely to view freedom in class terms. Now whilst classes exist, it is clear that freedom is a fiction. But have

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ORGANISE!

for class struggle anarchism

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OLD WORLD ORDER



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NEW WORLD ORDER

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BUMPER
25TH
ISSUE!

SWP:
TOUTS
FOR
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WHAT YOU
SAID

INTERVIEW
WITH
FILIPINO
ACTIVIST

REVIEWS

COLUMBUS
AND ALL
THAT

ASPECTS
OF
ANARCHISM:
FREEDOM

ORGANISE!

ORGANISE! IS THE national magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation (ACF). *Organise!* is a quarterly theoretical journal published in order to develop anarchist communist ideas. It aims to give a clear anarchist viewpoint on contemporary issues, and initiate debates on areas not normally covered by agitational journals.

All articles in the magazine are by ACF members unless signed. Some reflect ACF policy and others open up debate in undiscussed areas, helping us to develop our ideas further.

Please feel welcome to contribute articles to *Organise!* — as long as they don't conflict with our Aims and Principles we will publish them. (Letters, of course, need not agree with our A&Ps at all.)

The next issue will be out in early April. The deadlines are November 22nd for features and reviews, and March 7th for letters and news.

All contributions for the next issue should be sent to: ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

Who We Are

THE ANARCHIST Communist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists. Its structure is based on groups and individual members. We have members in the following areas:

Aylesbury
Chesterfield
Coventry
Derry
Gillingham
Grantham
Leamington Spa
Leeds
London
Manchester
Merthyr Tydfil
Newcastle
Northumberland
Nottingham
Oxford
Saffron Walden
Sheffield
Staffordshire
The ACF promotes the building of a strong and active an-

archist movement in Britain and internationally and has contact with like-minded anarchists overseas. For all contact write to: ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

PRESS FUND

THE PRESS FUND exists so you can contribute to the everyday running and production costs of *Organise!* Money is always needed for printing, postage, layout materials and a host of other things. We also want to see *Organise!* produced more frequently, with more pages and with a greater print run. Money is also needed to finance more pamphlets.

Thanks to all those who contributed to the Press Fund this issue:

£150 — London; £15 — Glasgow; £8 — Chester; £37 pounds — Liverpool.

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Marx

"Petty bourgeois elements, kulaks and declassé intellectuals"

Lenin

"Shoot them down like partridges"

Trotsky

Name:.....
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I enclose (2.50 for a four-issue sub, or 5 for a four issue supporting sub). Return form to: ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

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I agree with the ACF's Aims and Principles and I would like to join the organisation.....

I would like more information about the Anarchist Communist Federation.....

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Help *Organise!* to grow

WE FEEL THAT *Organise!* has an important role to play in the growth of revolutionary activity and ideas in these exciting times. We know from rising sales that many of our readers feel the same.

But we need your support to help keep the furnace burning.

Sell *Organise!*

Although our sales are rising, we need to keep boosting circulation, so try and take a bundle to sell to friends or workmates. By selling *Organise!* you can help our ideas to reach more and more people.

Write for *Organise!*

You can help to make *Organise!* yours by writing letters and articles.

Organise! will improve through a two-way process of criticism and feedback, and will better reflect the reality of struggle through readers communicating with us. Please write in with ideas.

Feedback

Please send feedback, contributions for *Organise!*, requests for papers & Press Fund money (payable to ACF) to London.

Organise! Back Issues

Back issues of *Organise!* (from issue 14 to issue 24 inclusive) are still available, from the London group address, as are a few copies of its forerunner *Virus*. They cost 40p & sae each and include:

- *Organise!* 18: Eastern Europe; ambulance crews; Gerry Healy's death.
- *Organise!* 19: Poll tax and prison riots; Mandela myth; ecology and class.
- *Organise!* 20: Class struggle in Ireland; Romania; poll tax update.
- *Organise!* 21: Gulf war; Russia in crisis; Brixton.
- *Organise!* 22: Recession; poll tax; warfare state; Commune; Asia.
- *Organise!* 23: Iraq Interview; Greens; ANC; pits; police.

WHOOPS!

In the last issue of *Organise!* the South African working class substituted itself for the leaders of Militant in the photo on p.6. This was the fault of our printers, who put the wrong side of the photo face up on the layout. After they unnailed their heads from the floor, they were allowed to print this issue. We forgot to point out that the article on children was a discussion article and was not official ACF policy. The editors have donned hairshirts, rolled in the nettles 10 times and put themselves on bread and water for Xmas.

Labouring Under Illusions

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS Party has in many ways been one of the success stories of British Trotskyism. It alone has managed to maintain a successful "independent" existence outside of the Labour Party, boasting a present claimed membership of 6,000. It is fashionable in anarchist circles to state that the collapse of Stalinism is bound to bring down Trotskyism with it. Obviously the crisis within the Communist Parties has a knock-on effect on the Trotskyist groups, but in the short term they hope to distance themselves from Stalinism, and fill the space left by the collapsing Communist Parties. Hopes are high within the SWP that they can effectively do this. So it is a nonsense to say that Trotskyism is finished, and that the class struggle anarchist movement can automatically take the place of a discredited ideology.

The Socialist Workers Party has cleverly sweetened the pill of Trotskyism, with its references to British syndicalism, the *Industrial Workers of the World*, and a pseudo-libertarian rhetoric that talks about the importance of workers' councils, and democratically controlled organisation. It was able to cut the ground from under British anarchism in the late '60s and early '70s. Many people, disgusted with the chronic disorganisation and confused politics of the anarchist "movement" as seen in the *Anarchist Federation of Britain*, moved over to the forerunner of the SWP, International Socialism.

Clique

Yet the Socialist Workers Party has consistently been under the dominance of the leadership clique around Tony Cliff. This leadership clique has strengthened itself through marriage and family connections. Promising new members are vetted for suitability for entrance to the inner circle of cadres. Any political differences lead to a freezing out from the social and political life of this inner circle. Front organisations like the women's grouping Women's Voice were set up then forced to dissolve when Cliff and Co. decided they were no longer needed.

The shutting down of organisations not completely under the control of the Party happened at the same time. Women's Voice, the Right to Work campaign, the Rank and File Movement etc, were simultaneously run down. So much for any idea of auto-

nomous organisation within the SWP schema.

for such a vote did not itself create illusions! The SWP is fostering illusions in parliament and the Labour Party. Even after seven Labour governments this century, all thoroughly anti-working class, the SWP still bangs on about voting Labour, when it is becoming even more obvious that such a vote will do no good at all, when those who call themselves socialists within the Labour Party are leaving it or are about to leave.

In fact, the SWP has tempered its political stand towards reformism drastically over the last few years. In an article in *New Statesman and Society* (3.5.91) one of their leading lights, Paul Foot, stated that: "To help build a powerful and effective anti-war movement during the few

Vote

The Socialist Workers Party have always advocated a vote at elections for Labour "without illusions" and to "defend the unions", as if calling

revolutionary Anarchists and its successor the *Anarchist Workers' Association* — was a consistent attack on Labourism as a major obstacle to a credible revolutionary movement in this country.

In a recent SWP pamphlet by Duncan Blackie, *Socialism and the Labour Party — A Dream Betrayed*, it is stated that the Labour Party is the "party of the trade union leaders", and gives details of how previous Labour governments have attacked the working class. The SWP is very good at criticising the Labour Party, but in practice when the chips are down always calls for a vote for Labour as it will doubtless do at the next election.

In fact, another luminary of the SWP, Dr David Widgery, in an article in the *Guardian* (14.12.91) stated that: "I am emphatically for a Labour victory in the next election". He went on to say that the British working class no longer had "a party representing its interest"... "Because with the direction the Labour Party is going..." As if the Labour Party ever represented the interests of the working class. Despite saying that "As a veteran SWPer, I obviously think that revolutionaries are best advised to set up their own political stall independent of the Labour Party", in practice he hopes a small corner of the Labour stall can be reserved for the SWP.

Failed

Recently the SWP put out an Open Letter, talking about a "socialist alternative" and signed by sundry Labour and ex-Labour activists. This was an opportunistic and devious move to pull those disillusioned with some aspects of Labourism into the SWP's orbit. The views of some of those who signed the Open Letter were printed in the SWP's weekly, *Socialist*



Worker. Many still believed in major aspects of Labourism, putting up candidates at parliamentary and council elections, and failed to see that a social revolution is necessary to get us out of the capitalist nightmare, not another Labour Party Mark 2. *Socialist Worker* failed to comment.

In order to spike the guns of any attempted opposition within the Party, the branch committees were recently dissolved. The activists were grouped in these committees, and in Leninist fashion were meant to be the transmitters of central committee policy. However, the leadership fears these committees would have been used as an alternative power base by those who opposed the line on Labourism. Far from being a move to greater control by the membership, the abolition of the committees was a bureaucratic move.

The more the SWP opportunistically attempts to exploit the confusion on the Labour Left, the more this Leninist group flounders in the marshes of Labourite reformism.

There are many who have joined the SWP for the best of motives, to struggle against the present foul set-up. It is possible that they can be convinced that Leninism is authoritarian, bureaucratic, hierarchical and an enemy of a real social revolution that attempts to put the running of society into the hands of the mass of the population. The anarchist movement has to show through theory and practice that it can offer an alternative.

Already in recent issues of the SWP magazine *Socialist Worker Review* and the heavy theoretical International Socialism there have been scurrilous and lying attacks on anarchism. The SWP leadership are hoping to inoculate the rank and file against the virus of anarchism, illustrating their fears.

Let us now turn these fears into nightmares for Cliff and his cronies. There are several members of the ACF who had previously been in the SWP. We invite those SWP members reading this magazine with doubts in the whole political project of their party to discuss with us and seriously consider the politics of anarchist communism.

Any Labour Equals Real Fraud

JUST AS WITHIN the narrow confines of capitalist production, where physical and mental work is exploited for the purpose of profit, so also has the "democratic" process been exploited in the name of maintaining class power. Tory, Labour, and every party that participates in the voting circus, all are out for one thing only: power.

But the power they wish to exercise does not have as its end one in which the fulfilment of human needs and desires is paramount. Instead their expertise — a bureaucratic expertise — lies with manipulations and mechanisms. Constituencies are

sibility" intended to impress and pander to the political conservativeness of the middle-class vote. Whilst Tories find it politically useful to fan the fires of bigotry and legislate against squatting and for racism, Labour takes comfort in a winter of content

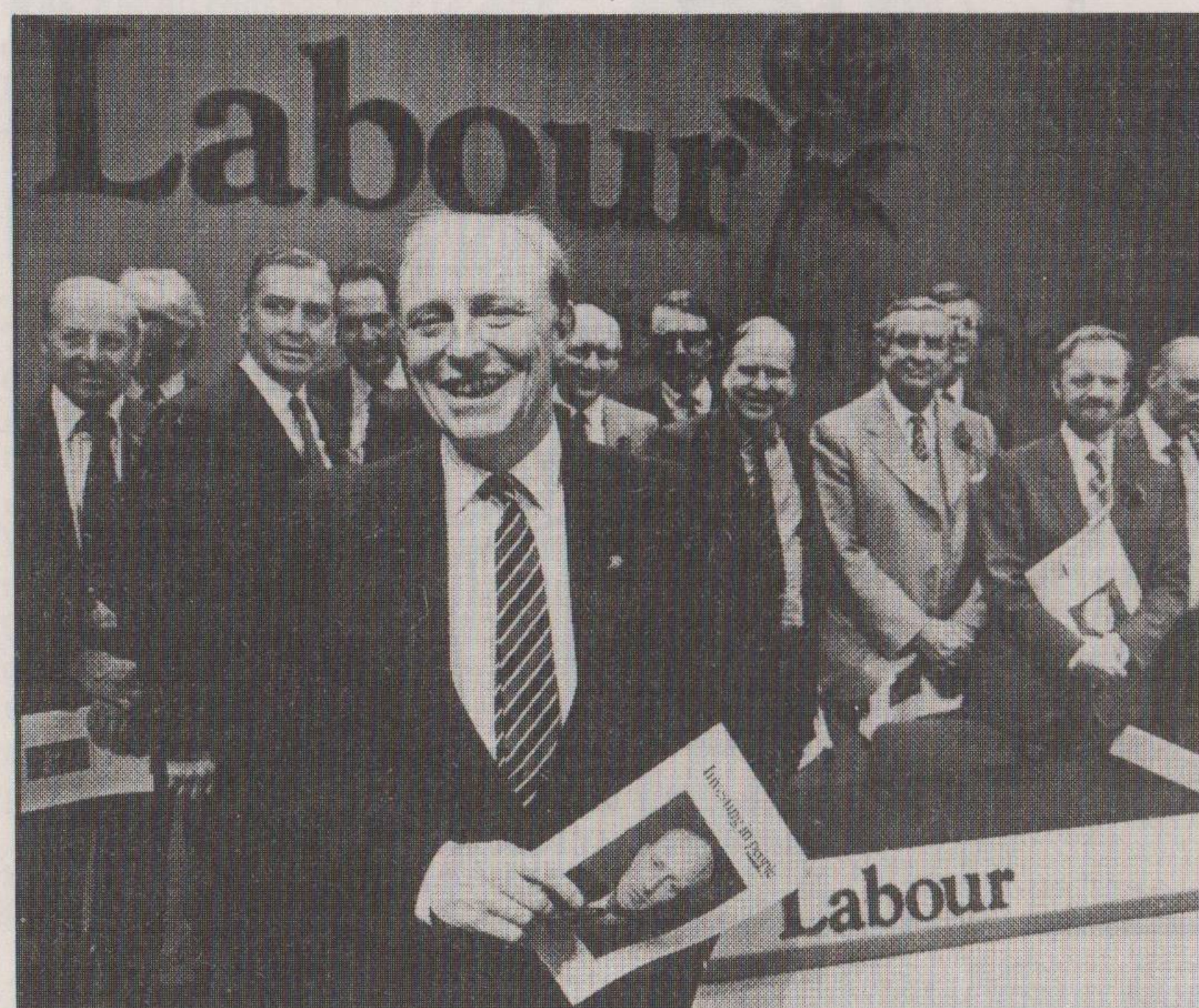
made, in credit and services. Discontent engendered through the lack of jobs and social facilities could be banded over relatively easily through a quick injection of North sea oil-cash.

Major's government continued the Thatcher legacy but by this time over-borrowing began to fuel inflation. Major's fears actually lie in not being internationally competitive in terms of attracting overseas investment, hence the insistence upon and adherence to high interest rates. Labour would change all this. Smith, the shadow chancellor, has continually stated that in Labour's opinion high interest rates do not work. Of course, in its economic vision, the emphasis must be brought back to industrial production, with the financial sector being deposed from the commanding heights. This can only be done by making money cheap, so that industry can update its machinery to the level of its foreign competitors. So with a Labour government, the City money-lender bourgeoisie and the capitalists will be well looked after. And the working class?

Labour's Agenda

The collapse of the eastern bloc into jelly open to moulding by western capitalism has proved to be a double edged sword for British capitalism. The economic might of the USA and Germany have enabled them greater access. But the general immiseration and lack of "spending power" of the Eastern European working class is a brake upon this new capitalist gold-seam of exploitation. Whilst the Tories would prefer to recede into the "little Britain" mentality, to increase protectionist legislation, and to do all they can to maintain the status quo, Labour will want to have an increasing EEC in

Continued on page 6



thought of in terms of gains and losses, more or less, credit or debit; and each party calculates its business-like computations, dealing only with external things: membership figures, numbers of votes, seats in parliament, and control positions. Tory and Labour, both have determined that the winning over of the largely middle-class constituencies is paramount. The reformism of Labour now speaks for the petit-bourgeois concerns of the middle-class voter. Hence the casting away from its syphilitic body of the Militant maggots, and the complete support from the top of Labour councillors in their harassment of poll tax evaders. These are acts of "respon-

promised from the unions and lunches out with the City gents; all the time saying: "Be reassured — we are your friends".

And friends indeed they are. What the City would lose with the Tories going, it would gain — but from a different source — from a Labour win. Thatcherism's main "contribution" to the economy, from the early '80s onwards was in the hyping up of the financial sector, to the detriment of the traditional factory-based industries. The City was able to make massive profits based upon the financial manipulation of the markets. Domestically, the only real growth industries were where quick profits could be

Supporting the Poll Tax Non-payers

DESPITE OUR VICTORY in forcing the abolition of the poll tax many battles remain in the struggle towards a total amnesty. Our victory was won by millions of ordinary working class women and men saying "NO!" to the poll tax and refusing to pay. The poll tax however will continue until Spring 1993, that is a third year of bills for the people of England and Wales. And a fourth for the people of Scotland. Non-payment has continued and even risen this year and looks set to rise again next year, despite the government's £140 sweetener, and even though there is no longer a movement building for mass non-payment.

Abolition does not mean, however, that the debts will be written off. The local councils, Labour and Tory, are still sending out the bailiffs/sheriffs and threatening non-payers with imprisonment in order to recover money from the millions of non-payers. This enforcement may continue long after Spring 1993. It is the struggle against bailiffs/sheriffs and jailings that now is the priority for what remains of the movement.

We do not make calls on the government for an amnesty, instead we fight to create an amnesty in practice. It will be when we make the enforcement procedures unworkable, and only then, that the state will recognise an amnesty.

That means we organise to defend ourselves and other non-payers from the bailiffs/sheriffs. In reality this has mainly meant informing people of their rights and telling people not to panic. Debt recovery is usually done by the fear of what might happen than by the reality of what will.

Our main task has been to keep people informed of what is going on, and how to continue the fight. In England and Wales the bailiffs cannot legally break in. So if you keep the door shut they can't get in. Bailiff-busting is on the whole less exciting than we anticipated a year ago. In Scotland the sheriffs can break in, but they have to give four days written notice. In practice this often means that you either get a group of people to be there ready to prevent entry,

or you can move valuables out of the house for the day.

Occasionally, though, the bailiffs/sheriffs do manage to get in and seize goods. These are the times when a big angry crowd is needed to prevent a warrant sale or auction taking place. There have been a couple of such incidents recently in Glasgow when a 200-strong crowd prevented a warrant sale by blockading the building where it was to have taken place. As with the demonstrations of Spring 1990 the state seeks to criminalise those who take part in active resistance. For the first time this century someone has recently been sent to prison for two months for the crime of "deformance". It is an ancient law that relates to the obstruction of a sheriff officer in the course of his duties.

Fighting the jailings

The other main line of attack by the local councils is to threaten non-payers with prison. They do not really intend to jail millions instead they hope to intimidate with the threat of jailing. But to do this it means they have to go through with the jailing of a minority to make an example of them. In many cases these have been leading activists in the local campaigns. In the last year or so about 100 non-payers have been imprisoned for lengths varying from a few days to three months. Note the threat of prison is not available in Scotland.

As with the threat of bailiffs our message to the threat



Two petrol bombs were thrown at the Poll Tax HQ of Cambridge City Council...

of imprisonment has been "Don't Panic, Don't Pay!". For those who are summonsed to a committal hearing legal aid solicitors are available to defend them even at the very last stage and if they make an offer to pay, based on what they can actually afford, then they won't go to prison. Those that can afford nothing are guilty of neither wilful refusal nor culpable neglect and should not be imprisoned.

We also need to organise for those who are imprisoned. Either for non-payment or because they were criminalised on demonstrations. This means organising pickets of local prisons where non-payers or protesters are being held (but not without consulting them first). Getting hold of regularly updated prisoners lists and sending letters of support or visiting those jailed. If this is not being done by local anti-poll tax groups then a local prisoner support group needs to be set up.

On October 12th 1991 a national network of Prisoners' Support Groups was formed with contacts in every region of the UK. The role of the network is threefold:

- to obtain and disseminate accurate and up to date information about anyone

imprisoned for non-payment or for demonstrating against the tax.

- to ensure that all these prisoners are supported during their sentence.
- to fight for a Poll Tax amnesty.

To get in touch with the network contact; PSG, c/o Brixton Law Centre, 506 Brixton Road, London SW9 8EN. (Tel: 071-738 7586)

Keeping up the fight

As anarchist-communists we recognise that the struggle against capitalism will be a long fight involving action both in the workplace and the community. The forms of that struggle will be many and varied and will have both high points and lows.

In the struggle to defeat the poll tax we have seen a mass grassroots community campaign that has seemingly risen and resubmerged. There are many things to be inspired about in that campaign but also many things to criticise. One is the underlying political incoherence of many of those involved. Most agreed on the lowest common denominator for involvement, that of building for mass non-payment, but could not agree to work on

Any Labour Equals Fraud cont...

fluence. Rosy-tinted integrationist EEC ideologues would have us believe that the aim of the EEC is one big happy family, all countries marching in unison towards the sunny days. The reality is different. Germany's economic might, although pre-occupied presently with eastern Germany, is of alarming concern to many of the EEC's "poorer" partners. Labour's agenda, indicated through its response to the Tories' machinations at Maas-

Poll Tax cont...

anything more than that. For example, a workplace campaign to defend the jobs and services threatened by poll tax cuts. This is something we can fight for now while still arguing that only a revolution bringing communism can bring us the level of services we really need. Services for us, by us and controlled by us.

In the community we are fighting for more than just against poll tax debts. Against bailiffs whatever debt they are trying to collect. Against imprisonment and a court system that confines and oppresses us in order to keep the ruling class and the capitalists in power. We see the grassroots community campaign against the poll tax and its enforcement as an example of working class action against this shitty system. As committed activists we are staying with this struggle, for both short term necessity and for building a longer-term, generalised, political consciousness. In the short term, we are defending ourselves, our friends and our neighbours from the threats and harassment from the council and their bailiff lackeys. In the long-term we want a movement that goes further and gives us control of our own streets, workplaces and lives. That many activists have dropped out of the campaign is a sign of both tiredness and political confusion. (Or in the case of the Trots they have moved onto new campaigns to recruit from.) Part of that confusion stems from a failure to see the goal of the campaign as more than just abolition.

We don't just want the cakes we want the bakeries as well!

tricht, will be, if they are to be elected, a "progressive" one. This means a progressive turning of screws on the working class, all the time attempting to put some sugar on the bitter pill it is hidden by capitalism to force-feed workers.

Labour will push for the scrapping of the national veto that currently allows the veto holders so much power over EEC direction. It will do this in order to back qualified majority voting. This does not operate on the simple basis of one country, one vote. Votes are determined by the size of each county's population. Therefore, Germany, France, Britain and Italy will each have 10, Spain 8, Belgium, Portugal, Holland and Greece 5, Denmark and Ireland 3, and Luxemburg 2.

For any policy to be legislated for in the system of qualified majority voting, this would mean that at least 54 votes out of a total of 76, from 8 member states would have to be gathered. This would mean that at least two of the largest countries acting together would not be able to block a decision. All this will be packaged and sold to the domestic political consumers as an extension of the democratic process, whereas the actual reality is in economic competition with Germany. Underlying Germany's concern about any loss of its veto will be the pressure on its economy if several countries act cohesively to further drive down their own social costs. Labour knows British capitalism cannot compete directly against German economic might, but its vision lies within a cartel of countries with a Labour government taking the ideological lead. For this to work out in practice, this requires British wages to be roughly equitable with those of the "poorer" countries, such as Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland. Domestically, the power of the unions within Labour is diminishing. Labour will renege on promises made to the unions, and play the softly, softly card on immigration. It will attempt to create jobs through increasing government influence, but any extra which do appear will be open to fierce pressures, further driving rates for such work

down to the poverty level. Capitalism will continue its direction towards social barbarism, no matter who heads the political machine. The gap between rich and poor will continue to widen. The working class is in for more misery, more suffering.

What is to be done?

What should be two relatively simple and unfettered tasks of society — the production of its material wealth and who says how that wealth is distributed — has been constructed by capitalism into a myriad of conflicting processes, each designed to extract from the working class its real power. Simultaneously arising from this swamp of stinking capitalist creation is a multitude of mostly middle-class professionals, ideologues, and academics. Each attempts to justify their individual existence through the manufacture of lies about their necessity, when the truth is that most are totally



superfluous. That is not to say that intellectuals and so forth cannot be revolutionary, but their participation must be qualified upon the insistence of the working class being to the fore. Intellectual argument must not create ghettos of specialised terminological sciences, only available to careerists who wish for jobs as ideological police post the revolutionary change. Anarchist communists argue that there is nothing in society that the working class cannot do. Without the bosses robbing massive amounts of wealth, totally disproportionate to their physical needs, wealth then goes to those who actually produce it — the working class. Without union bosses, whose service to the boss class is to derail and lead struggle into dead ends, workers create autonomous revolutionary organisations — as

the histories of Russia 1905, Germany 1918, Spain 1936 and Hungary 1956 have shown. Without politicians, whose self-justified existences lie in promoting a chosen section of the population to the detriment of others, and who, taken as a whole, add to capitalism's continued existence by dividing the working class into sectional interests and then ruling over it in the name of "social peace", without them, the working class finds its true communality and real solidarity then begins.

Capitalism today in the industrialised countries still has some fat to allow it to buy off the inevitable day of reckoning. The "invisible hand" of the capitalist market continues to cause very visible suffering and misery. But without the army of social workers, without welfare, without tax-collectors to collect the welfare, the system would collapse into a nightmare world of social barbarism, the mere shadows of which we can see today. But these shadows are lengthening. Economic crisis is an in-built tendency in the system. The capitalist class equates power to personal wealth. Once wealth is seen to be diminishing the jackals and hyenas of fascism begin baying for their day. Whether the leeches of the sham "social peace" will cede power for the prize of partnership or be pushed aside, would be a matter of relative strengths. Whatever, the future of capitalism, if unchallenged, is clear. The work camp, the concentration camp, total environmental destruction, global war. So do we as revolutionaries parrot what the Trotskyists put before the working class in this country as their panacea to the future of capitalism: "Vote Labour, but with no illusions"?

Our emphatic answer to the collaborationist touts for Labour is the same that we say to any body of would-be bureaucrats. The struggle is in the action. And any action, like the poll tax, that aids the severing of the ideological ties between the leaders and the led, that add to the formation of autonomous organisations run by the working class, for the working class, is what the ACF fights for and encourages. This is the only "vote". Any other vote is not worth the waste of ink.

On Post-Revolutionary Economic Organisation

The Anarchist Communist Federation is not in the business of providing blueprints. The working class makes its own decisions, without the disabling "help" of so-called experts, bureaucrats and advocates of Bolshevism. This, however, does not preclude us from positing a sketch of how a future revolutionary society could be organised. The following is a discussion article. To fight for a world without bosses we must have a clear vision of what we are replacing their rotten system with.

WITH THE COLLAPSE of the centrally planned state capitalist economies of Eastern Europe, there has been a near universal acclamation of the market. The market it is asserted is the sole mechanism by which economies operate; it is the

"invisible hand" that regulates the world's economy.

Whilst we would naturally expect the bosses to embrace the ideology of the market (though, in peace time under supranational monopoly capitalism there is

hardly any competition) it would be expected that self-proclaimed anti-capitalists would be more circumspect. After all "market socialism" has proved to be disastrous, see Yugoslavia. The market implies rationing-in-effect through the ability (or not) to pay for goods and services; it implies a wages system when the goal is its abolition; it creates insecurity and the ultimate creation of inequality. Why then do some anarchists advocate the market? Are they so seduced by bourgeois ideology to embrace it? Anarchist communists firmly reject the market and everything that goes with it.

Anarchist-Communist Political Economy

However, in rejecting the command economy and the market we have a responsibility to offer an alternative. Before doing so, it is necessary to outline how we envisage society to be organised and some of the possible problems likely to be encountered. There will, we argue, be basic units which constitute the building blocks making up society. These may be geographically based e.g. the commune which directly controls by means of popular assemblies both the social and economic matters in its area or the building blocks may be more directly based upon units of production e.g. workers' councils operating within wider social councils. Since there is not necessarily concordance between consumer and producer, whichever the basic unit decided upon (both types, on first principles must necessarily have within them in-built processes which totally deny any growth of bureaucracy and empower the collective will) some social device will be required to eliminate conflicts of goal and method. It's essential for there to be the fullest and widest cooperation between them, on the basis of federation, to decide what, and in what quantities, will be produced.

World-wide

Anarchist communism will ideally be a world-wide system. It is probably utopian to expect, that given the economic dislocation which would occur after international revolution, perhaps following civil wars, and the uneven distribution of productive capacity, that a world-wide system on the basis of "from each according to their abilities; to each according to their needs" could be established immediately. This is certainly the aim in the longer term, but given the likely shortages, goods and ser-



vices would have to be distributed equitably. In other words some rationing system would have to be introduced which took into account the special needs of, say, children. The existence of rationing in no sense implies recourse to the market, quite the contrary, it is a temporary measure required until material abundance becomes possible. Neither does it require the restoration of money as a measure of value; nevertheless, some non-exploitative accounting system will be necessary to facilitate production and distribution.

Wealth

Since a society's wealth is derived from the transformation of natural resources through the application of technology by labour, it must be the workers themselves who control the productive process. In an anarchist communist society, the term worker would apply to virtually everyone, excepting the young, the old and the disabled. How much time will actually be spent labouring will be decided by the needs of society as a whole, depending on many factors such as the efficiency of industry, levels of output, the eco-centric management of natural resources, definition of "need" etc.

Exactly what will be produced will depend on many factors. Generally speaking all the high technology-based arms industries will be either abolished or turned over to more socially useful projects. To what extent people will demand the consumer durables which characterise advanced capitalist societies is debatable but surely many private areas of today's life will become social after the revolution and consumption will reflect that development.

Nevertheless, whatever the priorities of production, they will be decided by the workers themselves in conjunction with consumers to express the multiple wishes of society. It is a fallacy to argue that workers alone should control *all* aspects of production, distribution etc since the *particular* interests of workers may not coincide with the general interests of workers as consumers.

Since under anarchist communism money is abolished, how can the demands of producers/consumers be realised and brought into equilibrium? How can the efficiency, quality and quantity of output be measured? The answer lies in the introduction of an accounting unit, the "socially average hour of labour". This non-monetary unit of accounting works as follows.

Unit

Each productive or distributive unit calculates the total number of hours of work used in processing a given number of products. The "value" of products can be measured by the amount of labour time "on average" which is embodied in them. Under capitalism a product, say a stereo

amplifier, requires an economic relationship between a large number of manufacturers/suppliers who sell at a profit to the manufacturer who produces the finished product. The unit of measurement here is money. Within anarchist communism, where money and exploitation have been abolished, the worker/producers cooperate and the value of the finished product is measured, not in money, but in the amount of labour time (on average) embodied within it. Where, as in the manufacture of stereo amplifiers, the division of labour between productive units is complex, requiring the input of a large number of workplaces, then the number of socially average labour hours, in aggregate, per finished unit will be high. Simpler products will be measured in less socially average labour hours since they involve less output.

Less

Since the efficiency of one workplace might be higher than another on a macro level the unit of accounting will have to be the social average hour of labour to take into account the shortfall in some workplaces compared to the relative surplus in the more productive ones. For instance, the labour hours involved in transporting raw materials to a production unit close to the actual source would be shorter than those taken to transport the same to a workplace further away. This time would be averaged out, and on the surface, it would seem that the worker who worked longer would be losing out and the worker who worked less would be gaining.

However, for a social revolution to actually work the first priority of workers free from the individualistic competition engendered by capitalism is the common good of society as a whole. Workers who have fought against all the might which capitalism will bring to bear in defence of its rotten system and have won, will not want to allow capitalism to creep in through the back door. A qualitatively different approach will be needed, towards social production. Post-revolution, worker/producers — we would hope — would realise that, within the system of the socially average labour hour that exploitation, having been eradicated would actually allow for a decrease in working hours, providing, of course, the requirements of society were at the level of pre-revolution.

Of course, workers would demand a level of abundance above the scarcity of today, but think of capitalism's operation. Its competitive system squanders the world's resources by needlessly replicating, in the small and medium sized sectors, many times over the same industries. In the new society the few concentrated to provide needs would replace the thousands, thereby releasing redundant capacity into more socially useful areas. The worker who "lost" out in our above example would gain much more both from the social infrastructure and in the indi-

vidual sense, economically also. Supposing that a direct comparison could be possible, the amount of time spent by the individual working within the measure of the socially average labour hour in gaining a useful product would be much less than under the money system. Exploitation — the amount of hours workers spend in supplying to the capitalist his profit margin — would be eradicated. Furthermore, workers will see the benefits of the revolution immediately. Those sectors of the economy which can, at present levels, be given over to abundance — the using of when required — such as transportation and communication, to name but two, can be socialised. As other sectors of the anarchist-communist economy enter into the arena of abundance, so they also can be socialised. Rationing, however, for scarce resources and products would remain.

In the period preceding product abundance a fixed "ration" would give equal access to all. This "ration" would be measured in units of the social average hour of labour. Like a telephone card is used, the units could be deducted electronically as goods are taken from the common store.

Technique

As technique develops, including the widespread automation of the production process, the total amount of socially average labour hours required to fulfil expectations falls as productivity rises. This will permit the reduction of the working week and will allow for the greater extension of "expenditure" in those vital establishments which extend the quality of life. More and more resources can be channelled into education, health, leisure, in fact all those areas of life which contribute to human endeavour and well-being. Many of these do not economically contribute to society in a direct way and must be supported out of wealth creation (measured in terms of socially average hours of labour). As the material basis of anarchist communism advances, then the proportion of wealth creation put aside for social purposes will expand whilst the relative proportion retained for personal consumption will diminish. In other words, workers will work less, engage more in freely available socially provided goods and services and ultimately take what they need from the common store.

For readers whose appetite doesn't preclude heavy marxist jargon, we have available (photocopied) pamphlets of *The Political Economy of Communism*. This previously unpublished pamphlet explores more deeply the economic theory behind the socially average hour of labour. Not an ACF document. Available from ACF, c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX. £1 (p&p included) for 13 pages.

Mutual Aid and Evolution

TOWARDS THE END of the 19th century, Charles Darwin laid down the basic theory of evolution in his book *The Origin of the Species*. This book showed how the natural variation present within a population, combined with the pressures of existence, led to the evolution of organisms better adapted to survive.

The idea of evolution was immediately taken and distorted by people keen to emphasise the competitive nature of society. They wanted to prove that in the natural world only the strongest and most selfish survive, and to try and extend this theory to include human beings.

Fortunately some people were able to see beyond this and in his book *Mutual Aid* Kropotkin put forward the idea that in nature, and in human society, cooperation is far more important for survival than competition. Recent scientific research has been able to shed further light on this debate.

One of the commonest arguments against anarchism is that "human nature" makes it impossible. We are supposed to have inherited from our animal ancestors instincts which make us naturally selfish. But is total selfishness the best way to survive? A few years ago a group of research biologists devised a computer tournament to test the various strategies an animal might adopt to ensure its survival. The tournament was based on the classical gaming problem, "The Prisoner's Dilemma", which can be summed up as follows:

Two thieves are arrested by the cops and thrown into separate cells. They are now faced with the prisoner's dilemma of whether or not to talk to the cops. This story is meant to represent the many situations faced by both animals and humans where they have to rely on someone else.

More realistic examples of mutual aid in the animal kingdom are easily found. One such example is provided by the fact that birds have to rely on each other to remove parasites from their heads. Another is found in vampire bats, a species not normally known for good publicity. On average they are only able to feed every five-six days, so it is in their best interest to share any food they can get, so they can be paid back when they are not lucky enough to find food.

In the prisoner's dilemma, if both prisoners refuse to talk to the cops then both are released due to insufficient evidence. In game terms, this counts as a minor win for both. If both talk to the cops then both are imprisoned because of their confessions. Though in real life this would be a major loss, in game terms it counts as a minor loss for both.

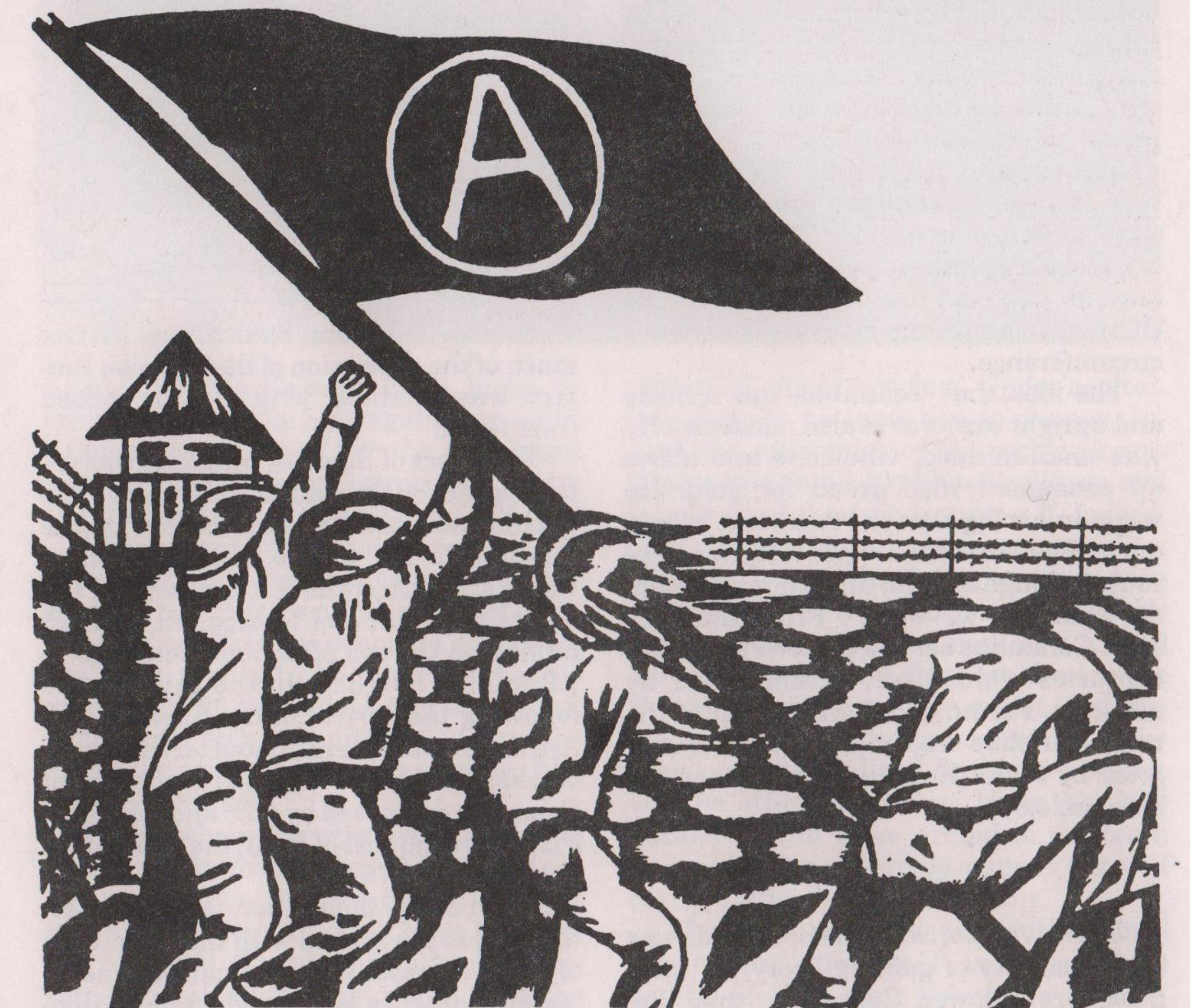
The problem arises when one prisoner talks and the other refuses. The one who talks can blame the other partner and get off scot free, as well as getting a reward

for giving evidence. This counts as a major win. The unfortunate partner, who refused to talk but got sold out, will get the blame for all the crimes and be given a harsh sentence. This is a major loss.

The biologists lengthened the game to find the best tactics to follow when the

Equally, total selfishness is not the best way as for a variety of activities it is essential to have enough trust in others to be able to work together. The problem is how we can cooperate with others, whilst at the same time ensuring we are not exploited.

This is where the findings of the research biologists can help us, as they reached a conclusion remarkably similar to the anarchist communist idea of mutual aid. They tried a variety of solutions to the extended version of the prisoner's dilemma, ranging from the one extreme of always talking, to the other of never talk-



dilemma occurs not just once but many times, as will happen in real life.

If you are always altruistic and refuse to talk, you will do well if you can rely on your partner not to talk either. However, if your partner is less scrupulous you could end up being betrayed every time.

If you are always selfish and talk to the cops you will be fine if your partner is a sucker who will always keep quiet and become the scapegoat. The chances are though that your partner will soon catch on and grass you up as well, resulting in both of you being imprisoned.

What conclusions can we draw from this example? It is obvious that always being altruistically selfless is not a viable strategy, as if we spend all our time working for others, with no thought for ourselves, there will always be people ready to take advantage and exploit us.

ing, and a variety of more complex strategies in between.

The solution that was by far the most successful is called "tit for tat". In this strategy your first move is always to be altruistic (ie cooperate with your partner and don't talk to the cops), thereafter you follow your partner's last move so if your partner was altruistic last turn you continue to cooperate, but if your partner was selfish you switch to being selfish as well. With this strategy you show you are willing to work with your partner for your mutual benefit, but you will not accept someone trying to take advantage of you.

It is increasingly clear that mutual aid is the only way forward. Only working together can we free ourselves from exploitation and create a society based on common ownership of wealth and social justice — an anarchist communist society.

1492 and Beyond

IN SPAIN AND the USA, but not in Latin America, there will be celebrations this year to mark the so-called discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus. That "discovery" was to be a total disaster for the native populations in the Western hemisphere from the Arctic to the Antarctic.

Columbus' "discovery" has been subject to quite a lot of examination over the last months, several new studies have been published. We can now assert that every aspect of the traditional story is false. Apart from the fact that the Americas were populated perhaps 20,000 years before Columbus arrived, Europeans had beaten him to it by several centuries. The Vikings established coastal colonies and the Portuguese may have been sailing to the Caribbean islands in the immediate period before Columbus' arrival.

The often told tale that fifteenth century Europeans thought that the world was flat is also nonsense. That the earth is a globe was known from the time of the ancient Greeks. Eratosthenes (275-194 BC) even managed to measure the earth's circumference.

The idea that Columbus was a noble and upright explorer is also nonsense. He was small-minded, vindictive and above all consumed with greed for gold. He wrote in his log that the Arawaks "would make fine servants... with fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want". From the very start Columbus set the pattern for future centuries' gold fever, accompanied by genocide. For an excellent account of the real Columbus see *Columbus. His Enterprise* by Hans Koning (Latin American Bureau, 4.99).

Booty

The driving force for the Spaniards was the possibility of gaining booty. As later travellers followed Columbus, they discovered gold in huge quantities. So much gold and silver reached Europe via Spain that it caused severe inflation. The native populations certainly valued gold and silver as precious metals but not in the way they were prized in Europe. Once the colonisers had exhausted the readily available gold, they set about enslaving the indigenous populations by setting them to work in the mines.

The Spaniards destroyed the native people's cultures, civilisations, values, religions and languages to a large extent. Money had been unknown in the Americas, but under the Spaniards the traditional exchange and social systems based on enlarged family groups were destroyed. In their place the Spaniards imposed a late feudal order based on the Spanish model. The year that Columbus arrived in America was the year that Jews



were expelled from Spain, and in fact much of the expansion of the Spanish Empire was financed with wealth robbed from them.

The effect of Spanish conquest was catastrophic for the native Americans. The unbelievable sadism and racism of the conquerors led to the depopulation of whole areas. According to one source, the native population of Mexico fell from 25 million on the eve of Conquest in 1519 to 1.9 million by 1580. In the thirty years following the arrival of the Spanish, the Arawaks were exterminated on the island of Hispaniola, the Quimbaya people of Colombia decreased by 80% and following Pizarro's conquest of Peru, the population fell by around 75%.

Much of the population fall can be attributed to the arrival with the Spaniards of "new" diseases such as smallpox, measles and influenza against which the native Americans had no immunity. Equally important was the murderous oppression imposed by the colonists in their desperate and frenzied search for riches.

As always, oppressors cover their greed and viciousness in an ideological cloak. This is the case in the Americas, where Catholic friars and priests accompanied and blessed the conquests. But the conquerors' methods were even more than the servile priests could stomach. The priest Bartolome De Las Casas was so sickened that he was driven to write a book to put the native people's case.

The native Americans were often worked to death, the Nazi labour camps having their antecedents in Central and South America. In their despair many turned to suicide. As one bishop observed "Some hang themselves; some fast to death; others take poisonous herbs; and

women even kill their babies to free them from the torture they suffer".

The rampant sexism of the conquerors was shown in the way native American women were frequently raped and treated as sexual chattels. We should not assume though that there was no resistance. Often, hidden from history, the indigenous people have opposed their oppressors. The Maya of the Mexican Yucatan peninsula fended off the Spaniards for decades. Even today the Lacandon Maya preserve much of their religion and culture.

In Mexico a major rebellion broke out in 1541. The "Mixon" war was led by religious leaders whose aim was to restore the ancient cultures and values, usher in a golden age of plenty and expel the Spaniards. Until its ultimate destruction the revolt scored a number of successes.

Slaves

In Peru there was a series of uprisings against the Spaniards aimed at restoring the pre-Conquest system. Under leaders who traced their legitimacy to the Inca royal family there were revolts in the 1530s, 1560s and subsequent centuries. Part of the success of Sendero Luminoso today lies in its promise to the insurrectionary peasants that success will bring about the restoration of Inca civilisation.

De Las Casas was to advocate the replacement of native American forced labour by that of black Africans. Thirty years after Columbus arrived in the Caribbean the first African slaves were brought to America. As many as 100 million Africans were seized by slavers, and the African continent was depopulated and its economy shattered. De Las Casas on seeing the effects of slavery on Africans had the humanity to change his mind.

This article has focused on the relationships between the Spanish conquerors and the native Americans. It should not be assumed that the Anglo-Saxon colonisers acted very differently. In a sense the annihilation of the North American native peoples has been more thorough. Where once hunters and horticulturalists walked the vast areas of the USA, in most places not a trace remains. European "civilisation" has a lot to answer for. European colonists have been replaced by national leaders determined to erase the last traces of cultures which go back for millennia. They will be resisted.

In North America work has already begun to expose the sham of the Columbus celebrations. As one commentator writing in the American anarchist paper *Love and Rage* noted: "This is a prime time to forge alliances that cut across barriers of race and gender, and unite us around the issue of class in North American society".

Drugs: Capitalism's Other Economy

OPIUM AND MORPHINE have a history going back 5-6000 years. They were used as medicines rather than something illicit or recreational. The legality or illegality of drugs and their non-medicinal use is part of our recent history, not something stretching back a long way. For the first three quarters of the 19th century opium was as easy to obtain as cigarettes or alcohol. It was the sort of thing many middle and upper class people used in their everyday lives for its effect upon their energy levels. The poor used it as a substitute for alcohol and the journey to the relatively expensive doctor.

Opium Wars

Britain was a leading trader in opium. There were two Opium Wars fought with China over the issue. China wanted to discourage its trade and use. For Britain it was a very lucrative business to be in. This trade in opium and its derivative, morphine, was led by Britain until well into this century. State involvement in the trade in drugs is something we have become used to now, but it has been the case for longer than most states would like to remember. Here it is important to note that when a state is involved in the sale of drugs it is called trade but when anyone else it is called trafficking.

In 1912 the first international drug controls were set up with the formation of the International Opium Convention. By the 1st World War opium and cocaine were made illegal here because of the state's fears that troops might be affected. By the '60s the recreational use of drugs in this country had spread and a particular culture had grown up around it. So in 1964 a new law was introduced to control the use of certain drugs, the Dangerous Drugs Act. This was extended in 1966 so that the hallucinogens, such as mescaline and LSD, and also cannabis, morphine, heroin and others were made illegal.

Modern Trade

The international trade in drugs has become a cause celebre in the past 30 years. In South America, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil are all exporters of cocaine, which is derived from the locally growing coca plant. The leaves of the plant itself have been used for centuries by local people to add to their energy and stave off hunger. The USA has spearheaded the fight against cocaine traffic through its Drug Enforcement



Agency. While George Bush looks to spend \$10.6bn on the fight against drugs he ignores the reasons for the continued trade, let alone the involvement of certain US officials in the trade itself.

By impoverishing local economies, US capital has left the field clear for such a trade. When there is no other way of earning a living, what are people to do? There are huge profits to be made — it costs around \$1000 to produce 1kg of cocaine, which will fetch around \$170,000 on the American street. Hence the phrase, "the other capitalism".

With such profits to be made and being illegal, those involved in the business are not likely to be your average run of the mill shopkeeper. All of us have heard of the Medellin Cartel, the Colombian cocaine organisation. The profits from the trade in cocaine have financed large armies of well armed and trained guards. Because of the nature of the business and having such firepower it was only a question of time before such "businessmen" started to deal in politics. The bribing of government officials has been par for the course in South America. In the case of the Cartel they had such power that they could effectively control the whole country. When officials didn't play ball, they would simply have them shot. Only recently has this situation changed a little. Change

This situation doesn't change because countries like the USA do not allow it to change. The USA effectively controls, through all manner of institutions, the world prices of commodities. They see no problem in keeping the prices of primary goods, raw materials, textiles and a wide

variety of crops, very low. Under capitalism there is no incentive to change. Indeed the economies of the cocaine countries would in all likelihood collapse and hundreds of thousands starve if, indeed, cocaine ceased to be an export commodity. Western governments are content with the situation as it is. The poor are trapped between the proverbial rock and a hard place. On one hand they are forced into the only viable economic outlet — drugs (be it the cultivation or transport). Thus they are criminalised for their poverty. On the other hand they have the drug barons behind them armed to the teeth and controlling a whole puppet show of corrupt officials and politicians.

The trade in drugs, particularly hard drugs, is reactionary. It is a trap which capital and the state use with real skill. The victims are always ordinary working people, the poor and the desperate. It is no use looking to decriminalise drugs because that would have one effect only — commercialisation, making whole economies reliant upon single crops such as opium poppies, coca plants or cannabis.

At Rock Bottom

This is capitalism at its most parasitic. It isn't a pretty sight looking at kids, youth, or indeed anybody, getting out of their heads, thinking that there is nothing else usefully to do with their time.

Above I talked about the "recreational" use of drugs. The most commonly used drug in this country is alcohol, with cannabis coming in second. Around 1 million use cannabis regularly here. I have no argument with those who use drugs such

as alcohol or cannabis recreationally, that is, not in excess and only occasionally. The problem for us all is that it is all too often the case that people get caught in the trap of one or more drugs becoming the focal point of their lives, the drug living their life for them. This the most extreme form of exploitation. This world drives people to such depths that escape through solvents (glue-sniffing), crack (refined, highly addictive cocaine), heroin and more, are the only options for alleviating their problems. Here people have given up the creative control of their own lives. Faced with apparently limited options, they give in to escapism. But there is another option which involves taking back control of your own life and not living in a nihilistic ghetto of self-contempt, passively poisoning yourself. The answer lies within the revolutionary opposition to this society.

Dealers

The others at the bottom of this hierarchy are the mules and the dealers. Those who carry it for others and those who sell it on the streets. The most common story of mules are that they are ordinary poor working class people who have no other option than such dangerous work to earn fast money. Examples such as Nigerian women carrying heroin and cocaine to pay for operations for their kids abound. Far from being devious and well off criminals, the real criminals are those who perpetuate a system which drives people to such desperate measures. Similarly the common view that most dealers of such things as cannabis are well off, living the good life, is garbage. Most earn a few extra quid to supplement benefits.

To give a good example, in Sheffield over the past few years two major initiatives have been taken by police concerning drug dealing. One massive raid in one of the poorest areas, Broomhall, had the aim of netting large quantities of drugs and major dealers. What they got for breaking down the doors of a whole neighbourhood were around six arrests of black people for negligible quantities of cannabis. In a rich area of the city they arrested a well to do, white, middle class professional with major quantities of cocaine. The well off in the drugs trade are good examples of the capitalist class. The poorest are those usually forced into it by poverty, they are often black and yet it is black people who are characterised as the real mainstays of the criminal trade in drugs.

It is time to declare war, but not on those who are the victims of the whole situation, those who all too often have no other option. We should declare war on the drug-capitalists and those who created the festering situation in the first place. Here is a message. Drug barons, corrupt politicians, smug exploiters, all of you are the criminals, your time is coming, we look forward to the time when you have no other options, when all you face is your own destruction.

Mining and Native People's Resistance in the Philippines

THE CORDILLERA IS a vast mountain range located in the northern part of the Philippines. It is richly endowed with natural resources coveted by multinational mining companies such as Berger Corp and now CRA the Australian subsidiary of Rio Tinto Zinc. In mineral resources alone the Cordillera supplies 73% of the Philippines' gold, 46% of its silver, 62% of its zinc and 21% of its copper.

The Cordillera is claimed as Ancestral Domain by some 1 million indigenous peoples commonly called the "Igarots" who have lived in the area since pre-colonial times. Their cultural identity and survival as a distinct people is rooted in the Cordillera and they see themselves as the stewards rather than owners of the region.

The land is placed in their care by their ancestors to pass on to future generations whose survival will depend on it. Since the days of the Spanish Conquistadors, the Igarots have fiercely defended their land and attempted to maintain their culture in the face of colonial domination of the Philippines. Today the struggle is against foreign multinationals working hand in glove with the Philippines government.

Some 80% of the Philippines has been declared public (i.e. meaning State), making most Igarots squatters on their land. This systematic grabbing of ancestral lands combined with state repression in the form of militarisation has enabled mining multinationals to exploit the region at the expense of the Igarots' social, economic and cultural needs, and wreaking irreversible environmental damage.

In response the *Cordillera People's Alliance* (CPA) was formed to bring scattered and diverse grassroots peoples' movements together to resist. Eugene Yokogan, Education Officer of the CPA, is currently in Britain working with *Minewatch* collective. *Minewatch* is a network of grassroots organisations concerned about the social and environmental impact of mining (especially on native peoples). It is committed to empowering local

communities through information, mutual aid and solidarity so they can decide if and how a mining project goes ahead.

Here an ACF member involved in *Minewatch* interviews Eugene.

"How are people employed in the Cordillera?"

Agriculture is the main livelihood; mostly a mixture of subsistence and commercial. In the early 1980s the region supplied 70% of the Philippines' temperate vegetables.

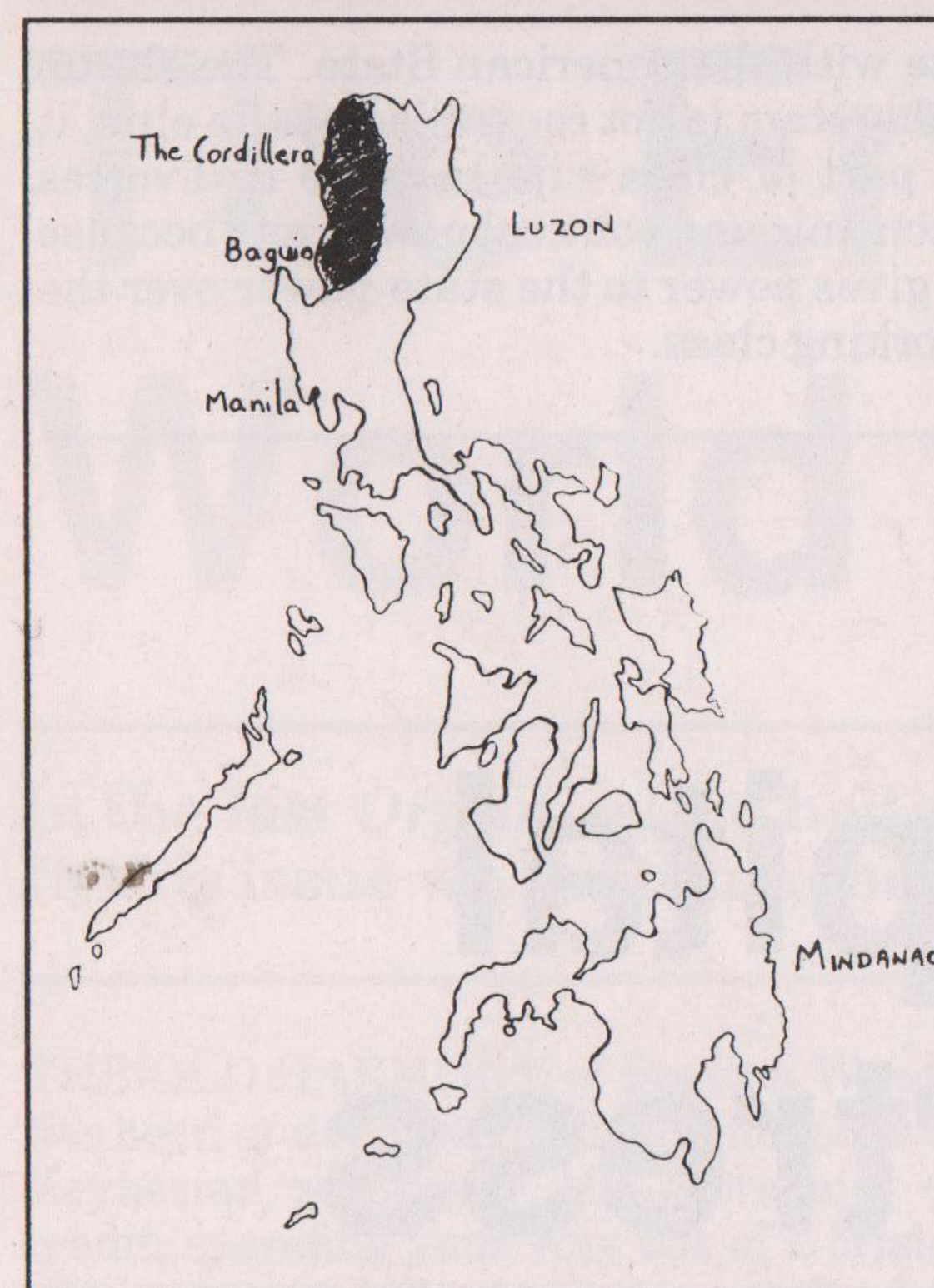
Between 60-100,000 people are self-employed miners (full/part-time), panning or pocket-mining gold which they sell on the black market.

The remainder are employed by government agencies such as the Civil Service, private companies (including mining), and non-governmental organisations.

Thousands from the Cordillera, together with many other Filipinos have been forced by evictions or poverty to seek work abroad eg, 10,000 people are employed as domestic helpers in Hong Kong alone.

"Do many of the Cordillera's problems stem from the 'development' plans of foreign corporations, backed by the government?"

Yes. Big business have their greedy eyes on the region. Already there are large-scale logging concessions owned by mining companies and the Philippines elite. Deforestation contributes to the erosion of farmland, springs deteriorate and there is less water for irrigation. The lowland



areas surrounding the Cordillera which are the rice granaries of the country are damaged by silt from the resulting erosion. Logging areas are heavily militarised to counter resistance and reinforcements are readily available. Resistance includes sabotage of machinery, picketing of concessions and government permit offices, media barrages and armed struggle (the NPA, New Peoples Army).

Since the 1900s large mining companies have moved in, evicting thousands of small-scale miners and farming communities. Mine areas are left depleted of minerals and unfit for agriculture. Open-pit mining, which is very destructive, is now being introduced. Subsidence resulting from underground mining contributed to the destruction caused by the recent earthquake. The Leparto Consolidated Mining Company mine in masayer has already proved a disaster. The Copper drier has caused a huge dust fallout which has destroyed and damaged plants, left fruit trees and animals unable to reproduce and has caused a high rate of respiratory ailments in people such as bronchitis and pneumonia. The Company ignored fact-finding missions and petitions throughout the 1980s until armed groups (probably the New People's Army) shot up the drier in 1989, telling the workers not to start it up again. Three of the Leparto tailings dams (mine waste tips) have already collapsed, leaving the surrounding areas useless farming due to acid spillover. Water springs are polluted, depleted or have dried up. Numerous attempts to depose the yellow company union have failed. During the last certification election many miners were again threatened or bribed.

Leparto have tried to buy support by giving money to Maakayen municipality for bus waiting sheds and basketball courts. Leparto machines clear landslides and they finance Leparto High School.

"What is the CPA structure?"

There are about 100 member organisa-

tions. Each province has a CPA chapter made up of the member groups. Two representatives are elected from each chapter to the Executive Council and in addition, each sectional group (eg women) have an EC representative. Congresses/General Assemblies are held every two years where officers are elected, the constitution and bye-laws amended and a programme of action decided. The Executive council runs things between Congresses.

The CPA does not believe it can achieve change on its own and so it makes alliances and links with other groups. For example, at a national level it is a member of Kamp (the organisation of indigenous peoples) and of Bayan, the New Patriotic Alliance (a coalition of nationalist and Democratic organisations).

"How did the CPA come about?"

Under the Marcos regime it was obvious that the Cordillera was a resource base for the national government and an exploitation area for multinational companies. In the early 1970s there were attempts to dam the chico river for a hydro-electric power project (financed by the World bank) which would have displaced 100,000 indigenous people. There was great opposition.

As a result of this experience, Cordillera people felt a need to unite in defence of their ancestral domain and for self-determination. The CPA was founded in 1984 to unite all sectors such as women, youth, workers and tribal leaders.

"What does the CPA do?"

Chapters campaign and organise on local issues and on general campaigns decided by the executive committee which has officers covering different issues. The four main areas are: self-determination, ancestral domain; foreign control, encroachment; fascism; and economic survival.

"What is your job as Education Officer?"

Education work plays a vital role in organising. We produce popular education materials such as leaflets, brochures, comics and primers as well as campaign materials, news articles and statements and letters of support for international groups. I train organisers and there is a curricula and modules for grassroots members of the community. I assess the value of our work and what is needed. We conduct forums, symposiums and some public meetings.

"How did your work with *Minewatch* come about?"

In 1990 a *Minewatch* worker came to the Philippines and shared insights with us about CRA and the Far South East Project (a large gold mine extension to Leparto). Learning of CRA's past record, their methods and tactics, strengthened and encouraged our campaigning. We found out that CRA were notorious for their violation of ancestral lands, brow-beating

of government officials and ability to co-opt people. We became serious about this campaign and decided to send someone to MW to become more aware of mining issues; the consequences of hosting another mine which would deplete our resources (particularly a CRA project) were all too predictable.

"Aquino came to power amidst much popular support and great hopes for change?"

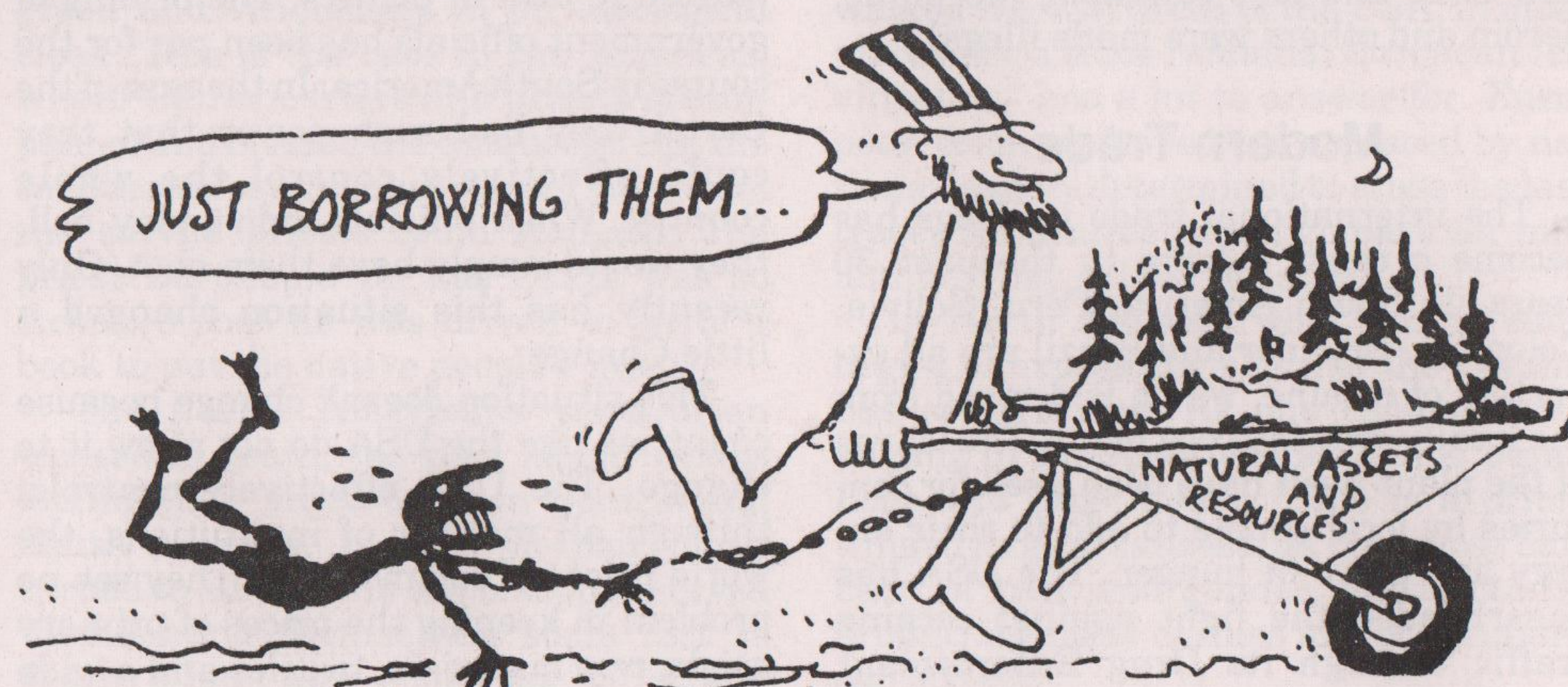
Yes, when Aquino was in opposition to the Marcos regime she committed herself to the demands of the people. She was a signatory to the Base-Free Pact and committed to agrarian reform (taking the hacienda as an example) These hopes have been disappointed, and her position has quite clearly changed. She is no less subservient to the American government than Marcos was. This was very obvious during the time of the camp. One of the people's demands was that they should not bear the burden of repayment of foreign debts and particularly those incurred by Marcos and his cronies — but Aquino continues to pay them. Her economic policies are against our survival — but she is a puppet of America and implements them.

The hopes of the indigenous people who were promised self-determination before Aquino came to power were particularly frustrated and the provision in the new constitution for granting autonomy to indigenous peoples was added only after successful lobbying by grassroots activists spearheaded by the CPA. The government has no political will to implement this. They demonstrated this by appointing Aquino "yes-people" to the Commission rather than grassroots activists. This is because they intend to keep control of resources, the economy, and political administration. Another example of how the people's hopes have been disappointed is the way the State continues under Aquino (as under Marcos) to use the military to protect its interests and keep the elite in power. In the Cordillera the military continues to protect foreign business, big capital and their local cohorts. It's very saddening because some of us, for economic survival, have to join the army.

"What are the lessons you draw from this period?"

The best way is to empower people by organising them, building people's consensus, educating them so that they're equipped with the best analytical tools to decide things for themselves. Mobilise them for action so that they can act independently and mobilise collectively against things they oppose such as open-pit mining. We have this emphasis because every part of the electoral system is controlled by the elite and their colonial masters. We're building a situation where we have equal power to face the elite.

Organise! comment: Anarchist communists know that NO government is in



the interests of the working class be it a Leninist "Workers' State", democratic post State Communist (Eastern Europe) or a "popular" government riding to power on the deposition of a dictator. Governments are part of the ruling class, the elite

whose power and wealth is built on oppressing and exploiting the working class. Aquino "opposed" Marcos and the American State because it enabled her to ride to power as the "people's champion", now it is politically expedient for her to cooper-

ate with the American State. The electoral system is not controlled by the elite, it is part of class rule because it divorces economic and political power, and because it gives power to the state-power over the working class.

Britain and Europe 1992/3:

The Barons of Capital and their New Fortress

THE SINGLE EUROPEAN market of '92/3 is still being bandied about by the powers that be as the great hope for the future. A whole variety of forces are combining to tell us that the future could not look rosier, this alliance being the "progressives" within the bosses and the unions and sections of the political parties. Outside of this there are those who are likely to lose out, the old entrenched forces of traditional unions, businesses protected by economic barriers and the politicians connected to each.

Unfortunately for British capital it has been suffering rather a lot recently. We are going through a recession. The economy has been contracting by about 2-3% per year. This means that jobs are lost wholesale and wages are lost as working hours are lost. The places being hit are not the old vulnerable areas of the North, Midlands, Wales and Scotland but the rich South East, thought to be invulnerable to such things. The bosses and government are hoping that all of this is going to change, I don't think it will that much.

Hope

One big hope is that the new trade freedoms of the single market will give a big push to the very successful. It is hoped that some of the damaging competition from US and Japanese multinationals will be excluded, leaving the field free for European industries. In the regions bosses are believing the propaganda put about that they are likely to get a better chance in the new Europe. All that is likely to happen is a further concentration of capital in the richest areas of the central core of the EEC - SE UK, Benelux, N Germany and NE France. The other areas will be used as sources of cheap, mobile and trained or untrained labour.

To support this process the governments are looking to exclude non-Europeans, no matter what or who they are. Thus, the TREVI and Schengen groups are busy setting new laws, information



and co-operation networks and propaganda. All of this is to mark any non-European as a potential risk or danger. They are being criminalised as drug dealers, thieves, terrorists or something new (as a term) economic refugees. This is happening whether those people wishing to enter the EEC are refugees, asylum seekers or migrants. It does not matter to the governments that such situations come directly out of the conditions encouraged by them - the economic deprivations, the arms sales to reactionary regimes.

To sell all this to the workers of Europe we are being handed a bright new idea - the Social Charter. We are being told that we are getting new harmonised rights and benefits, we are to be able to settle wherever we like in the EEC. All of which is essentially garbage. None of the proposals are to become law, they are all just suggestions for the different governments to adopt if they wish. All of the benefits are simply likely to be rounded down.

The bosses' only wish is for a workforce

which will agree to its own exploitation, tied into new working agreements by membership of compliant unions, and bought off by the empty phrases of the empty social charter. They want to be able to work us as hard as they wish, retire us as late as they wish, give us whatever hours they like. There is so much more to this whole enterprise of the bosses, we hope to be able to bring further news and information as we have it. We hope to have a more detailed pamphlet out as soon as we are able. Beyond this it is up to us to organise on a Europe-wide basis to oppose every attack upon the working and poor classes of Europe. To this end we are hoping to act wherever we can with comrades from all over Europe in a network which is now beginning to grow. Every measure they bring in to oppress, impoverish and exploit us should be met with every scrap of force we can muster. We look to everyone to help. It is in our interest to unite and in solidarity build an oppositional force they cannot ignore.

The End of the Old World Economy?

In the last *Organise!* we had a look at the New World Disorder. In this issue we continue the discussion.

THE OLD HARMONY of Bretton Woods has been under assault. Its foundations of Keynesian economics, the economics of credit, spending your way out of a crisis, of currency stability built around the dollar and world trade given a "fairness" with international agreement to remove gradually all its destabilising possibilities, all have disappeared or fundamentally changed.

Domestic spending by governments to banish crises ended in the '70s as a coherent strategy. International borrowing has been continued by the poor nations and has reached levels endangering the international banking system as a whole, with the crashes in Citibank etc, involved in huge lending to mainly South American governments. The Americans removed the pegging of currencies to the \$ in 1973 in response to the financial problems finally being brought home by its war in Vietnam. World trade agreements were to be reorganised because of the debt crisis of Africa and Latin America and because the major partners of the west could no longer agree over the division of their spoils.

Greed

The comfortable ideas of the '60s that capital had become crisis free came to an end, although it was easy to understand why such ideas became common. The combination of unemployment and inflation (stagflation), which had hitherto been thought impossible, the once-defeated nations having become the new industrial giants, and then suffering their own problems as new industrial powerhouses came to the fore, all combined to bring home the fact that the foundations set up around the war years had become brittle. It was time for a new beginning, even the new economic theories of monetarism could not help. The Chicago school who advanced these theories of cutting the money supply and letting the market take its course in a Darwinian survival of the fittest, were given carte blanche in Chile and many of their ideas were taken up by Thatcher (the new incarnation of the beast). It was soon found that the whole of these policies had very unfortunate effects indeed, greed becoming the creed of

the day did not necessarily produce anything but tended to destroy more than it created (if it actually created anything at all). The poor were given a new lot, to be even poorer while those with the capacity to exploit were given the green light to exploit away. The welfarism of Keynesianism was trashed in favour of individualism.

Need

The need to redefine the structure of the world economy was to be put at the latest round of GATT talks, the so-called Uruguay round (which incidentally were broken off just in time to fight the Gulf War). Until recently GATT had shied away from discussion of free trade in certain areas: agriculture, textiles, steel,

motor manufacture; even though its brief is to eventually agree away all barriers to free trade. These are areas of predominant strength for the industrialised nations. They have been the areas in which Non-Tariff Barriers have been pursued eg, quotas, voluntary restraints etc. If trade in these areas was freed the Poor World would be able to earn a great deal more on the world market, attacking the traditional strengths of the richer nations of the west because of their higher costs, probably sending many of their industries to the wall.

The USA pressed for the reduction of farm subsidies such as the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy of the EEC). Average subsidies in the rich nations being: US, 20%; Europe, 40%; Japan, 70%. No resolution has been achieved yet - initially the USA wanted a 75% reduction, the EEC offered 30% over 10 years. The USA has huge farming surpluses, wasting farming capacity as farmers go broke, and huge agri-business interests all over the world. The EEC has a large farming lobby



even though what is at stake is only 3% of European GDP. Similarly for Japan, even though the ruling Liberal Democratic Party is partially based upon the safe and cosseted farming lobby it has found it necessary to talk of cutting its subsidies and save money, eg, in areas of research which may bring new profits to contracting industry.

But why is all of this taking place? World trade has been in decline for some years now. Much of the reason for this being the debt crisis, western banks out of greed and a surplus of funds generated by oil and trade surpluses having to find a home only to find that such loans cannot be repaid because trade and commodity prices have been manipulated to suit the weakness of the US economy. Thus such areas as South America have found that they cannot trade as much with the US because they simply do not have the funds. (Which explains the western campaigns to write off some of the debts.) The US economy has contracted by around 5% over the past two years, along with the

UK, France, Italy etc. They need to manipulate the rules of world trade to restart their economies, for example, by reducing their budget deficit and giving their farm produce a better chance by being able to reduce their farm subsidies. How? By forcing the EEC and Japan to reduce theirs. Secondly, by giving them a new series of markets in services and technology by the removal of barriers and bootlegging in the Poor World.

Draft

The US wants to make its services freely exportable, everything from banking to shipping to telecommunications. Here 63% of EEC economy is at stake. A draft agreement has been on offer, accepted by the poor nations as well, but it is now being blocked by the US protectionist lobby. Large sections of US capital are scared. While it has successful multinationals the US also has to try to defend its domestic economy which employs millions and generates the profits which give

rise to the capital to export. The state is scared, not only does it have to contend with the huge Japanese economy but the German. The gap between the two economies is around \$1200b and is set to be \$1500b. Germany has a surplus in trade \$80b bigger than Japan, which is moving to a technology-based economy rather than wholly manufactures. In addition Germany, as well as Japan, is exporting capital at around DM100tr.

All of these trends and processes are pushing the world away from its previous form and into a struggle between three centres, the US, Japan and Germany. The US having its stronghold in the new trading set up, the free trade zone of the US, Canada and Mexico, but also extending its influence into the rest of South America where the US has traditionally propped up extreme right-wing regimes. Japan being centred around the Pacific and Asia. Germany coming from the strength of the trade area of the EEC and looking to extend its economy into the old Soviet bloc.

The Peace Goes to War

AS WITH ALL American peaces there is always war. The Gulf War saw the first flexing of the Pax Americana. Following on from the Truman Doctrine, the basis of the Free World ideology, the US has always had the moral (or immoral) capacity to support any repressive regime which fitted its interests — the various Latin American dictatorships, the Saudis and the Emirates, Asian reactionaries, African white supremacists and so on. But it would always bring them down or abandon them if necessary, as with Noriega in Panama.

Right or Wrong

Part of this whole ideology, my country right or wrong etc, helped to keep the US workers occupied with external hatreds and not with their own exploitation. Consequently, once the Soviet bear was tamed there would be the need for a new focus for that hatred. The muslim middle east was a convenience. Khomeini's Iran, Gaddafi's Libya and Assad's Syria have all helped along the way. Whether they were leftist or not it didn't matter. Even the most reactionary regime such as Iran's could be used because of the foreignness of Islam, that they would not listen to Judaeo-Christian reason or the power of the \$.

There the US used Saddam, aiding him with intelligence, as with the Baathist takeover (using CIA information on Iraqi Stalinists to get rid of them, allies were not required after the coup).

Later the Iraqis were to be used as convenient pawns and targets. The US

was to calmly say that Iraq should and could sort out its own disputes with other Arab nations. It is particularly interesting that at the time of the invasion of Kuwait the GATT talks were becoming very difficult for the US. In addition there had been moves towards new arab political and economic linkages — the Maghreb Union, bringing together the north African states, and the Arab Cooperation Council, an economic grouping of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and North Yemen. All of this was falling into the pattern seen by the Rand Corporation (right-wing US organisation) as the new available opposition for the US.

The situation, coupled with that of oil was to become of real benefit for the long-range interests of the US. The control of the price and supply level of oil is a major lever on the world economy. Japan, for example, having no oil of its own needs cheap and reliable oil supplies to keep its economy growing. Similarly the German economy could be damaged to some extent. By provoking a conflict in the Gulf the US could achieve a number of short, medium and long term aims.

In the short term the US could manipulate the oil price so that its own oil could become profitable. The US has oil deposits which involve high costs of extraction. The price of oil, at \$16 per barrel, was too low for the US meaning that it would increasingly import cheaper oil from abroad thus worsening its trade deficit. Here its interests coincided with those of Iraq which had huge debts to finance from its disastrous war with Iran, debts centred around forced loans from Kuwait. When the Ku-

waitis, who have very cheap oil (low production costs), refused to bow to Iraqi pressure at OPEC to raise the price of oil, then the Iraqis had a motive for military action. Reviving its old claims as a pretext, Iraq looked to the US concerning what was obviously going to be war — the US effectively said go ahead, expecting only the occupation of the northern oil fields and the wiping of the debts. Saddam got greedy taking all of the country, thus helping him in his other claims to Saudi Arabia.

Cheap Oil

Now Iraq had large amounts of cheap oil it did not need to raise the price of oil. It could also threaten supply levels with its pressure upon the Saudis or taking their territory. All of which was against US interests. But now the US could engage in its favourite hobby — open war. Germany, Japan and the oil rich arabs could be blackmailed into paying up for the defence of their interests by the global policeman, Captain America.

In the end the US made a profit out of the war, in direct contributions, contracts for Kuwaiti reconstruction and deals for the arms on show during the war. The USA could point to its crushing success as a threat to any others who might get out of line and follow their own interests too vigorously. In addition the US has the chance to remain in the region militarily, paid for by others, and control the region.

Lesson number one of the Pax Americana — what's yours is mine and what's mine is my own.

Organise! Questionnaire

SOME TIME AGO we sent out a questionnaire to subscribers and members. Thanks for the enthusiastic response. A large majority, 68% of members and subscribers, rated *Organise!* as the best of the anarchist press. The information received will ensure that the improvement that is needed will be translated into making *Organise!* the most widely read paper promoting the working class revolution. That, in turn, solidifies those often tenuous links between activists and the rest of the working class, making our task of the presentation of revolutionary organisation and ideas much more accessible. This opens the road to a meaningfully real discourse and a positive influence upon the development of autonomous organisation and action.

Organise!: Previous Content

Members

On coverage, 43% believed that *Organise!*'s content was good, 31% that it was adequate and the rest, 26%, that it was poor. Of the 26%, three quarters believed more coverage on women's issues and sexuality was needed, with race also needing greater attention.

Subscribers

On coverage, 46% believed *Organise!* to be good, 28% adequate, 14% and 12% respectively that it was excellent and poor. Of the 12% who ticked poor, ecology, Ireland, and women's issues came in for equal criticism. Capitalism and economy were considered to be excellently covered,

with the unusual result of imperialism being simultaneously rated both excellent and poor.

Comment: The majority of respondents believed that content, along with the depth of political debate and the style of the articles to be good to adequate. Members were overall more critical. This reflects the generally healthy and constructive environment within the ACF itself. Constant feedback and a commitment towards maintaining the forward momentum only adds further to the wider understanding of our perspectives. That being said, there was a definite confluence of agreement by both members and subscribers that women's issues and sexuality definitely required an increased coverage.

What's needed?

Given the very real constraints of finance not, at the moment, allowing us to publish more regularly or with a greater amount of pages, the balance of articles in previous *Organise!* issues was considered to be a reasonable model for immediately foreseeable future issues. Notwithstanding the extremely remote and minute possibility of the rotten (or should that be decomposed?) Maxwell Press being willed over to the ACF, the production of all-colour and daily issues of *Organise!* are not on the immediate agenda.

On the question of "What would you like to see more of?", a very complete range of opinions were given. Many respondents wanted to see more articles on industrial disputes and also on working class culture and leisure and, though recognising the effectiveness of the "new look" in breaking up large slabs of text

into something more digestible, believed that more pictorially relevant humour and "lighter, more newsy" type articles should be inserted. Any budding comic-strip artists and journo's out there?

Final words must go to those who replied. Many also write articles for *Organise!*. It must be stressed that without such a highly developed level of commitment *Organise!* would not have the degree of quality it presently has. The paper is not put together through a cabal of intellectuals usurping its pages for their own self-satisfying needs. May this compiler digress? To those who answered the question, "Do you feel you could write, or contribute to *Organise!*?", with the reply that they felt experience, knowledge, or skill was personally lacking, we say "balderdash, have a go!" *Organise!* is the voice of class struggle anarchists. Part of its primary purpose lies within the development of skills essential to a revolutionary movement. One of those skills is the presentation of thought into words. All articles sent in, so long as they do not contradict the Aims and Principles, are considered to be for inclusion into *Organise!* If arguments need to be developed or clarification is required we do all we can to encourage a friendly correspondence and revolutionary discourse. So dust them off and send them in.

Now to those final words. The following have, admittedly subjectively, been culled from the space provided in the questionnaire for any additional comments. Quote:

- "There should be a regular Around the ACF page so that people are aware of our activity. I would like to see more open polemic with revolutionary groups and individuals in an expanded letters/discussion page."
- "Changes have to be made but all the time recognising what we have achieved and maintaining/improving upon it. There are no short cuts or magical solutions. Work hard, be realistic and positive, laugh and smash the State!"
- "It would be good to have more debate in *Organise!*, articles by groups/individuals who don't agree 100% with us."
- "I feel that at this time perhaps more than ever before anarchy and all it stands for needs explaining and I believe the audience is there. We need to have non-anarchists reading *Organise!*. I believe that can only be done by making *Organise!* better... funnier... more colourful.... interesting".

Build the leadership of ideas! Forward to the daily!

ANARCHIST COMMUNIST FEDERATION DAYSCHOOL

Saturday 14th March 1992

Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont Street, London WC1 (Russell Square tube).

Timetable

- 10.00-10.30 Registration
- 10.30-10.45 Introduction
- 10.45-12.30 National liberation struggles — Why are they a dead end?
- 12.30-1.15 Lunch
- 1.15-2.45 Leninism. Labourism. Capturing the State or destroying it. Vanguardism and social democracy trashed.
- 2.45-3.00 Teabreak
- 3.00-4.30 Anarchist communism. Theory & practice. How do we go forward.
- 4.30-4.45 Conclusion

Cost £3 waged/£2 unwaged. Refreshments provided.

Please try to book in advance and also send details of creche facilities needed or any special requirements to ACF c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1. Disabled access.



FASCISM

Dear Organise!

With the worrying rise of fascism and racists attacks on the continent, isn't it time that anarchists really made a stand and fought the root cause of the problem — the bigotry of capitalism. Fascism is being allowed to grow unhindered by the democratic parties, they feel denouncing these acts will lead to damaged electoral support. We have no such worries. Let's take to the streets and encourage ethnic communities to fight violence with violence, the only language Nazis understand. Socialism of the authoritarian variety is dead, the Labour Party is dying, everywhere Trotskyist groups are fighting for their lives, there is no longer a visible alternative to Nazism. We must therefore step out of the shadows and into the light, as the viable way to smash the fascists and eventually overthrow the whole State bureaucracy which allows hatred to thrive.

Yours for Libertarian Communism

Martyn (Grantham)

REPLY TO GREEN FLAME (issue 24)

Where we part company with Green Flame's views is that we don't feel that electoralism has any role to play in radical social change. It is inevitable that "the good radicals in the Party" should be "fighting a losing battle against the elite professionals". This is the nature of Party politics. The real struggle is at the grass-roots, outside and against parliament.

We do however welcome dialogue and joint practical work with radical greens such as yourselves: we have much to learn from each other.

This reply was left out of last issue due to lack of space.

REVIEW

Cornelius Castoriadis, *Political and Social Writings. Vol. 1. 1946-55. From the Critique of Bureaucracy to the Positive Content of Socialism*, Minnesota.

It is always said that the shorter a review the longer the book — this is a short review, there are three volumes to be had eventually. It does not, however, mean that the book is either unimportant or empty, quite the reverse.

Hunted

Castoriadis was born in 1922 in what was then Constantinople. He entered the Greek CP in 1937, by 1942 he was a Trotskyist and hunted by both the Gestapo and stalinist agents. He moved to France after the war but soon came to recognise the redundancy of Trotskyism. His criticisms of stalinism, he realised, were to be levelled equally at the Trotskyists.

We know him best by his pseudonyms — P. Chaulieu and Paul Cardan. In 1949 he formed, with Claude Lefort and others, the group and review *Socialisme ou Barbarie*. The aims of this group were to challenge the practices, the theory and analysis of the whole of the French left, a formidable task considering the weight of the stalinist PCF at the time and the number of well-respected intellectuals who backed it.

Why read this now? Well, simply because at least some of it is still very interesting. For example, the statement "Socialism or Barbarism" is included, the result of a 1961 conference grouping *Pouvoir Ouvrier* (Socialism ou Bar-

barie), *Unita Proletaria* of Italy, *Pouvoir Ouvrier Belge* (Belgium), and *Socialism Re-affirmed*, which we know today as *Solidarity*, the British organisation (the review is still going). The statement itself is of interest as one step along the way from traditional marxism toward libertarian revolutionary politics. One particular smack in the eye for the traditional Leninists comes in the text *Proletarian Leadership*: "The leadership of the class cannot be distinct from the class itself", p200. As the text develops it looks at how revolutionary organisations "lead" but in a non-Leninist way.

Much of this first volume is taken up with the analysis of the Soviet society of the time. Within that the most amusing sections are devoted to the demolition of Trotskyism and stalinism. Having directly experienced both, Castoriadis is well placed to deliver blow after blow to these self-inflated, blow-up dolls of the political world. Moreover, he does it, as it were, from inside, using their own language, being still at this time, a marxist. Whether or not he is a marxist, or was, should not stop us from reading these texts. They provide useful weapons both in our struggle against the left as comprising Trotskyism, stalinism, Leninism, and also as motivations toward discussion within our ranks.

Here in this first volume we also see the mention of ideas such as "workers' management" or "self-management". Such terms are pretty well universally excluded from the language of the libertarian left now, but they were well discussed in this period.

The phrases stand in opposition to what Castoriadis called bureaucratic capitalism — the economy of the USSR and its clones. In the place of anti-revolutionary measures masquerading as revolutionary, such as nationalisation and bureaucratic planning, he advocates the direction of the economy by the producers, the direction of the workplace by autonomous workers' organisations — workers' councils.

Link to the Past

Castoriadis neatly showed both the class nature of the so-called "socialist" states and

the feebleness of their detractors/applauders, the Trotskyists.

These texts are a link to the past of the libertarian left and should be used as sources for present and future activity and discussion. They provide some weight with which we can beat the various Leninists about the head.

THE MANIFESTO OF LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISM

As we promised in the last issue we are undertaking a reprinting of several ACE pamphlets, all of which have proved to be good sellers.

Foutenis

The first one out is the historically important *Manifesto of Libertarian Communism*, written by the French activist Georges Foutenis. It is one of the key texts of the anarchist communist current, and its best features must be taken notice of in developing an anarchist communist theory and strategy for today. It is the third printing of this pamphlet by the ACF. It can be obtained for 60p & an SAE from the London address, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

ACF History

Other ACE pamphlets out early in the New Year will be a reprint of another fundamental text of anarchist communism *The Role of the Revolutionary Organisation*: an updated edition of *Making Progress* which describes the history, politics and structure of the ACF.

Also appearing, later in the year, will be a pamphlet on *Fortress Europe*, how the bosses plan to make us suffer in 1993 and what we can do to fight back, as well as a revised version of one of our very early pamphlets *Anarchism - How We See It*. All this costs loads of money.

We think you, our readers, realise how important it is to get over our ideas at this time, so any financial contributions would be very much appreciated.

Aims and Principles

1. The Anarchist Communist Federation is an organisation of revolutionary class struggle anarchists. We aim for the abolition of all hierarchy, and work for the creation of a world-wide classless society: anarchist communism.

2. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. But inequality and exploitation are also expressed in terms of race, gender, sexuality, health, ability and age, and in these ways one section of the working class oppresses another. This divides us, causing a lack of class unity in struggle that benefits the ruling class.

Oppressed groups are strengthened by autonomous action which challenges social and economic power relationships. To achieve our goal we must relinquish power over each other on a personal as well as a political level.

3. We believe that fighting racism and sexism is as important as other aspects of the class struggle. Anarchist-communism cannot be achieved while sexism and racism still exist. In order to be effective in their struggle against their oppression both within society and within the working class, women and black people may at times need to organise independently. However, this should be as working class women and black people as cross-class movements hide

real class differences and achieve little for them. Full emancipation cannot be achieved without the abolition of capitalism.

4. We are opposed to the ideology of national liberation movements which claims that there is some common interest between native bosses and the working class in face of foreign domination. We do support working class struggles against racism, genocide, ethnocide and political and economic colonialism. We oppose the creation of any new ruling class. We reject all forms of nationalism, as this only serves to redefine divisions in the international working class. The working class has no country and national boundaries must be eliminated. We seek to build an anarchist international to work with other libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.

5. As well as exploiting and oppressing the majority of people, Capitalism threatens the world through war and destruction of the environment.

6. It is not possible to abolish Capitalism without a revolution, which will arise out of class conflict. The ruling class must be completely overthrown to achieve anarchist communism. Because the ruling class will not relinquish power without the use of armed force, this revolution will be a time of violence as well as liberation.

7. Unions by their very nature cannot become vehicles for the revolutionary transformation of society. They have to be accepted by capitalism in order to function and so cannot play a part on its overthrow. Trades unions divide the working class (between employed and unemployed, trade and craft, skilled and unskilled, etc). Even syndicalist unions are constrained by the fundamental nature of unionism. The union has to be able to control its membership in order to make deals with management. Their aim, through negotiation, is to achieve a fairer form of exploitation of the workforce. The interests of leaders and representatives will always be different to ours. The boss class is our enemy, and while we must fight for better conditions from it, we have to realise that reforms we may achieve today may be taken away tomorrow. Our ultimate aim must be the complete abolition of wage slavery. Working within the unions can never achieve this. However, we do not argue for people to leave unions until they are made irrelevant by the revolutionary event. The union is a common point of departure for many workers. Rank and file initiatives may strengthen us in the battle for anarchist-communism. What's important is that we organise ourselves collectively, arguing for workers to control struggles themselves.

8. Genuine liberation can only come about through the revolutionary self-activity of the working class on a mass scale. An anarchist communist society means not only co-operation between equals, but active involvement in the shaping and creating of that society during and after the revolution. In times of upheaval and struggle, people will need to create their own revolutionary organisations controlled by everyone in them. These autonomous organisations will be outside the control of political parties, and within them we will learn many important lessons of self-activity.

9. As anarchists we organise in all areas of life to try to advance the revolutionary process. We believe a strong anarchist organisation is necessary to help us to this end. Unlike other so-called socialists or communists we do not want power or control for our organisation. We recognise that the revolution can only be carried out directly by the working class.

However, the revolution must be preceded by organisations able to convince people of the anarchist communist alternative and method. We participate in struggle as anarchist communists, and organise on a federative basis. We reject sectarianism and work for a united revolutionary anarchist movement.

JOIN US!

JOHN KINNOCK or Neil Major? The choice is increasingly meaningless. Labore's programme of out-Torying the Tories is now so complete that even unthinking, entryist Trotskyist groups such as Militant are considering leaving (tape-

worms down the toilet of history). In Western Europe the communist parties have collapsed or gone social-democrat; the trots try to convince us that Leninism differs radically from stalinism (pass the Tippet, comrade). Vital ecological issues — long a concern of anarchist thinkers — are reduced to soap powder and voting by the Green Party.



Bankruptcy

The failure of conventional parties and their "revolutionary" counterparts in tandem with the economic crisis have

left a vacuum. This may be filled by "new look" parties: Major's "caring" Tories, Kinnock's "socialist-free" Labour, Ashdown's il-Liberal Democrats, Lord Porritt's grey-Greens or by the trots or resurgent fascists.

Alternative

Without an organised national movement, anarchist ideas will remain marginalised.

We need to be organised in class struggle anarchist groups locally and nationally. This enables us to be effectively involved in campaigns and struggles, to coordinate and support each other, and to be a visible and real alternative

to the cynical manoeuvring of the trots.

Such an organisation would get known through effective propaganda and action, and develop its ideas through debate and experience. This is the kind of organisation the ACF is trying to build.

The ACF works towards a social revolution, not to seize power for itself, but participating in a revolutionary process as working class people, to assist the class as a whole to destroy the present system and build a free and equal society run through mass decision-making.

We urge ALL who agree with our aims and principles to join us — now's the time!