

# Ordure! Ordure!

THE CRY one hears in Today in Parliament sounds remarkably like Ordure! Ordure! and may well refer to the misplaced dung emitted from factory farming. The irrelevance of Parliament to the problems facing human society makes the whole exercise farcical.

Having created vast surpluses of expensively produced food our legislators thresh around trying to contain it, as the vested interests that have grown up around this activity make cries of anger in case their profits are reduced. Having denuded the countryside of trees, hedges, and rural working population, the price of land having been driven to ridiculous heights by speculators, our large farmers are now to be paid to put the hedges back and plant serried rows of conifers. Building speculators will build homes for those with well paid but irrelevant jobs in the towns, while those who still do the real work of the countryside will be kept in council house ghettos.

Most governments in the so called democratic and free world are elected by a minority of the populations. The issues they campaign on are short-term, short-sighted, and attached to myopic vested interests and multinational companies whose activities are damaging to the long term (and increasingly short term) interests of humanity.

Economic growth in the traditional sense is a nonrunner, yet all the political parties back this horse. They all put increased share of the markets as their aim, although on a world basis this means employment here and unemployment elsewhere. As Bertrand Russell succinctly put it, if a certain number of people produce the required number of pins in 8 hours and a method is found to enable them to produce them in 4 hours, the result should be an extra 4 hours leisure; but in this in-

sane economic system half the people still work 8 hours and the other half are unemployed. What has happened in agriculture is that the rural population has been replaced by yuppies and second home owners and enormous sums are paid to store agricultural surpluses. They used to burn the surpluses or dump them (people used to be prosecuted for taking food off the dumps). Now they store them at great expense.

The nonrenewable inputs of this local overproduction could be redirected to give the third world a breathing space, until the renewable resources of their land could be restored with extensive re-forestation and irrigation. Their best land could be removed from supplying tobacco, coffee, tea, and items that contribute to the west's agricultural overproduction, and returned to local agriculturalists to provide their essential needs. The west would then have to return to more varied crop production on small mixed holdings.

The political parties have completely failed to learn from even the limited extrapolation of the Club of Rome which warned that there are physical limits to growth. (*The Limits to Growth*, Pan Books £2.50) This extensive study completed a decade and a half ago, has not yet made any impact in a financially disordered world where our most valuable renewable resource, the soil, is being lost at an enormous rate. Air and water are polluted in the process. Nothing can be separated from an establishment of ecological equilibrium. As the recent case of anti-barnacle paint shows, you cannot poison one item in isolation. If weekend boaters are rid of barnacles, *Freedom* readers will have to do without their oysters or winkles.

Alan Albon

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**LONDON** Freedom Box Number Users: A Distribution, Anarchist Communist Federation, Rebel Press, Spectacular Times, Virus.

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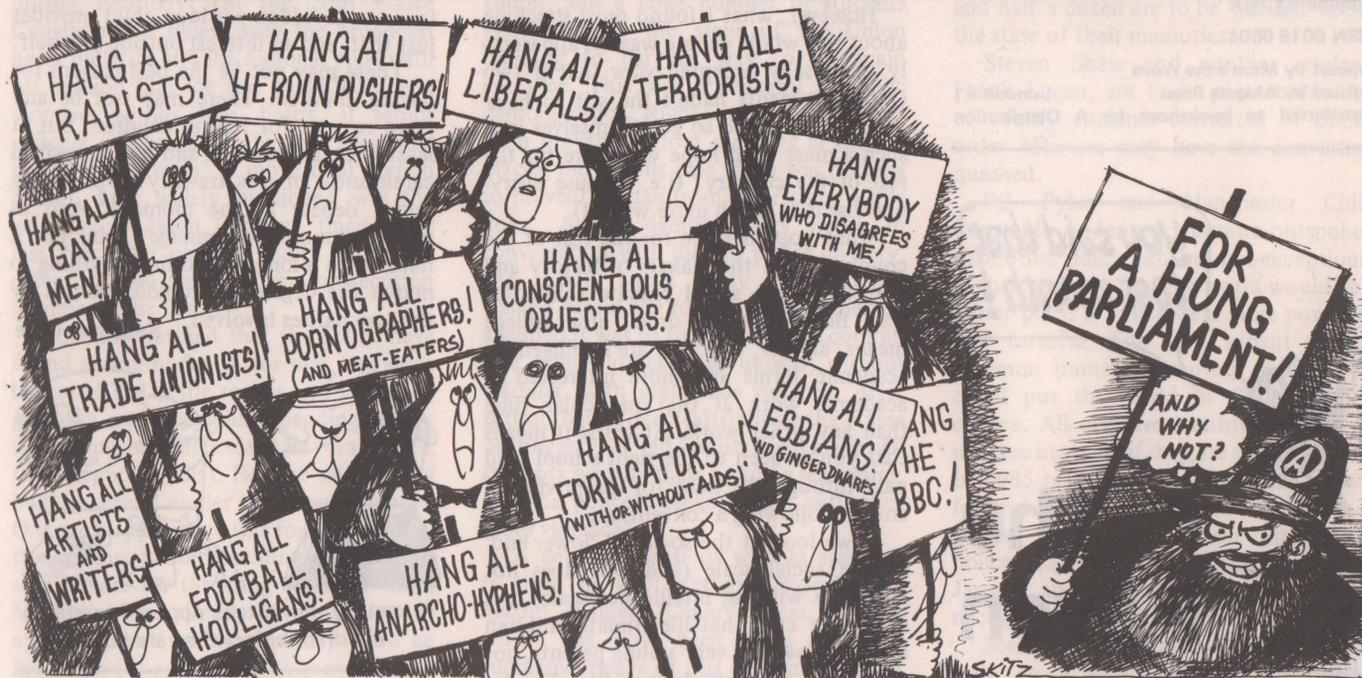
# FREEDOM

A LOT OF GOOD READING FOR

50p

ANARCHIST MAGAZINE

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## Hang 'em

IN 1975 a number of people were sentenced to life imprisonment for setting off bombs which killed people in Birmingham and Guildford. Had the death penalty been available in 1975, they would almost certainly have been killed. Twelve years later the evidence seems overwhelming that the evidence against them was misinterpreted, not to say faked, by police and others eager to restore public confidence by doing somebody for the bombings — the bombers themselves for preference, but if they could not be found, anyone handy. The cases are to be reviewed, and people found guilty of murder twelve years ago may now be freed as innocent.

A bad time, one might think, for advocating the restoration of the death penalty. Nevertheless, on 5 March, some 60 members of Parliament met to agree on the wording of a law to bring back hanging, to be proposed as an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill. Back to the days of Merrie England, when all was happy laughter and the sound of strangulation.

It comes as a surprise to many young people that the grisly ritual of hanging was discontinued in this country only about thirty years ago. Many more people would be surprised to learn that the

## THAT FOETUS

IRONIC that in the week Andy Warhol died the emergent phenomenon of the 'famous foetus' should reach fever point. And, whilst A. W. warranted (just) a scant few paragraphs, the said foetus was smeared across every front page. Andy said everyone would be world-famous for fifteen minutes and obviously his own fifteen minutes were well and truly up.

The story referred to, for those who've managed to avoid it, unfolded as follows: a 23-year-old post-graduate student from Oxford was informed sometime in January that he was the father of a foetus. His informer was the mother, a young woman he'd had a one night stand with at a party in October. She said she was pregnant by him, and about to have an abortion. She is a Christian, he is an atheist, and, here's the rub (...) active in the Pro-life movement. He was determined to stop the abortion. With the support of the notorious SPUC, he took her to court, claiming 'Father's Rights' and seeking an injunction to force the mother to go through with the birth. (He failed.)

Hysteria (carefully chosen word) gripped the nation — everyone had a say; Gillick was on the verge of tears. A *Sunday Times* headline declared 'Oxford

Prays For Its Unborn Child' — a collective pregnancy? How interesting — and each member (!?) of the congregation was suffering as deeply as the mother?

This is the kind of 'communal' living most people undergo at the moment — nobody wants to know you until you're in trouble and then they all want you to follow their advice. How would an anarchist community deal with this — support when it's asked for (no strings attached), silence when it's needed?

The most sensible comment came from the eminently sensible Rabbi Julia Neuberger who pointed out that the pros and cons of abortion were not the real issue (excuse me, not very carefully chosen word), and that Father rights mean nothing where the father isn't committed in some way to the woman bearing his child/children. Presumably such commitment doesn't necessarily have to be in the form of a ceremony, financial support or even physical presence as long as both parties have agreed on the form their parenting is to take.

However a man who will drag the mother of his foetus through every possible court despite the fact that she is

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# FREEDOM

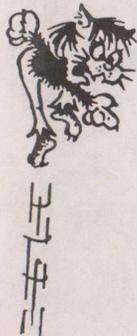
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You said that  
last month!



## The Raven

SORRY our theoretical magazine *The Raven* is having some technical problems taking off. We are assured the bird will be flying soon.

HANG 'EM continued from page 1

successful campaign for its abolition was started by anarchists, but that is an indisputable (and undisputed) historical fact.

For the record, the anarchists who started the campaign were Kitty Lamb and Gerald Kingshott. There had, of course, been earlier, unsuccessful campaigns. One of the speakers at the first public meeting organised by the London Anarchist Group was Sidney Silverman MP, whose abolition bill had been defeated in Parliament. In the light of response to this meeting and a second meeting organised by LAG (now calling itself the League Against Capital Punishment), Silverman was able to persuade establishment abolitionists like the prominent lawyer Gerald Gardiner, and rich abolitionists like Victor Gollancz, that public opinion was ready for another go and this time his abolition bill was passed.

Elderly London anarchists may be forgiven for feeling a proprietary interest in the absence of a death penalty in this country, but all anarchists will be appalled at the thought of the state acquiring yet more power of life and death. The 60 MPs who propose such a horror are a particularly reprehensible minority.

DR

THAT FOETUS continued from page 1

undergoing a very traumatic pregnancy and has a difficult moral dilemma to solve (by herself in the last resort) — and whilst she is already being treated for severe depression — cannot be said to have any kind of commitment to the mother's well-being.

However, what I found most shocking about this whole debate was the apparently universally accepted view that if two Oxford students hadn't the wit to have protected sex and so got themselves into such a mess what hope was there for the rest of the country? (i.e. because everyone else is so much more witless).

What hope is there for the rest of the country when the makers of history and shapers of the social climate think this way? Being at Oxford or any other college means, at best, that you are intelligent in academic terms and more interested in academic work at that particular time than any other work. At worst it means that you've been to the right school (and paid through the nose for the privilege), and are following a convention.

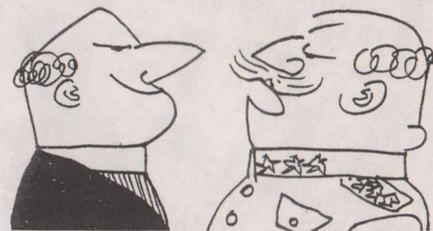
If we look at the so-called 'lower end' of the social scale (and this does not correlate with an intelligence scale) it is often the case that illegitimate children are conceived by very young parents, not carelessly, or through stupidity, but for very sound, practical reasons. Reasons of survival. These reasons, unfortunately, seem beyond the ken of the privileged social observers (I use the term 'privileged' instead of the trite 'middle-class' because I think notions of class are damaging and diverting).

As has been demonstrated in the case of the notorious Ballymum flats in

Dublin, and many similar places around Britain, the only way for a young homeless person to get shelter is by having a child, thus scoring priority points (yes, everything's a game show really).

Also, as Beatrix Campbell shows in *Wigan Pier Revisited*, when you're young, unemployed and unemployable, and live in a status-ridden world, a child provides just that, and an interest outside yourself.

These may not be the best reasons for having children. There may not be any good reasons for having children. But at least they are reasons and not the wilful carelessness of this travesty of parenting under debate at the moment. And as more and more facts emerge I think you'd have to go a long way to find anything to match the degree of stupidity shown by the two parties involved. **Sourpuss O'Sé**



Personally, I'm totally opposed to killing children, before they are born.

## Omori

THE Japanese anarchist Katsuhisa Omori was arrested ten years ago, accused of bombing a government office. After five years in custody he was brought to trial, and sentenced to death on 29 March 1983. His appeal was dismissed in January 1986. He is still in prison.

Japan is a state of the legal/electoral variety, and it is not a complete waste of time to ask the Minister of Justice to release Omori, in view of the length of time he has been detained and some legal doubts about his trial. The address to write to is: The Minister of Justice, Hiroshi Shimasaki, Homu Sho, 1-1 Kasumigaseki, I-Chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan.

Latest: London demo for Omori

We learn from *Black Flag* that our comrades the London Anarchist Black Cross are organising a demonstration outside the Japanese Embassy, 46 Grosvenor Street London W1, on Monday 30 March from 12 noon to 2 pm.

A new Omori video will be shown the previous evening (Sunday 29 March) at 8 pm, at 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Road, London SE24. Participants in the demo who need overnight accommodation are invited to telephone 121 Bookshop between 12 and 4 pm, Monday to Saturday, on 01-274 6655.

For those who cannot attend but wish to add their voice, the Embassy telephone number is 01-493 6030.



145 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France  
Damien Chalaud's show, broadcast every Sunday from 7 pm to 9.30 pm, is now recorded in England.

Send urgent announcements c/o Freedom.

# Riots and Witnesses

THE Broadwater Farm/Keith Blakelock murder trial continues, with the six defendants now reduced to four. Two witnesses of especial interest appeared during February. On the 26th Police Constable Ian Pyles made the broadcast news bulletins and the national press with his opinion that the riot could have been stopped within two hours, if senior officers in charge of the operation had had 'the backbone' to move their men in earlier. Less widely publicised was the evidence of Jason Cobham, fined £200 last year after pleading guilty to various offences, who appeared as a prosecution witness on the 9th.

Cobham testified that the police have found accommodation for him, and since he could not settle to the two jobs they got him, were giving him spending money and paying his bills (except, he complained, the telephone bills). He also said he had lied in several earlier court appearances. One such appearance was for the prosecution against Simon MacMinn, now serving seven years for throwing stones. I think MacMinn has already given notice of appeal against sentence; perhaps now he has a case for appeal against conviction.

In another Broadwater Farm trial at another Old Bailey court, on 6 February, James Roberts was acquitted of affray, petrol bombing and handling stolen property. Prosecution evidence consisted of statements said to have been made by him at several interviews, but in the space for the interviewee's signature were the words 'refuses to sign'. The reason he refused, he said in his defence was that the statement was a fiction; he was not at home on the night of 6 October; threats and the odd slap did not convince him otherwise. He is the fifth defendant to have his 'confession' rejected by a jury.

Readers of the British press will remember the unprovoked violence by

police against students when Leon Brittan spoke at Manchester on 1 March 1985.

Brittan, at that time Home Secretary, was coming to speak to the Students Union, and a large number of students assembled on the steps of the Union building to bar his way to the main entrance. This was a peaceful symbolic demonstration. Right-wing politicians had been prevented from speaking at various places, but in this case there was nothing to prevent Brittan from entering by a side door. Some demonstrators were in conversation with the few police on duty, and when about forty more police walked across the road in a body, they all assumed it was to form a peaceful cordon. The police attacked in unison, without warning, with gratuitous violence. After Brittan had spoken (attributing the noises of thuggery to 'red fascists') and made off, students were in 'their' building recovering, and the police attacked again with even more violence.

A detailed digest of witness accounts is given in *With Extreme Prejudice* by Martin Walker (Canary Press, £3.50), which has now been cited twice in successive issues of this column. Much of the book deals with the subsequent harassment of two students, Sarah Hollis who had attended the Brittan meeting and was concussed when police threw her downstairs later in the evening, and Steven Shaw who was writing a thesis on the Manchester police. Steven Shaw is now to be prosecuted for 'trying to pervert the course of justice'.

There were two separate investigations, a public enquiry by Manchester City Council and a police enquiry conducted by officers invited in from Avon and Somerset police. The public enquiry published its report in November 1985. The police enquiry, treated with great suspicion by many, reported to the

Director of Public Prosecutions, and most of the report was published on 26 Feb.

Eight cases of assault by police on students are found to be proved, but only one policeman is to be prosecuted for assault because the other thugs cannot be identified with utter certainty. Two other policemen are to be done for perjury, and half a dozen are to be 'advised' about the state of their memories.

Steven Shaw and another student, Frank Logan, are to be prosecuted. One of twenty students convicted of public order offences may have the conviction quashed.

PC Pyles and Manchester Chief Constable Anderton are more outspoken than other policemen, but not exceptional in their opinion that the world would be a better place if police were more powerful and forceful. This is a variant of the common human perception that oneself could put the world to rights, given a chance. All coercive institutions tend to increase in power if they are not restrained. In 1985 restraints on police were relaxed for the miners' strike, and their sense of greater power led to the Manchester police riot, and the deaths of Cynthia Jarrett and John Stonehouse in unnecessarily violent police raids.

Some anarchists would prefer a police state to a legal-electoral constitution, on the grounds that insurrection is more likely in a police state; but I think they are misguided. Certainly people are more likely to explode when they are bottled up than when they can blow off steam, but the evidence of history is that insurrections stop when oppression becomes light enough to tolerate it; it is just not true that things will be better in the long run if they are worse in the short run. The path to a free society is to make our own society as free as we can.

Therefore it seems sensible to resist any tendency towards a police state by co-operating with law courts and politicians, so long as we trust none of them.

Plod



# Soviet Democracy - the bottom line

WHATEVER you may think about the Russian system of government it is clear that it is currently undergoing major changes. The Gorbachev reforms amount to more than the release of the odd dissident and a crack down on the production of vodka. Censorship has been drastically reduced, they are trying hard to get themselves out of Afghanistan, more than one candidate is to be allowed at elections and the leadership is now claiming that it wants to see the 'perfection of socialist democracy'. According to Gorbachev 'we need democracy like we need air' and party officials are openly informing visitors that they want to follow the Hungarian model of communism. By this they do not mean the model of Hungary 56 with tanks keeping the population in its place but the model of Hungary as it exists today with a booming consumer goods market and a confident intelligentsia.

However, before we get too carried away by enthusiasm for these changes a little caution is called for. Communists have always had a strange definition of democracy and in the minds of those who are handing them down the reforms have as their main purpose the creation of a sober efficient workforce and a party bureaucracy which can be trusted. There is now a long history of communist regimes realising that if they want to make economic changes they are going to have to make political ones too but there is also a long history which shows where the limits lie. The communists want to make their economies more efficient without relinquishing their 'right to manage'.

Communist central planning is a very effective (if brutal) way of organising an economy which is based on or trying to create heavy industries like steel or engineering. So long as the technology is reasonably well known a central committee can plan how to organise production and be very effective in directing labour and resources to exactly where they are needed. The system will occasionally make giant errors of judgement but by and large the evidence of, say, communist organisation during the Second World War proves that it can be made to work.

What central planning is terrible at is the creation of totally new technology (if no one has invented it how do you plan for its creation?) and also flexible responses to the needs and desires of consumers. Were this merely a question of the central planning body failing to decide correctly which records the nation's youth would like to hear (they produce balalaika compilations - you want the Dead Kennedys) this would not bother

the party leaders much. Their advice to women during the current severe shortage of stockings (look after the ones you've got) is a good example of how unconcerned they can be. It is when a lack of computer software and military technology is experienced that it begins to be obvious that something needs to be done. Star Wars is heavily based on computer software and this is the sort of innovation which is most effectively developed by independent small companies operating in an atmosphere of open minded experiment. The Russian government would compete on Star Wars, just as they did on putting a man in space, but it would require the devotion of such a large proportion of the national product that there would be next to nothing left for improving agriculture or housing or providing the increase in consumer goods which the citizens have come to expect.



"Every time I move away from the brink a great cheer goes up."

The bulk of the party has begun to realise that if they are going to revamp agriculture, defence, industry and distribution all at the same time then they can do so most efficiently by using the same means that the capitalist countries use - permitting a degree of free speech and democracy. You cannot undertake innovative research very easily unless there is a wide interchange of opinions via independent publications and equally you cannot run a service based economy very well on the basis of communist party directives. Much the same is true for light industry and for agriculture.

This was a problem which was encountered first in some of the Eastern European economies such as Czechoslovakia. In his Solidarity pamphlet on the events there in 1968 Petr Cerny carefully demonstrates that Dubcek etc. were not socialists with a human face but representatives of the new technological, managerial and scientific faction in the party which wanted the kind of economic and political set up which the new technology required. They quickly ran into a serious problem. Once you let a little bit of pressure off people's backs they tend to have the time to look around and decide that they'd like a whole lot of pres-

ures released. The people demanded more than the party wanted to give and reforms began to get out of control. There seemed no logical point at which the old restrictions could be defended. If scientific opinion was to be freely given then why not allow artists the right to free expression? If artistic and scientific opinions could be expressed then why not political opinions? If you were free to speak then why not to vote and while we're at it why not start electing factory soviets as well? When too many people began to ask such questions the tanks were dispatched.

Both Hungary 56 and Czechoslovakia 68 haunt the minds of the party officials in the Kremlin. In those places when party rule began to crumble it could be reasserted by Russian tanks. Who will re-assert party rule if the Gorbachev reforms begin to outstep their intended limits? There is always the possibility that the old guard in the party will panic and will have sufficient power to put up the shutters and choke off the reforms before they go very far but the price would be the return of Brezhnev style stagnation. The party leadership are therefore caught in a terrible dilemma. If they want to modernise the economy they have to allow people to use their own creativity and initiative but if they want to keep themselves in power then they have to clamp down on this creativity.

Recent events in China are the result of the same processes at work. The regime wanted farmers to respond to local conditions and to let industry produce a new range of items in a more efficient manner. Part of this process was to produce open minded scientists and planners and so they began to allow educators a little more freedom. Once they started to use this freedom in dangerous ways party authority was re-asserted. Fang Lizhi used the temporary wedge of freedom to argue that:

We should not place our hope on grants from the top leadership. Democracy granted from above is not democracy in a real sense. It is relaxation of control.

I would say that he was exactly right, so much so that he was sacked and expelled from the Communist Party and will be lucky to stay out of jail. If people had continued to get away with arguing that kind of thing who knows where it might have ended? When it got down to the bottom line the party leaders would not tolerate challenges to their overall authority and it appears that in China the leadership has the power to enforce whatever limits they set.

What is particularly interesting about

events in Russia is that the authority of the communist party there seems to be more fragile than it is in China. There is a very strong weight of internal frustration pushing behind Gorbachev which could well explode into anger if the reforms are choked off but which could also get carried into increasingly brave initiatives if the reforms continue. The potential for the emergence of an atmosphere akin to that in Poland during the Solidarity era is an exciting one and this creates prospects which could only be beneficial to the freedom of us all. To take one example it is going to become increasingly implausible to argue that nuclear weapons are necessary to protect ourselves from a monolithic enemy if the current direction of changes in Russia is maintained. Thatcher and Reagan could well find themselves being given far more trouble from an unstable competitor than they ever were from a stable enemy.

As for those of us on the libertarian left I think our attitude is clear. We have never believed that party rule was for the benefit of the proletariat; it has always been for the party officials and just because they try to assume a more human face does not change this reality. Every lightening of the oppression in Russia should be welcomed but we should be under no illusions that there are still plenty of dissidents in detention, there are still no free trade unions and the party will set very clear limits on the extent of the reforms, unless the people fight to take whatever rights they are denied.

A.K. Brown

## BOOK REVIEW

**Voices of Dissent: people's poems selected and introduced by Farquhar McLay**  
Clydeside Press £1.95

I KNEW of Farquhar McLay as author of *Cry Anarchy! poems on anarchism and Glasgow life*. Now he has produced an anthology of 53 poems by 21 poets, 36 of them published for the first time. In the introductory note he writes fascinatingly and all too briefly on the relationships between poet and critic, between political theme and creative impulse.

One poem by Guy Aldred is from 1944, the others are all recent. As an anarchist I had heard of Dave Cunliffe, Dennis Gould, Jeff Cloves, McLay himself; others have established reputations. Some write on specific events, places or people: Raymond J Ross on Belfast and Edinburgh, Philip Levine on the execution of Ferrer at Montjuich, George Gunn on the Peace Convoy. Others write on more general themes; Tim Daly, Christine Cherry, Ian McKechnie, Thurso Berwick, Harry Bryce, Miguel Marti i Pol, Freddie Anderson, Tessa Ransford and John Manson are represented here. Tom Hubbard, William Neill, T S Law and John MacDonald write in Scottish; as a Sassenach I found them surprisingly easy to follow, but a glossary is provided which makes interesting reading in itself.

Not being a poet, the piece quoted in

a recent reader's letter struck me as doggerel, but in my uninformed opinion most of the poetry really is good.

This is the poetry of commitment, but to the cause of humanity, not dogma.

CC

*Cry Anarchy!* is still available at 50 p.

NEW titles in Freedom Bookshop include

**Banner Bright: an illustrated history of trade union banners** by John Gorman (£9.95).

**Ciao Anarchici: images of an international anarchist meeting** (Venice 1984) (10.00).

**A critique of state socialism** by Michael Bakunin and cartoonist Richard Warren, originally published by Cienfuegos in 1981, has been republished (£1.50).

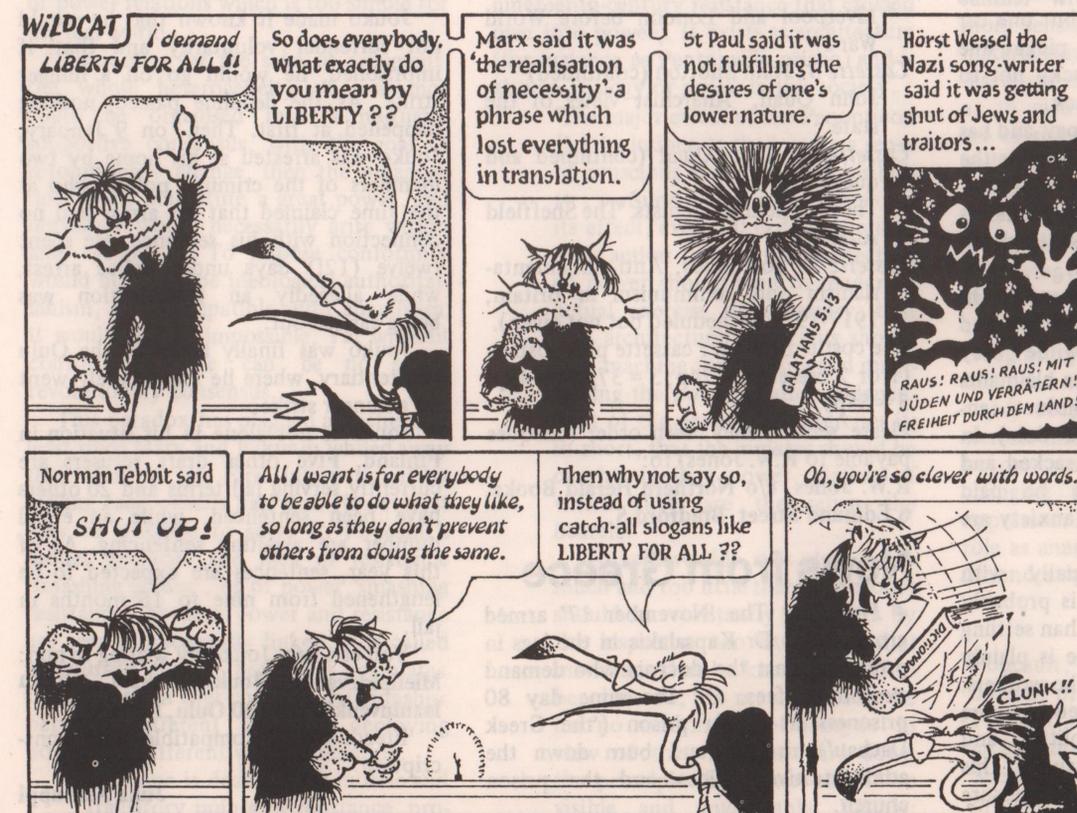
Albert Meltzer's **Anarchism: arguments for and against** is back in print (80p).

**The Secret Society of Freemasons in Bradford: an investigation** by A Cowan (£3.00).

Colin Ward has sent us copies of two titles we had thought out of print: **The Child in the City** (£3.50) and **Utopia** (£1.50).

**Eugene V Debs: spokesman for labour and socialism** by Bernard Brommel is available at a reduced price (£1.50).

More titles and a new list will be available soon. We regard all the above as good value for money.



# Derby Printworkers

## Sacked

SUDDENLY, after nine months of wage negotiations, 90 printers employed by the 'Trader' series of free newspapers were sacked, on 4 December 1986. They learned of the sackings through a 'sack-o-gram' delivered to each of their homes by a company courier.

Proprietor of the company, which publishes *Nottingham Trader*, *Derby Trader*, *Leicester Trader*, *Long Eaton Trader* and similar titles, is Lionel Pickering, a well-known opponent of printing trade unions.

The sacked workers' immediate response was to occupy the printing works, but the occupation was only kept up for two hours. A round-the-clock picket has been maintained there since, but in fact there has been no attempt to resume printing there. The printing has been done on contract by other firms, first T. Bailey Foreman, printers of the *Nottingham Evening Post*, then (when strikers picketed Foreman's) Huthwaite Printing Company. An early morning picket at Huthwaite's on 10 February learned that the contract had been moved again, but at the time of writing we have not discovered where.

A picket of the Pickering typesetting and origination plant at Langley Mill, on 8 February, succeeded in persuading some workers to turn back, but one car driver drove straight for the picket line hitting a woman who was lucky not to be seriously injured in the attack.

The NGA is paying strike pay and has supplied a dispute can, but otherwise the unions appear to be doing little. Picket lines consist of the sacked members supported by anarchists from Nottingham, local SWP members, and others.

The DHSS suspended payment to the sacked workers' families, for the second time since the sackings, while they investigate whether any of the claimants were sacked for 'gross misconduct' (entailing a loss of twelve weeks' dole). In fact none of them were so sacked and the arrears will doubtless be paid eventually, but hardship and anxiety are increased meanwhile.

Contract printing, especially with frequent changes of printer, is probably costing Pickering a lot more than settling at his own printing works; he is plainly willing to invest in defeating the workers. But his costs may be increased to more than he can tolerate if political and commercial pressures persuade his advertisers to withdraw. Political pressure

is already working; Derbyshire County Council has withdrawn all advertising. Commercial pressure will work if the 'Trader' series is seen to be unable to fulfil its distribution targets, or if it seems that advertising in those papers may be counter-productive.

The task ahead for the sacked workers and their supporters is to educate the local public as to what is going on, to spread the advertising boycott and the 'send-the-Traders-back' campaign which has started. After Wapping there is little hope of effective support from union leadership. The future lies in rank-and-file militancy, direct action and solidarity.

**Rich Cross**  
**Trader Sacked Workers Dispute**  
**c/o 114 Stonehill Road, Derby**

## History Workshop

**History Workshop 20 (1986) - British Anarchism Session**

Recordings of the session available on C90 cassettes:

**Cassette 1:** Heiner Becker, 'The revolutionary committee and anarchist clubs in London'.

Haia Shpayer-Makov, 'The public image of anarchism in Britain before World War I'.

**Cassette 2:** Haia Shpayer-Makov (cont.) John Shotton, 'Anarchist schools in Liverpool and London before World War I'.

**Cassette 3:** John Shotton (continued) John Quail, 'Anarchist views of the state'.

**Cassette 4:** John Quail (continued and questions)

The Sheffield Anarchists, 'The Sheffield Anarchists'.

**Cassette 5:** Bob Jones, 'Anti-parliamentarianism and communism in Britain, 1917-1921' (scheduled but not given).

The cost is £1.50 per cassette plus postage (1 or 2 cassettes = 24p; 3 = 37p; 4 = 49p; 5 = 55p).

Please send money with order (cheques payable to R.W. Jones) to:

**R.W. Jones, c/o Northern Herald Books, 6 Edmund Street, Bradford 5.**

## News from Greece

**4 February:** The 'November 17' arméd group shoot Dr Kapsalakis in the legs in protest against the doctors who demand exorbitant fees. On the same day 80 prisoners at Corfu prison (the Greek Dachau) rise up and burn down the administrative offices and the prison church.

**5 February:** Anarchists in Athens demonstrate in favour of humane prison conditions.

**9 February:** A policeman is captured and 'interrogated' by people alleged to be anarchists, on the Salonica University campus.

**10 February:** An anarchist radio station in Salonica puts out anti-state anti-prison propaganda. Police raid the site of the transmitter, an electronics shop, and arrest a 16 year-old anarchist, Nikos Hadjitheodozou. The proprietor of the shop, Dimitros Voglis, goes on the run.

**11 February:** Police announce that in Voglis's shop they have found a police radio-transceiver, a police code list, a list of car numbers of unmarked police cars, and photographs of policemen.

**12 February:** The ELA ('Revolutionary People's Struggle') blows up a whole floor of the Ministry of Finance building at 3am, in protest against the introduction of Value Added Tax. This is the day of a 24-hour general strike throughout Greece, in protest against poor wages and conditions. A big demonstration in Athens includes 150-200 anarchist workers marching under black and red flags for the first time since 1976.

**Basil**

**JOUKO SAKSIO**, a 23 year-old Finnish anarchist and draft resister jailed in Oulu, went on a hunger strike on January 21. He had been sentenced to a nine-month term in October 1986 for refusing to cooperate in any manner with the military authorities, and was ordered to start serving his sentence on 5 January 1987.

Jouko made it known that he would not surrender voluntarily and that, if imprisoned, he would go on a hunger strike. As the deadline passed, nothing happened at first. Then, on 9 January, Jouko was arrested at his home by two members of the criminal police, who at the time claimed that his arrest had no connection with his sentence. He spent twelve (12!) days under police arrest, while allegedly an investigation was being carried out.

Jouko was finally taken to the Oulu penitentiary, where he immediately went on a hunger strike.

Jouko is not alone in his situation in Finland. Five other draft refusers are currently serving jail terms and 20 others have been sentenced, while an equal number are awaiting sentencing. As of this year, sentences are expected to be lengthened from nine to 16 months in jail.

You can help Jouko by writing to him: **Mielipidevanki, Jouko Saksio, Oulun laaninvankila, 90100 Oulu, Finland.**

Freedom is incompatible with conscription.

**Juha Alakuppi**

# Organising to resist power

WHAT do we mean by 'anarchism' in terms of practical behaviour?

As we see from a century of *Freedoms*, debates on this issue generally produce more heat than light, like debates among literary critics about whether the novel is dead. It may be useful in this context, however, to consider Michael Foucault's 'discursive theory' of power and resistance. As Foucault summarises it in *The History of Sexuality* (page 95):

'Where there is power there is resistance . . . There is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of great resistances, each of them a special case. [There may be] possible, necessary, or improbable; . . . spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; . . . quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial. By definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations.'

The article by Dave, 'Go for it', in *Freedom* (January 1987), presents a refreshing alternative to the unthinking sloganising and factionalism to which anarchism is sometimes reduced, and I am broadly in agreement with Dave's opinions. However, Saul Alinsky's 'Rules for radicals', which Dave quotes uncritically and in full, seems to work with a model of power relations which is too simple for the real world.

Supposing, for the sake of argument, the whole heterogeneity of resistance could be organised into a mutually supportive consensus, with the goal of revolutionary change, then the organisation could constitute a great power, and resistance would necessarily arise within and against it. To impose conformity would not only be ideological authoritarianism, so incompatible with anarchism; it would also be impossible. Yet without conformity there can be no stable revolutionary consensus.

This paradox has plagued anarchism at least since Marx and Bakunin whiled away their time at the First International by pulling each other's hair out. However, it may be possible to solve it. Foucault's model excludes the idea of resistance 'smashing power', or of power 'smashing resistance', because power and resistance are seen as necessarily linked. It is called 'discursive theory' because it postulates a discourse, an ever-changing relationship between different ways of deploying power and different ways of resisting.

' . . . one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, pro-

ducing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remoulding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their minds and their bodies. Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localised in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities.

Many anarchists may be disturbed by this model. Like Dave's article, it locates anarchists among the point-by-point struggles of power and resistance, where they will occasionally move out of the sloganising margins and occasionally, even, cross over into power (there are historical instances of this happening). The relationship between power and resistance is akin to that between death and life; defining, awful, inevitable.

The curious relationship between the loci of resistance and the loci of power in the post-agrarian state (school, prison, hospital, factory) is shown in Foucault's discussion of the Panopticon in *Discipline and Punish* (page 201). The Panopticon is a prison where all the prisoners can be observed from a central point (introduced from Benthamite Utilitarianism, an early nineteenth-century resistance that crossed over into power). It exists as architecture (for instance as Pentonville prison) and is also an analogy of power in this society.

'The major effect of the Panopticon [is] to induce in the inmate a sense of conscious and permanent visibility . . . Surveillance is permanent in its effect, even if it is discontinuous in its action [so] that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and maintaining the power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power relation of which they are themselves the bearers.

To achieve this, it is at once too much and too little that the prisoner should be constantly observed by the inspector; too little, for what matters is that he knows himself to be observed; too much, because he has no need in fact of being so. In view of this, Bentham laid down the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable. Visible:

the inmate will constantly have before him the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at at any one moment, but he must be sure that he may always be so.

We constantly submit and/ or resist in the light (or perhaps shadow) of power. It is part of us, and by defining our actions it defines our identity. Yet if there were no possibility of resistance, power would cease to exist; the Panopticon would make no sense. Power and resistance are bound together, the interplay between them transecting and constructing our very idea of Self. The very act of thought creates structures of power within ourselves and in relations to others.

Hegel's theory of alienation considers the relationship between master ('power') and slave ('resistance'). Defining each other according to their roles, the two become alienated, seeing each other only as master and slave, rather than as full human beings. Foucault would argue the opposite, that master and slave know themselves and each other through their roles; their roles are their identity.

Hegel seeks a dialectical idealist solution: master = thesis, slave = antithesis, they mystically combine into a higher synthesis (I will go no further into this metaphysical silliness - readers may be familiar with criticisms of the vaguely more sensible Marxist version, dialectical materialism). Foucault would argue that discourse should be altered in such a way as to give participants a more positive set of roles (for instance, abolish slavery and see how roles like Bob and Fritz work instead).

The concept of social change as altering discourse requires a different way of perceiving the I/Other relationship from that we are used to. We should no longer talk of the enemy (Other) without recognising his links with ourselves (I) and the need to accommodate his desires in a way acceptable to both parties. Unless we can find a new role for the oppressor in our system, then if we succeed in changing the system we become the oppressor. Power is with us forever. Our role as anarchists is to find practical ways of rendering power creative for all.

**P.N. Rogers**

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# Nuclear Danger buried under Jargon

RADIOACTIVITY is fundamentally an anti-life force. Yet, despite the growing worries about the health dangers posed by it, in discussions with many people — both anarchists and others — over the years, it has seemed to me that many, if not most, even some who style themselves anti-nuclear, didn't really know much about it. I decided to educate myself about the problem only to find, even with a background of scientific training, just how little information I had and how hard it was to get.

A few years on I am still struck by the apparent lack of awareness in the anarchist movement of the greatest threat to life and liberty there has ever been. Not some far-off, potential threat but an actual, and sustained, long-term attack on the very fundamentals of life on the planet. A planet without which anarchism would seem to have something less than zero relevance.

If the central concern of anarchists is the suppression of individual liberty by the state, then how much more should we be concerned about the most totalitarian state yet conceived — the nuclear state? The politics of radioactivity once unleashed, this most arrogant of ideologies escaped the clutches of its masters, blinded with visions of undreamed-of power. Now quite out of control, the nuclear acknowledges no frontiers, no equals, and obeys no laws outside the uncontrollable forces of nature. Wherever its murderous manifesto is distributed nothing and no-one is safe. Race, sex, creed, even class count for nothing. Slowly, it has spread its sinister tentacles across the globe, its offspring daughter isotopes disseminating radioactive propaganda wherever they settle.

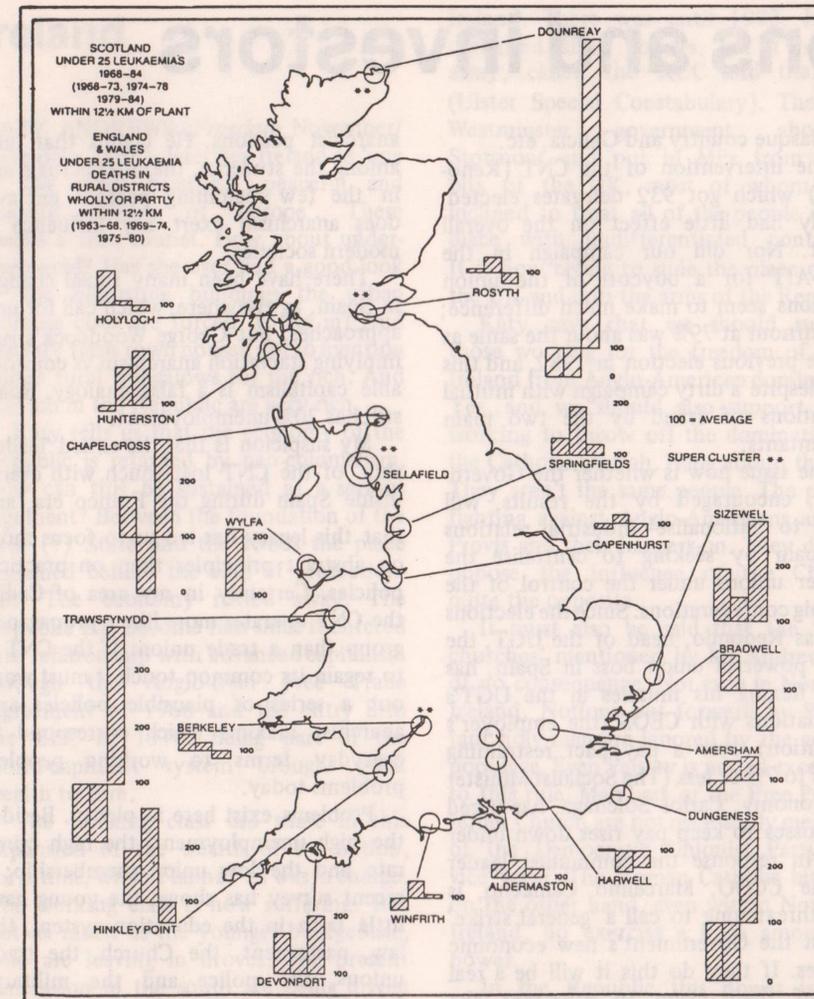
The near impenetrability of the methods and units for measuring radioactivity serves to obscure the dangers for many people. This is made worse by international bodies like the International Commission for Radiological Protection (ICRP) deciding to change them just as some of us non-experts were beginning to get used to them. Coincidence? The table shows the various units used. A Curie is a measure of radioactivity given off by a source; a Rad is the radiation absorbed dose received by an organism; Rems measure the equivalent biological damage caused. This is the easy part. Things start getting complicated when you have to start sorting out the different types of radiation and the isotopes involved.

Although it is well-known that ionising radiation causes biological damage, in individual cases this link has to be shown by statistical analysis in terms of probability, since it is almost impossible to prove a causal link between exposure to a particular source of radiation and specific harm suffered by an organism, for various reasons. Firstly, the delay between exposure and the development of detectable symptoms can be between 5 and 50 years in humans, and genetic damage to descendants can take many generations to show. An exposed individual may be quite unaware of it, may be living elsewhere when the symptoms develop, or may die beforehand of some other cause. If s/he is run over, the death certificate will read 'Accidental Death', so even if their body is riddled with leukaemia they will never show up in the statistics as radiation victims. Secondly, the permitted exposure levels were set by the ICRP on the basis of cancer death statistics at Hiroshima, as measured by the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC), now the Radiation Effects Research Foundation (RERF). This body has been under American control since 1945, when Allied Command banned any Japanese from researching or publishing A-bomb data. The ABCC totally ignored the massive rise in leukaemia deaths after the bomb until a Japanese doctor broke the ban and published his statistics. Since then, analysis of factors not considered at the time e.g. the angle of the bomb at detonation, the weather, the nature of the bomb casing, the way buildings shielded many people from immediate high radiation, variations in individual's resistance to radiation (due to age, size, health etc.), have shown that the radiation dose to the population was grossly overestimated. The new figures mean that the cancer risk from radiation

has been underestimated by at least two, and more probably 15 to 20, times.

Nevertheless, the ICRP continues to work to the old figures. It also uses unscientific methods to measure exposure to radiation: although it is known to be cumulative (i.e. each fresh dose adds to any damage already done), the ICRP only looks at exposure as isolated doses from separate sources. It does not add previous exposure to other sources, nor count radiation already in the body. This is important since it is well known that cancer risk is higher for each successive radiation dose. The British NRPB (National Radiological Protection Board) follows ICRP guidelines, but has its own 'Code of Practice'. Students of the history of perfidious Albion will be familiar with such clever get-out clauses. Basically they are 'gentlemen's agreements' between con-men, in this case the government and the nuclear establishment — both interested parties. No-one else was consulted and the Code allows radiation levels twice as high as the ICRP's.

A third problem with 'proving' radiation-related illnesses is caused by frequent comparisons with Background Level. The nuclear lobby is often heard comparing radiation levels around nuclear sites with the Background Level (B.L.). This is easily confused, sometimes deliberately, with the *Natural* Background Level (N.B.L.) but the two are completely different. N.B.L. is radiation given off by any naturally-occurring element in rocks, soil and air, and varies from place to place, i.e. radiation not man-made. Perversely however, the definition has been stretched to include radiation arising from man's removal of uranium from deep in the earth, and subsequent processing. Surely only a fool or a villain could possibly describe the deliberate introduction of thorium, uranium, radium and the daughter isotopes like radon gas into the air, water and food chain as 'natural'. BL is even more vague, including both NBL and any other man-made fission products from energy or weapons that have been in the environment for a year or more. Thus in some countries, when an application for a nuclear plant is sub-



mitted, radioactive pollution from all other sources, even from an existing reactor on the same site is counted as BL and disregarded. Since no nuclear facility can operate without emitting radiation, by this simple conjuring trick last year's radiation pollution becomes this year's BL, distorting the true contamination levels around the site. Obviously then, the BL is continually rising. Hence, bland assurances that levels around the site are no higher than BL are meaningless.

Since the early expansion of uranium mining, those NBL's which include large amounts of man-made radiation (now sometimes called Technologically Enhanced Natural Radiation, TENR) have become the largest source of internal radiation in the USA, and the third largest source to the general population, mainly due to the inhalation of radon gas.

The anniversary of the partial meltdown of the Three Mile Island reactor is in March, and that of Chernobyl in April. But it is only necessary to mention these in passing. For the truth is that a nuclear tragedy is going on before our eyes which owes its existence to nothing more than the normal operation of nuclear plant, the daily 'routine' emissions of radioactive gases and cooling water into the environment. These are not accidents, they are deliberate — indeed if you produce

electricity by nuclear energy it is essential to release radioactivity from power stations regularly, to avoid a build-up of radiation within the building which would prevent those inside from working — which wouldn't do at all. So they share it with everyone outside, instead.

Radiation is released to the environment at every stage of the nuclear cycle, from mining to energy to bombs, and there are accidents at each, as in any industry. Inevitably this results in health damage to those living or working nearby. The map shows the findings of two childhood leukaemia surveys around nuclear sites in Britain (1963-84), presented to the conference on the Biological Effects of Ionising Radiation (BEIR) in November 1986. Clusters of leukaemias above the national average were found at all 19 sites, as they were at Sellafield and Berkeley in separate studies.

Clusters can of course be caused by random distribution, but the Scottish study found that the probability of this being true around the nuclear sites was very low, whereas the clusters AWAY from them could all be accounted for by chance. Statistically, when the probability of a cluster arising by chance (i.e. not due to a radiation source) is less than 1 in 20 it is called significant, and further studies are called for. The clusters in England and Wales near nuclear plants

were found to be statistically significant both for their rural areas and for rural areas nationally. Other factors could be responsible for clusters of course, but this would not rule out statistically significant results near nuclear sites any more than non-sweet eaters with tooth decay proves that sweet eating doesn't cause tooth decay. Four of the sites have super-clusters around them, meaning that the probability of such large excesses of leukaemia occurring by chance is so small that they ought never to be found anywhere. Of the three time periods shown on the bar-charts, the middle one shows a 35% increase in leukaemias around 10 facilities in England and Wales from 1969-74.

Other evidence to the London conference demonstrated a positive link between BL radiation and adverse health effects, something suspected for a long time by many health physics workers. Dr. Alice Stewart's research concluded that it is the cause of 66%-100% of all childhood cancers. Her previous work on radiation-related cancers in children found that these were much more likely if their mothers were given pelvic X-rays when pregnant, a study ignored or derided by the radiation 'protection' bodies for 20 years, but now accepted.

Even if all man's nuclear activity stopped today, the earth would still be plagued with radiation poisoning for millions of years. (In 24,000 years time only half the plutonium released by the nuclear bombs over Japan and the fire at Windscale will have decayed.) Obviously things are going to get much worse before they get better, so it is essential to fight this suicidal technology now. Yes, all the other struggles are important too, but if we don't stop the nuclear state soon they will have been in vain.

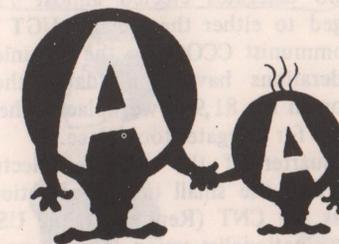
K. McFaul

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 SCRAM (*Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace*) Journal, No. 57.

Unit or Quantity	Symbol	Brief Description
Curie	Ci	$3.7 \times 10^{10}$ nuclear transformations (disintegrations) per second
Becquerel	Bq	1 nuclear transformation (disintegrations) per second
Rad	rad	0.01 Joules/kg (100 erg/g)
Gray	Gy	1 Joules/kg (=100 rad)
Dose equivalent	H	dose x Q x any other modifying factors
Quality factor	Q	Biological effectiveness of radiation
Rem	rem	rad x Q x any other modifying factors
Sievert	Sv	Gy x Q x any other modifying factors

Becquerels, grays and sieverts are replacing curies, rads and rems. All are currently in use.



# Spain — Unions and investors

STOCK MARKET pundits wax lyrical about investment opportunities in Spain. The Socialist Government here is modernising the share markets and has just legalised a second stock market for stock exchange gamblers.

The prevailing bullish view of stock market analysts on Spain, despite the high unemployment, the protesting peasants and the student troubles, runs as follows:

'The recent re-election of the moderate Socialist Party with an absolute majority for a further four years; the broad political consensus in favour of liberal, market oriented economic and fiscal management; membership of the EEC and its recently reaffirmed NATO links all mean that Spain should enjoy political stability for the foreseeable future.'

When one considers the mass of changes which have taken place in Spain during the last decade it is clear the Spaniards have become the latest converts to capitalism. The Catholic Church, that once-dominant institution of traditional Spain and bulwark of Francoism, may not yet have been routed, but its influence is waning as liberal capitalism takes hold. Today, in Spain, it is the banks which sponsor the political parties of the left and the right, and some banks often rival cathedrals in architectural splendour.

## Unions: paper memberships

Financial optimism about the growth of capitalism developing under a socialist government is fuelled by the 'elastic labour market' and the fact that 'labour relations have improved'. This means that the black economy in which workers are employed without papers, and the system short term contracts, is serving the bosses well, in that they can easily weed out the militants.

Management manipulation of labour is helped by the weak trade unions with low memberships. The actual members paying union dues is tiny. The political parties, the government through the patrimonio sindical, and the banks through loans, all help fund the unions. Thus the unions create for themselves artificial paper memberships.

In the recent trade union elections the results produced no surprises. With 132,000 delegates elected almost 75% belonged to either the socialist UGT or the communist CCOO. So the big union confederations have consolidated their position in the 81,964 workplaces where elections for delegates took place.

A quarter of the delegates elected came from the small union federations such as the CNT (Renovado), the USO and the nationalist union federations in

the Basque country and Galicia, etc.

The intervention of the CNT (Renovado) which got 932 delegates elected, clearly had little effect on the overall result. Nor did our campaign in the CNT-AIT for a boycott of the union elections seem to make much difference; the turnout at 79% was about the same as in the previous election in 1982, and this was despite a dirty campaign with mutual allegations of fraud by the two main contentants.

The issue now is whether the Government, encouraged by the results, will move to 'rationalise' industrial relations in Spain by seeking to centralise the smaller unions under the control of the two big confederations. Since the elections Nicolas Redondo, head of the UGT, the most powerful union boss in Spain, has been flexing his muscles in the UGT's negotiations with CEOS (the employer's federation) over a pay pact restraining wages to 7% or less. (The Socialist Minister of Economy, Carlos Solchaga, has urged the bosses to keep pay rises down under 5%.) In response the communist leader of the CCOO, Marcelino Camacho, is now threatening to call a 'general strike' against the Government's new economic policies. If they do this it will be a real test of their claim to represent the Spanish working class. Up to now the suspicion has been that CCOO unions are largely paper tigers with paper memberships.

## Sluggish CNT

Years ago Andre Malraux said: 'Since Spain is an anarchist society, when Franco dies anarchism will return to flower'. Obviously the French writer got it wrong. Neither the anarcho-syndicalist CNT, nor the Spanish anarchists generally, have as yet failed to make a deep impact upon Spanish society.

Reasons for this are not hard to discern: the CNT in Spain was begun in 1910 as a movement designed to popularise anarchism among the workers and make it socially relevant to the evolving industrial society of the day. Thus anarcho-syndicalist maxims were worked out which then had real meaning to the industrial and rural proletariat.

After the Civil War anarcho-syndicalism ceased to develop in Spain. It stagnated both as an ideology and as a popular movement during the Franco era. Certainly, outside of Catalonia it had become an obscure belief to the general public of modern Spain.

George Woodcock, somewhere, has argued that it was inevitable that as the Spanish working class became enriched by capitalism they would lose their

anarchist passions. He claims that only among the students, the intellectuals and in the few remaining peasant enclaves does anarchism exert any influence in modern societies.

There have been many social changes in Spain, as elsewhere, which call for new approaches, but George Woodcock's rule implying starvation anarchism vs comfortable capitalism is a false analogy. Spain still has 20% unemployment.

My suspicion is that the exiled 'leadership' of the CNT lost touch with events inside Spain during the Franco era, and that this legacy has led us to focus more on abstract principles than on practical policies. Certainly in my area of Cadiz, the CNT operates more like a propaganda group than a trade union. If the CNT is to regain its common touch it must work out a series of plausible policies and anarchist maxims which correspond in everyday terms to working people's problems today.

Problems exist here in plenty. Besides the high unemployment, the high crime rate and the low union membership; a recent survey has shown the young have little faith in the education system, the law, parliament, the Church, the trade unions, the police and the military. Somehow the CNT ought to be reaching these people.

Brian Bamford  
Cadiz

## IN BRIEF

Norwegians who refuse to do mandatory military service will no longer be asked the traditional question about how they would react if a 'family member' was being raped. They will still be asked whether they would have resisted the German invasion in 1940.

A Chinese woman is said to have killed herself after friends planted a microphone in her bedroom on her wedding night and broadcast over a village loudspeaker.

A judge in Belgium has found four people guilty of nudism and told them to stick to the beaches in the Netherlands 'where pleasures are without limit'. They now include a motorcycle courier delivery service for dope. However, the authorities are reported to think that this stretches their haphazardly tolerant attitude too far.

Snow has fallen in the United Arab Emirates for the first time in recorded history.

# Ireland

KATY ANDREWS (*Freedom* November/December 1986) describes Ireland as 'one of the most beautiful, peaceful and unspoiled regions of Europe'. There speaks a true tourist. How about underpopulated? Has she ever had a good look at the disgusting buildings the urban working class are forced to live in? And the very flash town houses, not to mention pricey rural bungalows for the rich. And the rich in the Republic are very rich.

Katy tells us that the economy of the Republic is retarded by neo-colonialism. How can this be sustained as a serious argument? Between the foundation of the Free (!) State and the 1960s the place remained behind the wall of protectionism. The economy rotted away. The Republic has become rich since it entered into relationship with advanced capitalism through the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement of 1966 and the entry into the EEC in 1970. Being part of the world-capitalist system brought great wealth to Eire.

The working class did share in this expansion of the wealth of the nation, for a time, while Fianna Fail was in charge. The working class is now suffering. But not as much as the younger bourgeoisie, who are leaving in droves. The present generation in the south are being driven out not because of their rebelliousness, but because they want the bourgeois goodies NOW.

Katy describes Northern Ireland as a statelet. What exactly is this supposed to mean? There is no state in Northern

Ireland. There was until 1973. It had organised state powers, i.e. it had an army, called the RUC and the USC (Ulster Special Constabulary). Then the Westminster government abolished Stormont and put in MPs from other bits of the UK, most of whom were inclined to treat all of the people of the place with undifferentiated contempt. It is now trying to slide the place out of the UK and into the arms of the Republic.

Katy says that we should support those working for the freedom of all of Ireland from Anglo-American domination. Yes, and we should also support those working to throw off the domination of the Catholic Church. Hang about, though. They aren't the same people. The people fighting against Anglo-Americans are the Provis and their hangers-on. They do not oppose the influence of the Church; quite the opposite.

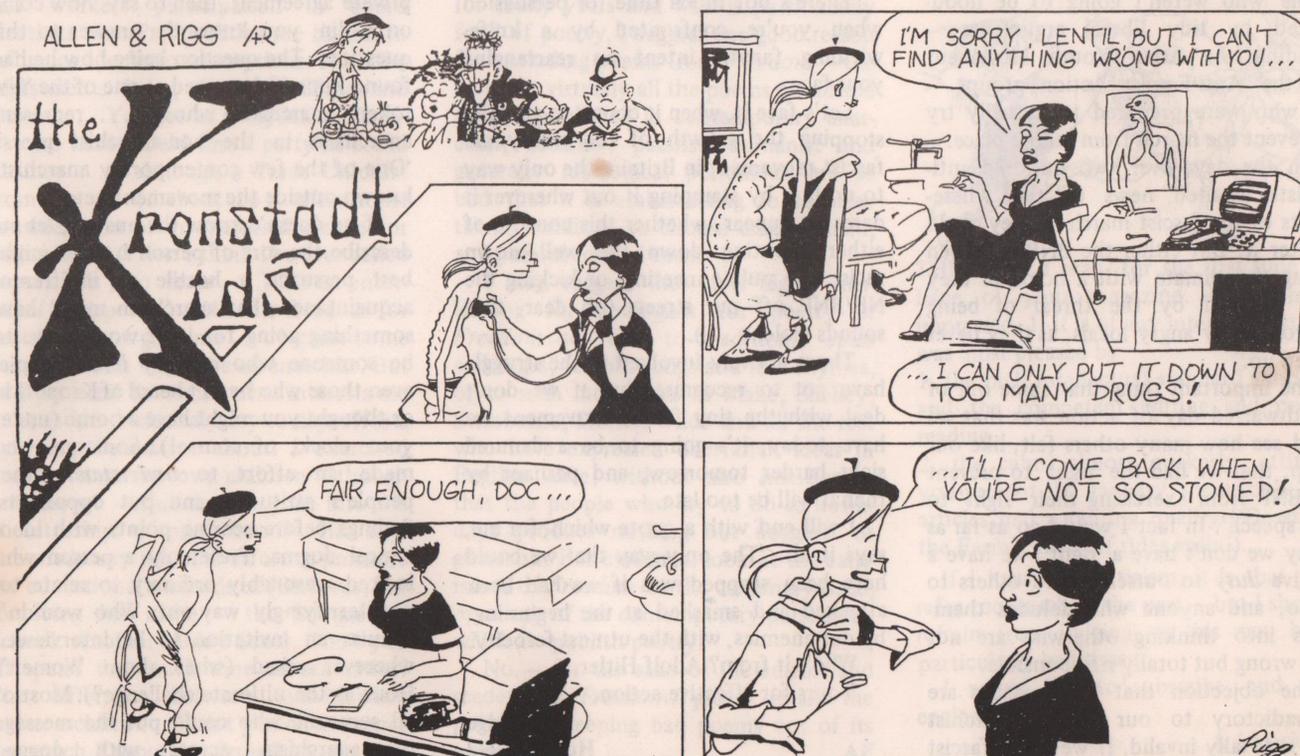
It must also be said that the 'other churches' mentioned by Ms Andrews are of no consequence. Not even in Northern Ireland. Notions put forward by Protestant holy-men are ignored by the general populace. Even Paisley is not an exception to this rule. Members of the Free Presbyterian Church are not necessarily members of the Democratic Unionist Party and vice versa. The Roman Catholic bishops, on the other hand, even within Northern Ireland, do exercise a huge amount of power.

In the Republic this power is such that the state now has a proscription on divorce and one on abortion written into the Constitution. The hospitals have 'ethical committees' to act as thought police in matters of Catholic morals. Non-Catholic and dubious teachers are being

driven out of the Catholic schools. Illegitimacy is being kept on the statute books (illegitimacy was made even more difficult by the new Free State; the farmers wanted to keep total control of the land they had won from the Westminster parliament). 'Pornography' is being used as a means of re-introducing heavy censorship; the Censorship Board has been there all the time since the laid-back '60s and it is being reactivated. 'Sects' are being harrassed; this includes physical harrassment. This list is not exhaustive. The real Ireland beyond Dublin is not liberal or progressive or revolutionary. It is Roman Catholic and proud of it. The Republic of Ireland today is as near to being a thoroughly Roman Catholic polity as is possible. This is not an accident.

Catholic Ireland did not fight a savage and successful war against Liberal England, pagan England as it was unabashedly called in the 1950s, to set up a liberal democracy. It fought to set up a Catholic democracy. This is not a contradiction in terms. The reason why the Republic is a Catholic state is because the population want it to be a Catholic state. The desire to absorb the six countries of Northern Ireland is conceived as quite reasonable. After all, it will be doing the benighted heretics a big moral favour. If the Prods behave themselves they will come to no harm. If they do not behave themselves then presumably they will go the same way as the two-thirds of the Protestant population within the Free State in 1921 — to England, the North or the ends of the earth for all the ruling class in the Free State cares.

Sean McGouran





## Free Speech

THE ongoing debate in *Freedom* on 'Free Speech' has constantly revolved around abstractions comfortably contemplated from the safety of well-worn armchairs. Now, theory is alright as far as it goes, but it is often too generalised to mean anything when confronted with a pressing need for immediate and effective action.

Take, for example, a recent event at Bradford (Yorkshire) in early February.

The Bradford Asian Youth Movement had found out that the British National Party (violent fascists organised in paramilitary groups) were going to hold a march in the city under the slogan 'Stop Immigration - Stop AIDS'.

Now, Bradford being a city with a large ethnic population, this move was directly provocative and intended to generate tension within the local community plus gain a platform for their extreme racism.

Presumably, if we were to uphold the sanctity of the BNP's right to 'free speech' (i.e. the 'right' to spread their lies and bigotry, and intimidate the black and Asian communities) then we should have sat back and let them get on with it.

Fortunately, there were quite a few people who weren't going to be hoodwinked by tidy liberal arguments - including the Asian Youth Movement and the Anti-Fascist Action groups - and who were prepared to actually try to prevent the march from taking place.

On the day, over two hundred anti-Fascists awaited news of the whereabouts of the fascist march so they could counter it. But either the BNP had been testing the climate with a hoax, or they were put off by the threat of being confronted by angry locals, as they never turned up.

The important thing that came out of this thwarted day of action was that we could see how many others felt, like our group, that we had the 'right' to prevent the BNP from exercising their 'right' to 'free speech'. In fact I would go as far as to say we don't have a 'right', we have a positive *duty* to ourselves and others to do so, and anyone who deludes themselves into thinking otherwise are not only wrong but totally irresponsible.

The objection that these means are contradictory to our stated anarchist aims is totally invalid. If we allow fascist

organisations or individuals unhindered access to a public platform for their prejudices, then this is the means by which they will build a larger movement.

Perhaps some might be objecting to this unpalatable reality with a comment like: 'You cannot defeat an idea by beating up those who believe it'.

No, you can't beat someone into changing their mind, but you can certainly stop them from putting ideas into practice, or prevent them increasing their numbers and influence by chasing them back to where they crawled from whenever they appear.

Another objection commonly spouted is: 'The way to counter prejudice and bigotry is by pulling their arguments to pieces, exposing the lies, and let people see for themselves that the fascists are wrong'.

But where would people get to hear this criticism? At the rally where the fascists are preaching? On the TV? In the 'free' press? Or would some brave/suicidal individuals stand outside the meeting place giving out counter-propaganda? Who would read it? Perhaps the anti-fascists should hold a meeting to discuss the finer criticisms of 'fascist political philosophy'? Who'd bother going?

There's not much time for persuasion when you're confronted by a knife-wielding fanatic intent on rearranging your face.

Let's face it, when it comes to actually stopping the growth of the embryonic fascist movement in Britain, the only way to do it is by stamping it out wherever it dares to appear, whether this consists of either shouting down the well-known racist at a public meeting, or kicking the NF/BNP off our streets (oh dear, that sounds violent...).

Those actively involved in the struggle have got to recognise that if we don't deal with the tiny fascist movement we have today, it's going to be a damned sight harder tomorrow, and perhaps by then it will be too late.

I will end with a quote which, for me, says it all: 'The only way that we could have been stopped was if we had been attacked and smashed at the beginning, by our enemies, with the utmost ferocity.

Who's it from? Adolf Hitler.

Yours for effective action,

**Midge  
Huddersfield**

## Voltaire

SADIE PLANT (Letters, February 1987) attributes to Voltaire the saying, 'I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it'. This is a common mistake, but Voltaire actually never said anything of the kind - he didn't believe in complete freedom of expression, and he wouldn't have defended anything to the death.

The saying was in fact invented long afterwards by S.G. Tallentyre (the pseudonym of the British writer E. Beatrice Hall) in *The Friends of Voltaire* (1906), a book about various leading figures of the French Enlightenment. The chapter on Helvétius includes an account of the ban of his book *De l'esprit* in 1758-1759 and of the support he got from other *philosophes*, including Voltaire. The author comments: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it", was his attitude then or ever, and he said nothing like it in any of his many statements on the subject at that or any other time.

Voltaire was a good and great man, but he wasn't even a liberal, let alone a libertarian, and it is wrong to continue to attribute to him something he didn't say and wouldn't have agreed with.

NW

## Bouquet for Colin

I HAD to smile to myself when I read Colin Ward's article in the centenary magazine. Then I wanted to nod in fierce private agreement, then to say 'now come on Colin, you know the answer to this question'. The question being how he had found himself described as one of the 'few token anarchists who... represent anarchism in the non-anarchist press', 'One of the few contemporary anarchists known outside the movement', etc.

If he doesn't know the answer, let me describe the sort of person I think might best persuade a hostile or indifferent acquaintance that anarchism might have something going for it. It would have to be someone who actually *liked* people, even those who hadn't heard of Kropotkin or thought you might have a bomb (under your clock, of course!). Someone who made an effort to *understand* other people's attitudes, and put opponents' feelings before scoring points with ideological dogma. Preferably a person who looked reasonably ordinary to relate to, not terrifyingly way-out. Who wouldn't dismiss an invitation to be interviewed wherever asked (what about Women's Hour as the ultimate challenge?). Most of all someone who could put the message of anarchism across with dogged

persistence, gentleness, but absolute sincerity, who could make it make *sense*.

After a meeting where Colin spoke I heard someone say 'I never knew *that's* what anarchy is - it's all about personal responsibility really, isn't it?' Amazing, the message had got through!

In the November/December issue of *Freedom* magazine someone writes 'One of the curiosities of anarchism is that so few people accept such an attractive philosophy'. Perhaps the reason is that there are so few people prepared to try putting it across in the way I have tried to describe.

If you recognise anyone, have another blush, Colin!

**Dorothy Percival**

## Practicalities

AFTER receiving the Centenary issue I passed it on to a lady friend of a most conventional nature, from whom I still have to retrieve it. Her astonishment when I told her I was an anarchist - or think I am - is symptomatic of the difficulty the future generation is going to find in establishing it as something serious to be considered. Some years ago I estimated it might take about two hundred years thinking that in medieval times the idea of democracy was so outrageous it wasn't even considered outside the monasteries... I think now two hundred years may be an underestimate. The *practicalities* of the whole conception have not yet been properly worked out except in Spanish anarcho-syndicalism which, in some ways seems to me not much different from co-operatives and workers participation in board meetings... Practicalities are bound to influence idealistic conceptions. Note the adjustments being made in China and Russia... You see as a Clydeside socialist who never could find a party he could fit into... although a Trade Unionist from the age of about 16 - after some consideration of my personal dislike for authority - (I don't think I've ever called anyone 'sir', no *never*...). As an entertainer (puppeteer) AND the freedom for decisions that gave me... I came some years ago that I must be an anarchist. But as a practical Scotsman what interests me most is the technical, day-to-day efforts to bring anarchism about. I exercised some of it on my own children - though not enough - (has anyone gone into the 'dictatorship' of parenthood?). Has anyone made any national effort to promote the educational methods of (Oh Jesus, I've forgotten his name - the Summerhill School. Another bloody Scot). Don't you all spend too much time on semantics? The difference between individualism and anarchism... Don't you all reverence too much Kropotkin, Proudhon, etc, etc.

Even some Christians acknowledge that the Bible may be out of date! Get with it! Anarchists. Appeal to the pop groups and the young. My grandson is studying politics, psychology and English. Now he wants, after Christmas, to go and live in a 'squat' - whatever that means...

I put to him once what I thought was a creditable aphorism. 'Do what you like so long as other people *like* what you do'. Substituting 'tolerate' for 'like', would you agree that it is quite a good definition of anarchist/liberal/socialism? Or is it all much more obtuse and dialectical.

Can you explain to me how the most subversive publications come from capitalist America rather than our 'democratic' Europe. Thomas Paine, Jack London, (who wrote *Oil?* - Sinclair Lewis? No. Whoever it was). Perhaps America is a better breeding ground for anarchism than anywhere in Europe: although in the evolution considerable changes in the idealist conception will inevitably occur.

**Melville Thompson**

## Witness wanted

WILL some of my personal acquaintances please testify to my sex and/or identity? Or if not will the editors of *Freedom* please stop publishing letters on this topic? They have no relevance that I can see to anarchism or feminism and they are personally embarrassing.

**Andrea Kinty**

## Poetry now

AS AN anarchist who has been involved in producing many kinds of periodicals for many years and who is passionately fond of poetry, I suggest one good reason for excluding poems from *Freedom* - the fact that virtually all the poems submitted to and published in contemporary anarchist, socialist, pacifist, humanist and generally ideological periodicals are so bad that it is embarrassing to consider them, invidious to choose among them, and painful to read them.

I also suggest that it is highly misleading for apologists for poetry in *Freedom* to refer to traditional epics and sagas, to folk songs and folk rhymes, or to such individuals as Blake, Shelley, Swinburne, Morris, Wilde and all the rest who have expressed libertarian ideas in English verse, without also mentioning that the people who try to do so nowadays produce nothing but doggerel or gibberish. For evidence, look at the early issues of *Freedom* or the centenary issue, or at any of the contemporary periodicals which do publish poetry.

No - for the sake of the editors and readers of *Freedom*, please retain the policy of keeping bad poems out of its columns.

AF

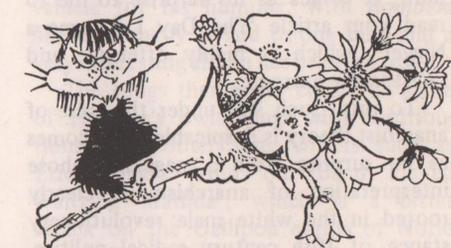
## Working class

DR has a lot of trouble about what working class means ('Working Class: Four Definitions', *Freedom*, February 1987), but it isn't very difficult. The working class consists of those people who, in order to live, are obliged to seek to sell their energies, mental or physical, to an employer in order to live. In other words, about 90 per cent of us. And the other 10 per cent - those who don't have to look for employment to live because they live off the backs of the 90 per cent - are the capitalist class. Forget the 'middle class' - upper or lower - they're a figment of the sociologists' (and unfortunately of some wage and salary earners') imagination.

What unites the working class is their poverty. What unites the capitalist class is their wealth. Unless, of course, you think that £200 a week or so (what a 'high-paid' worker might earn) isn't poverty. True £200 can buy a few more sticks of furniture and a few more meals out than, say, £90 a week. But not many more. The real difference lies elsewhere. The real difference lies not in a measly £100 or so a week but in the wage of *any* worker - 'high' or 'low' paid - and the wealth of any member of the capitalist class, who can buy furniture and meals out at the drop of a hat and virtually anything else that takes his or her fancy.

The so-called 'middle class' is just another of those fictions well beloved of the powers-that-be, including workers, to make status and wealth distinctions between one another and camouflaging their common class interest.

**Howard Moss**



THIS week I read, for the first time, an issue of your magazine. I was most impressed. If it is of any interest to you, I was most pleased by

1. the high intellectual standard adopted, and the competent editing and proof-reading,
2. the calm, almost quakerly, attitude you present. In January's issue only two articles had a ranting quality ('Down on the Farm', 'Dolgoff rides again').

If I have any criticism, it is that you refer too much to the past - but I should refrain from judging, as this may be a particularly bad time.

I would like to subscribe, and also enclose a donation.

**A J Lockton**

# Abuse and Threats

RE 'The Day I Became a Nigger': throughout my life I have heard white people insulting black people and then qualifying it with 'no offence mate, but . . .' or 'Don't take it so seriously', etc, etc, — an insult is an insult and no amount of apologising, rationalising or back sliding can change that. The title of that article was an insult, a pathetic racist comment (which was further aggravated by some more racist statements further in the article), for which there are no excuses. It merely reflects the shortsightedness and stupidity of the editorial group that no rider or disclaimer was produced with the article. It reflects the author's and the editorial group's blatant racism that it was written and published at all.

Is this what freedom of speech means to you? Licence to promote racism (or even more often sexism) under the 'respectability' of intellectualism? Or on an 'anti-censorship' ticket?

If that headline had been in the *Sun* or the *Star* I can imagine *Freedom* readers being disgusted and outraged by it, but if it's in *Freedom* then it's okay — well it certainly isn't by me. It has just confirmed what I had been told by others — *Freedom* is written by and reflects the views of middle-class, white, male intellectuals . . . Well no thanks, you can keep it.

Raf  
Sunderland

NOT being a regular reader of *Freedom*, mainly because I do not wish to support a paper which propagates and promotes such reactionary attitudes on sexism and porn, it comes as no surprise to me to read your article 'The Day I Became a Nigger', which is highly offensive and racist in the extreme.

To print such shit under the guise of anarchist theory is despicable — but comes as no surprise from a magazine whose interpretation of anarchism is clearly rooted in the white male revolutionary stance of 19th century radical politics. Your reactionary stance on racism, sexism and pornography, your non-existent support of the printers, your non-existent support of the miners, and your attempt to intellectualise, mystify and distance revolutionary anarchist theory from ordinary working-class people are as out of date, out of touch and offensive as your paper — I'd suggest you extract your heads from your collective arse, or piss off back to your cheese and wine parties with the vicar, and your consciousness-raising seminars with the libertarian right, and leave anarchism to those of us who at least have some idea of what it is. Yours in disgust.

Micky  
(Letter posted in Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

**Editorial reply:** Micky's allegation, that by attempting to show anarchism as intellectually respectable we distance it from ordinary working people, is an insult to ordinary working people. It implies that they are uninterested in anything but their day-to-day existence, and/or incapable of rational discussion, and/or unable to read anything complex. As working class people ourselves (whatever Raf has been told by others) we know this sneering attitude to be as untrue as it is objectionable.

We supported the striking miners not only verbally, but also materially. For the duration of the strike, Freedom's office was loaned to Bates Colliery NUM Branch as the depot for their fund-raising activities in London. However, we did not equate support for the miners with licking Arthur Scargill's arse.

Nor do we equate our commitment to racial and sexual equality with the espousal of every policy and slogan, however authoritarian or however daft, which happens to be fashionable among the louder sections of anti-racists and feminists.

'Nigger' is an insulting and demeaning word. In his title, 'The Day I Became a Nigger', Tony Gibson applies the word to himself (no-one else) to indicate that he has been insulted and demeaned. Far from expressing racist sentiments, qualified or not, he takes racism as the archetype of unfair discrimination and measures ageism against it.

Presumably he used that unpleasant word to shock people into reading his article. In the cases of our comrades Raf and Micky he seems, sadly, to have had the opposite effect.

IT IS a tragedy that the anarchist tradition of *Freedom* has been so perverted by the present editors. Contrary to your explicit statement in January's *Freedom* you now see fit to censor material sent to you which, although critical of *Freedom*, is clearly anarchistic. You do not, however, apply similar censorship to calls to support Thatcher (see *Freedom* February) or the use of racist and sexist offensive language.

Readers of *Freedom* will have seen some (albeit small) changes in the last two issues which can in part be attributed to suggestions I made in my letter of December 20th (unacknowledged and unprinted).

To put things right, I suggest that you print this letter together with the original letter in the next issue of *Freedom*.

Otherwise, in the interests of free speech and information, I will send copies to all the other anarchist journals and to everyone on the *Freedom* contacts list explaining why I am forced to do so.

Anna Quay  
Coventry

Our policy of providing a forum of anarchist opinion is not a promise to publish everything we are sent. Anna Quay's letter of 20 December is a thousand words of suggestions for improving Freedom. We decided that to take up a whole page with it would be navel-gazing concern with ourselves and not the wider world, a failing to which the letter itself draws attention. We will send a photocopy to anyone interested enough to send an s.a.e.

Anna Quay is not the only reader to misunderstand what we thought self-evident, that John Myhill's 'support Thatcher' letter was ironic. Perhaps we should refuse to publish jokes.

## In Brief

An encouraging proportion of people are cynical about political parties, according to a poll (1). For example, only 21% believe that a future conservative government could keep its promises. Labour manages 24% and alliance 26%. Even amongst their respective supporters, the figures are only 45%, 48% and 54%. Unfortunately, being cynical ourselves, a discouraging proportion of these people shall still go out and vote for these same parties.

Which government would	Now	Nov 1986
Govern Britain strongly	Con 56 Lab 26 All 20	Con 63 Lab 31 All 20
Govern Britain fairly	All 49 Lab 44 Con 35	All 51 Lab 45 Con 36
Keep its promises	All 26 Lab 24 Con 21	All 28 Lab 27 Con 21
Give people like you a better chance in life	Lab 35 All 28 Con 24	Lab 40 All 30 Con 26
Listen to what people like you think	All 37 Lab 36 Con 19	Lab 41 All 40 Con 22
Make Britain more united	All 29 Lab 25 Con 18	Lab 29 All 27 Con 20
How would you vote?	Con 38 Lab 35 All 25	Con 39 Lab 36 All 23

The Open University had more women graduates than men for the first time this year. Only just — 3,078:3,055.

Mother Teresa, Calcutta saint designate and well known right wing Roman Catholic, has estimated that \$100,000 of money mailed to her organisation has been stolen en route.



## VIDEO & RECORD REVIEWS



### The 'banned' tv show

LOOK HERE — as Hamlet said — upon this picture, and on this. On one side is *The Secret Society*, a series of six television programmes made by the investigative journalist Duncan Campbell for BBC TV Scotland and scheduled to be broadcast on BBC2 first in the autumn of 1986 and then in the spring of 1987. In January the first programme was banned at a late stage by the BBC Director General Alasdair Milne (who was dismissed by the BBC Board of Governors a few days later), because it deals with the sensitive subject of Project Zircon, the Government plan to build a new British radio spy satellite which will cost about £500,000 and which has been concealed from the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.

The authorities took so long to decide what to do next that soon after the ban was announced by *The Observer*, Duncan Campbell published the full details of the affair in the *New Statesman* on 23 January, and at the same time pirated videotapes of the programme began to circulate around the country. The delayed reaction of the authorities was a series of police raids on the *New Statesman* and the journalists involved, and then the offices of BBC TV Scotland in Glasgow.

This is, of course, just one more chapter in a running story of official secrecy and unofficial investigation, in which Governments of all parties try to keep their military and intelligence activities secret, and investigators, both professional and amateur, try to discover and disseminate the facts. In the general area of left-wing exposure of official secrets there have been dozens of cases of Government embarrassment from 1963 (when the Spies for Peace exposed the emergency regional government system during the Aldermaston March) through various instalments of increasing exposure by journalists led by Duncan Campbell. In the particular area of Signals Intelligence there have been several cases from 1958 (when two Oxford students were prosecuted and imprisoned for publishing information in the student paper *Isis* about British monitoring of Russian military traffic) to 1977 (when Duncan Campbell himself was one of three people in the ABC case who were prosecuted and conditionally discharged for publishing similar information in *Time Out*).

On this occasion the whole business is both very embarrassing and very encouraging for the Government. Once again it has been caught trying and failing to suppress

the facts; but this time it is up against the hated BBC (as in the *Real Lives* case in 1985) and also the hated lefty press. The Thatcher Government is no worse than any other in this respect — after all, the ABC case occurred under the Callaghan Government — but it does show a high level of incompetence combined with malevolence; and there is a General Election on the way. The Kinnock opposition is no worse than any other either, but it is having a bad time trying to be both 'responsible' and oppositional; and there is indeed a General Election on the way.

For us there are some pleasant ironies to relish. This time it is an established left-wing paper and the national broadcasting organisations which are raided at dawn, searched for hours or days on end, and have everything taken away or turned upside down. For once the journalists' and broadcasters' trade unions have a real issue on their hands — and are responding with token strikes and a lobby of Parliament! The film itself — which we saw at Conway Hall in London on 9 February — isn't especially revealing or interesting, and like the *New Statesman* article is vitiated by its argument that the real issue is the deception of Parliament.

For us the real issue is whether we are meant to be at war, and whether we are free to discuss the issue openly. What if Parliament had been consulted, and what now that Parliament has been informed? As with the world wars and conscription, with the atom and hydrogen bombs, with nuclear tests and nuclear power, with the Suez War and the Falklands War, the government does the same, whether it is Conservative or Labour and whether it bothers about Parliament or not. — The issue is not Zircon and Parliament, but war and liberty.

On the other side is *When the Wind Blows*, an animated film of the book by Raymond Briggs. Briggs is one of the most popular creators of comic strips — whether the rude farce of *Fungus the Bogeyman* or the gentle fantasy of *The Snowman*. *When the Wind Blows* (1982) is a funny but sad tragi-comic strip, the saga of Jim and Hilda Bloggs, a stereotyped conventional couple (based on the author's parents) who follow the official instructions about how to protect themselves and survive a nuclear war and who soon die of radiation sickness. It has already been a bestseller ever since it was published five years ago and has also been made into a successful radio play, and into a fairly successful stage play, but the new film is intended to reach a much wider audience.

It has been favourably reviewed, and it will no doubt be widely seen, but it is very disappointing. Briggs' delicate crayon drawings, which were so beautifully captured in the film version of *The Snowman*, have been vulgarised in a coarse and clumsy way, and diluted with photographs and film which reduce their subtle impact. The voices of John Mills and Peggy Ashcroft are good, but the sound-track is loaded with loud pop music which distorts the quiet tone of the narrative. Even so, this is a much more convincing picture of the world of nuclear war than the Zircon film or indeed such realistic films as *Threads* or *The War Game*.

MH

### Bombers Moon

THERE was more than a heavy dose of irony present, when one morning early last year I saw a copy of *Bombers Moon* featuring as the central item in the front window display of our local RAF Careers Office. The state can, of course, recoup almost anything for its own purposes but I doubt very much whether RAF Careers Officers play that particular LP to would-be recruits.

The theme of this album by Mike Harding is the futility and waste of wars, with some sideways glances at work, and humanity's relationship with the environment. This LP is very, very different from the image most people will have of Mike Harding from his appearances on TV as an entertainer or from his earlier LPs. Previously, LPs such as *One Man Show* may have featured the odd 'serious' song such as 'King Cotton', but were mostly a vehicle for his humour. With *Bombers Moon*, comedy is laid to one side, and a very interesting album has been the result.

The songs themselves consist of some of Harding's own songs with contributions from other song writers such as Eric Bogle's 'And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda', which is a bitter attack on the Gallipoli events of World War I, Bruce Springsteen's 'Factory' and Dave Goulanders' 'January Man', which follows the course of life through the twelve months of the year. The best of Harding's own contributions are 'The Acrinton Pals', which bitterly recalls the massacre of thousands sent to their death in the Somme in 1916, and 'These Poor Hands', which attacks the attitudes of the likes of Thatcher et al who look upon us all as mere 'hands' to work in the fields, factories, workshops and offices for their profit while we ' . . . never owned one handful of earth . . .'. The music does not have the punch or energy of performers in the 'folk' scene such as 'Brass Monkey' or 'The Hop' but the lyrics more than compensate.

Jonathan Simcock