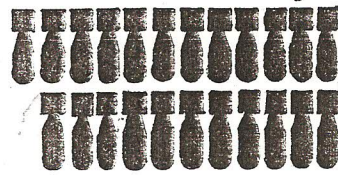
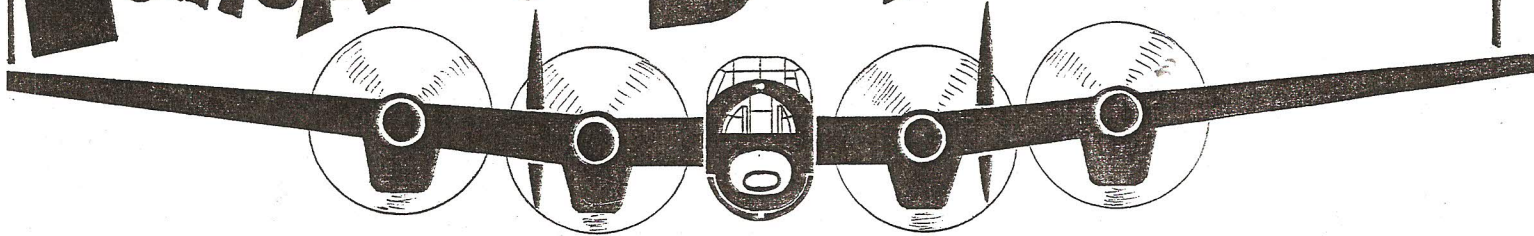


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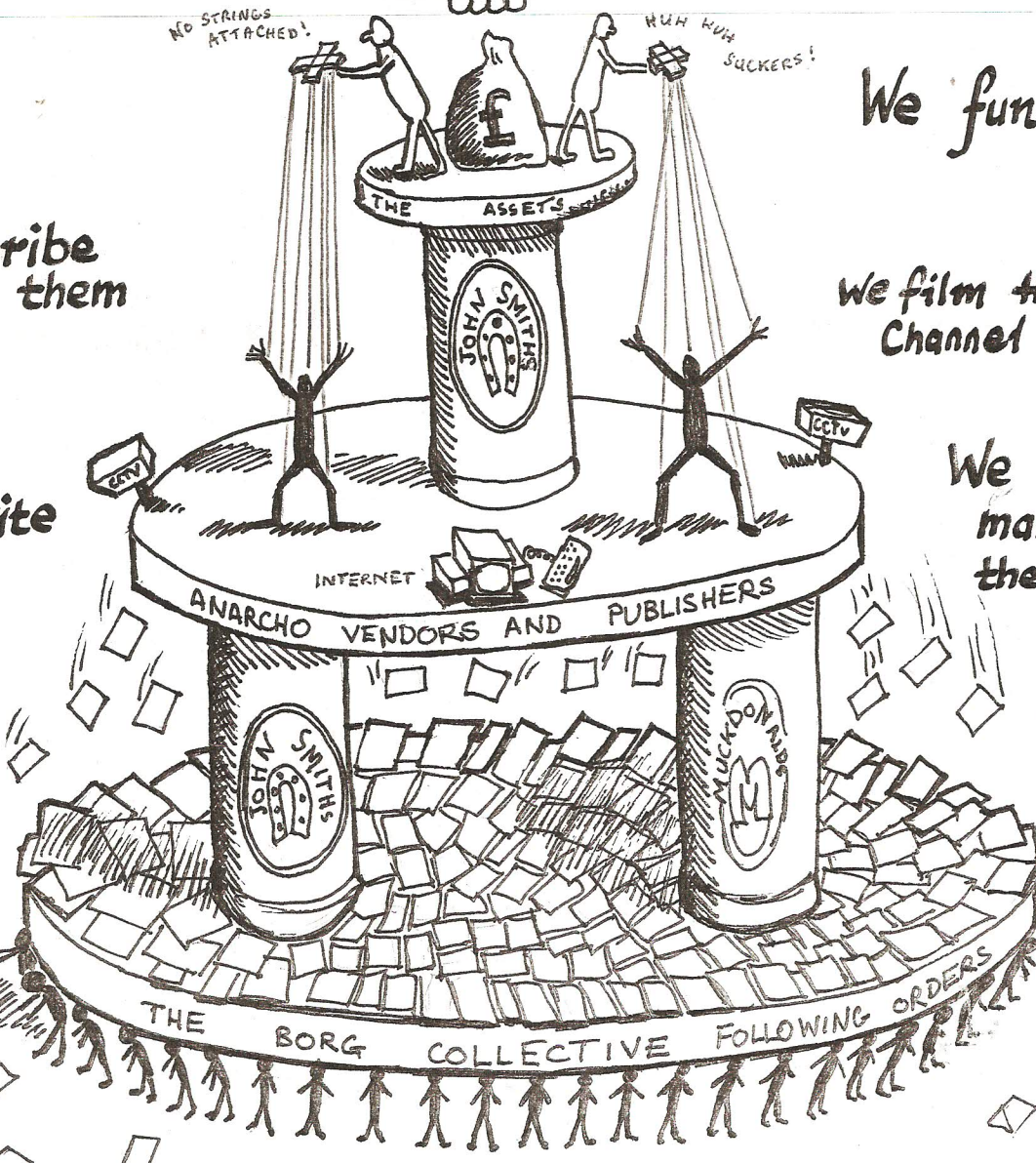
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ANARCHISM is CRUSHED

THE SOCIAL GENE

RICHARD FROST, 28, ISBN: 09534529-0-5
Cereberus, Nately Road, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, 149 pps

Who are we? What are we? Where are we heading? On one level this book is a kind of explanation, an etiology, a genealogy of genes; but on another, more important level, it is a plea or mini-manifesto for Social Anarchism. What Richard Frost wants is a gradual devolution of power to the lowest level. This begins with local councils. Power has to find its own level. Once this happens, communities gain self-confidence to deal with problems in their own ways. People find solutions themselves, but up to now they have been crippled by bureaucracy and robbed blind by leaders, kings, religions, fat cats. The answer must be applied gradually, step-by-step, so as 'not to frighten the natives'. In this way, power itself is to eventually be abolished, disappearing slowly 'like the grin on the Cheshire Cat'.

There is a lot in here that GA readers will find congenial. 'The Social Gene' is an optimistic book. Frost's vision of Social Anarchism is inevitable, he believes; the only way humanity can thrive and prosper. It is the sort of programme members of the Green Party and people advocating 'Small is Beautiful' would go for.

Beyond this, Richard Frost opposes the Richard Dawkins' 'Selfish Gene'. Dawkins is merely a biological restatement of Thatcherism or the economics of Adam Smith. Ideology harnessed to oppression. We move across into territory familiar to Primitivists and GA readers generally; the Kalahari Bushmen, primitive affluence, Marshall Sahlins, archaeology and anthropology. Frost himself admits his own indebtedness to Peter Kropotkin's 'Mutual Aid', and on this level 'The Social Gene' a little bit like a replay of the war of words between T H Huxley and Kropotkin. Against Dawkins' battle of the genes, Frost believes in an innate co-operation between people. We are inherently social. Morality, ie social behaviour is determined at a genetic level.

Do we have to buy this genetic explanation? At the microscopic level, we have the nitty gritty details of the interactions. At the macroscopic (the Big Picture) the genes do not see where the whole is heading. Humanity has the capacity to transcend all that - we can see how the cumulative effect of commuting and the school run is Global Warming, El Nino, ozone layer depletion. There is a break between our intention, the act, its consequences. The genetic 'explanation' doesn't get us further than saying 'it is because it is'. One is left with the suspicion that the theory might be circular or banal.

Under the Dawkins / Thatcherite theory, altruism is a bad strategy, cheating is better. The cheats prosper, riding on the backs of the altruists, but if this were true, Frost says the cheats would overpopulate to the point where altruism is no longer a good bet.

The paradigm breaks down - flips over. Against Dawkins, Frost declares for 'the survival of the fit enough', or 'survival of the ordinary'. Key here is that populations moderate their numbers below the maximum level sustainable on resources, investing the surplus in evolutionary experimentation.

This 'primitive affluence' is seen as the natural way of things, but humans invented culture, turning this around, pushing the myth of scarcity as a 'justification' for the leadership controlling the resources, and setting the mass of the pliant populations on to the civilization treadmill, feeding the rulers' palaces, circuses and wars. Our genetically programmed sociality, conformity and obedience is our undoing.

We find a mild critique of civilization here; Frost calls it a 'slow inferno' (page 30) 'a rod for our backs'. The civilization of Athens is 'stained with the slaves' blood'. Murray Bookchin can put that in his pipe and smoke it! Politics itself is neatly defined as 'the science of oppression' (p 98), a way of managing social control. Every solution has to 'kick at the foundation of oppression'.

The main weakness of this book is not its content as such but its form - a kind of prose-poetry. Some would reject it out of hand because of this, yet it is readable:

Almost every marvel and monstrosity of civilization
Has been driven by the need
To waste resources because -
And this was where blind faith took over -
There wasn't enough to go around.

(page 36)

The 'poetry' is saved by its good humour and its optimism. We can see the common sense of what he is arguing for, 'a modest proposal for anarchism' - what he calls 'revolutionary subsidiarity'. Dick Frost admits his uncertainty about how we get there 'I am dead weak on the transition to an appropriate form of production', but it has to start in the small scale, the modest detail of things, the local. The very reasonable-ness of the tone of this book is its strongest point.

Stephen Bookchin

EDUCATION AND THE MEDIA MISREPRESENTATION OF ANARCHISM

Two reasons why the State is able to get away with the persecution of radicals, as with the Gandalf case are: (1) prejudicial images of anarchism in the media, and (2) the total lack of education in schools about anarchism.



To counter this I am putting forwards two proposals:

(A) That anarchists campaign for fair representation of anarchism in the media.

For two long 'anarchy' has been used as a synonym for violent disorder, and anarchists have been caricatured as 'Mr Verloc'-type bomb throwers.

We call upon the anarchophobic media to stop this biased, negative propaganda.

(B) That all anarchists campaign and lobby for the case for anarchism to be taught in schools.

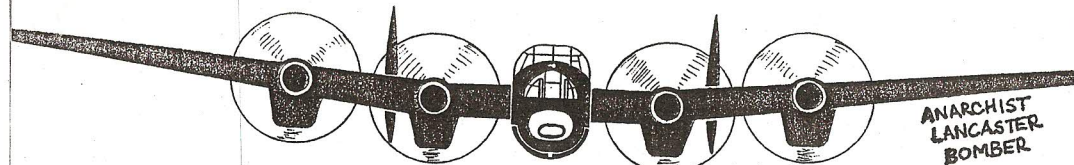
We are not asking for children to be indoctrinated about anarchism, but simply that a fair presentation about anarchism be made.

Sexism and racism are not tolerated in schools, and rightly so. Anarchism and radical politics are not even on the agenda. The education system is silent about us. Yet we exist, we are a valid part of human experience, and so ought to be taught.



We believe that both of these requests will be either ignored or ridiculed by the State-controlled puppet media and education authorities. This would not be so in any reasonable and democratic society. The system has a vested interest in keeping children in ignorance. Merely to make these requests exposes their one-sided ideology and bias.

**GREEN ANARCHIST,
BCM 1715, LONDON WC1N 3XX**



STOP THE SECOND GANDALF TRIAL

On Monday 2ND November 1998, the second Gandalf trial start in Portsmouth. Robin Webb, the ALF Press Officer, & Paul Rogers of Green Anarchist, are on trial for daring to report animal-rights activities, protests, anti road campaigns, and others.

The first Gandalf trial, August/November 1997, followed on from 'Operation Washington' - 60 police officers, £4M, to stamp out alternative magazines. Three of us, Saxon Wood, Noel Mollana and myself, were jailed, but eventually released after widespread international protest at this attack on free speech.

Please write to your MP, or Tony Blair. Write to Jack Straw in protest at this outrage against free speech. Please write to Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, Hants, SO23 8UG, protesting against this blatant totalitarianism and complete waste of rate-payers' money. Please join our protests against this injustice.

Steve Booth

WE DEMAND

FREE SPEECH NOW!

*London Greenpeace Gandalf Support Campaign,
Panther House, 38 Mountpleasant, London WC1X 0AP
Green Anarchist, BM 1715, London WC1N 3XX*

