

1990-91 SEASON OF MEETINGS

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11th January - 'Propagating the Libertarian Message' (speaker J.M. Alventosa Ferri) 18th January - General discussion 25th January - 'Public Transport and State Centralism' (speaker Peter Neville) 1st February - General discussion 8th February - To be arranged 15th February - General discussion 22nd February - 'Building the Anarch City' (speaker Andrew Lainton) 1st March - General discussion

Subsequent meetings to be arranged (volunteers wanted) from 8th to 22nd March 1991 and 19th April to 31st May 1991, all at 8pm to 10pm. We hope to continue the meetings from 7th June to 14th July 1991 either at the same time or at the earlier time of 6pm to 8pm (however, if we are the only group 84b Whitechapel High sing the Centre the staff may wish to close at

Anyone interested in leading a discussion contact Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW.

Some members of the forum have looked at the possibility of other activities for 1991/92. It has been suggested that we look into the possibility of running a weekend national conference this year or next, or a conference on theories and methods of anarchism. Comments would be appreciated.

FREEDOM fortnightly ISSN 0016 0504

Published by Freedom Press 84b Whitechapel High Street London E1 7QX Printed by Aldgate Press, London E1

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EDITORIALS

(continued from page 1)

it is a joke. As we write these lines (7th ex-terrorist prime minister of Israel, December) The Guardian published a Shamir, first called at Downing Street and photograph of a row of some twenty men later in a speech to leaders of Britain's spead-eagled on the ground with armed Jewish community made it quite clear soldiers guarding over them. The caption that: reads:

Floored ... US soldiers stand guard over Panamanian police loyal to Colonel Eduardo Herrera, who surrendered on Wednesday after a 12-hour siege of police headquarters. Earlier Colonel Herrera, a former police chief, had escaped from prison by helicopter to lead the coup attempt.

When Kuwait was declared a province of Iraq by Saddam Hussein American hands were raised in horror. Yet what is Panama if not a *de facto* province — or one more star on the Star Spangled Banner?

For years the US hired and financed armed mercenaries (the Contras) to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. And when they tired of the Marcos regime in the Philippines they put in Aquino. People also forget that Castro, with his handful of followers thirty years ago, could never have overthrown the ruthless Batista regime (another US nominee like Noriega, in Panama, who got their comeuppance when they didn't toe the US line) without US backing.

ast but not least, the State of Israel is the US fifth column in the Middle East. Without massive American finance and armaments Israel would never have been in a position to hold on to the occupied territories for more than thirty years and wage wars in the Lebanon. The United States has also vetoed every attempt by the United Nations (which the Americans are now relying on to justify any actions they may take against Iraq) to require Israel to 'get out' (to use Bush's tough talk to the Iraqis) of the occupied territories. On his way to the US the other day the

PREDICTION

nly fools predict the future — but here The undeclared purpose of 'democracies', majority.

of switching funding entirely to the centre.

factions blame each other for the defeat. Service are not elected but, rather, appointed. Kinnock will certainly face a major challenge to his leadership and probably won't survive. half-truths, smears, reward and punishment, a The party will be divided over whether to Parliament filled with ostensibly elected, but return to old principles (remember socialism) pre-selected and vetted, talking heads, and an or to continuing following in the Tories wake established Church as its (im)moral arm, the is the best policy.

which will lead to a great disillusioning of the country. And historians, in general, add their remaining left-wing activists, which in their not inconsiderable weight to this turn will lead to the renewal of the old debates duplicity. of the best way forward for the left and Readers of crime stories can be sure that, socialism. Within this debate anarchism will should they not succeed in identifying the take its place, perhaps be in a similar position | villain by the penultimate chapter, all will be as it was before the turn of the century. While revealed in the end. The problem with we may not win the debate outright, we will histories and historical biographies is that the be in a position to influence any consensus in villain may never even appear in the story. an anti-authoritarian direction. Wishful Take, for instance, The Baldwin Age published thinking?

defend them from the Tories.

jester.

... all the UN resolutions against Israel including Resolution 242 calling for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories, should be 'consigned to the dustbin of history' . he also made it quite clear that Israel would resist all UN attempts to monitor Israeli actions in the occupied territories. Still less would it allow an international conference to broker a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement.

According to The Guardian (7th December) "Britain's sharp disapproval of Mr Shamir's posture was made plain during his talks at Downing Street". But did the Prime Minister threaten to send more of our Desert Rats to threaten Israel to 'get out' of the occupied territories (with more poor Palestinians than the Kuwaiti population now under Iraqi occupation) or else? Of course not. There's no oil there - just poor people who (like the blacks in South Africa) depend for a miserable living doing the menial jobs for their Israeli masters.

Type believe that in the capitalist world Vy'saving face' is a minor consideration compared with the overwhelming vested interests in the Middle East (we mean oil).

If the Bush administration felt confident of a lightning military victory they would have already launched a war without waiting for the approval of the UN or Congress. They haven't in the past, so why now? They are also hesitating because of anti-war demonstrations in the US as well as the refusal by both **Republicans and Democrats in Congress** (who recall the Vietnam debacle) to give them carte blanche to use military force.



goes anyway! Unlike Peter Miller as we know, or do not know, them to be (Freedom number 23) I believe the Tories will is to keep power and wealth firmly in the hands win the next election, albeit with a reduced of those who actually govern. To this end they endeavour to ensure that 'freely elected' They will attempt to generate a mini-boom representatives of the people appear to be in the lead-up to an election by cutting interest making vitally important decisions which rates; 'solve' the poll tax problem by taking decide their fates. In reality, the actual rulers education out of local authority expenditure | in democracies never put themselves up for and introducing some form of ability-to-pay election for the simple reason that they could structure or increased benefit scale; education be in danger of being rejected. Thus the Royal will be highlighted — perhaps under the cloak Family, as symbols of the Crown, which is part of the actual government, are not elected. Labour, after losing their fourth election in a Similarly, the Judiciary, the Military, the row, will be driven with dissension as various | Police, the Civil Service, and the Secret

By the use of propaganda, secrecy, people are, mostly, persuaded that they have The latter course will probably be taken, genuine representation in the government of

in 1960 and edited by John Raymond. In his The Liberal Democrats will muddle on introductory chapter, Raymond, if we are to through as usual, although we might well see take him seriously, presents Baldwin as the a real nationalist challenge to Labour in the master of his own, and our destiny. Yet, Scottish and Welsh constituencies - as they certain events, which might lead an become pissed off with Labour's inability to unsophisticated reader to conclude that Baldwin was not, had John Raymond Anyway, that's enough of playing the court | completely baffled. One episode of many is sufficient to suggest that Baldwin was a mere Eddie May fall-guy for the Establishment, as were the

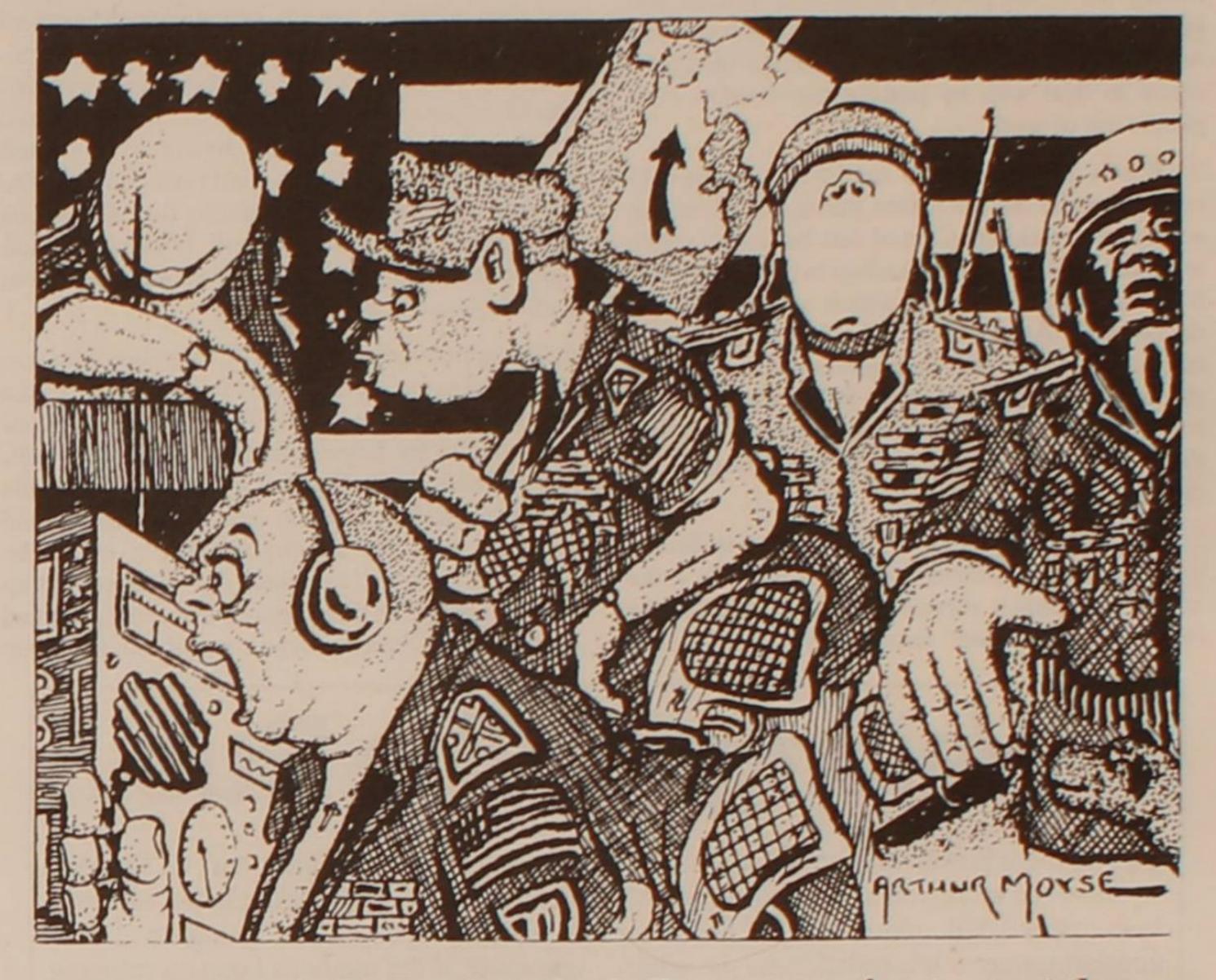
SAY "NO" TO THE WARMONGERS

Tt is true that demonstrations have only a relative value in obliging governments to take notice. But it is even more true that apathy allows governments to ride roughshod over the people. In Britain the anti poll tax demonstrations, both mass and by individuals refusing to pay, and appearing in court has undoubtedly upset the government and 'inspired'

(assuming politicians can be) the opposition to declare that they will abolish it if returned to office.

We must in this country launch massive demonstrations against war in the Middle East. Not a life must be sacrificed for oil interests! Bring back the servicemen from Saudi Arabia now!

Let the Middle East solve its own problems. After all Europeans took centuries to stop fighting each other so they are in no position to give lessons to the rest of the world.



"God damn it Bush, when the hell are you going to start the goddamned shooting war — the boys and I in the Gulf have got reputations to make"

Who Are the Real Rulers?

other Ministers involved: The British Government was pledged, with the League o Nations, to implement sanctions against Mussolini, who had invaded Abyssinia. However, Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare signed a pact with his counterpart, Laval of France, which would have allowed Italy to annexe two-thirds of Abyssinia, provided Haile Selassie agreed to the deal. Raymond comments: "Baldwin, though informed in advance, does not seem to have fully understood what Hoare intended to do". The upshot of that event was that Hoare was sacked, and the Plan was not put to the League of Nations, but the point to be made here is that the story of the Plan becomes credible only if unelected persons outside the Parliamentary scene were controlling the process and using Baldwin, Hoare and Co. as messenger boys. Only in such a context is it possible to believe that Prime Minister Baldwin did not know what was going on. Well 'schooled' readers probably regard the sacking of a Minister as a terrible personal tragedy but, no doubt, most Ministers realise that they are expendable and actually welcome the release of pressure and the privileged existence that awaits them when put out to grass. No dole queues for them!

John Raymond makes excuses for other events which should reasonably put a question mark on Baldwin's apparent position of real

The RAVEN 10 on EDUCATION

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power, but there is no need to seek a copy of The Baldwin Age because there are plenty of more recent recognised works that readily lend themselves to this conspiracy-theory analysis.

If memory serves well, it will be recalled, by those of advanced years that the Conservative Government between the years 1931 and 1935 was 'led' by Labour MP Ramsay MacDonald, with Baldwin as Lord President of the Council, despite the fact that MacDonald had only thirteen MPs to Baldwin's 472. If you cannot smell a conspiratorial rat in that, go and see a nose specialist without delay.

EFC

Iraq to free hostages — Why?

A n explanation for the Iraqi's decision to A allow all their foreign hostages — 'guests' — to leave the country was given by the former British Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath in a BBC interview in which he said that when he saw Saddam Hussein he pointed out that the hostages 'shield' would not deflect the Americans and British if and when they decided to launch a war to 'liberate' Kuwait.

Mr Heath was only confirming the government's policy about the hostages held in the Lebanon. No concessions. Let them be killed in our humanitarian war to 'liberate' the Kuwaitis! Half the population of one and a half million were immigrant low- paid workers from India, and Palestinians. Of the other half most had fled to Saudi Arabia. So who or what were they proposing to liberate bearing in mind that they are unconcerned with the lives of their 'kith and kin'? Answer:

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TAThen a Prime Minister resigns it is traditional for newspapers and magazines to pay tribute to their achievements during their period of office. One of the endearing features of Mrs Thatcher was that she gave every appearance of liking plain speaking. I therefore feel it is appropriate to record a plain speaking appreciation of her many achievements during her eleven years in office which are, I believe, as follows:

1. On coming to office one of her first actions was to cut income tax and raise VAT. This had two effects. The first was characteristic of her entire period in office in that the policy change took money out of the pockets of the less well off and put it in the pockets of the rich. The second effect was to cause a sudden surge of inflation which she chose to deal with by putting two million extra people out of work.

2. When these actions made her massively achieved by sinking an out of date battleship which was both well outside and known to be sailing away from an exclusion zone which she herself had build any replacements. designated. At the time of this sinking peace negotiations were still in progress and not a single person had been killed in the Falklands war. As a result of this action hundreds of young men lost their lives and many more were burned or disfigured.

3. She stuck by her motto of 'Where there is discord

POLITICAL OBITUARIES! Margaret Hilda Thatcher

as issuing military equipment to the police torce, advising courts to hand out long jail sentences, and the good old fashioned tactic of starving them out for twelve months.

4. She provoked riots on the streets of London, Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol and Birmingham and then declared that the prime aim of her third term of office would be to help 'those inner cities'. Her help consisted of the poll tax which reduced costs for those with large homes in the suburbs and increased them for those living in cramped accommodation in less pleasant surroundings. She unpopular she led the nation into a war. This was gave further assistance by insisting that all councils should sell off their council houses at such ludicrously cheap prices that they were unable to

5. She appointed a 'brilliant' Chancellor who was increasing number of well-off people were forced instructed to cut income taxes for the rich at a time to devote their precious tax cuts to protecting their of world economic boom. The rich showed their health or educating their children privately. She was appreciation by buying Japanese mobile phones, also successful at selling off state-run businesses at German cars, and Italian designer clothes. When the below their market worth. balance of payments went into serious deficit and . She stuck by her convictions to the last. She inflation rose she announced that it would be genuinely did believe that poor people need a good may we bring harmony' by provoking a strike necessary for us all to tighten our belts and put up kick up the backside and that she was the only amongst Britain's miners. Harmony was finally interest rates. She thus ensured that those who had person in the cabinet who really understood what brought to the miners' families by such measures been forced to borrow large sums of money to buy

Waiting for the Bus

men; the more you are talked about, the there's more icebergs about in the winter ... less powerful you are. Personal A lot more people are going to die of acquaintance with politicians is what ignorance if the medicos keep on refusing counts." Who said that, Daisy? ... Sounds to publicise the fact that sodomy is like some anarchist, Bert ... No, it was a physically dangerous, never mind all the Cabinet Secretary, Lord Hankey ... Never hygiene problems that go with it ... What heard of him. How long has he been dead? do you do then, lock them all up? ... Worst They say he stopped the Channel Tunnel thing you could do, Daisy. That's where being built sixty years ago, even though most of them first get into it, in borstals and Parliament and businessmen were all for it boarding schools and prisons where there's . At least he had a bit of common. I can't power structures and deprivation ... What see any sense in it myself, nor the Concorde do you think of Geoffrey Howe's speech, - what is the point of that? ... Well, of Bert? I couldn't detect any signs of course the Concorde could have military bitterness. Seemed pretty low-key to me .. applications. So all we have to do is work I reckon it was all stage-managed. out the military applications of large Produced by Whitehall, and directed by tunnels and we've got the answer ... advisers for the Crown. Heseltine Perhaps there's a Pot-holers Lobby we conveniently canvassing himself in Europe don't know about. What I want to know is while it was all going on ... Seems they're where's the Bus Travellers Lobby. Looks getting worried about the way Lech Walesa like the Attivan and Valium addicts might is carrying on in Poland, Bert. he's been be getting compensation from Wyeth and talking a bit like a dictator ... He's been Roche who supplied their drugs ... Can't doing that for some time. He suggested see that coming off, Daisy, there's too banning strikes many months ago. Well, he many alcoholics waiting for their chance to is a Roman Catholic, isn't he? ... They're put in a claim ... Who will they sue? ... worried about soon having millions Maybe the Department of Health for telling unemployed too ... They'll have a them it's safe to drink the stuff ... Why democracy like us then. They should be don't the Valium addicts sue the pleased ... It's ten weeks since Saddam Department of Health, then? ... The invaded Kuwait. Do you really think manufacturers are an easier target. And if there's going to be a war? ... I don't think they do have to pay out a bit of so, Daisy. Oil is what America is interested compensation, they only have to put up in, and a war could make supplies more their prices and carry on business as usual difficult. The Yanks aren't going to give up bashing about their silence over the Gulf ... That Jehovah Witness that called said he crisis ... What does he expect? Prime thinks this is it, Armageddon ... They said Ministers don't agree to the appointment of that in 1914 and in 1939, and again in the Bishops who go shouting their mouths off. '50s. They are people who have given up And don't forget, the Archbigot of Cant thinking because they can't figure out what himself said that goodness wasn't the same is going on. Governments are like football thing as Godliness ... Do you really think clubs. Prime Ministers, like football Terry Waite will have a go at the Bishops managers, are only public relations people, too when he gets back? ... He probably feels blown out of all proportion when the team like I do, that since they kept silent when is winning, and sacked when the team loses we were selling all those arms to Saddam, a few matches. It's the men who run they are in no position to talk about the governments and football clubs, and so the moral right of going to war with him. Did sacking, that matter ... Who are they then, they think Saddam was going grouse Bert? ... The big shareholders, of course, shooting? ... Anything in your paper today, the people with the money ... Is that what Bert? ... 91 AIDS deaths in October. Bet Lord Hankey was on about? ... You've got you Sun made a splash about that ... Didn't it, Daisy. Just in time for the bus. And don't see anything ... Funny, there were 147 go on at the driver for being late. He's not deaths last December, and that passed even the bloody manager ... without comment. There's something fishy going on, Daisy. How can they forecast

6 The most powerful men are not public anything on figures like that? ... Perhaps . Ted Heath gave the Bishops a bit of a rising in their cars just for the sake of a war

a house because there weren't any council houses left were adequately rewarded for their thriftlessness and lack of caution by being faced with massive rises in their mortgage repayments.

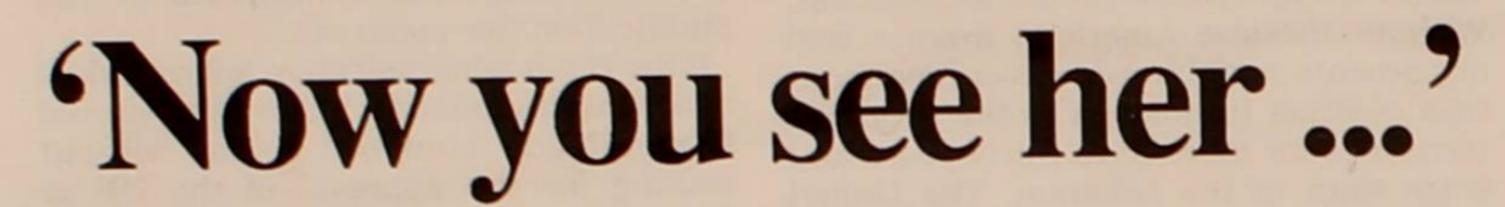
. She was astute enough to recognise that petty state officials are often more obviously oppressive to working class people than the most exploitative private company. She therefore consistentl mised to curb their power and remove the dead hand of bureaucracy. This promise earned her the unable to provide an effective service and an

the country needed. She was such a successful conviction politician that she was able to drive any other politicians with a grain of self-belief out of her Cabinet and convince many of the MPs who she had personally chosen that her own party would be better off without her.

8. She survived without being assassinated long enough for everyone with a grain of common sense o see through her. Thus she proved to the IRA and other potential terrorists the short-sightedness of attempting to assassinate politicians. By surviving for eleven years she developed such a distaste for herself and for the things she stands for that she had made it virtually impossible for any politician to become popular by peddling her own bitter brand of sour and selfish Conservatism. This is no small achievement

votes of large numbers of working class people who In short the record for Margaret Hilda Thatcher had never previously voted Conservative but had amounts to deceit, arrogance, robbing the poor and come to realise that the Labour Party had become cold-blooded murder. It says something for the the party which spoke up for and fostered this inept nature of the Labour Party and the emptiness bureaucracy. Her efforts to dismantle the of its political perspective that after eleven years of bureaucracy were sufficient to ensure that it was Thatcher a large number of British people are still horrified by the prospect of being 'looked after' by the alternative management. If we are to learn one lesson and one lesson only from the last eleven years it must be that the only version of socialism which will ever be popular with ordinary people is one which allows them to run their own lives free of state-run bureaucracies. The Labour Party has utterly failed to learn that lesson.

A.K. Brown



Tust a few days ago, Margaret Thatcher was apparently the most powerful person in the country - now, she is just another backbench MP. It has been said that in the space of her eleven-year reign she sacked, shuffled and sorted out all of her original Cabinet Ministers: now apparently, they have turned round and sacked her. How can it be that such a powerful person as Maggie can be disposed of like that? Another popular myth, that of Cabinet Rule, is similarly exposed by the continual Cabinet shuffles in that eleven-year span, a dramatic game of musical chairs which should cause anyone of an enquiring nature to want to know who is conducting the music, and what disposes them to stop the band playing in the middle of a tune. One clue to the dispelling of the myth of Prime Ministerial or Cabinet rule is the existence of Penguin £7.99 ever-present advisors. On her last trip to the Paris Security Summit, we were told that Maggie was | The novel is supposed to be the supremely accompanied by her (unelected) Private Secretary protestant and especially English art form. So for Overseas Affairs; Charles Powell. We were told it is a paradox that the most consistently also that upon her return she had a meeting with her accomplished serious English novelist of the advisors (unelected). But, of course, Ministers do present century should be a Roman Catholic not tell us that they have been advised to do this and advised to do that; they always say 'I have decided ...', to give the impression that they bear complete responsibility for those decisions. Thus they become the scapegoats when things do not work out and the real decision-makers boot them out, or shuffle them, and carry on running our lives as they but has been influenced by his Roman wish. Our faceless rulers used Maggie very Catholicism as it has developed. The principal successfully - trades unions, taxes, health service, education, poll tax, you name it — and now that between good and evil, which may be they find they have gone as far as they could without considered a Roman Catholic theme. Greene bringing the population out onto the streets, they are deals with it by identifying with the outsider, counting their evil gains and instituting a the hunted, the desperate. In my view this cooling-off period.

So, since prime ministers, including Maggie, are culture. not for turning, she had to be dumped.

Clearly it was the unelected Establishment who decided that Maggie's style could no longer serve a change in tactics necessitated by the uproar against the poll tax in particular, and other factors. Maggie could not possibly carry on without loss of face. So, while it was the advisors who signalled the band to stop playing, it was the Establishment who gave the command. This analysis and its conclusion is neither fantasy nor difficult to follow. The reason that it is more than their jobs are worth to do so. One TV hack told viewers that newspaper campaigns had played a great part in the downfall of Mrs Thatcher, and would greatly influence the choice of her successor. The same old hack also said that the Cabinet Press Secretary was in complete control of press handouts to the media. But he did not air the thought that the (unelected) Press Secretary tells the Minister what to do, and then speaks to the public through the media, as if he were the servant of the

Parliamentary process and not the servant of the Establishment.

I hold no brief for the violent politics of the IRA, but their policy of winning Parliamentary seats and not filling them is, arguably, the best way to get rid the biggest hoax ever foisted upon us.

EFC



The Life of Graham Greene, volume 1 1904-1939 by Norman Sherry

living in France.

Graham Greene converted to Catholicism in his twenties having had a specifically English and Anglican upbringing. I feel that his great talent as a novelist stems from this background theme of his work has been the conflict siding with the underdog is something he retains from his English background and

This opening volume of Norman Sherry's excellent biography of Graham Greene relates his early years. As a long-time admirer of his writing I found the book most interesting and informative. The severe depression of his youth which nearly drove him to suicide was a part of his life I knew about before reading this book but understood more fully after reading it. The account of his earliest years is most interesting, for which I am grateful as why media hacks fail to put it forward can only be many biographers neglect a subject's childhood. This section helps the reader to understand why it was possible for Catholic Greene to excel at the protestant art form. The account of youth and early adulthood are also of greatest interest and I looked forward, on finishing this volume, to the next volume and its account of Greene's years of maturity and high artistic achievement.

Peter Miller

On the Margin

(Time: the present. The exact date is under discussion)

Tramp: (in cardboard box, his home in the Strand) Now, let me see. It is either the first of December and a Saturday and the year is 1990 or it is the first of December, also a Saturday, but it is 1997. For next year it will be a Sunday and the year after a Monday, sufficient it is to say that seven years later it will be a Saturday again. Whereas seven years ago I was still a professor of mathematics at Padua University. Sic transit gloria mundi.

Journalist: (dapper fellow, latest technical model) Now, let me see. I'm not in London's historic Strand and I'm writing a feature for the Daily Flop on homelessness. Hello there, why are you in that cardboard box?

Tramp: I once tried living in one of your metal newspaper stands, but I found it very uncomfortable. There is a lot to be said for a metal-free, ecologically conscious cardboard box.

Journalist: There have been momentous changes recently. The world is agog to learn your opinions. Do you keep abreast of the news of the day?

Tramp: I have heard said that the earth is not flat and I tend to agree. For if it were, there would be no ups and downs. There would still be a top and a bottom, more like a sheet of film so thin that it would not interfere with the abstract existence of bodily forms moving in and out of the interstices.

Journalist: The esteemed readers of the Daily

Flop would want a plainer answer. What I meant to ask was, what if any changes are envisaged by those fortunate to live in cardboard boxes in the Strand by the change of inhabitants of certain rooms in nearby Downing Street? If you had the chance, would you exchange your cardboard box for an elegant suite in Downing Street?

Tramp: Three meals a day?

Journalist: And a packet of chewing gum every Saturday.

Tramp: Done. Is this on the level?

Journalist: Just like the earth is flat. But to continue, what should happen in the Gulf?

Tramp: Now that is a question very near to my heart. This is really a question I like to hear. What's the Gulf?

Journalist: I see. You hold with Wittgenstein that what we do not know, we do not speak of. Surely you have an opinion?

Tramp: I tell you what should happen in the Gulf. I think those people should get the first ticket out and go.

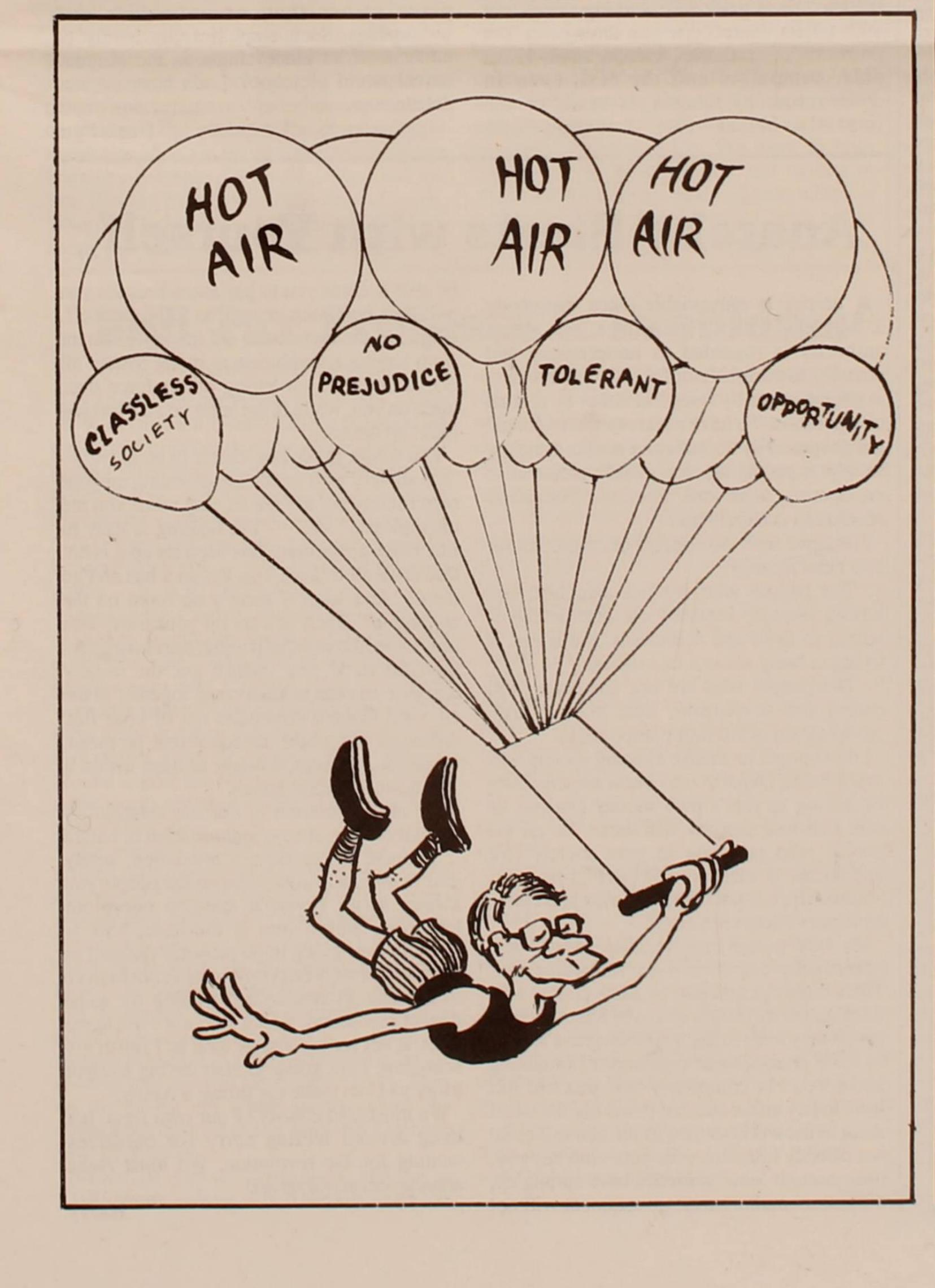
Journalist: Go where?

Tramp:Not so much where, but fast. That's my personal opinion mind you, I cannot speak for those who mouths are full of sand.

Journalist: Aha, you old rogue, you are an impostor.

Tramp: All right then. You can quote me what I think about the world political situation. I have come to the reluctant conclusion that

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FEATURES

Newsvendor: Read all about it. The Daily Flop. Sensational interview. Homeless tramp tells all.

Tramp: That was quick. The wonders of modern science never fail to amaze me. Unless of course there is a mistake. Tell me, newsvendor, what is the date of the paper.

Newsvendor: It's Saturday, 1st December. Afraid I can't tell you what year. It's an official secret. I can reveal it to you however that it could be 1983.

Tramp: Not just 1983, but also 2004 and every seven years after.

Newsvendor: That is debatable. For we don't know yet whether we shall lose a day or not in month of Mondays, I'm his man. the year 2000, in which case the next Saturday which will be a 1st December will come either in 2003 or 2004.

living in a cardboard box in the Strand is the **Tramp:** That's it, my friend. The dangers of best that the combined efforts of all society can mathematical uncertainties reduced me to this afford me. On the one hand I'm the citizen of low level existence. I who was once the this great metropolis and on the other hand I'm revered professor of mathematics at Padua a dispossessed peasant. I've everything and University, reduced to poverty, to being a I've nothing. I sit here and watch the world go mere tramp, by simple changes in the calendar. December 1st 1983, Saturday, rich. December 1st 1990, poor. Because of some unfathomable trick of mathematics.

> Journalist: Do not fret unduly, the present incumbent of 10 Downing Street has also, according to the Daily Flop, failed a simple test of arithmetic when he applied for the prestigious job of a conductor of a London omnibus. And thus he became Chancellor of the Exchequer instead.

Newsvendor: Bring back the man who could work these problems out with matchsticks. Watched by his Cabinet colleagues in awe.

Tramp: Tell the present incumbent that if he ever wants any tips on how to calculate the possibility of a month of Sundays following a

John Rety

Rambling Notes

Redlands Wood in Surrey we did feel at risk. The path gradually narrowed, finally ending in impenetrable bramble beneath which we found the remains of a wooden noticeboard lying face down on the ground. When deciphered, its message read Ordnance Survey map later confirmed this. We did not linger, nor search for any victims in the undergrowth.

Further north they arrange things differently. In the Peak District National Park, access agreements allow landowners to close the moors to walkers for up to twelve shooting days a year, provided these are publicised well in advance. This protects innocent walkers, and the grouse fortunately cannot read. This year, however, for fear that saboteurs would interfere with their pleasure, they decided to keep their shooting days secret and the walker would take his or her chance along with the grouse. Then they had a better idea - to persuade the Peak Park Board to close the moors altogether in August, except of course for the sportsmen, claiming that there was a fire risk. That would keep out protested and the ban was lifted.

Of course the main danger to walkers in the National Park often comes from the MoD who insist on using land in the parks for live firing practice for their tanks and upset about the noise. artillery; they also claim they are protecting rare plant species. Exactly how much land they are using is not disclosed but it includes 15% of Dartmoor and 22% of the the Peak District and the Pembrokeshire coast

A study by Dr Susan Owens published last May entitled Military Live Firing in National Parks had been commissioned from the UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development by the Protection of Rural England, Dartmoor Preservation Association, Open Spaces Society and Ramblers Association. It concluded, perhaps not surprisingly, that live firing and should give up some of it, starting with land they used in National Parks. It also suggested that they should pay for what they still used and their claimed needs be subject to public scrutiny. Chris Patten, who was then you will remember Environment Secretary, even

Not much chance of being shot at on a less surprisingly did not see things that way Country walk in England, you might at all and promptly proceeded to approve think, yet on a recent walk through an MoD application to rebuild Willsworthy barracks in Dartmoor National Park. This will house soldiers who will be using for their war games land on licence from the Duchy of Cornwall, due for renewal in 1991. So their landlord is the environmentally conscious conservationist 'DANGER rifle range' and a glance at the Charles who promised in 1985 seriously to consider whether live firing should be allowed to continue after 1991. He didn't, so was he leaned on and, if so, by whom?

> This is all going to get worse when the British army of the Rhine no longer has the North German plain to practise on and the tanks and fifty four thousand troops come home. The MoD is quietly buying up another 50,000 acres and may have its eyes on your backyard. We can expect to see more signs saying 'Battle area, no access' like the one on Thetford Heath. Perhaps they could stay permanently in a Middle East desert, but that would be unfair to the Bedouins.

And have you heard about the new German village of Fibua in the Wiltshire countryside? The Germans refused to have it and the proposed site here was moved 200 yards across a local council boundary both walkers and saboteurs. The public so that planning permission could be obtained without a public enquiry. FIBUA stands for Fighting in Built Up Areas, and that is just what the army are using it for. The villagers of nearby Chitterne are very

Finally, not a matter of live firing but an assault on the senses and a desecration of the countryside to boot. Soldiers (officers really) of the King's Own Border Regiment Northumberland parks as well as some of proposed to use stones to mark out on the ground a giant replica (195 feet by 130 feet) of their regimental badge, and this on a wild, open stretch of common land overlooking the M6 motorway near the Lake District. The idea was approved with acclaim by the local Tebay Parish Council. This is not surprising as the good burghers Council for National Parks, Council for of Tebay have been happy over the years to keep unemployment down by encouraging the local lads to join the regiment and have no doubt subscribed generously for a new war memorial whenever needed. However the military were using too much land for the regiment has now abandoned its plan, due apparently to the public protests; or was it because they realised how easily a few comrades, as a festive season gesture, could have rearranged the stones one night to create an enormous letter A.

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If our God does exist, the last place we would expect to find him is in his church. The same observation could be made about every industrial institution. What has employment done to work? And you don't have to be an Illich or a Riemer to know that the last place you would expect to learn something useful is in school.

But there was Auntie, through Peter Sissons, conducting 'The Great Education Debate' on television. It ought to have been a wake or a alive. search for alternatives to schooling to justify the billing. Evidently the big issue is falling standards. The interested parties, as the BBC saw them, were policy-makers, parents and come of the debate. In truth each one of us is at some time or another policy-maker, parent, teacher and pupil. Compulsory schooling and its monopoly over learning and upbringing creates this kind of divisive nonsense.

I am reminded of the jungle dweller who on being introduced to Christianity observed else. 'your God must be old and sick because he never comes out of his house'. His own deity,

trees, flora and fauna, the skies, the rain, the sun, etc. The God of Skool has long passed away but only the kids seem to know it. They were not at the great debate because they couldn't be counted on to pretend that he's still

So, predictably, the three parties got stuck into each other over the failings of education. The parents blamed the teachers for their permissiveness and abandoning the teachers, with a few experts thrown in. The rote-learning and the 3Rs. The teachers turned pupils were conspicuously absent. You don't on the parents for dumping unruly, allow prisoners to discuss the efficacy and disinterested kids on them and attacked the conditions of their prison unless they have the policy-makers for inadequate resourcing and political clout of the H Block residents of the the intolerable stress of keeping classroom Maze. The setting up of entrenched, interested control. The Labour rep promised more funds parties as protagonists is typical of how the for schools and to abolish leaking roofs. The BBC does its 'neutral' bit for the junior ministers waffled on about excellence establishment. It ensures that nothing can and competition as though each could be delivered with the drop of the word. The man from the supermarkets, those magnificent providers of dignified and meaningful work, wanted us to be more like the Germans and the Japs. The great debate was a farce — because skool is a farce, it couldn't have been anything

You have to agree there's a bit of justice in the air when a system geared wholly to control he said, was virile and pervasive - in the actually begins to get out of control itself. The

On the Nature of Anarchist Organisation

nonald Rooum and I seem to be covering some anarchist organisation (22nd September, 20th well worth extending.

After revolutions, it is not just anarchist aspiring power elites, who easily step into the potential we observe in collective action. This autonomous groups, their fragmentation and logic. sectarian behaviour will ensure a lack of influence. isolated, conflictual and impoverished. We already know that popular, mass uprisings can potentially see no evidence that autonomous groups could

a) be sufficiently numerous to have real effect, and and our own practice to see how that happens counter domination.

on real events — whereas history tells us that mass what was said about delegate conferences also emotional commitment and collective desires to applies when autonomous groups need t make change does get us halfway there.

nonald Rooum is surely correct to highlight the before or since that time. I agree that the structural that effort. But we have to look ahead). autonomous ones just as much as large connected autonomous anarchist groups weren't desirable Accordingly, the views expressed in the pamphlet event of having any major influence - people will unchanged to any future situation.

acknowledges and makes use of the fact that our relative independence is inevitably part of a wider

on replacing people by machines. The pursuit of environmental mastery, the idea of reality. No amount of yearning for individual knowing and controlling it all, is destructive rational control can mask our embeddedness i nonsense. The mass production of fantasy by society. Our effort at unity is motivated by the media is no substitute for an inner life. combination of desire and knowledge. We express On another front the message of press, important issues regarding the nature of our deeply-felt solidarity with others of the oppressed and share the collective desire for things television, radio and every high tech advance October, 3rd November) - I think the sequence is to be different. This includes the feeling, amply is clear. Hard graft and working things out reinforced in experience, that together, united, we with others doesn't get you anywhere. The immutables. Such emphases can hardly be are much more than the sum of our isolated parts. profusion of textbooks, videos, audio-visual sentiments that are overcome by authoritarianism Our awareness of this extra dimension of unity is aids, computers and the rest, even in or fatal compromises - the majority of people the basis of activity - without it there would just under-resourced schools, is based on the without vested interests in those outcomes are the be lone heroic voices in the wilderness and no hope implicit belief that knowing and casualties. When there is no visible and coherent of a better world. But we also know that these anarchist movement, the libertarian sentiments that feelings and desires are not enough (although they do exist remain at the level of very basic, vague, are necessary) - and we derive our ideas of what generalised yearnings. These are no match at all for might work to fill the gap from the libertarian tactical vacuum, not least by promising 'authority' potential is difficult to bring to fruition in the face (in the sense that society can become functional of contrary forces, but retreating from it in fear is again). When anarchists are only organised in small much worse, leaving nothing but our immaculate

authority is regarded as unnecessary and Autonomy in this sense readily means separate, To return to Donald's 3rd November piece: we actually downright harmful and where society want to develop a practice of organisation that is not governed by force but rather by mutual can grow and influence mass movements without co-operation. To have a society where people topple the state and capitalism. We need to think falling prey to elitism. Party organisations always about how to influence what happens next - and I do divide into leaders and passive members, which are governed by no authority means a society is why we take great pains to analyse past events in which people are completely prepared to co-operate with one another. Therefore b) present adequate realistic ideas and practices to anarchist non-parties, so as to learn from experience revolution is clearly out. and avoid it. But we also believe that the collective I disagree with the concept of revolution for A faith in the possible efficacy of rationality and origins of libertarian practices, wherever these two main reasons: human progress never seems to have much bearing occur, are the baby, not the bathwater. For example, . The people who are not anarchists are having anarchy imposed on them which is wrong in itself and a contradiction if one is co-ordinate wider activity. The point is that unless there is a deeper sense of unity among the trying to bring about a free society. autonomous groups (i.e. more than a shared | 2. The people who are not anarchists will I shortcomings of the 1930s Spanish CNT, as I intellectual focus), little of substance will emerge resent the revolution, thus making true did. But his points do not explain other examples of (although in hard times the movement may be kept | co-operation in the future impossible. organisational failure in revolutionary situations alive this way - and I certainly am not denigrating I do not seek to change existing society, nor

to abolish it; I wish to start a new society. Only will be an anarchist haven. tendencies towards elitism in groups (small Three conclusions. Firstly, I never said that by setting up one's own society can one be For me, revolution is not the solution sure that true anarchy will ensue for all the revolutions are always authoritarian in nature ones) urgently need attention. The ACF is not I think they are. Secondly, if these groups are all people who join you in your society (for ... I mean, if you have a revolution, surely content with previous solutions to these problems. there are, they will be more elitist, not less, in the example, a commune), are doing so you're imposing your ideas on the people you voluntarily, it is not being imposed upon them sweep away (even if they're complete The Role of the Revolutionary Organisation (and identify those who 'write the big books' rather than by some violent revolution. elsewhere) go beyond previous libertarian the movement as a whole and its ideas. We are bastards), and if that is the case, how is My view means that in reality anarchy will communist formulations, and will doubtless be talking of the large numbers of non-anarchists, not anarchy ever going to be properly realised as developed further. We do not see our present ideas the movement's internal status hierarchy! The never really be nation-wide. But who cares? there will always be people who do not believe There's always going to be some people who as either the best possible view, or applicable Spanish public's perceptions of CNT leaders in anarchy. Preaching and waiting for some helped propel them into 'office', while the think authority is right and to be honest I don't distant revolution, which I do not even agree Perhaps the main difference between Donald and movement had prepared no counter to this. Thirdly, care if they want to dig their own grave and rot with, is not for me and as soon as I finish my I is the significance attached to 'autonomy'. The the idea of autonomous groups and the idea of mass in it. Of course, these communes I'm talking schooling I am going to start saving straight ACF is a federation of autonomous local groups and organisation are not necessarily contradictory about won't be completely free, you will still away so I can make my dream a reality. individuals - can't be the same 'autonomy', can particular forms are. I see the same dangers as have to pay taxes, etc., but this is not the worst We must take control of our own lives, not it? Our intention to move towards (but, of course, Donald Rooum, but I won't turn possibilities into thing in the world as long as the authorities do hang around feeling sorry for ourselves never totally achieve) practical and theoretical unity certainties, or sacrifice collective (risky) desires for not directly interfere with you. And anyway, waiting for the revolution. We must make doesn't undermine our autonomy, but the sake of an illusory (reified) vision of separate once enough 'new' societies have sprung up, anarchy occur ourselves. autonomous security. the central authoritarian government will not Tom Jennings Harry

ANARCHISM — EDUCATION SKOOL IS STILL DEAD

parents castigated the powerless teachers as though they could do something about of them were bandied about as though they'd robots. Nobody cared to look into the matter? Is it good or bad? The decline experience, schooling is a dead loss for the kids. Then along comes this national curriculum, a sort of compulsory sheep-dip, to remind teachers of their enslavement and the kids what schooling is about. The 'one best way' to standards of proficiency ignores the dictum that standards are a refuge for the mediocre. But then the State wants above all else mediocre, disciplined, unthinking consumers.

If newer teaching philosophies seem to legitimise the reluctance of many teachers to engage in the rote aspects of indoctrination, they also signal the demise of the industrial myth. There just isn't 'one best way'. Rational thinking is not the only way of making sense of experience. We can't dismiss the unprogrammeable as irrelevant. You can't go

understanding can be made easy, at the press of the proverbial button. Illusion is enough. If teaching the kids better. Resources of the lack you've got the symbols who needs the real thing? Resourcefulness and ingenuity which make any difference. Just give every child a must always precede the discovery and desk computer and I'll give you a nation of deployment of resources now count for nought. Hardly surprising is it that the Pandora's box of declining proficiency in obsession with resources grows as our reading, writing and arithmetic. Does it collective ingenuity declines, another sign of the bankruptcy of western civilisation? Just as coincides with school life becoming play and spontaneous activities provide the unbearable for more and more teachers. With risk of discovery and learning and therefore the disappearance of the last vestiges of can have no place in schooling, so imagination spontaneity and play from the student's and ingenuity are the least of the attributes the State wants to see in the citizens. A national curriculum will surely inoculate us against these dangerous diseases.

> School can't solve any of our most pressing problems because it is part of the problem. The opportunities of parents, friends and neighbourhoods to regain responsibility for bringing up their kids grow with the demise of both school and the industrial myth. The social dislocation now being experienced throughout the planet and the ecological -disasters brought on by the excesses of industrialisation point above all to deficiencies in the western way of structured experience. As Freedom is always saying, we must change the way we think. The thinking associated with an emerging oral culture (in which literacy and numeracy play a less central part and which is most surely already undermining the authority of school) stresses the relational rather than the independent, the underlying similarities of experience rather than the superficial differences, the diversity of answers rather than the one and the relevance of action and solution to time and place rather than as universals and understood let alone taught in the abstract, unreal world of school. Let's have the real debate now.

> > Denis Pym

Anarchy Starts with Yourself

narchy is only viable when everybody A agrees with its principles, i.e. where

be able to force you to pay taxes because you will then be strong enough to fight them off. (Fighting the authorities off is very different from having a revolution as in the former all one is doing is not letting others force their ideas on you, while in the latter you are forcing ideas on others.)

You might think this vision to be naive — 'It's all very well to talk about setting up your own society but it's not so easy when you are unemployed', etc. - but nothing is easy in life. Once a commune has been set up it is not that difficult to join. You get on a bus and go there! 'And what if there's no room on the commune?' Then you set up your own! You find some like-minded people, start saving and then do it. If you cannot get the money together you can at least come together in the city and make a commune out of your flat. Although the world outside might be mean, capitalist and authoritarian, at least inside it

A s part of his leadership campaign, John A Major declared that he wanted to bring about a 'classless society'. This brought an immediate response from me along the lines: 'So what are you going to do, you stupid git, expropriate all the wealth from your capitalist friends, give away all your own money and recognise where their interests lay; in other 'individuals and families'.

'social class' that matters is your social status, Major is claiming that because minority inevitable, and therefore background feature of the social environment, it ought to be less important to the public consciousness than any criteria suggested by the Tories.

Of course, if Thatcher and Major are to their shared (class) interests, it is only proselytisers for the Revolutionary because class consciousness is so low already. But things can change, of course. Thatcher's of all those Marxists out to sell their papers. individualist message of 'I'm all right Jack, They depict world events as being directed by because, after all, society doesn't exist' was forces invisible to all (even to other non-RCP lip-service at least to elements of the post-war 'consensus'. In effect, a morality based on individualist-morality (or, rather, that Nietzschean individual-amorality) of hard-line Thatcherism.

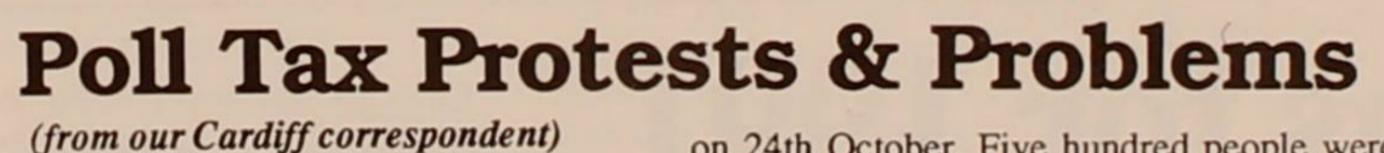
society can occur so too can changes in of a *class*. The problem for class struggle revolutionaries is *not* the notorious fuzzy boundary between the working class and the rest; this has existed since the time of Marx. When the bulk of the class becomes a class acting for itself, those on the margins will

The Poll Tax Struggle: its relation to anarchist theory

make the means of production communally words, we may sometimes find the working owned?' Not many years ago, certain Tory class hard to pinpoint now, but when it comes MPs were claiming that Britain was already a to the crunch, they will know who they are: 'classless society'; they tried to make us they are those who do not own the means of believe that 'we're all middle class now'. production and who therefore have to work (or Analogously, Thatcher once claimed that claim benefits, etc.) to live. No, the problem, 'society does not exist'; there being only as I see it, is relating a class struggle theory of anarchism to the conscious needs and Such Newspeak would be laughable were it demands of working class people here and not so dangerous. We know that Major is not now. The same difficulties apply to non-class referring to ownership of property as the struggle anarchists who claim that anarchism the working class / 'the public' have criterion for class; this is the point. By is in 'everyone's best interest', but who meet intellectually digested huge amounts of implying that the only meaning of the term with non-adherents who are not well off under capitalism and the state but who nevertheless retort 'Well, I've heard all your best Britain). ownership of significant wealth is an arguments and I'd still rather live under some form of the state'.

I will characterise attempts to meet this challenge of connecting abstract theory to social reality with two extreme examples which are unsuccessful for similar reasons. In successful in their attempt to blind the public the shopping precincts and on the campuses, Communist Party (RCP) are the least popular received well ten years ago; but the 'welfare Marxists) but themselves. So, for example, the state backlash' has forced the Tories to Gulf crisis is about 'more than oil'. In effect, back-pedal to some degree and show the the operation of these invisible forces makes 'caring face of capitalism' by paying the conscious intentions of both national leaders and their opponents in non-RCP protest and revolutionary groups irrelevant in society as the unit of analysis is regaining its the long term. There is almost a religious toe-hold at the expense of the quality about all this - become a convert, see the light, prepare for the predicted millennium by converting others to the faith.

But within anarchism there are also those I believe that if changes in people's who are quietly contemptuous of popula common with the RCP in other respects, they | local government. people's perception of themselves as members are united by seeing the anti poll tax revolt as not relevant to their notions of social and | London borough played what it believed to be a economic transformation. We have in both | clever game, and it was lucky enough to escape cases a set of principles that are written in more punitive measures of the sort which were stone and an 'I know best' attitude which is meted out to such London boroughs as Southwark insensitive to the popular mood. Both fail to recognise the fact that the agenda for the



TTTT Thile Thatcher retires to her new house V in Dulwich, over 200 sleep rough on the with a 30,000 name petition, when the counci streets of Cardiff each night. Their chances of decided to axe the school meals provision. getting affordable housing declines over the NUPE are to ballot their members on strike last month as over 200 people were placed on action to save the 850 jobs. the council's rehousing list — now numbering 5,241. Over the last ten years the council's housing stock fell — due to the 'right' to buy policy — by 6,327 to 18,473.

Meanwhile Cardiff council are going to desperate lengths to improve their poll tax collection rate. They are now chasing up people who left Cardiff long ago. One woman's parents have informed the council three times that their daughter had left Cardiff; number of services available to the ordinary this didn't stop the council from sending around a poll tax officer (who was told the with their savings made from the old rates same story) and then threatening the woman with a court date.

The council is still chasing after £20.6 million (just under half the total) from Cardiff non-payers, despite taking 15,000 to court Businesses still owe the council £15.9 million (33% of the total) yet how many businesses have been dragged before the courts recently?

In Somerset, the Tory-controlled county council are considering £5 million cuts in the attack of 20th October! Once again, Militant education budget to keep poll tax bills for the side with the authorities in blaming the victims council has decided to axe, cutting 850 jobs to save £1 million.

News of these proposals led to a join the Militant Tendency! 5,000-strong protest march through Taunton

on 24th October. Five hundred people were also outside the council chambers on the 28th.

Gloucestershire county council are at present considering cuts of £3 million in an attempt to avoid capping. The axe will fall mainly on social services (used mainly by the poorer members of the community). The Tory group say the cuts are not deep enough and wants cuts of £6 million!

Thus the poll tax is having one of its intended effects, of drastically reducing the quality and members of the community. The richer -

the rest!

'leadership' of the All Britain Federation, health, lawyers, building control, engineers, recently and obtaining 12,000 liability orders. Messrs Wally, Sheridan and Reynolds, have issued a letter (presented to the recent All Britain Conference) effectively blaming the Trafalgar Square Defence Campaign and 'anarchist groups' for the Brixton police coming year down to 'acceptable' levels. First for their being attacked by the police. It's time on the hit-list are school meals, which the the blame was placed firmly where it belongs

— on the police (and those directing them) and their Militant apologists. Help the police -

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POLL TAX & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

revolution is not to be set by a small group of long-time anarchists or Marxists alone without regard for what is actually happening.

This is not meant to argue that we should jump on any bandwagon that looks a bit rebellious, for anarchism is not simply rebellion. But the discriminating revolutionary must surely be able to recognise a protest movement with potential. This is impossible if:

1. The revolutionary believes that only when dogma can they have any real revolutionary potential (cf. the Socialist Party of Great

2. The revolutionary dismisses any agenda not wholly consonant with the explicit principles of his/her organisation/movement.

Both entail an arrogant lack of faith in the working class / 'general public' themselves and in any of their initiatives. The successful revolutionary surely requires humility and flexibility.

I don't claim to have all the answers to relating theory to actuality. I simply recognise the fact that the continuing rebellion against the poll tax has been and remains the most important opportunity for the ideas and practices of anarchism that I have witnessed since I got into anarchism twelve years ago. Throughout the poll tax struggle, the importance of the solidarity of the community, of workplace and community organisation and of autonomous *federal* organisation have become salient throughout the working class, not just in certain regions or occupational groups; more than any time in the last ten years, perhaps, the employed, the unemployed and the retired have been united by a common aim — to defeat the poll tax. All this stemmed from a Tory attempt, by introducing a non-property-based tax, further to gloss over conflicting class interests, and to blind us with Newspeak (e.g. 'we all benefit from services; we should all pay something; therefore it's an equalising tax'). The Tories real mistake was to underestimate the sense and the guts of the general public / the working class; I only hope that anarchists don't make the same mistake. Johnny Yen

Local Government in a State of Collapse

Tounslow, Middlesex, used to have a middle of the road Labour administration which cleverly steered clear of head-on collision with the Tory government. It still had its own share of token NALGO protests sparked off by the national uproar when Thatcher bludgeoned local government. When it came to selling the housing stock to tenants, Hounslow successfully dragged its heels by putting only one clerk on the job of processing the mountain perception of themselves as members of a movements. Although they may have little in of applications. By that time the skids were under

Together with other Labour councils, this West and Tower Hamlets. Hounslow survived, perhaps because it was so close to Heathrow Airport with thousands of acres of factory and warehouse space, all of which yielded fat pickings as far as rate revenues were concerned.

The chickens are now coming home to roost. Already, many employees have left Hounslow council, disheartened by clever-clever policies and the habit — shared by a lot of Labour councils all over the country — of limping along with Tory policies and hoping for the best. A three-year housing maintenance contract has been awarded to a private company. The council's own maintenance department lost out so heavily that 53 workers were made redundant. The lucrative contract was awarded to an outside firm by three council officers. None of them are NALGO members.

Hounslow is certainly ailing. The Civic Centre, built in the 1970s, is now suffering from 'Sick Building Syndrome' due to its closed-system air conditioning which causes respiratory and other ailments, resulting in long staff absences.

People with long service records are now leaving local authority jobs in large numbers all over the country. This has gained impetus since 1987, when 74% of all authorities had growing recruitment problems. By 1988 vacancies were running at can then escape the worst effects by going between 10% and 20%. Today in the south-east the private. One law for the rich — bugger all for figure is put as high as 25%. The main shortages are in such areas as social workers, accountants, History's repeating itself again. The Militant | computer staff, trading standards, environmental architects and planners.

> Deople who seek work inside local government are now disillusioned, conscious of central government intervention at every turn. It does not take long for the thinking newcomer to reach the conclusion that something is badly wrong. Among social workers in 1988 the turnover rate was 15%. In the administrative, professional, technical and clerical staff classes it hit 20%.

Part of the general meltdown of local government is due to low pay. Council of Europe salary thresholds are not even reached in 22% of general **EM** administrative staff salaries. Some of them are now

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so badly paid that they are potential Department of Social Security claimants.

Southwark, another London borough, has hit a new low in which the housing offices are usually closed, and they do not even have enough social workers to handle cases of child abuse. Not far away, Wandsworth now has to use agency staff to keep the residential and day centres going.

All this has led to a new trend. Some local authorities are ignoring national pay scales, and are introducing higher salaries in an effort to improve recruitment. About 70 authorities have already taken the step, but are unsure whether the poll tax revenues will meet increased staff costs. About 60% of the authorities in the south-east are planning to follow suit. This heralds yet another confrontation with a government which will certainly disapprove and probably cut grants.

ocal authorities are now failing fast, due Lentirely to the way in which the Tory government has pursued a policy of gradual extermination. Finance and the desperate measures which money can create are the poison in the roots. Ten years ago the local voice was strong. When Thatcher announced a relaxation of central government and the presentation of 'choice' to the electorate, the blatant lie was promptly demonstrated with the introduction of rate capping.

Many local authorities promptly started to play the investment game, using contingency funds and even borrowing in order to make a fast buck in world markets. In Hounslow Labour politicians banned South African investments on principle, and the catering department promptly steamed the damning labels off tins of pears from Durban. Banks and investment houses crowded in, sensing fat commissions on deals. The Labour bride hopped into bed with the Tory bridegroom. Then the government burst in, penalising any gains, and finally declaring the investment game illegal.

Thwarted local authorities then invested in building societies and other innocuous organisations and institutions. While this was safe and respectable, it did not provoke central government. The snag was that the returns turned out to be so low that cuts had to be made not only in the provision of services but also in house building programmes and other essential provisions for the community.

Today's crisis is the natural outcome. Local authorities are now in the game of finding the cheapest outside contractors with a consequent lowering of services and standards.

What all this demonstrates is the futility of power on both the local and central government sides. We are now likely to see a complete reformation of the local government system and, perhaps, the gradual emergence of much smaller and more parochial administrations, kept barely alive by central government funding and an uncertain poll tax.

B. Abbott

REPORTS & READERS' SUGGESTIONS

History Workshop 24 **Glasgow College**,

17-18th November 1990

The Workshop looked really good on paper. Glasgow College is right next to both the main railway station and coach station, in the city centre. Book stalls, creche and college catering facilities were promised.

The grim reality: no food, no hot drinks at all, just worst of all, absolutely no heating, anywhere.

But the bookstalls were excellent, with the anarchist publications making a good showing. The Workshop was organised into eight strands,

one of those being 'Anarchism', while the others papers which sounded very interesting, but you new wielder of authority. have to choose just one for each time slot.

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In the 'Anarchism' strand, Heiner Becker started off by giving some biographical details of one of Nettlau, along with some quotations from his

to why he is so disregarded as a writer in Britain, with some illuminating asides as to various arguments with Vernon Richards.

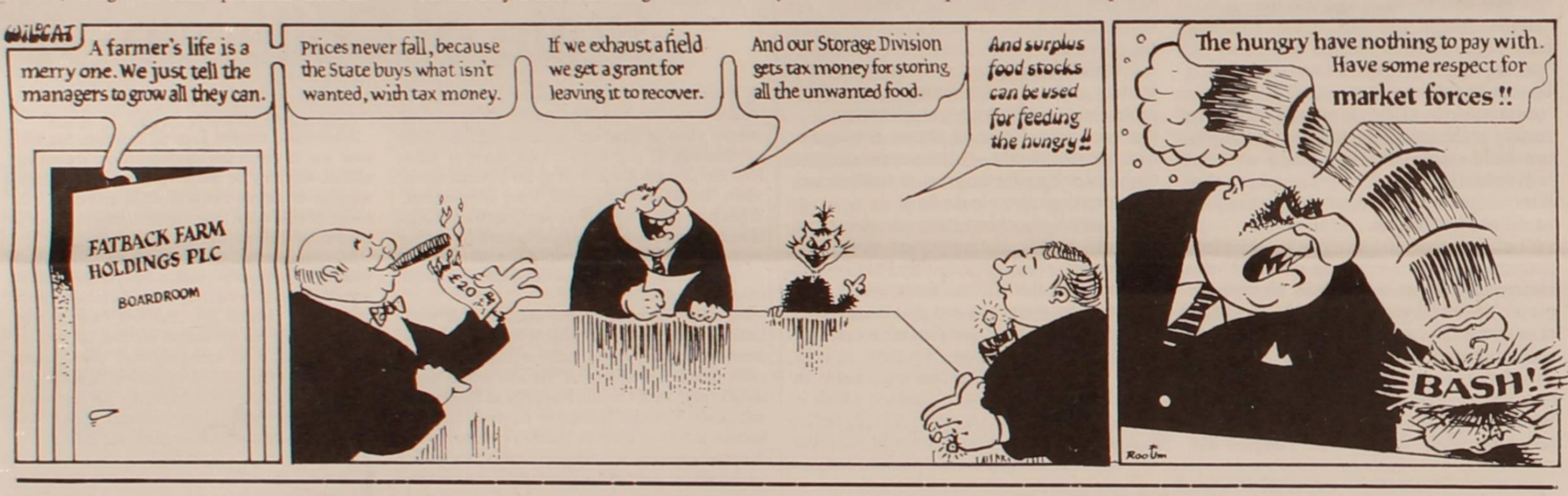
'Japanese Anarchism between the Wars' by John back-to-the-land and work-for-all schemes, he was Crump (I didn't attend this paper, so I'm quoting famous as an orator from 1901 to 1914. directly from the programme). "Most textbooks 'Glasgow: City of Oppositional Culture' by give Japanese anarchism a premature burial in Karen Goaman (a Londoner). This paper looks at 1923, when Osugi Sakae was murdered. In fact, oppositional currents, particularly publications, Japanese anarchism survived as a mass movement into the 1930s. This paper focuses on its 'pure anarchist' mainstream in the 1920s/30s."

Sharif Gemie made several interesting points in his 'Anarchist Analyses of the State'. He looked at how 'state' means different things to different groups of people, to historians, to anarchists, and to political sociologists. He discussed why the concept cans of soft drinks. They did organise sandwiches of state is so amorphous, and considered various for lunch, eventually. No creche at all. Perhaps views of the state, from Godwin, through Proudhon seen to have failed to some extent, in the eyes of recently in Freedom. feminists, among others.

In principle, the members agree with the idea The last of Saturday's papers was given by John of having an anarchist gathering based on the Quail. He looked at how there has been an insidious | club, probably sometime early next summer, were 'The Repackaging of Glasgow', 'Conflict and rise of power at managerial level, to the detriment and are keen to offer the club as a venue. There Class', 'Religion and Sectarianism in the West of of the workers. He has spent some time researching are a few problems to be ironed out, such as Scotland', 'Technology', 'Work and Labour', into the analysis of power structure in British membership (as they hold a club licence for 'Women's History', 'People's Health and Housing industry, and noting how the power base has the bars) and insurance if people wanted to kip Struggles' and 'Working Class Culture and changed, to such an extent that he has come to the there overnight, but in principle they are very Education'. As usual with these workshops, one of very reluctant conclusion that it's all up for the willing to play hosts and would like to have the main problems was that there were quite a few workers. Institutional power is now seen to be the some idea of how many people would like to attend for a weekend meeting and The discussions held after the talks were often as get-together.

interesting as the talks themselves.

The Sunday programme I have to quote, as the



More Illustrations

Dear editors,

As much as I enjoy my monthly visit to Angel Alley to buy my copies of Freedom, I am beginning to be tired of the style and layout (of the magazine, not the alley). What is Dear editors, in a while a little bit boring.

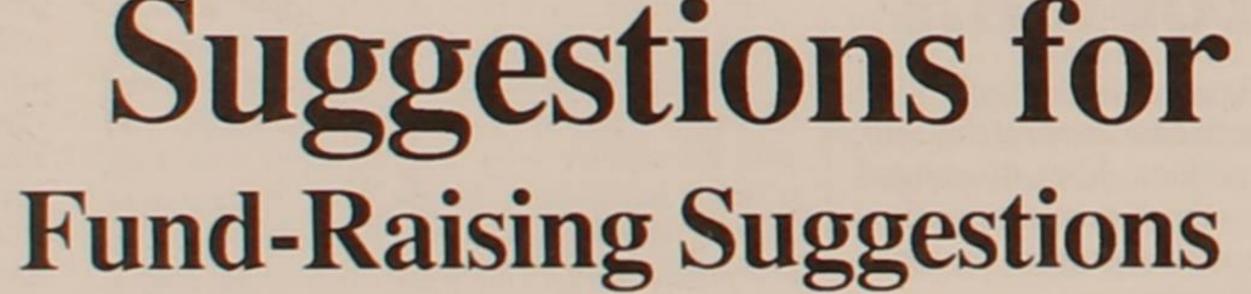
lacking are photographs!

even better.

anarchist is to provide antidotes to call a Sustainers Program - does this very effectively, and even buy tapes of lectures or conference the dominant cultural imagery of the supporters who pledge a fixed has regional fund-raisers - but then sessions - even short courses on advertising hoarding. Sound amount from year to year, payable the US is a big country. photographs do this very nicely and either monthly or in one lump sum at 3. Grants from liberal or progressive would cost you very little to produce what could be more anarchic than a the beginning of each year. foundations of various kinds, like and/or duplicate. Some obvious good collage turning capitalist Advantages (I believe) are that it gets Acorn, Resist and Peoples Fund, in examples would be sessions from the Dear comrades, magazine images into something of bigger total amounts in, even from the UK? A group of us ran anarchist 'strand' of the History How about publishing a selection of our own?

my thing, but at least let's open the subset of your income steady, years). For example, I was surprised the London Anarchist Forum, capitalists/Christians have a debate.

VISION.



and/or The Raven in any ways other Baltimore).

1. Many alternative press rousing political speeches and/or access to regular anarchist speakers, Freedom suffer from this lack of ways, e.g. getting it into local special issue. bookshops/libraries. Some 4. Finally, although I don't know any Tyrone Shoelaces publications even have sustainers' paper that uses this as a fund-raising SW London newsletters, mostly, as far as I can device, I've often thought you could

Marcher, and ran Farm Colonies for the unemployed. An enthusiastic supporter of identity.

1 in 12 Club

Thave received a letter from the 1 in 12 Club in Bradford apropros the possibility of to the present day, suggesting why anarchism is holding a National Conference, as suggested

Unfortunately, the 1 in 12 Club - which will the foremost German writers on anarchism, Max poor facilities meant I only attended on Saturday. be ten years old next April - is in dire 'Stewart Gray: leader of the Hunger Marchers and financial straits at present, and to compound

works. There was a lot of discussion afterwards as Christian Teacher 1862-1937' by Alison Weir. centred mainly in contemporary Glasgow, and Alexander Stewart Gray, an Edinburgh lawyer, left situates these amongst anti-authoritarian currents in Scotland in 1901, became the original Hunger Britain (and North America). It raises such issues as the communication of ideas, historification and

> It's good to see anarchism being given a strand to itself in this kind of workshop — the same will be true next year, when it is to be held in Oxford. well worth going to, despite the cold.

Zeb Korycinska

the problems has recently had its PA system ripped off. Although the club hopes to host a women's weekend in March and would be delighted to have a national anarchist conference there, its future unfortunately seems to be uncertain. The club might even have to close temporarily (or even permanently) due to fiscal problems.

It would be tragic if we were to lose this wonderful and centrally-located resource (and so close to such beautiful countryside). At a time when anarchist movements are getting things together and starting clubs and meeting places all over Eastern Europe, surely we can get it together to do something to keep the 1 in 12 Club going — at any rate until we've had a national conference!

If you can help in any way, particularly with fund-raising or other financial assistance, please contact Julie at the 1 in 12 Club, 7 Newburn Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire

Suggestions for 1991

but the collage by Arthur Moyse in fund-raising, but one or two ideas amount donation to cover costs and be some interest (especially, but not the others. issue 22 (as well as 'Wildcat') was from the US might be of interest. provide margin for the paper), plus only, from people like me with little Surely one of the tasks of the publications there have what they other entertainment. The Guardian conferences, etc.) in being able to anarchism (why not?) — which it those who would (occasionally) an alternative bi-monthly newspaper Workshop 24 in Glasgow, anarchist greeting cards and Maybe I am biased as visual art is respond to one-off appeals, makes a a few years ago (it lasted for three announced in Freedom, meetings of postcards? Why should the thereby allowing you to plan ahead (but the locals weren't) to find that prepared lectures by leading The Left presses of Britain have a more (for expansion or bankruptcy), we could sometimes get small grants anarchist thinkers (any anarchist far less successful record than those can help to build up a cadre of people to research a social issue, like thinkers, for that matter, I suppose), in, for example, Latin America, of who feel they have a continuing stake housing or race relations, on which or interviews with anarchist writers, of that kind would also make good market. copy in Freedom and The Raven.)

Enough already! You have probably tried all of these and then some over the years, but I can't remember seeing reference to them in Freedom, so I thought I'd mention them just in case. I also know you shouldn't have to handle see, for this purpose (e.g. the extend your mail order service to fund-raising as well, and that you written is mostly an interesting read, I wonder if you have thought of excellent Guardian from New York, cassette tapes. The folks who put out have enough to do with the two sometimes a brilliant read and once trying to boost finances for Freedom and Social Anarchism from Social Anarchism have a parallel publications, bookshop, mail order operation that offers cassette tape service, and so on. Some of these What Freedom appears to be than direct appeals to readers for 2. Annual fund-raising events, e.g. recordings for college (and other) ideas don't require much effort, donations (nothing wrong with that, take over a restaurant for the night radio stations in the US, which I think however, and you might be able to 'Wildcat' helps break up the words of course)? I am no expert on and host a dinner (everyone pays x does quite well. I think there would find someone else to try their hand at

> FT New York

Anarchist **Greetings** Cards

monopoly?

There are already plenty of 'alternative' cards available so why not some anarchist ones? It would be using illustration, so let us not let in supporting the paper in other we would then base an article or a educators, labour organisers, and the a great vehicle for spreading the like. (By the way, I think interviews word and should be quite easy to

> Gordon Kite Tokyo

Theory and Practice

Dear editors,

Pradier quotes Berkman, Christie, quiet picket which had been formed Meltzer, Colin Ward, Malatesta, against bailiffs. April Carter, Proudhon and one They didn't turn up; but the non-anarchist on government. They opportunity to make a point about the say (and according to Pradier democratic alternative to the devious anarchists in general also say) that Militant's grip on the APTU (Anti government handicaps or prevents Poll Tax Union) was not lost on the has been refused credit. free activity. It is the greatest invader people there. A Labour councillor and the worst criminal man has ever and one of the non-Militant APTU known. It fills the world with organisers both bought a copy of had the wrong address. violence, fraud, deceit and Freedom. oppressive misery. It is the My 'exclusion' by the local Milies administration of society against its was stepped up by them objecting to will. It is intrinsically coercive and anything at all given out or sold by antithetical to freedom, oppressive me in the main Dover thoroughfare, and repressive. Proudhon drives the regardless of the fact that I had not point home: "The government of been using the APTU stall. Needless man by man is servitude. Whoever to say what my reaction was. One can lays a hand on me to govern is a imagine what kind of society theirs usurper and a tyrant. I declare him to would be: a one-party state with be my enemy."

in most, perhaps all, anarchist can actually be interested in the writers. Condemnation of sufferings of the shat-upon, needs to government, not merely of this or listen to their boring harangues. that government but of government as such, of the principle of is to split the union in the face of the movement. Anybody who supports enemy of oppressed people as the government — any government — parasites who dreamt up the poll tax. anarchist.

the government side in the Spanish and deprive people of a role within it. Civil War? Undoubtedly they were It's one and the same struggle heroic in their anti- Fascism, but against the Hooray Henry/Hildas of when people fight and kill and die in the Tory Government and against support of a government can they Militant and the like. sensibly be regarded as anarchists?

George Walford

Coping

Dear comrades,

In Freedom of 1st December, Alex The papers were all sold on a very

'undesirables' safely tucked away. Similar declarations can be found Anyone who believes these leeches

Some still argue that to attack them the SWP in the interests of so-called What, then, of those who fought on unity is to actually weaken the union

> Meanwhile, bailiffs raided a second-hand shop in London Road, 1, Germany. London N5 Dover, on Tuesday last. The local

businessman described the bailiff as of bailiffs, pinned down by a man who twisted his arm and pressed a knee into the shopkeeper's back, then kicked and punched in the face. On With this issue we complete our 10am-2pm, running the office (which top of this he was kept in custody for two hours by police - whom he had actually called himself. Thousands of taken; and since this raid he says he The businessman has since

discovered that the bailiff's warrant

Letters to the Editors

Calling Pierre Ramus's daughter

Dear editors,

government, has to be accepted as a enemy. They can't or won't see them Our comrades of the publishing major theme of the anarchist for what they are — as much the group Trafik hope to publish some of the work of the Austrian anarchist A s most reader will know we have case you should have received a writer Pierre Ramus, a.k.a. Rudolf Aalso just added five Pluto Press renewal notice with Raven 12. But can hardly be regarded as an To suppress criticism of Militant or Grossmann. In this connection they titles from their Libertarian Critique you can easily check how your Raven would like to contact one of his Series to our publications list. The subscription stands by referring to the daughters, present name uncertain, October-November sales have been address label. If the third figure on the who is now resident in London.

> requested to draw her attention to this we have run out of some titles. But not letter, and she is requested to get in for long. The publishers stocks were stocks were stocks where stocks were s touch with TRAFIK, Peterson, in Plymouth and we had to find Dreaders - comrades, friends Edouardstrasse 40, D-4330 Mülheim

Freedom's Original Sin! rather than in theory yesterday. Anarchist fundamentali

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

Dear editors,

The article Fundamentalists?' (1st December) is people; and my doubts about a nice example of anarchist reprinting old material — though I fundamentalism on the defensive - didn't actually reproach you for the evasive anonymity, the reprinting Barrett-obviously don't misleading use of the first person apply to rescuing or translating or plural, the emotional animus, the describing past work which seems to personal remarks, the cheap sneers, have historical significance or the irrelevant arguments, the contemporary relevance. carelessness with verifiable facts, the Personal position: My own wilful misreading of what I wrote and contributions to The Raven were misunderstanding of what I meant, indeed mostly historical, but they and above all the avoidance of the happened to be what I was asked to real points raised in my review of write, and I always took much care to George Barrett's pamphlets (3rd reconsider the value of the people November) and my letter (17th and events involved; meanwhile I did November). I don't want to prolong a great deal of work obtaining, the dispute in a negative way, but I encouraging, editing, typesetting and should like to clarify some issues in proof reading the many other very a positive direction.

George Barrett: The criticisms i my review were only that in general he wasn't much good at more sustained writing and that in particular his answers to some common objections to anarchism are not convincing; they may be tested by reading him rather than always taken great care to reconsider exchanging insults, and the facts that he was a good anarchist or that we are convinced anarchists don't mean that he always wrote well or that his particular answers to objections are convincing after more than seventy years. The criticisms in my letter were only that your double writing many letters and articles (and they were more pertinent than you arguments in favour of Barrett — that a pamphlet) and giving many talks admit. And, in conclusion, how do you found him convincing but (and some broadcasts) about anyway didn't need to be convinced anarchism, and a high proportion of outsider? - don't make sense if you are this work has related to what

'Anarchist interested in convincing other

different contributions. My Anarchist Classics, the Pluto Libertarian Critique and the Dover Libertarian Series are similarly historical, but again that is what I have been asked to do, and I have the value of the texts involved; meanwhile I have done a great deal of work recommending, reading and reviewing other people's very different theses and books (trying to be honest rather than generous here). I have also done a great deal of work

anarchism means in practice today Anarchist fundamentalism:

Fundamentalism is the reliance or the original dogmas of a religion or ideology and the refusal to consider the need for change. The basic ideas of anarchism may well still be the same, but the world has changed during the century or two since they were developed, and anarchists need to take account of the changes. It is not a matter of being up to date or situation of the left press. We believe original or fashionable or acceptable that both our publications are doing or modernist or superior or technically sophisticated, but of ideas but at a cost which we do not being realistic and relevant and applying anarchism to changed We are not just referring to money to Fund situations. For example, we must pay the printing and postage bills Cambridge AM £2, London NW1 SE reconsider the notions of liberty and (which at £20,000 a year can't be £1, Birmingham KA £1.50, Dossenequality and fraternity, community sneezed at). We are as concerned heim RS £12, Wolverhampton JL £2, and solidarity and co-operation, with the daily tasks - running the New York FT £10. socialism and liberalism and bookshop five days a week from capitalism, reform and revolution 10am-6pm and Saturdays and violence, and so on, in the light contributions to such things as the of current events and recent Freedom Press Centenary Series and developments in the natural and social sciences; we must reconsider the old anarchist answers in the light of new political questions, and we may even have to reconsider the old anarchist ideas themselves. Otherwise we may remain convinced of anarchism, but we shall convince no one else, and we shall have the same impact on the world in the

future that we have had in the past. The long and rather hysterical response to my brief and surely reasonable remarks suggests that you think this exchange reads to an





Donald Rooum

Nicolas Walter

"very aggressive". The shopkeeper was pulled to the ground by a number News from Angel Alley

issue for 7th September.

April-June, July-September, October-November periods.

We are also aiming to complete the Centenary Series of volumes 1886-1986 which has taken longer or financial reasons as well as the eternal editorial problems which no minority group can escape. We shall also be publishing a number of Freedom Press titles. To enquiries regarding the anarchist poetry volume announced long ago, Visions of Poesy, the situation is that it has all and be as patient as we are!

Any reader who knows her is have a number of unfilled orders as due for renewal. Angel Alley just cannot thought!). accommodate more books. Anyway we now have warehousing at a comrade's premises in London, so our problem is solved and all outstanding orders will be dealt with by the time this issue of Freedom is

> Freedom readers of The Guardian will have read of the sorry state of Freedom Fortnightly Fighting this country's 'left' commercial Fund weeklies. Raven 12 readers will also Sheffield FD £5, Cardiff VM £1, Wolhave read our comments on the verhampton JL £2, New York FT £30. useful propaganda for anarchist know how long we can go on paying. Freedom Press Overheads

V first year as a fortnightly printed means dealing with several thousand on a larger format. We are not quite letters a year with orders, enquiries, fortnightly in that we miss two renewals of subscriptions, pounds worth of his goods were fortnights in the year. The first issue manuscripts to read, changes of n 1991 will be dated 12th January. address, requests for information Thereafter Freedom will be published from students and so on) - and far fortnightly until 15th December 1991 from protesting we are stimulated but with one exception — there will be no the ever-increasing contact all this brings to Freedom Press - but there P.G. Carey We shall also be publishing four are too few of us to do this work and issues of The Raven in 1991, ensure the regular publication of our hopefully within the January-March, two journals and new Freedom Press titles in our spare time. We too have to earn our livings.

> Making anarchist propaganda is not a job but it does require commitment from those involved, not just when the 'spirit moves' but week in week out, as a vital part of one's life. Any volunteers?

With this issue a large number of Freedom subscriptions are due for renewal and if so there should be been typeset but now we simply await a renewal notice somewhere in your the camera-ready sheets from the envelope. If yours is a joint comrade editor and illustrator. Try subscription for Freedom and The Raven, then The Raven part of your subscription may also be due. In that so good that at the time of writing we right is 12 then your Raven sub is also

warehousing space for more than and critics, and keep writing (and 6,000 volumes as our stock rooms in those with cash to spare give us a



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