

anarchist fortnightly Freedom

30p

16 OCT. 1982 VOL.43 NO.20



ON a damp, misty morning this week we were treated to the spectacle of thousands of patriotic citizens cheering thousands of young men marching through the streets of the City of London to celebrate the deaths and mutilation of yet more thousands of young men. The cause for celebration was that more of the 'enemy's' young men were killed and maimed than 'ours'. This constituted a 'victory' and in the fine tradition of those who have slept safely at home, piling up the profits giving thanks to those who actually went out and 'defended' their right to do so, the burghers and aldermen of the City gave a party. Invitations were issued to the high and mighty and, as a reluctant afterthought, the maimed. Unfortunately this 'victory' is not quite an official one, so the party was dubbed 'Salute to the Task Force'. As at all parties the danger of gatecrashers loomed large. To prevent this the City of London Police aided by their much larger neighbour, the Met, flooded the area with

even more thousands of young men, and this time women too. Having been denied God's blessing at the 'Service of Thanksgiving' earlier this year, Maggie T was not going to be denied the chance to wallow in sentimental righteousness this time. Some say a tear sprang to her eye as she talked to the token half-dozen wounded, probably at the thought of the cost of caring for them and the effect on the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement. Yes, here was an opportunity for us all to feel proud to be British, to see 'our boys' (the ones with legs and arms still) marching to martial music on our own streets! wave the flag! sing 'Rule Britannia!' 'Rejoice!' Well, not all of us felt that way. Yes, some even considered disrupting the joyous happening, but fear not, the forces of law, order and right were there. Anyone who looked remotely 'unpatriotic' (ie, not waving at least 3 union jacks) was invited to step inside a blue van and was entertained, at police expense; until the

party was over. That the entertainment consisted of reading the graffiti on the cell walls is sad, but they *were* trying to spread the joy, honestly. Two people were so carried away with the occasion they were going to wave a banner, but in the nick of time, they were nicked, nothing was going to spoil the festivities. 16 arrested for trying to chain themselves across the route, failure here for the filth, two got away, but never mind, arrest three people who look like they might approve of the action to make up for that. "What, no fixed abode, eh? Well, sleep in our nice warm cells tonight and you can tell the magistrate in the morning!"

All in all, a success for might, right and decency. Having given thanks the rich and powerful can forget all about the poor sods till the next war, the next task force. But hasn't that always been the way?

BRIQUE LEFLIC

Reports France

INFORMATION ON THE FRENCH SITUATION

HERE follows a Communique from the French Anarchist Federation, which we have received recently.

Paris 8th October 1982

TERRORISM

TERRORIST actions; against Israelis, against Jews and against immigrant workers, and including murder have been in the headlines again this August. Most of these terrorist actions were claimed by the French movement 'Direct Action', composed of ex-libertarian activists together with extreme left activists both going in the same direction — against Imperialism and Reagan.

Meanwhile the Socialist government shows its real face. Behind an outward humanitarian face hides political repression. The new security secretary reinforces the police system and there is also the revelation of the training of a new special corps of police, created a year ago.

ECONOMIC CRISIS

THE Socialist government — face to face with the main problems of liberal capitalism (unemployment and inflation) — can

only find 'traditional' solutions: stopping wage rises, control of money supply, devaluation ... plus co-operation with the reformist unions to obtain 'social peace' without giving anything. The unions play the game and work against the working class. The working class should wake up and find the spirit and practice of anarcho-syndicalism.

L' ASSOCIATION COCCINELLE

THE 'Coccinelle' (Lady-bird) association was created in June 1982, and it will probably open in autumn. It includes a library (which will lend books) and a documents centre. We'll collect the anarchist and anti-authoritarian press from the whole world. We'll card-index every article and sort the slips out by subjects, so that everyone who wants documentation about a definite subject can immediately see everything that was written before about the same theme. Later on we think of organising meetings with knowledgeable guests about topical subjects (such as, for example, atomic power, information processing, etc). Files with articles from the anti-authoritarian press will also be compiled, about the same kind of subjects. We ask every anarchist or anti-authoritarian group to send us the periodicals, pamphlets, leaflets, recordings ... they publish, have published or will publish, so that we can card-index them. As yet we haven't got any money, so we can't buy anything. That problem should be settled when the library opens, because we'll ask people who regularly borrow books to pay an annual contribution.

We ask the whole anarchist, alternative and anti-authoritarian press to print this release.

Our contact address is:
Association Coccinelle,
c/o M J C Claudel,
1 place Paul-Claudiel,
51100 Reims, France.

England

'ULTRA LEFT' REVIEW

THE weekend 11th/12th September saw in Manchester a conference to discuss setting up on a more permanent basis a review more or less along the lines of the *New Ultra Left Review*, which the Manchester 'Wildcat' group had put together and mailed out a couple of months before to various people who they considered might be interested, ie 'those who loosely describe themselves as Left Communist, Libertarian Communist, Council Communist or Anarchist Communist, or whatever'.

The conference decided to change the name of the review, which most people had said they didn't really like, to *Intercom*, with regular participation in its production based on the 10 points below:

- (1) Opposition to the class society which exists in every country in the world.
- (2) Commitment to the communist objective — abolition of nation states and the money/market/wages system and its replacement by the common ownership and democratic control of the world's resources.
- (3) Rejection of 'nationalisation' as any kind of solution to working class problems.
- (4) Support and encouragement for independent working class struggle outside the control of the trade unions (including the shop steward and 'rank and file' movements), and all political parties.
- (5) Opposition to all capitalist and nationalist parties, including the Labour party.
- (6) For the active participation by the whole working class in its own liberation through a social revolution which overthrows all governments, bosses and leaders.
- (7) Rejection of all 'national liberation' struggles.
- (8) Active opposition to racism and sexism.
- (9) Opposition to religion and all other ideological mystifications.
- (10) Support for principled co-operation among revolutionaries and opposition to sectarianism.

It is hoped that via the review and exchange of locally-produced leaflets and news sheets, the various groups and individuals would keep in regular touch with each other, and that the inclusion



of longer articles would hopefully stimulate debate. It is also hoped that *Intercom* would provide a contact for isolated individuals.

Briefly, any article which is in broad agreement with the 10 points above will be included although the publishing group have asked that articles be pre-typed on a UNIVERSAL stencil and that jargon be kept to a minimum. The address to write to is R Knight, c/o Students Union, The University, Keele, Staffs.

NWFA CONFERENCE

AT a meeting held in Manchester on the 25th September 1982, it was resolved to set up a North West Federation of Anarchists. Groups and individuals were present from a number of areas in the region.

The Liverpool group agreed to act as the contact address/clearing house, for the Federation. It was decided to circulate the minutes of the meeting to those people who had written in, but were unable to attend. There is to be a bulletin which will be publicised in the near future.

Discussions at the meeting covered a large number of topics such as unemployment, action at work and anti-nuclear activities. We agreed that there should be an anarchist presence on the YOP's demonstration on the 16th October 1982.

Contact can be made with the Federation at the addresses given below:-

The Secretary NWFA,
Box LAG,
37 Bagot St,
Wavertree,
Liverpool 15 2HA.

DAM,
Box 20,
164/166 Corn Exchange Bldgs,
Hanging Ditch,
Manchester 4.

In brief

MALAYSIA has joined other south east Asian countries in banning video games as 'addictive and unhealthy'.

THE Press Council has upheld a complaint against the Sun newspaper, about a cartoon, following the charges against 179 people in a Social Security swoop in Oxford. The drawing showed a conveyor belt of people going through the court. Of the 13 defendants shown, seven are recognisably black or asian. In fact, of the 179 charged, one was black. An Indian was acquitted.

MORE than 100 pupils have walked out of their school in Wakefield in support of the ex-headmaster. He has been suspended since July, after having been named for alleged excessive caning.

Dr Digby Anderson has written a guide to *Detecting Bad Schools*. This seems to be mainly a matter of uprooting wishy washy progressive attitudes. A 'normal' parent is defined as one who reads the *Daily Mail*. Parents are advised to follow teachers and listen to their conversation, key words are listed; beware of rally, march, peace, alternative, rights and 'anything sounding Latin-American'. 'Beware especially if any of these are preceded by the word Women's'. 'Teachers are not particularly political people but those that include Trotskyists and proselytising lesbians.'

KENT Police are unhappy about some uncalled for help. It has been revealed that during the summer they mounted an armed raid to arrest some drug smugglers. Back in the Hotel, celebrating, they discovered another set of armed men. These turned out to be a group of Royal Marine Commandos who had been sent to lurk offshore in case the smugglers' boat tried

to make a getaway. The police say that if there had been an accident the two parties could have ended up firing at each other. The Local Customs and Excise, who set it all up, insist that the police were told, and anyway, there was no harm done. The incident was described on television as the first time that armed forces had been used for anti-criminal activity without the knowledge of the police.

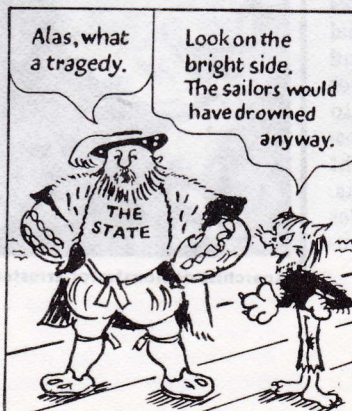
PROFESSOR John Adair of Surrey University has been getting some publicity for his studies on 'leadership'. 'Most organisations in this country limp along in spite of their leaders.' 'There is no such thing as a born leader but some people have a high natural aptitude which can be developed. They must be spotted and trained because our national circumstances are pretty parlous.' Sounds a bit like Tibetan monks looking for the new Delai Lama. Or countless shoddy science fiction stories or totalitarian dreams. Anyway, it seems that that old permissiveness/progressiveness is to blame. 'In the Sixties, leadership went out of fashion and became a dirty word. It was thought that democracy and leadership were mutually exclusive. But the climate has changed.'

THE Confederation of British Industry is generally enthusiastic about the proposals for job splitting suggested by the government. A confidential memorandum to members points out the advantages of reducing unemployment in an election year, perhaps by as much as 150,000. However, there might be a problem. If someone was employed for more than 16 hours a week, after a year they would qualify for some legal protection. Horror! Don't worry. That nice Mr Tebbit has solved the dilemma. He has raised the grant to an employer adopting the scheme from £500 to £750 and assured them that they would not be liable to action for unfair dismissal. Who said that he had no heart?

STOP PRESS: All those arrested during the 'Falklands Victory' march have been released, but are due to appear again in court on December 16th.

WILDCAT

Launching of the Mary Rose battleship, 1552





London needs people like you in the Metropolitan Police.

POLICE NEWS

THE government is to introduce early legislation to extend police powers of stop and search. The Home Secretary made the announcement to the annual conference of the Police Superintendents Association. The powers would be achieved by 'rationalising the existing powers to stop and search for stolen goods and by introducing powers to stop and search for offensive weapons.' The Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure suggested extension of the search power, recommending that the officer should be required to identify him or herself and supply a note giving the reason for suspicion. Untidy riders like this have a habit of falling off, as seems to have happened here. Authorities are keen to point out, with the utmost resolution, that this in no way represents a reintroduction of 'sus'. Superintendent Tony Parkes, from Devon and Cornwall commented 'It is the right of every member of the public, every citizen if he wishes to, to be able easily to be searched. What can happen to him should be able to happen anywhere in England and Wales.' Might we get in quickly and go on record as not wishing to?

Nice to have it acknowledged, from New Commissioner Newman, 'People must get it clear that squads of police with truncheons can cause serious injuries.' The *Observer* has obtained a copy of a confidential manual *The Constables Instruction Book*, which is 'an official document, not available to press and public' (A. Spokesman). The newspaper seems startled that officers are advised to keep a special eye on young people, especially if they are carrying bags at night and not to get involved in racial attacks. Surely they didn't think that constables would have been behaving like that unofficially?

GAMES IN BRISBANE...

THE holding of the Commonwealth Games in September-October this year focused world attention on the city of Brisbane. The holding of these games was part of two closely related aims of the Queensland government, neither of which have anything to do with sport. The first is their desire to publicise Queensland as a mecca of free enterprise where multinational mining companies especially are given every opportunity to make huge profits and rape the environment. Secondly, the Queensland government is anxious to demonstrate to these companies (uranium, coal and aluminium) that they will be able to conduct their affairs without hindrance from aborigines whose land they are taking, from ecology and other groups who might mobilise popular resistance, and from unions who might endanger production by fighting for better pay and conditions for members.

For several years, therefore, the Queensland government has been attempting to provide optimum conditions for a certain kind of 'development' — a stable police state. States of Emergency, threats to invoke their martial-law style Essential Services Legislation, an Act which basically suspended civil liberties for the period of the Games, rejection of the strongly supported demand for aboriginal land rights, banning of materials from schools and politicisation of the Police, Education and other government depart-

ments have all been features of Queensland politics during the last ten years. Possibly most pervasive of all is the banning under the Traffic Act of leafletting, street speaking, assembling and marching (the life blood of most dissident movements) without a next-to-impossible police permit.

Against this background a number of anarchists in Brisbane began organizing for a civil disobedience action aimed against those sections of the Traffic Act which forbade leafletting, street speaking, assembling and marching without a permit. A number of these people had been involved in the largely unsuccessful civil liberties demonstrations during the late seventies and wanted this action to be more imaginative than simply having phalanxes of demonstrators marching into police lines. Proposed alignments with certain Christian and traditional left groups fell through so the People for Direct Democracy — a coalition of anarchist groups — went ahead with the action.

Prior planning and training sessions were held by the group who planned to be arrested (called the Committee of 50), posters were put up, forums held, leaflets distributed, a guerilla march held, and an open letter to the police was distributed to all police stations throughout the city. This letter asked police to consider not enforcing undemocratic and repressive



Anarchist demonstrator arrested in Brisbane

Queensland laws and reminded them of Nuremberg.

The Civil Disobedience Day began in the new City Mall. The Labor-controlled Brisbane City Council is determined to maintain this bleak, sterile, Muzak-filled area as a monument to passive, alienated consumerism and threatened us with arrest under ordinances which are even more repressive than the relevant sections of the Traffic Act. However, in the end, the Council backed down and the action went ahead as planned.

The activities included an opening ceremony by our 'mayor' creating a 'Free Speech Mall', popular theatre, street speaking, ceremonial leafletting, picketing and busking — all illegal activities. All the acts were very professional and the big crowd which developed was very supportive. Then the 'mayor' cut a ribbon announcing 'Freedom of the City' and led us out of the Mall into the streets where the same actions occurred. The police, however, did not move in to arrest us. Instead, they lined up across the street waiting for the climax to our action — a street march. When that came, 22 of us were arrested (by about 100 police) and the whole of the main street of the city took up supportive chants and cheering as we were led away.

The Committee of 50's action reflected the success which can come from careful implementation of the principles of non-violent civil disobedience. We were imaginative and well planned, we humanised the situation to minimise police violence and we highlighted the highly-conscious repressiveness of the Queensland government and the largely mindless repressiveness of the Labor City Council. Hopefully, we influenced other dissident groups in the state not to compromise with the permit system during their campaigns. Finally, I believe, we captured the imagination of the city and a great deal of respect for anarchism.

OTHER NEWS

WE have about 400 copies of the 'Anarchy or Chaos' edition of *Social Alternatives* (February '82) so, if any groups or individuals would like to buy copies or think they could sell some we would be very interested in hearing from you. (c' — Drew Hutton, Social Studies Dept, Kelvin Grove Campus of Brisbane CAE, Kelvin Grove 4059.)

The Libertarian Socialist Organization (LSO) and the People for Direct Democracy (PDD) will soon be shifting their centre and their PO Box number. We will let you know as soon as possible how to contact us. In the-meantime correspondence for both the LSO and the PDD can be sent to PO Box 187, West End, 4101.

...AND AMSTERDAM

THE see-saw struggle for possession of the 'Lucky Luyk' squat enters its third year with the biggest battle yet. Two days of street fighting has followed the latest eviction on Monday (11th Oct) night. Thousands of demonstrators, summoned by the 'Kraukers' alarm network, took to the streets of Amsterdam's Museum District. Anyone going to the Concertgebonn was treated to the symphony of shattered glass, exploding tear gas shells and water cannon on a scale unprecedented in the last two years. Barricades were erected, a tram burnt out and some twenty policemen given a dose of their own medicine.

Lucky Luyk was first squatted in 1980. The owner sent in a team of heavies who managed to repossess the building. The well-knit squatters community didn't stand back. Hundreds descended on the building evicted the heavies and barricaded the building. The owner gave up and turned to the courts. This latest eviction follows months of harassment. The owner managed to get a court order granting possession but lacked the means to enforce

it. Therefore the city council purchased the building and proceeded with the assault.

With the building evicted, the squatters didn't lack a sense of poetic justice, a determined police and military defensive action is all that saved the US consulate from being evicted by the squatters.

How have the local squatters managed to achieve such solidarity and purpose? It comes about through a wide network of self-help groups, community shops, bars, pirate radio, etc. The squatters have built an alternative society within the orthodox city environment: It is fear of this alternative society growing stronger and expanding that has caused such a reaction from Dutch government. The ostensible reason for Lucky Luyk's eviction was that it was needed 'for homeless families'. If the Amsterdam City council gets its way, there will be more 'homeless families', squatters and even more homes left empty waiting for property values to rise.

CHE KROBARRO



Amsterdam street party

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WRI CONFERENCE

Dear Friends,
International conferences are always difficult to recapture afterwards but, as one who attended the WRI Triennial in Perugia, I thought your reporter succeeded beyond reasonable expectation. The libertarian presence was strong and it was encouraging to discover the extent to which radical peace action groups were influencing the broader peace movement in many European countries. The fact that a tiny organisation, based in London and with an annual budget of only £25,000, could stage such an encounter was impressive. Yet, during the course of the week, the gap between the need and potential for transnational communication and collaboration and the resources for the organisation to make it possible became more evident. It was perhaps inevitable that those present should enthusiastically support the commitment of more local movement resources to the expansion of international work but, sadly, the experience of the past shows how parochial we all become once the glow of international communion, essentially between small numbers of people, dims when we return home to roost.

International work starts with communication which involves travel, translation, interpretation and the sheer will to contact people and organisations outside and beyond the normal alliances we have to maintain. Usually it does not convey the urgency of local struggle so that even if its value is recognised in principle the practical obligation to be involved stems from predetermined policy rather than impulsive commitment.

On the face of it the WRI's problem, after a successful conference and with increasing demands and a grinding schedule of regular work, is survival. But survival is not enough. Not now. Not given the stampede to destruction being whooped along by the cowboys in power or the bleary awakening into the new peace movement representing as it does the still small minority of our fellow citizens who are not yet dead from the neck up. No single organisation is all that important but the WRI is part of a fragile chain of transnational resistance which I suspect we need and which some of you may feel deserves your material support.

Yours fraternally,

TONY S

WRI Treasurer

55 Dawes Street,
London SE17 1EL

OUTMODED IDEA

Dear Friends,
I thought I might add my views on the subject of Anarcho-syndicalism. My opinion is that it is an outmoded idea and would not lead to a libertarian society in the late twentieth century industrial environment.

The idea of Anarcho-syndicalism is to create an anarchist society by the control of the means of production by the syndicates. Unfortunately many anarchist devotees of syndicalism do not look deeply enough at the reasons for the development of factories in capitalist society. These are to do with hierarchy and coercion. Even if the factories were taken over by anarcho-syndicalist organisations, the individual worker would still only understand part of the process of production the part that particular person worked on. A factory environment is inherently structured so that a bureaucracy would spring up to co-ordinate the process of production. Paradoxically to create workers self management involves destroying the factory system.

Another criticism I have of Anarcho-syndicalism is that like Marxism it tends to see liberation in economic terms. This of course neglects other aspects of domination.

Technology also in modern society can be extremely repressive. Apart from the pollution aspect technology can mould people's behaviour into various ways to conform with it. It has a life of its own often leading to domination. Again Anarcho-syndicalism ignores much of technology's domination of the individual.

What I think the kind of society anarchists should be trying to create (although I realise the danger of drawing up too rigid a blueprint of possible future societies) is a federation of small decentralised communities (with face to face democracy in them). The form of technology used should be ecologically sound and of a type which is comprehensible to the individual so that person can understand the whole process. A long way from the present factory system.

I think anarchists should be attempting to break down the factory system by autonomous groups, rather than attempting to build a mass syndicalist organisation which would only further domination.

Best wishes,

D DANE

DAMP SQUIB

Dear Friends,
Gratifying as it was to find that excellent mag Big Bang mentioned in the pages I am sure that Jeff (Cloves) Ed Big Bang would agree he would also like to see poems: as well as blank spaces!

I realize that some readers are unable to tell whether an idea is present! or a style exciting no matter whether it is prose or poem! Anyway as you did publish one poem of arguably the finest political poet now alive and well—Lawrence Ferlinghetti and published one of mine in 1969 (!) what am I talking about?

Here we are in 1982 with Lawrence Ferlinghetti's collected poems: Endless

Life now in print (New Directions). With his Populist Manifestos (3) hitting the streets and kids once again being harangued by poets everywhere. 'What the fuck' you might say?

Well: just this: without poets and musicians* we shall end up with politicians of anarchy and I'm more in favour of Ipswich Town FC.

Yours, as ever,
DENNIS GOULD

FANATICAL

The Editors,

Two good letters in the last issue of FREEDOM expose an element of fanaticism that is unfortunately not confined to the religions.

The letters by Lanty on ALF&A and Madeleine S on Matriarchy's Miscarriage show two facets of the same problem. There are certain ecological, biological and physical laws that humanity ignores at its peril, and they relate to our being as part of the planet. We have to distinguish between exploitation and the facts of co-existence. Dietary habits have a lot to do with where people live and animal husbandry should have a symbiosis in which fertility is maintained in a similar sort of way to what occurs in nature. It is the twist that an exploitative and authoritarian society has imposed that upsets the balance. As Lanty so rightly points out a vegetarian society can impose just the same sort of imbalance.

I share Madeleine S disapproval of society's low value placed on the rearing of children. While much of the professionalism achieved at great expense to counteract the low value placed on childrearing activity could be made redundant by a change to a healthier attitude. At least in Western Society the element of choice for women to become mothers or not is there so those that actually want to are adequately backed up by an approving society. The rearing of children is still repressive, either by design or the circumstances imposed by a profit orientated society. The potential of human beings has scarcely been realised and as was pointed out in Magical Child reviewed in this journal some months ago, a lot that can be done at the infant stage is neglected.

In Venezuela there is an interesting experiment in which the ideas of Edward de Bono are being used to increase the creative potential of children in one of the most exploited parts of the world.

ALAN ALBON

WORRIED

Dear FREEDOM,
I find 'Lanty's' remarks on the animal liberation movement a bit worrying. My concern is not for the ALF, who are quite

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capable of defending themselves, but for the damage done to anarchism as the product of a logical reasoning process. Lanty has very strong feelings on the subject but it is all too apparent that he has not submitted those feelings to a great deal of analysis.

He is quite right that the animal liberation movement has nothing to do with environmentalism. Environmentalism (and conservation) are trendy words for what is really resources management (ie it is stupid to kill off the resource you are exploiting). As such it is capitalism pretending to care. Conservation and environmentalism in, for example, the whaling industry is just about not hunting whales to extinction. Animal liberation is about not firing explosive harpoons into social, intelligent sea mammals at all.

It is interesting that, of the hundreds of thousands of animals rescued and released by the animal liberation groups over the years, Lanty should (along with the mass media) pick on the incidents involving the release of minks. Mink farm 'escapees' are indeed causing severe problems to indigenous wildlife in some regions but this problem is much more widespread and existed long before the ALF was thought of. The ALF action will have added to the problem, but they did not cause the problem. The initial and major cause of the feral mink problem is irresponsible and incompetent fur farming which has allowed mink to escape from inadequate pens. Mink have also been deliberately released when farmers move on or for economic reasons. If over the years Lanty has not been equally hostile to such fur farmers in his area I suggest that his expressed concern over the feral mink problem is not genuine but, just like the media, he has taken it up as a convenient stick with which to beat the ALF.

If Lanty has seriously to consider mink predation on poultry he must have concentrated in his area the entire 5% of commercially bred poultry which is not bred in battery sheds!

It is very convenient to say that 'animals' kill each other. It is more accurate to say that some animals kill other animals. (Some humans kill other humans, does that mean that all humans can be shot on sight as murderers?) If wolves eat lambs there may be some poetic justice in us eating wolves. This, however, is not the case. The majority of meat consumed is from cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry — vegetarians all.

I can see Lanty rejoicing in his self-image of the strong man, surviving and doing some of the hard but necessary things that are involved in surviving. But when he admits to killing for 'sport' I lose any sympathy I had. I have had to kill animals in what can be called an 'act of mercy'. I did it with a heavy heart and with frustration because I could do no more. Having had those experiences I

have nothing but contempt for those who take killing as a game to be enjoyed with a drink and a laugh — and maybe even a funny costume.

Comrade Lanty's vision of a new world has very little to do with anarchism. The last third of his letter could have appeared as a Labour, Liberal or Ecology Party leaflet. It transcends nothing in the way that anarchist thought does and should. We are not in the business (like the reformist parties) of making the best of a bad job — we are in the 'good job in the first place' business.

People who live in inhospitable areas, says Lanty, have no choice but to live off other animals. This, in passing, ignores the whole concept of trade or distribution but it also raises some fundamental questions. We share this planet with other species. We might ask if it is reasonable that humans should expect to have total rights of exploitation and occupation over every dry inch of this planet.

Why does Lanty restrict his care and solidarity to his own species? Perhaps it is because humans are more intelligent and more aware than animals. However, our psychiatric hospitals contain people with less intelligence and awareness than some animals. Does Lanty feel they are therefore suitable candidates for painful experiments or the meat pie industry?

Perhaps it is because of some spiritual or mystical reason. To turn Lanty's own phrase on him — that has nothing to do with anarchism.

Perhaps Lanty just prefers humans because he is human himself. That seems fair enough as long as he doesn't pretend that he is any different from the racist who prefers whites because he is white himself.

I would be more interested to hear Lanty's reasons for his speciesism rather than his excuses for it.

Solidarity,
EDWARD JOHNSON.

CONCERNED

Friends,

As an anarchist of sorts and a vegetarian whose principles are founded not on concern for personal health, but on concern for the rights of animals, the appearance in the present issue of *FREEDOM* of the letter signed 'Lanty' was not a little disturbing.

Though normally averse from troubling to reason with the kind of mind which revels in ignorance, I feel compelled to make this answer, if only for the reason that 'Lanty' ought not to be encouraged, by the default of his opponents, in the belief that his opinions represent anarchist thinking in general.

His letter positively bursts with contradictions and absurdities, and to challenge these, one by one, would be a tedious

exercise. I'll deal with just a few of his points.

He asks—'What has the Animal Liberation Movement got to do with Anarchism', and answers—'Not a lot'. He is entitled to sound that opinion from within a fellowship which, if it cannot sanction diversity of minds, cannot claim to embody the essential anarchist ethic.

But I would remind 'Lanty' that the licence given him is also the licence which associates too may claim. I am aware of no incompatibility in the belief that we humans and our fellow creatures have basic rights in this world, which ought not to be violated by those forces in which power, and the iniquities of power, are invested.

'Lanty' has the idea that, 'If there is an anarchist morality... it is that we should do as we please provided that we harm no other human'. A startling statement indeed! Presumably this absolute licence which he advocates would sanction the extermination of 'non-useful' species, the unrestrained exploitation of natural resources by commercial interests, and the abolition of any codes of conduct in our dealings with animals? And how would this grand experiment in freedom of conduct be managed to ensure the protection of our own precious species from ecological collapse? Perhaps our politicians and the profiteers and administrators who stand at the back of them would undertake the onerous responsibility?

Or can we be certain that 'Lanty' is actually expressing any ideas which even he himself understands in their implications? His careless use of language repeatedly confounds one. Just what, essentially, does he mean by 'harm'? Does he mean to 'injure' or 'kill', or what? The accepted senses of 'harm' are 'to damage or hurt'. By these definitions, would 'Lanty' not agree that the State is harmful to its subjects? Are anarchists, therefore, by his moral dictum, to decline to oppose that systematically-inflicted harm?

If 'Lanty' cares to examine the principles of those who are concerned with the rights of our fellow-animals—and I am not here speaking for Animal Liberation Front, which I know little about and of which I happen not to be a member—he would discover, I think, little that would threaten his hunting and fishing habits. Rather, the concern is primarily with the conditions under which increasing numbers of subject—as opposed to free-born—animals are born, live out their brief lives, and die.

Finally, I too 'live in an upland area'—Argyll, which is a damn sight more upland than Cumbria—yet I can assure 'Lanty' that I have no difficulty in maintaining a varied and satisfying vegetarian diet, and without dependence on 'the imported rice and pulses' to which he contemptuously refers.

Slainte!
ANGUS

FREEDOM CONTACTS

ABERDEEN

Subversive Graffiti Collective, c/o 163 King St, Aberdeen (includes the ex-members of Aberdeen Solidarity). Activities include production of a local free news-sheet.

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

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.

Box A, c/o 120 Victoria Road, Middlesbrough

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 Community Association, Devonshire House, Stocker Rd

FORMBY

Floating Free, 58 Freshfield Rd, Formby, Merseyside L3 73HW

GLASGOW

'Practical Anarchy' (monthly free broadsheet, send large sae) c/o Box 3

Calderwood 15/GPP pamphlets c/o Box V2

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 25L

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

LIVERPOOL

The Secretary NWFA, Box LAG, 37 Bagot St, Wavertree, L15 2HA.

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
Pigs for Slaughter + 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.

Martin Nicholas, 186 Mount Pleasant Road, London N17
MALVERN and Worcester area, Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storrage, Worcestershire.

MANCHESTER

'Wildcat' or 'Solidarity' at: Box 25, 164/5 Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, M4 3BN
DAM, Box 20, 164/166 Corn Exchange Bldgs, Hanging Ditch, M4.

MERSEYSIDE

Box LAG, 37 Bagot Street Wavertree, 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

Rip Fuller, 60 Ramsden Rd, Orpington, Kent

OXFORD

Oxford Anarchists, 34 Cowley Rd

PLYMOUTH

Anarchists, 115 St Pancras Ave, Penncross

PORTSMOUTH

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-synicalist contacts in Treherbert. Rhondda, Pontypridd, Penarth, Barry and Cardiff areas

SOUTHAMPTON

'Southern Stress' c/o 108 Cedar Rd, Portswood, Southampton

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

Billy, 63 Clynnmaes Place, Blaenymaes, Swansea.

SWINDON

area, Mike, Groundswell Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon

TAYSIDE

Josh Cowan, 3/R 17 Cheviot Crescent, Dundee, DD4 9QJ

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

'Anarchism as a Way of Social Life' Course of six sessions, Monday evenings, 14 February — 21 March 1983, 8 — 10pm. Tutor: Nicolas Walter. Fee: £4.50 if resident in Inner London Education Authority area, £6.50 outside. Information from and applications to: Course 230, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1.

literature

'The Bourgeois Role of Bolshevism'. Reprint of 1930 Guy Aldred pamphlet. 50p inc p+p from GPP Reprints, Box V2, 488 Gt Western Road, Glasgow G12

'Alaska: Anarchy and Solidarity' is a newsletter and correspondence group for our northwest corner of North America's Northwest — it includes northern British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, too. We just started putting out the newsletter this year to link-up with other anarchists, Wobblies and the libertarian left in our neck of the woods.

'Archipelago' is a populist, multi-media journal based on Southeast Alaska, although not limited to this region. We began producing this journal in 1977 with newspapers, cassette tapes, books and records.

Contact: Box 748, Douglas Alaska, USA 99824

'I am starting work on a publication called 'Anarchist Artists'. If there are any anarchist groups, singers, poets etc, please contact me at the address below'

Gaz of Black Ram
c/o Forum Books
86 Abbey Street
Derby

'THE END OF MUSIC', a critique of the music business and 'punk' rebellion. Available for 65p including postage from Box V2, 488 Gt Western Rd, Glasgow G12. Also just out, 'The Bourgeois Role of Bolshevism', a GPP Reprint of a 1930s Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation pamphlet, 50p inc p+p. Bulk orders for both pamphlets from @ Distribution, 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1.

desires

Next meeting to discuss setting up a North West Anarchist Federation will be at 11am on Saturday, October 23rd at the Sir Joseph Cleary Community Centre (Stanley House), 130 Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool 8. Would anyone who can't make it but has ideas/items for a possible agenda please send them on c/o Box LAG, 37 Bagot Street, Wavertree, Merseyside L15 2HA.

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UNDERGROUND POLAND

A SOCIETY WITHOUT A STATE

While Jaruzelski's Army-Party junta tries to shackle society and pummel all resistance into submission, the Polish underground movement is building a society without a state.

Background

On December 13th, 1981, Communist Party First Secretary and Commander of the Polish Army Wojciech Jaruzelski declared war on Polish society. After months of careful planning and preparation the 'internal invasion' was given the go-ahead in Moscow. The aim of the newly-formed junta (the Military Council for National Salvation in close collaboration with trusted members of the Party Politburo) was to destroy the free trade union 'Solidarnosc' together with other independent social, political and economic organisations, and to ensure that demands for workers' control, local and regional self-government and freedom of expression were silenced. The sudden and ruthless efficiency of the clampdown took the entire population by surprise. Any spontaneous resistance by workers was violently crushed, tens of thousands were 'interned', and arrested, thousands were sentenced or thrown out of work while masses of bewildered workers were forced at gunpoint to sign 'oaths of loyalty' to the regime. In this way Polish society was forced to walk down 'Jaruzelski's road to socialism', paved by the Kremlin's faithful disciples.

Solidarity Resilient and Rebuilding

Contrary to Brezhnev's and Jaruzelski's hopes and expectations all independent thought was not gagged, and autonomous organisations were not exterminated without trace. Despite the terror administered by the militia and security forces under the facade of a temporary 'army takeover' (in reality the culmination of true Leninist aspirations by the Party) workers began to rebuild their Union organisation under siege conditions. The prominent Solidarity activists who escaped arrest went underground, safe from the clutches of Party thugs. Underground Solidarity, from the beginning of its conspiratorial existence last December, espoused only peaceful protest against the 'state of war', and regularly offered to negotiate some form of compromise with the State. But their conditions for dialogue (lifting of 'martial law' and release of all political prisoners) have been consistently rejected by Jaruzelski, who demands an unconditional surrender and a 'dialogue' only on the unacceptable terms laid down by the regime.

Simultaneously with its calls for mass demonstrations on specific days (which, as before December 13, prevent uncontrollable spontaneous protests and channel popular opposition into peaceful manifestations until attacked by the rioting militia Solidarity has been busy rebuilding Union structures and lines of communication in war conditions. According to recent accounts in one of the thousands of underground publications the 'Temporary Coordination Committee' (TKK) is recognised by all Solidarity units as the most important policy-making body for the duration of the 'war'.¹ There exists efficient liaison between the major Union organs, with the documents and appeals of the TKK reaching most members of the Union. By the beginning of August regional coordination centres already functioned in at least 15 areas of the country, while in Upper Silesia (the region hardest hit by ZOMO riot police brutality and the militarisation of coal mines and steelworks) several groups are attempting coordination. The document records that 'activities within regions have been largely decentralised. In some cases they have been initiated by the regional authorities, in others they were the result of inter-factory agreements and the initiative of other resistance groups.'

The mass resistance movement among industrial workers is based on Union cells in factories; 'Solidarity groups are active in practically every industrial plant, university, school, research centre, hospital and other institutions. They collect

contributions, help the repressed, organise strikes, protests and petitions, posters and leafleting actions, boycotting collaborators and official propaganda meetings. Some have their own papers, debating clubs and libraries.' Oppositionist underground activities encompass all sections of the population, including artists, academics, writers, scientists and journalists whose 'main form of independent cultural life is beginning to emerge.' Meanwhile, 'in higher education establishments the Solidarity underground cooperates with the independent students movement. Some regions have regular contacts with Rural Solidarity'—the 'suspended' trade union organisation among independent farmers.

Two Strategies: One Aim

The underground movement in Poland is, however, not simply a clandestine Solidarity trade union, but a political movement for national and social independence based on the ethos of mass solidarity. Two contrasting views currently exist in the underground as to future strategy; there are those who call for a direct confrontation with the regime and those who consider that a long-term and patient policy of building an alternative society is more promising and less destructive of life and limb. Others think that some combination of these two strategies is also possible. The former method encourages the frequent mobilisation of the population's anger and frustration which is to be channelled into direct nation-wide protest aimed at all centres of Party and State control. This would involve, among other actions, a general strike, massive street demonstrations and a united widespread popular protest, still within the bounds of passive resistance. Certain proponents of this policy of direct action consider that resistance to police violence would need to be active and armed, if the first few days after December 13 are not to be repeated. The difficulties and dangers of organising and coordinating such a protest are numerous; it could finally result in the Soviet invasion we have been bracing ourselves for, if the Polish security forces are unable to cope.

Many activists feel the time is not yet ripe for such a solution, and they urge patient, constructive work instead until the international situation changes in Poland's favour. But the likelihood of such a change cannot be predicted and may be a long way off. In the meantime it is difficult to preach patience to an energetic population whose aspirations have been viciously attacked and whose future now looms ahead like a nightmare. The second strategy is a long-termed one which does not exclude occasional protests, but views these as being largely of symbolic and spirit-raising significance, marking the continuing existence of opposition in outward manifestations, but making these subordinate to more important organisational work. Proponents of this view reason that despite the authorities' attempts to divide society by pitching generations and occupations against each other, and their attempts to rule through threats, bribes and promises, the population has refused to be subdued and broken. It is believed that the initial confusion and fear is wearing off and people are beginning to organise themselves again in workplaces and neighbourhoods. As a priority an alternative, non-official, voluntarist social structure should emerge completely separate from the discredited and decaying organism manufactured and controlled by Party stricture. It should be firmly based on opposition to the failed socio-economic system imposed on Polish society for over 37 years. It opposes dictatorship with democracy, hierarchy with decentralisation, commands with voluntarism, corruption with social control, and censorship with freedom.

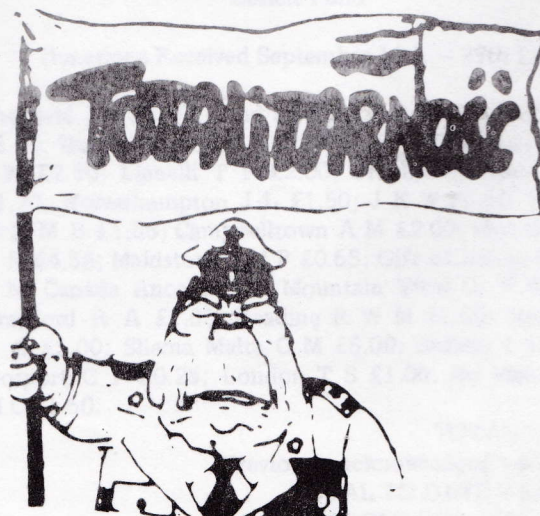
Conspiracy and Grass-Roots Organisation

The fundamental principles of successful conspiracy are well known in Poland; nearly 200 years of occupation by imperialist neighbours have necessitated this. However, the present occupation differs from all previous ones because the invader is far more devious and sophisticated than before.

He speaks the same language, often lives next door or works with you and constantly appeals to your 'patriotism' and reason, while threatening you with even greater evil waiting to pounce if you overthrow him. A detailed document recently published in an underground bulletin in Poznan discusses how to engage in conspiratorial work in present conditions.² It includes the following suggestions which clearly demonstrate the difficulties of conducting conspiracy during an 'internal occupation':

1. Keep quiet. Do not boast to friends and family about what is being done. Prattling brings us to ruin.
2. Do not try to find out more than you have to know. Only the one who doesn't know won't say anything. Imagine you are the person being interrogated by the secret police.
5. Act in only one organisation, but carefully and consistently.
7. Reliability and punctuality are the basis of successful conspiracy.
8. Rules of personal protection: looks: strike for the ideal of looking average, don't call attention to yourself; do not talk about your private life; do not let yourself be seen in public with other members of the organisation.

Despite enormous difficulties underground groups have sprung up throughout the country, within and outside the clandestine Solidarity structure. Since January this year activists in hiding, and many committed people previously uninvolved in Union or oppositionist work, have urged citizens to form Circles of Social Resistance (KOS). These circles have specific short-term aims as well as being suitable building bricks in a future underground society. This society is to be painstakingly constructed from the 'bottom' without need for a 'top'. These units counter the regime's attempts to amorphosize society, destroy voluntary social links and isolate the individual and the family in their relations with the State. The principles of KOSes are straightforward: 'If you do not want to surrender, if you cannot reconcile yourself to terror, start immediately to organise. Look around at your acquaintances, friends and co-workers. Find among them those whom you know think and feel as you do. . . A KOS consists of five members who know and trust each other. KOS is a secret cell of social resistance. KOS gathers and transmits information about incidents and the repression. KOS organises help for victims of the repression and their families. KOS collects money for common aid, for publications and for other organisational purposes. Each member of KOS establishes another KOS. The newly created KOS acts independently, maintaining contact with the mother-circle only through the first person. . . Let us try to cover the entire society with a network of KOSes. Let us use personal contacts and family ties. Let us act decisively, courageously and with common sense'.³



The organisation of underground activity through KOSes, and other similar self-aid groups, and the stubborn resistance of society effectively challenges the Party-sponsored OKON's (Citizens' Committees for National Salvation), controlled and directed by the Communist Party apparatus and high-ranking army personnel. These official stage-managed 'citizens' committees' exclude all members of independent social organisations who haven't sworn their loyalty to the regime, and are shunned by those citizens as the league of collaborators, opportunists and power seekers. By contrast, the KOSes are gaining widespread support and gradually establishing a nationwide network of popular opposition, not based on violence and terrorism like the State, but on constructive work for an alternative social system.

Anti-State/Non-State

Many Poles who envisage the necessity of a protracted struggle for independence and a self-managing society eschew violent confrontations which inevitably lead to even more deaths, beatings, arrests and increasing State terror. Instead, they espouse an ambitious programme of social construction which, while opposing the various organs of Party and State, directs most of the peoples' energy into creating the very society hoped for in the future under the noses of the commissars and cadres. Some activists feel that a time will come when the newly created society, now beginning to function underground, can smoothly and openly replace the discarded corpse of totalitarianism. Preparations for this moment of liberation, it is argued, should be made now—energetically and constructively.

The principles of such a movement for an alternative society were recently set out in a document issued by the 'Solidarity Temporary Coordination Committee' in hiding and submitted for general public discussion.⁴ It asserts that the aim is 'the construction of a Self-governing Republic. . . In the present conditions we can achieve this goal only through an Underground Social Movement. . . (which). . . must diminish the feeling of isolation in the individual. It must teach collective action, increase awareness that only thanks to self-organisation and our own initiative will we reach our goals. It must make society aware of the power it has.' The underground society is establishing itself in places of employment and in neighbourhoods, among workmates, friends and neighbours.

Five major spheres of activity are considered crucial for present needs and future development. Firstly, there is a need for 'support actions for those who are victimised or dismissed from their jobs, those living in poverty, the sick and others who need material and moral support.' Secondly, it is publishing, printing, distribution, leafletting and unmasking the aims of the authorities' propaganda.' Thirdly, society is to organise teaching and self-education, including 'independent science movements, workers' and peasants' universities, discussion clubs and libraries.' Fourthly, the underground movement is to coordinate 'actions manifesting the existence of social resistance, anniversary celebrations. . . and protest actions.' Fifthly, the manifesto of the alternative society asserts it is vital to 'organise economic activity, including cooperatives and workshops, and exercise influence on economic processes.'

The Polish underground struggles against 'facade organisations set up by the authorities, organised boycotts of official propaganda, meetings, discussions . . . and opposes collaborative gestures.' As a fundamental principle of constructing an anti-State and non-State society 'the Underground Social Movement should be decentralised', while all Solidarity cells 'have a duty to inspire and organise underground society' which 'will constitute the foundation for political activity.' Should Solidarity be officially banned by the regime, as now seems more likely, this process 'will prevent the breakdown of society. It will exert constant pressure on the authorities and threaten them with total isolation.'

'The Future is Ours'

If the Communist regime continues to suppress the aspirations of Polish society, and strengthens its systems of control and exploitation, there could be a general explosion of bottled-up anger and frustration. This could result in another national tragedy; mass slaughter, concentration camps, increasing terror and even a Russian invasion. To prevent such a disaster the underground is demonstrating that until conditions are ripe for the abolition of the State, society must learn to exist and function by itself, combining opposition to the regime with a disregard for and a disobedience of its authority.

A member of the Warsaw Solidarity executive in hiding has described the aims of underground Poland succinctly: 'Such a movement ought to lead to a situation where the government will control empty shops—but not the market; employment—but not the means of livelihood; the state press—but not information; printing houses—but not the publishing movement; postal and telephone services—but not communication; schooling but not education. Such independence on the part of society could in time lead to the government retaining in its control only the police and a handful of servile collaborators. In such a situation, there would be no third way out. There would come either the downfall of the government or . . . a gradual yielding of barriers that divide government from society, and the gradual shuffling off by society of the bonds imposed upon it. . .'⁵

The future of Poland hangs in the balance, but whatever the result, freedom or fascism, the models and experiments now undertaken by the Polish underground should teach us all that society can and must be separated from the State, and eventually exist without it. Polish society may have been caught completely unprepared for a 'state of war' but it intends to be ready for the next dramatic transformation.

JAN

References

- 1 *Tygodnik Mazowsze* No 23, August 1, 1982 (Solidarity weekly published in Warsaw)
- 2 *Wielkopolska Observer*, May/June, 1982 (Solidarity bulletin published in Poznań)
- 3 Text of an unsigned and undated leaflet from Warsaw
- 4 *Underground Society*, a manifesto issued by the Temporary Coordination Committee (TKK) of NSZZ 'Solidarnosc'
- 5 Quoted in *AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News*, May 1982

Solidarnosc

Bakunin and Marx

Prison Niederschoenenfeld, Bavaria.

20th June 1920

Dear Comrade Tamlyn,

Your letter in No 372 of FREEDOM has given me much pleasure in my double imprisonment. For it proves to me that there are also in England people who have different conceptions about the Revolution from those put forward by party-programmes and literary theoreticians, under the penalty of being branded 'not a true revolutionary'.

There are, I am sorry to say, too few of those who fearlessly and publicly stand up against hero- and leader-worship. It is not only the large, alas – too indolent body of Marx-worshippers which has to be moved. Many hesitate because the hornets-hive of literateurs and journalists, who as high-priests and apostles stand in the service of that indolent body of Marx-worshippers, is always ready to throw itself pitilessly upon everyone who tries to 'drag their holiest possessions into the dust'. But they conveniently overlook one thing: not against their heroes or their revolutionary work are these attacks aimed, but against the comet's-tail which, unconditionally admiring, attaches itself to them.

They all, before and after Marx, have done their part for the liberation of the working-class. But the working-class, as we learn from the course of history, from the moment when the first working man asked himself: why? and: for whom? – this always flows into the stream of the one, great movement which often for decades, centuries, flows under the surface, and when it comes above the surface is called revolution. And that is the point that only and alone matters. What have they, those heroes, may they as men, as investigators, as thinkers be as great as possible – what have they accomplished as Revolutionists? For Revolution is not a number of fights behind barricades or a matter of voting – Revolution is the conscious and by nature pre-ordained struggle of life against decay, is the sudden coming to visibility of the writing with which nature writes her diary. But as little as *she* remains stationary, so little should we always and eternally repeat what a man has shown us once – also we have the duty to progress and to lay on the measure of our time to our history.

None of us will, for that reason, refuse recognition to the discoverer of that measure, just as none of us will allow himself to be forced to recognise that measure as the only infallible and absolutely right one. And none of us will admit that everything and *only* that will have the right to claim to be revolutionary which harmonises with that measure. Those who do and demand that, do not see that thereby they act contrary to the teachings of that man who has proclaimed the fact of the evermoving revolutionary development (*Entwicklung*) as his highest thesis.

And here you are right when you point out that Marx himself has given us the example.

To the questions about the relations of Marx to the German Social Democrats I will not reply this time; it would take up too much space. Although my verdict is personal, I want it also to be just. What it should be ex-

plains the first part of this letter. Perhaps I will write more fully in another letter.

Marx's opposition to Bakunin was contrary to the revolutionary convictions as laid down in his works and letters. Personal quarrels and animosities played a great part. Before everything, Marx never made an attempt to do justice to Bakunin in any way. Even the part in Marx's *Revolution and Counter-revolution*, in which Bakunin's fearless leadership on the Barricades of Dresden in the year 1849 is fully admitted, does not speak against my opinion. The articles were compiled by Engels and appeared under Marx's name. Altogether, Engels was the far more active (and important!) one of the two men. (The relations between Marx and Engels would be worth a closer study!) Marx's unconditional belief in the world-historic role, which he thought was allotted to him, and the pertinacity with which he defended the exclusive truth of his teachings, did not allow him to give any credit or to admit any recognition of or significance to those who opposed his ideas. But in the conception of the nature of Revolution (*Wesen der Revolution*) there were fundamental differences between Bakunin and Marx. Bakunin's critique and opposition proved by their success their justification. It is laughable when the masses of Marx-worshippers believe that they find in the assertion of this and other facts a depreciation of the importance of Marx. We do not stand up against the Revolutionist Marx, but against the retrogressive, out-of-date part of his teachings, which with everything else Marx has said is blindly looked upon as gospel. And that only for the one reason, because it is meant to give to the comfortable masses the halo of the revolutionary, with which they clothe their unrevolutionary deeds and thoughts. There is no Backwards! and no Halt! in the Revolution – and Revolution is nothing other than Life, Growth – there exists only a Forward!

For us Forward-hastening and Forward-driving ones there is therefore no time for leisurely worship on the altar of past heroes and mortal leaders; it is our duty each in his own place to be hero and leader. Not the fame of a few, but the happiness of all is the aim of the Revolution.

We have no need to overthrow old gods, for we do not recognise gods, we only know comrades, fellow human beings, Revolutionists; to them we devote all our love! The god of Revolution is Humanity.

From my narrow cell I stretch out my hand to you in your country in the glad consciousness that there also truth and justice are to be found in the front rows in the fight for humanity. For us the victory!

With revolutionary greetings
EUGEN MARIA KARPF

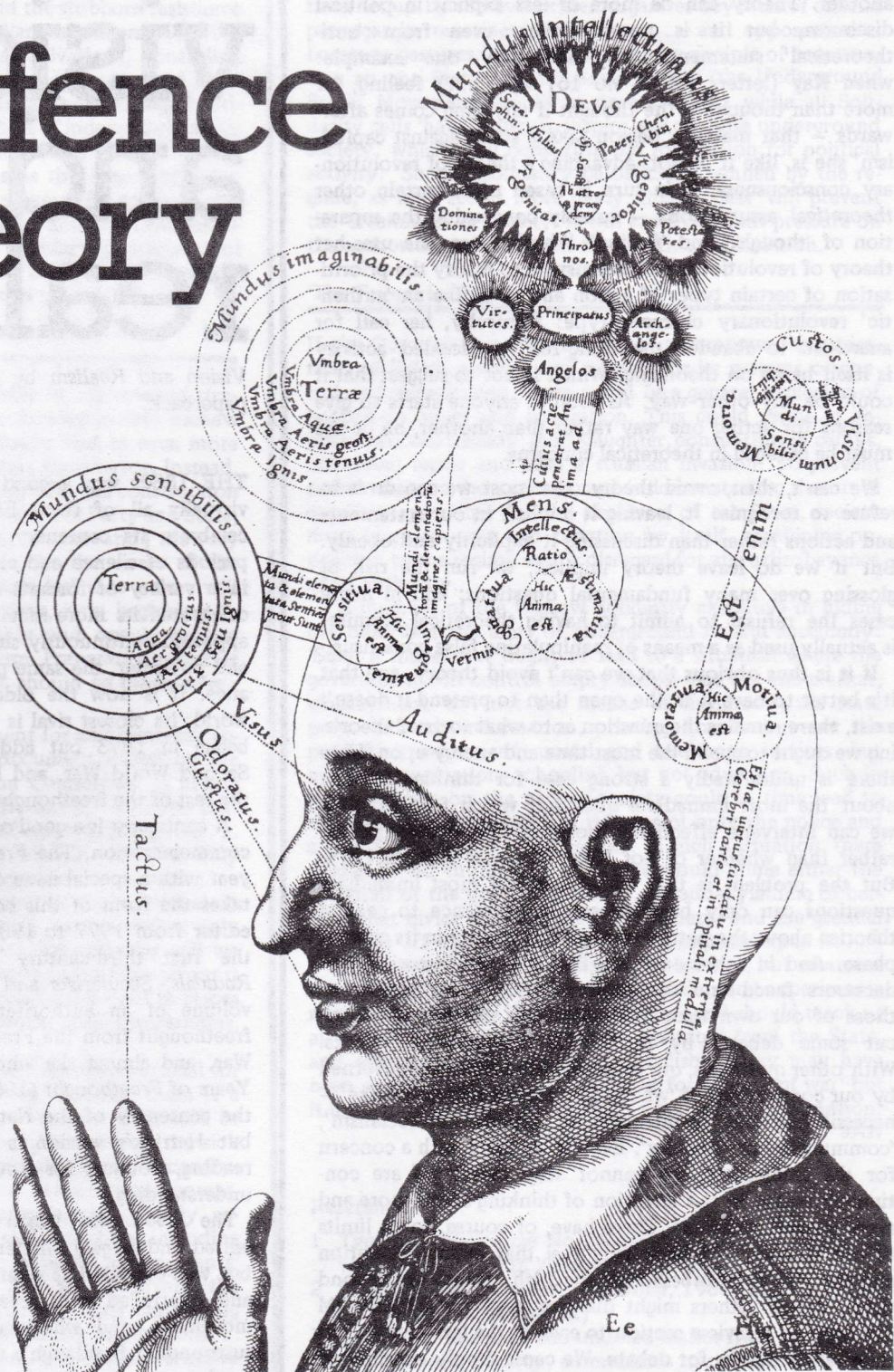
Fortress and Prison Niederschoenenfeld,
near Donauwoerth, Bavaria, Germany.

In defence of theory

SINCE 'theory' has been getting something of a knocking in the pages of *FREEDOM* recently, I'd like to come to its defence. But before I begin, I'd like to straighten out what I'm not defending.

Firstly, I have no desire to act as an apologist for obscurantism or intellectual intimidation. As a number of correspondents have pointed out, writing unnecessarily complicated prose in esoteric jargon is utterly indefensible: it intimidates thereader and effectively excludes 99% of the population from the possibility of participation in the debate. Theory can and should be written in clear, concise, grammatical and accessible language.

Secondly, I do not want to defend any division of labour between 'theorists' and 'activists', let alone a privileged position for the 'theorist' in the revolutionary project. As it has been said, theoretical specialists divorced from the reality of the everyday struggle tend to drift off into irrelevant speculation, and there are real dangers of theorists within the revolutionary movement becoming an elite which exercises power over the movement as a whole and — in a post-revolutionary period — society at large. The other side of the coin is that a movement of politically illiterate 'activists' has little chance of even organising effective propaganda — a fact which hitherto seems to have been overlooked by most contributors to the debate. Of course, as things are in the British anarchist/libertarian milieu a certain division between 'theorists' and 'activists'



does exist (though it shouldn't be exaggerated). I don't want to defend this unfortunate state of affairs, but at the same time I think it's worth noting that the 'theorists' hardly occupy a privileged position in the milieu's division of labour. If anything, the British anarchist movement is characterised by a deep rooted suspicion of thinking: anyone arguing that thought is somehow desirable — let alone anyone producing relevant theoretical work, since no-one is doing any right now — is treated with ridicule or accusations of 'elitism'.

My defence of theory is, then, neither a defence of obscurity and intellectual intimidation, nor a defence of specialised theorists — academic or otherwise. So why do we need theory?

Perhaps the first point to be made is that we simply

can't avoid it as long as we talk and argue with one another. Theory can be more or less explicit in political discourse, but it is never absent, even from 'anti-theoretical' statements. To take only one example: when Kay (letters vol 43 no 16) says '...it's feeling, far more than thought – the thought if anything comes afterwards – that makes a person take a stand against capitalism' she is, like it or not, advancing a theory of revolutionary consciousness. It in turn is based upon certain other theoretical assumptions – notably concerning the separation of 'thought' and 'feeling'. What's more, she uses her theory of revolutionary consciousness to justify the prioritisation of certain types of action and to define an 'authentic' revolutionary character-type: ironically, her call for anarchists to abandon theorising for 'red-blooded' activity is itself based on theorising! Which is not to suggest that it could be any other way. As soon as anyone starts to give reasons for acting one way rather than another, he or she must be engaged in theoretical concerns.

We can't, then, avoid theory: the most we can do is to refuse to recognise it, leaving it implicit in our statements and actions rather than discussing it explicitly and openly. But if we do leave theory implicit, we run the risk of glossing over many fundamental questions: and in many cases the refusal to admit to having theoretical premises is actually used as a means of manipulating false consensus.

If it is thus obvious that we can't avoid theory, and that it's better to have it in the open than to pretend it doesn't exist, there remains the question as to what sorts of theorising we ought to spend the most time and energy upon. Here there is undoubtedly a strong case for thinking hardest about the most immediate questions which face us: how we can intervene effectively, how we should organise etc rather than whether or not Kropotkin was right in 1914. But the problem is that sometimes the most immediate questions can only be answered by reference to general theories about the nature of capitalist society in its current phase. And in other cases we find that our historical predecessors faced and discussed questions very similar to those of our own time – which means that we can short-cut some debates by turning to historical precedents. With other questions, our responses are ultimately governed by our conceptions of 'what a free society should be like' – necessitating our formulation of visions of 'socialism', 'communism' or 'anarchy'. Even if we start with a concern for the immediate, we cannot stop there: we are continually pulled in the direction of thinking about more and more general problems. There have, of course, to be limits to our straying – I personally feel that animal liberation and the Wat Tyler rebellion of the 14th century are beyond them, though others might disagree (seeing as FREEDOM has devoted a review section to each in the last year) – but these are a matter for debate. We can't simply exorcise all discussion which doesn't relate immediately to next week's demonstration.

Finally, on a slightly different note: Kay is wrong, at least when talking of the failures of British anarchist or libertarian intellectuals, to keep on about 'academics'. At present there can't be more than two or three anarchist academics in the country. Thankfully, the prospects of a British equivalent of the Anarchist Institute are pretty remote.

For self-managed socialism
L ERIZO

vision and realism

Vision and Realism by Jim Herrick. G W Foote, £2.00, paperback.

THE 1880s was a good decade for new periodicals, but virtually all of them have disappeared. FREEDOM will celebrate its centenary in 1986, though it has suffered periods of silence and changes of name and has appeared in a variety of formats and frequencies. The *Freethinker* celebrated its more remarkable centenary last year, having appeared continuously since May 1881 with the same name and publisher, the same policy and much the same appearance. It is now the oldest freethought periodical in the world; its closest rival is the American *Truthseeker*, which began in 1873 but added racism to atheism after the Second World War, and has therefore been repudiated by the rest of the freethought movement.

A centenary is a good opportunity for a celebration and a commemoration. The *Freethinker* held its celebration last year with a special issue and a party. The commemoration takes the form of this book by Jim Herrick, who was the editor from 1977 to 1981. The story isn't entirely new – the first third-century is covered in Edward Royle's *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans* (1980), the second volume of an authoritative academic history of British freethought from the French Revolution to the First World War, and almost the whole century in David Tribe's *100 Years of Freethought* (1967), a popular account celebrating the centenary of the National Secular Society in 1966 – but Herrick's version is fresh and clear and well worth reading, not just for sectarian nostalgia but for historical understanding.

The *Freethinker* began as a very personal paper, being edited and largely written by G W Foote, a self-educated but well-educated speaker and writer, who had belonged to and quarrelled with several fractions of the freethought movement, and who was prompted by the controversy surrounding Bradlaugh's attempt to get into Parliament to produce a new paper attacking the real enemy – organised religion, and especially Christianity. It was aggressive and amusing, and it soon got into trouble, facing several blasphemy prosecutions in 1882 and 1883. Foote's offence was not atheism, which had not been persecuted for several decades, but the publication of 'Comic Bible Sketches', deliberately offensive and often antisemitic caricatures of biblical scenes; Herrick reproduces a couple, and they are quite funny if rather trivial. Foote was imprisoned for a year, which made him a martyr and made the *Freethinker* famous.

But what really established Foote and the *Freethinker* was the passing of Bradlaugh, the unchallengeable leader of the freethought movement. In 1890 he resigned as President of the National Secular Society, which he had formed

in 1866 and dominated ever since; Foote was elected as his successor. In 1891 he died, and his paper the *National Reformer* soon ceased publication. During the 1890s Foote became the unchallengeable leader of the National Secular Society and the *Freethinker* became its unofficial organ. There were other major figures and other papers among the militant secularists, as well as among the milder rationalists and ethical humanists, but the *Freethinker* took the character it has retained ever since, of the main mouth-piece of non-party freethought. Bradlaugh and most secularists joined the growing socialist movement, and freethought tended to get left out of political life.

Foote suffered from financial difficulties and bad health, but he worked on until his death in the First World War. He was succeeded both as President of the National Secular Society and as editor of the *Freethinker* by Chapman Cohen, who worked on until well after the Second World War. He maintained a non-party line on the left through world wars and depressions, through Fascism and Communism. He didn't oppose war, but he disliked it and opposed the suppression of those who did oppose war. He supported all the 'progressive' causes, most of which had been pioneered by his predecessors in the freethought movement, and towards the end he supported 'permissive' causes as well. Like Foote, Cohen was a voice of freedom of thought and speech and action during a period of changing threats to all such liberty.

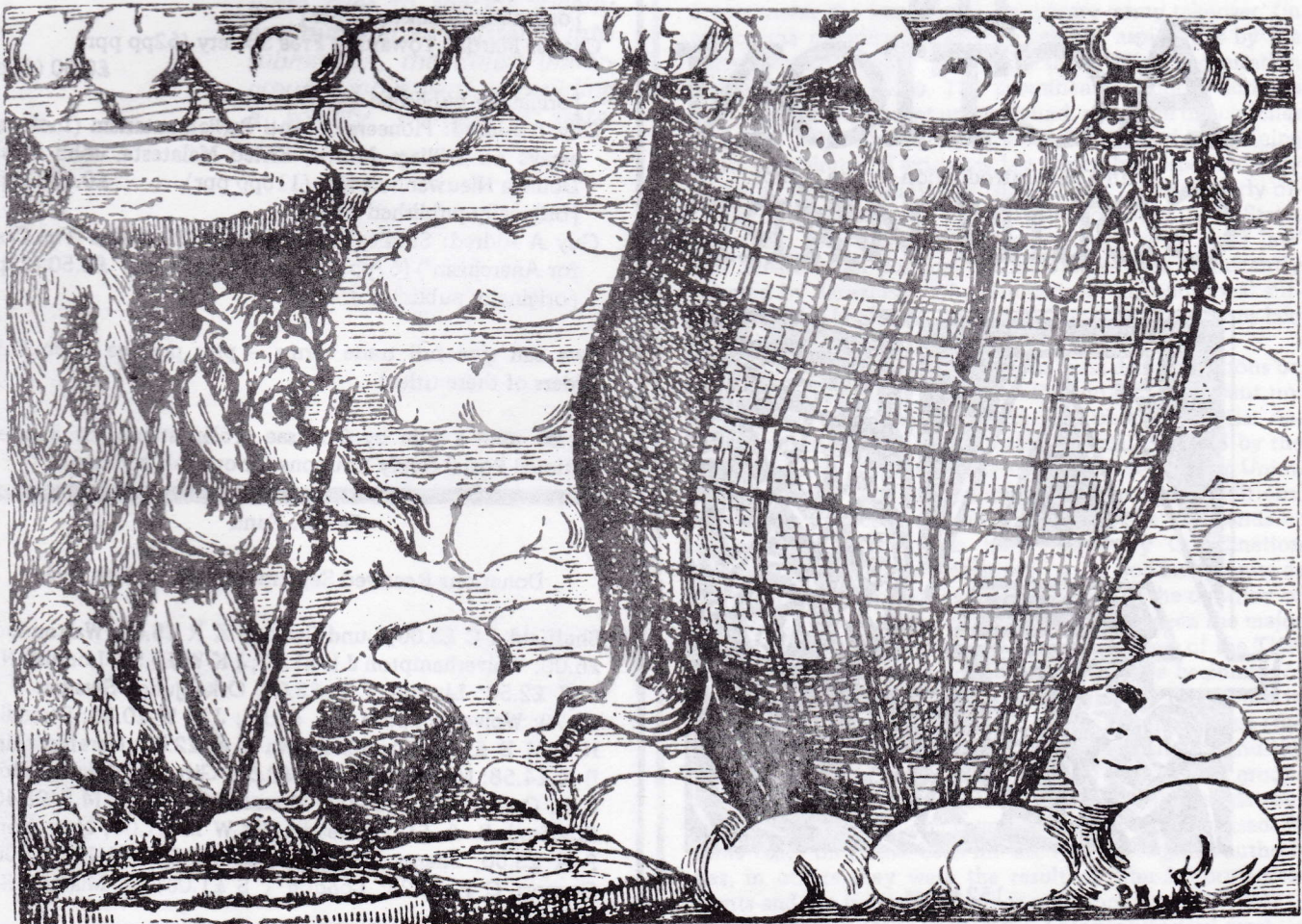
Like the Freedom Press, the National Secular Society and *Freethinker* office was destroyed in the blitz during the Second World War. Cohen resigned the Presidency of the former in 1949 and the editorship of the latter in 1951.

During the past 30 years there have been many editors, and the present one has been editor several times, but the paper has kept going. It began as a monthly, for more than 90 years it was a weekly, and now it is a monthly again. Throughout the present century it has been the only real newspaper of the freethought movement. Whether it will last a second century is a question which cannot be answered from the experiences of its first, but it certainly deserves to.

Herrick says less about the most recent period, the revival of freethought under the new name 'Humanism' and then its decline during the past two decades; but this is a very difficult subject, especially when most of those involved are still alive and often active. He says less than he could have done about the more mechanical details — circulation, production, finance, and so on. Like the *Freethinker* itself, he doesn't say much about politics, which is a pity. There are a few references to anarchists, some of whom have always been involved in the freethought movement and a few of whom have sometimes written in the *Freethinker*. (There is one small error in this connection: the petition for Foote in 1883 was not organised by Kropotkin, but in imitation of the one organised for Kropotkin, who was then in prison himself.)

Reading this book makes one think about freethought during the past century. It also makes one think about the approaching centenary of FREEDOM. What will our first century seem like?

M H



And it shall come to pass that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I shall take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts.—EXODUS xxxiii., 23.

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