

MEETINGS

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Anarchist Forum

Fridays at about 8pm at the Mary War Centre, 42 Queen Square (via Cosmo Street) off Southampton Row), London WC1.

1990-91 SEASON OF MEETINGS

28th September - 'Why Revolutions Occur' (speaker David Wedgewood) 5th October - Open discussion 12th October - 'What Did You Do in the Sixties Daddy?' (speaker Peter Lumsden) 19th October - Open discussion 26th October - 'Bored with Class Politics (speaker Andrew Lainton) 2nd November - Open discussion 9th November - 'Anarchism, Deviance and

Criminology' (speaker Peter Neville) 16th November - Open discussion 23rd November - 'Anarchism: the moral concern of the Left' (speaker Dave Dane) 30th November - 'Anarchism in an Ageing Society' (general discussion) 7th December - 'Anarchism and

Psychology' (speaker Peter Wilkinson) 14th December - 'Anarchism and Youth' (general discussion)

Further meetings are now being arranged for the coming year from 11th January to 22nd March 1991 and 19th April to 31st May 1991, all at 8pm to 10pm. And in 1991 we hope to continue from 7th June to 14th July either at the same time or the earlier time of 6pm to 8pm. The reason for the possible change of time is that if the Mary Ward Centre continues to be used by other groups from 8pm to 10pm during this period we may continue at the original time, but if we are the only group operating the Centre may wish to

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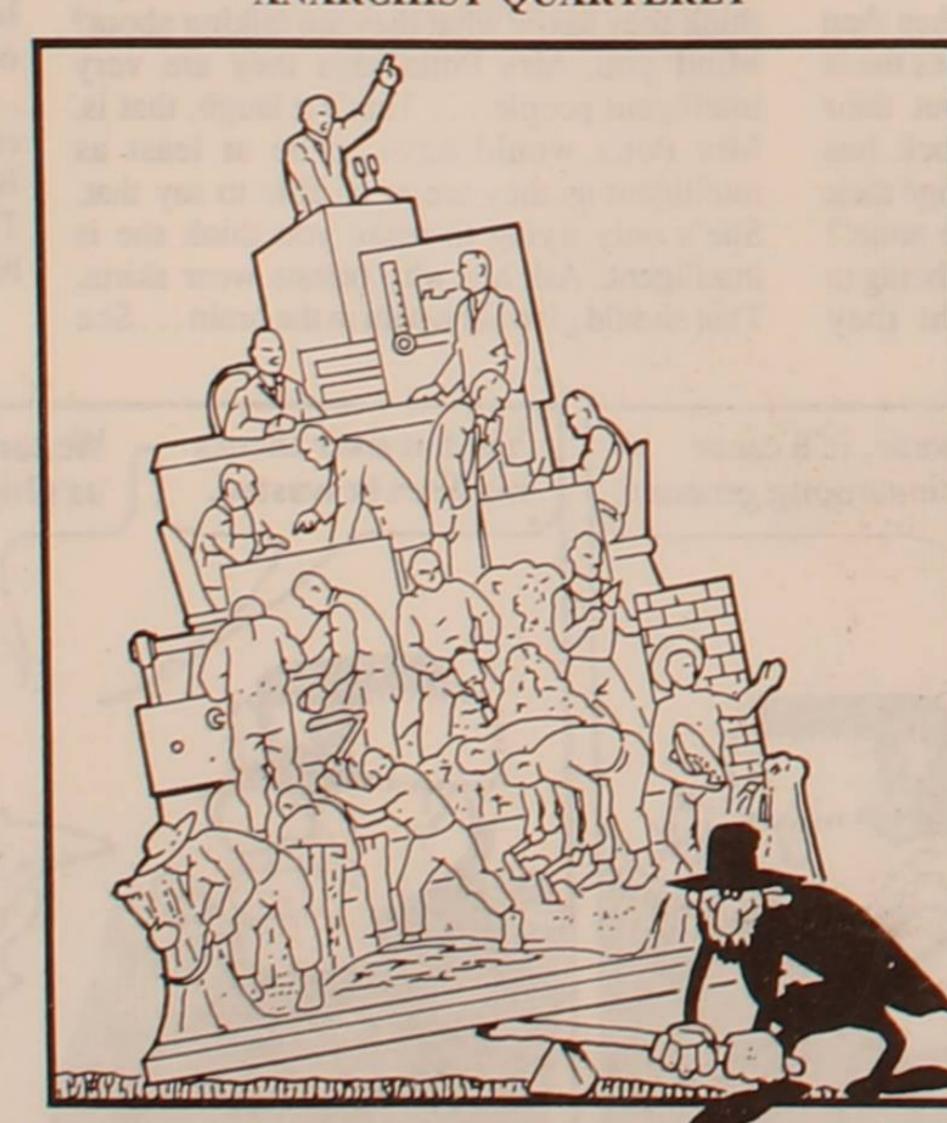
close earlier. Anyone interested in leading a conference in 1992 or both. Either it could discussion either presenting a formal paper be by invitation or entirely open. The Why not receive Freedom every fortthe forum have looked at the possibility of them in London? Let us know your views. other activities for 1990-91, but this has so far brought little response so these are being held in abeyance. However, it has been suggested that we look into the possibility of

or simply having a general discussion to problem with the latter is will visitors expect. contact Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the accommodation? It is easy enough to book a meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper hall and get speakers. 'Free' accommodation Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, for 'drop-in' guests, especially in London, SUBSCRIPTION RATES Middlesex TW7 4AW. Some members of may be more difficult to provide. Why hold

> The Mary Ward Centre 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AO Tel: 071-831 7711

running either a weekend national conference next year or an international

ANARCHIST QUARTERLY



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What Press? (continued from page 1) Our society is rotten and our press thrives on

Freedom for

that rottenness. The 'quality' Press will not indulge in scandals about the private lives of our 'favourite' TV stars, their 'bonking' proclivities or their vital statistics — 'boobs and bums'. They are only 'quality' because between them they cannot muster the circulation of one of the 'boobs' tabloids. But which they seek to distance themselves.

Tust 31 years ago Britain was 'threatened' with a close- down of Fleet Street as a result of a strike by the 2,500 ink workers. The 'quality' Observer argued that the printing industry was not like any other for it was: "also a public service, the visible expression of free

speech, the means of communication between government and governed, a necessary instrumen of information and enlightenment. That a great deal of paper and ink is normally wasted on trivialities in no way alters these facts. It is absolutely false to imagine that a modern democracy can work properly without newspapers."

Freedom (then a weekly) replied:

"Why do we not share The Observer's views ... is not because we discount the fundamental, bas role that the printed word plays in society, but that like all other activities, it too can operate for anti-social as well as social ends, for what is bad as well as for what is good. To couple 'the visible expression of free speech', 'the necessary

ARIUVI AUGI Doctor!

(continued from page 1)

and if they can also win public support convincing us (or us via the media and the experts) that they are on our side, their chances are enhanced. Doctors, with the exceptions that only go to prove the rule, are businesslike and cynical about their jobs and the public as are railwaymen, ambulance crews, miners, lorry drivers, teachers and all those who provide us with public services. Don't be surprised. That is what capitalism is about and all 'Thatcherism' has done in the past eleven been trying to improve its image in those years is to emphasise the fact which anarchists and even old-fashioned socialists should welcome.

To illustrate our point one could cite the case of the three 'family doctors' in Carlisle who have excluded two council estates from their practice, blaming "financial arrangements under the GP's contract" (The Guardian 13th April). Their argument was that leaving patient lists open to the estates' residents could prevent the practice reaching screening targets "and so jeopardise bonus payments of syllabus. The article was headlined 'Rumpus over up to £6,000".

Dr Wheeler, spokesman for the three 'family' doctors was worried that the family practitioner committee "might allocate us large families from one of those run-down areas. That would mean we would not reach our targets. If you miss a target by one patient then you don't receive the payment." And this 'family' doctor added for good measure "These people are the bottom of the pile in Carlisle in terms of social class. They are the apologise unreservedly." sort that tend not to attend for cervical smears and immunisation". Which shows that the poor are still afraid to 'trouble' the doctor. Dr Wheeler sums it all up in a sentence: "We are not seeking to insult the very many decent and defending the Freedom of the Capitalist Press. honest families who live on these estates but We should aim to create an alternative, when there is £6,000 per annum at stake people have to take precautions" (our italics). 'People' in this context means Dr Wheeler and his partners Dr George Dickinson and Dr Ruth Reed. Know your doctor!

instrument of information and enlightenment' with the means of communication between government and governed', as The Observer does in its editorial, is to equate Franco's press with, say, a paper like The Observer. We do not, in spite of The Observer's logic, for it is clear that whereas the latter feels at liberty to criticise the government of the day the Spanish press receives instructions from the government as to what it should say on every major national and international issue. As to whether we should be worse off without the

organs of mass communications is, however, another matter. As to whether the national press of in their own way they are just as much part of British journalism at its best) and the the establishment as the 'filthy' tabloids from government-controlled organs of the totalitarian countries, is considerably narrowed, at least for anarchists. Neither would ever question, or permit the expression of ideas advocating an alternative to, government. For both the democratic and totalitarian press, government, authority, is sacrosanct. And we submit that if the ideas contained in the anarchist philosophy have made no headway in the public imagination, it is not so much a reflection on the 'impractical' aspects of the ideas of anarchism or proof of their rejection by the public, as it is evidence of the stranglehold on a press which, albeit free from direct governmenta control, never veers from the established, orthodox social and economic concepts."

The Freedom editorial went on to point out that those journalists who were expressing their horror at the thought of the Press being silenced by a handful of ink workers never mentioned the fact that half a dozen news proprietors had the power to close down the national Press and a large section of the provincial and magazine Press as well, which they would do if their newspapers failed to

The holier than thou attitude of the 'quality'

name which is maintaining editorially an

anti-Labour and especially anti-Neil Kinnock

for Prime Minister campaign both in its

editorials and in Garland's cartoons, which is

too obvious to be accidental and one suspects

that it is part of the circulation war between

leftist. After all, even the establishment

Guardian is referred to scathingly as a Bolshie

rag by Carlton Club inmates and it too has

f the quality Sundays, The Telegraph is

as vicious politically as The News of the

World is both politically and socially. The

kind of scandal The Sunday Times gets up to

is indicated by the retraction it published only

"Mrs Glenys Kinnock — In last Sunday's paper we

reported a dispute which had arisen in Ealing

between parents and the Council's education

committee over the use of a religious education

RE which puts Glenys before God'. This was a

reference to Mrs Glenys Kinnock. We now accept

that such a reference to Mrs Kinnock was

unjustified and deeply offensive to her. We

apologise for this headline which we unreservedly

picture of Mrs Kinnock. This was incorrect and we

now accept that the syllabus does not include either

a picture or any reference to Mrs Kinnock. There

was no justification for any reference either in the

story or its headline to Mrs Kinnock, to whom we

* * *

Anarchists should not worry themselves about

libertarian press which presents news straight

and above all draws attention to the positive

actions of our fellows here and worldwide. A

new journalism and above all a completely

different type of journalist.

a couple of Sundays ago which reads:

circles to counter its flagging circulation.

your money is in safe hands. concerned and all the fine words about the original reporters or those processing the the noisy demos but it is the solidarity of Freedom of the Press conceal one significant fact: namely the unanimous bias against the Left. One of the best examples of a lack of political independence is the daily of that

Greatest Investment' recent report issued by the Halifax sellers on the imminent resumption of the

Building Society showed the price of gravy train. '89-'90 money lenders, estate agents, professionals and punters could look forward again to lining their pockets. The frenetic buying and selling of houses and the upward

For people wanting to secure a home and those who have just acquired their first, the prospects are somewhat different. Figures like this 2% are issued every day by 'authoritative' sources. More disturbing, the professionals who refer and defer to them act first place? Are they based on asking prices or employment... of us that the bonanza will soon resume —

media promise no less.

The figure of 2%, whether conjured up by returns, is politically astute. It acknowledges resisters and non-payers that anarchists ought what we all know and so keeps the losers and doubters quiet and yet the small drop gives confidence to the trade and house buyers and

nousing to have fallen by 2% in the past Meanwhile all those poor first time buyers twelve months. My naive response was to of the late 1980s are delivered one sucker protest. Surely the figure is 20% or 22%. A punch after another. These are mostly the bevy of hacks writing in the daily press about young who would not have been thinking of housing mortgages referred with optimistic buying a house if the fashion had not been deference to the report. To a man they were foisted on them by every authority from Ma Manchester Guardian (to quote two examples of reassured, as they were supposed to be, by the Thatcher to the bank. Well, the value of their pronouncement. After the 'slight hiccup' of 'asset' is now down by much more than 2%. The repayments are up in amount and duration and then along comes the poll tax. Not a little of the poll tax protest comes from over-stretched, would-be yuppies who now spiral of house prices is about to resume—the know they are being screwed. Living in a cardboard box, that grand refuge from bills, summonses and eviction orders, may not be so

It is a mark of the degeneration of 'advanced' industrial society that we have to clobber and coerce those who ought to be young, alert and questioning with a hopeless choice. It is either unprofessionally by neither questioning their living rough or the life sentence of a mortgage authenticity nor exploring their meaning. For and compulsory employment. I suppose those facts are not free- standing. Alone they carry of us who have it all must cripple youth in this no message even though our empirical minds way to prevent them pulling the whole pack might wish otherwise. They just embellish a of cards down. But there's more that is made set of beliefs, expectations and assumptions of cardboard than we can know — law and but whose? Who owns the statistics in the order, education, health, defence, food,

completed transactions? Are they derived Fortunately some people have not given up from data supplied by estate agents? Along on a nobler investment. People who begin to with the money lenders they share a big realise that the only wealth is human ingenuity interest in informing government and the rest and effort. I'm thinking of the anti-poll tax movement and the way supporters are combining to fight the limitless immorality of government. Recent Freedoms made much of to be proclaiming and helping. You don't get freedom without people acting together.

Prison Notes

the quality papers whose advisers presumably are anxious that they should not be tainted as

> Detween 1958 and 1972 suicides in British prisons remained static. Between 1972 and 1982 suicides in prisons in England and Wales totalled some 169 instances. This was roughly four times the rate of suicide amongst the general population and gave rise to some concern. A Chief Inspector's report as a result of the rise in suicides between 1972 and 1982 concentrated on examining suicide in prisons on a national basis. This was the first time that a Chief Inspector's report had concentrated on a single issue. In 1984 the report was finalised and concluded with a number of recommendations emphasising more preventative measures and closer co-ordination between doctors

and prison officers. However, suicides after 1982 continued to rise. The annual average of 17 between 1972 and 1982 was considered a high figure. Between 1982 and further to 26, which included figures of 40 for 1987 in every 100 prisoners in 1989 tried to commit produce successful (sic) hangings. suicide though only 28 succeeded. Mr Mellor, the Conservative Minister responsible for the Department, announced in February of this year that Judge Stephen Tumim, the HM Inspector of Prisons, is again going to review the situation.

Of the 28 suicides recorded in 1989, 26 were as a result of hanging and two were caused by cut arteries. Another suicide as a result of a cut artery occurred on the 10th December of that year but wasn't included in the 1989 figures. Also during 1989 there were a further 16 hangings, of which four were returned verdicts of accidental deaths, six were given open verdicts, and six have yet to be given inquests. There were a total of 80 deaths in prisons in England and Wales for 1989. The 42

hangings (26 suicides) perhaps are too sensitive to be dismissed as a further example of Tory statistical manipulation. However, 26 of those hangings were unconvicted remand prisoners awaiting trial, two were women, and six were teenagers.

angings in British prisons tend to follow a similar pattern. Sheets or blankets or clothing is used as a neck-rope which is then tied to the bars on the cell window. The length of the window bars from the floor means that the bars can only be reached by standing on a chair. The prisoner then removes the chair from under his/her feet and the hanging is completed. Hangings in British prisons are also united by the fact that they virtually all occur in old Victorian prisons where the windows remain at such a height that successful (sic) hangings can take place. The only fixings that a rope can be attached to are the window bars, the light fitting, and an upturned bed. In the case of the light fittings these are frequently too fragile to hold the weight of a human body and so are incapable of 1989 the annual average suicide rate escalated producing successful (sic) hangings. The upturned bed tends to topple over so is equally incapable of and 30 for 1988. 1989 saw 28 suicides and 533 producing a successful (sic) hanging. The window attempted suicides, a figure normally concealed in bars in old Victorian prisons, merely because of The article also stated that the syllabus included a prison suicide statistics. Crudely put, this meant one their height from the floor, are perfectly able to

> Prison suicides are overwhelmingly a result of hangings. Other prison deaths also occur through the practice of hangings. Behind the locked doors of prison cells the prisoner has no voice. In the freedom of society the psychological effects of prison are to ensure that the prisoner continues to have no voice. It is left to others to speak for the prisoner. Hanging as a punishment has been suspended by the British government for a number of years. It looks as if the length of suspension suggests that hanging as a punishment has been abolished. Suicide as a crime has also been abolished. Prison suicides by hanging are flourishing and are a growth industry.

A correspondent

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 28 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

THE A.N.C. & SOUTH AFRICA Collaboration or Workers Control?

Mandela from imprisonment has once more put the spotlight on the African National Congress (ANC) and its social and economic unrest. policies for South Africa were it to come to

the recent un-banning of the ANC and the release of its other leaders.

The quality of life for the majority of blacks has changed very little since Mandela was first poor then and it is poor now. However, for the whites very real economic fears have arisen too in a country suffering not only sanctions but also a 40% unemployment rate, a stagnating manufacturing sector and a lack of foreign investment.

In twenty years economic growth has fallen by 50% and the rand has been devalued to 35%. South Africa is heavily in debt and suffering high inflation as well as a large balance of payments deficit.

Apartheid is more than just a bigoted system of institutionalised racism — it is a means of achieving cheap labour and exploitation. What it is not, however, is efficient.

Because of separate (or worse) standards of education provision for blacks, there is (despite the high jobless total) a dire shortage of about 400,000 skilled workers which, it is estimated, will grow to 1.5 million by the year

The average income for blacks in South Africa is one-fifth of the income of the spends 2,500 rand for every white child, but only 500 rand per black child.

Buying off revolution

9

The government was spending 25% of the Socialism or the market? GDP on roads, housing, schooling and the The ANC's version of a new South Africa military during the early 1980s. This was social democracy, mixed economy — will fall

boil again recently. The core of the question

expected to share the cramped and dangerous

The Northern Ireland Office is refusing to

allow segregation in Crumlin Road jail though

it does allow it in other prisons. Loyalists and

Unionists have generally called for

segregation, while on the Nationalist side the

SDLP has kept quiet, as Sinn Fein has been

issue that must give most reason for concern

is that many of the prisoners are on remand,

some of them for periods of up to one year and

some for even longer. This gross denial of

freedom is at the base of all the ills of the

prison system here and has not been addressed

by politicians in any meaningful way. The

reality is that the prison population of

Northern Ireland is largely working class and

highly politicised (Nationalist/Loyalist) and

the state is using imprisonment by remand as

a form of internment for people actively

Turther news from the war front concerns

the row between Gerry Adams of Sinn

opposing the state.

spaces of the Northern Ireland prisons.

South African government was trying to buy ripe for increasing exploitation by world and contradictions faced by the black off the black community and prevent or delay

In 1984 when the rent subsidies were removed the townships exploded, two states Mandela's release has been accompanied by of emergency were brought in and the antiapartheid movement regained momentum. Buying off revolt had proved too costly but so had not buying it off!

Under De Klerk the regime has tried to walk imprisoned over two decades ago - it was a narrow tightrope. He has tried to satisfy the demands of investors through embarking on a series of large-scale privatisation programmes, whilst at the same time he has begun a process of negotiation with the ANC.

Ideally, De Klerk seeks to have the ANC jointly presiding over a South African free market economy. He wants the ANC to help hold back the struggle and also to have abandoned their original economic demands of increased state spending, nationalisation and social welfare programmes. The impossible question for the ANC will be how they can manage to satisfy the needs of black South Africans as well as somehow create an economic climate attractive to foreign

Anarchists have always argued that socialism means workers' control from below, not nationalisation from above. The politics of the ANC lead to a tinkering around with the worst symptoms of capitalism rather than the attack on its very basis and its

average white worker. The government The ANC may well soon go the way of the occupied territories took place or were Solidarnosc in Poland and be talking about the market and calling for bans on strikes and

News from Northern

Ireland

s the Enquiry into the prison system in Fein and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

general in the aftermath of the Recently the Irish News, a Belfast middle

Strangeways riot continues, the question of class Catholic paper, challenged Gerry Adams

the segregation of Loyalist and Republican to explain how he could reconcile his support

prisoners in Northern Ireland has come to the of IRA violence with being a practising

rests in the fact that people who have been doing that, pointing out the fact that the church

segregated from one another since birth and itself is not pacifist, and indeed, in its support

who have decided to engage in armed activity of the state is in fact highly violent. This

partly arising from that segregation are now episode arose from Gerry Adams' attendance

actively calling for segregation. However the and the Roman Catholic Church.

much to the annoyance of the banks and between two stools. In the light of the opening

Catholic. Of course Gerry had no trouble in

at the funeral of the Cardinal recently. What

sickened many people I spoke to about this

afterwards was that fact that he, a radical

politician, attended with all the other

dignitaries. But as Gerry himself says, the

Cardinal was a great Irishman and that was all

that counted. Anarchists will see much to

decry in the hypocrisy of both Gerry Adams

n the economic front, the news that the

Derry firm of Maydown Precision

Engineering (MPE) has entered into a special

working relationship with Short's of Belfast

has disappointed many socialists and

anarchists in this area. The factory was

originally owned by Molins who sold

machines for use in the cigarette industry.

When they tried to close it down in 1984 a

sit-in and eventual buy-out by shop stewards

and workers was hailed as a major

achievement in saving this part of the

industrial base of the area. Unfortunately the

finance capital, an ANC-run South Africa population. may find it extremely difficult in the hunt for It is the ANC's Stalinist politics which have class on the other.

the ANC against the disgusting apartheid and instead towards full workers' system and the neo-fascist right wing, we must nevertheless be fully aware that politically the arrival of an ANC leadership at the head of the

The very welcome release of Nelson foreign investors. The reason was that the up of competitive markets in Eastern Europe South African state will not solve the crisis

loans, investment and aid. It will satisfy led them to choose to collaborate with the neither the parasitic intentions of the world's guardians of apartheid 'in the national capitalist businessmen on the one hand, or the interest'. But, for the black workers of South desperate material needs of the black working Africa and their interests, the answer lies in an end to the capitalist system once and for all Whilst we must defend Nelson Mandela and and policies that go beyond nationalisation self-management and control.

David Luton

ISRAEL When are Terrorists not Terrorists?

The indecent haste with which President In May a young Israeli killed seven Bush used the abortive landing on Israel's Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, and as a shores by a Palestinian 'terrorist' group to result set off more violence resulting in more postpone any talks with the Palestine Arabs being killed. Needless to say, the Liberation Organisation (PLO) though he knew that the PLO was not involved, but on the grounds that it had not denounced the attempt vigorously enough, is yet again proof it, "They always say it is a madman when of the powerful American Jewish lobby so far as Israel is concerned.

In that same period a number of examples of Israel's 'terrorism' against the Palestinians in confirmed in the Israeli courts which apparently were not noticed by the Bush have apparently not influenced Israel's Yankee paymasters to stop some of the \$3 billion (£1.8 billion) American aid without which Israel would have long ago ceased its aggressive role in the Middle East.

latest news looks likely to mean that MPE will

eventually be taken over by Short's, who

themselves are now owned by Bombadier of

Canada. While this may secure the jobs of the

workers in the short term, it will surely mean

the end of the already declining control they

had of their workplace. It has been reported

that Short's interest in MPE is more political

than economic, as most of the workers there

are Catholics, which would help offset Short's

own imbalance towards Protestant workers,

something which the Fair Employment

Agency has been chasing them about. It will

also mean the workers in this area will be even

more directly involved in missile production

1 992, when it comes, will lead to a tricky

period for people who work in shops in

border towns like Derry and Newry on the

northern side and Letterkenny and Dundalk on

the southern side. Already the EC has ordered

the Government of the Republic to do away

with restrictions it had imposed on visitors to

Northern Ireland on the amount of goods they

could buy when out of the state, without being

away for a certain length of time. How should

anarchists respond to the opposition to the

removal of these trade barriers on the

periphery of the market? Should we see them

as steps in the direction of the free passage of

goods, even though still driven by the

capitalist system and the wage economy? Or

should we seek to keep them in place as a

something like this happens". When an Arab does it he is accused of being a PLO terrorist. * * * In mid-June Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, cancelled all visits to African countries after

official Israeli version was that the killer was

'mentally deranged'. Very few Arabs

accepted this explanation. As one of them put

and other PLO officials. * * *

resistance in the occupied territories) the Israelis cut off water supplies to Lower Jifflik and according to The Observer's reporter there they had still not been restored after five days. Only 100 yards away across the main road, "brilliant green fields and orchards of an Observer's correspondent points out that the

General Ariel Sharon, former Israeli Defence Minister, Butcher of the Lebanon, now Minister of Labour in the Right Wing

administration. Here are a few events which receiving information that Israel was planning to kill him. Other targets included his deputy

> In an effort to break the intifada (Arab Israeli settlement carved out of confiscated Arab lands are awash with water". The Israelis deny using water as a weapon, but

> > (continued on page 4)



protection for workers in shops who may be threatened when the trade barriers come Likud Government.

UNRAVELLING THE SPANISH Both the books under review are por casa, REVOLUTION that is they are written from a libertarian perspective. One is a history of the Spanish Civil War and the other is contemporary

Freedom Press 388 pages £6.00 (post free)

Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution

José Peirats

Spain 1936-1939: Social Revolution and Counter-Revolution (selections from Spain and the World)

Freedom Press 272 pages £5.00 (post free)

In 1964 I was first made aware of the work declare, as one direct actionist did, "all my of José Peirats by Germinal Garcia. sources are CNT-AIT". Germinal was at that time our contact man for George Orwell wrote: "During the Spanish the conquests of the revolution. History events in Spain", there should be a reappraisal the exiled FIJL (Spanish Libertarian Youth Civil War I found myself feeling very strongly repeated itself once again. Those who of the communists' role in Spain. Movement) in Paris. He told me Peirats wrote that a true history of this war never would or conquered by the Of the events of May 1937, in which fighting better history on Spain than Gerald Brenan, could be written". He told Arthur Koestler: State. It did not take long for the took place between government forces and the but Peirats was por casa (one of ours) while "History stopped in 1936". Orwell took this anarcho-syndicalist Ministers to adopt the CNT-POUM workers, 'Comrade' Alexander Brenan could claim greater impartiality.

you'd call 'proper historians' in the sense that Spanish Civil War bore no relationship to become manipulated by the State. both were autodidacts (self-taught) and reality — "not even the relationship implied of them, Peirats the anarchist and Brenan the hundreds of men had been killed. I saw troops ex-Bloomsbury liberal, have added greatly to that had fought bravely denounced as cowards doses. our understanding of Spanish history.

ISRAEL

(continued from page 3)

village elders were told privately that supplies to Jericho".

Yehuda Meir, accused of ordering soldiers to break the arms and legs of Palestinian prisoners, took place recently. The Independent's correspondent in Jerusalem writes that the Colonel broke down in tears and told the court that he had been following the orders of the then Minister of Defence, the hawkish Labour Party man Yitzhak Rabin. Rabin had called for "force, might and beatings" but he has since said that his orders "clearly stated that force could only be used against rioters resisting arrest". The trial arose from orders alleged to have been given by Meir in January 1988 to seize a group of 20 wanted Palestinians from the West Bank villages of Hawana and Beita and take them to a stretch of wasteland and then to shatter their arms and legs with wooden clubs. "Witnesses testified that the soldiers bound their victims from Hawana hand and foot and stuffed rags into their mouths to stifle the the betrayal of friends, ideals, and the Spanish screams while an army truck revved its engine loudly to drown any noise".

claiming that the order came from senior | did, have a choice? echelons of the army. "He said Mr Rabin Steven Lukes, the English sociologist, in a

media', Colonel Meir quoted Mr Rabin as unfair to Germany, had little choice but to

The colonel said in the early stages of the intifada soldiers behaved 'like hooligans'."

* * *

President Bush stopped financial 'aid' to Romania when miners with sticks and clubs ran amok among the people of Bucharest recently. Perhaps he hasn't been told about the breaking of bones by the Israeli soldiers in the occupied lands?

P.S. If you didn't know the answer to our actually manipulated events. Were the War. Vernon Richards in his editor's headline, it is 'When they are Governments'! | Spanish anarchists and the CNT manipulating introduction to Spain: Social Revolution and

reportage of the events surrounding the Civil War and the Revolution. Any piece of writing which is por casa ought to be subjected to the most rigorous scrutiny by the reader and reviewer. It is not good enough to proudly

and traitors, and others who had never seen a victories . . . ". History was being written not according to what happened, but what ought

Spain 1936-39 covers these developments well, giving virtually full reports of Garcia stone-throwing and tyre-burning on the road | Paris justifying their own decision to join the government. The same issue has a qualified from Emma Goldman. But elsewhere there is a critical 'Open Letter to Federica Montseny' press to the dictatorial offences of Stalin, the persecutions against the Russian anarchists. Berneri declares: "I wish to state that the Spanish anarchists could follow a political line different from that which prevails".



The Peirats history reads like a Thomas Hardy novel — what seemed at first like a minor blemish of anarchist principles, that of agreeing to work within the political institutions of the State, is gradually magnified by further compromises leading to working class. Why? Was the choice for the CNT and the anarchists only between joining Colonel Meir admitted issuing the orders | the government together with the other parties which were at first challenged by horrified or setting up an anarchist dictatorship? Did the senior officers. But he silenced protests by | Spanish anarchists, as Sr Berneri claims they

assembled senior officers near Nablus shortly | recent broadcast compared A. J. P. Taylor's after the outbreak of the intifada and told them | theory about Hitler and the causes of World 'go in and break bones. If they are beaten it | War Two with that of High Trevor Roper. abnormal conditions created by the Treaty of 'You do the work, I'll take care of the | Versailles which most people agreed was pursue a foreign policy which led to another World War. In his view Hitler was a prisoner many other Spanish anarchists were arguing Orwell or the anarchists, 'Comrade' at the time of the Civil War. They, that is the Alexander doesn't need to read or understand the circumstances which arose from it.

The Hugh Trevor Roper position is that The communists seem determined not to reading him any longer. No serious anarchist Hitler was not compelled to act as he did, but re-examine their activities in the Spanish Civil or syndicalist ought to be without either of

their control? Certainly, as we have seen, the of the journal Marxism Today to respond to a room for manoeuvre.

pessimistic view because he thought the government's arguments". So we learn again says that the fighting in Barcelona only Both Brenan and Peirats were not what newspaper reports and accounts of the those who try to manipulate the State soon

There is no simple way of testing the neither was a truly professional career in an ordinary lie". He added: "I saw great credibility of the por casa syndrome, other historian like, say, Eric Hobsbawn, Hugh battles reported where there had been no than to declare it as a kind of health warning Trevor Roper or A. J. P. Taylor. And yet both fighting, and complete silence where and to recommend the reader to read the writings of our enemies in roughly equal

What I think the accounts and reports in a shot fired hailed as heroes of imaginary book such as Spain: Social Revolution and Counter-Revolution show is that they have stood up to the test of time better than most of to have happened as defined by the different the alternative accounts. The book itself records that there was, even in the 1930s, a body of independent opinion prepared to commend the anarchist stand. People like Sir would be restored "for a pledge to stop Oliver's and Federica Montseny's speeches in Peter Chalmers Mitchell, the zoologist and member of the Royal Society, who was living in Malaga at the time; Carlo Rosselli, sympathetic response to their collaboration ex-professor of economics and editor of a liberal newspaper; Andres Oltmares, professor at the University of Geneva; Cyril The trial of an Israeli military leader, Colonel by Camillo Berneri, challenging the Connolly, journalist and critic; Fenner conspiracy of silence of the Spanish anarchist Brockway, politician; even Mr Attlee felt able to say "... from close range one realises that the CNT has a great influence; it works for the popular cause in its role of a force of the

Later, of course, many of the intellectuals like Koestler and Spender, who either sided with the communists or remained silent over Spain, have gone on to attack the Communist Party bitterly. One odd exception seems to have been the film director Luis Buñuel who acted as Negrin's bodyguard, and seemed to think the sun shone out of Stalin's arse. Buñuel only broke with the Communist Party because, he says, "Marxist doctrine permitted no mention of the unconscious mind".

Some with even stronger stomachs have lasted

Stalinists have strong stomachs

the course to the present day. Bill Alexander, Communist and International Brigade official historian, in The Independent last year commented on Orwell's account of the Civil War, which was sympathetic to the anarchists: "He writes as though it's a great joke, the bullets whistling like curlews — I mean, it's a lovely poetical thing . . . but was it serious", and he continued that if Orwell's application to join the Communist-run International Brigade had been accepted "he would have been a different man. The very comradely, will hurt them and the demonstrations will Taylor's case is that Hitler, given the very political atmosphere would have influenced him". Orwell poetical! I wonder if a serious minded Stalinist like Comrade Alexander has read Orwell's Looking Back on the Spanish War: "The picture of war set forth in books like All Quiet on the Western Front of his own timetable, and to an extent is substantially true. Bullets hurt, corpses circumstances beyond his control. This is stink, men under fire are often so frightened essentially what F. Montseny, G. Oliver and that they wet their trousers". But to dismiss CNT-FAI, were confronted with an abnormal us, to him and most Marxists we are simply intervention —a military coup — and their historically irrelevant, even today when their responses were determined by this event and Holy Land, the Soviet Union, seems to be falling apart.

events, or controlled by circumstances beyond Counter-Revolution points to the reluctance anarchist leadership claimed there was little reader who asked that in view of the "mistaken position of the British Communist Party when What Peirats says is that "the it sought to defend the Moscow show trials anarcho-syndicalists who were Ministers which coincided with the period in which defended their actions by the need to legalise Stalin sought to determine the outcome of

erupted because "anarchist elements forcibly took over the city" and that until that point "the ideological struggle was being gradually won by argument and in battle". Both the books under review deal with the May events. Spain 1936-39 reproduces an article from Combat Syndicaliste (Paris) which claims that the attack on the workers by troops of the police assault guards at the Barcelona central

The May Days Barcelona 1937



telephone exchange, administered until then by CNT (anarcho-syndicalist) and UGT (socialist) militants, was masterminded by Moscow. José Peirats in Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution claims that Spanish communists "accused the POUM [leftist Marxists] of provoking and maintaining the 'rebellion'." But, he quotes Walter Krivitski's book I was Stalin's Agent to show: "The fact is that in Catalonia the great majority of the workers were resolutely anti-Stalinist. Stalin knew a showdown was inevitable ... the GPU [Stalin's secret police in Spain] fanned the flames and set syndicalists, anarchists and socialists against one another. After five days of butchery . . . " More people died (many of them anarchists) in these five days in May 1937 than were killed in Catalonia at the start of the fascist rising on 19th July 1936.

Did choice exist?

The real problem for anarchists must be to explain how the libertarian movement lost ground and influence during the course of the Civil War, and the extent to which the cause of their decline was related to the participation of some of their leaders in government. Peirats deals thoroughly with the CNT-FAI collaboration with the institutions of the State, and its theme is one of the decline and fall of libertarianism.

But what Peirats needs to do is convince us that alternative choice was possible, and that other courses of action consistent with anarchist principles were available. For my money, I think he puts up a good case. His argument is that "the Spanish anarchists suffered from an excessively urban orientation in their revolutionary, or rather insurrectionary, plans. If the insurrection was lost in the cities, the villages were written off." Peirats claims a "guerrilla organisation could have saved the north from Franco". It seems that the anarchists in mid-1938 did consider using guerrilla tactics but, he says, by then it was too late.

My chief regret in reading Peirats is that I didn't take Germinal Garcia's advice and read his complete works 25 years ago. Now this volume is at last freely available in English there is no excuse for any of us to put off

Brian Bamford

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There are some thoughts that come to you more readily in the countryside than in towns. Or, rather, you often need liquid stimulants in the urban setting. I'm thinking in particular about the 'what's it all about / what am I doing here' sort of thinking. Grown up people aren't really supposed to bother about such questions, and, anyway, they're soon answered by the structure of waged employment, job hierarchy, bills and mortgage repayments that circumscribe most people's lives. But, then, I don't think many anarchists qualify as 'grown ups', so the 'what am I doing here' style questions are quite legitimate. When I lived in the city I used to approach these questions down the same path as most everyone else — via the pint glass. I remember lying on my back on some waste ground in the centre of Sheffield mumbling something drunken and banal like 'it's a wonder we don't fall off', and 'just think how far away the stars are'. That didn't get me very far, she went off with someone else anyway. However, now I'm a big chap (at least outwardly) I think these thoughts whilst sober, and living in the depths of rural Perthshire helps. It rained all day today, but cleared up sufficiently this evening to allow me to walk out. Summer rain freshness, and banks of soaring cloud lifting over the Ochil Hills brought a clear sensation of time and history yet to come. It was a pleasant feeling, it made me feel part of the earth, as temporary as the clouds, but as unique and universal as the clouds. Walking back through the village I felt slightly more free than when I had set out. I didn't really need to ask all the 'what's it all about' questions because, for me, I'm all I need, my life is my path. Down a small side road in the village is the parish church — something that is well attended, and not just by old devotees. I don't know the figures, but a good guess is that Scotland is far more religious (in Christian terms, at least) than England. Recently there's been a low-level mumbling about religion in Freedom with comments from Donald Rooum

feel that that brand of monotheism (and, I suspect,

its brothers: Judaism and Islam) are nothing more

than power structures, and, at an individual level,

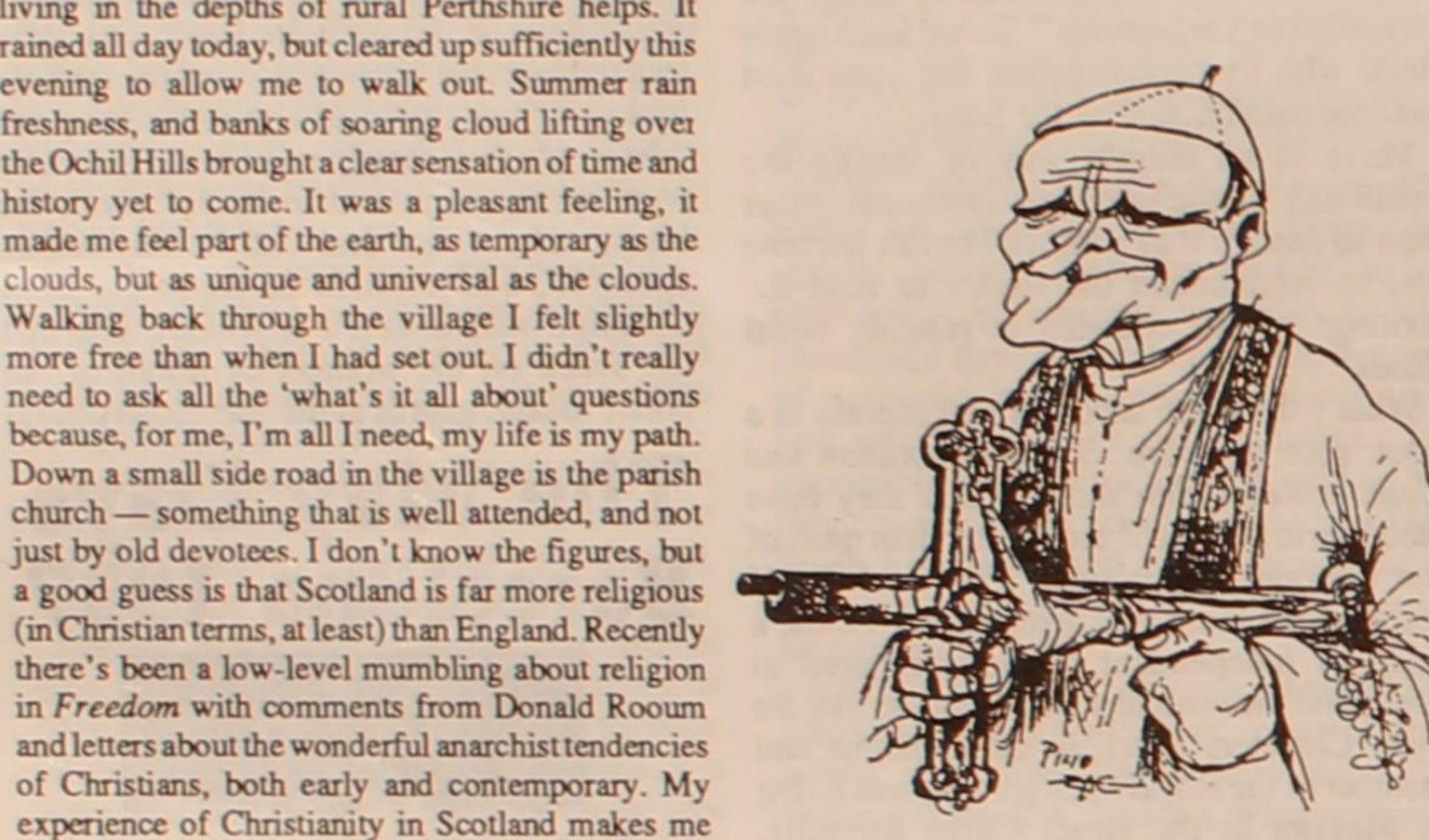
fetters on personal freedom.

LO

Life, Eternity and all

I have close personal knowledge of one of the most fundamental Protestant churches in Scotland — the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland — and I know well several active members of the Church of Scotland -Christianity's liberal wing in the country. The effects of the former on its members and adherents are more apparent than the latter's, but, in the final analysis, both are anti-freedom.

The Free Presbyterian Church is largely confined several churches in the Lowlands. This little Calvinist church gained UK-wide fame last year for



from IL PECCATO 2, Fano

sitting in judgement on the senior law officer, Lord MacKay, the Lord Chancellor. There aren't many of them, perhaps 10,000 'members' plus more 'adherents' (now, since a split, in two churches) but they represent a very active tradition up north. Before the Lord Chancellor case they had often appeared in Scottish newspapers for their strict hatred of women in trousers, Christmas trees, women with short hair, men with long hair, Roman Catholics, doing anything on a Sunday (sorry, church to which you belong. There are plenty of to the Highlands and Islands, although there are Sabbath) including buying a paper on a Monday (made on a Sabbath), and, controversially, putting cockerels under creels to stop them fucking on a Sabbath. The Church of Scotland is most unlike the Free Presbyterian Church (which is closely resembled not that long ago, however). The Church of Scotland is, in fact, much beloved by that most Lucifer if you know that he will fall, and then why liberal institution the BBC, and it is one of the few create Adam and Eve if you know they will rebel Scottish institutions that gets regular UK-wide (the first anarchists?) and thereby lead directly to radio coverage, all because it has women ministers the necessity of crucifying your only son, not to and thereby enables the liberal atheists and mention the odd bit of suffering for the human race. ecclesiastics in the Beeb to annoy Anglican In addition, I don't think I'd be too happy sitting in conservatives by broadcasting comforting heaven (presuming à la Calvin, that I've been platitudes in female tones. Whereas the typical Free chosen) whilst the majority of the human race is Presbyterian sermon is full of injunctions to realise being frazzled. But, God on one side, there is even what a bunch of unworthy sinners we all are, each less reason to submit to an external agency when compared with the Free Presbyterian's hour) religion in the same way as a political system uses normally tells you that it's nice to be nice, and don't 'Parliamentary Democracy' or 'Communism' forget to kiss your granny goodnight even if she is (whatever that's called these days) or the myth of a a grasping old bag. But, I maintain, despite these revolution — be it 1917 or 1989 in Romania. And, outward differences, both churches, like others, are make no mistake about it, churches, like political the same in their fundamental attack on individual parties, are power structures. freedom — they both attempt to remove one's responsibility for oneself, in order to maintain control over the individual.

> The key to all Christian belief is that we are all sinners, that because of the original fall of Man we are created in sin, and are sinful in ourselves.

up for you, make you whiter than the driven snow. He has sacrificed himself on your behalf, and all you have to do is repent and you'll get a pardon (the Church of Scotland tries to ignore what happens if you don't get a pardon, but the Free Presbyterians lovingly gloat over the eternal torture that the non-chosen will get — although this seems to conflict with the triumph of good over evil, but, no matter). Both these fundamentals (the core of Christian belief) immediately take responsibility out of the individual's hands. First he/she is a sinner, because of someone else's 'fall'. Second, he/she cannot redeem themselves, that can only be done by submission to an external agency, viz Christ, or in more mundane terms, the particular reasons why one would be unwilling to submit to God. I wouldn't wish to submit to a God whose rationality is, by my understanding, so entirely irrational — for example, if you are the personification of good and, at the same time, you possess knowledge of all eternity, why create Church of Scotland sermon (all ten minutes of it, that agency is simply another hierarchy, using

However, help is at hand, for Christ can fix things

I was in the position to observe closely the manouverings that led to the Lord Chancellor's dismissal from the Free Presbyterian Church, and the build up to the split that followed. All of that

(continued on page 6)

Information Technology (IT) is used to prevent challenges Leto the power of the state and the interests of capitalism in a variety of ways. The majority of dissenting commentators have focused on the issues of surveillance, the storage of personal data and the surrender of human judgement to computer calculation in decision processes: but one of the greatest threats to liberty in the modern world is posed by the computer's tendency to destroy our relationships with each other and our environment. This threat is highlighted by recent advances in computer science which challenge our ability to distinguish between real and imaginary experience.

Virtual reality — the technology of escapism

Over the past decade you cannot fail to notice the hordes of adolescents crammed into amusement arcades, shovelling coins into games machines which allow them to play the role of Rambo or Ninja Assassin for a few minutes. There is also a huge home computer market for the games software which many teenagers spend every available hour playing. A typical computer game will have a quest scenario based upon a well-established film or book genre (you can play the part of spy, karate killer, racing driver, commando, starship captain, etc.) and involves moving the 'hero' or his vehicle through an animated landscape and overcoming a set of 'villains' or geographical hazards. The more sophisticated games have smoothly animated 3D graphics and realistic sound effects synchronised to the action, but the degree of realism of this imaginary world is limited by the player's point of view he can only see the section of the game environment framed by his VDU screen.

Imagine the seductive power of a technology which allows you to enter the imaginary worlds created by the software writers. . . imagine the sense of escape from the rigours of everyday existence as you don an all-over suit lined with sensors which translate the movement of your body in the real world into movements within a fictional landscape . . imagine the realism of the illusions conjured up by this equipment if its programmed graphics allowed a 360 degree view of the computer-generated world, and it included a helmet with sensors to enable the presentation of a 3D image appropriate to the orientation of your head and the direction you faced. It would be difficult to discriminate between the visual experience produced by this technology and that experienced within our real environment. This validity realised, computer created 'world', where the boundaries

known as a 'Virtual Reality'. If this idea appeals to you then hurry, hurry, hurry — get

between real and fictional experience are broke down, is

Virtual Alienation: IT and the retreat from society

your 'Datasuit' and 'Eyephone' from the VPL company of California — a snip at only \$200,000! David Gale (The Guardian, 13th April 1990) reveals that not only is this 'Virtual Reality' technology already in existence, but that the developers plan to add tactile feedback to the realistic graphics and sound effects that presently accompany the Datasuit-wearer's journey through manufactured landscapes. Gale predicts that prices will fall and many better-off members of the community will own a 'Home Reality Engine' which enables them to experience sights, sounds, textures and forces of the body in a made-to-measure fantasy world. Imagine the fake experiences you could buy: knocking out Frank Bruno in the first round, sex with your favourite TV personality, or would you prefer to storm the Bastille in 1789?

Living in separate worlds The ability of human beings to effect social and political change is critically dependent upon the existence of a shared culture in which we all participate: there must be a common set of fundamental experiences, values and ideas that we can analyse and argue about if we are to develop and improve our society. Without this common frame of reference collective action and debate will be impossible. Richard Gott (The Guardian 18th April 1990) warns us that the loss of shared experience will lead to cultural stagnation: "There is no longer a common denominator . . . we all live in increasingly separate worlds". If — as many IT pundits are suggesting — Virtual Reality replaces collective forms of art and entertainment (such as cinema, theatre, galleries and TV) then the resulting retreat from genuine social experience into solitude and isolation will hinder the creation of a freer society. What incentive would there be to protect our real environment for those who escape into a dream world at every opportunity? What chance would we have to develop new forms of social

organisation if many members of the community have become isolated from each other by this technology? Those who opt to retreat from the unpleasant realities of real life into the cosy myopia of manufactured fantasy will be unable to carry out an informed critique of the way we live. Virtual Reality technology presents human beings with the possibility of evolution into a variation of philosopher Herbert Marcuse's One Dimensional Man—with the state buying our compliance with dream experiences as well as commodities envisaged by Marcuse.

In Elements of Refusal (Left Bank Books, 1988) John Zerzan asserts that the false sense of self-sufficiency facilitated by home entertainment technology (computers, personal stereos, etc.) has brought about a "shrinking away from our social selves". Zerzan's analysis of the effects of the colonisation of our homes and workplaces by IT is that we are becoming "weaker, reduced, infantilised". In spite of warnings from those who dissent from the headlong rush into a technology oriented culture, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that those who can afford to use IT to avoid dealing with other people are choosing to do so. For example, French car manufacturers Renault are planning to introduce 'Multimedia' technology in the training of mechanics. Multimedia allows the presentation of text, animated graphics and sound and capitalises on the vast storage capability of CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read-Only Memory). The price of Multimedia means that versions will be widely available long before Virtual Reality technology, and many IT journalists are already predicting that it will have a huge impact on communication at our work: workers will be able to pass detailed and complex information to colleagues they have never had to suffer the inconvenience of meeting!

The appalling notion of replacing human teachers with automated learning techniques is back on the agenda, with its Typere the Gnostics just second century elitists? VV (Freedom 16th June).

The Gnostics were the arch-rebels of Christian society from the second to the fourth century. The Pauline Christians of Rome set out to crush them and to hand over an obedient and conformist church to the Roman Emperor. These things they did, as Constantine is our witness.

In those early days there were some 80 recorded varieties of Christianity round the Mediterranean,

Life, Eternity and all that . . .

(continued from page 5)

resembled nothing more than a split in a small, rigid and increasingly failure-ridden political party something like the split that the British communis experienced a few years ago. The Free between the old guard ministers and the younger men. The ideological (sorry, theological) divisions were almost imperceptible to the outsider, but adherence to one view or another of the Bible (the 'proof' of the rightness of their particular cause) strove to build their forces. However, a causus belli amongst Free Presbyterians. Then the democratic the heart of any MI5 operative, or Stalinist. And father of gnosticism. don't think the other churches are different, just thousands submit themselves to these religious oligarchies, from the 'Leaping Jesus' churches that in its real sense, power over the actions of others on whatever level) oligarchs is that someone else | will destroy you." caused your problem, and someone else will solve

clouds over a sea, and smile to yourself.

Gnostics as anarchists of old

each one doubtless aspiring to come out on top. Most of them perished. The Copts still survive in Egypt and Ethiopia and there is a residual presence of Nestorians in Iraq.

- just as there has never been any Anarchist Party to be distinctly weird; but that is a secondary matter. The heart of the matter was of real substance.

The Father was beyond all that (he has various codices (a codex is simply a bound book rather than was carefully noted by the two factions as they names like Elohim) — he is the very ground of our a scroll) in a large jar near the village of Nag being, to know him is to know the eternal and the Hammadi. And there they were dug up by a local was needed — hence the use of Lord MacKay's infinite and that knowledge is gnosis. It is the direct peasant collecting bird lime as fertiliser in 1945. attendance at a Mass, something not unknown even personal perception of the divine that makes They are written in Coptic, an Egyptian language nonsense of all the absurd theology of the church in Roman script. They had an extraordinary history decision-making body of the church, the synod, was | — Incarnation, the Virgin Birth, the Crucifixion, thereafter but came through it, and they are now carefully pre-prepared. Once the split was under the Resurrection, the Trinity and salvation through available, in full, in an English translation. way the followers of the old guard were enjoined to | Christ. Forget it. Christ was an exemplar, a teacher, support them on the grounds of 'loyalty'. So much a messenger, that's all. You can imagine how that The medieval sequel Leninism it seems to me. And that was just before | was received in Rome! Simon Magus (magus the surface of events, I haven't even mentioned the means sorcerer) was suitably denounced as such in dirty tricks campaigns that would have gladdened the Acts of the Apostles. And Simon was a founding

look at the women ministers issue in the Church of The gnostic Gospel of Phillip: "You saw the spirit, that 'Our Church is the Way', but, instead, the Iron become the Father. You see yourself and what you

What price then the authority of the book and the are sprouting up all over the country, to the priest? And from the same gospel, JC is on record black-suited hardliners on Lewis. And the as saying: "If you bring forth what is in you, what theological core of all these power-hungry (power | shall bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is in you, what you do not bring forth

What's all that got to do with 'Life, Eternity and Jung writes in Man and His Symbols: "Gnosis for all that . . . ?? Fuck all. Go and have a look at a few man is to be in the place of the presence and revelation of Being. The Da of Dasein (as in Stephen Cullen | Heidegger) is itself brought out of concealment into

disclosure. Dasen in is the truth of being, hence 'to see a world in a grain of sand"

And so we are on to Blake, the arch-gnostic of the modern world. He totally rejected the church, the The Gnostics were a special case because there priests and all their works (although he had a soft was never intended to be a Gnostic Church as such spot for Wesley) because they ignored the foundations of the human spirit in favour of in modern times. Gnosticism was a form of dogmas, moralities, rituals and their own authority. Christianity that any could adopt as their own. Its He never knowingly went to church, i.e. he was very nature made it flexible and capable of any christened in St James, Piccadilly (still the same number of different forms. Some of them turned out font today), and churched into the cemetery at Bunhill Fields.

Following Simon Magus came Menander, Gnosis means knowledge - knowledge of the Saturninus, Basilides and Valentinus, not forgetting Father. And the Father is not the God worshipped the author of the fourth Gospel which has distinct by Jews and Pauline Christians. Jehovah, or the gnostic overtones and is not entirely respectable as Presbyterians had, for some years, been split Demiurge was, to the Gnostics, a mixed-up lower a result. They were heavily persecuted by their divinity who made the world and made a mess of it fellow 'Christians'. In the year 367 or thereabouts, - witness natural disasters, sickness, war, Athanasius, the Archbishop of Alexandria, starvation and all the other horrors that we are heir denounced all "apocryphal books and heresies" and the Gnostics of Upper Egypt buried 52 of their

As we know, good ideas do not lie down and die. of the middle ages (the eleventh to the thirteenth of France. In Provence, round Toulouse, it became day'! Law: 'Who says organisation says oligarchy'. And see you shall become. Whoever achieves gnosis the focal point of a new kind of society that was become no longer a Christian, but the Christ." avowedly Christian but had no connection with Some further reading: decided to crush by force. The Albigensian Crusades of 1209 to 1229 drowned Gnosticism in its own blood. The very Inquisition was invented to ensure its dispatch.

> Cathari, the Joachimites and the spiritual wing of Press, Boston, 1959. Spirit, the Beghards and the Beguines, and their political context was that of the titanic struggle Kurt Rudolph, Gnosis, Harper & Row, 1985, between the Pope and the Emperor. the Guelfs and £16.95 —mostly for specialists.

There were two classes in gnosticism: the perfecti who had achieved gnosis and who lived lives of extreme asceticism, they were vegetarian and celibate, the spiritual capital of society and a source of strength to the credentes, the ordinary believers who could only join the perfecti on their deathbeds.

The Gnostics were part of a vast European Christian underground, the faith of the underdog, the saint and the revolutionary. It broke out again in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries through the Anabaptists, the Hutterites, the Mennonites, the Family of Love, Jacob Boehme and finally the Quakers. We think of Gerrard Winstanley in connection with the Diggers, his role as a gnostic prophet has yet to be properly recognised.

And now we are into yet another gnostic renaissance. Simone Weil is a case in point. In a recent review of a book about her Peter Levi wrote: "She was a little like Tolstoy, with the same indestructible attraction and power to annoy. Lenin she despised. She was an anarchist activist, a severe individualist, an opponent of all totalitarian states and yet a genuine utopian. To Simone Weil gnosticism appealed greatly." (The Independent,

It is about time this word was dispatched from the vocabulary of the thinking classes. History is the product of contesting elites. Only occasionally, under climactic conditions, do great numbers appear on the streets, as they have done recently in Eastern Europe — but it took seventy years.

Most of the time, in most places only the few raise their heads and their voices. We need to differentiate. There are elites of the good concerned with freedom and justice and what to do about them. There are elites of the bad who are into tyranny, conquest, exploitation and force. Even the history of anarchism is the history of tiny elites — except Driven out of the Mediterranean arena by Roman for the momentary flourish in Spain. It is qualities Pauline Christianity, gnosticism survived in that count, quantities will come in their own good Bulgaria as the Bogomils. Then towards the height time. If the word 'elite' is to be used at all it needs the clearest particular identification.

century) it spread down through Macedonia, Thrace Long live elites of creative people! May millions England. The fact is that the one universal truth isn't you became the spirit. You saw the Father, you shall to northern Italy and then to Provence in the south draw inspiration from them and join them 'on the

Peter Cadogan

Rome. The Pope and the great lords of France Elaine Pagels, The Gnostic Gospels, Pelican £3.95. Tobias Churton, Gnostics, Weidenfeld and Nicholson £10.95.

The Nag Hammadi Library in English, E. J. Brill, It was a dynamic era. After the Albigensians, the Hans Jonas, The Gnostic Religion, The Beacon

the Franciscans came the Brethren of the Free Robert Avens, The New Gnosis, Spring Publications, Texas.

apologists claiming that previous failures were due to the inadequacies of the old technology. It does not occur to those who are keen to employ the Multimedia capabilities of personal computers like the Apple Macintosh and the Commodore Amiga that we ought to be questioning the wisdom of replacing human contact with passive consumption of high quality video images.

A grim prospect?

A useful indication of the extent to which people are becoming alienated from each other was provided by Stoke-on-Trent headteacher Keith Shackleton, on TV-AM's 'Good Morning Britain' programme (25th May 1990). Shackleton has introduced co-operative games to the syllabus after becoming concerned by the fact that increasing numbers of pupils were engaging in solitary games in the playground. He suggests that computer games are among the technologies that have played a major role in this growing inability to

To believe in the possibility of an anarchist society is to believe in the ability of people to resist the efforts of the state to isolate us from each other. In spite of the rapid development of isolating technologies there may be cause for optimism. At the start of the 1980s it was predicted that cheap home video machines would hasten the demise of the cinema and the novel: the ailing cinema industry then underwent a commercial resurgence and people buy more paperback fiction than ever. The prediction that Virtual Reality and Multimedia products will dominate education, work and leisure may prove to be equally false. Many people still want to see paintings, films and music concerts together and to argue about their meanings and merits afterwards. We can but hope that human beings continue to relish the company of others and do not begin to purchase the technologically concocted experiences which would anaesthetise them to the problems and injustices of the real world.

Andrew Hedgecock

Anarchism

A narchism is the political doctrine that nobody should be boss over anyone else. All the varieties of anarchist are striving towards anarchy, a society in which the boss type of relationship is impossible, and all relationships are of the voluntary, co- operative kind.

Voluntary co-operation is the basis of all human societies. Even the most oppressive of bosses needs at least the tacit consent of the majority of subjects, which is why every government fosters the fear that something worse might take over, unless resources are wasted on weapons. Anarchists think it should be possible to have co-operative societies without coercive embellishments.

If people ask 'how will this or that be organised in a free society?' an anarchist might offer an opinion about how it might conceivably be organised, but it will only be an opinion, an imaginary solution to an imaginary problem. We cannot dictate to the members of a free society how they organise their lives. To get bogged down in hypothetical details is to miss the point of anarchism altogether...

The point of such questions, of course, is to question the notion that a free society could organise itself effectively and survive. Anarchists believe it could, but in the last analysis that too is a matter of opinion.

The limits of political power are decided not by the good will of the powerful, but by what the unpowerful will tolerate.

A more useful question is, whether a free society is worth striving for. This is not a matter of factual opinion but a matter of social attitude. If we make progress towards a society with no government at all, then we have a society with less government than we had at the start, which is desirable in itself. If you want no weight at all on your back, it follows that you would prefer a lighter weight to a heavier one.

Less government is certainly possible. There are enormous variations between one government and another in the degree of censorship, conscription, official secrecy, petty prohibitions, and inequality of wealth. People survive under the least oppressive regimes now in existence at least as well as they do under more oppressive regimes.

And there seems to be little dispute that there is too much government in the world. Even murderous tyrants condemn the excesses of other murderous tyrants.

It might be asked why, if anarchists favour less oppression they do not try to take power themselves and govern in a less oppressive way than others. But this is to misunderstand the reality of government.

People in power are always as powerful as circumstances allow. This is not to impugn the sincerity of those who seek power for programmes of social reform. It is just the way government works. If you want to use political power, for any purpose, you must first seize power and then hold onto it. And the more powerful you are, the better for your purpose.

The limits of political power are decided, not by the good will of the powerful, but by what the unpowerful will tolerate. It is at the level of consent that anarchists hope to weaken the bosses, and ultimately to make it impossible for anyone to be boss over anyone.

28 27 28 28 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 5

The Guardian (29th May 1990) reported a ampaign of bombs against British military targets in and around West Germany stretching back to 1978. The same newspaper alleges that this campaign is being carried out by the IRA (Irish Republican Army). The basis of this allegation is a series of admissions by an anonymous telephone caller. In fact, this campaign has produced no published evidence linking it with the IRA.

There have been eighteen major incidents since 1978. The first was a series of eight bombs running in a parallel line across the old Western Front of Germany stretching from Dusseldorf to Hanover. These signified the start of the campaign and caused little or no damage. The second incident saw a small bomb explode outside the officers' mess in policeman and an off-duty soldier were also injured by gunshot wounds. The campaign then stopped for

town near to the Belgian end of the Western Front. Dortmund. In this incident no people were killed but 30 were

The British Counter-Culture 1966-73

newer more libertarian society.

audience than we had up to now.

local activist who had recently gone to university.

Cubtitled A Study of the Underground Press, this

index was only a page and a quarter long - unusual

for a book even of this length. I looked further.

by Elizabeth Nelson

Macmillan, 1989

10

The British army and its enemies in Europe

incident was the death of a British soldier by gunshot wounds. The assailants were now growing

an unsuccessful bomb. The second, at Hanover,

Bielefeld and one at Duisberg (near the Dusseldorf military personnel and their families. It has shown soft-spot). Three of these incidents were bomb clear signs of advancement into Holland and clear shell guns distributed to both sides during the attacks claiming the lives of some three RAF signs of escalation (the 300lb car bomb in 1987). It servicemen and injuring eight others. The other is clearly a well funded and organised operation.

The fact that there has not been a single arrest despite a number of car chases by German police in confidence and operating cross-border attacks following known assailants indicates that the ground conditions are favourable to the 1989 saw six more major incidents. The first was organisation unit. It is also worth noting that the latest incidents aimed at innocent civilians followed killed a British soldier (car bomb). The third, also closely after the assassination by car bomb of the at Hanover, was unsuccessful. The fourth, at German banker Alfred Herrhausen, whose the extent of supporting the sending of Dusseldorf injuring no-one. 1980 saw an escalation Munster, saw two off-duty soldiers shot. The fifth company was in the throes of a British bank Muslim hit squads from abroad to murder of the campaign with the death of an army colonel saw the campaign take a new turn with the death of takeover move. His death beyond the western from gunshot wounds at Bielefeld, the central spot a soldier's wife by gunshot wounds in a Dortmund frontier at Frankfurt was of course attributed to the of the Western Front. In the same year in two further carpark. The sixth saw the killing of an RAF Red Army Fraction (a German based organisation). incidents at Bielefeld and Munster a military corporal and baby daughter by gunshot wounds There has also been no connection noted between near the Belgian end of the western frontier. The the German western frontier campaign and the 1990 campaign has started with the shooting to Lockerbie bomb loaded at Frankfurt airport. death of two Australian tourists inside the Dutch Indeed, that bomb was connected to the Palestinian In 1987 the campaign started once again with a border, but was quickly followed with the death by organisation operating within Western Germany, major bomb exploding at Moenchengladbach, a gunshot wounds of Major Michael Dillon Lee at and allegedly responsible for the Berlin nightclub bomb (the one which America attributed to Libya). At the moment attention in Germany is focused seriously injured. The next year, 1988, saw four It is clearly an orchestrated campaign across away from this series of incidents as a five-year long more incidents, two inside the Dutch border, one at Germany's western frontier aimed primarily at case is finally getting underway at Linz in Austria concerned with investigating the production of field

> number of uniformed targets, the fact that women and children have also been callously shot dead raises the question of the nature of British military establishments inside Germany. The obvious question is should family quarters be now abandoned along the German western frontier, one woman and one child is two too many. Remember, no evidence links this campaign with the IRA.

Pacifists picket themselves — repudiating Rushdie death threats

The Peace Pledge Union (PPU) — the main ■ British pacifist organisation — has launched a regular picket of its own building in central London in protest at repeated support by one of its tenants for the killing of

Parts of Dick Sheppard House (the PPU's headquarters for more than fifty years) are let to a variety of tenants. One of these is the Muslim Institute, which has taken a fundamentalist Iranian view of Islam, even to

The PPU does not require that all its tenants should be pacifists — but it draws the line at organisations in its building going to the other extreme and encouraging acts of murder. Other tenants in the building have joined the PPU in repudiating the death threats.

The PPU has asked the Muslim Institute to leave, but they have not thus far done so. In response to a further recent statement by an official of the Institute, clearly reiterating support for the killing of Salman Rushdie, the PPU has decided to go public in its condemnation of the policies of its tenant. (The PPU's decision is further influenced by Whilst it may be easy to dismiss the German the 'Muslim Manifesto' published by the western frontier campaign as involving a small Institute last week which urges British Muslims to involve themselves in 'armed struggle' abroad.)

> Posters criticising the Institute have been attached to the railings outside the building and leaflets are being distributed to callers to the building and passers-by.

For further information contact Albert Beale on 071-387 5501.

tax protesters in the Isle of Wight, Tyneside, Warrington, etc., by fouling up the entire legal process. CAN'T PAY, WON'T PAY Dristol City Council has released

1 in 2

the staggering figures for non-

payment in the city. In the first two

months since its introduction,

150,000 people in the city have not

paid a penny towards the poll tax -

that equals 50% of those on the poll

tax register! The council is £7 million

per month short in expected revenue.

In Cardiff the city council are to

take 400 of the 25,000-plus

work for them while keeping their

these people impossible by

following the example of anti-poll

Tere, Bert, it said in the paper that

Poindexter has been jailed for six

months. I thought you said . . . Oh Daisy,

Daisy, Daisy. If you read past the headline it

says it's suspended for his appeal to be heard.

By the time it has all gone through the courts,

and his remission has been taken into account,

he'll get six months free holiday with his wife

in Monaco . . . I don't know why they don't

put sides on the bus stops these days. They

don't keep the wind off. You didn't get your

Guardian today, Bert. Gone off it? . . . It's

enough to put anyone off for life when they

pay idiots like Enoch Powell to give their

views. Just think about it. Enoch fails to get

rivers of blood flowing on the streets of

multi-cultural Wolverhampton, so he pisses

off in a huff to represent people in Northern

Ireland where it's all going on without a black

face anywhere to be seen. He's the best Irish

joke I've ever come across . . . It's Drinkwise

day today, Bert. You doing anything about it?

I've had one, I'm too fuddled to make a

sensible decision whether or not to have any

I didn't make it up. Honest. - AUTHOR

own heads below the parapet.

Victory

Treedom readers might remember non-payers to court on 12th July. In the campaign in Cardiff to a vicious attempt to split the prevent the building by the Cardiff non-payment campaign the Bay Development Corporation of a Labour-controlled council are barrage to block the rivers Taff and rumoured to have decided to Ely to create a yuppie boating lake. prosecute first those who have Well, campaigners are claiming a Undeterred by high winds, an previously been summoned for not major victory after a House of overcast sky and rainy forecasts, and political fall-out away from these the project and the promises made by afternoon of Sunday 1st July on summonses by claiming these people the developers about the risks of Parliament Hill, Hampstead Heath, However, anti-poll tax water level and the environmental Yorkshire and South Wales. be able to pay higher poll taxes. This investigation.

criminalise inability to pay should be death to the barrage project and at conference next year. fought all the way and be shown to least this will delay and make it even preparing to make the prosecution of by local and national political elites.

South Wales

News from **Angel Alley**

t has been a busy fortnight at Freedom Press, with an issue of The Raven as well as Freedom to dispatch and the arrival of a large consignment of books (about 800) from Black Rose Books and two cartons of books and pamphlets from See Sharp Press of San Francisco, which filled the office and the landing cash). outside for a couple of days.

Anarchist picnic

paying the rates. The council Commons select committee raised about thirty comrades attended the subscriptions expired with the 7th obviously hopes to divert sympathy serious doubts about the validity of Anarchist Summer Picnic held on the April and 21st April issues and they will not be receiving future issues of Freedom until we hear from them. have a history of non-payment. flooding, compensation, ground coming from as far afield as

campaigners will respond by consequences. It further ordered that It was nice to meet old friends and including the possibility of subscription expires. attempt by a Labour council to Some have seen this as the kiss of organising a national anarchist

be what it actually is - a cowardly more expensive. Either way, this bright, sparkling intelligence of funds, but now and then we feel that attempt to quietly do the Tories' dirty must count as a major victory for many of the youngsters who are now we should remind comrades and those who have been fighting against entering the movement whose ideas sympathisers that no anarchist paper the might of finance and construction are unfettered with the mistakes of has ever paid for itself by sales and In the meantime, campaigners are capital, backed up as the latter were the past. I see a bright future for the subscriptions, even though no-one movement. It's good to be alive at | connected with the Freedom Press EM this time.

Peter Neville

has now been transferred to the

The Black Rose consignment I included some new titles which are listed below.

bulging stock room.

We now also have stocks of the third printing of the Freedom Press title Why Work? Arguments for the Leisure Society. The new price is £4.50 (post free on inland orders with

With this issue we are sending V V pink reminders to those readers whose subscriptions to Freedom expired between 7th April and 16th June and hope they will be renewing without delay. This will be the second reminder for those whose

If yours is a joint subscription with 1st June-30th June 1990 the Raven you can check your Raven subscription on the address label pointing out that those who could not the barrage cannot go ahead for at make new ones. A frank exchange of it is the third figure from the left and afford the rates are in no position to least a year without further study and ideas took place over many issues, refers to the actual issue when the Fund

> What impressed me most was the WW appeals for donations to our £5. group gets paid, nor indeed do any of

Freedom was duly dispatched, The the regular contributors to Freedom Raven 11 followed and some 50 or The Raven. It's all a labour of love, orders dispatched. And what was left but the printers and binders have to be paid and the Post Office gets nearly £200 in postage each issue. So may we commend the wise words of somebody much admired by lovers of freedom:

> Message to Freedom readers (women and men) from Tom Paine (1737-1809)

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

DONATIONS

Freedom Fortnightly Fighting

Leeds CA £2.50, Newcastle CR £2, Slough EC £3, Douglas Isle of Man The don't like making constant PC £7, Leeds CA £1, Bradford RW

> Total = £20.50 1990 total to date = £625.80

says she hopes Demdanjuk is strung up upside

Glasgow JTC £5, London N19 DL £1. Total = £6.00 1990 total to date = £414.50

Almost a Drop-Out He had been known for his sober respectability. He had changed. "Gordon, what are you doing in a Midland Dairies uniform?" I said. White trousers,

a flower. Clearly something had happened. I was book is what it says it is and being short, only missing out but it had not yet hit Birmingham, or it 143 pages of text, should be accessible and, to those might have hit the university but there was more who are interested in finding out about this town and gown distinction in Birmingham than phenomenon, a useful source of information. The Oxbridge at all levels.

light blue military style jacket and hat badged with

discography, twenty two pages of notes and a one a frequent attender at many galleries I had nothing page glossary of terms. And then it hit me. The back tangible to contribute, so found a libertarian role in cover confirmed the thought — a PhD thesis ("she sweeping the place out once a week.

completed her doctoral thesis on the British I hit London in the early '70s and tried to find the counter-culture . . . "). It was the index with which counter- culture but found only the shreds. In the I personally had trouble. It was too brief, like an '60s I had had a letter published in the International afterthought. I was around at the time yet there was Times and from that one of its readers had started a may experience more than the sounds of more evenly across Britain. Thank you very no mention about anarchism, Freedom and so on. correspondence. Invited to stay in London, I met There was also something else missing. And then I her and, finding she was living with a previously the wildlife, weather and livestock. Many concentrated over the Houses of Parliament had it — what was missing was me and my unmentioned boyfriend, went to the outer suburbs, experience, which makes it difficult for me to Greenford I think, to stay the night. He turned out review it objectively. I was around at the time, was to be a neo-fascist and we spent a curious evening involved in it, and yet was never really a part of it. examining the collection of handguns he kept in a steel box chained to a bed. The relationship did not I became consciously an anarchist in the late '50s, survive the visit.

started to read Freedom in the very early '60s and met my first anarchists in 1961. By 1963, then T mention this to indicate that although there were living in Birmingham, I had gathered around me an Inumerous people participating in this anarchist group and as the '60s progressed had also counter-culture, few of them were from the become involved in the peace movement (CND, anarchist movement which, if anything, stood YCND, Committee of 100, racial issues, a homeless aloof. There was some effect on transient peace hostel campaign and later Vietnam campaigning). movement activists, who later affiliated to political Northumberland, Lake District and Yorkshire organise, although the Germans have had I was then a syndicalist, read Solidarity and became groups, became nascent feminists or sank into Dales national parks and, ironically, the Eden some success which resulted in the Autumn of involved organisationally within the anarchist single-minded vegetarianism, campaigning for a Valley. movement. I felt my involvement was that of a single issue rather than a whole cause. There were working class activist campaigning for peace to a lot of well-dressed beautiful people around low-flying (down to 250 feet) zones and in Lossiemouth as a base. As the arrogant MoD destroy the state and capitalism and introduce a London, especially in Soho and Notting Hill. "London is a place for the young and the rich, borders and mid-Wales ultra-low-flying difference to the total annual flying hours. Suddenly in the mid '60s I became aware of a especially the young rich", Colin MacInness used newer phenomenon. A new paper had come out to say. Yes, there was a sort of middle class called International Times. It was followed by Oz counter-culture related to long hair, fashionable and later other publications. These were different. clothes, drugs and pop music and psychedelic art, First of all they appeared to have a libertarian but not very accessible to the working class, up there with a tape measure, checking? approach, to address themselves to most of what I especially a working class further education stood for and appeared to be reaching a far wider teacher. And by the mid '70s it had all but armers are concerned about the noise enemy action' and the money saved will be There were oddities. It appeared to address itself libertarian circles, although I met the odd sheep in ground can be polluted with toxic hydrazine Combat aircraft. to a drug culture. I must admit to never having had lamb's clothing. Gordon? He is now a university vapour (lethal dose 1g) and the air with carbon CND, campaigning against all this, the slightest interest in drugs apart from what one lecturer in sociology, when last heard of doing monoxide, nitric oxides, hydrocarbons and designated 1st to 8th July in Scotland and 8th gets on prescription. I like alcohol but not up to the research on computer personnel. Don't get me point whence it interferes with my control over wrong, a good mate but into marriage and children

myself and situations. I like music but I must admit and the odd flowered tie. it is classical music I like: jazz sounds to me like Read the book. You will enjoy it. You will learn cats howling in the wind and pop bores me to tears. a great deal about a transient phenomenon which, I have flirted with folk but prefer Ewan McColl to whatever it did for the people concerned, produced civilian involvement is inevitable and that practising for nuclear war that only the the Americans apart from Blind Willie Johnson. In little of value for the anarchist movement. A other words, I knew something was happening but revolutionary underground? More like a group of village resident. latter-day bohemians. Butterflies who had their day did not feel myself a part of it. Going to London for a demo I met a well-known in the sun before dying.

Peter Neville

Rambling Notes Thew city dwellers still romanticise over the perhaps because it frightens the horses. Last

Then a friend started an Arts Lab. Thinking it an peace and quiet of the countryside, every September the Ministry of Defence report on Eleven pages of bibliography, a page and a half of excellent idea I joined, then realised that although living environment has its own aural template low-flying training by the Comptroller and and tempo and those who seek to escape the Auditor General (£5 from HMSO, but don't town, whether permanently or from time to waste your money) stated that there is no time, do so because they seek a healthier and alternative to the 151,000 flights a year, more positive space to enjoy. But take care in costing £304 million of your money, but your choice of countryside, citizen, or you suggested that the misery could be spread industrial agriculture blending with those of much but we would prefer it to be rural communities are being terrorised by the and Downing Street. sudden ear-shattering screams of a Tornado, Phantom, Harrier or Jaguar passing overhead. The complaints continue and in May this Whether practising nuclear bombing runs year a House of Commons Defence 400 decibels of sound. They prefer pleasant under 250 feet should be phased out. Not a lot

zones allow flying down to 100 feet. Pilots Do not imagine that the recent cancellation

You may complain, and 5,600 a year do so - even some Conservatives complain,

(you may feel you are the target) or learning Select Committee said that low altitude to fly under Soviet radar, these terrible manoeuvres should be banned, there should monsters may fly less than 100 feet above be tighter controls on the 55,000 hours of your head, would you believe, and emit up to flying between 250 and 600 feet and flying valleys and flying between hillsides so what of notice will be taken of that. Complaints are could be more suitable than the ignored and demonstrations difficult to 1989 NATO exercise being transferred to the The north and west of Britain is littered with Highlands of Scotland using RAF much of north west Scotland, the Scottish pointed out, it did not make all that much

have been heard to boast that on the tops they of an order for 33 Tomado combat aircraft will go down to 25 feet, and who is going to stand reduce this noise pollution. They were only intended to be mothballed as reserves 'to replace those lost in accidents or as a result of disappeared. Few of the people I met continued in stress effects on their livestock, the available for a projected new European

sulphur dioxide, the products of kerosene to 15th July in England as low-flying weeks, combustion. Planes crash or collide from time but you probably never even noticed. No-one to time and although the 65 deaths in the last has come up with a really effective idea. Can six years have all been aircrew, eventual you? Or are we helpless in the face of this means you the walker, agricultural worker or military and their sycophantic supporters

Waiting for the bus

let her have it in hospital ... They made bloody worshipped him ... Like so many of them, he sure she only had the one, didn't they. Drugs was very popular when he was under arrest. can be alright under supervision. Christ! Look Popular with his wife too, I suspect, because at that tail-back. Our bus is going to be late it cut down the birth rate ... I can't understand getting through that lot. Phew, those bloody the Pope. Dead against any of his priests fumes. Talk about passive smoking. Did you having a bit of nookie, and telling everybody see in the local paper that the leader of the else to put their wives in the club. I wonder if Council said more office blocks and factories Mrs Walesa really understands it? Don't in Slough is a good thing because it means suppose she's ever had time to think about it. more jobs . . . Yes, and more people and more Funny her husband's name is Lech. Daisy, did houses and more cars and more exhaust fumes you hear what I said? . . . Sorry Bert, I was and less buses. Why do they do it, Bert? Do wondering why priests wear those big skirts. they get a rake-off? . . . Makes you wonder. Perhaps they are hiding something . . . Don't Wiltshire Councillors have been making a think about it, Daisy, it can become an mint over the privatisation of their computer software department. I wouldn't trust any of ... What a lovely thought. I can't remember them, Conservative or Labour. You can tell when it was as cold as this in June. Do you more about them from their handshakes than from their labels. A thing that intrigues me is Mind you, Mrs Potts says they are very ... Only thing I could do is pack it in. Soon as what this lot are going to do about their anti-nuclear ideas now that Kinnock has Mrs Potts would have to be at least as more. I ask you. How can anyone take a joined the nuclear club. Will they change their stupefying drug and be sensible enough to posters to 'Slough was a nuclear free zone'? She's only trying to make you think she is ...What's all that about Lech Walesa being in know when to stop? . . . Mrs Potts says a

obsession. Try thinking about global warming

think they know what they are talking about? intelligent people . . . That's a laugh, that is. intelligent as they are to be able to say that. intelligent. Ask her why priests wear skirts. bus drivers. Guinness must be good for you because they trouble with Solidarity? I thought they That should give her a pain in the brain ... She

down like Mussolini . . . I couldn't care less what happens to him, Daisy. If people were happy to put up with Bomber Harris after he had thousands of kids roasted alive in Dresden, I'm sure they can leave Demdanjuk to live with his conscience until he dies a natural death. Look at those old RAF and Luftwaffe fliers having a beer and a laugh together on the fiftieth anniversary of the war. All obeying orders. Something doesn't add up somewhere. Wish that bus driver would obey orders, it's starting to rain. Suppose I shouldn't moan. Bet all those mates of mine who copped it fifty years ago would give anything to be standing in this bus shelter like us. Poor sods, if they could come back from their graves and see what's going on now they'd shoot all the politicians in the world, starting with our lot . . . Funny, you were saying only a few days ago how quiet they've been about AIDS. That programme last night on the telly reckons they've got it all wrong. . Looks as if it might be the second biggest

cock-up in history . . . What's the first then, Bert? . . . We need governments, Daisy. There's too many politicians and not enough

The government is taking part And even worse, it'll cause in an umbridled disarmament race! | the conscripts. | redundancies among generals. *Actual complaint of Major-General Ivan Nikulin, 5 July 1990.



about the police.

*I didn't make that up, either. It's a genuine Thatcher idea