

FREEDOM

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TORY PARTY MARK II

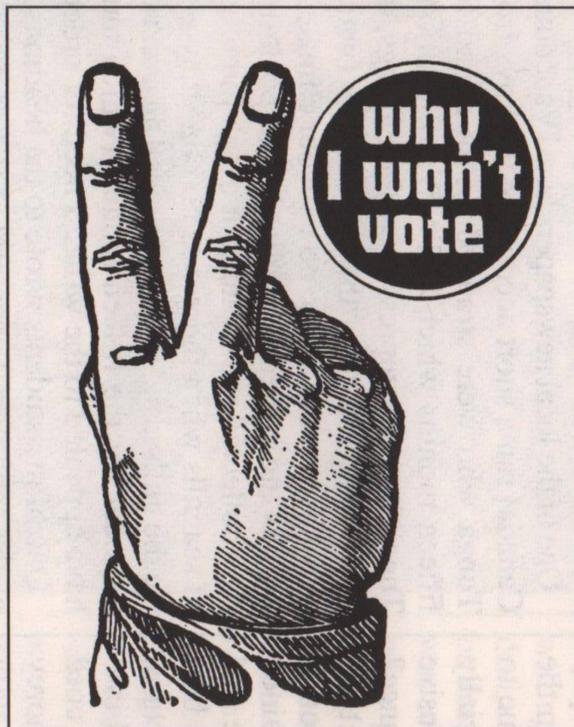
Eric Heffer, the left-wing Labour MP, once wrote a book warning that the Labour Party was in danger of becoming an SDP Mark II. We've gone way beyond that now. In late January, the Shadow Chancellor gave four promises on New Labour's New Economic Policy for government: there would be no loosening of controls on public sector pay; Labour would maintain the Tory ceiling on planned public expenditure for two financial years; there would be a fundamental review of the allocation of resources; and in the first year, there would be no negotiations on altering departmental budgets – forcing ministers to concentrate all their efforts on finding saving in their own budgets. In other words, Labour plans to govern within the financial and economic strategy set down by the present Conservative administration – for nearly half of the life of the next parliament. Linked with this was the announcement that Labour would not increase income taxes, even for the very rich.

The *Financial Times* reported on Gordon Brown's press conference:

"The physical presence of Mr Tony Blair was nowhere to be seen, nor were any of his advisers in evidence ... But Mr Blair's shadow was everywhere, because it was the Labour leader – not Mr Brown – who first became convinced of the necessity of adopting this policy. Mr Blair is persuaded that the Tories have won the fundamental argument on income tax and that no party can win a general election even hinting that rates may rise."

The Tories have won the arguments – that is the central message of New Labour. The Tories have won the arguments, and so it is necessary for the Labour Party to adapt to the new realities.

One aspect of this adaptation came in the report of a prestigious commission set up by the Institute for Public Policy Research (attacked by Michael Heseltine as a Labour Party front organisation). The report, 'Promoting Prosperity: A Business Agenda for Britain', was written by a group including many leading



Picture taken from issue Number 14 of our anarchist quarterly *The Raven* on voting which is available from Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX (96 pages, £3 post free anywhere)

business people and launched at a conference at which Blair was the keynote speaker – the report and commission are seen by many as important steps in the building of bridges between New Labour and business leaders. The *Financial Times* summarised the analysis and recommendations of the report as "pro-market consensus with reformist edges". This is, I believe, a concise description of the New Labour project itself.

For another description of the present state of Labour politics, one may turn to the chair of a Conservative Association in the Welwyn Hatfield constituency. John Dean is quoted as saying that Labour's policies were now 'ridiculously' similar to those of his own party. Amen, Mr Dean.

Incidentally, leading economists think that "the chances that a government, of either stripe, will be able to achieve [the targets accepted by Brown] have to be slim to negligible" (Paul Johnson, Institute of Fiscal Studies).

Milan Rai

THE HUMAN FACE OF CAPITALISM

Modern 'management' is a strange blend of ideology, semi-religious cultism and New Age forms of manipulation. One of the latest fads for top managers is 'coaching' – using advisors to help the movers and shakers improve their performance, especially their social performance.

A recent article in the *Financial Times* notes that many 'top people' in business "have risen from technical jobs at which they excelled into management jobs for which their 'people skills' are not up to scratch". Hence the need for 'coaching', which can involve fortnightly sessions for up to a year with an advisor described as "part shrink, part consultant, part agony aunt and part shoulder to cry on".

"What I am doing is helping self-awareness. I make people take me through what has happened", says Susan Block, a coaching specialist at consultants GHN, an executive training company. "Most directors have not realised that there are different ways of doing things. We are trying to give them the confidence to try. We are looking for incremental changes. We are not doing a frontal lobotomy."

The *Financial Times* gives an example of the power of coaching: "For instance, one director of a company felt that his relationship with his secretary was not what it might be, that she was sulky and unwilling. It was only after a coaching session that it emerged that he usually did not greet her in the morning."

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FATTENING THE FAT CATS

HOW THE RICH SUFFER

TORIES DON'T FIDDLE SOCIAL SECURITY

In the dock was retired accountant Ralph Robson who was accused to stealing £8,000 from the Department of Social Security. Mr Robson became unemployed in 1992 and applied for income support. He filled out the necessary forms. To the question "Is your spouse in employment?" he replied, truthfully, "No". His wife had just retired.

A few weeks later, however, Mrs Robson started working as a supply teacher at the rate of about £150 a day. She worked fairly regularly for three years, but Mr Robson did not report this to the social security authorities and continued to draw income support. He drew more than £8,000 to pay his mortgage on his fashionable home in Cleardon.

In 1995 he had to fill out more forms. To the question whether his wife was working he again answered "No". Er, not quite right. A witness from the education authority told the court that on the very day Mr Robson had filled in the forms, Mrs Robson was teaching at a local school.

The magistrates, specially imported from Gateshead, were merciful and compassionate people. They dismissed the case, and Mr Robson walked free. The case was decided entirely on its merits and the verdict had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that Mr Robson is a former leader of the Tory group on South Tyneside council.

Outside the court Mr Robson said that since he was charged his life had been hell. "I was frightened to go into South Shields in case anyone saw me", he moaned. "I stayed away from my masonic lodge and wouldn't go to my local church" (from *Private Eye*, 10th January 1997).

FATTENING THE FAT CATS

Henry Casley retired as chief executive of Southern Electric with a package estimated to be worth anywhere between £250,000 and £570,000. He now earns around £100,000 a year in a non-executive seat on the board of Southern Electric, where his positions include chairmanship of M.B. Burke, a firm of cable-layers.

"The capitalist is a thief who has succeeded through his efforts or those of his ancestors; the common thief is a would-be capitalist who is simply waiting to become one, in fact to live, without working, on the proceeds of his hauls, that is, on the work of others."

Errico Malatesta

Early last year he and other directors caught some flak from the press when they landed a pay rise of between 14% and 18%. Mr Casley got a 14% rise, and a £56,000 bonus on top. One industry source worked out that before privatisation the eight directors of Southern Electric earned a total of £185,000; now they were on £1.1 million on top of share options.

Southern Electric has refused to give out the exact amount of Mr Casley's pay or his retirement deal.

WHAT THE POOR HAVE TO PUT UP WITH

'LOWEST PAY EVER RECORDED'

John Waddle and his two workmates before Christmas got the lowest pay ever recorded in modern Britain, while working for Henry Casley's company M.B. Burke. Mr Casley paid workers 81p an hour to dig trenches for the cable-laying firm.

Workers taken on to do the digging for M.B. Burke got £122 each for three weeks' work. £200 was cut from their wages for the use of a mini digging machine.

Mr Waddle claimed he and his mates did not know that this sum would be cut out of their pay to rent the digging gear. He said they had worked around the clock to try and get some money for Christmas.

Ken Taylor, the finance director for M.B. Burke, showed no sympathy, saying that the men had opted for piecework and were not on an hourly rate. He added "We are very proud of our job creation record".

Based in Barnsley, the company seems to be picking up labour on the cheap in depressed areas taking full advantage of the misery and suffering in the North of England.

TRAINING AND VOLUNTEERING ...

"Show the boss what you can do!" say Employment Service leaflets. Do a 'Work Trial'.

Work Trials mean working for free for an employer for up to fifteen days. All you get are benefits and up to £10 a day travelling expenses, plus £1.50 a day for meals. (*Work Trial promotion leaflet distributed by Burnley Job Centre, East Lancashire*)

'Training for Work' offers dubious placements:

"Insulators, loft and wall, Halifax, allowance £10 plus benefits. Opportunity to gain NVQ Level II in Energy Conservation. Some training then working on site to gain experience."

"Clerical Business Admin., Halifax, allowance £10 plus benefits. Hours 9.30-4.30. Duration up to 26 weeks. Opportunity to gain NVQ Level I and II in Office Environment."

"Security, Halifax, allowance £10 plus benefits. Hours depend on placement. Duration up to 26 weeks. Opportunity to be trained in the security industry ..."

One jobless militant called these spurious appointments which are designed more to cut down the unemployment statistics than provide any useful training or work. The whole approach is inefficient and sometimes plain silly. (*Training for Work positions advertised in West Yorkshire Job Centres*)

CONSCRIPTION ON THE CHAIN GANG

In October 1996 the Tories decided to extend their workfare scheme - known as Project Work and piloted in Hull and Kent - to other

areas of the country. People who have been unemployed for more than two years - up to 100,000 people - could be forced to work for their benefit plus £10.

Gillian Shepherd made her announcement of the extension of this scheme at the Tory Party conference. She said it had been outstandingly successful (despite only 8% of participants finding 'proper' jobs).

The Tories are using the unemployed as a political weapon in the run-up to the election says Keith Sinclair, Secretary of Hull TUC in *Action for Health and Welfare*. No doubt Mr Sinclair thinks Labour is going to be kind to the poor - that Labour Party which includes Jack Straw with his 'war on beggars' and Gordon Brown with his tight public spending policy.

The Glasgow novelist James Kelman best expresses my requirements in his essay 'Not not while the giro': "All I'm fucking asking is regular giros and punctual counter clerks".

Northern Unemployed Worker

RADICAL THEATRE

Brian Behan on his play *The Begrudgers or, it shouldn't happen to a bishop but it did.*



Readers of *The Guardian* or *The Independent* will remember that last May they said that Tory Central Office were determined to cut off Behan's funding for his plays. Well, I am still rattling the bars of my cage. I have a further radical offering going on at the Albany Theatre, London, on 11th to 15th February. I would like to emphasise that the play is not particularly Irish. Come along, whatever your nationality, it is a comic farce. The play is simply a good night out. We open with a knees-up and hope the fun goes on to the bells of hell at the end.

It is said of Brendan Behan that he was born an Irishman and remained an Englishman all his life. One of the Kray twins, Reg, in an interview from jail declares "I enjoyed Brendan Behan's *Borstal Boy*, it is true to life". Brendan became a folk hero to the English working class after his clash with Malcolm Muggeridge. His immortal closing of the show with "Why are the millions watching two boring old farts like us when they could be out walking the dog, having a

pint or making love" rang bells throughout the land.

We poke fun at all the fundamentalists, be they Christian or Muslim, Catholic or Protestant, priest or politicians. Brendan is for 'Sid, shut it down', it being the House of Commons. He declares it to be the longest running farce since *The Mousetrap*. He wants it replaced with a reasonably honest computer. He defends the monarch, we must leave room for a little humbug. Kavanagh declares we are 98% chimpanzee so why all the fuss about nationality. We see them clash in a famous court action when Brendan has called Kavanagh that fucker Brendan Mucker, or here comes the Monaghan wanker. To Kavanagh, Brendan is the Dublin jackeen, sly and artful, as cute as a shit-house rat.

Hope to see you there, and yes, the lead singer of The Prodigy did attempt to ban me on the grounds that I was too ugly to play him. He has been overruled by MTV. I am now to be seen in them all.

Brian Behan

— OBITUARY —

Michael Duane

I first met Michael Duane in 1969 when I was a student at Garnett College, the technical teachers' training college in Roehampton. His lectures there were attended to overflowing, the audience including students from other colleges, and he was in constant demand to lecture at other places. He described himself as a Senior Lecturer at the college, but I saw his pay-slip during a tutorial in his study and his pay-slip designated him 'Headmaster of Raisinghill School'.

Raisinghill, a comprehensive school in Islington, had been closed four years earlier as the only way of getting rid of him. A headmaster who had served his probationary year could not be sacked except for dishonesty, indecency or violence, and Mike's offence had been merely to disagree with the educational establishment.

With his half-moon spectacles, iron-grey eyebrows and clear, erudite, forceful but kindly manner of speaking, he looked like the stereotype image of a headmaster. It was easy to see why he was given the job. But he was a friend of educationalists like A.S. Neill and Dora Russell (who could run their schools as they thought fit because their pupils' parents paid fees), a correspondent of Noam Chomsky and the Russian psychologist Luria, and tried to apply the 'de-schooling' theory of Ivan Illich and John Dewey's ideas of learning through practical experience. Raisinghill was a school which the socially disadvantaged and 'less academic' could enjoy, because they could more or less stick to practical lessons if they so wished. Duane also provided an advisory service for disadvantaged and 'less academic' parents, in dealing with officialdom and the law. His stated aim was to "rid schools of fear".

When it closed, the school had the reputation of a 'sink school' exclusively for the 'less academic'. He referred to it as a "soi-disant comprehensive" because most of the abler children from local primary schools went on to the grammar schools which still existed. But the 'more academic' do not seem to have been badly served. In 1960, when Duane was appointed, 18 pupils sat 'O' Levels and five passed; in 1964, 80 entered and 42 passed.

The school's reputation, however, was such that the Inner London Education Authority decided on a 'full inspection'. A gang of



inspectors turned up, by appointment, but the headmaster was not there to greet them. In fact he was in the street, dressed in overalls, teaching a group of lads how to strip down an old car. This was a defiant snub of the inspectors, and it is not surprising that they decided he should go, though their report that he "lacked leadership qualities" was untrue and unfair.

He was born in Ireland on 25th January 1915. When he was six his father was killed in crossfire in the Irish civil war, on the way to work, and from then until the age of eleven he lived with his grandparents while his mother supported the family working in England as a pastry cook. He was conscripted into the army in 1940 as a private, and demobbed in 1945 with the rank of staff major and several French medals. He described himself as a pragmatic anarchist in the style of Herbert Read (another decorated ex-officer, though without the working class origin).

As far as I know, his first meeting with the mainstream anarchist movement was at the time of furore over the Raisinghill inspections, when John Rety asked him to speak to the London Anarchist Group, then meeting every Sunday at the Lamb and Flag public house. He was barracked throughout his talk and the subsequent discussion by a pair of snooty idiots in the audience, but he did not hold it against us.

After his retirement he wrote for *Freedom Press Work, Language and Education in the Industrial State* (1991) and *The Terrace: an educational experiment in a state school* (1995), about a school in Doncaster.

Michael Duane died just before his 82nd birthday, on 21st January 1997.

Donald Room

GANDALF SIX

We have recently learned what happened at the Gandalf Six committal hearing at Portsmouth magistrates court in December. The magistrate ruled some of the evidence inadmissible and the hearing was adjourned until May, as the prosecution has applied for a judicial review of the magistrate's ruling.

Gandalf is an acronym: Green Anarchist and Animal Liberation Front. Four alleged editors of our contemporary *Green Anarchist* are charged jointly with two members of the Animal Liberation Front with conspiring to incite criminal damage. The last direct communication we had from the Gandalf Six told us that publishing their names would "be regarded as a hostile act", but the name of one of them, Robin Webb, is published in a recent Gandalf

Six leaflet and the latest *Green Anarchist*, so we hope to be forgiven for repeating it here.

The case against Robin Webb, press officer of the ALF, had been put in an earlier trial at which he was acquitted. The defence argued that this was to put him in 'double jeopardy', i.e. trying him twice for the same offence. The prosecution argued that there were two different offences, but the defence argument was accepted by the court and Robin Webb's release was ordered. The prosecution said that without Robin Webb in the dock, the whole procedure would be futile. So it seems to depend on the judicial review whether any of the case will go ahead.

Some *Green Anarchist* supporters tell us they are not in favour of ALF actions, and were not conspiring with the ALF but simply publishing the text of the ALF communiqués they had received. We do not know, however, whether this is the substance of their defence in court.

NORTHERN IRELAND:

SOUND BITES FROM A WAR/PEACE PROCESS

The balloon went up here at the start of January and, unlike the balloons launched by the filthy rich, ours has stayed up. We had a double-edged statement from the IRA – a willingness to wage war coupled with the desire to create peace – and two rocket attacks on major manifestations of the state. The first was at the courts in Belfast and the second was on a police patrol in Derry near a leisure centre. My kids had just been swimming there.

I heard the Security Minister, a Mr Wheeler, wash his hands of the whole affair on the radio. He's busy trying to get himself re-elected across the water. The election campaign got underway here with the ditching of plans for a Sinn Féin and SDLP pact and attempts by the two main Unionist parties to work out some deals. 'You run your Tweedledum there and we'll run our Tweedledee here'. Attempts are in hand to squeeze out the fringe loyalist parties by calling the bluff on the phoney cease-fire that has been in place for some time by the loyalists

paramilitaries. There were two sectarian petrol bomb attacks in one week in Derry which could be seen as a response to the IRA rocket attack. And an Official Unionist Councillor in Belfast said that there would be no need for the UVF and the UFF if the police could be allowed to just get on with their job. Tough one for freedom of speech that. How do you respond to sectarian statements that appear to put lives in danger? Where is freedom of speech without a consideration of power?

We don't feature much in the election manifestos of the Big Two across the water. There's an irony in that for anarchists. It seems to point up the futility of voting in elections, yet the right to vote was one of the key civil rights demanded at the end of the '60s that brought a lot of this to a head. Yet for the Tories and the Blairites there are just no votes in it. Anarchy Rules OK?

Dave Duggan

COLLECTIVE CARE

Amid the widespread grumbling dissatisfaction with an under-funded health service it is refreshing to learn of a medical practice in London which manages to remain enthusiastic and harmonious.

The Hoxton Health Collective in East London has eight staff members, two nurses, two doctors, a practice manager, a psychotherapist and two receptionists. A fairly typical medical centre staff complement. Where this one differs radically is that each staff member receives the same hourly rate of pay (£10) and all work a 36-hour week. The working week includes a two and a half hour practice meeting where all clinical and planning matters are discussed.

The collective was established in 1987 by one of the present GPs – the only remaining member of the original group – who was determined to break down the hierarchical set-up he had experienced in so many GPs' surgeries where doctors are revered, receptionists act as a barrier between doctor and patient, and patients are not given sufficient information to make informed choices about their treatment.

The philosophy of the collective is to break down these barriers. Staff share the burdens, responsibilities and decision-making. Patients are handed their notes when they arrive and

are encouraged to read them. All of the staff are called by their first names.

The only sad note in the news report was that the collective was finding it very difficult to recruit another doctor, and this was attributed more to the fact that Hoxton is a deprived area and the centre has a huge workload than that the new doctor would be receiving considerably less pay. The hope for the future of the collective is that they are about to start training medical students, who may find the ethos of the centre one to emulate.

In a week of confused or contrived health spending statistics, reports of 'battleground' conditions in a Liverpool hospital and a mental health service in Inner London that "cannot be sustained" because demands on it are so great, it is heartening to know that there are still groups of health-conscious people striving to sustain imagination and hope.

In a health service where the internal market has pitched hospital against hospital and GP practice against health centre, prompting competition rather than co-operation, the words of John Hewetson (*Ill Health, Poverty and the State*) written thirty years ago are still apt: "The important fact to grasp is that the problem of ill health will not be solved by any measures which fail to solve the problem of poverty".

Silvia Edwards

MORE FOOD IN LESS SPACE

Following a mention in *Freedom* a few years ago I became interested in permaculture in general and forest gardening in particular. And with good reason.

The fruit and vegetables sold in the shops average ten calories of energy to give one calorie of food energy, what with all the petrochemicals processed and poured on them and the transportation. Forest gardening, however, gives ten calories of food energy for every one calorie of energy put in (and that is usually spade/picking work). Sounds a hundred times better, but is in fact infinitely better as conventional monoculture is destroying the environment whilst forest gardening (usually) improves it.

With forest gardening we aim to recreate a natural forest/woodland with no bare soil, concentrating on perennial and vigorous self-seeding plants occupying several different 'layers' of aerial and mud space. Perhaps a tall tree layer, a small tree layer, a shrub layer, a herbaceous layer, a ground cover layer, an edible root layer, plus climbers and horizontal spreaders, with corresponding root layers to hold the soil. Each plant may give us something to eat (or a medicine, or dye, or oil, etc.) or might stop other plants suffering pests and

disease (which have to search around to find their hosts anyway) or, say, take nitrogen out of the air and put it into the soil for other plants, or lots of other things, a combination of many even. A plant might be added just to increase the general diversity, with perhaps unknown but probably beneficial consequences. With billions of different interactions between flora and fauna, this diversity makes for a very healthy and stable society indeed. Anarchist!

As a bit of an anarchist myself, I'm a great believer in diversity as a good measure of health, whether it be of environments or societies or individuals. Since I also believe in necessary, useful and good ('ends'/ 'means') work, and there's none more so than growing things to eat, and am against unnecessary work and very much against unnecessary suffering (as caused by monoculture, for instance), then this forest gardening is for me. Another great enthusiasm. Thank you very much *Freedom*, even if my subs did nearly go on a few more trees.

For more information and plants contact Plants for a Future, The Field, Penpol, Lost Withiel, Cornwall PL22 0NG.

Brett Lund

— NEGOTIATING THE DOLE QUEUE —

BRING ON THE BULLIES

BULLYING FOR BEGINNERS

What is bullying – institutional bullying – in the context of the poor, the unemployed and the single parent?

It's like standing on a tightrope with a small safety net underneath, while out of the corner of your eye you can see an official – some civil servant – trying to pull the net away.

That's what it feels like when dole staff threaten to take you off benefits if you don't take a low-paid job, or go on some useless course, or accept a Project Work scheme. This kind of bullying occurs because dole staff are being bullied by their bosses and the government to meet targets and put people off the register of unemployment.

In the current year to March 1997, the Employment Service is bashing on taking 216,000 claimants off benefits. 216,000, that's the target they are forcing the dole staff to meet. If successful the staff will get incentive bonuses.

With difficult claimants, under the new Job Seeker's Act rules dole staff can impose weeks of talking to claimants in the dole queue this bullying seems to have been on the increase since the new year.

People taken off benefits react differently. One man in Bury went on a 'Do-It-Yourself' demonstration in the Job Centre garbed in a balaclava last week. Before Christmas a man in Marple, Cheshire, an unemployed manager, put a claimant adviser in hospital. Last year a young man in Burnley committed suicide. In the last issue of *Freedom* we reported the case of an anarchist in East Lancashire who is taking his case to appeal.

ANARCHISTS ATTACKED

In the last year there have been suicides, blood on the dole house floor, occupations of Job Centres, 'Three Strikes', claimant pickets, demonstrations against the JSA, and now the tribunals are expecting a flood of appeals. At the back of all this is bureaucratic bullying by the dole bosses under the Job Seeker's Act.

Earlier last year, in Edinburgh, union leaders for dole workers were claiming to be worried that staff were being blamed for harassing claimants (see *Edinburgh Evening News*, 23rd

May 1996). In November Alan Manning, Secretary of the North West TUC, wrote to member groups warning: "the North West TUC has clearly recognised that there is no place in our campaign for tactics, which include the exposure, targeting or action against civil service workers, and it is expected that all TUC bodies would recognise this and act accordingly (see *Freedom*, 30th November 1996).

To de-code this message – "it is expected that all TUC bodies would recognise this and act accordingly" – is the TUC's way of saying to the Trades Councils and Unemployed Centres 'If you don't toe the line and do as the executive of the North West TUC says, we'll withdraw our recognition from you and withhold our support!'.

It's not surprising, then, that anarchist, direct actionists and Groundswell should find themselves under attack from these people. Thus last month Tony Gallagher is reported to have threatened to sue a North West anarchist, 'John H', for an unpublished article entitled 'Three Strikes and You're Out?'

Tony Gallagher is an officer in the PTC, the civil servant's middle management union. This unpublished item, intended for *Trade Union News*, comments on the lack of union opposition to the Job Seeker's Act, saying: "Surely the unions should be giving support to members who are unwilling to implement the worst of the JSA and protecting them from harassment and intimidation by management ... In the absence of contact with, or support from, the CPSA and PTC [civil service unions] it looks like opponents of the JSA will have to take action by themselves".

It is hard to see how that constitutes defamation, even if the article had been published. Most anarchists, and direct actionists, would see it as fair comment.

From another angle, last month Keith Sinclair write a piece for *Socialist Outlook* called 'How Not to Fight the Job Seekers Allowance, or Three Strikes that Shouldn't be Slammed'. The Timeside Unemployed Group is condemned for issuing a leaflet which "refers to 'dole officials', never once calling job centre employees workers, far less mentioning that the vast majority of job centre workers oppose the JSA".

Mr Sinclair, a teacher and leader of Hull Trades Council, concludes: "It's clear that the main advocates of 'Three Strikes' tend to be from an anarchist background. However anarchists and syndicalists who operate within the existing trade unions and trade councils are often opposed to 'Three Strikes'. Support for 'Three Strikes' is often linked with a refusal to fight to put pressure on the Labour Party and union leaderships to fight the JSA and Project Work".

Hull Trades Council and Mr Sinclair have done a lot to resist Project Work on Humberside. But Groundswell, through 'Three Strikes' and 'Sanctions Busting', have raised the level of debate about the Job Seeker's Allowance. Nationally Groundswell, working on a shoe-string, has had more impact on the day-to-day operation of the JSA than the Labour Party and union bosses despite all their resources.

GROUNDSWELL – THOSE SUBTLE BULLIES

We are led to believe that some trade unions take some forms of bullying seriously. We can say this because the December issue of the *T&G Record* has an article labelled 'Taking On the Bullies at Work'. In it Dave Turnbull, the T&G London district officer, tells us: "Like most workplace issues bullying can be prevented by workers getting organised and looking after each other".

We are informed that "a special organising support unit has been set up to help employees stand up to bullying, as part of a new campaign".

If the unions denounce and fight bullying at work, is it not vital that they fight institutionalised bullying in the dole queue? Especially when, under the Job Seeker's Act and Project Work, the dole queue is being mobilised as a low-paid scab army to drive down pay rates and threaten the jobs of union members?

In the nineteenth century the trade unions developed the strike and other forms of industrial action, which replaced the peasant riot and machine-breaking. Now they are dabbling with forms of legal action and New Labour. The unemployed can riot, they can commit act of violence and sabotage, but is it not better that they think up restrained and civilised kinds of action like 'Three Strikes',

'Sanctions Busting' and occupations of Job Centres?

The trouble is that there is a temptation for unions to use the jobless as political cannon fodder. Arthur Scargill, during the miners' strike, called on the unemployed to help man the mass pickets, but offered us nothing in return.

Groundswell has started to help mobilise the jobless to fight for themselves. One feels that some of the union bosses, like perhaps Tony Gallagher, are still in the business of manipulation.

The evidence shows that Mr Gallagher and others for the dole bosses union, the PTC, don't take the jobless seriously. Several unemployed centres, like Preston and Bury, have complained that the civil service unions have snubbed them and not sent representatives to discuss mutual problems about the JSA and Project Work.

All we get from Mr Gallagher is bullying and bluster, threats to man anachorists and a curious comment (reported in *Freedom*) that "Three Strikes' is a strategy which will give the Employment Service management an excuse to call in other agencies, like *Special Branch*, the police, and could lead to claimants being frisked for concealed cameras".

Given his performance so far in fighting the JSA, one must wonder if Mr Gallagher is moonlighting for *Special Branch* on the side.

The problem is that Groundswell (an independent campaign against the JSA by employed and unemployed activists) is grabbing the direct action initiative, while the TUC is dragging its feet in the campaign against the JSA. The TUC wants a Labour victory in the coming general election, but Groundswell doesn't give a hoot. So to save its face, the North West TUC last December approved a policy of occupations of Job Centres.

What is going on here are distinct kinds of coercion. One is the kind of bullying operated by the dole officers, which involves taking people off benefits as a sanction. Similar, in kind, to the withdrawal of TUC funding to unemployed centres. The other type of coercion, which anarchists seem to employ, is that of shaming people into doing what you want them to do. This more subtle style of what George Orwell (in *Tolstoy, Lear and the Fool*) called "getting inside the brain" of the enemy, through exposure to 'Three Strikes', forces the dole clerk to face the guilt of their own actions.

Mack the Knife

JSA: THE IRISH CONNECTION

The Campaign Against the Job Seekers Allowance was launched with a rally in Belfast city centre on Saturday 5th October.

People assembled at 3pm at the Art College, Belfast, to hear speakers. The crowd then marched along Royal Avenue to Belfast City Hall. An anarchist flag and the anarcho-syndicalist 'Organise' banner was prominent in the procession.

Speakers included one from the Unemployed Resource Centre, Belfast Trades Council, the Socialist Party (formerly Militant), the Young Socialists and one from Organise.

The speaker from Organise drew parallels with the unemployed struggle in Belfast 64 years ago which united catholic and protestant in opposition to the ruling classes. This was known as the Outdoor Relief Strike, and some were shot during the dispute by the Royal Ulster Police.

Jason Brannigan for Organise said: "The lesson, as we show our opposition to the JSA, is that we can and must unite across the sectarian divide to fight for our real interests. Interests as workers and unemployed, disabled and other oppressed sections of our society which this legislation attacks."

This demonstration is just the beginning. We must now set about building local groups of unemployed together with working people, particularly dole workers, to let our anger be felt.

Edited version of an item in *Organise!*, the voice of anarcho-syndicalism



— ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK —

MUTUAL AID RECONSIDERED

(A lecture to members of mutual insurance societies, Turin, 4th February 1997)

The phrase 'mutual aid' to describe the propensity for co-operation, as opposed to competition, was introduced into our languages by the anarchist philosopher Peter Kropotkin in the year 1890 in an article on 'Mutual Aid Among Animals' in the journal *The Nineteenth Century*, the first of a long series which examined the capacity for mutual aid among the people he described as 'savages', among the 'barbarians', in the medieval city, and amongst ourselves in the modern age.

These articles were gathered together in his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, published in the year 1902, and rapidly translated into every European language and into several of those of Asia and the Far East.

The subtitle of Kropotkin's book is important. Charles Darwin had developed his evolutionary theories in his books *The Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man*, and his account of "Natural Selection" and of "the struggle for existence", as well as the concept of "the Survival of the Fittest", used by his disciple Herbert Spencer, were appropriated by apologists for unrestricted capitalist exploitation.

The situation Kropotkin faced was like the situation we face today, around the world. A quarter of a century ago, the British sociologist Richard Titmuss warned of what he called "the philistine resurrection of Economic Man in social policy". You and I have seen it happen in the new religion of the market economy.

Kropotkin's aim was to show that mutual aid was a more important factor in human as well as animal evolution, and among the examples on which he focused attention were the free cities of the middle ages, resisting the dominance of marauding barons, and the emergence of endless examples of working-class self-help in the period of the industrial revolution, followed by the creation of the trade union movement and the co-operative movement, built around the 'Rochdale Principles' for co-operative self-organisation which were developed in the middle of the nineteenth century in a small town in Lancashire, England, and spread throughout the world.

He, and other historians, noted how the poor displaced peasants who formed the new industrial working class, in spite of their poverty, created a network of mutual insurance institutions. They included 'sick clubs' to pay for medical care, 'coffin clubs' to pay for burials, 'widows and orphans funds' to help families after the death of the

breadwinner, 'penny banks' which were the equivalent of the modern Credit Unions or of the Grameen Bank, the small-loan institution from Bangladesh which has influenced many people in the West faced with the unwillingness of the banking institutions to cater for the needs of the poor. Yet another of these mutual aid organisations from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the 'building society' formed as mutual savings banks whose members deposited their money to pay for the building of houses for

members. When every member was housed the society was ended. They were followed by permanent building societies, mutually owned, which provided long-term mortgage loans for house-purchase and were also savings banks.

All these institutions had their equivalents in France, especially under the influence of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and, of course, in Italy. But in Britain the very influential socialists of the Fabian Society urged, at the beginning of this century, that these mutual endeavours should be replaced by a policy of comprehensive social insurance provided by the state. The Liberal government early in the twentieth century instituted Old Age Pensions in 1909, and National Health and Unemployment Insurance in 1911, and the Labour government after the Second World War universalised these social benefits and instituted the National Health Service. Mutual institutions were relegated to history as mere precursors of state-provided welfare. The

A Contradiction

On Friday 13th December I viewed *I Shot Andy Warhol*, a biopic of Valerie Solanas depicting the events of her life at the time when she acquired her 'fifteen minutes of fame' by shooting Andy Warhol. I had heard of Andy Warhol – pop artist, film producer, launcher of the Velvet Underground and Lou Reed – but the name of Valerie Solanas was new to me. No matter, I said to myself, it'll probably be about Andy Warhol and The Factory anyway.

Well, Valerie was a surprise to me – so full of life, so sassy, so intelligent, so brimming with original and inventive ideas. Every so often during the film there'd be a scene of her facing the camera and quoting from her manifesto. And what quotes! Three of her major proposals spring to mind as I write: "overthrow the government, eliminate the money system, institute complete automation". I have to know more about this woman, I thought. I wonder if I can somehow get myself a copy of her *SCUM Manifesto*?

On Saturday 21st December I bought a copy from the Freedom Press Bookshop and read it that weekend. Valerie, obviously possessed of a great intellect and in command of a lively and independent mind, could see so clearly the faults in her society: war, the money system, useless toil – automation could quickly do away with unnecessary labour – and the authoritarian family as a factory for 'respectful' (i.e. fearful) human beings, are but a few of the problems she pointed out. Lack of privacy, and at the same time the sense of isolation and the lack of community spirit felt by residents in the suburbs, were other issues tackled by Solanas.

In answer to the problem of what we would do with ourselves if automation reduced our need to work to just a few hours a week, Solanas proposed that we completely revamp educational programmes so that the "goal is to educate and not to perpetuate an academic and intellectual elite". Once that were done, millions could be "trained within a few months for high level intellectual work that now requires years of training". Once we have time, we can then solve "the problems of disease

and old age and death" and completely redesign "our cities and living quarters".

Solanas's fourth major proposal was to "destroy the male sex". For those who know about Valerie Solanas you will be surprised that I have waited this long before spilling the beans about this to the remainder of the readers. There is a reason for this, however. From the film I learned that Valerie had been sexually abused as a child – I think by her own father – and I tried to bear this fact in mind when I read the *SCUM Manifesto*. From the first page it was clear that the sexual abuse she had suffered at the hands of a man she should have been able to trust had clearly warped her personality and skewed her view of society accordingly. I had been drawn to her writings because of her other three main proposals for a changed society, so I decided to read the manifesto anyway and simply ignore all anti-male remarks and pay attention only to her radical insights on society and her proposals for change. If I had not made that decision, I would not have been able to get far without being thoroughly sickened at her attitude towards the male sex. Three things made it easier for me than it would be for a man, I think, to temporarily disregard the sexist content of the material:

1. As a woman, I obviously did not feel personally attacked.
2. As a woman, I was flattered by Valerie's opinions – stated as if they were facts – that "emotional strength and independence, forcefulness, dynamism, decisiveness, coolness, objectivity, assertiveness, courage, integrity, vitality, intensity, depth of character, grooviness, etc." are female characteristics and it was likewise a refreshing change for me to read that "the female function is to relate, groove, love and be herself, irreplaceable by anyone else ... In actual fact the female function is to explore, discover, invent, solve problems, crack jokes, make music – all with love. In other words, create a magic world."
3. As a woman, I am an expert at pretending that, in textbooks as well as in literature, the words 'he', 'him', 'his' and other such male words really do include and refer to me as well, so to substitute 'an authoritarian person' or some other such appropriate phrase for 'the male' was accordingly accomplished with ease, and I reached the penultimate page before I lost my concentration entirely.

By then I could no longer deceive myself that Valerie's *SCUM Manifesto* is an anarchist manifesto. Independence of thought is an anarchistic trait; the idea of a society of self-governing individuals (i.e. without government control), the elimination of the money system and the institution of complete automation are anarchist ideas, but Valerie has taken her insights into the facts of society and concluded – no doubt due to her traumatic childhood – that because men (in general, when compared to women) are in positions of power, then all the problems of society are down to men. She recommends as a solution, therefore, that the male sex be destroyed. Personally, from the facts and opinions inside Valerie's manifesto, I can see no logical conclusion that the male sex should be destroyed. Valerie merely starts with an assumption that males are inferior, points out the many and varied injustices inherent in authoritarian society with (to my mind) false references as to male culpability, and baldly concludes that therefore men should be annihilated.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT ... AND ACTION!

Passion Brigade Newsletter: embracing the Lesbian and Gay Freedom Movement, No. 12. A cheap 'n' cheerful little periodical whose motto is "anarchy = sexlib". Like many publications which do not have a panel of regular writers, this one seems to publish anything which is sent in, a practice which often leads to unpredictable and sometimes entertaining results. This issue is fairly uneven in the quality of both the writing and the production standards, from the good to the bizarre to the embarrassing. But what is important is that the articles and letters all come from personal experience, and reflect the enormously wide range of human sexual preferences and practices. So, for example, you'll find articles and letters on such topics as spanking, consent, Gay Pride, paedophilia, fat solidarity, pornography, and a report on a meeting between the former LGFM, Feminists Against Censorship and Class War. Plus drawings, poems and film and book reviews – one of which is of the Freedom Press title *Love, Sex and Power in Later Life*. A5 size, 35 pages, 40p, and we also have copies of No. 11 in stock (same price).

The Match! No. 91, winter 1996-97*, edited by Fred Woodworth. Sexual freedom isn't exactly top of the list in some parts of the USA, according to a report retailed here from an Australian publication. Apparently over thirty prisoners in Georgia are serving sentences of sixteen years or more each for an offence which can incur the death penalty. The nature of the heinous crime? Oral sex, which in the state of Georgia is classed as sodomy!! It just shows you the sort of serious problems some people have with their sexuality (and I mean the law-makers not the law-breakers, of course) when not only do they insist on proscribing other people's private sexual behaviour, but they can't tell one sexual act from another! It makes the Taliban look positively enlightened. This is a lovingly crafted, hand-produced annual

magazine that has the unique ability to educate, infuriate, inspire, depress and amuse all at once, largely due to Fred's individualism and indefatigability. Aside from all the regular features and serialised anarchist fiction there are plenty of news pieces, and a disturbing article revealing Bob Black as a police informer against people he disagrees with – the relevant letters are reprinted, complete with signatures. 34 pages of letters include half a page of indignant ones about the behaviour of AK Press, and for those who didn't like what was said about the late Albert Meltzer over here, you should see what Fred Woodworth has to say. 92 extraordinary pages, £3.

Lobster # 32 has material on state terrorism in relation to several episodes: a) the murder of Yvonne Fletcher, officially blamed on the Libyan Embassy but more probably the work of someone in a nearby building formerly crawling with western spooks; b) American human radiation experiments from 1953 to at least the 1970s; c) Yet another SAS memoir detailing bombings and assassinations in Zambia, and planned attacks in London on Rhodesian/Zimbabwean politicians including Mugabe; d) Background and subsequent developments on the killing of Mexican PRI Presidential candidate Colosio. A major article sheds light on the Bilderberg Group and its secret strategic machinations in post-war Europe; another covers control of the UK and US Communist Parties by MI5 and the FBI; and there are more useful Internet sites for investigators. A valuable publication. 52 A4 pages, (and #31 still available) £2.50 each.

KM

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Some books mentioned in this issue:

PETER KROPOTKIN		
<i>Mutual Aid: a factor of evolution</i>		
with an introductory essay 'Mutual Aid and Social Evolution' by John Hewetson		
Freedom Press	300 pages	£6.00
MICHAEL DUANE		
<i>Work, Language and Education in the Industrial State</i>		
Freedom Press	36 pages	£1.00
MICHAEL DUANE		
<i>The Terrace: an educational experiment in a state school</i>		
Freedom Press	75 pages	£2.50
VALERIE SOLANAS		
<i>SCUM Manifesto</i>		
Phoenix Press	32 pages	£1.50

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pennies of the poor which once supported them were taken in taxation to pay for the officia machinery of welfare

The story does not end there. In Britain, government policy since 1979 has been to erode the level of social benefits, and to encourage people to pay privately for insurance against unemployment and sickness and to invest in private pensions. There are paradoxes here. The first is that the new insecurity of employment has spread very rapidly to all kinds of occupation. People hesitate to commit themselves to insurance payments they may be unable to continue. But at the same time, the principle of mutuality is no longer, in Britain, seen to be a guarantee of integrity. It is seen, in the financial world, as a liability which restricts the entrepreneurial opportunities available to any particular insurance society or building society.

I do not report the current trends with any pleasure, but anyone here who watches international financial trends will know that

during the last ten years many very old British institutions, like mutual building societies which have converted themselves into banks and mutual insurance companies, have become profit-making entities. Other equally large societies have resisted this transition. I wish they were bold enough to publicise the fact that they generated profits for members rather than for speculators. We have no reason to believe that the current trends in the financial world will last for ever. Even in the contemporary British climate, the Co-operative Bank, which makes it appeal on the moral case for 'ethical investment', is flourishing.

I must turn to the retail co-operative movement for which Britain was once famous. It has been challenged for years by its younger capitalist rivals. In the year 1900, 1.75 million members in 1,400 local societies were involved in seven per cent of retail trade in Britain. By the year 1960, twelve million members in 950 local societies amounted to

eleven per cent of retail trade. Today about eight million members in about fifty societies still have a considerable share, but forty per cent of retail co-operative sales are handled by the two wholesale co-operative bodies, the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS) and Co-operative Retail Services (CRS), both trading directly with the public. Customers often do not realise that they are in a co-operative shop.

So we can conclude that the co-operative share of the retail market has been maintained, but at the expense of local democratic control.

What other fields of co-operative enterprise in Britain should I mention? There does exist a co-operative productive sector, linked to the Industrial Common Ownership Movement, but it is statistically invisible. There is also a small but growing Co-operative Housing sector. In the 1970s there were about two housing co-operatives in Britain, by the 1990s there are about a thousand.

Britain has no equivalent for the network of secondary co-operative organisations for purchasing, accounting, credit and marketing, which serve the small-workshop community of Northern Italy, nor does it have anything comparable to the co-operatives for building construction to be found all over France.

I have given you a sombre picture of the current situation of our co-operative movement in Britain because I am convinced that our successors in the next century will be obliged to re-invent the co-operative principle. We have seen in this century the rise and fall of managerial state enterprise of both the Marxist and the Fabian variety, and we have seen the triumph of international capitalism with its continual aim of eliminating labour or buying it in the cheapest world market. The only known alternative to both is the mutual aid principle expressed in the organisational form we call co-operation. So we have to find ways of making it work for

people in the twenty-first century.

But I have to return briefly to the significance of Kropotkin's attempt, a century ago, in drawing your attention to the confirmation of his views in the well-known recent book by Robert Putnam, Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. I am told that this book, with its careful research over many years, has provided the occasion for much political discussion in Italy. I will say nothing about this. What I want to draw to your attention is the striking confirmation these authors provide for Kropotkin's historical survey of the mutual aid principle in the middle ages and in the nineteenth century. Putnam and his colleagues, you will remember, found that "the regions characterised by civic involvement in the late twentieth century are almost precisely the same regions where co-operatives and cultural associations and mutual aid societies were most abundant in the nineteenth century, and where neighbourhood associations and religious confraternities and guilds had contributed to the flourishing communal republics of the twelfth century".

Mutual aid institutions have something more than their functional value. They are a measure and an indicator of the health of any society.

Colin Ward

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Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, 1902 (London: Freedom Press, 1987); *Il mutuo appoggio* (Salerno: Roma, 1982).

Johnston Burchall, *Co-op: The People's Business* (Manchester University Press, 1994).

John Pearce, *At The Heart of the Community Economy: Community Enterprise in a Changing World* (London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1993).

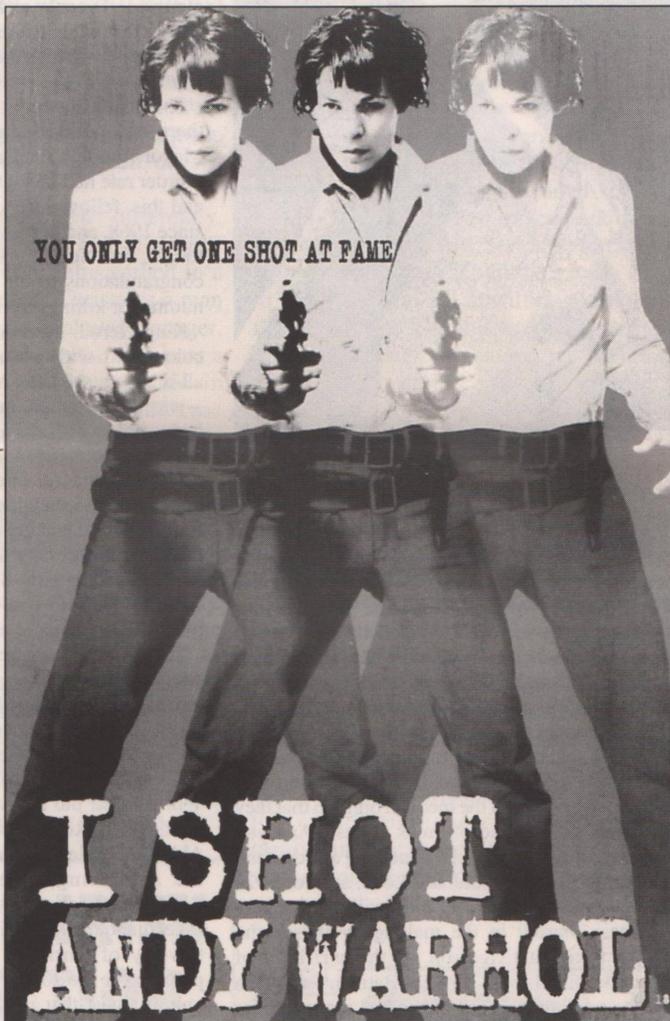
Robert Putnam, with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993).

in Terms

One example Valerie gives of so-called proof that males are inferior to females is the fact that whilst females possess two X chromosomes, males possess only one X chromosome, and instead of the second X chromosome males have a Y chromosome. From this fact Valerie proceeds along a series of steps drawing conclusions therefrom, i.e. the Y (male) gene – and depending on the typeface used this may even be graphically demonstrated to you – is an incomplete X (female) gene; the Y gene has an incomplete set of chromosomes, therefore the Y gene has something missing, therefore the male is an "incomplete female" and "a biological accident".

Well, there's something missing all right! What's missing are some of the facts about genetics, and what's been added is a generous use of the techniques of misapplying knowledge in order to push opinions and prejudices as if they were truth. Even this one example of her 'proof' that men are inferior reminds me of the scientific article published in medical journals – I think around the turn of the century – which stated that men's brains are larger than women's brains. This is a fact I would not dispute, but I do dispute the conclusion, also published at the time, which was that men are cleverer and therefore superior to women because of their larger brains. The reason I disagree with the conclusion is that a fact is missing from the equation, because there is a human brain which is even larger than a man's: namely the brain of a cretin or congenital idiot, so it is clear that the size of brain is no indication of its efficiency, efficacy or superiority. Valerie's arguments as to the superiority of her sex over the male sex are founded on equally false premises as those put forward to argue the contrary view. Invariably these arguments are based on incomplete data, selectivity of facts, distortion and/or false logic and the deliberate use of an emotive subject matter with the aim of by-passing reason.

Whilst reading her manifesto I toyed for a while with the idea that Valerie was making heavy – very heavy, it must be said – use of irony. She, to make her point, had taken the usual view of society and turned it on its head. Where men, by common consent, were taken to be biologically stronger than women she posited that they were weaker; where they were generally accepted as being superior intellectually, she depicted them as inferior; where of a higher moral standing, she painted them lower;



where spiritually purer she showed them to be sullied, and so on. Finally I could no longer ignore the relentless vitriol poured by Valerie on the male sex. In the end I just had to admit that where I had gone in search of an anarchist, I had found a fascist.

Question: What is the definition of anarcho-fascism? Answer: A contradiction in terms.

A rough guide to fascism is that it is authoritarian, judgmental and self-righteous. Furthermore, fascists are hostile to 'the other', i.e. anyone who isn't in their set as they see it. As far as anarchism goes, however, the outline I like best is that in Donald Room's book *Wildcat Strikes Again*, where Wildcat the cartoon character, in defining freedom, says: "All I want is for everybody to be able to do what they like, so long as they don't prevent others from doing the same". Hear, hear! I want a different society and I want it now! But not only do I not want it as the cost of nearly 50% of the human race, I don't want it as the cost of even one human being. And now I'm beginning to understand why critics of anarchism, during the rare moments when they are not denouncing anarchists as sinister bombers, are dismissing them as mere dreamers and utopians.

In case you were wondering: Andy Warhol did not die when Solanas shot him in 1968. At the end of *I Shot Andy Warhol* the film told how both Valerie and Andy died only ten or so years ago.

Joy Wood

RICH AND POOR

Looking through an old trunk I found some manuscripts which were either the beginning of a book or notes for one, I can no longer remember. But times have not changed all that much and I think they still have some relevance.

Anarchist society had always a romantic aspect for me. Life is short and we have only one bite at the cherry. I cannot understand, could never understand, what the point is of organised misery – in other words, the present state of society with all its petty regulations and laws – especially when I feel it is against the nature of the individual to become hard, merciless or plain stupid.

I have said before, and nobody has tried to prove me wrong, that the world is so rich that even the greatest efforts of governments cannot make it completely poor.

Certainly I have lived through a war, a young child in a big town which was carpet-bombed – this neither did a lot for my musical education nor for my nerves.

The whole town was burning. There were so many corpses on the street that death stared us in the face at every corner.

The population lived in basements. By candle-light I read *The Noble Savage* while the house shook.

My sweet mother, even in that rat-hole, was as clean as ninepins. She cared not who gazed at her, but sat in front of the mottled mirror and fussed with her appearance. "Come on", she said, "get out of that book".

We were going to the opera. Well, not exactly – the opera house was closed. What she meant was that I conducted the orchestra. That is not right either. There was only the old wind-up gramophone, a few records and a box of needles.

Going past the opera house the other day I was tempted to rush in and shout something about this to that rich crowd. I'm glad I didn't.

My nerves are not as bad as they used to be.

I did a lot of day-dreaming about that world I wanted to live in. Not the world of bombs, chaos, cholera and the rest. I could not then, and I cannot now understand who these people were who managed to screw up my existence. Their stupid laws, their ignorance, their interference. You do this, you do that. The storehouses full of food while the population starved. Their incredible schools where you learnt nothing except boredom.

I am taking bits of that old manuscript, jottings towards that definitive work that was going to say exactly what I thought. Let them pretend they do not understand.

Those schools, whoever invented them knew how to knock all sense and idealism out of the heads of little children. They taught people how to read so that they could spy on each other. Let me look at your documents. Where is your passport? It is important for us to know how much you weigh, especially we are interested in the colour of your eyes and if you could oblige us with your fingerprints, there is a good fellow. Race, religion, nationality, date of birth.

On every corner of the street there is now a surveillance camera. Not only that but they have managed to drive the whole population mad with their insane newspapers. Occupation: poisoner. Lots of jobs at the labour exchange. The hired assassins of the state. Bless this bomb and this bomber. Training is free.

For me it was waiting for anarchy. Winding up the gramophone in that long-ago dark basement in the company of that enchanting woman. It could have been your mother, but she was mine.

Perhaps one day I'll put these fragments together even if the language may not suit these post-modernist, zero-tolerance times.

John Rety

— ABOVE THE PARAPETS —

BAYONETS AND BANDAGES

Peregrine Worsthorpe has been sacked from his job at the *Sunday Telegraph* after 35 years. The right-wing columnist has marked his departure with a review of his work, in which he has confessed, for example, that he is now ashamed of his past support for Enoch Powell's stand on "coloured immigration" — a subject on which Worsthorpe admits to having written "a lot of wicked nonsense". On other issues, however, he has not changed his mind. Regarding the US assault on Vietnam, Worsthorpe is quite candid:

"My America, right or wrong, that was basically my view — a mirror-image of the British fellow-travellers' attitude to the Soviet Union. If the Americans had not sent troops to Vietnam in the first place, it would never have occurred to me to urge them to do so. But once they had taken the fatal commitment, it did not occur to me to question it — not at any rate while there was any chance of victory. In effect, I became a propagandist for American policy, willing and eager to put the best gloss on everything they did ... With the cold war safely won, the role of propagandist may seem unworthy of a journalist. Most emphatically, however, that was not how I saw it at the time, when it seemed unworthy of a journalist to try to be anything else." (Emphasis added.)

Would that Worsthorpe and his colleagues would be so honest while they are in the process of churning out their propaganda. (Note in particular Worsthorpe's admission that "while there was any chance of victory" in Vietnam, the idea of questioning US policy never occurred to him — the stance of mainstream liberals as well as reactionaries, as it happens.)

I was reminded by all this of the most extraordinary newspaper editorial I have ever read (and which I reproduced in *Gulf Crisis Weekly* at the time), in which Worsthorpe argued against allowing the televising of war. While the camera can record the "disgusting horror" of one man bayoneting another, it cannot, Worsthorpe argued, do justice to "all the ennobling stirrings that can lead a man to steel his will to the point where he can tear

another man's guts out with a clear conscience". "In this respect", Worsthorpe concluded, "making war has something in common with making love. Neither action looks as good as it feels."

All this was written on the eve of the 1991 Gulf War. Six years later, the war continues. The UN Food and Agricultural Organisation reported in December 1995 — over a year ago — that economic sanctions had killed more than 560,000 Iraqi children. Water and sanitation systems continue to deteriorate; food rations are insufficient; and the health service, once the envy of the Middle East, operates at a fraction of its capacity. This is less visible than a bayonet in the guts, but no less deadly. As of last December, Iraq is now allowed export oil to the tune of \$4 billion a year, with over half of it deducted to meet UN expenses and compensation requirements. Roughly two billion dollars a year may sound like a lot, but it is actually one-third of what was recommended as necessary for basic human needs in July 1991 by an expert team sent to Iraq by the then UN Secretary General. The Security Council never acted on the recommendations of that group.

There are those who have not forgotten the plight of the Iraqi people. The 'Voices in the Wilderness' campaign in the USA, organised largely by Kathy Kelly of the Gulf Peace Team, deliberately and publicly breaks sanctions by exporting medical supplies to Iraq without a license from the US Treasury Department: "We are governed not by rules that license people to bring aid to people in need, but rather by compassion". Compassion, honesty and commitment. Worsthorpe may have had a belated (and rather limited) attack of honesty on his 'retirement', but he still has a lot to learn about the basic moral values he and his ilk love to pontificate about.

Milan Rai

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e-mail at kkelly@igc.apc.org.

INTERNATIONAL PROTEST CAMP IN SUMMER 1997, RUSSIA

In 1996, the anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, the radical environmental movement 'Rainbow Keepers' renewed its anti-nuclear activity. In April, on the day of the Chernobyl anniversary, activists in Kiev from Rainbow Keepers and from other environmental groups blockaded the Ukrainian Ministry with the slogan 'Stop Nuclear Expansion in the Ukraine'. The militia attacked the protesters, five of whom were arrested. In August Rainbow Keepers organised a strong campaign against resumption of the building of the Rostov nuclear power station. After five weeks of vicious struggle with actions in many parts of the Rostov region, Rainbow Keepers succeeded in making the local authorities reject their plans for immediate completion of this nuclear plant. But the problem still has to be decided finally, and a major international campaign is therefore planned.

Wide support is essential. We need your personal participation and support. We are planning an active campaign from 15th July to 15th August 1997 and are asking European environmental and anarchist groups to try to avoid organising international actions for the same time period, and to include our action in your calendars.

Rainbow Keepers is a radical environmental movement which acts in the former USSR territory and beyond, and is known for its uncompromising struggle in defence of the environment. It uses methods of sabotage and holds popular summer camps of protest. The movement has a profile as

high as Greenpeace, yet has no permanent budget and/or paid staff.

You have a unique possibility to participate in our summer camp of protest, in workshops and discussions near a bonfire, in blockades and demonstrations and, maybe, if you're lucky, you'll get to visit a Russian jail. You can be sure you'll have a chance to make acquaintance with the militia and NPP security forces at least. Rostov is located more than 1,000km from Moscow, and the Rostov nuclear power station is about 150km from Rostov.

If you want to participate in this action, please inform the working group beforehand so that we can prepare an official invitation for you in time. Also, we ask you to consider supporting us in any way you can — finance, publicity, etc. — and to spread this information as widely as possible. For additional information and any other questions, please contact members of the working group personally to avoid misunderstandings.

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Condensed by Patrick Nicholson from an original article in the internet newsgroup 'gen.anarchism'.

FOR MY GREATER GOOD!

The lives of mass murderers and poets make dull reading for its interest, whatever interest there may be, lies in their exposé as rather odd characters whom one would lean on a pub bar with but hesitate to be seen in their company by the mass readership of *Freedom*. The observation of their lives is a meaningless occupation for all seem to be cut from the same cloth.

Of the murderers singular, or in the mass, they prove to be woeful characters with a working class

buried the bodies in the cellar, and during all that time Fred and Rosemary were fun folk in Gloucester's Cromwell Street wherein murder was no more than a means to an end, and that end was sexual pleasure.

There have always been those who kill as no more than a necessity in pursuit of a particular need, and no more so than in the matter of Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker in America's early 1930s. In the era of Dillinger, Pretty Boy Floyd, Machine Gun Kelly, the Ma Baker Gang and the dead-pan Karpis, Bonnie and Clyde roamed the American midwest living off small-time hold-ups, and in the performance of those small-time hold-ups they killed and killed as soldiers would as no more than military-styled logistics in that if the need arose then shoot to kill, and in doing so they went like a scythe through corn in a trail of death. Yet historians of the period all agree that the killing of civilians and law officers went with the territory of kill or be killed. They are now ranked with Billy the Kid, and in Hollywood's cast list there is always a fresh film script demanded of them.

Not so fun-loving Fred West for, though he went chicken and hung himself, public opinion and the tabloids cry nay, nay, at the thought of fun-loving Fred's dark claim to fame being filmed. Come the stench of wealth, it will be, and take its place alongside Dracula and Jack the Ripper, and who knows that while Rosemary tarts up her prison cell she may yet be called upon to act as technical adviser.

The stench of murder is but a matter of degree and there was political applause in New York when Mayor Rudolph Giuliani applauded that the 1996 murder rate had fallen to only 983 unlawful deaths and this, fellow voters, for a fall for the first time since 1968, and to show his appreciation Randolph toured the New York police precincts to offer congratulations to the 'boys', yet the greater the number of killings the easier it is to accept.

King Herod, according to Hollywood — in full colour and with a cast of thousands all-singing all-dancing, see the Christians thrown to the lions — was a fun person, but for political necessity he had to hold a national referendum and a nationwide ideological ethnic political cleansing of the Israelite first-born, and no one can believe that Herod's policy of mass slaughter of children was malicious for in all these matters it was no more than a matter of political necessity and then back to the grapes and the dancing girls. Stirner, as ever, was right, for whatever you do you do in pure self-interest, no matter what the pain, no matter what the pleasure.

The life, for no particular reason at all, of the late Aleister Crowley who was born in 1875 and made his way to the Satanic Kingdom in 1947 feet-first, should be held up as a mirror to us all. Denounced in full tabloid on the front page of a national newspaper as 'The Most Wickedest Man in the World', dear old Aleister sweated like a dog on a hot day to make contact with Satan, yea even in his Abbey of Thelema at Cefalu in Sicily going through the Ace, King, Queen of the Satanic Mass "deliberate wickedness, pursuit of evil for its own sake, diabolical disposition; worship of Satan, with travesty of Christian forms" and Aleister was prepared to go to the very depths of hell in his unholy quest that he sacrificed a cat on his DIY Abbey altar and no Lucifer, Son of the Morning, turned with the collecting plate.

People kill and kill for various reasons, and always for the greater good. Leopold and Loeb killed a small boy to prove their superiority, Brady and Hindley killed children to demonstrate to themselves their Nazi-style superiority, the boys in the American midwest to out-gun the law, Fred and Rosemary killed the innocent young for fun and Herod for political necessity. Aleister Crowley, the wickedest man in the world, killed a cat to look into hell. They all succeeded.

Arthur Moyse



background, socially isolated, seeking their revenge against a society they believe is treating them ill. The drear facade of the houses that house them, be it working terraces or faceless soul-destroying red-brick council house, and the shadowed streets or dirt country lane that is their jungle of the night. The rich do not purge with killing their emotional conflicts for they can pay willing partners for relief, and for them only an emotional squabble leads to mayhem and the best legal brains that money can buy for the short stay in the open prison and the medical opinion that they must, and are, in need of quick release. And you will stand up at the back of the meeting and demand to know what of Leopold and Loeb, sons of 1924 Chicago dollar millionaire, and I will say that here was mass murder in the making by those who sought their justification in the writings of Nietzsche and his post-superior Batman Superman and their failure to conform to the mass murder pater pattern was ruined by their incompetence, time for their dark flowering as mass murderers and pa's dollar cash to hire Darrow for the defence with his 'the rich are as entitled to justice as the poor' leaving a vacant chair in Chicago's death house.

What almost all mass murderers have in common is a need to rationalise and justify their dreary murders of the innocent, be it to cleanse the streets of harlots or to prove to a weak and corrupt society that they are superior individuals above society's law or that perverted men or women flaunt their sexual poison and in that dark night of their souls they walk the darkness of that night to kill and kill for the good of society. Thus spoke Hitler, thus spoke Stalin, murder in the mass in the darkness of the country lane or the barren wilderness of the town's ill-lit streets. And it is always the greater evil for the greater good and we, in the spew of that evil, are the greater good.

Judge Gerald Sparrow wrote of Ian Brady and Myra Hindley that "the trial of Ian Brady and Myra Hindley for murder, arising out of the sadistic torture of children from which they derived their sexual satisfaction, revealed the cruelest and most horrific crime of perverted passion of the twentieth century" and with the best of intent the good judge was wrong, for he had yet to meet Fred and Rosemary. Without any sense of social well-being, Fred and Rosemary West murdered the young and innocent for no more than pure sexual pleasure. As the score mounted, so they followed tradition and

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Who Minds the Minders?

Dear *Freedom*,

Malcolm Ledger (25th January) criticises Chris Platts (30th November) for "failing to make any distinction whatever between acts which are affectionate and loving, freely accepted and given, and those which involve force". On the face of it this could sound like a reasonable argument, but can we look closer at the assumption "freely accepted and given" as it applies to the involvement of children in sexual acts with adults.

The use of obvious force is by no means the defining criteria of abuse in this sphere. Working in the NHS with adult survivors of sexual abuse, this question of 'maybe I asked for it' seems to me to cause the most lasting torment. Sometimes the coercion is obvious – the child does not resist because of the power relationship with the adult or actual fear for themselves or others, mother, sib, pet, etc.) if they do not cooperate. But often there are more subtle forces on children – where a parental figure is cold, rejecting and emotionally barren or absent, dead, ill, depressed or too worn out to be able to give care to the child. If the only attention available comes as part of a sexual interaction, then the child may appear to 'want it' at some level. What this child really wants, and has a right to receive, is the attention and tender touching, feeling loved and special without having to pay with their body. As the abusing figure often appears as a rescuer from an otherwise arid emotional desert, the child may love, wish to please and see the world from this powerful adult's point of view. The abuser can then manipulate this love to fit in to his/her own distorted ideas of what is 'good' for the child.

The issue of 'enjoyment' is further complicated when the body of a sexually stimulated child responds physiologically with normal pleasurable feelings, even though the child is psychologically distressed by what he/she is being forced to experience.

So when there is talk of how many children enjoy sex with adults, we must question whether this can really be informed consent or whether the wholly natural desire of the child to be lovingly touched has been distorted into this no-win choice. It is the adult who has the experience to define the boundary and, if they cause the

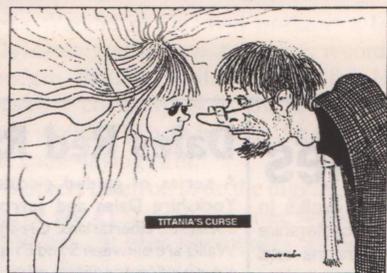
child to cross it, then let them be in no doubt that to rob a child of non-sexualised love, tenderness and a childhood is to do them harm.

On the question of what is to be done with abusers, we could at least try to understand, like the Amerindians, that these are also human beings – once children – but damaged themselves, usually through no fault of their own. Is there a way to use some of this philosophy of teaching and healing – with an eye on the past to understand how things have come to be – yet keeping our children safe (especially bearing in mind the addictive nature of abusive behaviour) while treatment is given a chance?

Maybe it could be possible to set up communities, still within an imprisoned system, for those offenders who have gained insight into the damage they have done and control over their impulses, but whose best interests, nor those of any possible future victims, cannot be served by just being returned into this generally hostile, emotionally cold society of ours. Maybe this is where Amorey Gethin's idea of a minder could be used, with the recovered abuser being helped to gradually integrate into society for increasing periods of time under the close wardship of minders, returning regularly to their prison community for on-going treatment and support?

On the wider front, as David Murray sadly observes, ours is an oppressive and repressive, competitive and violent society. Maybe our only real hope is to look more closely at Amerindian cultures, the close physical contact kept with infants and children, the self-esteem from being a valued member of the community, the belief in the principle of wholeness and the inter-relatedness of all things, and see if we can learn some wisdom before it is too late.

Eileen Brierley



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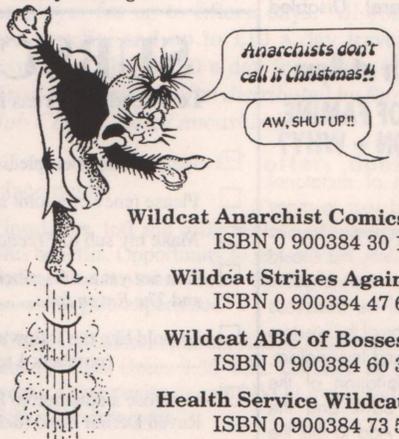
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Positive vision needed

Dear *Freedom*,

I just want to comment on how good the new *Freedom* looks. And the contents are the usual high standard.

A brief response to Libertarian. I was using 'anarchist programme' in a figurative sense. Of course we don't need more programmes, but there is a permanent anarchist 'programme', i.e. the emphasis on mutual aid, solidarity and reciprocity. In my opinion we should be offering this 'programme' as an alternative to the faltering state capitalism. One example only: as mentioned in an article by Colin Ward in *The Raven* No. 3 ('The Path Not Taken'), about half the workforce had medical insurance through mutual aid societies. The problem was that the other half were too poor to pay the premiums. Rather than subsidise the poor, the state, in an obvious power-grab, nationalised the mutualist societies. Wouldn't it be wise to reconsider the use of mutual aid societies – plus subsidies for the poor – rather than prop up the statist system?

Nor am I an academic – I am a cleaner in a hospital and before that worked for many years in warehousing, nor as a pacifist, am I a Class War type. As for utopianism, nothing I have written in *Freedom* during the past ten years could be even remotely construed as utopian. Nor do I think convincing people that "the world is rotten to the core" will do anything more than create the sort of cynicism that leads to passivity. What people need is a positive vision, not more doom and gloom – they get enough of that already from the mass media.

Larry Gambone

Lord of the Flies

Dear Editors,

I want to respond to Steve Cullen's letter (*Freedom*, 11th January 1997) referring to Colin Ward's interesting piece on Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. I taught the novel for years and used the experience of the Tonganese boys, Golding's own remarks in an interview and in essays, and A.S. Neill's comments in discussions.

One of the local newspapers here [Vancouver, Canada] ran a short account of the boys from Tonga who were stranded on an island for fifteen months which Colin Ward mentions. The writer was impressed by three things: the boys were healthy "though naked" (which may have something to do with our climate as well as the writer's peculiar moral position), they collected rain-water but drank the blood of seagulls when there was no rain (they also ate the gulls), and they maintained an accurate calendar for the fifteen months (which must have appealed to the writer's need for order).

One of my students wrote to the headmaster of the school in Tonga and received a reply. The headmaster, who wrote as if he were trained in the English tradition and signed MA after his name, was caught between his admiration for the boys' ingenuity and his need to remind my student that they were bad boys: they had stolen a local fisherman's boat and wrecked it.

I reproduced Neill's letter to Colin Ward for my class (it appeared in *Anarchy* 59). It is an excellent short analysis of the novel. He speculates early on that the reason the novel jumped onto reading lists for schools, colleges and universities almost from the month of its publication (and stayed there, in some cases, right up to the present) is the novel fits exactly with the prejudice of most established authority and obedient citizenry who automatically assume that murderous savagery is natural to humans and only avoided by adult authority and training. A bit later he writes: "Golding might have introduced at least one girl to soften the hateful hearts, but a girl would have spoiled his pet thesis – that boys are born original sinners and can only be saved by the stern discipline of grown-ups", but he hastens to add "that some suppressed school-girls might also have joined the hunting gang". Neill concludes that Golding knew nothing of human nature: as "child psychologist [he] is conventional, establishment, backward-looking. Freud, Homer Lane, Aichhorn, might never have lived. The book could well have been written decades before child psychology came on the map!"

I disagree only with Neill's comment that "the characters, barring the little 'uns, live".

The Anti-Election Campaign

Dear *Freedom*,

So the anti-election campaign has started and I dare say it will achieve what it sets out to do. Sadly the same could not be said for a mass de-selection campaign – probably the finest objective that we could hope to embark upon. But why not?

It's all very well to refuse to give *them* our vote, but surely the trick is to use our 'democratic' powers of election to usurp the process. To clarify quite how much the political system is despised I would suggest that people should go out and register their vote – let's have a mass campaign of spoiled votes, a telling vote against governance. If everyone who doesn't want to vote did this the politicians and the state would be in question. Hell, we might even get an anarchist mandate (I imagine the Tories would join in the calls for proportional representation then).

This will be my first time at the polling booths. A vote against the system has far more to offer than my usual abstention – it demonstrates a clear anti-parliamentary stance.

James Darrington

They are, in my view, mere names, symbols, moved around like wooden chess pieces by Golding to make his own point that beneath the thin veneer of 'civilisation' imposed on the boys by adult society is the savagery presented in the novel as human nature. The voice in the novel is always the carefully controlling voice of the author presenting his thesis, and his characters never escape him into life.

In an interview shortly after the book became a hit, Golding explained all this, adding that the epileptic boy, Simon, he intended as a sort of Christ figure. Golding was himself a headmaster in a boys' public school; he said that one of his functions was to grab two boys by the collar in the moment before they tried to murder each other. Steve Cullen may have found in his reading of the novel some criticism of established society which Golding didn't know he had put there. Some of my students did, but many of them saw Neill's point. I suspect that Golding would answer that the chaos of war was the consequence of the lack of stern adult education for all, a last resort defence of civilisation as he saw it.

I was in Golding's presence twice – I won't say I knew him. Some time in the early '70s, I think, he was invited to lecture at the University of British Columbia on a subject of his choice for what was then a very large fee. He read an essay from a book he published two years earlier! Because I had a local reputation as an exponent of Neill's ideas who often used *Lord of the Flies* as a negative example to make my argument, I was invited to a reception after the reading and was introduced to Golding as an opponent. Apart from one or two other low-ranking academics like me, the rest of the crowd was made up of university and school administrators and members of the local establishment. Golding was so pompous and full of himself that after a couple of polite opening remarks by me, Golding made it clear he wasn't interested in a discussion and turned to a more genial and admiring audience. The other occasion was at a literary conference in Cornwall where he and his wife, as Sir William and Lady Golding, decorated the head table at an opening dinner where he preened as the convenor told a story about Sir William's irritation when one of those apocryphal 'Americans' called him, of all things, Bill. Of course, this time I found more interesting people and did not re-introduce myself. My view is that there is nothing about the novel which is anything more than symptomatic of a disturbed society. As for the author, he may be a very nice man at home and abroad, but I didn't see that quality.

John R. Doheny

Dear *Freedom*,

Please accept the enclosed cheque towards the anti-election campaign. I'm sorry I can't manage more.

I like the new *Freedom*. It's a very good read. You'll be pleased to hear that I've never voted in my life, but I always go to the polling station and spoil my voting paper (I don't want to be thought apathetic) – I just write 'I'd rather think for myself'.

With very best wishes from one of your oldest supporters (now 82).

Olive Markham

Freedom editors comment: We thank those readers who have contributed to the anti-election campaign outlined in our last issue. All contributions will be acknowledged in these pages and used to enable *Freedom* and other Freedom Press publications to be advertised and sold up and down the land during the run-up to the election. Our traditional case against voting is clearly stated in *The Raven* no. 14 on voting, details of which are given elsewhere in this issue. Here we print two readers' ideas on how to oppose the election, with the intention of opening a discussion in these columns

BOLTON

Monday 10th February at 10.30am
Demo against workfare (Project Work) at
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North West Against JSA co-ordinating
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- 1997 PROGRAMME -

14th February General discussion

21st February Searchlight for Beginners
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pamphlet)

28th February General discussion

7th March Who to Vote For? (speaker Adrian
Williams)

14th March General discussion

21st March Politics and the Ethical Void
(Steve Booth will introduce his new pamphlet)

28th March General discussion

4th April Anarchism and History (speaker
David Probart)

11th April General discussion

Anyone interested in giving a talk or leading a
discussion, please contact Carol Saunders or
Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville
at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth,
Middlesex TW7 4AW (telephone 0181-847
0203 subject to caller display and an answer
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powers, first through slavery and imperialism,
and then through the exploitation of the
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International Monetary Fund. Add to this the
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- and you have a recipe for disaster.

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