

CAPITALIST PATRIOTISM

'BUT NOT AT OUR EXPENSE'

— Lord Matthews.

THIS year's season of Whitehall farces continues to milk the Falkland tragedy for all it's worth.

Ever since the cad leapt out of the closet to snatch Britannia's treasure, catching, in true farcical fashion, the Foreign Office with its trousers down, the drama has been wound up for the gaping audience and the bathos laid on with a trowel as it turned out that the spear-carrying extras also carried the can.

The stars, however, have not done too badly, as is to be expected. Margaret Thatcher's own star shone brighter than ever, to such an extent that everybody expected her to call an Autumn election. She has, so it is said, decided not to — for which she undoubtedly deserves ten out of ten for not being an opportunist. And that should be worth a few votes on its own.

For the country's other leading patriots too, the pride and the passion has paid handsomely. Of the daily newspapers which supported Thatcher to hysterical proportions, none was more vociferous (with the possible exception of the execrable *Sun*) than the *Daily Express*, which always speaks for the poor dumb British people, unable to speak for themselves.

Such is the concentration of capital today that a newspaper baron is not content to be simply that — which for most of us would be quite enough. No, it so happens that Lord Matthews, who now owns the *Daily Express*, etc, also owns (or his company does) the Cunard shipping line, which sprang into its national service with eyes gleaming at the opportunity to serve the country by getting some of its laid-up ships out of mothballs and into the gravy.

The best thing that could happen to one of Cunard's ships — the Atlantic Conveyor — did in fact happen. It was sunk.

It was of course insured. It was due to get compensation from the 'Intervention Fund'. The Ministry of Defence was willing to contribute to the building of a replacement vessel — and the Department of Industry was ready with a substantial sum from the home shipbuilding credit scheme, if the new ship were to be built in Britain.

Ay, there's the rub. Having a ship built in Britain costs many millions more than getting it built in, say, Korea. So the highly patriotic Lord Matthews, whose publications screamed blue murder against the Argies (unfortunately not selling all that many extra papers every day in spite of that . . .) was not prepared to put his hand in his capacious pocket (wearing his Cunard hat) to give jobs to British ship-builders.

It was then he uttered his immortal words:

'I am as anxious as anyone that it should be built in Britain, but not at our expense.'

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT WITH PUBLIC MONEY

Then another factor entered the arena. In spite of Mrs Thatcher's appeal to the noble Lord to put patriotism before profit (ha, ha!), it was the dockers and portworkers who came out and said they would black ALL Cunard ships, including the gallant and heroic QE2, if Matthews insisted on buying Korean.

Fortunately it will not come to that. Our monetarist Government, with its hard face set firmly, as though in cold porridge, against spending public money

— especially for something as unprofitable as a National Health Service — decided that, after all, in this special case, it can reach into the coffers and give Lord Matthews' company something between 10 and 15 million pounds (of *our* money!) so that he could do the decent thing and get his bloody boat built in Britain.

It would of course not be a simple replacement of the old one that was destroyed. It would be a modern, labour-saving ship and, more important, it would be of such design that it could be very rapidly converted for military use in the event of another crisis like the Falklands suddenly blowing up (no pun intended).

Meanwhile, among the lower orders, patriotism is not paying off quite so well. Merchant seamen coming back home and getting rather less than a hero's welcome, are finding that they are coming back to the dole. Now they are back to real life, they are finding that being British was a prime qualification for going to the South Atlantic battle ground — but back home it means that their rates of pay are far too high, in view of the fact that their work can be done by cheaper Asian workers. Nor will there be much help from the National Union of Seamen, since the union gets a handout from the employers for every cheap Asian employed on a ship carrying the British flag (but not on those flying flags of convenience).

And on top of that the Government has now reneged on its promise of a big bonus for seamen going south of Ascension Island into a 'military' zone. Many are still there — but not on bonus pay.

Governments have to consist of liars, and as for patriotism? The FIRST refuge of scoundrels!

PS

WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL

TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE, Perugia, 26–30 July

THE most constructive of gatherings of activists — particularly international ones — should not be judged in terms of motions passed or recommendations agreed. Much less should they be judged in terms of formality, constitutional amendments and the like, though there are apparently many (normally of a Marxist-type persuasion) who seem to be fascinated by such things.

No — it is in the informal meetings between friends old and new that happen 'between sessions'; ironically — or perhaps not — it would seem that some kind of fairly formal framework — a chairperson, translation facilities in the case of international gatherings (and the simultaneous headphone translations provided at the War Resister's Triennial Conference were excellent) and the normal rules of polite discussion that often seem to be despised (wrongly in my view) by some anarchists — all this is necessary in order to create an environment in which the informality can flourish into real usefulness rather than degenerate into purposelessness.

This is especially true when the conference is only a week long — long enough for relationships between participants to be established, but not long enough to permit of too much self-indulgence. My only comparable experience is the anarchist summer camps — I have been to two of them — which last a month or more and permit of a more expansive and self-indulgent mood.

In addition to the plenary sessions, there were small working-groups where, in my view, most of the real work was done. There were groups on Ireland, the Middle East, Feminism and Non-violence, Non-violent Civilian Defence and more — all of them led by people of great knowledge of and personal experience in the various areas under discussion. I cannot report in a too detailed way upon these except to say that the group that I attended throughout the week-long conference — that on the Organisation and Finance of the WRI — was excellently run and a focus for much disciplined thought and hard work. (The anarchist movement often seems to me to lack a certain self-discipline and capacity for hard work; but the international pacifist movement also lacks certain attributes that anarchists tend to possess in greater abundance. It's a pity we cannot learn from each other).

There were also four main speakers during the week. Henk Branderhorst and Bram van der Lek on anti-militarism; Beverley Woodward producing an excellent presentation at incredibly short notice on Militarism and the Third World when

Mary Kaldor was unable to attend; Johan Galtung from the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo; and most significantly for me at least, Narayan Desai on the Structures of Domination.

Narayan's speech may have been 'only' a restatement of the fundamentals of non-violence, 'only' a re-application of Gandhian philosophy 35 years on, but it was a re-affirmation made with such poetry and eloquence that it was singularly refreshing after the much (albeit important) dryer and more detailed work of the conference both in plenary and in workgroups.

Through Narayan's speech it was possible to trace the Gandhian influence on such important contemporary thinkers as Schumacher and Illich; and although Gandhi has (rightly) come under some fire in anarchist circles for his dogmatism and authoritarianism, in my view anarchists who reject his ideas as uncritically as some pacifists accept them, do Gandhi and themselves as big a disservice as the latter.

To focus on Narayan's speech for a moment — it was, as I say, for me (and I suspect for others attending the conference too) the high spot of the week; he began by commenting on the outdatedness of the traditional Marxist analysis of Structures of Oppression; and then he identified seven separate inter-related structures of oppression: Political, Religious, Cultural, Sexist, Economic, Racial and Statist (to which some thought that Ageist might add an eighth); he also defined seven contemporary social evils — with which some anarchists and certainly myself would take some exception. These were: — Politics without Principles, Wealth without Work, Pleasure without Conscience, Knowledge without Character, Science without Humanity, Commerce without Morality, Worship without Sacrifice. To which we might add an eighth — commitment without humility (a humility which alone can give rise to a tolerance and compassion that I believe are essential to a revolutionary). The social evils listed above all smack at first sight of a certain puritanism; but at second sight, when one thinks about them more deeply, this can only be said of Worship without Sacrifice. More correctly one could say, as an anarchist, that Politics is *always* without principle and Commerce is *always* without morality. Such points of basic disagreement were refreshing. Narayan emphasised also two vital attributes of the revolutionary that are always in short supply and go to the roots of much of the posturing that passes for revolutionary commitment

these days; one was the need for courage and the other was a much-emphasised need for what Narayan termed 'active love' — no closer definition of that is, I feel, necessary.

This may be stating the obvious — but the non-violent revolutionary movement *and* the anarchist movement (and I do differentiate between the two) are so cripplingly short on both commodities, that the obvious does seem to require re-statement.

A re-affirmation of basic principles in such an eloquent way as Narayan gave the conference acts as a 'cleansing agent' to permit one to see through the mess of detail and the greater mess of human suffering, and see more clearly the goals that lie ahead.

He did make one small point in a rather telling fashion: If three individuals of — say — an anarchist persuasion, each convinced three more of — say — *their own* anarchist vision and each of these repeated the process, the process would only have to be repeated 18 times to encompass the entire population of India!

As the song says:—
'if two and two and sixty make a million
We'll see that day come round'.
My abiding impression of this week will be of 200 friends, old and new, who worked together and learnt much from each other. It was a much-needed process of mutual refuelling and strengthening.

JH

FREE RADIO

Solidarity Call for Radio Libertaire

THE Socialist-Communist government in France has considered the matter of free radios in the Paris region. For example, the state is insisting on maintaining all the benefits of their monopoly, keeping the number of available frequencies to a minimum, if possible killing the free radios. Radio Libertaire is one of these. It is transmitted by the Anarchist Federation. !!Now they are trying to close it!!

We ask all comrades and sympathizers to send postcards and telegrams of protest to the Prime Minister. We suggest a text similar to:

'Monsieur le Premier Ministre,
Nous vous demandons d'autoriser les émissions de RADIO LIBERTAIRE comme garantie des libertés dans la diversité d'opinions.'

If you send these cards to Radio Libertaire 145 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, we will send them on to the Ministry.

The Poverty of Syndicalism

ACORRESPONDENT (Ames, 7th August) queries 'the apparent attack on Syndicalism' in our editorial about Trade Unions (10th July). We said that we 'oppose the use of trade unions as any kind of authoritarian institution, as in Syndicalist or Guild Socialist theory'. Perhaps we should explain.

Such theory envisages that the economy should be dominated by workers' organisations — called unions, or syndicates, or guilds, or collectives, or councils, or soviets — which would replace not only the present workers' organisations but also the present system of industrial and commercial ownership and management, and would run all production and distribution on the basis of workers' control. When this theory began to be put into practice in the last century, the existing workers' organisations were faced with fundamental choices between concentrating on immediate reforms or planning ultimate revolution, between supporting the new socialist parties or remaining independent of all political organisations.

At the end of the last century, some workers' organisations, especially in South-West Europe, developed 'revolutionary syndicalism' (*syndicate* meaning *union* in the Latin countries), rejecting parliamentary involvement and adopting direct action in preparation for a general strike and the social revolution. Many revolutionary syndicalists moved towards anarchism, and many anarchist communists moved towards syndicalism, the result being 'anarcho-syndicalism', combining suitable elements of the two ideologies.

The advantages of such theory and practice are obvious and significant; the disadvantages are less obvious but just as significant. The central problem is that it is difficult to keep syndicalism anarchist. The workers' organisations have very strong tendencies towards reformism, sectionism and authoritarianism. However revolutionary their ultimate aims, their immediate activity is mainly concerned

with the day-to-day struggle for short-term gains, and they develop a 'trade union mentality' in which pay and conditions have the same function as votes and elections in parliamentary parties or as meetings and demonstrations in revolutionary parties. However broad their official attitudes, their immediate activity is mainly concerned with the narrow advancement of their own members, and they develop a gang consciousness in which the enemy becomes not only the state and the bosses but also other sections of the people, other unions, and even their own minorities. However open their structures and however revocable their delegates, their permanent tendency is to fall into the hands of an intolerant majority or an unmovable bureaucracy.

These and many other issues have been debated in the anarchist movement for nearly a century. There was a classic confrontation 75 years ago, at the International Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam in August 1907, when Pierre Monatte defended and Errico Malatesta criticised Syndicalism. Malatesta, who for 35 years had supported the theory of anarchist communism and the practice of anarchist participation in the labour movement, nevertheless, warned against excessive

concentration on the workers' struggle, because libertarian organisations must be more than unions, because the social revolution must be more than the general strike, society is more than the working class, and life is more than work.

Malatesta's warning — which was often repeated, and may be found in various forms in Vernon Richards' collection *Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas* — was borne out over and over again in the later experience of the labour movement in many countries and several revolutions. As he said, if anarcho-syndicalism is predominantly anarchist, it is simply anarchism applied to the particular conditions of the labour movement; if it is predominantly syndicalist, it soon ceases to be anarchist. The libertarian struggle is not the monopoly of any single class or organisation or activity, and despite the attractions of syndicalist theory the experience of trade union practice makes most anarchists cautious about even anarcho-syndicalism: We want the right not to work as well as to work, to leave as well as to join a union, and so on. Anarchism includes but transcends anarcho-syndicalism.

NW

MUTATIONS

THE Mutants are a colony of squatters in Wales. They have had their problems in the past, for example injunctions forcing them to move from particular sites. At one stage, some local farmers became so resentful about their presence that shotguns were used. This gained enough notoriety to produce national television reports.

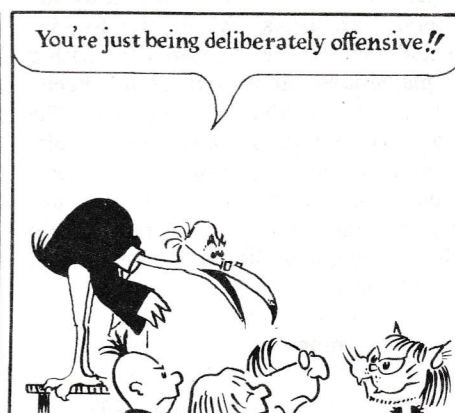
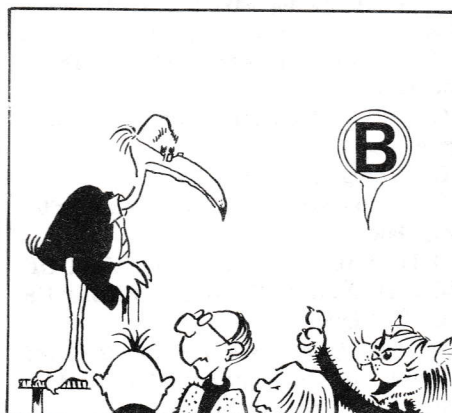
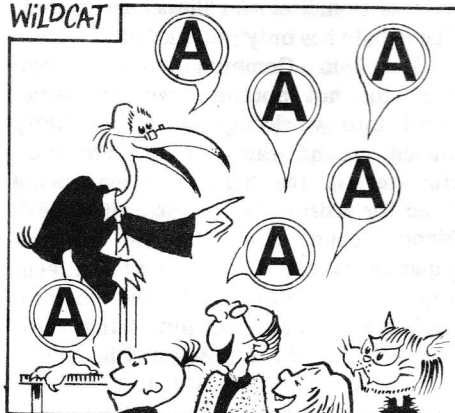
Now the injunctions have become rather more sweeping. Two High Court proceedings have been instigated by the Welsh Office and by Dyfed County Council. The effect of both is that the group cannot 'station' on public land anywhere in Dyfed. Settling on private land would need planning permission.

A total of 36 names are listed, including at least one who has not been near the

camp for months. Any opposition must be filed within fourteen days, otherwise proceedings will continue in his absence. One of the listed people has applied for legal aid in order to test the whole thing.

The defence will be that it is all unreasonable. Such a sweeping injunction is something of a legal precedent. After all, the group has only been around Haverfordwest. If this persecution succeeds, what next? Exclusion from the whole of Wales? The entire United Kingdom? This could be done under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. It doesn't matter that the shotgun was fired at the camp, surely being the target of terrorism means that you provoked it? There are precedents here, like women who contribute to their own rape by their own negligence.

WILDCAT



NOT having a trace of the spiritual or mystic in my nature I attended the 'Green Gathering' with some misgivings — the idea of a week in the company of hippies (originals and revivalists) beneath the shadow of Glastonbury Tor filled me with the materialist's dread of the paranormal. In the event I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and here, for what it's worth, is a subjective despatch from the green front.

I think the 'gathering' started as an Ecology Party bash but this year's (the third?) was arranged by 'an independent collective who first met at last year's Eco Summer Gathering'. Its aim was to bring together 'groups involved in radical, alternative or ecological activities: feminists, anti-nuclear activists, ecologists, third world campaigners, libertarians, conservationists and other groups interested in a fairer, more just society'. By and large, it did just this though I think it's fair to say that class and the third world hardly got a look in or a mention in the workshops I attended, and, if there were any campers from the third world, I didn't see or meet them.

Estimates of attendance varied from 3,000—5,000 and although some thought the gathering was too big to be comfortable, it seemed about right to me. The closeness of the tents, caravans, tepees and the peace convoy wagons produced a kind of enforced intimacy which broke down the strains and tensions of the first day and by the end of the week produced a genuine sense of *festival*. The abundance of musicians, poets, performers, theatre groups and spontaneous entertainers was a delight and the al fresco cafes like the 'Rainbow Bohemians', 'Stained Stoats', 'Munchies and Slurpies' etc provided delicious food and cafe society at every turn.

I saw one anarchist flag and Dennis Gould had a FREEDOM stand selling the paper, anarchist badges and poetry publications. The main anarchist element, though, was the marvellous Peace Convoy contingent up from Stonehenge and the demented entertainment provided by the Tibetan Ukrainians. The children loved it all and were very well catered for with a big playground, circus roundabout, creche and the sheer freedom of being there. The weather smiled on us all and, on the whole, I thought the gathering was a good example of libertarian principle put into effective practice — it was tolerant, largely self-managing and allowed of a great deal of spontaneity.

There were clashes of course — a gathering embracing seasoned political activists like the Peace Convoy on one wing and 'metamorphic foot massage'

LIVING OUT OF

(say) on the other meant a good deal of accommodation on everybody's part. For myself, having last attended a festival on the I o W in 1970, this gathering was a revelation. So free and unoppressive compared with that and putting its hedonism to ultimately useful purpose.

I was never a hippy first time round but always hoped that out of vague declarations of love and peace some firmer commitments might have emerged. In America some of the most charismatic hippies ended up preaching psychobabble to the rich (eg Jerry Rubin) or in the black magic massacre trade (eg Charles Manson) but where did all the others go? Since 1970 the revival of feminism (or revitalisation) and the growth of the green movement, stimulated by the emergence of the Friends of the Earth, has added to the mix, and the Green Gathering partly answers my question. Some of the hippies (in the UK at least) didn't get dragged back into straight society — they had the courage and determination to put their ideas into practice whether as New Dawn Gypsies, Tepee People or Peace Convoy propagandists by deed.

It was these groups I found the most interesting and inspiring because their alternative lives were being lived out publicly and were bound to influence anybody with an open mind. The Peace Convoy had a battle over paying to get on the festival site and put out 'A message from the Peace Convoy'. They won their point so I won't drag up an old battle — but I will quote from their 'message':

'... We believe in true anarchy, a state of individual responsibility, a lifestyle that is gentle on the planet. We know what we need to achieve this, and we have the courage to go on saying 'NO' to those that try to force us to go against it ... NO ... to nuclear war, to Cruise missiles and nuclear power

NO ... to harassment of gypsies and travellers

NO ... to pollution and waste

NO ... to restriction of consciousness by drugs law

NO TO THE UNIVERSAL THREAT OF MEGADEATH THEY USE TO KEEP US ALL IN LINE'

And every time we stand against it we get hit with the barrage of hatred released by the threat of change, of chaos (ever been

in love? felt anything more chaotic than that?) ... and everytime we come back with understanding, with endless attempts at communication. We try to cure them of the hate and pain ... because we can't stop believing love is the answer ...'

And The Red Ice Real Kool Comic put out this appeal in its festival edition:

'The balance of different sorts of people is badly needed in the Stonehenge scene. Greens — we badly need you at Stonehenge especially for windmills, eco-trips, natural highs, accoustic music, creches, kid's-trips, mechanic workshops and football matches! Spare us please, meetings, votes and committees. Bring us tolerance, patience and the *courage* to travel in convoy and *take* sites by peaceful strength of numbers. Courage to be with the wilder side and not get put off by little things. Change doesn't come easy'.

I think if a visitor from Mars dropped into the site on a space parachute, she would have understood the gathering to be concerned with peace rather than ecology (if the two are divisible) for this issue was the great unifier and, for me, the most heartening. The biggest and best workshop I attended was about the Greenham Common peace camp and the debate on mixed or women only action. This workshop was conducted with tolerance and seriousness and only got bogged down in demands for concensus and/or votes on whether the workshop supported women only actions or not. Quite what would have been done with the vote if it had been taken I can't imagine. As somebody said, the Greenham Common camp is the most important development in the peace movement for twenty years and we mustn't foul it up with factionalism and ill-planned action. The debate has only just started.

Greenham Common and feminism were the hot potatoes, whether structured into workshop debate or hotly argued around campfire or cafe stall. However, in the light of a man being fined for assisting in the birth of his girlfriend's child, poet Margaret Wright's paper on 'Verbal Disarmament — a technique for dealing with the medical profession' tended to put things into perspective:— 'Last Autumn, I happened to be outside the fence of RAF Greenham Common with a megaphone. I had been

SEASON?

IN BRIEF

A MAN who tried to set fire to the British consulate in Venice said that he did it 'because the English get on my nerves'.

ACCORDING to an opinion poll in Madrid 29% would be in favour of a military invasion to recover Gibraltar, 42% were against and 29% uncommitted. Now we can understand why the Ministry of Defence was so careful about screening press stories about the South Atlantic Campaign. As soon as one allows discussion that the thing was very close, other Hispanics start to fancy their chances.

TWO men in Indonesia who tried to steal a bicycle have been burned to death by an irate crowd.

LAW-BREAKING by right wing extremists in West Germany has increased by 11% last year, according to the Federal Interior Ministry.

ANDRE Tchaikowsky, who had a lifetime ambition to go on the stage, has left his skull to the Royal Shakespeare Company for use in productions of Hamlet.

THE chairman of the council in March, Cambridgeshire, suspended a meeting when a member turned up wearing a CND sweater. Chris Bennett says that the garment is part of his everyday dress. Hugh Beaver, the Town Clerk, says that it brings the council into ridicule & says that he may have to call the police if it reappears. This only reinforces the letter in Saturday's *Daily Telegraph*, which blames the erosion of society's values on the decline in 'manners/discipline'.

FEHNI Isiklar, the secretary of DISK, the Turkish left wing union confederation has complained of torture. Perhaps, in itself, this is no more than we might expect, with sympathy to Mr Isiklar. What makes the case particularly distressing is that he was tortured by the National Anthem. It was played continuously to keep him awake. He contemplated suicide and eventually signed a false confession implicating others. The Turkish National Anthem seems to have a special power; you may remember the unfortunate who was arrested for not standing straight when it was played. All this makes us very concerned about the recent fuss about the British version.

ACCORDING to a report by the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board, many aborigines are persecuted by being arrested for swearing. They tend to be fined £50, which they cannot pay, and go to prison. There's an idea for Brixton.

MICHAEL Heseltine, Environment Minister, has been defending the government's policies after criticism from the Confederation of British Industry. He thinks that Britain's economic problems are due to the incompetence of industrialists & society as a whole. It would seem that those

to blame are everybody except himself and his close colleagues. We are confident that this list could be widened if he found it necessary.

GENERAL Rogers, NATO military leader in Europe has estimated that by spending only another 4% per year on defence, the United States & its allies could stop a Soviet attack in Western Europe, unless the USSR used nuclear weapons.

IN the event of a nuclear holocaust, the United States postal service would be forced to suspend registered & express post. However, they will continue to accept personal letters not exceeding 8oz. This promise comes from the emergency civil defence plans presented to Congress last week. There are other reassuring details. Although some correspondence may have to be destroyed to prevent it falling into enemy hands, it 'will NOT be opened and examined'. As well as this concern for people's human rights, the plans go even further. Special committees will carefully list any currency which was found in the packages. That's nice, you'll be able to reclaim any money which had to be destroyed. It is, at present, unclear how these committees will be able to do this, as they will NOT open and examine the mail, but no doubt they know best. As an added concession, in disaster areas, postcards will be accepted without stamps. Americans are, of course, individualistic people, so, thoughtfully, they are to be given opportunities to help themselves, rather than relying on the authorities. That is, they can go and seek shelter. As an example, the inhabitants of Minneapolis can migrate across the river to St Paul. To maintain equilibrium, the folks in St Paul are told to cross to Minneapolis.

WOMEN are inferior to men and have made few contributions to humanity, according to an article in *Workers Daily*, in China. To be more specific, less than 2% of women have made such a contribution. In the light of the size of the Chinese population, this attitude seems not merely provocative but even perverse.

MOST Scottish schoolchildren between the ages of 14 & 16 are hostile to Trades Unions, according to a survey of 3,000 of them. An article in *Personnel Management* identifies the chief cause as the 'media'. Other influences include school (those who were taught about industrial relations were more tolerant), geography (those in rural areas were more hardline) and social status. These attitudes seem to change rapidly after school. Whereas 70% of the pupils agreed that 'a good worker is interested in the job and is loyal to the firm', 21% of a group of apprentices in Greenock agreed.

JOB-SHARING in parliament. Following the recent suggestions about splitting work, two labour party members have changed their names by deed poll to 'Mary Evans Ron Bailey'. They intend to contest an election jointly on a platform of a bill for women's rights, completely open government and more participation & consultation in the Health Service.

asked to speak to a gathering of the peace movement. I had not addressed a meeting in this way before. Afterwards a woman came up to me and said 'I don't know how you have the nerve. I couldn't do it', I laughed. But since then I have come to realise I do 'have the nerve' and that it comes from having the temerity to give birth at home in Newcastle and from helping other women to do the same thing. It is a hard training ground. As I am able to make the comparison, so I am able to say that it is easier to be at the activist end of the peace movement than it is to give birth to a baby in your own bed in Britain today.'

I could make many criticisms, from an anarchist position, about the Green Gathering but I don't think they have any place here. There is a possibility that the success of this year's gathering could spoil next year's by making it simply too big but, that apart, I think anarchists should attend and take a look-see — clearly many people quite unacquainted with anarchist theory are actually trying to live it out and this gave me a great lift. Also the imagination and creativity shown by many visitors to the Green Gathering is so inspiring that the potential support for such gatherings, and thence for the ideas generated, must be enormous.

One cavil though. The first anarchists I met attracted me because — despite the jibes of 'utopian dreamers' — they had no truck with mysticism and spirituality and clearly lived in the material world. (Incidentally I first came across the word *ecology* in *Anarchy* magazine). Now I see adverts for 'United anarchist mystics', 'pagans against the bomb' etc and the dances to summon up rain, the feminist witches who claim to have made military motorcycles burst into flame and the other magic activities of some of the workshops worry me and strike me as potentially dangerous. You have only to read Ed Sander's book *The Family*, about the Manson gang to understand where such practices might lead.

JEFF CLOVES

More info from Margaret Wright, 19 Tynedale Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne 12. Tel: Newcastle 668965. Enclose SAE please.

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTER

12% AND MORE

Dear FREEDOM and readers,
As A Ffranke pointed out (in Vol 43 No 9) a 12% pay rise alone will not solve many of the long-term problems of the Health Service. However, as this is my immediate concern, I would like you to consider an important aspect of the dispute.

In the run-up to the Health Service workers '5 days of action' in August, some union leaders have urged that even basic emergency cover be suspended at many hospitals. The TUC has 'advised' against this and have indicated that they would aid strike-breakers if it happened.

The press has been quick to herald a repeat of the TUC/Government alliance to crush ASLEF. Whilst not supporting the TUC, I would like to point out another aspect — many of COHSE's members would never support the withdrawal of basic cover, for two reasons that our 'leaders' seem to have ignored. Firstly, the effect it would have on our public support. The Government and their scummy supporters, the national press, are eager for the chance to prove us to be the 'greedy, heartless bullies' they claim us to be. This leads on to the second point — withdrawing cover would directly contribute to the deaths and sufferings of our patients.

As anarchists, I hope you will understand that human lives are more important to me than the wages of capitalism/statism (which will only be taken away again, anyway). Playing with the lives and fears of people is the game played by Governments — we must not sink to their levels. I am asking for your understanding and help in opening people's eyes to the fact that the Government (all Governments) is always playing groups of people against each other, whereas, if local communities were to unite with us, the Government wouldn't have a leg to stand on, and would ultimately be seen not to have any real function in a 'health service' at all. . .

J TCHAKAROV

Hospital ancillary and COHSE member

WRONG AGAIN!

Dear Editors,

JW has, as usual, got everything wrong in his letter (7th August). His sense of threatened persecution and inverted snobbery is so strong that he imagines criticism and elitism where none exist.

The second part of my article about B Traven (24th July) was not a 'criticism' of Traven, but a neutral argument that his fiction is not good for the literary reasons suggested by Peter Neville (10th July) but for non-literary reasons. John Steinbeck, whom JW compares with Traven, was a highly conscious artist (as may be seen in *Of Mice and Men* or *Tortilla Flat*), as is

Adrian Mitchell (as may be seen in many of the poems in *For Beauty Douglas*). By contrast, Traven is naive in his approach and clumsy in his methods, and is read because of what he has to say, not because of — indeed in spite of — how he says it. But this isn't a bad thing at all. On the contrary, it is one of the reasons why the fiction of Traven is so much more effective than that of Ret Marut collected in *To the Honorable Miss S . . .* and other stories and of most other left-wing novelists. Most impartial readers will agree that Traven's style, construction, characterisation, narrative and so on are crude to the point of incompetence, but that these disadvantages are outweighed by his great advantages. The subject of 'good bad books' is well discussed in George Orwell's essay of that title (*Tribune*, 2nd November 1945; *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*, Volume 4), and like Orwell I would say that such books (or poems or plays or films or pictures or music) are often 'better' than 'good' ones.

JW mentions that he has been 'severely criticised' by me in the past. I must point out that this has been in reply to unprovoked personal attacks by him for more than twenty years. I would reply to his latest one by saying that I am not a 'critic par excellence' or a 'self-appointed literary expert' or someone who 'fears words that speak directly, not with an academic punditry', and that I am not much interested in literary criticism or academic debate, preferring the most direct language possible.

As for JW's closing sneer about the difference between 'those who make their living from other people's work and those who know how to communicate to the hearts and minds of loving people', it surely applies just as much to him as to me. We have both made livings out of other people's work, but we have both done what we can to communicate libertarian ideas. Can't we have differences of opinion without using distorted argument and personal abuse?

NW

London

SQUATTING IN SYDNEY

Dear People,

Some comments on the otherwise useful article by John Englart on recent Australian anarchism. As a member of the Sydney 'carnival' group in 1977-78 and having maintained contact with them since I feel that their role has been downplayed. Squatting, by its repudiation of private property, is anarchistic and has a spill-over into other cooperative activities (eg, entertainment, printing, food coops, mutual aid). This practical expression of Anarchy in Sydney has an importance far beyond bickerings over personalities and position papers.

The Sydney squatting movement is

still alive and well, particularly in Pyrmont where many NZ anarchists reside. The Balmain coffee shop established by these 'Panic' people holds regular meetings. Three anti-authoritarian calendars, postcards, posters, and a reprint of 'Why Strikes Fail' have been produced by this group.

I shared a squat with Ken Hauptman for over a year. He was strong-willed, opposed to hypocrisy and promoted many cooperatives, housing, printing, protest and support activities. His 'individualism' was strength of character.

RICHARD SUGGATE
(Christchurch Anarchists)

P O Box 13165

Christchurch, New Zealand

UPDATE ON TSURKOV

Dear FREEDOM,

In a recent issue of FREEDOM, you carried a report on the Revolutionary Communards and in particular the libertarian Marxist Arkady Tsurkov. The information provided in this report was taken from a leaflet produced some time ago by the Black Star Collective (Tyne & Wear). Since its publication we have received an update.

In November 1981, Tsurkov was transferred from PERM labour camp 34 to CHISTOPOL prison. In January of this year, he was visited by a friend who reported that Tsurkov was in poor health and going blind.

Anyone wishing to protest against Tsurkov's imprisonment and especially harsh treatment (co-defendants all released) should write to the Soviet Embassy — Victor Popov, Ambassador, 13 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QX. And to anywhere else you can think of to highlight this case.

The campaign for Tsurkov's release is now gathering momentum. Many groups and individuals throughout the country have taken up the call for his freedom. The Direct Action Movement has produced a poster (cost 10p) available from: Manchester Dam, 164/166 Corn Hanging Ditch, Manchester M4 3BN.

Yours fraternally,

A N DIMMICK

Tyne & Wear

FOREIGN OFFICE RIPS OFF DIEGO GARCIA

A NEW development in the Diego Garcia story (see the Review Section, Page 14) is that the new Prime Minister of Mauritius, Aneerood Jugnauth, has claimed that the United States is paying the British Government £500,000 a month rent for the use of the island as a military base, the Diego Garcians aren't getting any of this. The British Foreign Office denies the claim; they would, wouldn't they?

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTER

MAKE SENSE

FREEDOM!

I get increasingly pissed off with being treated as if I'm being dogmatic if I argue for consistency.

If you find Macdonalds 'unreal', then surely the first stand you make against that is to stop eating the dead animal flesh it churns out? Meat consumption denies the starving in the Third World of food. Eating meat kills. Refuse to be a part of that slaughter.

If you find sex shops 'plastic', then stop living up to the sex roles that they market. Refuse to be available as the losers in that sexual oppression.

Where's the logic in fighting oppression while your eating habits kill?

What's the point of fighting for sexual freedom while you lock yourself up in the same sexual chains?

No, I'm not for 'closed minds' and cloned people, I'm for an anarchism that MAKES SENSE.

Love and anarchy
RICHARD CROSS

SHOULD WE BE A WEEKLY?

Dear Comrades,

FREEDOM comes like a breath of fresh air amid the Mirror and the Mail. My only criticism is that it is not weekly. I'm very isolated here — so it is only through FREEDOM that I hear of other anarchists. Keep up the good work.

MARK HURN

Leighton Buzzard, Beds.

ACTION WITHOUT THOUGHT

Dear Allies; My opinion on the theory-practice problem:-

Anarchists should postpone the writing of long, theoretical architectonics to their prison years. Whilst 'free' they should be out and about leafletting, pamphleteering, graffiti-ing, squatting, marching; putting anarchy on the map, in a word. L Erizo's quoted phrase (FREEDOM vol 43 no 10) 'Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary practice' is enough to make any red-blooded revolutionary tear its hair out. The world would be a far more lively and free place to be around in if theory had never been thought up, if all those learned men and women with their massive brains had never ever put pen to paper or if they did, all torn up their enlightening scripts before anyone else had set eyes on them. For L Erizo would do well to note that the capitalist social democracy is based on a theory, that thought out by Plato in ancient Athens, and also that there are as many theories as there are thinkers. The individual thinker is only interested in its own picture of the world and so avoids the contamination of other theories, so it is only the person who does not think or who does not have an original framework in its own mind — for the self is the printing-block, experience the ink for a person's world picture — who is at all concerned in a life-or-death way about other people's philosophies.

This leads to the flummoxing question, why do people write down their views about life, the universe and everything, when they should know — that their works are only serving to shepherd the reading flock into looking at the world with eyes that are not their own? The answer must be 'fame', but fame is a capitalist carrot and aspirations to immortality should be left to the Christian cabbages.

All this theorising and intellectualising just alienates the uneducated revolutionary, giving him to think that perhaps he had better, after all, verse himself in a few volumes of Kropotkin or Proudhon or Stirner before he opens his mouth. And, what's more, being well-up in all these big-

wig theories alienates a person from its less well-read ally: it speaks a different language. Yet in the end no one needs an all-time great to tell them that they suffer from the cradle to the grave as a result of the system and its corollaries — at least no one capable of suffering. For although everyone can feel pain, not everyone can suffer and those who can, suffer in their own individual way, to their own individual measure. If L Erizo thinks that people uninitiated in anarchism may be brought onto the path of resistance by reading or even studying the rational argument of rational minds, then he is misguided. For it's feeling, far more than thought — the thought if anything comes afterwards — that makes a person take a stand against capitalism: sympathy, perhaps, for itself and for others for the injustices and the cruel treatment meted out to them. But because everyone is not capable of feeling in this way, the feeling that comes of suffering, then everyone will never be won over to the practice of anarchy — and no amount of theory will change this.

Theory has, moreover, a nauseating effect, viz the production of a particularly noxious breed of worm, the academic. The academic anarchist is an anarchist in only one place — the armchair, for in all other places it is a capitalist: it is usually a member of some capitalist institution, such as a school or a university; it usually abides by capitalist laws, such as fitting a marriage certificate before having children; it is usually imbued with bourgeois and Christian morality, the ethics of neighbourliness and sociability. And the excuse this white sepulchre uses when confronted with the theory and practice dichotomy of its life usually runs:-

'Well, you've got to live in this society, so you....' — at which point the revolutionary's ears seize up in angry indignation and will hear no more. The true-blue revolutionaries are not these who sit patiently weighing up methods to gain mass credibility and intellectual respectability but the sufferers: the suicides and those who end up behind bars for practising what they preach: the people whose lives are cut short because there are not

enough like them. The world is full of people who only want to survive, who will be accomplices to any capitalist abomination as long as they have enough food to keep them going for the next week, and sadly too full of self-styled revolutionaries who only want to survive too. Sadly, because the only way you can guarantee survival in this political set-up is by passivity or harmless theorising.

When is there going to be enough theory written before anarchists decide the time has come to act? With every year the State tightens its grip on the individual because with every year science and technology advances: a revolution would have been far easier to achieve at the beginning of the century than it is now. But anarchists then preferred to write their little books which would secure for them a place in the history of letters, than to approach people in all walks of life and most importantly of all ages by holding meetings, distributing pamphlets et alia.

What opportunities anarchists have missed, are missing now with a war causing mass casualties and with three million unemployed! Anarchy is such a simple idea to grasp: it is simply obvious. What is difficult is planning the transformation from a capitalist country to an anarchist country and even more difficult, the switchover from a capitalist world to an anarchistic world. But the difficulty just increases the longer anarchists wait, for capitalism becomes more complicated and entrenched with every year. Why not trust to the maxim, 'Necessity is the mother of invention' and spring to action NOW. With evil scientists discovering ever more devious chemicals by the year — who would have thought that they could come up with anything worse than the atom bomb and what will succeed the neutron bomb? — has anyone anything to lose?

So let us send off all the academics cowering in the anarchist ranks to the newly-established Anarchos Institute in Canada and let us wish them the most interesting and scintillating discussions that afternoon tea and scones can inspire.

KAY

FREEDOM CONTACTS

national

ABERDEEN
Solidarity, c/o 163 King St.

BASILDON
Are there any anarchists out there in Basildon, Essex area? Contact—Mark, 27 Little Lullaway, Basildon Essex.

BEDFORDSHIRE
Bedfordshire and isolated Anarchists, write John 81 F Bromham Rd, Bedford MK40 2AH

BELFAST
Anarchist Collective, Just Books, 7 Winetavern St, Belfast

BIRMINGHAM
Birmingham 'Angry', c/o Peace Centre, 18 Moor St
Birmingham DAM, c/o Peace Centre 18 Mare St, Ringway Birmingham

BRISTOL
L. Bedminster, 110 Grenville Rd, Bristol 3
Box 010, Full Marks Bookshop, 197 Cheltenham Road, Bristol 6

BURNLEY
BAG, c/o 2 Quarrybank.

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge Anarchists, c/o 186 East Rd, Cambridge
East Anglian Anarchist Federation c/o Grapevine, 186 East Road.

CANTERBURY
Alternative Research Group, Students Union, University of Kent, Canterbury
Canterbury Anarchist Group, Contact Address: Andrew Savage, 177 Old Dover Rd.

CARDIFF
c/o 108 Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Rd, Cardiff 2
Whistle Blowers, Box 999, 108 Salisbury Rd.

CLEVELAND
25 Liverton Crescent, Thornby, Also produces 'Common Cause' local anarchist paper.

CLYDESIDE
Clydeside Anarchists, Box 3, 488 Gt Western Rd, Glasgow G12

COVENTRY
Coventry Anarchists, c/o G Fyfe, 23 Radford Rd, Leamington Spa

CRAWLEY
Libertarian Group, Ray Cowper, 1 Bluebell Close Crawley W Sussex.

CUMBRIA
2 Forestry Cottages, Millfield, Hutton Roof, Penrith

DERBY
Black Ram, c/o Forum Books, 86 Abbey St, Tel: Derby 368039

DONCASTER
Doncaster Anarchist Centre, 49a Doncaster Market Place

DUBLIN
Love v Power, Whelan's Dance Studio, 51 South King St, Dublin 2

ESSEX
DAM, Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gdns, Saffron Walden, Essex
Oral Abortions, The Catskills, Maldon Rd, Gay Bowers, Danbury

EXETER
Anarchist Collective, c/o Commu-nity Association, Devonshire

House, Stocker Rd

GLASGOW
Glasgow Young Anarchists, c/o Box 1984,
'Practical Anarchy (monthly free broadsheet, send large sae) c/o Box 3
Rendezvous Group, c/o Box 68; produces councillor leaflets.
Calderwood 15/GPP pamphlets c/o Box V2
All at Glasgow Bookshop Collective, 488 Gt Western Rd, G12. (Kelvinbridge Subway)

HUDDERSFIELD
Huddersfield Anarchist Group & DAM, Box DAM, c/o Peaceworks, 58 Wakefield Rd, Huddersfield

HULL
Hull @ Group, 23 Nott St, (moving in Sept to 24 Albany St)
Libertarian Collective, 70 Perth HU5 3NZ

KEELE
Keele University Anarchist Group + North Staffs Libertarians, c/o R Knight, Keele University

KEIGHLEY
Anarchists, c/o Simon Saxton, 1 Selbourne Grove, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD21 2SL

LAMPETER
Anarchist Group, c/o Adian James, SDUC, Lampeter, Dyfed SA48 7ED Wales

LEAMINGTON
and Warwick, c/o 42 Bath St, Leamington Spa.

LEEDS
Leeds Anarchist Group, Box LAP A, 59 Cookridge St, LS2 3AW
DAM + Federation of Leeds Anarchists, Box RU.

LEICESTER
Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Libertarian Education, 6 Beaconsfield Rd, (tel 552085)
The Anarchist Society, Societies' Room, Student's Union Building, University of Leicester, University Rd, LE1 7RH

LONDON
Anarchy Magazine, Box A 84b Whitechapel High St London E1
FREEDOM Collective, Angel Alley 84b Whitechapel High St, E1 (01-247 9249). Aldgate East tube, nr Whitechapel Art Gallery.
Greenpeace, 6 Endsleigh St, WC1, Meet Thursdays 7pm
London Workers Group, 11 Leyden St, E1.

121 Books/Anarchist Centre, 121 Raiton Rd, London SE24 Tel: 274 6655

Anarchist-Feminist Newsletter, c/o 121 Raiton Rd, SE24
PigsforSlaughter+Anarchist Youth Federation, c/o 121 Raiton Rd
South London Anarchist Group (SLAG) c/o 121 Raiton Rd
South London DAM, c/o Raiton Rd SE24
South London Stress, c/o 121 Raiton Rd SE24
Squatters Defence Network, c/o 121 Raiton Rd SE24.
Toxic Graffiti, c/o 121 Raiton Rd, SE24.
West London Anarchists contact John Sanders, 4 Naylor House Mozart Estate W10.

MALVERN
and Worcester area, Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storridge, Worcestershire.

MANCHESTER
'Wildcat' or 'Solidarity' at: Box 25, 164/5 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, M4 3BN

MERSEYSIDE
Box LAG, 37 Bagot Street Waver-tree, Merseyside L15 2HA.

MORECAMBE & LANCASTER
North Lancs Libertarians, c/o Cliff M Poxon, 13 Carleton St, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4NX

NORWICH
Norwich @ Group, c/o Box 6, FREE-WHEEL, 52-54 King St

NOTTINGHAM
Jackie Veevers, 7 Irene Tce, Basford, Individuals Anonymous 12p SAE, above address

OLDHAM
Nigel Broadbent, 14 Westminster Rd, Failsworth.

ORPINGTON
Rik Fuller, 60 Ramsden Rd, Orpington, Kent

OXFORD
Oxford Anarchists, 34 Cowley Rd

PAISLEY
Anarchist Group, contact through: Student's Union, Hunter St, Paisley, Renfrewshire

PLYMOUTH
Anarchists, 115 St Pancras Ave, Penryn

PORSMOUTH
area anarchist group, c/o Garry Richardson, 25 Beresford Close, Waterlooville, Hants

READING
Reading Anarchists, Box 19, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham St

RHONDDA
and Mid Glamorgan, Henning Anderson, 'Smiths Arms', Treherbert, Mid Glamorgan

SHEFFIELD
Anarchists, c/o 4 Havelock Square S10 2FQ

SOUTH WALES
DAM, c/o Smiths Arms, Baglan Rd, Treherbert. Write for anarcho-syndicalist contacts in Treherbert. Rhondda, Pontypridd, Penarth, Barry and Cardiff areas

SURREY
Damp Squid Anarchists (North Surrey) Tel: 01-399 3197

SUSSEX
Brighton Anarchists, c/o Students Union, Falmer House, University of Sussex, Brighton East Sussex
Hastings Anarchists + Poison Pen, 92 London Rd, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex
Sussex Anarchist Society, c/o Hastings Anarchist Group

SWANSEA
Black Dragon, Box 5, c/o Neges Bookshop, 31 Alexandra Rd, SA1 5DG, West Glamorgan

SWINDON
area, Mike, Groundswell Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon

TAYSIDE
Anarchist Group, 3L 188 Strathmartine Rd, Dundee

TYNE & WEAR
Newcastle Anarchist Group, c/o 2 Priory Court, High St, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE8 3JL

WAKEFIELD
Anarchist and Peace Group, c/o Fazackerley, 36 Bowan St, Agbrigg, Wakefield, West Yorkshire

literature

Carl Harp - Printing Appeal

A group of anarchists are planning to re-print 'Love & Rage' Carl Harp's prison diary, along with 'I Wanna Be Free' (the Hapotec pamphlet), unpublished material and an account of his killing.

The book will be linked to ongoing prison struggles. If you have any material, ideas or especially money, please send it to: Carl Harp Printing Appeal, c/o 121 Books, 121 Raiton Rd, London SE26.

'Black Dove'—anarchopacifist magazine, is still under construction, but we need more articles/cartoons/ideas and donations toward the cost of printing it. Hopefully 'Black Dove' will be national in format and we're particularly interested in—communes/non-violent direct action/practical anarchy. But all ideas considered.. anything is acceptable(?) ie bundles of ten pound notes!

So please get writing, fraternally,
Norwich Anarchopacifists
Write: Box 6, 52/54 King Street, Norwich, Norfolk

Me Myself I, Out now 20p. Shalamar Fan Club, 27 Nightingale Ct, Gosport Hampshire PO12 3EV.

EVENTS

25th August. Picket outside West London Magistrate's Court, 114 Southcombe St W14. 10.00am. In support of 6 people arrested outside Russian Embassy on June 7th anti-nuclear protest. March to Fleet St. Assemble outside afterwards and march to Northcliffe House where a delegation will meet the Daily Mail editor and present a statement. Non-violent protest against press warmongering & smear campaign against the peace movement. For more details ring Jim Brown: 582-7375, Ru Reiss, Steeple Aston 40461.

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anarchy, breakdown of administration, writ not running; disorganisation, chaos 61n. *turmoil*; licence, insubordination, indiscipline 73n. *Disobedience*; anarchism, nihilism, anti-statism 769 n. *non-observance*; interregnum, power vacuum, powerlessness 161n. *impotence*, misrule, misgovernment, mob law, reign of terror 954 n. *lawlessness*, usurpation 916 n. *usurpation*; de-thronement 752 n. *Deposal*.

Adj. *lax*, loose, slack, decentralised, disorganised, unorganised 60 adj. *potent*, feeble, 163 adj. *weak*; remiss 159 adj. *relaxed*, relaxed, unstrict, informal, slipshod; tame and undemanding, indulgent 736 adj. *lenient*; weak-kneed 60 adj. *irresolute*.

anarchic, anarchical; ungoverned, uncontrolled; unbridled, licentious 878 adj. *insolent*; rebellious 738 adj. *riotous*; unauthorized 954 adj. *illegal*; lawless,

FREEDOM is often accused of being a middle-class paper for armchair anarchists more interested in theoretical nitpicking than in 'real action'. In particular the language and style of FREEDOM gets a lot of stick for being elitist, irrelevant to the working class and so on.

Rather than re-fight old battles I will concede at once that; theory is necessary or at least useful; that sometimes complex statements cannot be made in simple language; and that the FREEDOM collective are to the best of my knowledge sincere and well-meaning and quite entitled to call themselves anarchists, whatever their class backgrounds.

However, I do think that all this is more than just a question of style. I think language is pretty fundamental and not enough thought has been given to it by anarchists.

So far the 'debate' on the matter can be summed up simply. One faction says - "if it can't be said simply it's not worth saying and action is more important than talking anyway". The reply is generally along the lines that action without theory is blind and self-defeating. Long words are useful because they sum up complex ideas and sometimes you can't make do without them. It's the anarchist's own responsibility to carry a dictionary if necessary. The argument raises strong feelings but never seems to progress much. The division is roughly speaking along class lines.

For the moment I am using the word class loosely. For my purposes there is no need yet to get involved in the question of whether class exists or how it should be defined.

It is enough that people generally accept that there is a middle class and a working class, however vague an idea it is.

My own class is open to question, I am unemployed, and was born the son of a miner. The people in my village, though, no longer accept me as one of them because I have been educated and I talk like the middle classes sometimes. I have a foot in both camps and really belong to neither.

Thinking back over my own life has made me decide that language is one of the main weapons in the class war, or alternatively, one of the main means people use to dominate each other.

The teachers at my school were trying to impose their pretentious speech on us. Their unconscious snobbery (social climbers are always the worst snobs) caused them to put tremendous levels of emotional violence into putting us down and ridiculing us. As a result we turned obstinate. The one unforgivable sin in our school yard was to be caught using the teachers' words. We flatly refused to learn long words or even to listen to them at all. The snag with this instinctive solidarity is that it justified the teachers in labelling us as stupid. To me, this sums up the whole system of oppression.

What was odd about me was that being a lonely kid I took to playing word games in my head. I might have day-dreamed about fairy castles. With me it just happened to be

words. I had been certified as lower 'B' stream Sec. Mod. material: But I gradually developed a huge vocabulary which, however, I never used. Eventually an English teacher noticed that I had used the word 'pessimistic' in an essay. As she thought this was a word beyond my meagre intellectual calibre she questioned me about it and found out that I did indeed know what pessimistic meant and a lot of other words besides. The word spread that I was a late developer and I shot to the top of the class as soon as it dawned on me that I might be clever after all.

For a long time I thought that the obvious explanation was true. I started off stupid and somehow got smart. I now think that idea doesn't make half as much sense as saying that I inadvertently slipped through the barriers designed to prevent me from learning the middle-class way of speaking. I was no cleverer at all. It was being able to use a wide array of words as mental tools that made the difference.

Words are powerful mental tools (used properly). Keeping the working class from learning sophisticated words is also to rob them of the power of knowledge. Medicine for instance would probably not suffer too much from scrapping any medical terms and replacing them with ordinary English. The difference between a patella and a knee-bone is that a doctor knows what a patella is and the punters don't. The jargon is really just a secret code to preserve the doctors' monopoly of medical knowledge.

Ordinary people feel oppressed and intimidated by long words. This is usually written off as a mental problem of some sort of inferiority complex. I reckon the real truth is that middle-class language is intended to intimidate. To prove this you need only watch two trotskysts arguing.

Words are used in 'civilised' societies to do the same job as used to be done by clubs and spears: to dominate.

It is disturbing to watch an anarchist conference in this light. The crude struggle to dominate the discussion is often so intense that it seems to be on the verge of physical violence. In the event the struggle is pointless because nobody is actually listening to anybody else anyway. To concede a point is seen as weakness and will be pounced on. A grim picture.

So far the deck seems pretty well stacked in favour of the middle class. They have the brash confidence to hold forth against opposition, they have the words to handle complex ideas, they have access to specialised knowledge, and they know how to manipulate people. But they have a fatal weakness. They are bullshitters. They often haven't a clue what they are talking about. Their language has to carry a double burden. It is intended to communicate and to dominate. One often gets in the way of the other.

A careful analysis of middle-class language reveals several interesting features:—

- They often give themselves away by misusing long words. A clear sign that the word was used to impress rather than to enlighten.
- They use far too many unnecessary words. They will usually find a complicated and bewildering way of saying even the simplest things. Awkward phrasing usually hides some kind of verbal trickery or woolly thinking.
- A high proportion of middle-class statements, carefully analysed, look as though they are saying something very deep and actually mean nothing at all.
- They will totally ignore any criticism which is not in their own verbal code.

To make my point I have picked out a particularly excruciating sentence from my pile of old FREEDOMS (the Review section of 20th Feb '82 vol 43 no 3). I have no special desire to pick on the author Peter Neville and I could probably have found much worse examples if I had bothered to search.

"Within the context of industrialisation then the police are seen as part of the control apparatuses of capitalism, the

bourgeoisie and the bourgeois state and their origin is seen as within the context of the development of the bourgeois state — their men at arms."

It certainly manages to project an image of great profundity but what does it actually mean? If we are too strict about grammatical rules it is arguable that it means nothing at all. The two 'within the context of's contradict each other. It would certainly make more sense as two separate sentences, one referring to 'the police' and the other to 'their origins'. However that doesn't make too much sense either because the first sentence is also implicitly including the origins of the police in the word police, since it is used 'within the context of 'industrialisation', which is a process stretching from past to future. The sentence is not clear about whether the police are seen 'within the context of 'industrialisation' or 'the development of the bourgeois state'. Is there a difference anyway?

A good way of spotting bullshit is to translate it into the simplest and briefest terms possible. This raises problems as it can be seen at once that this sentence would need to be translated into various alternative versions to cover the possibility that it really meant something else entirely:— eg it might mean 'the police are seen as the men at arms of the developing bourgeoisie and their state', or it might mean 'industrialisation caused the growth of the bourgeoisie and their state, of which the police are a part' and so on. It is certainly not at all clear.

There is at least one misused word: 'apparatuses'. It seems to imply that the bourgeoisie and the modern state have a 'control apparatus' each. This only confuses the role of the police who are somehow seen as part of both simultaneously. Surely this cannot be what was meant. At the very least one of the 'within the context of's is redundant. The clumsiness of the phrase structure hardly needs comment. It conceals both a desire to impress and wooliness of thought. Whatever it was he was trying to say was simple enough to have been easily understood if it had been written clearly. I am not sure whether it really means nothing at all, but certainly, considering the sheer weight of words it says very little very badly.

I look forward to seeing what reaction my criticism will bring. It is clear enough that if I had simply said it was 'too posh' or 'why can't you talk simple, eh?' I would have been ignored. I have been forced to use middle-class language to make my point. The response should be interesting.

Finally it is typical of academic language in that it is totally separated from life. Nowhere in this sentence is there any suggestion that he is talking about real heads getting bashed by real truncheons. It is unnecessarily cold and detached.

That seems to have hammered that sentence to death. I don't do it to be awkward. The probably unconscious desire to intimidate, mislead and show off cripples middle-class speech, writing and thought. It is a quite natural revulsion at these features of middle-class speech that stops the working class from listening.

The working-class part of the picture reveals the scale of the tragedy. The hatred of middle-class speech and writing is real and incredibly powerful. Ironically it is this same hatred that prevents them from learning the language. This makes them sitting ducks for systematic humiliation, much of which is carried put quite 'innocently' by everyday middle-class speech.

Academics do 'research' into working-class 'linguistic deficiencies'. The obvious fact that anybody at all can learn another language if they move to another country always escapes them. They should be trying to work out why, therefore, can't some people learn a few thousand words in their 'own' language? The answer could only be that they refuse to learn or are prevented from learning. The simplicity and directness of working-class speech is a defensive reaction against daily humiliation by middle-class status seekers.

Continued on page 13

557. Language — N. *language*, tongue, speech, idiom; patter, lingo 560 n. *dialect*; mother tongue; vernacular, common speech; correct speech Queen's English; lingua franca, jargon, pidgin, pidgin English, Chinook; sign language, semiotics 547 n. *gesticulation*, artificial language, Esperanto, Ido, Volapuk, private language, idiosyncrasy; officialese, translationese; confusion of tongues, polyglot, medley Babel 51 n. *confusion*.

linguistics, language study, glottology, dialectology, philology; phonetics 577 n. *pronunciation*; derivation 559 n. *etymology*; morphology; semasiology, seman-

Susan M Lloyd ed., *ROGET'S THESAURUS of English words and phrases*. Longman, 1982. 1249pp. £7.95.

FIRST published in 1852, *Roget's Thesaurus* has been thrust by generation after generation of zealous parents and teachers into the unwilling hands of kids in order to 'help them learn the language'. This latest, revised edition, the first for twenty years, was prepared by Englishwoman Susan Lloyd. Since its publication, the chief row generated by Ms Lloyd's extensive revisions has concerned the descriptive versus the prescriptive use of words. Should a thesaurus seek to describe language as she (he? it?) is written and spoke, sexist and racist usages and all? Or should such a work of reference be concerned to reform the language, from the standpoint of improving us all? Should Ms Lloyd be concerned, in short, to map or clean up the existing linguistic waterways, ideological sewers, clogged mental drains, and eddies of intolerance?

Clearly, any position on this question must itself be normative or prescriptive. Ms Lloyd has opted for the reformist approach, with sexist usage a particular focus of hygiene and therapy. For what it's worth, I think this is wrong. While aware of and opposed to sexist, racist and in general ideological usage, I believe, precisely in the spirit of *Roget's* original project, that the aim of a thesaurus must be the ideal of every science: value-free description and explanation of the facts. (The fact that in practice this ideal is rarely attainable hardly invalidates it as the proper aim of linguistic (and every other) science.)

In a sense, however, all the fuss about whether Ms Lloyd should or shouldn't have replaced 'countryman' by 'countrydweller' is beside the point. The point, for me anyway, is whether there should be an institution like *Roget's* at all. A thesaurus, we're told, is a 'treasure house' of language (from the Greek). *Roget's* task, then, is to store or conserve meanings. "Generations have found it invaluable in finding the most apt, the most accurate, the most telling or the most elegant expression for their thoughts", writes Ms Lloyd. "Creative writers such as poets, playwrights, novelists and above all, translators, naturally give *Roget's Thesaurus* a special place on their bookshelves, not only for the quality of its vocabulary but for its variety of register, from the everyday to the poetic . . .". In other words, if you're stuck for a word or synonym, look it up in

Roget's. As a writer, I find this pernicious nonsense in the extreme. Like mechanical systems of every kind, from calculators to computers, cars to television, *Roget's* substitutes a fixed, pre-given machinery for the free, creative use of one's own intellectual, linguistic and imaginative powers. Why think, indeed why write at all, when you have your fast-frozen, instant take-away all-purpose Brain Number to hand? The logic of machine-substitution is to cripple, destroy and replace the creative use of human powers in every sphere, from the work-place and kitchen to the studio and bedroom. Just so, the inherent logic of a ready-given synonym is totalitarian: it stifles free, creative language learning and use, whether in the streets, in play or at one's writing desk. The idea of Shakespeare or any other creative writer getting round with a *Roget's* is only half-funny. I know what Orwell, that profound student of the totalitarian in language and lover of self-activating democracy, would have said of the very idea of a fixed, dead body of pre-given meanings. Few of the words that we speak in the pub, at the local market or with our kids are to be found here. The normal free, creative character of language learning and use emphasised by Chomsky has no place in Ms Lloyd's world of linguistic essences. No wonder most kids hate the book.

It's the most appalling indictment of our present education system (in my opinion) that Ms Lloyd can write in her preface that "students of English will . . . find the work helpful, especially in writing essays . . .". When learning is reduced to Shakespeare or William Golding cribs, when essay-writing consists of recipes for repeating the same idea in different words, then it's time to be proudly conservative. Indeed, one of the best critiques ever to be written of the authoritarian dangers of this sort of fixed schema, instant coffee, cookbook recipe mentality, is by the conservative thinker Michael Oakshott, in *Rationalism in Politics*. But then, the Libertarian tradition has always included some strange bed-fellows. If kids want to learn and use English or any other language, they should use an ordinary dictionary when necessary, and, for the rest, look, listen and use their own brains. I wonder how many copies of this new *Roget's* will be thrust into the hands of our young to help them learn and use the language this year?

PAT FLANAGAN

Dead believed missing

MURDER is a luxury that like indoor hang-gliding or the seeking, picking and eating of edible fungus without the authority of a Penguin paperback book on the seeking, picking and eating of edible fungus, should be left to the hedonistic dilettante to while away the disenchanted minutes as an act of pure Russian Roulette without annoying the neighbours with the noise. Murder, like charity, is a communal act and is indeed an appeal to the Court of Last Resort for it is an act of desperation by both partners. He that gives and he that takes. Go beyond the death of the individual and we move into the world of semantics when the organised slaughter of millions can be described as historical inevitability, mass murder, the greater cause or even the purification of the race. But for the innocent child or the dribbling ancient stumbling into the gas chamber or the shambling queue lined up to be machine-gunned by the edge of the open waiting ditch, Mass Graves for the Use of death is a very lonely and a very individual thing. But let some sad neurotic throw a bomb into a crowded cafe or shoot some ineffectual clown in High Office and the vicarious excitement caused by that stupid act will reverberate among the frustrated romantics seeking an outlet in the poster shops for their own inadequacies against their own personal and local authoritarian Mummy figure. All morality is but an artificial creation and the philosophical question that the Old Testament writers, arguing an all-loving monotheistic God were then and now unable to come to terms with – of how can an all-loving omnipotent creator create evil – is that good and evil in both thought and action could not exist until men and women came together in communal groupings and out of that necessity had to rationalise their own actions, by the sheer need to survive, into what their small or large group held to be good or evil acts. Therefore good and evil are not absolutes but arbitrary rationalisations of communal social ways to, literally, survive. Individual murder is a thing, in 1982, that we applaud or condemn according to our bank balance, our social, religious or political philosophy but everyone who applauds the killing of an individual man, woman or child, from the nazi via the patriot to the dedicated revolutionary, would claim that it was in the interest and the cause of the greater good. Only the criminal killing in pure self-interest is an honest man or woman. So?

As I am moved into the technological age with the wrist watch TV set and the Thinking Bomb, individual murder is no longer the perquisite of the romantic revolutionary, the dedicated nationalist or the freedom-loving sad sack, throwing the classic bomb or firing the jammable revolver into the crowd to win a place of glory on the bookshelf Valhalla, but not only part of the international patriotic/revolutionary consortium but official governments' policy. No longer the whispered meetings in dark stone corridors of power and the passed poison vial and the pointed pointel, for they were the good old days and we shall never see their like again. We are of that generation who can witness man moving into Deep Space, and who know that in guarded offices, high officials of almost every government have, in these last fifty years, accepted the sanctioning of the private or public murder of individuals as an acceptable part of their particular government's policy. The bizarre ravings of American government agencies on how to murder Castro, the Byzantine manoeuvres of various French or Italian governments as to who killed who and why, yea, even into the field of public debate and as film fodder for we the masses.

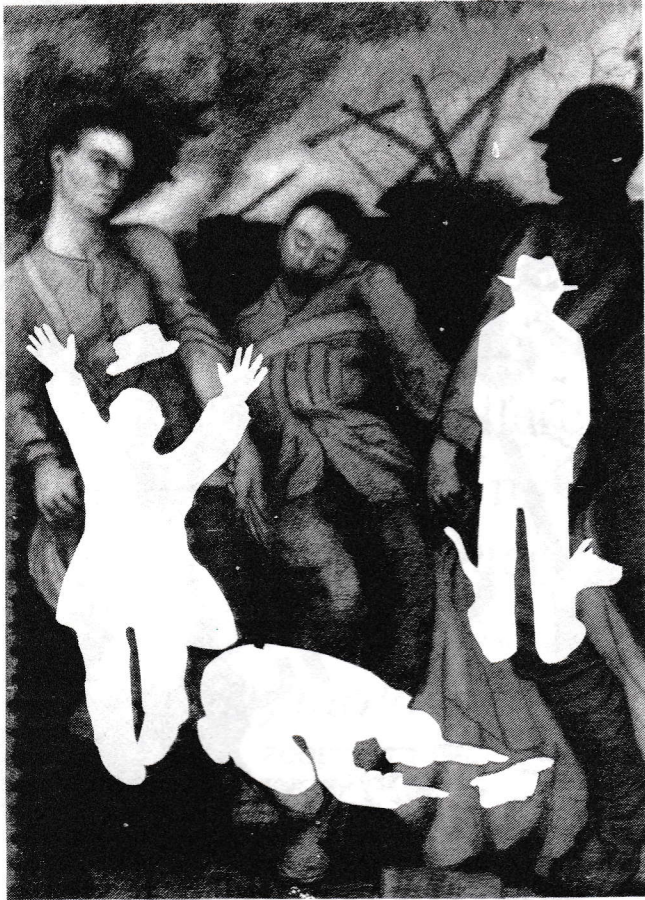
For the British government, there is the alleged covering-up of the death of Helen Smith in Saudi Arabia by the British Foreign Office. Did she fall off the balcony or was she deliberately killed and thrown over the balcony? For the

Dutch government, there is the question concerning the death of Johannes Otten, and was he working for Dutch intelligence or was he murdered with Helen Smith? Do tell, High Government Officials. The murder of individuals by governments or government agencies is for them a stupid and a foolish solution to their political problem for it is a pragmatic, short-term answer that by its action creates greater problems. The various Russian governments must regret that Stalin ordered the murder of Trotsky, for in doing that they created a myth greater than the man. If Christ had never been crucified, he would have lived out his life as another mystic philosopher to vanish into history, and there would have been no Christmas pudding and FREEDOM bookshop would be open on the 25th December.

I have at my side, with Mick my brown mongrel at my feet, various review copies of Penguin books and high on that list is Thomas Hauser's *Missing*. It is stated that "On 17 September 1973, six days after a military coup toppled the freely-elected government of Salvador Allende, Charles Horman was arrested by the Chilean military. One month later, his fingerprints were matched with a body in the Santiago morgue. He was one of two American citizens to die in the coup in Chile." "Specifically, it has been alleged with increasing credibility that Charles Horman was executed with the foreknowledge of American Embassy officials in Santiago . . ." (My emphasis). That is the claim, and here is the book by Thomas Hauser, which is the story of the search by Horman's wife and father to find the missing man. I accept that it is a good and honest book and I do wish that I could praise it but I found that the slick, trans-Atlantic style that became fashionable after the 1945 war moves, unintentionally, from what should be fact into fiction. It is the use of spoken words and conversations that could only be created by the writer at his typewriter away from the scene of the action.

The book is used as the basis for Costa-Gavras' film, *Missing*, and with Jack Lemmon in the leading role as Horman's father we have a good solid Hitchcock type of film, for we the spectators accept the scripted private conversations by the actors and we relate the death of one lone American to all the unidentified dead that the camera pans over as they lie huddled together in the unity of death in the temporary morgue. Costa-Gavras' film *Missing* has been compared to his film *Z* that he directed in 1969, for that was based on the political murder of Montand and the political murderous violence in France that was triggered off by Montand's killing. We can only be revolted by the death of thousands if we are forced to come to an understanding of the life of one of those individual dead, for he or she becomes an archetypal figure for their generation. The list is so long so let me quote figures if not facts and for my information on the following dead, missing or imprisoned, I am grateful to Neal Ascherson. Of journalists, 24 imprisoned in Turkey, 40 in Poland, 20 to 30 in China and 100 who have 'vanished' in Argentina during the last ten years. 16 vanished in Korea, and 72 in Vietnam and Indo-China, during their wars and it is accepted that 329 are held to be dead. 4 Dutch television journalists were murdered in El Salvador and 20 murdered in Iran. Editor Mustafa Karchoui on trial in Morocco, the trial of Okay Gonensin the editor of Cumhuriyet in Turkey and the jailing of the IPI member, Bulent Ecevit. I lay Hauser's book aside and there is Jacobo Timerman's story *Prisoner Without A Name, Cell Without A Number*.

Timerman, an editor of the liberal paper *La Opinion*, was a victim of a dawn arrest by members of the Argentine army and held in prison for two and a half years. His



Using a drawing
by Gerald Jarman
1982 Hayward Cal.

ARTHUR MOYSE

imprisonment followed the ancient and accepted pattern of all authorities of torture, beatings and long interrogations by all organised parties involved in these drear comedies – from Northern Ireland to sunny China – and I fault all and excuse no one. Jacobo Timerman was released in 1979 and he now lives in Tel Aviv where he writes for an Israeli newspaper, and I say to you, Jacobo Timerman, check and check again that there are no prisoners being maltreated in any Israeli civilian or military prisons. I praise your book, and history records your cry, now you too owe a duty to the dead or the damned.

Of my third Penguin review book *Original Sins* by Lisa Alther, I can do no more than quote the *Daily Mail*, for 'Lisa Alther, best-selling author of the wise, bawdy, honest, funny, salty, invigorating, important and beautiful *Kinflicks* has equally wisely and beautifully Done It Again'. I belong to that lost generation of dirty postcards in the factory lavatory and why do the blokes always keep their socks on and I honestly consider that Lisa's book as art or as good clean smut is pretty rubbishy, but, for an unimportant book and to keep my name on the Penguin review list, I'll hawk my honour – so quote me as saying that Lisa Alther's book *Original Sins* is a magnificent work of art with a prose style, a humour and an in-depth creation of characters that recalls the best of *Das Kapital*.

But I owe a duty in relation to Timerman's and Hauser's books to draw attention to what I hold is a fine piece of reporting. It is Nestor Makhno's *My Visit to the Kremlin*. But a few pages, no more than a pamphlet, of his visit to the Kremlin to deal in the matter of arms and policy with Lenin, yet in a few lines and a few pages he brings the day, the hour, the building, the corridors into understandable and acceptable focus. We create heroes and ask too much of their brief lives, for we deny them the right to human failures. Makhno in his last years became fit fodder for the

piss-takers, but at a particular moment in history he stepped forward to be counted. A small few-paged pamphlet, but it makes Makhno a fellow-human instead of yesterday's hero – and comrades, the bookshelves are loaded with those unsellable copies of those whose boring lives we have to live up to.

ARTHUR MOYSE

Missing by Thomas Hauser. Penguin books. £1.75

Prisoner Without A Name, Cell Without A Number by Jacobo Timerman. Penguin books. £1.75

Original Sins by Lisa Alther. Penguin books. £1.75

My Visit to the Kremlin by Nestor Makhno. Black Cat Press, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

ANARCHY, CLASS AND LANGUAGE

Continued from page 10

There is something about the style of some of the contributions to *FREEDOM* that seems sneering and supercilious. Those not so familiar with long words rightly feel put down by them. Oppressed people have been taught that if they don't understand it's because they are stupid. Long words make them hate themselves for their 'stupidity'. A sentence like the one I quoted could well have been unconsciously designed to exploit this feeling. How can you successfully strike an intellectual pose if you can't overawe the multitudes? There is a temptation to be as obscure as possible. Often the obscurity tails off into complete confusion and meaninglessness.

Anarchists ought to be very much concerned with the business of communicating. We have a message to communicate and it might help if we could understand one another for a start. To that end we should be challenging the obstacles to genuine communication put up by both classes.

If a long or unknown word is useful, then use it. Get other people to learn it and point out how it's useful and what for. If you are trying to explain something to an audience wider than just 'intellectuals' however, use it only if there is no simpler way of explaining the same thing. Resist the temptation to go in for dazzling verbal displays. Aim at clarity above all else.

For anarchists it is not good enough to bamboozle people into thinking we know what we are talking about. We want them to know what we are talking about too. It is a difficult task. We are trying to explain a social theory to people who are outraged by the whole idea of abstract thought.

What we are talking about is at odds with the usual way of understanding reality. We have either to explain laboriously or use our own jargon – anarchic structures, hierarchy, statism and so on – in order to be able to even think about anarchist views, let alone explain them to others.

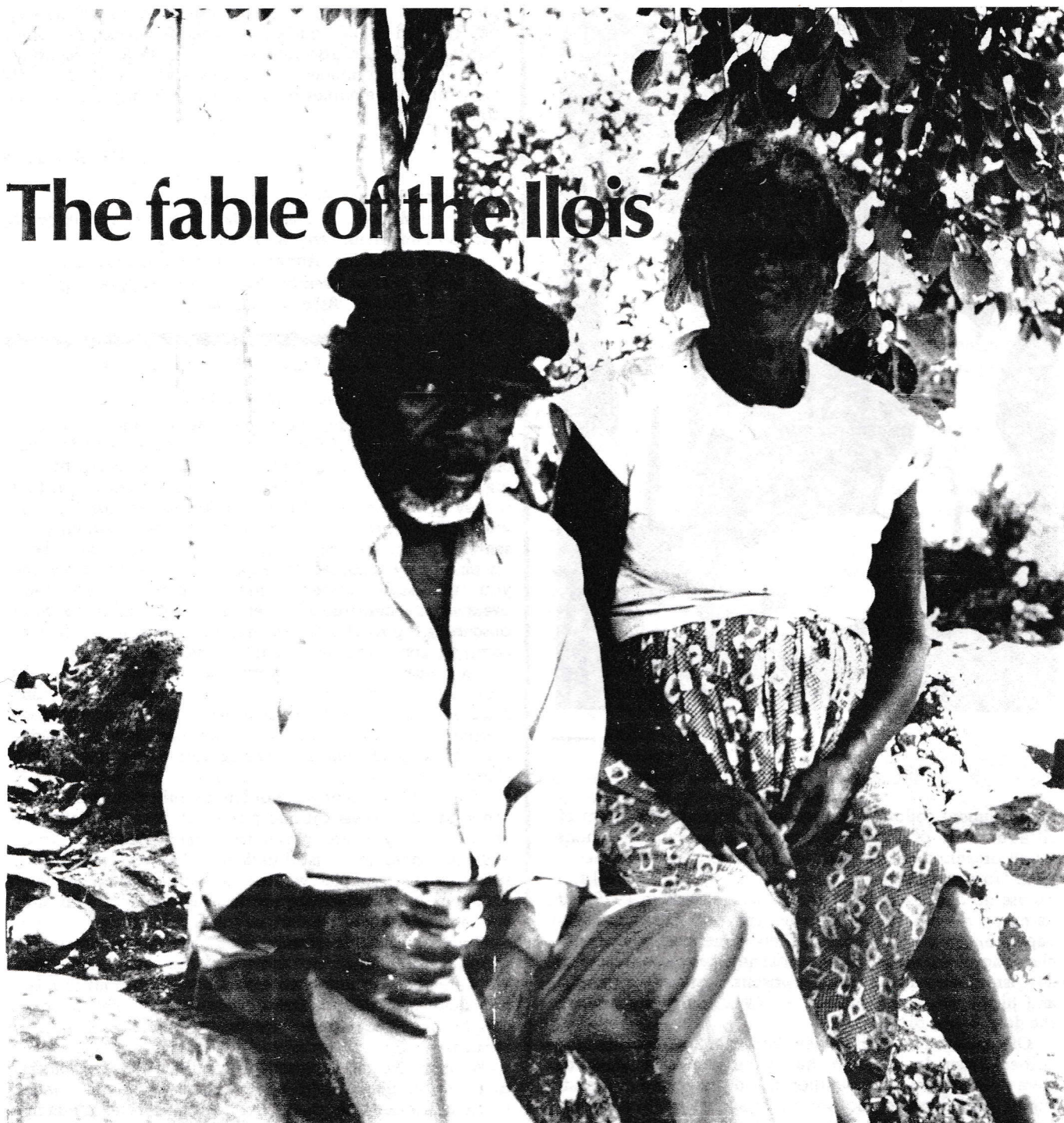
We need to get our meanings accepted into the mainstream of language use. This means that we must explain and restate our jargon to others. Obviously, it is only worth going to so much trouble if the word really was necessary in the first place.

Lest I be misrepresented or misunderstood, I must make it clear that I am definitely not advocating Sun style 'yobspak'. It is patronising and insulting to assume that working-class people do not understand words like 'patronising'. How thick do you think they are?

Also I am not writing off the middle classes entirely. They are genuinely unaware of the viciousness of their verbal behaviour. People should not be blamed for what class they happen to be born into, they should be blamed for what they do. And if they are harming other people, they should be made to stop.

JOHN ROBERTS

The fable of the Ilóis



Diego Garcia: A Contrast to the Falklands. By John Madeley. Minority Rights Group. £1.20.

THE Minority Rights Group was formed during the radical revival of the 1960's, with a policy rather like that of Amnesty International, a product of the same period, except that it campaigns for the human rights of *groups* rather than *individuals* suffering oppression. Its work is done in various ways, the most public being a series of reports on the particular situations of various minorities throughout the world.

More than fifty MRG reports have appeared since the beginning of the 1970's, have achieved a high reputation, and have sold a total of more than 200,000 copies. They have covered the best-known minorities — such as the

Basques, the Catalans, the Gypsies, the Kurds, the Palestinians, the Indian Untouchables, the Armenians, the Baha'is — and dozens of the less well-known ones; they have covered a few wider topics — such as Arab women, and female circumcision — and a few general ones — such as the social psychology and the international protection of minorities. They have covered two topics of British interest — the double minority in Ireland, and race and law in Britain and the United States — but, like Amnesty International, the Minority Rights Group has been reluctant to get involved in British politics. This position is changed with the most recent report, by John Madeley, which has nothing to do with religious or racial divisions in the British Isles but gives the fullest account so far of the way British Governments for seventeen years have oppressed the inhabitants of Diego Garcia 6,000 miles away in the Indian Ocean.

Diego Garcia may be compared and contrasted with the Falkland Islands, as the report's title suggests. It is a tiny island (thirteen miles long and six miles wide) in the little Chagos Archipelago 1,000 miles south of India and 2,000 miles east of Africa. It was discovered and named by Portuguese explorers in the sixteenth century, but it remained uninhabited until the eighteenth century. In 1776 it was claimed and settled by French pioneers from Mauritius, 1,500 miles to the south-west, and became a commercial colony (exporting so many coconuts that the Chagos were called the Oil Islands) and also a leper colony.

In 1815, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Mauritius and the Chagos passed from French to British rule, and the people of Diego Garcia became British citizens, as they still are. By the end of the nineteenth century there was a flourishing community of about 500 people called Ilois ('islanders'), the population about 60 per cent of African and about 40 per cent of Indian origin, the social structure matriarchal (because of the excess of women and the informality of marriage), the main religion Roman Catholicism, the language a unique Creole, the main source of income the coconut trade, the administration from Mauritius informal. The small settlement was poor but peaceful, and it was unaffected by the world upheavals of the twentieth century.

All this began to change in 1965. Towards the end of the huge decolonisation process which so suddenly dissolved the British Empire after the Second World War, Harold Wilson's Labour Government granted independence to Mauritius – on condition that the Chagos Islands were not included. The Mauritian leaders accepted the condition (for a payment of £3 million), and the British formed a new colony, including the Chagos with some other islands in the British Indian Ocean Territory. By this time the population of Diego Garcia was about 1,800 – the same as that of the Falkland Islands.

In 1966 the British Government signed a defence treaty with the United States, granting the BIOT as a military base. At first the isolated island of Aldabra was chosen for the base headquarters, but the British Government changed the plan because it would have meant disturbing the remarkable giant tortoises there, and decided to disturb the equally defenceless people in Diego Garcia instead. In order to carry out the treaty, which was undebated and almost unreported, the British authorities began an extraordinary project of removing the inhabitants from the island. Ilois who went to Mauritius – as they did to buy supplies, visit friends or enjoy a holiday – were not allowed to return. Ilois who stayed in Diego Garcia were deprived of their jobs – the British Government simply bought up the coconut industry in 1967 and closed it down. Food imports were stopped. By 1971 about half the population had left Diego Garcia for Mauritius. In 1971 the first American troops arrived, and the remaining Ilois were told that they too must leave. They were first moved to two other islands in the Chagos, but the Americans wanted all the Archipelago, so the British moved them on to Mauritius. By 1973, after eight years, the whole native population of the Chagos had been expelled.

In Mauritius, the Ilois were given virtually no money, no food, no homes and no jobs. The last batch from the Chagos organised a sit-in in their ship, and won some housing. In 1973 the British Government agreed to pay compensation to the Ilois, but nothing was received until 1978; at the same time it agreed to pay compensation to the Mauritian Government, but little reached the Ilois themselves. These British citizens, expelled from their homes by the British Government, were driven into poverty, disease (mental as well as physical), and crime.

Nothing of all this was known in the outside world until 1975, when a Committee of the United States Congress began to inquire into the plans for a military base on Diego Garcia. One of the questions asked was whether there were

any inhabitants there, and the answer was the truth – that there were none – but not the whole truth – that the inhabitants had all been removed during the previous decade. Later in 1975 the whole story was at last revealed to the English-speaking public by the *Washington Post* and the *Sunday Times* – the latter discovering that the American Government had paid the British Government \$11.5 million for the deal.

The Ilois had already made informal and formal requests for help, but the responsibility was shifted between the Mauritian, British and American Governments. Following the publicity in the Anglo-American press, they began to organise themselves properly, and organised support also began in Britain and the United States and above all in Mauritius, in the left-wing Mauritian Militant Movement. The British Government followed its usual pattern of threats and promises and lies to combat the unfavourable publicity and possible legal action.

In 1980 the American Government used Diego Garcia for its disastrous attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran, without asking for British permission under the treaty. This was followed by a series of sit-ins and hunger-strikes by Ilois against the British representatives in Mauritius. A Mauritian report showed that 77 per cent of the Ilois want to return to their homes. In 1981 the British Government at last agreed to formal negotiations, but refused to change its position, while it granted the Americans more facilities at Diego Garcia – and while the Mauritian Government explored the possibility of charging the Americans rent for the island! In March 1982 the British Government suddenly and considerably improved its financial offer, and the Mauritians and Ilois finally accepted. By coincidence – or not as the case may be – in April 1982 the Argentines invaded the Falklands, and the British went to war for 1,800 people in a small and distant island colony. In June 1982 the Mauritian elections were won by the MMM, whose new Government immediately claimed the Chagos and demanded the closing of the American base.

The story is shocking, if not surprising. What old imperialism failed to do in two centuries was done by modern militarism in two decades. The situation may change completely now, in view of the publicity and the political implications, and the Ilois may at last be able to return to Diego Garcia. But, as John Madeley says, there should be a wide and deep inquiry into the whole business: 'If there is now constructive questioning and probing into their case, then the suffering of 2,000 people who have been denied the right to live in their homeland may not have been entirely in vain.'

The parallel with the Falklands is particularly significant – the fact that the Falklanders are of British descent while the Ilois are of mixed African and Indian descent, the secret manoeuvrings of the Foreign Office and the Defence Department, the political machinations over places where the military importance of the land outweighs the personal interests of the inhabitants, the shadows of the Cold War between East and West and of the hot war between North and South, the abominable behaviour of the British authorities at every stage, the denial of even the most basic democratic rights when there are no electoral votes at stake. The only good things are that the British and American Governments don't actually seem to have directly killed anyone, and that the precarious tradition of free speech in Britain and the United States has in the end brought the facts into the open.

The liberal method has exposed the scandal, but the moral of the story is a libertarian message. Every Government does as much harm as it can, and as much good as it must. The only good which Governments can do for the Ilois of Diego Garcia is to let them go home and then leave them alone. The same is true for all of us.

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TOTAL TO DATE = £1484.25

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