

## It Rests on You!

There is one thing - and only one - that the State really and truly does fear. And no, it's not the use of violence against itself or any of its "citizens" (if it really deplored the latter, it wouldn't use so much violence against them itself; and as for the former, the government is ARMED TO THE TEETH and only chafing restlessly most of the time because it doesn't have nearly enough opportunities to try out its latest big-time bullying weapons on even pitifully organised and armed sectors of the populace.)

These days the State doesn't even fear dissent much. Sure, they'd prefer there not to be any, and they'll intimidate and harass and persecute dissenters, but that's only to stay in shape, so to speak. Besides, the actual enforcers are always police of one variety or another, and they enjoy doing directly to people what bureaucrats only do from a distance, pushing them around, generating pain and fear, and stealing their belongings and money.

The truth is the State doesn't fear ANY of the things that most protest or reform movements think it does - not voting, not letters-to-the editor in newspapers (those are carefully controlled so that the fearful ideas can never get through), not movements to place more enlightened people on juries. The only thing the State or government is afraid of is this: your withdrawal of consent. Illegitimacy. Anything else you do only adds to its total of amassed power. If you vote to change some aspect of it, AND WIN, the change may or may not be implemented (as the voters' approval for measures to partially decriminalise marijuana in Arizona and California has not been). Chances are that it'll be delayed for so long and subjected to such a slow death by law suits that when the "winning" reform finally slips into its grave hardly anybody will even notice. Even if the reform is implemented, the State will license whatever it is, regulate it, inspect it, and so on, to such a degree that the totality of statism is not only increased, but the State is further enabled by the aura of justness in its alleged willingness to change (never mind that to get it to do even THIS required millions of hours of human effort and untold expense by the hopeful

reformers.) And of course, if you LOSE in a vote, which in all likelihood you will, whatever it is you were objecting to and voting against will now have even more power because it has been ratified by "the will of the people". In other words, as long as you play the statists' game, the State will win over the long run the same way that the "house" wins over the long run when people gamble on roulette wheels. There's enough of an edge in the odds for the "house" that it keeps amassing money - and how much it amasses is directly related to the number of people who walk through the door and play the game.

The only thing the "house" fears when it comes to roulette, is that people will stop walking in the door at all and playing the game. So it provides lots of incentives to get people to do that: free drinks, shows, scantily-clad girls, tour packages with low-priced hotel rooms, availability of prostitutes, and, of course, always the great lure of Winning Big. The gambling industry, then, is willing to encourage you to enjoy yourself and try to win big, so that IT can enjoy ITSELF even more and win even bigger.

And the State would go out of business, too, if people gave up on its games and realised that over the long run governments only keep enlarging themselves. Here in the USA we've had a clear progression from an initially small and perhaps not too harmful government, to a gargantuan one, millions of times as large as when it started out. There's almost a biological imperative about this, and despite the hoped-for effectiveness of written limitations, the horrible thing has grown and grown, the same way that a tiny rattlesnake grows - no matter how much you may not want it to - into a large and highly dangerous one.

The State stays in existence for only one reason: most people think most other people think it ought to.

Back in the 1800s, the insane King Christopher of Haiti used to shoot to death some of the workers on his projects - despite the fact that there were a lot more of them than there was of him. One writer gives us this episode: "The slightest hint of insubordination brought down his murderous wrath. Suspecting the fidelity of a company of citadel guards, he lined them up on the highest battlement and commanded them to march forward, right over the edge of a 130-foot wall. And they

obeyed, to be dashed to pieces on the rocky mountainside below." The mental concept of the propriety of these orders, OR the fear of the tortures that might result from an individual's refusal to obey them, combined with the inability of any single person to know whether the others would stand with him or not in his refusal, all contributed to an irresistible exercise of power, that, at base, ONLY rested on those victims' own attitude and resolve. This State and all its myriad incredible tyrannies, likewise rests on you.

Fred Woodworth

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# Total Liberty

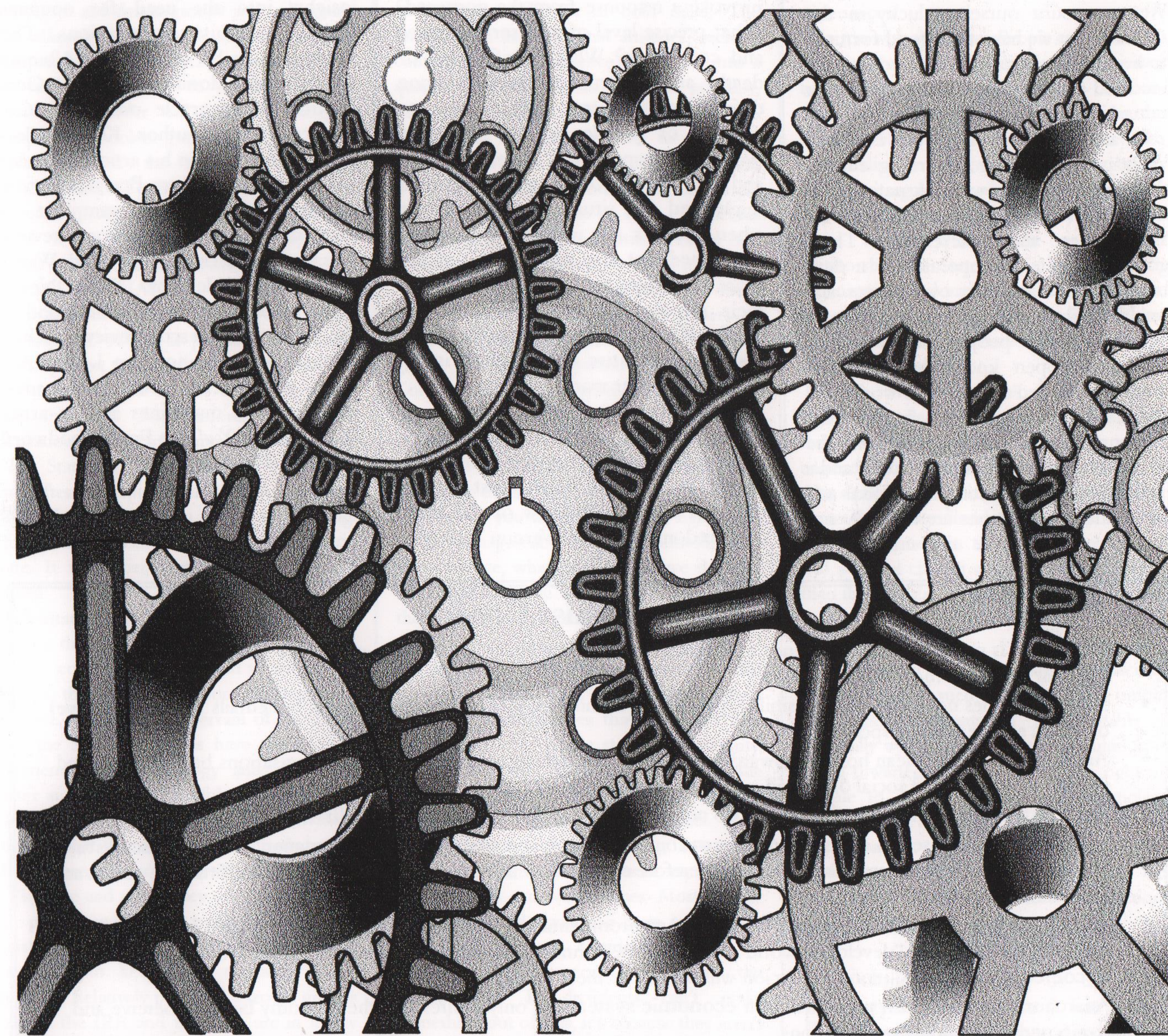
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## EDITORIAL

“May you live in interesting times” is a saying much quoted and oft attributed to the ancient Chinese. Since September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 we have indeed been living in interesting times. Disastrous times for peace loving peoples the world over, and particularly disastrous times for innocent civilians in Afghanistan. The spokesperson for the American military-industrial complex, one George Bush Junior, threatens military action against Iraq, Iran and North Korea. It is quite likely that the threat to the first will be carried out, less so with the latter two. We can count ourselves lucky in this country that we have the “good fortune” to live under a *regime* that has not to date incurred the wrath of the world’s sole remaining super-power.

In any case such an event is hardly likely given that the governing elite in this and the other western nations are more or less in agreement with the USA as to where their interests lie. These governing elites co-operate on a daily basis to maintain their own power and wealth. The linkages and networks between these people are complex, sometimes open knowledge, at other times well buried secrets. The works and deeds of the UK government, the USA government, the European Union, the World Trade Organisation, NATO, and a host of other international, national and corporate organisations are certainly not carried out to serve the interests of

ordinary people, nor to preserve their economic well-being and freedom. Cloaked in the language of secrecy, dishonesty and deceit, lies and evasion, the elites carry out their murderous work of ‘Statecraft’, of robbery and self aggrandisement. However depressing it may be, we must conclude that they do so with the consent of the majority of the governed. There have been enough exposés of the facts relating to graft, corruption and abuse of power within government in the popular press and on satirical programmes on television to ensure that at least some of the political and corporate elite’s actions are *widely known*. One has to ask the question, just what level of outrage is needed to provoke a response from the governed? What precise level of self serving greed and corruption? What horrific level of death and destruction heaped upon defenceless civilians before we see millions of people on the streets of Western European and American cities and the creation of a movement that might end this situation? Or is it only when people’s *own* interests are directly threatened that they will act? It is all the more important that Anarchists keep up their efforts, by printed journals, by word and by example, to show that there is still an alternative and that there is still hope for a better world.

Last December saw the death of veteran Anarchist Vernon Richards, for many a long year the power behind the throne at Freedom Press. Most readers of *Total Liberty* will know of the work of Freedom Press and Vernon Richards.

Freedom Press has been the core of Anarchism in Britain over the last 60 years. From 1936, when *Spain and the World* was published, becoming *War Commentary for Anarchism* for the duration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and *Freedom* ever since. It was with *Freedom* many Anarchists had their first introduction to the movement, and it was the Freedom Press who provided a host of reading matter not easily available elsewhere. Vernon Richard’s legacy to the movement is the books, pamphlets, and magazines he has produced or which he helped inspire.

This edition of *Total Liberty* has the usual eclectic mix of articles, comment and reviews. Larry Gambone gives us his insights into the need for openness within Anarchist organisations. Dick Frost gives us his thoughts on Ubiquity, Utility and Morality. Peter Good contributes an article on *Health Care*. Science Fiction author Ken Macleod gives his opinions in his article *Anarchism and Science Fiction*. Rory Bowskill reviews a Land and Liberty pamphlet on Permaculture. The editor reviews ‘Dissenting Electorate’ by Carl Watner and Wendy McElroy. Peter Neville reviews books on statewatching and on the Taliban. Joe Peacott reviews Richard Garner’s latest writings on Locke. Also there are letters from our readers, recommended magazines and an article *It Depends on You!* by Fred Woodworth editor of *The Match!*

JPS

### An Anarchist Credo

- Anarchism is not terrorism or violence and anarchists **do not** support, aid or sympathise with terrorists or so-called national liberation movements.
- Anarchism does not mean irresponsibility, parasitism, criminality, nihilism or immoralism, but entails the **highest level** of ethics and personal responsibility.
- Anarchism does not mean hostility toward organisation. Anarchists only desire that all organisations be **voluntary** and declare that a peaceful social order will exist only when this is so.
- Anarchists are **resolute anti-statists** and do not defend either “limited states” or “welfare states”.
- Anarchists are opposed to all coercion. Poverty, bigotry, sexism and environmental degradation cannot be successfully overcome through the State. Anarchists are therefore **opposed** to taxation, censorship, so-called affirmative action and government regulation.
- Anarchists do not need **scapegoats**. Poverty and environmental destruction are not ultimately caused by transnationals, the IMF, the USA, the “developed world”, imperialism, technology or any other devil figure, but are rooted in the **power to coerce**. Only the abolition of coercion will overcome these problems.
- Anarchism does not posit **any particular economic system** but only desires that the economy be non-coercive and composed of voluntary organisations.
- Anarchists are not utopians or sectarians, but are sympathetic to **any effort** to decrease statism and coercion and the replacement of authoritarian relations with voluntary ones.

## On The Need for Transparency

The anti-terrorism legislation enacted in the USA, Canada and Britain is a frontal attack upon civil liberties. Such attacks must be resisted. We must oppose ANY move by the State to increase its powers over us. But our opposition is of an ethical and not of a practical nature. What do I mean by this distinction? In practice, this legislation could have little effect upon us, we oppose it because it is morally wrong. “Could have little effect upon us? You are dreaming,” you say.

What are these legislative acts designed to do? They give the State increased powers to investigate and detain groups and individuals who allegedly promote or support political violence. They give the State greater ability to do surveillance and to check financial records, in order to root out alleged conspiratorial violent groups.

But what is the result if you are TRANSPARENT? What if everything you do economically and politically is out in the open? What if all your actions are non-violent and minimize confrontation? (\*) THE STATE HAS NO POWER OVER YOU! True, in a time of hysteria, such as the aftermath of 911, it is possible for a non-violent person to get falsely accused, but this will be (and so far is) the exception rather than the rule. Furthermore, such false accusations will backfire upon the authorities.

The State consists of the rule of a small and often conspiratorial elite forcing the mass of the population to do its bidding. This is true even in a supposedly democratic State. It is an organism that lives by, and indeed thrives on, violence and confrontation. For dissident organisations to counter the rule of the State by engaging in hidden, conspiratorial acts and to attempt to impose their views by confrontation and violence, is to enter the terrain of the State. And the State authorities have much more experience and technology and are much better at this than a handful of malcontents. These actions, when taken by a dissident minority, put that minority at a disadvantage, placing them in a contradictory situation.

Violence and conspiracy are the responses of people who are isolated, unpopular elitists. Conspiratorial parties of left and right are lucky to keep their deposits during elections. Relatively powerful terrorist groups such as the IRA and the ETA are in reality backed by less than 10% of their potential supporters. Leninist terrorist groups such as the Red Army Faction and the Red Brigades had virtually no popular support whatever. Animal rights activists who plant bombs or

engage in arson are a mere fraction of animal rights supporters. Their ideas or their actions, (or both) are not popular, so they seek to force themselves down people’s throats.

Now look at a movement which is transparent. Here it is the State that is entwined by contradictions. The dissidents, being open and above board in their beliefs and actions, make all the surveillance come to naught. The authorities would look rather foolish in fact. If, rather than seeking to impose a set of unpopular ideas upon the people, they attempt to find issues which really concern them, the elitism of the authorities stands out in bold relief. The State, which lives by elitist attitudes, secrecy, confrontation and violence, is thrown into a quandary by people who are open, populist, non-confrontational and non violent.

The only way for the State to crush an open, non-violent and populist movement would be to become totalitarian, to simply ban ANY opposition to its rule. I think this is unlikely in the “democracies.” There is a virtual consensus among social scientists and the members of the ruling elite that some level of freedom is needed for society to develop and prosper. Tyranny would kill the goose that laid the golden egg. Thus, the Corporate State is, out of necessity, forced to allow some space where debate, political and economic action can take place, even if it works to marginalise the people who take advantage of this fact.

Some of you might be saying right now, “Well, transparency, non-confrontation and non-violence, what the hell can we do with that? And what can we gain from listening to the people – they support this damn war etc.”

I will deal with the last part of this statement first. True, the majority does sometimes take stances that we don’t like. But that isn’t the whole story. The majority, or at least very large minorities of the population, also take libertarian positions on a whole range of important subjects. Most people favour less government, less taxes, want decentralisation and more say in their communities and work places. Most people (in Europe and Canada, a large minority in the USA) favour decriminalisation of cannabis and are concerned about the environment. If dissidents can’t make something out of this, it’s because they aren’t really trying.

The economy is based upon consumption. The biggest group of consumers are ordinary working people. There simply aren’t enough rich to pull it off, not by a long shot.

This gives us an immense and largely untapped power. Change consumption patterns, you change the economy. In the act of changing consumption, you change society, and thus eventually, how it is governed. Our right to consume what we want, invest, live and work where we want, is essential to this society. Nothing could be more legal and less confrontational, than choosing to do what we wish in these areas. The alternatives already exist – co-ops, allotments, credit unions, small businesses, barter networks, LETS, the Simple Living Movement etc. We can build on these experiences.

So too with the State. People can withdraw from it. Mutualist alternatives can be created to the State social services. People can *home school*. Movements already exist to take the schools back from the bureaucracy, to decentralise political power, abolish repressive regulations and limit the power of government over us. It is perfectly legal to do these things. Other than a complete dictatorship, the State cannot suppress such organisations as long as they are non-violent. But start waving guns around or preaching violence and the authorities have an excuse to shut you down.

If the authorities think their repressive legislation will allow them to crush dissent, they have another thing coming. It might engender the opposite by forcing dissent to take a populist and non-confrontational turn. In so doing, the dissidents would adopt the ethics and practices that would make social and political change a real possibility, rather than the pipe dream it seems to be right now.

Larry Gambone

(\*) I recognize there are times when secrecy is a necessity – such as organising a union. Sometimes confrontation is inevitable – especially when the will of the population is being thwarted. I also recognize the right of people to defend themselves from violent attack. But these are exceptional circumstances. Certain ideologies make secrecy, confrontation and violence into the first, not the last, choices of action.

“Evolution is leading us up to Liberty simply because it has led us in nearly every other direction and made a failure of it...”

Benjamin Tucker





## Ubiquity, Utility and Morality

I am concerned here with three aspects of Anarchism, which ought to be better known: ubiquity, utility and morality.

There is a whole lot of Anarchism in the world – ubiquity. Without it, no society of any sort could work. Anarchist means for me the free, voluntary association of people to make something happen which they want, without exploiting anyone or anything. It is basic in human nature. We associate and co-operate because that's how we are. A whole lot of evil organisations, including big business and the State, depend on this instinct. Twisted, perverted and generally bugged about, it yet makes the world go round.

What interests me here, however, is the more nearly anarchic structures we have or used to set up. Sport is a nice example. Though corrupted by business and money-grabbing, any game is in essence a few or a crowd of people getting together to do something they want to do. Interest groups, hobby clubs, dancing, singing and social life generally aren't much different: they are things we do voluntarily and which we could, and often still, organise by and for ourselves. Usually we make up and agree on rules. We establish hierarchies and recognise specific jobs, which have to be done so the game or dance can happen. We even agree on offences and punishments – such as 'sendings off' in football. But no one is forced to suffer. We can always walk away or resign.

Sick clubs were voluntary, mutual aid organisations. A group of people who established one could, by paying an equal sum each week, in effect hire a doctor or the services of a hospital when one of them was ill. It is a long leap to the NHS, but that is effectively a sick club writ gigantic: in theory, we all contribute according to our means in order to get treatment free when we need it.

Building societies were set up so that members could save for the time when they would need to borrow the price of a house. The community of members provided a small return for saver-members and sufficient funds to advance as mortgages to

borrower-members. The Trustee Savings Bank operated in a similar way.

Co-ops might have been the frontier of a brave new world. Their hopes, promise and successes are well known. Some flourish and modest new ones are continually being set up.

Now include some non-conformist churches, the trades unions, public libraries, evening classes, the Labour Party (!), the SWP (!) and so amazingly on and you have a partial over-view of organisations in the UK which demonstrate aspects of Anarchism. Essentially, and in their beginnings, all involved people joining together to get or provide themselves with some thing or service they needed, all the people contributing and benefiting roughly equally. How and why they went astray requires another article.

The immediate utility of Anarchism is less obvious since we tend to think or dream of the end game. But those things about existing structures which rightly disgust us, such as inequality, secrecy, fixed hierarchy are frequently just the points at which anarchic reform is needed now.

In my on-going campaign against the NHS I rail against its secrecy in decision-making in general and over the allocation of resources in particular – which determine staffing levels, availability of beds, waiting lists for operations, etc. I attack quite rudely the elitism of medical and management hierarchies, the lack of contact between bosses and workers, the absence of a complaints procedure or effective feedback from patients and so on.

I do so with anarchic prejudice because I am sure that openness at all these points would be the best first step – one that could be taken now – towards efficiency and the economic use of people, money and resources. Bad planning, waste, incompetence, over-manning, cock-ups and cover-ups are difficult to get away with when they happen in the public gaze. I want organisations of patients and self-help groups covering e.g. arthritis, heart disease, asthma

etc. to be a new power in the health service at every level, one with no bureaucrat, financial or career interest.

The NHS is just an example of the bureaucracies, which serve our needs, as opposed to the capitalist enterprises, which feed our desires. Government departments, education, social services, health, transport are others. What they all need is not more money but rather a growing democratisation of their procedures and structures, which would be a step towards Anarchism.

This is a reformist programme with a revolutionary objective. The drive to open up systems to public scrutiny, participation and inquiry as of right would improve what we have and be a step towards what we want. I accept for the time being much that is far from Anarchist but I am tired of Anarchism being equated with both chaos and utopian daydreams. For me, it is the best theory of social life; it already exists and its precepts need to be applied piecemeal to any social structure which seeks the common good, however inadequately.

The moral issue is similarly basic: Anarchism is essential to human life. We are human in so far as we are Anarchist. Our life should be in balance between individual freedom and the requirements of the free communities to which we ideally belong. Anarchist morality is whatever helps to maintain the community, which is the stage and context of our liberty. It is, therefore, altruistic, which is why it is the highest morality: there will be times when the individual will sacrifice his or her interests or life even for the community. But what results from this altruism are the conditions in which the free, unique individual can grow and flourish.

This is a plea to Anarchists to broadcast the virtues of our beliefs and to seek to apply aspects of Anarchism wherever we can get a hearing. We live in a half way tolerable society, which is worth improving. It is fast running out of ideas; what hasn't been tried is the Anarchist programme. It's time to begin.

Dick Frost

## ANARCHIST REMEDIES TO MEDICAL CHAOS

If you ever need a working example of the chaos resulting from planning and regulation then you need look no further than the British Health Service. This great post-war vision started off with the highest of intentions. On offer was free medical care for all from the cradle to the grave. It was truly a tempting slogan. One that promised decreasing demands on medical services as the health of the nation improved. In fact, the reverse happened. The more resources the Health Service provides, the more demands are made upon it. As a result the Health Service finds itself locked into a chaotic cycle in which the only solution sought is centred around the demand for more, and more, and more of the same.

You don't need me to spell out the evidence. Just go and sit in the waiting rooms of anyone of our hospitals. Everywhere you will see evidence of bureaucracy and hierarchy running wild. You will see more uniforms here than in the average military transit camp. Be aware of how the whole place is riddled with class and status. A powerful pecking order presides. Registered nurses be-medaled with badges and name-tags; administrators in dark suits; young doctors flaunting stethoscopes round their necks. And the deeper picture is even worse. Practitioners have become victims of a system that has desensitised many well-meaning people. A litigant-sensitive administration insists that everything be written out and fed into computerised tick-boxes. You will learn how qualified electricians are the only ones allowed to change a light bulb and then only when in possession of the correct docket. Watch how cleaners clean only what their time and motion study permits. Observe the teams of superannuated porters who are called upon whenever an office desk or a cabinet needs moving.

What this chaos has produced are bands of compartmentalised health service employees who have learned to survive by guarding themselves against blame. In their world, you are not allowed to make mistakes. Whole careers are seriously jeopardised if risks are taken and a practitioner steps outside the boundaries of their recognised compartments. In report and in committee the name of the game is CYA – Cover Your Arse. And make sure you cover it well. The professions have taken the precaution of protecting themselves well from scrutiny and criticism. They have bolstered themselves with powerful images of people doing their best under difficult conditions. And by asserting that their work can only be objectively judged by their peers they have ensured their motives are extremely difficult to question.

The cold arrogance of technological medicine regularly receives many damning exposures of bad practice. A growing distrust between practitioners and patients has been seeded. Increasing numbers of patients are beginning to view themselves as disgruntled customers of a State monopoly. More and more people are willing to embark on the precarious path of lodging complaints. Guarding themselves against this culture of complaint, practitioners have come to rely on tests and procedures that often have more to do with professional defence than looking at an individual illness. Medicine is now increasingly reliant on technology. The best care has become equated with the best technologies. And both practitioners and patients are trapped in its grip.

This same technology has been warmly embraced by the growing business sector influence within health provision. After all, both technology and management share the same appetite for numbers and complicated graphs. Between them they have managed to create an institution that is hostile to non-technological intervention. Scientific medicine is a hard-edged philosophy and it hinders the progress of the more human approaches to health care. It's an oddity isn't it that the more advances science makes in medical technology the more the people turn to alternative therapies? The people's strange earthy wisdom often turns out to be right.

I am not advocating a health service free from technology. I wouldn't want to live in a world without anaesthetics. Rather, I propose a system of health care which would view healing as a loving interchange rather than a bureaucratic transaction. One in which human interaction precedes any other. This kind of care is far removed from the bleating mantra for more and more resources. Listen in to the people's wisdom again. What patients want, if you ask them, is a friendship service with an integral level of trust. They actually express a preference for hospitals that are happy and creative places to walk into. All these simple-sounding provisions are essential ingredients to healing. The people's wisdom calls upon us to radically rethink the way we practice medicine.

A starting point for Anarchists is the understanding that healing is a process and an enquiry. For a resolution of some condition to occur the efforts of both the patient and the practitioner are required. At present our waiting rooms overflow with patients who have surrendered the power of their own inner healer. That's why patients sit around in waiting areas looking so downcast. To be sick in any bureaucratic system means you must be in possession of a stamp of official approval. You need

permission to be sick. And you pay a heavy price for this permission. Trust must be surrendered and invested into an authority figure.

Anarchist objections to business sector medicine works from the as yet untapped seam of *personal responsibility* as a working alternative. It is an argument demanding practitioners free themselves from the hierarchical quagmire they are bogged down in. It asks practitioners to understand healing as process. It asks them to listen in to their own wisdom by acknowledging that much of modern medicine is often just a substitute for what patients really need.

Such a model of medicine needs practitioners who are willing to break out of their compartments and share their skills with others. Many nurses are just as capable of prescribing appropriate medicines and dealing with everyday cuts and bruises. Much of the present necessity for paperwork could be avoided if the system could be persuaded to invest trust in its patients. Practitioners need only record their observations on tapes which patients would keep for future reference. Most queries about health matters can be answered competently by practitioners who need not necessarily be based in Dettol-smelling clinics.

Responsibility of course, works both ways. Anarchists would ask of the sick that they in turn become better patients. The healing process is not helped if a person sees themselves as passive recipients of expertise. Every body comes equipped with its own inner healer and it's a far more complex arrangement than any machine. You need to be in control of your own body and take responsibility for it. The only real choices modern medicine offers is to accept or to refuse the treatment offered. Various forms of self-medication come in the form of alcohol or drugs. You know there are dangers if you buy into a diet of sugars and preservative foods. Accordingly there is little need for the State to spend millions warning people to stay away from the six-packs and cigarettes.

Modern medicine, with its gloss of audits and leagues tables, is in great peril. It is deaf to whether results can be obtained from other approaches to health care. It single-mindedly seeks solutions from the powers that are the cause of its problems in the first place. The interests of bureaucracy and technology do not lie in the direction of increasing personal autonomy. Awkward delays and administrative complications would result if medicine began to risk investing trust in its patients. And what a chaotic mess that would be.

Peter Good



# Anarchism and Science Fiction

It was science fiction that got me interested in Anarchism in the first place. Paul Anderson's short story 'The Last of the Deliverers' turns on a confrontation between the last communist and the last enthusiast for capitalism - two very old men, who end up dead in the river with their hands locked around each other's throats: a microcosm of a world in which the US and the SU and their contending ideologies have long since collapsed. (One down, one to go.) Cheap, small fusion-power plants have made possible a radical decentralisation of population and power into small and in many ways self-sufficient communities, who can nevertheless co-operate on a continental scale to build spaceships. As a late-sixties space age schoolboy I found this vision exciting, and when I talked about it to a friend he said, 'That sounds like Anarchism.'

So off I went and read all I could find about Anarchism, starting with Giovanni Baldelli's *Social Anarchism*, April Carter's *The Political Theory of Anarchism*, and the Cohn-Bendits' *Obsolete Communism*. They didn't make me an Anarchist, but they changed my life. By way of retaliation, I'd like to get more Anarchists interested in science fiction, and change theirs.

What I'd like to see is not just more SF informed by Anarchism, but an Anarchist movement and climate of opinion much more informed by SF than it currently is. Cloning, genetic engineering, life-extension, nanotechnology, space exploration and industrialisation, artificial intelligence and so on are moving from science fiction through the science journals to the headlines. If Anarchists refuse to think about such things, others who aren't so reluctant will shape their use, and with it the future.

Too much Anarchist rhetoric has a nineteenth-century feel - not surprisingly, because that's when a lot of it was written. It doesn't have to be like this. One of the most inspiring books I read as a teenager, *Breaking In The Future* (Zenith Books, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1965) was written by an Anarchist, Tony Gibson. Cannily, it didn't talk about Anarchism. Its front cover posed the question: 'Outer space, new nations, automation, population ... How can we use a million years' experience in the revolutions just ahead?' If any Anarchist has given an answer half as lively and on the ball since, I'd love to hear about it. The same kind of question is still being asked, and variously answered, in SF.

Science fiction is relevant to Anarchist concerns because, as Peter Neville correctly says (TL, Spring 2001) it 'allows the examination of alternative worlds, alternative

systems, alternative societies and the interplay of new ideas'. But as Richard Alexander, also correctly, points out (TL, Autumn 2001) Neville's article misses much recent SF of potential interest to Anarchists. So does this one - there's a lot of it out there.

Academic discussions of Anarchism and SF tend to begin and end with Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, a book which has probably put more people off Anarchism than any other. It presents a dour vision of *Anarchist Communism*: something like a particularly fanatical kibbutz or Spanish Civil War collective. Computers are hand-waved into economic planning, children are discouraged from 'egoising' - getting possessive about their toys, or their ideas. The conflicts this induces in Shevek, a brilliant physicist with a few too many ideas of his own, are well presented. In the absence of public debate and in the relentless presence of morality, Shevek has no forum in which to express his dissent, no way to find like-minded individuals with whom he might find common ground; instead, his conflicts become conflicts with other individuals. He is as isolated as any dissident in a totalitarian State.

A much more cheerful vision of a stateless, classless, and moneyless society is presented in Iain Banks's *Culture* novels, set in a Galactic society of abundance premised on benevolent artificial intelligences - machines like gods, in which humans live like mice in gliders, or bats in belfries. Life in a Culture Orbital is like a Caribbean cruise, except that the ship contains its own ocean. Those discontented with this lazy life-style are free to depart or - if they're smart - join in the Machiavellian machinations of Contact Section, which artfully nudges backward planets in the right - or left - direction. Even in their interventions the Culture keeps its scientific cool, selecting certain planets to be left untouched: properly conducted social experiments need control samples. Earth, in case we hadn't guessed, is one of them.

An equally *Communist Anarchy* has been imagined by the hard-headed American free-marketeer and engineer James P. Hogan in his *Voyage From Yesteryear*. His utopia runs on a more immediately feasible technology than the indistinguishable-from-magic machinery of the Culture. It has robots to do the dirty work, but they aren't conscious robots so we're not relying on their benevolence, just their tolerances. One has the distinct feeling that Hogan has their blueprints, if not (yet) their programmes, in a big drawer in his desk. What makes the story, however, is the fun Hogan's heroes have running rings around the State-Capitalist Earthpersons who attempt to repossess

them. 'Take me to your leaderless' doesn't quite cut it when you want to re-establish top-down authority.

In this respect Hogan follows Eric Frank Russell's superficially light-hearted, but fundamentally serious, anti-authoritarian tales in *The Great Explosion*, in which scores of scattered colonies are being corralled back into Earth's bureaucratic empire, with mixed success. In the collection's culminating story, 'And Then There Were None', one particular shipload of bureaucrats and their increasingly mutinous crew confront a highly individualistic anarchy whose 'secret weapon' of Gandhian disobedience is both operating principle (if co-operation is voluntary, its withdrawal is an effective means of enforcement) and revolutionary strategy.

In the advanced countries an everyday experience of an anarchy which works by co-operation and non-cooperation is the Internet. Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash* reflects vividly the freewheeling spirit of the Internet's pioneering years, when mutually hostile 'online communities' of researchers, libertarians, Anarchists, labour and human-rights activists, Holocaust revisionists and pornographers found common cause as 'netizens' in end runs around all attempts at censorship or regulation. A cynical saying in the geek culture of programming is 'If you document a bug, it's a feature' and Stephenson gleefully takes this attitude to some obvious objections to anarchy: unstable individuals with personal nuclear weapons are dealt with by ... extreme politeness. With Greater Hong Kong as a chain of motorway service areas, the Mafia as pizza delivery franchise, 'You have a friend in the Family', and the whites-only enclaves of New South Africa brandishing their bazookas, the anarchy of cyberspace has been mapped onto the dismembered body of the State.

Vernor Vinge's *A Fire Upon the Deep* uses the Internet not only as the model for his galactic communications web, aptly called 'The Net of a Million Lies', but also for the galactic society of societies, some of which are anarchies and all of which exist in one. For Vinge, an Anarcho-Capitalist with genuinely Anarchist views, anarchy is not so much a programme as a description of the existing state of affairs. We never emerge from the state of nature, and never can. There are in his world lots of statists, but no States, in the sense of authorities whose claim to legitimacy can be upheld or attacked. It's turtles, all the way down - or pretenders, all the way up.

The suspicion that the State is no more public-spirited than the average corporation or criminal gang has seeped into US culture since the first Kennedy assassination, and

spawned numerous conspiracy theories. Robert Shea's and Robert Anton Wilson's *Illuminatus!* trilogy works its way through a succession of them, each of which explodes the previous one by revealing, behind the secret masters, other masters more secret still. Behind the Bilderbergers, Trilateralists and other usual suspects we find the Freemasons, behind them the Illuminati, behind them the Templars, the Cathars, the Gnostics ... by the time the ultimate manipulator of events is exposed as a Lovecraftian monster in the pre-Cambrian

epoch, the reader has long since got the point. As Chomsky says, if you want to know the names of the world's real owners, look at the brand-names all around you.

My own books have been inspired by all of the above, as well as by Anarchist and libertarian literature from 'left' and 'right'. Without Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia* I couldn't have written *The Star Fraction*; without the SPGB's *Socialism as a Practical Alternative* and William Morris's *News From Nowhere* I couldn't have written *The Cassini Division*; without Larry Gambone's *Proudhon*

and Anarchism I couldn't have written *The Sky Road*. This diversity of inspiration is as typical of SF as it will, I hope, become of the new and broad libertarian movement we'd all like to see, and indeed of the society it creates. A future without coercion will be the work of many hands, and many minds, and begins now.

Ken Macleod

## Book Reviews

### PERMACULTURE A Beginner's Guide

Graham Burnett

Published by Land and Liberty

35 Rayleigh Avenue, Westcliff on Sea, Essex. SS0 7DS

Price £4.95 including tree tax

AT 60 A5 pages this is a bargain, less than 10p a page and some of that goes directly towards the kind of activities it advocates. The last three pages are lists of further reading and contacts which is useful as this is, as the title says 'a beginners guide' so it is aimed at getting people into the ideas rather than those who have been on lots of permaculture courses.

Some in the Anarchist movement have said this book is not radical enough but whether the move to a free society is evolutionary or revolutionary, without food nobody lasts much more than two months. So the advocates of fighting in the streets to get rid of government should read this and think how long they will last if the State cuts off the food supply to any area they gain control of! Those who take a more evolutionary approach should get a copy to help themselves and others escape the culture of dependency on the State (benefit payments) and corporations (supermarkets) for their ability to stay alive and change things.

The advantage of this introduction is that it covers many aspects of permaculture and the issues surrounding it, not just growing things but social, economic and psychological as well. Generally each subject is given one or two pages, making for lots of short sections, that can be dipped into for ideas or information during those odd few minutes we find filling much of our time, such as while waiting for the kettle to boil, rather than chapters of twenty pages or more that you need an uninterrupted hour to in order to be able to take in what is being said. Although, as the author recognises, it is impossible to even mention every aspect of a

subject as wide as permaculture in 60 A5 pages. Thus some things have been left out or given less attention than people with a particular interest in those parts of permaculture would like. Apart from three pages of tables and another three of contacts etc. every page is illustrated in some way, breaking up the text, making it more readable, or explaining an aspect via diagrams.

Unlike some books on the subject this one doesn't assume you've got a couple of hundred acres of tropical forest at your disposal where you can just walk around naked waiting for the coconuts to fall and pick fruit all year round, or thousands of pounds to spend on a smallholding in Wales. In fact it recognises that most people in the post-industrial (and also in the industrialising) countries live in urban environments and says that it is possible to use permaculture philosophy and techniques in these places as well. Whether it's a few herbs in a window box of a flat, using old tins and jars for keeping things in rather than throwing them away or sharing skills within your community. Hopefully this will both encourage those who have felt that they would like to get into a more sustainable way of living but haven't got the resources to start where they are and reduce the risk of permaculture becoming a fundamentalist, elitist, middle class, new-age, trendy fad.

This aspect of the book reveals that many more people are practicing permaculture than would be thought; the man down the road who helps people fix their cars is doing permaculture even if he doesn't know it. After all, permaculture is in many ways a modern name for ways people have done things for centuries in order to perpetuate their society. I see this part of permaculture, and this introduction to it, as it's most radical aspect because it is where people are at which is the best starting point for encouraging them to go a bit further.

Anything which makes for stronger, healthier and more vibrant communities is extremely radical as it weakens the centralised State and peoples' dependence on it as well as providing the networks of trust and mutual support to allow the State to be challenged more effectively as was the case with community based resistance to the poll tax.

In some sense this is a handbook of covert subversion of both the State and Corporate Capitalism. It suggests ways of creating a set of parallel structures that break the hold of the twin evils without getting shot. The methods it advocates may not seem as exciting as storming the corridors of power but they are much harder for the State to resist. It is extremely hard to legislate against people having and helping friends or doing something to help themselves and even harder to police such legislation. With networks to provide food, health, education, repair houses and goods or manufacture things we need, both the State and Capitalism are undermined. Thus, hidden, within these seemingly innocent pages is a possible way to reach a point where a call for total non compliance with the State and non participation in the activities of it or Corporate Capitalist consumerism will be responded to with enthusiasm by millions and cut the supply of funds to the State agencies of repression.

I don't know about you but to me that seems a radical, even revolutionary situation and one which, unlike any kind of armed uprising, would not need the first stage to be the killing of all those such as drug users who would be a security risk because they might be willing to turn informer for their next fix.

For anyone wishing to be free of the State or Corporate Capitalism it is a useful starting point, as it gives ideas for eating better and having your head clearer which are needed as we move from a 'cradle to grave' State to whatever will replace it.



On the downside of this booklet is the fact that, as it is written by veggies / vegans. It neglects the fact that some land is best suited to pasture via which animal products can provide a useful input to not only diet but other necessities for survival in northern temperate regions without imports from countries further south which have a detrimental effect on the populations of the countries that they are grown in, and involve transportation over thousands of miles, making them just one more example of global capitalist consumerism. Maybe that's personal bias as an omnivore? But if a rabbit can provide three uses (meat, fur and fertiliser) it is a more permaculturalist view than just fertiliser.

Rory Bowskill

## Dissenting Electorate

Dissenting Electorate: Those Who Refuse to Vote and the Legitimacy of their Opposition. Edited by Carl Watner and Wendy McElroy. Published 2001 by McFarland ISBN 0-7864-0874-x 135 pages Paperback

Dissenting Electorate is a compilation of essays and selections from a range of authors old and new. The uniting theme of the book is their refusal to consent to political government and the process of voting. They include such stalwarts as Victorian political philosopher Herbert Spencer and his American near contemporary Lysander Spooner. More recent are contributions from Carl Watner editor and publisher of the American journal *The Voluntarist* and American feminist and Anarchist Wendy McElroy.

The broad thrust of the book is written from a North American and libertarian viewpoint. That said, there is much in common with more mainstream Anarchist views on the State, government and voting. Lysander Spooner's comments on this topic are blistering ... 'As all voting is secret (by secret ballot), and as all secret governments are necessarily only secret bands of robbers, tyrants, and murderers, the general fact that our government is practically carried on by means of such voting, only proves there is among us a secret band of robbers, tyrants and murderers, whose purpose is to rob, enslave, and so far as necessary to accomplish their purposes, murder the rest of the people.'

Above all the various articles assail the concepts of 'consent' and 'political obligation' as defended by political philosophers since the days of Locke and Hobbes. Anarchists believe there is no reality to these concepts, either *consent* or *political obligation*. This book gives us good ammunition for our discussions.

Jonathan Simcock

## Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy Theories by Robin Ramsey, Published by pocket essentials, 18 Coleswood Road, Harpenden, Herts AL5 1EQ, 2000 ISBN 1-903047-30-7 £3.99

Robin Ramsey is the editor and publisher of LOBSTER, a twice yearly journal specialising in in-depth articles on statewatching and the security services (as distinct from STATEWATCHING, the quarterly, reviewed by me in TL Vol 2 No.1 Summer 1999). *Lobster* costs £6.00 per annum from 214 Westbourne Avenue, Hull HU5 3BJ, single copies £3.00 plus postage from Freedom Bookshop. Website [www.lobster-magazine.co.uk](http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk).

This little booklet is complimentary to the journal. Although only ninety-five pages in length, its' even chapters and detailed notes cover the wide ranging topic from a critical examination of 'conspiracy theories and conspiracies' to real conspiracies and State produced disinformation.

For instance why do Americans believe in conspiracies? Because American history since World War Two has been dominated by them. Not only the Red Menace and UFOs but cover-ups by the CIA and FBI, much of which have engendered SF TV series such as *The X Files*, *Dark Skies*, *Rosswell High* and the like.

Remember the old expression 'just because I'm paranoid does not mean they aren't after me'? Anarchists may be sceptical of State propaganda and disinformation but we know it exists. That is why we are Anarchists, working out a more ethical alternative.

This book does not necessarily say anything new but it does give plenty of detailed ammunition for those of us who find ourselves in the position, in public debate, wherein we can say "But what about so and so?" and then give detailed argument to enlighten the protagonist.

I am glad to hear the comment made recently by a senior police officer saying some cases are never closed. Maybe this means we will find out, at long last, who killed Hilda Murrell? A conspiracy of silence or just pressure put on us by the State to prevent civil police detectives from moving in certain directions? Bedtime reading comrades?

## TALIBAN

TALIBAN: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia by Ahmed Rashid. Pub. I.B. Tauris Publishers. 2000 ISBN 1-86064-417-1 £12.95

Ahmed Rashid is an internationalist Pakistani journalist with a considerable knowledge of Central Asia and Afghanistan. He is Pakistan, Central Asia and Afghanistan correspondent for the 'Daily Telegraph' and 'Far Eastern Economic Review'. The book itself is not fully up-to-date in that it covers the period before September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 but

perhaps this is part of its strength. It is a balanced picture of how it is, or was, before the present conflict commenced.

I may be wrong here but I often feel up-to-the-minute 'topical' books tend to be a little histrionic and lose a sense of objectivity, of perspective, emphasising certain things related to current events and de-emphasising other things because they have no immediate topicality, although in real terms they are an important part of the background.

What the book does for me is give a background of who is who in the conflict: Pashtuns (Pathians), Uzbecks, Tajiks, Hazara; Sunni and Shi'a; the coming of The Taliban and their immediate and longer term effects. Who is who in The Northern Alliance - who do not appear to be as bad as they are often painted by Pakistan, itself ruled by an undemocratic military dictatorship; in a country where the feud is often central to life; and the affects of Central Asian oil producers and their would-be western partners. Everything is often very complex and nothing is quite as it seems especially in relation to who your friends and allies are at any one time.

Peter Neville

(Editor's note: The above review has been shortened.)

## If Hobbes Is Right

Anarchist and individualist Richard Garner has recently written two new pamphlets. *If Hobbes Is Right, Then He Is Wrong* argues the case for people's ability to create an ordered society without a State and authority, while *The Case Against the State* contains three brief essays which challenge any belief that the State is either necessary or benign.

Garner believes that each individual has a right to individual self-ownership or sovereignty and that only voluntary interactions between people can be considered just. Since States necessarily violate individual sovereignty with their taxes, laws, regulations, police powers, etc., they are unjust, and therefore unacceptable, institutions. Hobbes, however, argued that without a State, or "common power" to protect people from each other, a war of all against all would occur, where might would make right and no mutually agreed-upon property rights could exist. In this world, people would be routinely robbed and abused by those who were stronger. Consequently, civilisation could not exist, since there would be no incentive to develop new techniques or knowledge when people could not have any realistic hope of protecting themselves and their belongings from the predations of others who were less industrious, but more powerful.

As implied by the title of his first pamphlet, Garner agrees with Hobbes' underlying assumption that people are self-interested and rational, but does not believe that a

society of such people, in the absence of a State, would inevitably degenerate into the sort of chaotic and brutal "anarchy" of which Hobbes writes. On the contrary, Garner argues that what others have called enlightened self-interest would lead free people, generally, to cooperate and live peacefully together. To back up his case, he cites a number of examples of real world cooperation independent of government to demonstrate that his belief in the ability and desire of people to cooperate is not based simply on theoretical conjecture, but is driven by the actual experience of people living and working together on their own.

Unlike some other Anarchists, however, Garner is not naïve enough to believe that theft and violence would automatically disappear in a Stateless world simply because most people would prefer cooperation to conflict if given real choice. But his remedy for the ongoing problem of coercive or unjust actions, which will occur in any society, is not government, which he believes is just another parasite of the kind Hobbes feared would arise in the absence of a State. Garner instead advocates a free market in the provision of defense services by private individuals and groups. He argues his case for the efficacy and fairness of this arrangement at length, relying heavily on the writings of David Friedman and Murray Rothbard, and describes instances where private agreements have brought about orderly and fair systems for the protection of person and property and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

While I found his use of game theory to make some of his arguments rather cumbersome and distracting, Garner succeeds in making the case that even if Hobbes was right about human nature, he was wrong about the necessity for a coercive government to create order in society.

In the first of the essays in his second pamphlet, *The Case Against the State*, Garner makes the case that "the State is your enemy," and recounts for the reader the various ways in which people are murdered, robbed, and controlled by government. He further argues that despite the claims of supporters of the State, people in general do not really "consent" to this institution. While none of this is new ground in Anarchist theory, I did appreciate seeing again the argument, in the tradition of individualist Lysander Spooner, that even by voting one does not necessarily consent to being ruled by an elected government. Since the alleged consent of the governed is a key part of the argument in defense of the State, the point that such consent is actually not given by most people, even voters, is worth reiterating from time to time. This essay is followed by a very brief excerpt from an on-line posting in which Garner covers again some of the same issues regarding defense services he already addressed in *Hobbes*.

The third and final section of this pamphlet, is a refutation of David Kelley's "The Necessity of Government". Kelley is an objectivist scholar, popular among minarchist "libertarians" in the United States, who argues that an institution outside the market, the State, is needed to formulate and enforce the few necessary rules and regulations that would defend individuals against coercion and ensure the freedom of the participants in the marketplace. He believes that anarchy would "Be a disaster in practice...because it is fantastic and incoherent in theory."

Garner easily debunks the arguments of Kelley in favour of the State, pointing out the inherent contradictions in his and other minarchists' defense of State power. As he does elsewhere in these pamphlets, he ably puts the case that States necessarily violate individuals' freedom, engaging in precisely

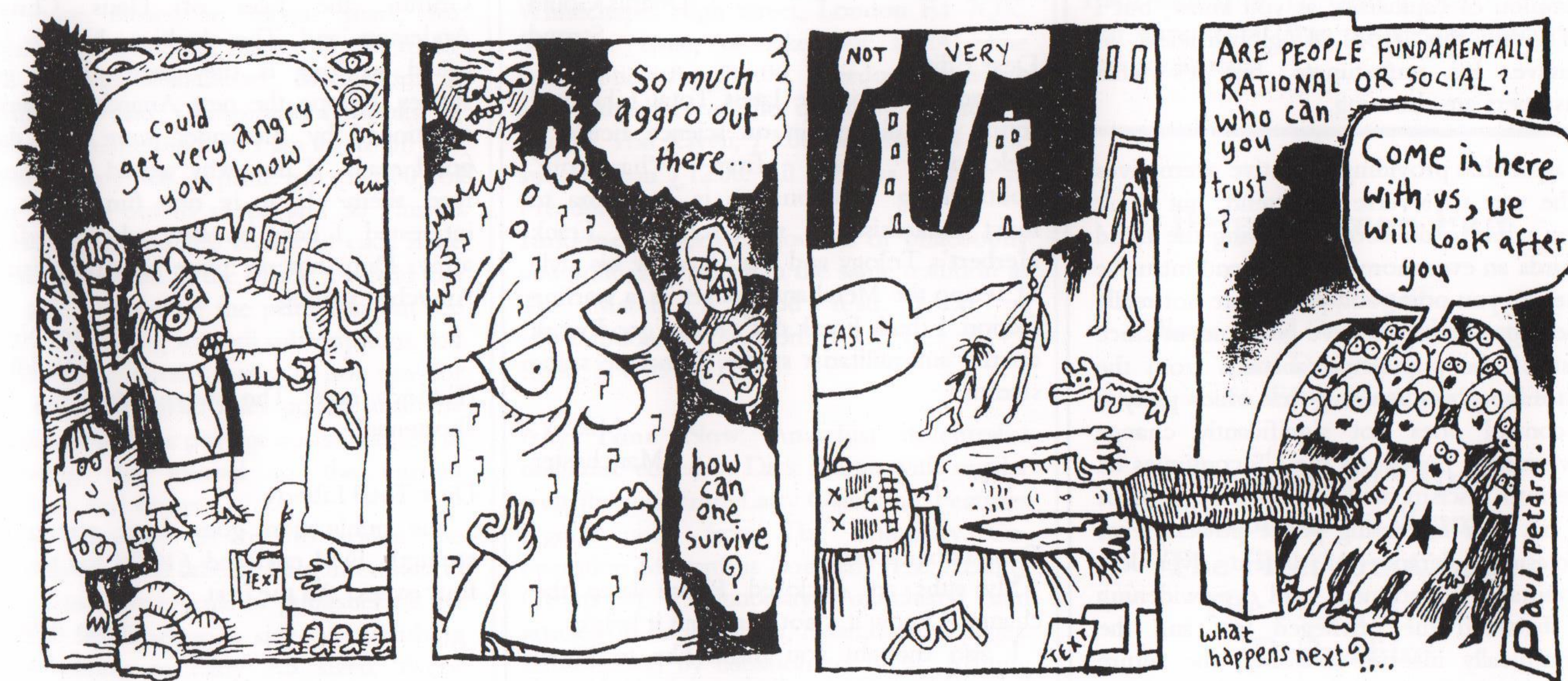
those activities it purportedly exists to protect its subjects against. Garner argues that orderly, rational, and equitable social and economic systems can arise spontaneously through human interaction undirected by the State or other authorities. His use, as in *Hobbes*, of historical examples to prove his points is one of the strengths of this essay, as well.

In both of these pamphlets, Garner defends a position with which I am largely in agreement, but I was disappointed that most of the examples he used to demonstrate how a free market would work used a model in which Capitalist economic relations and commerce hold sway. Other Anarchist individualists, including Benjamin Tucker, whom Garner cites in his pamphlet, have argued that not only could the market, unhindered by government, provide all the products and non-coercive services anyone would want, but it would also drive down prices to the level of the true cost of providing these products and services, thus eliminating profit and, with it, capitalism. His failure to argue, as he did so well in his earlier *What is Mutualism?*, that it is possible to have a market-based and Stateless economic system based on private property, but free of capitalist economic arrangements, will, I fear, make his arguments far less persuasive than they otherwise might have been to those of a more collectivist bent.

Joe Peacock

(These pamphlets are at present being published by Half-Assed-Photocopy-Job Unlimited, and are available from the author at 31 Hatfield Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9AF, UK. Prices are £2 for *If Hobbes Is Right, Then He Is Wrong* and £1.50 for *The Case Against the State*.)

(Editor's note: Remember you can help fight global capitalism by ordering the above books from your local bookstore!)







## Letters

Dear Total Liberty

Just finished reading the last issue of "Total Liberty" and I'd like to make a few comments. In your editorial, you write, "How do we stop the all powerful multinationals from dominating the world, from denying us a choice in how we live our lives?" I don't think multinational corporations have that kind of Chomskiesque control over our lives. They grow and prosper because of the choices of millions of individual consumers. Take McDonald's as an example. Consumers voluntarily part with their hard earned money because they want cheap, quick food and they know what they will get before they walk in the door. Most people are risk averse, so if they are in a strange part of town or travelling, they will tend to eat someplace they are familiar with, which is another reason these corporate franchises are so successful. You can tell people about working conditions, impact on the environment, and so on, but for the consumer it is a consensual transaction that is taking place and no one is being bullied into working or eating there. If a local restaurant folds when one of these places opens, people just weren't spending their money there anymore. I'm not a champion of capitalism, as you know, but I don't see this type of globalisation as coercive. It's unfortunate, but it's what consumers are choosing.

I agree that providing attractive alternatives is the way to reverse this trend, but don't know what to do about reversing the trend towards an ever more powerful and intrusive State. As you point out, people are not really choosing more oppressive government since most of the population abstains from the electoral process, realising that which party is in control does not significantly change Government policy. As the US continues its slide into fascism, with its constant state of war, its ever increasing police powers, ever decreasing tolerance of dissent, ever less accountable government, and ever widening gap between the privileged few and the economically insecure majority, the future does not look good for Anarchism here,

unless one savours the possibility of a bloody, confused, and possibly reactionary revolution, which I certainly do not. As long as we continue to keep our ideas alive, there is some hope at least, no matter how faint, that we might inspire people to consider other possibilities.

Ed Stamm  
Kansas, USA

Dear Total Liberty

Good to see your mention of letterpress (TL Vol. 2 No. 3 Autumn 2000). I think the most important aspect of the craft, any craft, is the learning of physical and mental work, the practical nature of such work, and the personal, individual nature of the art/craft.

Our society and culture treats the non-academic nature of both arts and crafts as subjects suitable only for 'filling' time or for idiots! In the twentieth / twenty-first centuries the absence of jobs for most people will make both arts and crafts more necessary, more essential, such that artifacts 'handmade' and individually inspired objects, furniture, jewellery and artworks will enable considerable numbers of individuals to make not just a 'living' but a way of life!

Hand-operated machines and machinery are not just 'antiquated' but provide a simple, and simply understood, way of working. Such machines require no electricity, no other power but the physical i.e. they are cheap to run, rarely breakdown, and are made from parts easily replaced from other machines.

Most importantly they create enough copies for any small job, poster, leaflet, magazine. And it is possible to use typeset work for photocopying large numbers of copies.

Finally it provides a more pleasant alternative design and print because of inks and metal / woodblock typefaces, plus solid impression of letterpress.

Salut  
Dennis Gould  
Stroud

Dear Editor

Thank you for the latest Total Liberty. I found the discussion on science fiction a welcome break from 'hard-core' politicalising. Positionalism is anathema to most Anarchists. I read some of Frank Herbert's Trilogy and was taken by his style of seeing the Merchant Houses as a warring faction. I think Frank did a lot of good work on the anti-militarist stance. I enclose some stamps.

Mike V.  
Manchester

Dear Total Liberty

My subs are enclosed. Please keep the change. I know it's not much but it helps.

I also thought you might like to know about these two magazines which I read

called Maximum Rock and Roll and Punk Planet. These tend to have quite a Socialist / Anarchist readership (or at least they think they do!). They are both American mags but have quite a strong UK readership. The website for punk planet is [www.punkplanet.com](http://www.punkplanet.com) and their email is [Punkplanet@punkplanet.com](mailto:Punkplanet@punkplanet.com). I don't have details for Maximum Rock and Roll but you should be able to find it on the Internet.

Yours  
Simon Dunnington  
Didcot

Dear Total Liberty

I am glad my piece on science fiction bought a response. That, of course, was the idea. However, I was criticised for being old fashioned and out of date, obviously missing a great many contemporary writers.

Richard Alexander and to a certain extent John Pilgrim are correct, I have missed many of the 'new writers'. Mind you I have found many of the writers I have missed are not my cup of tea; I find Ian M Banks almost unreadable and to be honest I never liked Michael Moorcock even in the sixties so I have never followed his later writings. As I said, I have read much of Ursula Le Guin but just because she might have written a book which appealed to Richard Alexander does not make me think her an Anarchist writer and no, John Pilgrim, just because Heinlein wrote Starship Troopers on a corporatist theme, not fascist, does not make me feel the rest of his writings are fascistic, because Pilgrim does not apparently know what fascism means. I remember one supported a very strong feminist line but that does not mean he was a feminist, simply one who played about with ideas and we are all richer for that. Oh yes, and he always wrote a damned good story, which is more than I can say for many modern writers.

Still keep up the debate. I know thinking is hard but try it, it works wonders in the end. The reason why the works of the brothers Grimm, the tales of Hans Christian Anderson and The Arabian Nights have lasted so long is they were damn good stories. I hope the new Anarchistic writers mentioned by Alexander were also damn good reads. If not, why would I bother to read them? If it is not fun I am not interested. I gave up duty when I left the army. Duty has no place in Anarchism or Anarchist writing.

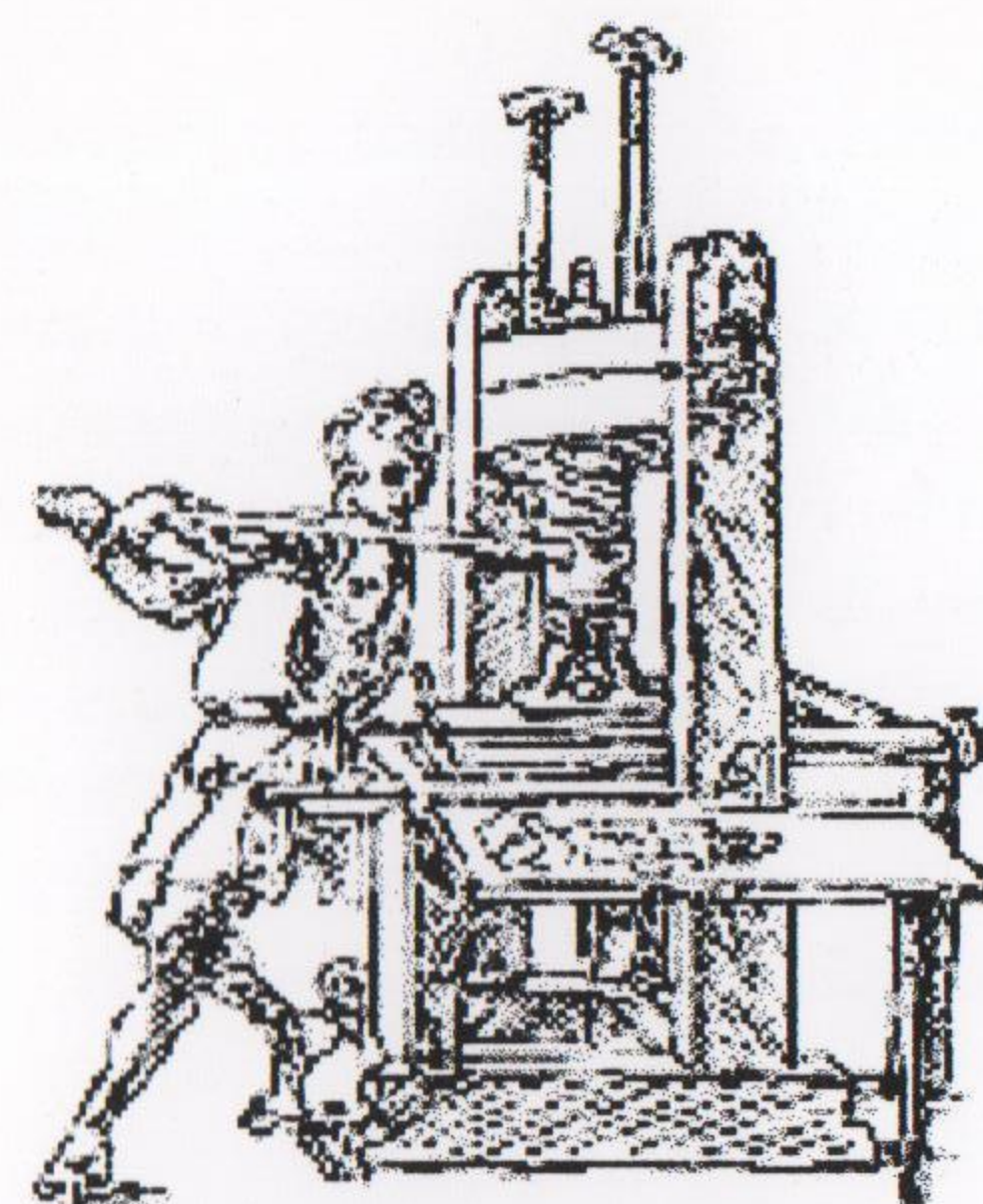
Peter Neville  
Middlesex

(Editor's note. The above letter has been shortened)

Dear Total Liberty

The publication goes from strength to strength. Find enclosed £10.00 for the next four issues. All the best.

John Atherton  
Crawley  
West Sussex



## The Editor's Recommended Magazines and Journals

The world of small circulation Anarchist and radical magazines is populated by a mix of old favourites such as The Match! Freedom and The Raven and also by numerous lesser known publications; The Cunningham Amendment, Global Tapestry, Green Anarchist, Imagine, The Dandelion, not forgetting Total Liberty. There are many more out there. All the editors of these journals seek more readers and outlets which will stock the magazine and put our magazines and papers before the public.

Sadly circulations run at most to hundreds not thousands. Advertising in the mainstream Broadsheet Newspapers is prohibitively expensive and not greatly effective. Total Liberty has had the occasional advert in Private Eye, The Guardian and other smaller circulation journals, but we still have only a small subscriber base and small sales at the approx. 12 radical bookshops across the country which stock TL. The unfortunate fact is that independent and radical bookshops are few and far between. Many have closed in recent years, for example, Independent Books in Sheffield, Front Line in Manchester, Mushroom in Nottingham, and Compendium Books in London, to name but four I am aware of.

Total Liberty has a print run of 500, of which 250 go out to shops and 50 plus to subscribers, leaving 200 copies of each issue languishing unread in the office. I would like to be able to increase the print run but see little point in doing so until subscriptions and sales increase. Total Liberty is not run for profit. Proceeds from sales go to fund the next edition and the postage costs incurred in distributing the journal to the current subscribers and shops.

As an initiative to try to widen the readership of Total Liberty I am interested in hearing from any journal or publisher on the Anarchist and libertarian side of publishing who is willing to carry A5 sized 'flyers' advertising Total Liberty in their journal. In

return I am willing to include 'flyers' for other journals within TL's subscriber and shop copies. By offering each other such practical mutual aid we may bring new subscribers to our publications and get our ideas across to a wider public. This is really important, as it is likely that the number of independent bookshops is more likely to fall than to rise in the near future.

For those readers of Total Liberty who wish to contact any of the journals mentioned at the start of this column their titles, postal addresses and subscription details are listed below.

**The Match!** A Journal of Ethical Anarchism; first published in 1969. The Match! exists solely to criticise authoritarian society and religion in order to argue for the many humane advantages of freedom and rationality. Post Office Box 3012, Tucson, Arizona 85702 USA \$2.75 Send cash or stamps only.

**Global Tapestry:** A journal celebrating Anarchism and poetry £2.40 per issue. Subscription £9.00 UK (cheques payable to DA & R Cunliffe) available from Spring Bank, Longsight Road, Copster Green, Blackburn BB1 9EU

**Green Anarchist:** The best way to protect freedom of speech is to exercise it! Issue 64 Winter/Spring 2002 24 pages with artfully drawn illustrations from Steve Booth, articles on eco-protests, animal rights, housing, food production and more. Available from 9 Ash Avenue, Galgate, Lancaster. Subscriptions £10 for 5 issues. Make cheques payable to Green Anarchist.

**The Voluntaryist:** P O Box 1275, Gramling SC 29348 USA. Edited by Carl Watner. \$20.00 for six issues. Watner argues strongly for a society based on voluntarism and non-coercion, also with interesting items of news and comment in each issue.

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