

BOOKSHOP NOTES

These notes are now restored as a regular feature, reviewing books available on various topics. This month most of our space is taken in noting the new books in stock since the September list. But first some good news: the bookshop is now open on Mondays (10am-6pm) and coinciding with our local author and good friend Bill Fishman's 'signing' on 5 Dec, his publishers have reduced the price of his *East End Jewish Radicals* from £18.00 to £9.95 (cloth).

As mentioned last issue, Adrian Mitchell's poems have arrived: *On the Beach at Cambridge* (£3.50), *For Beauty Douglas* (£4.95) with Ralph Steadman cartoons, and to these should be added *Nothingmas Day* — childrens and adults poems illustrated by John Lawrence (£3.95). Kenneth Rexroth's *An Autobiographical Novel* is £8.95 (cloth). To our list on the Miners' Strike are added *The Great Strike* by Alex Callinicos and Mike Simons (£3.95) and *Hearts and Minds: the story of the women of Nottinghamshire in the Miners' Strike* (£4.95).

Other new titles include *Mama Coca* — government's involvement in the drug industry in South America (£3.00); *Anarcho-Feminism: two views* by Liz Verran and Carol Ehrlich (60p); Rudolf Rocker's *The Methods of Anarcho-Syndicalism* (50p); Bob Potter's *Vietnam — Whose Victory?* (£1.00); and Cajo Brendel's *Theses on the Chinese Revolution* (£1.00). Please note that Scalapino

and Yu's *Chinese Anarchist Movement* is out of print.

Two on Spain: *The Spanish Civil War*, a new pamphlet by Eddie Conlon from the Worker's Solidarity Movement (Dublin) is £1.35, and Gerald Brenan's *The Spanish Labyrinth* is back in print at £10.95. On Britain: Hermia Oliver's *The International Anarchist Movement in Mid-Victorian London* (£19.95); Stan Shipley's *Club Life and Socialism in Mid-Victorian London* (£2.95); Andrew Rothstein's *The Soldiers' Strikes of 1919* (£3.95); H.N. Brailsford's *The Levellers and the English Revolution* (2nd edition 1983) (£6.95).

A. Bonanno's *Anarchism and the National Liberation Struggle* (50p); Chaz Bufo's *Listen Anarchist!* (50p); Kropotkin's *An Appeal to the Young* (50p); Michael Moorcock's *The Retreat from Liberty* (£2.25); Michael Taylor's *Community, Anarchy and Liberty* (£5.95); Mark Holloway's *Heavens on Earth* (£4.95); and Terry Perlin's anthology *Contemporary Anarchism* (cloth, £13.60).

Two works by William Morris — *A Dream of John Ball* (£1.50) and *The Wood Beyond the World* (facsimile of the Kelmscott Press edition) (£5.65). And of course we supply the books reviewed in *Freedom*. If ordering by post, please add 10% postage and packing (20% overseas).

The reprint of the Freedom Press title *Why Work?* is now available. Please note that the price is £3.50 (post free).

CONTACTS

updated to 1 January 1987

BANGOR Anarchist Collective, c/o UNCW Students Union, Deiniol Road, Bangor, Gwynedd

BRACKNELL A's, Box 21, 17 Chatham St, Reading RG1 7JF

BRIGHTON Brighton Bomber, c/o Priory House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton

BRISTOL Drowned Rat, Box 010, Full Marks Bookshop, 37 Stokes Croft, Bristol

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DAM National Secretary, Box DAM, Cambridge Free Press

COVENTRY Anarchist Group, PO Box 125, Coventry CV3 5OT

DURHAM Libertarian Organisation & Structure, c/o 85a New Elvet, Durham

EDINBURGH Counter Information, Box 81, c/o 43 Candlemaker Row

ESSEX Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex

GLASGOW Here & Now, Box 2, c/o Changes, 340 West Princes Street, Glasgow G4 9HE

HASTINGS A's, c/o Hastings Free Press, 14 Lower Park Road, Hastings, E. Sussex

HUDDERSFIELD A's, PO Box 20, Huddersfield, W. Yorks

JERSEY Jon Godfrey, Les Frontières, Route de Fief, St Brelades, Jersey

LEICESTER A Group, c/o Blackthorn Books, 70 High Street, Leicester

LIVERPOOL DAM, Box DAM, 32 Lark Lane, Liverpool 17

Class War, PO Box 110, Liverpool L69

Liverpool University Anarchist Group, c/o SU, 2 Bedford St North, Liverpool L7 7BD

LONDON Freedom Box Number Users: A Distribution, Anarchist Communist Federation, Rebel Press, Spectacular Times, Virus.

121 Books, 121 Raiton Road, London SE24

Class War, PO Box 467, London E5 8BE

Greenpeace (London), 5 Caledonian Road, London N1

Leslie's Bookshop, 17 Turners Road, E3

Solidarity, c/o 123 Lathom Road, London E6

Streatham Action Group, c/o 121 Books

Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists, c/o Housemans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, N1

MANCHESTER Timberley Village Anarchist Militia (TV-AM), Room 6, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester M1 2BU

DAM, c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester M1 2BU

NORTHAMPTON A Collective, c/o Rainbow Bookshop, 33 Collwell Rd, Wellingboro'

NOTTINGHAM A's, Rainbow Centre, 180 Mansfield Road, Nottingham

OXFORD A's, Box A, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford

PORTSMOUTH A's, Time for a Change, 167 Fawcett Road, Southsea, Hants PO5 3LT

PRESTON A's, Jez Appleton, 34 Elgin Street, Preston, Lancs PR1 6BH

READING A's, Box 19, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham Street, Reading RG1 7JF

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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA A's, c/o Graham, 360 Victoria Avenue

SPANISH Information Network, 37 South Terrace, Esh Winning, Co Durham DH7 9PS

STIRLING A Group, c/o CSA, University of Stirling, Scotland

SWANSEA Black Sheep Collective, Box D, Mandela House, University College, Singleton Park, Swansea (term time only)

ULVERSTON South Cumbria DAM, 3 Little Union Street, Ulverston LA12 7HP

FREEDOM

ANARCHIST MAGAZINE

NEW PRICE

50p

Vol 48 No.1 January 1987 50p

EDITORIAL

NEW price 50 pence; still not a low price unfortunately, but lower than the 1986 price. Printing costs are reduced by cutting the number of pages (not the amount of reading material), but they are still not covered by a retail price of 50p, so we remain dependent on donations until the circulation increases by some 500. If you buy the paper regularly please take out a subscription; the packing and postage costs less than the combined mark-up of distributors and retailers.

Our editorial policy

Freedom is an anarchist magazine, which means it is against all governments, bosses and coercive institutions of every kind, and in favour of voluntary co-operation between sovereign individuals. We seek to show thinking people that government is an unnecessary evil, and anarchism a sound and sensible idea.

Opinions differ among anarchists about how freedom from coercion might be achieved. We ourselves tend to the opinion that the anarchist revolution is now, that we work towards the free society by siezing every opportunity to widen the scope for individuals in our own society, rather than hoping for the millenium to come suddenly.

However we do not restrict the pages of Freedom to our particular viewpoint. Editorial policy for more than a century has been to provide a forum for all shades of anarchist opinion, so long as articles are clear, readable and not too long.

This is not to say we publish everything alleged to be anarchist. It is sometimes alleged, for instance, that the Guy Fawkes conspirators were anarchists because they attempted to blow up the government of the day; but their objective was to replace one government by another, so they were not anarchists at all, and an article from them claiming they were anarchists (supposing they were alive today) would not be acceptable. Nor would articles from self-styled anarchists advocating participation in government, conscription, censorship, or that so-and-so should be jailed.

Objections to anarchism and denunciations of Freedom's editorial attitude are welcome as letters, not more than 500 words.

Charlie Crute, David Peers, Donald Room, Francis Wright, editors

MILITANCY but not here

THERE is a heartening surge of militancy around. Not so much here, unfortunately. We have a vicious, self-serving, discredited government, yet the only opposition seems to be restricted to speculation whether the general election shall be in the spring or the autumn. That shall be decided in the interests of the government and after it we shall have a government. We look abroad. Current foreign news has a reminiscent ring to people of a certain age, students, strikes, France, China, a super-power trying to extract itself from a colonialist suppression enterprise. There's no real connection of course, just the effects of age. What is heartening is the grass-roots basis of these movements.

The first was the French students' rising. It came just too late for the last issue. It was, on the surface, a triumph for street militancy. The right wing government was arrogant in its assumption of a mandate to deal with 'socialist' softness. The security forces, never shirkers in France, were implementing this on the streets. The government announced some university 'reforms' and was rocked by the backlash (and someone died). The proposed action has been shelved. This is not, however, a return to the heady days of the 1960s. With all its limitations and narcissism (and how smug we were!) that was addressed to wider concerns; the word 'lifestyle' hovers. Last month's French government cave-in was to the potential enmity of the privileged, seeing their children gassed and batonned by the CRS. A comparable move in Britain in 1984 was sorted out without riots, middle class pressure was enough to frighten Tory conviction politicians.

The achievement of the French students was to rock the government's confidence and credibility. This helped the impact of the public sector strikes, notably on the railways. These are a real triumph. The strikers have out-manoeuvred not only the government (with, of course, CRS support) but their own hide-bound bureaucratic unions. Local committees have alarmed responsible labour movement negotiators and the CGT and Communist Party are scrabbling around trying to get a foothold.

The attempt is to rally the left to avoid the need for 'co-habitation'. President Mitterand is busy playing both ends against the middle, meeting strikers, insisting on the need for rigorous economic policies and generally consolidating his own position. Responsible people pop out of the woodwork. The students' organising committee condemns acts of vandalism, committed of course by outside agitators. They call for young people to become registered voters. The establishment insists that the railway strike is 'political', as if it could be anything else. And, as all the official politicians all salvage what they can, the ones who are really worried are the CGT and the Communist Party: "For the first time since the war, a desire for grass-roots organisation on a national scale has appeared. The unions are being forced to support a protest movement by workers, not the other way round." (Henri Vacquin, industrial sociologist — whatever that is).

Things are less clear cut in China. Students have built up a wave of demonstrations, in the face of increasing official clamp-downs. They demand 'democracy', but it is difficult, at this

continued on page 2

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distance through various filters, to know exactly what this means. The heroes in a movement showing great courage seem to be Xue de Yuan and another 'self-styled released criminal' who have been arrested for selling illegal publications and poems advocating 'bourgeois' democracy and freedom and stirring up anarchism. There is parallel industrial unrest, sufficient to produce an official circular pointing out dangers and giving guidelines for dealing with them (eagerly reported from Wapping). How much dabbling by government factions goes on is also uncertain.

Student protests alone are limited to publicity. Industrial action tends to have limited objectives. Yet both, organised by people for their own reasons, have an impact beyond such carping. And they encourage us all.

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FREEDOM

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THE ANARCHIST SWITCHBOARD is a free access space run according to Free-space principles, that is, that all activities are open to anyone who fairly, sincerely, and nonviolently wishes to participate, and without regard for monetary considerations. The Anarchist Switchboard is maintained entirely by contributions from people who use the space; we receive no grants or funding from corporations, governmental agencies, or other sources. We are attempting to create one small space that is as free as possible from the capitalist-statist world of commerce and commodity consumption. We see anarchism as not only a goal, an agenda for a future society, but also as a process. By implementing and practicing the process of anarchism now, we feel that the advent of a better society will be hastened. 'Process' and 'goal' cannot be

MOVEMENT NEWS

separated. As such, we seek to put into practice our visions of how people will relate to and interact with the world.

The Anarchist Switchboard is a member group of the Social Revolutionary Anarchist Federation (SRAF) and of the New York Anti-Authoritarian Network.

If you would like to be on our mailing list, send your name and address (and if you are near New York your phone number) to **The Anarchist Switchboard, 324 East Ninth Street, New York, NY 10003**, phone (212) 475-8312.

The Libertarian Education conference, organised by *Lib Ed* magazine, was held in Leicester on October 4, and proved to be a great success. The attendance - 156 people - was far greater than originally anticipated, and reflects a revival of popular interest in alternative ideas in education, both inside and outside the state system. The ideas represented at the conference arise from a number of different interests, from education at home, small schools and free schools, to state funding for alternative schools and alternatives within the state system. The debate was therefore extremely lively, and one which the magazine will continue to cover.

The main initiative that has come out of the conference has been a proposal to start a Libertarian Education Network. This will provide an information library, national contact list, recommended bibliography, and a means for the exchange of information, news, articles, etc. to subscribers. Out of this it is hoped that local and special interest groups will be formed, and together with an improved circulation of information, this will enable the movement to build on the current wave of interest. Membership of the Network will cost £5 per year, which will include a subscription (three issues) to the magazine.

Lib Ed

The Cottage, The Green, Leire,
Lutterworth LE17 5HL

Take back the land!

Any Anarchists in the Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire area interested in forming a rambling club for monthly-bimonthly walks in the Chilterns write to: **Box A, 11 Ridgmount St, Bedford, MK42 9HR.**

London Anarchist Forum

Meetings resume 16 January 1987

(Programme for the term will be announced at the meeting and, we hope, published in the next *Freedom*).

Fridays 8pm

Mary Ward Centre

42 Queen Square, London WC1

Anarcho Womens Festival

Bristol, 14 + 15 February 1987

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More details from A-Fems

Box 101, 37 Stokes Croft, Bristol

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1986 Total to date = £817.87

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November Total = £43.25

Previously acknowledged = £423.64

1986 Total to date = £466.89

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December Total = £65.00

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1986 Total to date = £848.12

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December Total = £67.00

Previously acknowledged = £423.64

1986 Total to date = £490.64

BROADWATER Police Trials

THE trial started on 14 January of six men (Mark Braithwaite, Engin Rajit, Winston Silcock, and three juveniles) charged with the murder of Police Constable Keith Blakelock during the Broadwater Farm uprising of 6 October 1985. A total of 75 men were arrested and told they were to be charged with this murder, but 69 of them were later told that the murder charge would be dropped if they would sign confessions to lesser charges such as affray. None of them was allowed access to a lawyer before signing. One who signed a 50-page confession, implicating various other people, was later shown to have been in Windsor at the time.

Sixteen of the confessions have so far been produced in court, five in connection with guilty pleas and eleven as evidence for the prosecution in contested trials. There have been four acquittals (confessions rejected by the jury) and twelve horrendous prison sentences, some of which have since been reduced by the Appeals Court. (One sentence, imposed concurrently with a longer sentence, was of twelve months for stealing two cans of soft drink.)

Six trials for murder have now begun. We must see what emerges, but at the moment the evidence is uncertain. There is no doubt PC Blakelock was murdered, but the people charged with the murder may have been selected with a pin.

That leaves 53 of the 75 arrested still awaiting trial, on dates which have been fixed between now and July. Some twenty of them have already been in custody for fifteen months.

The letter of the law is that civilians involved in the killing of a policeman are entitled to the same consideration and respect as policemen involved in the

shooting of a civilian, but -- surprise, surprise -- this does not seem to be what happens in practice.

As we prepare for press -- a week before *Freedom* is available for distribution -- the trial of Chief Inspector Lovelock is still in progress. He is charged with unlawfully shooting and maliciously wounding Mrs Cherry Groce on 28 September 1985.

Mr Lovelock was one of an armed gang who broke into Mrs Groce's home in Brixton with the object of arresting her son (who was not there). Hearing a noise outside her bedroom door Mrs Groce assumed it was her epileptic daughter, and opened the door to offer assistance. Mr Lovelock naturally assumed she had come to attack the assembled constabulary and shot her 'in a reflex action' with his police handgun (which needs nine pounds of pressure to operate the trigger). A pair of mistaken assumptions which ended in tragedy. Mrs Groce is now stuck in a wheelchair.

The case strongly resembles another tragic accident in August 1985, when Constable Chester shot and killed John Stonehouse aged five in the course of searching the house for John's father (who was not there at the time). Mr Chester was charged with manslaughter and acquitted. This looks like a precedent for the acquittal of Mr Lovelock.

It remains to be seen whether (assuming Mr Lovelock is acquitted) the police follow the other precedent of treating their colleague, acquitted of crime but still admittedly responsible for a tragic error, as if he were a hero. When Mr Chester returned to the beat the media were invited to the celebration, local loonies were assembled to extol his virtues, and a photograph appeared in all the national daily newspapers showing the Constable

cuddling a little boy similar to the one he had killed. Are we now to be regaled with pictures of Chief Inspector Lovelock smirking as he helps an elderly black lady across the road?

Unlikely. There is one essential difference between the two cases, namely that the shooting of John Stonehouse did not provoke a riot. **Plod**

At this time of year, selected official papers are released. These can sometimes provide harmless amusement at official embarrassment. This year has been disappointing. Really juicy bits are, as usual, held back and we are fobbed off by being told that the government, during the Suez affair, comprised lying, racist, unbalanced megalomaniacs. We had hoped for secrets. Much more entertaining were the earlier details about how King George V was knocked off at an 'appropriate' time. Much more dignified than tinpot dictatorships, which have to delay such happy events and resort to the traditional stuffing, puppet strings and so on for official occasions.

According to a poll conducted in 1984 by the Public Agenda Foundation, *Voter Option on Nuclear Arms Policy*, 39% of Americans questioned agreed that 'when the Bible predicts that the earth will be destroyed by fire, it's telling us that a nuclear war is inevitable'. Amongst those with earnings under \$20,000, the percentage rose to 49%.

The publisher of a Turkish edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica is being prosecuted for separatism and weakening Turkish national feelings, for a reference to an Armenian state in the 11th century.



Secrets Escape Abroad

British secret revealed in Australia
Israeli secret revealed in Britain
American secret revealed in Iran
Salvadorean secret revealed in America

SO LONG as governments continue to exist, there is one thing to be said in favour of national boundaries. They allow information to be published, which governments would prefer to keep from their own subjects.

In Australia Mr Peter Wright is trying to publish a memoir of his years in the British intelligence service. If he tried to do it in Britain he and his intended publisher could be threatened with prosecution under the Official Secrets Act, and if the book was by any chance printed it could be confiscated and burned. But because publication is intended in a different country, the best the British government can do is claim breach of contract in a civil court. Their legal representatives have so far made a dreadful hash of it, assuming that because an Australian judge wears a daft wig like a British judge, he is going to jump like a British judge at the mention of (British) national security.

If rumours circulating about the book are true, its publication is no threat to national security in the sense of giving valuable information to any hostile government. But it would be an embarrassment because it explodes the myth that this country is mostly ruled by the elected politicians who form the most visible part of the government. Peter Wright says, we hear, that Soviet penetration of Britain's institutions went much further than any layman suspects, that two Soviet agents, Wilson and Heath, were successive Prime Ministers, and that a complete communist takeover was only averted by Peter Wright and his friends taking over the security service and sabotaging the elected traitors. Of course, the only evidence that Wilson and Heath were Soviet agents is that their consensus politics was far to the left of Peter Wright's born-again fascism; but his book shows (if the rumours are correct) that the Prime Minister is as much controlled by the security service as vice versa, and that a loony faction needs neither election success nor armed coup to take over the government.

Margaret Thatcher has made no secret of her anger with Neil Kinnock, because he has learned in 'Privy Council briefings' what is in the book, and what damage it can do to myths about the British constitution, yet he tries to make political use of it.

Britain itself was the place chosen by

Mordechai Vanunu to reveal a secret of the Israel government, that they have a vast stock of atom bombs. The announcement did not make much of a stir because everybody outside Israel knew already. Dr Vanunu is said to be a brilliant nuclear engineer, but in matters of current affairs he does not seem very well informed. If he were, he would have noticed that when a Nigerian politician in exile declined to return voluntarily to discuss his Swiss bank account, and was found in a packing case at London Airport, he was accompanied in his packing case by two Israeli security men, experts in packing-case travel, earning a bit on the side. Evidently ignorant of that incident, Vanunu en route for another country accepted a drink from a fellow passenger in the transfer lounge at Rome airport, and the next he knew he was in gaol in Israel charged with treason.

A consignment of packing cases exported from Israel caused a United States government secret to be revealed in Iran. There was nothing unexpected within the cases; they contained weapons supplied by the American government, without the knowledge of people or parliament, via Israel which is an American client state. The surprise was a group of four gentlemen hidden behind the packing cases: the former National Security adviser to President Reagan, the manager of President Reagan's National Security office, the retired CIA expert on Iranian affairs, and the Israeli Director of Anti-Intelligence. All four were dressed as mullahs, complete with false beards, and carrying symbolic gifts of a bible and a cake in the shape of a key; apparently they thought Persians, having a taste for pompous tomfoolery, would take kindly to this nonsense. The Iranians, who had kept quiet for months about arms shipments, could not restrain themselves from telling the hilarious story of the shipment of fools.

The United States government, afflicted as it is by the Freedom of Information Act, really needs to sit tight on its secrets. Once the giggling Iranians had blown the gaff about the weapons shipments to Iran, it rapidly came out that the Iranian military had paid well over catalogue price, and the profit had gone into a Swiss bank account, used by the President's National Security office to finance terrorists in Nicaragua.

This led to the revelation of a Salvadorean government secret in the United States, for it was a military secret in El Salvador that American weapons for Nicaraguan contras are shipped from a Salvadorean airport. El Salvador of course

makes no pretence of telling ordinary citizens what is happening; but the secret of gun-running to Nicaragua was not known even to Mr Duarte, the president.

Secrets revealed by design and accident

Not all government secrets have to go abroad to escape. Some are let out on purpose by a faction within a government fighting its corner, and others get out by pure accident.

An example of a deliberately revealed secret comes from Greece. Two years ago the Papandreou party were elected to the political wing of the government on a promise to rid Greece of American nuclear weapons, but failed to get one weapon moved. Not to lose face with the electorate, they revealed the existence of 152 secret agreements between the Greek and American governments which effectively surrender Greek sovereignty over American bases. There is nothing the Greek government can do short of declaring a war of independence.

The British Labour Party is now trying to get elected on the promise of getting American nuclear weapons out of Britain. Denis Healey, an opponent of the anti-nuclear policy when it was proposed at successive Labour conferences, has become curiously reticent about it now that it looks an electoral winner. He was Defence Minister for part of the time the Americans were moving in; does he know something we don't about secret agreements?

Another example of a deliberately revealed secret, this time in Britain, occurred in 1978 when Reuters published a secret internal memorandum from the Ministry of Defence, showing that unprecedented numbers of servicemen were tendering their resignations; a fact of obvious military value to the potential enemy. A police investigation found that the secret had been deliberately leaked by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as part of a campaign for military wage increases. No prosecutions followed, but the security services cannot have been pleased as they were currently collecting evidence for what became the 'ABC' trial, the prosecution of two journalists and an ordinary soldier for publishing secrets which were outdated and valueless. Perhaps the Defence Chiefs were threatened with prosecution if it happened again.

An example of a secret revealed by pure accident occurred in 1986. By a curious coincidence this was also a Ministry of Defence memorandum about the need for more money, this time to prevent the loss of submarines and supply ships. Captain Alan West, a Falklands war

Spain's Rural Idiots

STATE socialism often becomes a cure which makes the disease (capitalism) seem almost benevolent by comparison. Not just Soviet-style socialism, but the weary welfare-statism of grants, subsidies and bribes, as offered by today's PSOE (Socialist Party) government in Spain.

Perhaps its most interesting effect has been to bring the government and the peasants of Andalusia into conflict. These peasants, whom Marx described as 'rural idiots', have been a continual problem for governments over the years. In January 1933, as is well known, the bloody put down of an anarchist peasant rising at Casas Viejas in the province of Cadiz led to the fall of the leftist government of Azana.

Now the Andalusian peasants are again in ferment, this time not about anarchism but about the destruction of olive groves, the introduction of cash crops for the Common Market countries of Northern Europe, and the mechanisation which is putting land labourers on the dole. Andalusia is becoming neither a European California, or a rural colony of Northern Europe, depending on who you listen to — the big landowners and the socialist government or the unemployed.

Throughout Andalusia, half a million land labourers are almost continually without work. In the worst hit provinces of Sevilla (more than 1 in 3 out of work), Cadiz (27.5%) and Malaga (25%), 'modernisation' is producing a crisis. Battle is joined between the olive (labour intensive) and the sunflower (capital intensive), between jobs and machines, between ecological concerns and pesticides, between the peasant and state capitalist world views, between city and countryside.

The radical syndicalist Sindicato de Obreras del Capo (Union of Land Labourers) now represents the peasants of southern Spain. Recently its General Secretary, Diego Canamero, advised the politicians to tour the villages on horse-

hero now working at the Ministry, took his dog and the secret memorandum for a walk along the towpath near his home at Sonning, Berkshire, where he was careless enough to let the memorandum fall out of his pocket. Before he got round to informing MOD security of the loss, the memorandum was found by a freelance journalist who happened to be taking a constitutional along the same bit of towpath. Captain West was court-martialled for negligence, and sentenced to be severely reprimanded. DR

back and see the dole queues for themselves. He went on to say, 'This is the worst thing about an ideology named socialism, that has been contaminated by luxury and comfort'.

In September, when the General Secretary and 200 other SOC members were under threat of imprisonment for staging a work-in at a farm in Sevilla, the SOC mounted a big national campaign for their amnesty, and that of the hundreds of other land labourers under threat of prison for previous occupations. This included a week-long series of demos by peasants and supporters in Madrid, demos in Malaga and other cities and villages in Andalusia, more land occupations in the provinces of Huelva and Cadiz, hunger strikes, and some 'general strikes' in the countryside. The SOC was joined in these actions by the CNT (Renovados). Eventually an embarrassed government and judiciary backed off; Canamero and some others were amnestied.

Modernisation versus millenium

Writing in *Diario 16 - Andalusia*, the Secretary for Political Socio-Economic Research of the PSOE in Andalusia quoted Gerald Brennan (1943): 'The principal characteristic of Andalusian anarchism was its simple millenarism. Every new movement or every new strike was greeted like it was the immediate coming of a new age of plenty in which all — including the landowners and civil guards — would be free and happy'. The writer saw the SOC campaign as yet another manifestation of anarchist millenarism; if only the peasants would be patient the government would reform agriculture to the benefit of all, through a mixture of laws and state subsidies.

More radical writers, like Francisco Santiago of SOC, have argued that dole money is no answer to people with neither work nor land, and that the government seeks to humiliate the peasants with its policies.

SOC demands that the land should belong to those who work it; and in Andalusia, where more than half of the land is owned by 2% of the population, this is a radical demand. The Agrarian Law of 1978 promises redistribution of land, but Diego Canamero and other SOC militants tell me it does not work as promised. It may even help the big landowners, in that they may have the right to buy back land cultivated by peasants at state expense.

These big landowners favour crops easily processed mechanically, such as

sugar, cereals, cotton, and the sunflower whose oil can be profitably sold through the Common Market. Olive groves are being uprooted, 3½ million in the past five years, because olive trees cannot be grown as profitably (yet olive oil is superior in flavour to most other oils; Canamero's wife told me straight she will have no other cooking oil in the house).

The SOC programme is for a genuine redistribution of land now to the peasants, with peasant co-operatives to administer cultivation through the pueblos. They advocate the establishment in growing areas of industries such as fruit conservation, textiles and tobacco manufacturing, the reforestation of some two million hectares of desert, and much needed irrigation of agricultural land; all of which would provide much needed work for the unemployed.

The SOC slogan runs: 'We are not birds of the air / We are not fish in water / We are men who live on the land'. In accordance with the perennial peasant belief that all things in life are in limited supply and must be conserved, SOC opposes pesticides and artificial fertilisers; it is the natural ally of the ecology movement.

Centralists of all kinds — big capitalists, state capitalists, multinationals, economists who love economies of scale — look to unlimited growth in the Gross National Product. Theirs is the spirit captured in the poem: 'Property, property / Let us expand / Soul and body / Without end'.

Some peasants have embraced the concept of eternal exploitation, for instance the peasants of French provinces who produced watery wines for the European wine lake. Andalusian peasants lack such sophistication. Always ground down by the State and its Civil Guard, they cannot yet see the State as sugar-daddy. Marx was right to recognise their 'rural idiocy' as a threat to the centralised state he envisaged.

At a conference entitled 'Anarchism and the peasant movement — past, present and future' at the University of Cordoba in October, the sociologist Eduardo Sevilla declared 'The oppression of today differs little from that of the nineteenth century' and said the day labourer movement had inherited the methods of struggle of traditional anarchism.

When the anarcho-syndicalist CNT seems to be in decline over most of Spain, it is a source of reassurance that opponents of statism and centralism are merging in another form.

Brian Bamford

The Day I Became a Nigger

WHEN I woke up in the morning I found that my face had turned black, quite black. I went to my place of work and they looked at my black skin; then they told me that of course they would have to stop employing me forthwith. I protested that my work record was good and that this sacking was most unjust, but they told me that nothing personal was intended; it was just a matter of a general policy that applied to everybody. 'People with black faces do not earn such a salary as yours', they said. 'If you look around in the world in which we live you will see that many dark skinned people are not employed at all, for in general dark skinned people have a lower level of production. Everyone knows that'.

And if I was an exception to this generalization? Well, conceivably I might be of course, but they were applying a routine principle, so out I must go.

I woke up sweating from this horrid dream, and was almost impelled to look in the mirror to confirm that my face had not turned black. But why had I had the dream — and then I remembered. It referred to the date on the calendar! I realized that all they said in my dream had been literally true, all these monstrously unfair generalizations used to kick me out of my job would take effect that morning. They were not doing this to me because my face had turned black overnight, but because a certain date on the calendar had been reached. I had reached the age of statutory retirement.

We have laws against racism and the unfair discrimination that it involves. We have none against ageism. No-one can be kicked out of their job because their face turns black, but they can be and are given the sack when they reach a certain age, quite irrespective of their past work record and their present level of efficiency. They are declared un-people; sometimes they are given a watch or similar token

before they are told to run away and play.

'But surely,' some will protest, 'this is retirement, an excellent institution, and many people are happy to stop going to work and to live on a pension.' And if they are not happy to do this? 'Well — too bad.'

Scientific studies of ageing, a research field known as gerontology, have highlighted the various disabilities that attend our later years. Taking all the disabilities together, both physical and psychological, it is recognized that two factors are responsible, *biogenic* and *sociogenic*. Biogenic factors refer to the inevitable physical degeneration that comes with age, but the rate of this degeneration varies enormously between individuals, some people in their 80s being more hale and hearty than others in their 50s. Scientific research workers reckon that about 25% of the disabilities of retired people are due to biogenic factors. Progress in preventive and remedial medicine has certainly done much to combat these biogenic factors, and we may expect further progress. But what of the other 75%, the sociogenic factors? These are wholly remediable. They are the product of society's treatment of older people and, most importantly, the myths about ageing that people accept about themselves, and hence tend to conform to the ageist stereotype that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

He or she is white haired, inactive and unemployed, making no demands on anyone, least of all the family, docile in putting up with loneliness, cons, and every kind of boredom, and able to live on a pittance. He or she, although not demented, which would be a nuisance to other people, is slightly deficient in intellect and tiresome to talk to, because folk-lore says that old people are weak in the head, asexual, because old people are

incapable of sexual activity, and it is unseemly if they are not. He or she is unemployed because old age is second childhood and everyone knows that the old make a mess of simple work. Some credit points may be gained by visiting or being nice to a few of these sub-human individuals, but most of them prefer their own company and the company of other aged unfortunates. Their main occupations are religion, grumbling, reminiscing and attending the funerals of friends. If sick, they need not and should not be actively treated, and are best stored in institutions where they can be supervised by bossy matrons who keep them clean, silent and out of sight. A few who are amusing or active are kept by society as pets. The rest are displaying unpardonably bad manners by continuing to live, and even on occasion of complaining of their treatment, when society has declared them unpeople and their patriotic duty is to lie down and die.'

So wrote Alex Comfort, a doctor whose research work in gerontology is internationally recognized.¹ This he tells us, is the accepted stereotype of the ideal 'old person'.

Funny, ha, ha!

I found the following joke on the back of a matchbox:

'First old lady: "Isn't it windy?"

Second old lady: "No. I think it's Thursday."

Third old lady: "So am I. Let's have a cup of tea."

Matchbox jokes are an excellent guide to popular humour and contemporary attitudes towards identifiable groups. It would be possible, I suppose, to make up similar jokes about children afflicted with spastic paralysis, women afflicted with severe period pains, and the alleged stupidity of all black people. But as things stand, I doubt if they would get printed on the back of matchboxes. If your skin is black it is unlikely that you will often be called a 'coon' to your face in modern Britain, but if you are over 60 (or even over 50 and look it) there are many other epithets you may be called — all very lightheartedly — to emphasise that you are 'different' and rather a figure of fun because you have lived a certain number of years. Older women stand in special jeopardy of a combination of ageism and sexism. If a man in his sixties has a sexual relationship with a woman in her twenties he may very well be called a 'dirty old man', because in the dirty minds of some people older people just shouldn't be sexually active. It is much worse for a woman in her sixties, for if she has sexual relations with a man in his twenties she

may be regarded as an utter monster. I have heard such a woman referred to as a 'senile nympho', although normal sexual activity is surely not indicative of senility, but of health.

While racist and sexist jokes are becoming less acceptable in the media, ageist jokes still flourish. The depiction of older people as essentially ridiculous and a fitting butt for the aggressive humour of the young, has a very ancient history. Aristophanes' comedy *The Ecclesiazusae* has the double basis of sexism and ageism. The new Athenian government is depicted as all-female, and hence all sorts of ridiculous laws are passed. One is that no young man may have sex with his girl friend unless he has first fucked an old woman at her demand. There is a long scene in which two young lovers are kept apart by the successive demands that are made on the young man by three randy women identified as 'hags'. Our own Shakespeare frequently plays to the gallery by depicting older people as funny. The character of Falstaff is shown as ridiculous as he is an oldish man behaving as a young man. In the *Merry Wives of Windsor* the two cock-teasing wives lead Falstaff on by letting him suppose that they will sleep with him, in order finally to humiliate him publicly. But Shakespeare was a little more subtle on this ageist issue (as he was on the racist issue over Shylock) for in *Henry IV Part II* he gives Falstaff a very good speech when confronting the Lord Chief Justice maintaining, in effect, that what a man is capable of should determine his age and not his years.

Why is aggressive humour levelled at that portion of the community identified as 'old'? For the very same reason that other forms of aggressive humour flourish — fear on the part of those who create and perpetuate the stereotypes.

A necessary revolution

Although no white people will ever be labelled as 'coons', quite inevitably (unless they die young) they will eventually come to be labelled 'wrinklies' and suffer the attendant consequences unless they are prepared to do something about it. This is the basis of the fear that is expressed in aggression: they feel that they are doomed. If age is stereotyped as being absolutely awful, then all sorts of life-threatening and life-threatening behaviour becomes justified.

'They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.'

Thus the poet Lawrence Binyon seemed to justify the sacrifice of the thousands of young mugs who threw away their lives on the fields of Flanders in one of the silliest of wars. Yet age need not weary nor the years condemn if only society can

break out of the stupid stereotype of 'old age' that tends to dominate us, and the untrue myths that are current about ageing. Sure, we will all drop dead some day, nor should we wish to become immortals like the wretched Struldbruggs in Swift's *Voyage to Laputa*. Manny Shinwell, after his 100th birthday fell ill and spoke the famous last words 'I have had enough' and died. But his hearers did not know whether he referring to life or to the half-consumed glass of whiskey at his bedside.

A revolution in attitudes is demanded, for as I have pointed out, 75% of the disabilities of people's later years are *sociogenic*, and need not occur if people will only wake up to the realities of ageing, and not accept myths concerning other people or for themselves. Modern researchers in gerontology are demonstrating that we do not have to become stupid, forgetful, asexual and dull as the years advance.² That will happen only if

we accept that it must happen, and bow to the absurd conditions that society forces on us. In Britain today about 16% of the population are over the age of 65 and that will have steadily increased by the year 2000, a hefty minority that can wield some clout if it wakes up to its power and its potentialities. As medical science advances it will become a healthier minority, and a hell of a social revolution on a lot of fronts is pending. And for younger people I would suggest that they ponder on the lines:

And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;

It tolls for thee.

Tony Gibson

1. Alex Comfort, *A Good Age*, London: Mitchell Beazeley, 1977.
2. N Coni, W Davison and S Webster, *Ageing: The Facts*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Inflation/Starvation

The Dynamics of (Thatcher's) Capitalism

THE recent announcements of government pre-election expenditure, to buy the votes of the don't knows, will come as no surprise to anarchists. Nor will the predictable return to business as usual, in the little Grantham grocer's store of her dreams, if Thatcher rules once more.

The effects of the pursuit of her dream, 'to defeat inflation', should be clearly understood. Global inflation will persist while significant numbers of people anywhere are starving and competing for food. Their demands, and our mechanisms for resisting them, ensure that real prices of necessities (a relative concept) will continue to rise.

In the real world inflation is the natural price we pay for resisting the demands of the starving. The multinational corporations which supply us are a complex means of taking the food out of the mouths of starving peasants, and delivering it, ready to micro-wave, in time to watch Eastenders.

They demand continual growth as their reward for keeping suburbia fed and content. Thatcher's economic machine will feed them from the ever growing pockets of the loyal rich. To balance this, and control inflation in the national economy, she has to import starvation. The equation will then be in balance; the rich will be richer, and the poor starving. God will smile on a Tory heaven.

The economic strategy is on course to achieve this. First, cut away the manufacturing base. Then export the unused capital, technology and skills. The jobs will inevitably follow.

This will produce a negative balance of trade, as we no longer make desirable, modern necessities (micro-wave ovens, colour tvs, and fitted kitchens).

Soon our currency will drop in relative value. This will have one major effect, which will in turn generate further turns of the screw. The price of raw materials will increase. This will make the remaining home industries less competitive, and their home and export markets will shrink. (Pouring oil on these troubled waters has slowed the trend; cynics believe this has happened because the government cannot wind its revenue demands down — a Thatcher aim — fast enough).

Shrinking markets lead to further bankruptcies and a further export of capital...

Releasing ownership of your necessary infrastructure services and industries, by 'privatisation', then allows the export of home generated profit, and more jobs will follow. With the loss of control of essential industries the price of their services will inevitably rise. Our secondary service industry sector then comes under the same threat that removed our basic manufacturing base...

This nation still has to import 40% of its food. Eventually we will reach the point where we can no longer afford it.

Result: zero inflation amid growing starvation. (Of course the stock markets will still be moving ahead as the pound becomes an electronic information currency, unrelated to any field, factory or workshop.)

Colin Johnson

We have already carried stories of Catholic-instigated blasphemy charges in Germany and Austria. A conference of Catholic bishops has now denounced a 'Christmas special' of the holy family made of jelly sweets. However, it would be acceptable in gingerbread, chocolate or marzipan. The offence seems to lie in mass production. The company concerned has been flooded with protest letters, threats of hell-fire and an individual promise to deliver it in person. (Incidentally, the columnar three year old sustained a hand injury during his nursery pantomime, sufficient to need X-rays. He is convinced that it is the fault of 'baby Jesus'.)

This column has previously noted suicides amongst Japanese youths, attributed to school and home pressures. Last year, the figure was 723 in the first eleven months, a 44% increase over the previous year and approaching the record of 917 in 1979.

An army court in Israel has ruled that transmigration of the soul is no excuse for military desertion. The defendant, Mohammed Zayed Salem, a Druze, said that he had a morbid fear of Israeli tanks after, in a previous existence as a Syrian soldier, he was run over by one. This sounds reasonable, especially for a Druze. However, he was sentenced to three years in prison.

Winstanley's Two Models of Communism

AS GEORGE WOODCOCK puts it, 'the really anarchist wing of the English revolutionary movement in the seventeenth century ... was the ephemeral group whose peculiar form of social protest earned them the name of Diggers'. Gerrard Winstanley, by far the most productive of Digger pamphleteers, was undoubtedly an anarchist during the short time of the movement's existence (some 14 months), and is sometimes said to have remained a consistent libertarian. A study of his pamphlets shows this to be an error.

In my opinion, Winstanley's writings fall into three distinct phases:

1. His five theological tracts, published in 1648 and 1649. In this period Winstanley moved from millenarism to communism, eventually calling for the abolition of private property in order to make 'the earth ... a common treasury as it was in the beginning.'
2. The writings of Winstanley during his Digger period. In April 1649 the Diggers, also known as True Levellers, occupied a strip of common land on St. George's Hill between Cobham, Walton-on-Thames and Weybridge in northern Surrey. The Diggers' pamphlets also tell us about nine other Digger communities in England. Winstanley is not the only author named, but only a few pages of Digger tracts were written without Winstanley's participation.

3. *The Law of Freedom in a Platform, or True Magistracy Restored*, Winstanley's last known work, an elaborated blue-print of a communist state in England, published in 1652. By this time the Digger movement had ceased to exist, and Winstanley did not even mention it.

The basic idea of communism among other things is present in both phases of Winstanley's political publications. But there is a fundamental break between the Digger writings on the one hand and *Law of Freedom* on the other.

The communism outlined in the Digger pamphlets was of a libertarian character. The Diggers prophesied that in their ideal society of the near future 'Enmity in all Lands will cease, for none shall dare to seek a Dominion over others, neither shall any dare to kill another, nor desire more of the Earth than another; for he that will rule over, imprison, oppress, and kill his fellow Creatures, under what pretence soever, is a destroyer of the Creation, and an actor of the Curse and walks contrary to the rule of righteousness'. Due to their community of goods 'without that cheating intanglement of buying and selling' they promised to be able to do without laws and prisons: '... we shall not arrest one another. And then, what need have we of imprisoning, whipping or hanging Laws, to bring one

another into bondage?' The Diggers, admittedly often vaguely, described as their aim 'an anarchist society possessing no state, no army, no law', for 'not one word was spoken in the beginning, That one branch of mankind should rule over another.'

In his early writings Winstanley firmly rejected the death penalty: 'For if I kill you I am a murderer, if a third come, and hang or kill me for murdering you, he is a murderer of me; and so by the government ... murder hath been called Justice when it is but the curse.'

But this picture suddenly changed with *Law of Freedom*. Here Winstanley stressed the necessity of government, laws and punishment. In Winstanley's Utopia the revolution comes from above, not by direct action of the poor. 'And because offences may arise from the spirit of unreasonable ignorance, therefore was the Law added.' The instrument of change and the means to preserve the communist community is the state: Omnipresent officials, strict discipline, police, army and a legal system including admonitions (for first offenders), forced labour (the standard punishment), and the death penalty (the punishment in extreme cases). *Law of Freedom* is dedicated to the military dictator, Oliver Cromwell.

Why this sudden change from the anti-

authoritarian model of 1649/50 to the authoritarian concept of 1652?

Winstanley's disappointment at the failure of the short-lived Digger movement and the realization of his own lack of power were probably factors, but more important is a basic change in Winstanley's philosophy. His perception of human nature had completely changed between 1650 and 1652.

In his early writings and in the Digger pamphlets Winstanley depicted human beings 'as sociable, cooperative, and reasonable by nature, though corrupted by social experience. He was convinced that reason and the cooperative trait of human nature would eventually get the better of the competitive aspirations, greed, and thirst for power. He refused to accept the aggressive power 'that causes divisions and war' as basic to human character: 'But this Law of darkness in the members is not the state of Nature'. 'Looke upon a childe that is new borne, or till he grows up to some few yeares, he is innocent, harmlesse, humble, patient, gentle, easie to be entreated, not envious; And this is ... mankind in his Innocency.'

In *Law of Freedom*, however, Winstanley had ceased to trust in the reason of the denizens of his projected communist commonwealth; they are not by nature cooperative communists. On the contrary, they have to be coerced to be good members of society, for, 'the body of the people are confused and disordered, because some are wise, some foolish, some subtil and cunning to deceive ... By reason whereof offences do arise among brethren, and their common peace is added a Law to limit mens manners, because of Transgressions one against another', so Winstanley's state of the future is ruled by elected 'Overseers, to cause the unruly ones, for whom onely the Law was added, to be subject to the Law, or Rule.'

There is nothing left of Winstanley's earlier idealization of the innocent, harmless child: 'Mankind in the days of his youth is like a young Colt, wanton and foolish, till he be broke by Education and correction.' 'All children shall be educated, and be trained up in subjection to parents and elder people more then now they are'. Even the popularly elected parliament in Winstanley's commonwealth must rely on armed forces to rule the population: 'For if so be a Parliament had not an Army to protect them, the rudeness of the people would not obey their proceedings.'

Authors stressing the libertarian tendencies in Winstanley's thought tend to minimize the authoritarian content of *Law of Freedom* as 'apparent compromises' and 'relative moderation' (Woodcock) or to interpret Winstanley's plan as a 'possibilist' document, dedicated to

Oliver Cromwell in the hope that he would implement it.' (Hill) But Cromwell did not react to Winstanley's project, and it seems unlikely that Winstanley expected any reaction. 'From the contents and tone ... it is clear that Winstanley had little hope that Cromwell would carry out the programme set forth in his book and that he merely told him what he should do to be in a better position to criticise what he would do.' (Berneri)

Authors arguing on the basis of orthodox Marxism often do not distinguish between Winstanley's two models of society. If they take any notice at all of the contradictions they usually dismiss the punishments, the almighty state, showing no inclination to wither away, and the lack of pluralism in *Law of Freedom* as matter of minor importance, or they do not see any problem. For example the Marxist-Leninist historian Klenner sees no relevance in the denial of women's suffrage, or Winstanley's different attitudes to capital punishment, although Winstanley's varying position on the death penalty most drastically illustrates his general and fundamental change of mind.

As Schenk says, 'In *The Law of Freedom* Winstanley ceased to be an anarchist. Of his earlier anarchism there is no doubt.'

The dispute between anti-authoritarian and authoritarian socialists, between anarchists and Marxists and Social Democrats, about which can justly claim to be the ideological successors of Winstanley, is misconceived, Winstanley genuinely expressed two different ideologies, giving both anarchists and authoritarians a fair claim.

Gernot Lennert

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Christopher Hill (ed) *Gerrard Winstanley, The Law of Freedom and other Writings* Cambridge U.P. 1983

Christopher Hill *The World Turned Upside Down, radical ideas during the English Revolution* Penguin 1980

George Woodcock *Anarchism* (2nd edition) Penguin 1986

Marie Louise Berneri *Journey through Utopia* (2nd edition) Freedom Press 1982

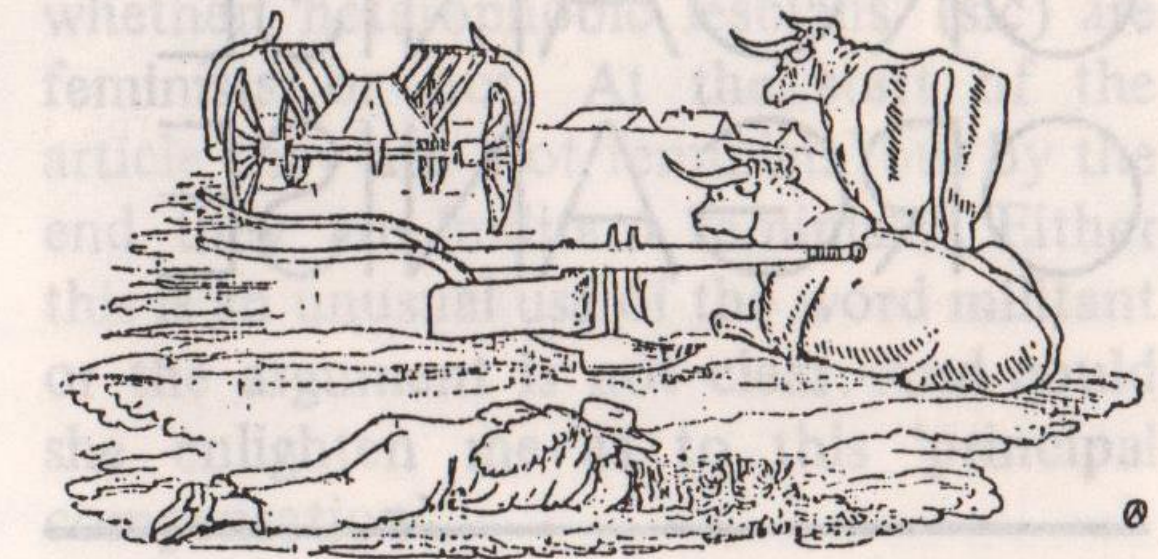
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J C Davies *Utopia and the Ideal Society, a study of English Utopian writing 1526-1700* Cambridge U.P. 1981

Gernot Lennert *Die Diggers, eine fruh-kommunistische Bewegung in der Englischen Revolution* Trotzdem Verlag 1987

LAND NOTES



THE old joke of the farmers before the second world war who were paid not to produce pigs is now being repeated here. It appears that our farmers may get £80 per acre for not producing wheat. While the unfortunate water consumers in East Anglia appear to be receiving more than their fair share of ammonium nitrate through their water supply the big farmers and chemical companies are resisting any restrictions on use.

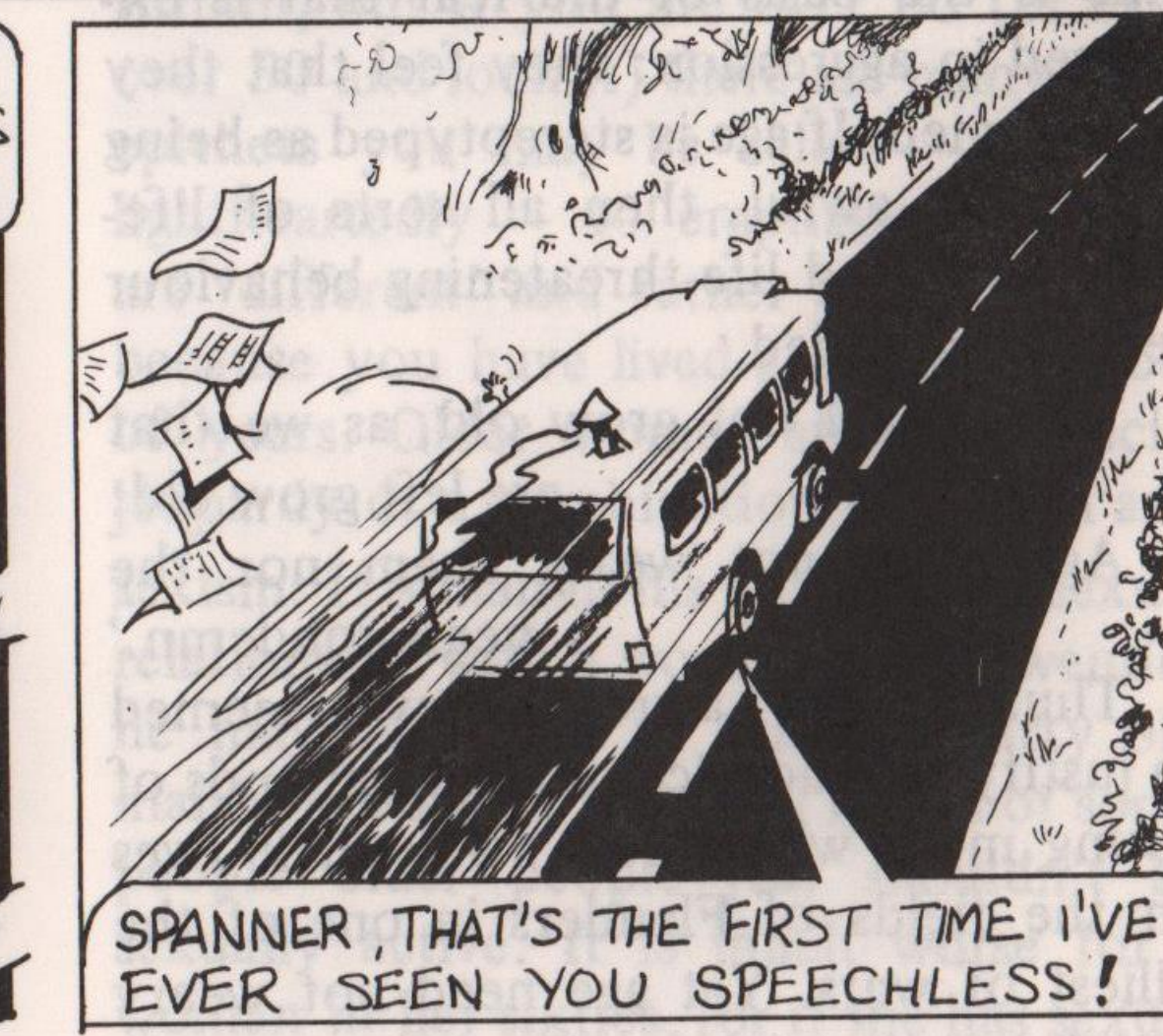
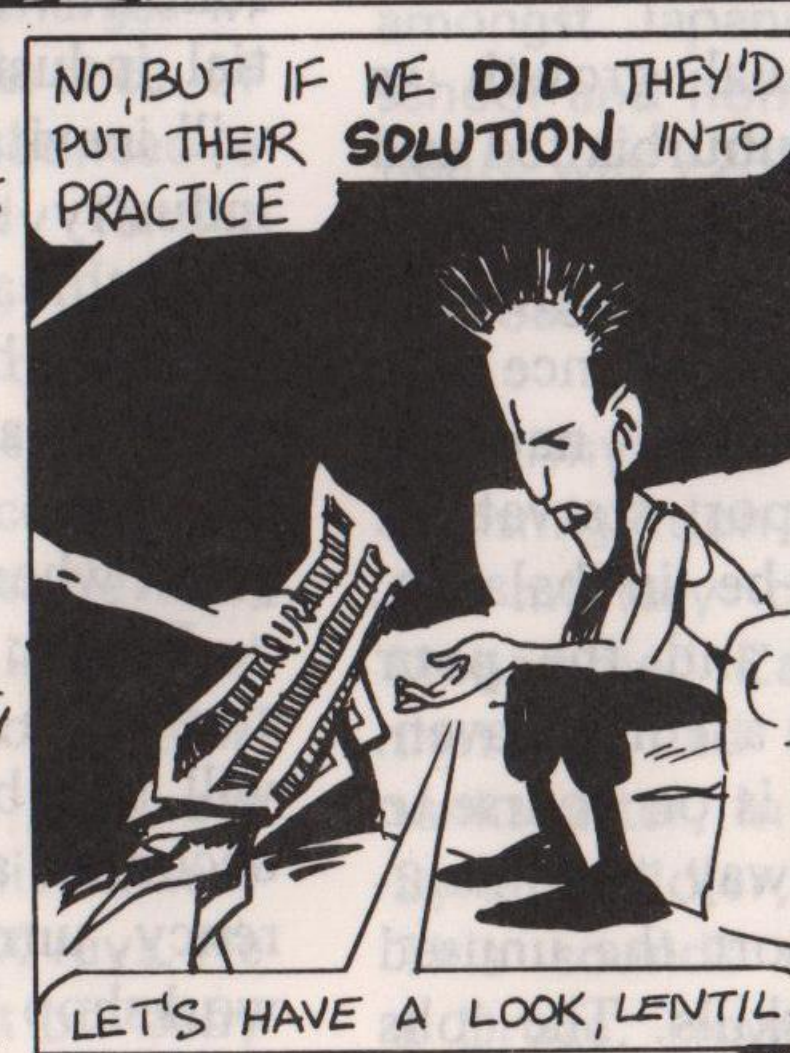
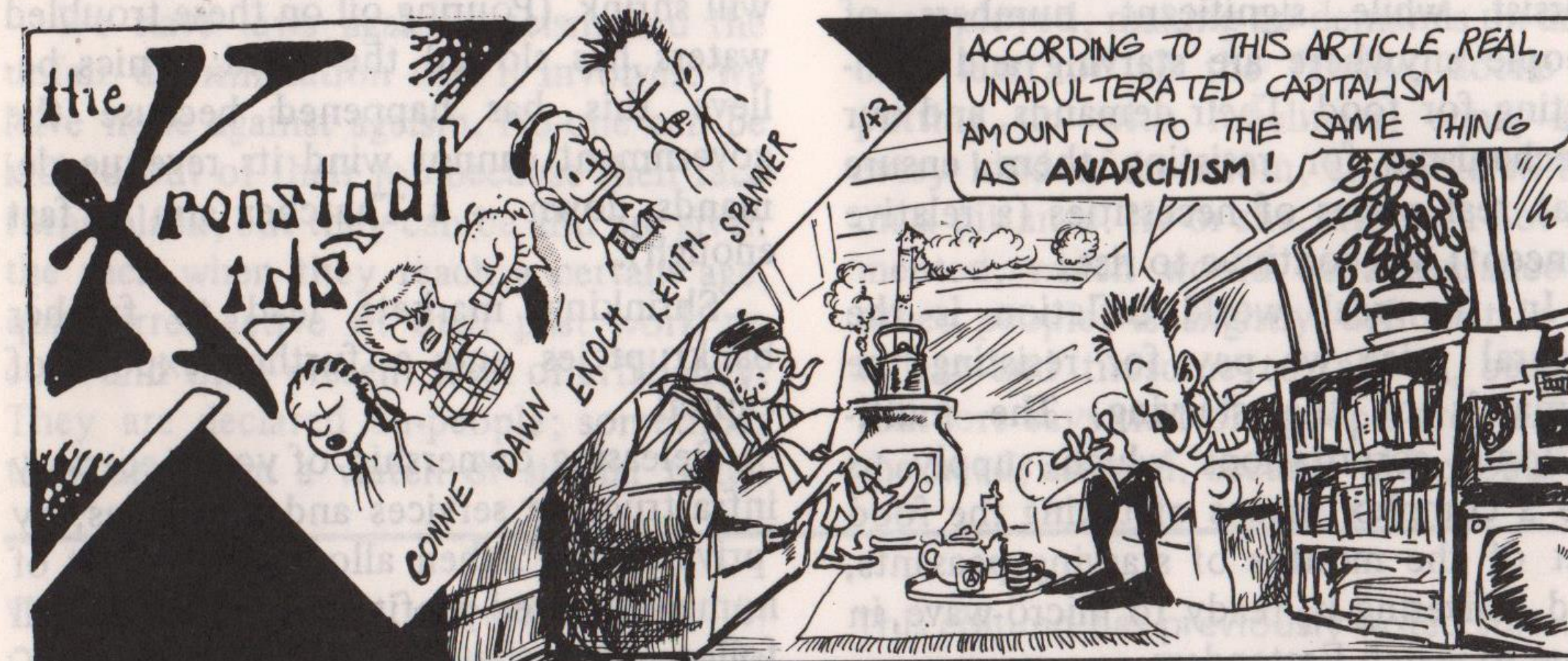
In Cornwall huge farm implements gouge out the sides of the narrow roads while paying no rates to maintain them, this after receiving much tax relief to buy larger and larger machines; machines that enable farmers to cultivate steeper slopes with all the attendant dangers of erosion and flooding.

It seems strange to me that the philosopher Edward Carpenter is not regarded with more respect in anarchist circles, for in an essay published in 1889, called 'Civilisation its Cause and Cure', he said:-

The growth of wealth, it is shown, and with it the conception of Private Property, brought on certain very definite new forms of social life; it destroyed the ancient system of society based on the gens, that is a society of equals founded upon blood-relationship, and introduced a society of classes founded upon differences of material possession; it destroyed the ancient system of mother-right and inheritance through the female line, and turned the woman in the property of the man; it brought with it private ownership of land, and so created a class of landless aliens, and a whole system of rent, mortgage, interest, etc.; it introduced slavery, serfdom and wage-labour, which are only various forms of the dominance of one class over another; and to rivet these authorities it created the State and the policeman.

Such forms have spread world wide so the rulers of the third world sell the crops and the minerals to buy the means to sustain Statehood.

Alan Albon



Go for it ORGANISE ORGANISE ORGANISE

Organise, vt. to give an organic structure to, to arrange so as to communicate, to be ready for action. **organisation**, n. Act or process of organising: suitable disposition of parts for performance of vital functions.

THE anarchist movement is not a single issue campaign, it flows over and permeates all political, personal and social areas. I feel that if you can accept that then you must accept that each anarchist has different areas of emphasis, different opinions about ideas, tactics and theory.

To impose a slab of pre-formed ideology, however flexible, on other anarchists, is an expression of authoritarian ways of thinking. To set up fractional organisations or areas within the anarchist movement, in my opinion, only constructive when the people involved are mainly trying to reach out to non-anarchist workers, students, unemployed people, etc. It is not helpful if either they or anarchists outside these organisations start seeing each as being mutually exclusive to the other.

An anarchist *idea* or *theory* might well be exclusive of another, but if we start seeing fellow anarchists as walking sets of ideas, instead of people who we should be tolerant and flexible towards, then we lose any hope of building something genuine and strong.

To claim an idea as 'my truth' and to carry it away to a mental ghetto, hardly interacting with anyone else unless to put forward 'my truth' is the point at which 'my truth' starts becoming more like a lead entombed ideology.

But, you may say, doesn't the anarchist movement as a whole do just that in relation to the outside world? Yes, we do, but I think it's a legitimate form of self-defence, against the real and physical forces that govern us, and against the interior forces like tradition, accepted behaviour, and our lifetime of conditioning. But I doubt if it's going to make a revolution happen unless we get organised and mobilised.

'Organisation' doesn't mean that we have to stop being able to imagine what it's like to be another person, or to surrender our right to individual action, or to accept one single set of ideas. What it does mean is that we have to be tolerant of other people and groups.

I don't like labels, but let me give you an example: you can call yourself an 'individualist', or you can call yourself a 'co-operativist' — both a fairly rigid frame of mind, but if the individualist says 'I'm an individualist (who aims to co-operate)', and the co-operativist says 'I'm a co-operativist (who aims to nurture individuality)', then the two can at least work together in some way.

All very well, you might say, but if there's no groups near you, and you're starting to wonder if a revolution is ever going to happen, how can you organise? Well, all organisation starts from communication — write to your nearest group, even if they're fifty miles away, ask if they've got any contacts in your area. Or put an ad in the anarchist papers saying you're starting a group, and see what happens.

If you do get a small group formed, or there already is one, all well and good. From that point on, theory, tactics and action (with a little tolerance) come together into a whole.

Without necessarily agreeing with all of what follows, I think that the following 'Rules for Radicals' put forward by the American Saul Alinsky in the early '70s, form a viable starting point for the discussion of group tactics.

- 1) Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.
- 2) Never go outside the experience of your people, if you do, the result is confusion, retreat and a breakdown in communication.
- 3) Wherever possible go outside the experience of your enemy. Here you want to cause confusion, fear and retreat. Don't do what is expected.
- 4) Make your enemy live up to their own book of rules. Very few organisations can do this, or live up to their projected image.
- 5) Ridicule is one of our most potent weapons, it is almost impossible to counterattack humorous ridicule. It also infuriates the enemy, who then react to your advantage.
- 6) A good tactic is one your people enjoy. If you're not having fun doing it, there is something wrong with the tactic.
- 7) A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag and a ritualistic commitment.
- 8) Keep the pressure on, with different tactics and actions. Try to use all events of the time for your purpose.
- 9) The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.
- 10) The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure upon the

enemy. This pressure produces the reactions that lead to the next action, and so on. Constant pressure sustains the action.

11) The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative. You cannot risk being trapped by the enemy if he tries to absorb you into his structure by a sudden agreement to your demand, saying, 'You're right — how should we do it?'

12) Pick the target, freeze it, personalise it, and polarise it.

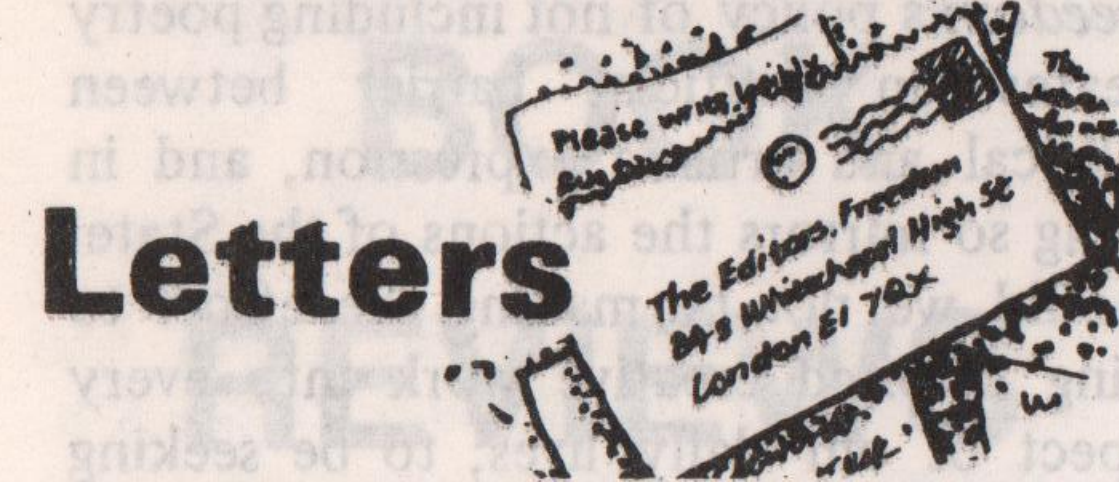
This last one is tricky. Some people will say that success comes from polarising situations, some will say that it's better to discover and define areas of agreement. As with 'nonviolent' against 'violent', this is one that people will have to decide for themselves, while respecting other peoples views. One rule can't always be applied to different campaigns or tactics, though.

Alinsky also puts forward a useful list for the *development* of tactics.

- 1) Work for a victory, even if it's only a small one.
 - 2) Objectives should be achievable with the current level of support.
 - 3) Make sure that you make the best use of people, resources and strengths you have. Be sure that everyone in the group knows what's happening and what's expected.
 - 4) Seize and keep the initiative.
 - 5) Relate tactics to an overall strategy.
 - 6) Tactics should be used where the opposition is weakest and least prepared.
 - 7) Tactics should be used when the group is strongest and best prepared.
 - 8) Targets should be real and concrete, and once selected should be held.
 - 9) An indirect approach that uses humour or makes fools out of the opposition is ideal.
 - 10) Plan ahead, work out contingency plans for all possible responses.
 - 11) Precede a tactic by a build-up, demand or ultimatum — prepare the press beforehand (without losing the element of surprise).
 - 12) The tactic should be dramatic, if possible symbolising the essence of the conflict.
 - 13) Keep the pressure on.
 - 14) Evaluate the tactic and responses to it afterwards, and use the conclusions in the development of further tactics.
- Once a group is up and running, the next stage is the organisation of a regional network or federation to share resources, skills, news, and to put individuals in touch with others.
- When most of the groups in the country are linked in some form of network on a local basis, then is the time to start talking about a national anarchist conference and the setting up of a national network.

Dave

Anarchists in Womens' Groups



Letters

I AM writing with some comments about Andrea Kinty's article 'Anarchists in Women's Groups' (Centenary issue of *Freedom*), in which she cautions us about members of womens groups who 'are not feminists' — the anti-rational, the censorious, the heterophobic (sic). Of the first she argues.

Rational thought is a skill which needs time to learn and perform. Slaves and women have traditionally had no time to spare which is why comparatively few slaves or women have been great intellectual innovators.

It sounds enticingly simple and plausible and seems to be similar to what Virginia Woolf was saying in *A Room of One's Own*, but I would argue that there are other important reasons for the apparent lack of female intellectual innovators. Most importantly that work by women has consistently been suppressed or dismissed. Emily Bronte was aware of this (what she called) 'prejudice against women' which led her to publish *Wuthering Heights* under the name Ellis Bell, as was 'George Eliot'. Several recent books have uncovered many previously unheard of works by women. Moreover, many of the books which we accept as written by men were, in fact, the result of joint cooperative efforts by men and women, eg Wordsworth, Shelley.

I would also like to question the term 'great intellectual innovator' with its connotations of reverence for these thinkers and artists working away, separated from society. Who's to say who is a great intellectual innovator? And what criteria do they use? From Aristotle to Rousseau the so-called 'greats' have redefined human as male and have justified the subordination of women. As Ruth points out:

It is a measure of the extent and pervasiveness of sexism in our culture and in the history of ideas that Rousseau's happy acceptance of the enslavement of more than half the human race does not interfere with his reputation as a champion of liberty and equality.

Secondly, whilst I agree with AK that women are as capable as men of rational thought, I would like to question her rigid separation of intuition from rationality. Surely, even according to her own definition of intuition as 'the art of good guesses', good guesses must have something to do with rationality — they

are not somehow conducted to our minds from the inner psyche. Dale Spender provides an interesting new way of understanding so-called 'women's intuition', not as 'lazy' as AK sees it, but the result of their enforced silence in mixed groups. Because women talk less (men speak eight times as much as women in mixed groups, according to most sociological studies), they actually listen and hear more, and it is the knowledge gained from this, Spender argues, which has been dubbed intuition.

Next, AK talks about the 'interesting difference between male and female erotic fantasy'. She points out that it is not a universal or inherent difference, which leads me to wonder why she mentioned it. It does not seem to play any part in her argument. There may be as many intra-sex group differences in fantasy as inter-sex group differences especially if we start looking at cultures where there's not even any notion of romantic love — and the same could be said of most other psychological differences. Even if this were not the case, living in a society which is as 'genderised' as our own, we could not attribute the difference to anything *essential* about maleness or femaleness.

AK's next claim is that:

Feminism would raise women's confidence to the point where they can just laugh at girlie magazines, realising that idealised photographs no more humiliate real women than the bronzed heroes of pulp romantic fiction real men.

She goes on to say that women's groups should help women to overcome their 'irrational fear' of 'girlie magazines'. This made me really angry. For me the aim of women's press groups is not to enable us to *laugh* at our oppression but to do something about it. Would AK have black people 'laughing off' racism too... and poverty... injustice... She writes as if there's something wrong with *women* for feeling offended by 'girlie magazines' rather than with the multi-million pound profit industry which makes its living from these images which degrade and oppress us and only evaluate us in terms of our appearance or as sex objects.

I personally believe that because of the unequal power relation in society such magazines *are* more offensive than the pulp romantic depiction of male heroes. But even if they're not, to say it is no *more* humiliating than the pulp hero is not a justification for not doing anything about it.

And a last point about this. I haven't come across the 'irrational fear' that AK mentions, but a lot of *anger*. And feeling angry doesn't necessarily lead us

to advocate censorship, as AK implies.

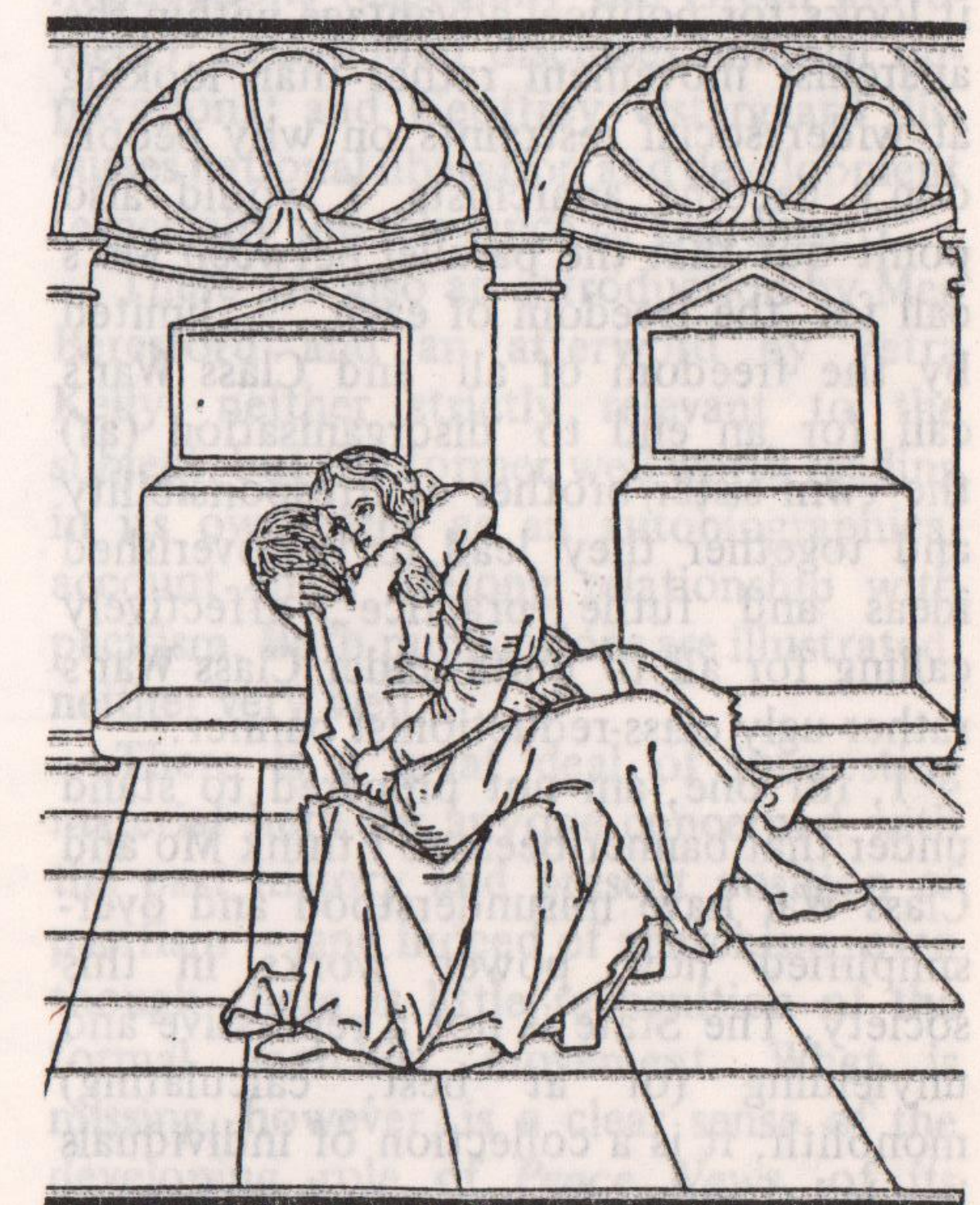
Just a couple more points. I would ask AK to display some of her much-valued rationality — and make up her mind about whether 'heterophobic lesbians' (sic) are feminists or not. At the start of the article they are 'not feminists' but by the end they are 'militant feminists'. Either this is an unusual use of the word militant or the argument is not clear. And could she enlighten me as to this 'principal compensation'.

Finally, I'd like to draw attention to AK's use of language, in particular the word 'irrational', to dismiss points of view she disagrees with. Hence women's apparent fear of 'girlie magazines' is 'irrational' as are demands for censorship. The case as to what is/is not rational has to be discussed. To simply assert, without any justification, that these things are irrational seems to me strikingly similar to men's traditional use of 'irrational' to dismiss women's thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Ros Gill
Leicester

CHRIS HARTWELL rightly bemoans the lack of female contributors to *Freedom*, but is this surprising when if they do so they chance their sexuality being called into question? Chris dismisses Andrea Kinty's piece in the Centenary issue "since Andrea Kinty doesn't sound like a woman". A poor and dangerous substitute for argument if I ever heard one. I mean, how *should* a woman write or sound?

Eddie May



Daryl Poxon writes: would it be possible to find an anarchist friend to write to and hopefully meet when I'm released from prison. Write to L62735 POXON, HM Prison, 54 Gaol Road, Stafford.

The fact is...

THE editorial note to the DAM(ned) dispute in *Freedom* (December) gives the impression that the rival CNT groups emerged at the same time. The fact is that the CNT-V, the Renovadas, is a peeling of the 'real' CNT recognised by the anarcho-sindicalist international AIT. To some anarchists it may not make any difference whether the State recognise and grant the historic patrimony to the reformist Renovadas or the revolutionary CNT-AIT. In my opinion it would be a shame, as if the Freedom Collective was taken over by people calling themselves anarchists but printing authoritarian rubbish.

Peter Bach
Denmark

Anarchism Wrongly Understood

FRANKLY, I feel Mo's 'Anarchism Wrongly Understood' (December '86, page 15) is a veiled restatement of the Class War Federation's anonymous contribution to the *Freedom* Centenary Edition (page 70). Mo does not go so far as to explain the unpopularity of anarchism in terms of it being ghettoised into an alternative 'strict exclusive lifestyle restricting struggle to veganism and animal rights and holding on to the cancer of punk', but he does find the idea of social alternatives undermining the State as 'preposterous'. Pausing only to point out that I've seen more punks among Class War than I have at Freedom (they tend to be a little too old!) and that Class War's critique is itself ghettoised as it looks for political advantage within the anarchist movement rather than looking at wider social restraints on why people don't become anarchists, I would also point out that the parallel between Mo's call for 'the freedom of each... limited by the freedom of all' and Class War's call for an end to 'disorganisation (as) the twin sister/brother of irresponsibility and together they lead to impoverished ideas and futile practice', effectively calling for all to unite under Class War's rather ugly class-reductionist banner.

I, for one, am not prepared to stand under that banner because I think Mo and Class War have misunderstood and oversimplified how power works in this society. The State is not a repressive and unyielding (or at best, calculating) monolith; it is a collection of individuals banded together to protect what they see as their own interests, and defining the way they see the world both as it is and, openly or implicitly, as it should be. The recent breakdown in this community of interests in Parliament over two previously held 'sacred cows' — intelligence and

defence — has revealed that both left and right are prepared to go outside 'democratic' (= parliamentary) channels to maintain their power, which allows the overall value of democracy and the democratic consensus to be popularly questioned.

I feel it the duty of anarchists to present new ideas and facts that undermine the consensus of power further. We have a long history of 'whistleblowing' with or without the interference of the Official Secrets Act, causing the public to question again, thus shifting the consensus from under the State's feet.

We should not only posit alternatives but also live them, for only by setting an example to others can we honestly but non-coercively educate others for social change. The failure of the Bash the Rich campaign is an example of the failure of the 'call to arms' approach. Where positive and achievable alternatives have been advanced — feminism and vegetarianism spring to mind as the most obvious by example — real social change has occurred; and the forces of repression have seen no call to crack down on them, not least because a good number of Parliamentarians are themselves leading feminists or vegetarians.

I call, therefore, for a slow but sure strategy: one of subversion and education rather than confrontation and destruction. It is more realistic and credible to start building today with what we've got, or to smash it up and (assuming you don't end up against the wall with a firing squad in front of you) start building tomorrow.

PN Rogers

Down on the Farm



Education to the Tories means that every child should know the story of Animal Farm. This story proves that no revolution can succeed, that the idealist will be silenced or vaporised and that the old order will return in a more vicious form — they look from pig to human, from human to pig and they can no longer tell the difference! That's right isn't it Thatcher — no different from a pig. In such a manner do the deprived look at you Thatcher and all your lackeys. A class of bloated pigs thriving on the alienated poverty of millions. You are the revolutionary whose monetary revolution has turned sour, your class is the pig class. Oink, Oink, Thatcher, Oink Bloody Oink.

AMA
Edinburgh

Bardic Tradition

Freedom's policy of not including poetry creates an artificial barrier between political and artistic expression, and in doing so mirrors the actions of the State. Should we not be making the effort to bring inspired creative work into every aspect of our daily lives; to be seeking new ground through which art may be liberated from its present elitist form?

Our earliest literary foundations are poetical stories handed down as the product of entire societies; the Teutonic sagas, the Greek epics and the Old Sanscrit narrative poems. As products of the societies, these works could not fall to the claim of single authors — the bardic tradition produced work that was held dearly as a common possession. The institution of art which confronts us today is, like that of politics, an institution of privilege and elitism. As anarchists, we should be working to invert this situation, and is not the publication of poetry alongside political work not a step in the right direction?

Patrick
Durham

Our Literary Editor comments:

Mirrors the action of the State? The British Government is the biggest (and most liberal) patron English poetry has ever had. The Arts Council spends over £400,000 a year in subsidising literature including poetry magazines and publishing, one of our finest poets, Ted Hughes, receives a stipend as Poet Laureate, and university grants are given for its study.

The earliest poetical survivals are court poetry, and the bardic tradition is a Romantic fantasy comparable with the idea of a 'golden age' in politics. The most overtly political of the Romantic poets was Shelley, sometimes thought of as an anarchist, but his idea of revolution was a moral transformation brought about by an enlightened elite which is why he called poets 'the unacknowledged legislators of the world', and his views of a classless society are also comparable with the Marxists' which is why he has been claimed by them as 'Red Shelley'.

Since then English poetry has lost its prophetic function (in the Communist countries and cultural minorities, eg Wales, the situation is very different). As anarchists we take into account all the forces which underlie social change, but the relationship between political and artistic expression is a complex one — as is the relationship between political and cultural elites.

We explained in our last issue (as Patrick's letter reached us) why we do not publish poetry. It may be true that 'everyone is a special kind of artist' but professional writers have to accept cultural standards however determined. An anarchist society is one in which there is no State, not one with no standards.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Great French Revolution, 1789-93

Peter Kropotkin Elephant Editions (2 volumes, £3.95 each)

THIS history of the French Revolution is the only full-length contribution to historiography by Peter Kropotkin, and one of the very few by any anarchist writer. Although it was begun 100 years ago and finished nearly 80 years ago, and is therefore out of date in many points of documentation and interpretation, it remains valuable as a rare account of a critical episode in world history from the point of view of the practice of popular action and the theory of social revolution.

The original French edition was published in 1909, and so was the English translation by Nannie Dryhurst and Sasha Kropotkin. The most recent reprint of the latter appeared in the United States in 1971 and in this country in 1972, with a foreword giving a relevant extract from the biography of Kropotkin by George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic and a publisher's note giving a summary of Kropotkin's life. This new edition in the Anarchist Pocketbooks series (following similar treatment of *The Conquest of Bread* in 1985) gives a reduced reproduction of the original 600-page text in two small volumes, without the index and with a reduced list of contents, retaining Kropotkin's original preface and adding a new seven-page introduction by Alfredo Bonanno (which is badly argued and badly translated but does contain some interesting and important points), and also a nice cover design by Cliff Harper.

Kropotkin's work is inevitably dated but has never been superseded, almost all the important work on the popular aspects of the French Revolution being done by Marxists (even Daniel Guérin's 1944 book on the class struggles during the Revolution seems more Marxist than anarchist). The ideal would of course be a new edition with a detailed introduction and/or notes to bring the book up to date — the sort of thing which has in fact been done behind the Iron Curtain, but not for some reason in France — but in the absence of anything like that this is a convenient and cheap version of a very readable and instructive classic of libertarian scholarship.

NW



Lady Chatterley's Lover Hunt Emerson & DH Lawrence Knockabout (56ppA4) £4.95

TESTIFYING to the novel's literary merit at the famous obscenity trial in 1960, Dame Rebecca West opined that 'Lawrence had absolutely no sense of humour'. This cannot be said of the brilliant Hunt Emerson, who now presents the story as a strip cartoon. Emerson not only preserves most of the story line, but also restates in picture form the point Lawrence made in words, about 'sex as a natural and vital thing'. In the love scenes he also manages to convey some of the lyricism, a quality not often found in Emerson's work. But there is no shortage of laughter; Emerson's zany imagination and amazingly comic line are added into the story, making it magnificent fun. Anyone who has been put off the genre by tedious strip versions of books should read this one to discover how the job should be done. Magnificent.

DR

Against All War

Fifty Years of *Peace News*, 1936-1986
By Albert Beale (*Peace News*, £1.50)

Articles of Peace

Celebrating Fifty Years of *Peace News*
Edited by Gail Chester and Andrew Rigby (Prism Press, £4.95)

THE fiftieth anniversary of *Peace News* — which was marked by a long article in *Freedom* last June — was celebrated by a special issue of *Peace News* on 6 June which contained interesting articles by Albert Beale, Dennis Gould, and Diana Shelley; it has also been commemorated in a more permanent form by these two separate publications, a short history of and a longer symposium about the paper.

Against All War is a 64-page paperback booklet by Albert Beale, the main London contact of the paper since it moved to Nottingham in 1974, consisting of a brief narrative, rather hastily and clumsily produced, largely derived from previous accounts by Harry Mister (the latest in Housmans *Peace Diary* 1986) and by Roger Moody and Albert Beale himself, partly revised in the light of comments by other people involved in various ways at various times. It overlaps to some extent with Andrew Rigby's introductory chapter in *Articles of Peace*, which is a 192-page paperback book collecting nine articles on various aspects of the paper's work.

The libertarian tendencies of *Peace News*, and especially the shift towards anarchism during the 1960s, are rather underplayed by Albert Beale (although he was involved in the process) but are emphasised by Andrew Rigby, who describes

its eventual ideological position as 'anarcho-pacifism'. The other chapters in the symposium take up particular implications of this important point, that the paper's and the movement's opposition to war came to involve opposition to the state. Michael Randle and Diana Shelley describe developments in the paper's interests and policies; Howard Clark discusses nonviolent defence; Tom Woodhouse discusses economic implications (especially cooperatives and collectives); Andrew Rigby discusses social implications (especially communities and communes); Chris Jones discusses political implications (especially the Green movement); Lesley Mair discusses feminist implications; and Geoffrey Ostergaard discusses national liberation and development (especially the relevance of Gandhism).

There are also an introduction by Meg Beresford and an afterword by Petra Kelly, neither strictly relevant to the subject, but the former well worth reading in its own right as an autobiographical account of a lifelong relationship with pacifism. Both publications are illustrated, neither very well.

There is a great deal of interesting material here for anyone concerned with the past history and present position of pacifism — and indeed of anarchism, even though there is little recognition of the formal anarchist movement. What is missing, however, is a clear sense of the developing role of *Peace News*, of its connection with the rest of the media and with the peace movement, and of its place in society at large. And there is little hint of self-criticism or realisation of the steady deterioration in the quality and influence of the paper.

NW

Dolgoff Rides Again

Fragments: A Memoir
Sam Dolgoff
Refract Publications (£6)

IN the introduction to this thoroughly bad book, the author asks the reader to take into account his great age — 83 — and that ‘the “remembrance of things past” is not always unfailingly correct’. He also warns us that his book ‘is not a systematic work. I have recalled my experiences and impressions as they occurred to me.’ Fair enough. But in that case why did not his ‘friend and comrade’ Paul Avrich, who suggested that he should write his memoirs, or his anarchist publishers, Refract Press of Cambridge (Cienfuegos Press in disguise?) help him at least to get the factual material right?

The best treatment for this book might have been to ignore it, but for the fact that it is presented as the ‘personal recollections drawn from a lifetime of struggle in the cause of anarchism’ by the editor and author of works on the writings of Bakunin, on the Spanish Collectives, on the Cuban Revolution, and a number of pamphlets. It is a shame that he should conclude his life’s work with this rambling collection of reminiscences which, with few exceptions, concentrates on the political frailty of his ex-comrades. As a result Sam Dolgoff emerges the real Simon Pure anarchist, or does he? Well, not quite. Right at the end in the Conclusions — significantly, the shortest section of the book, occupying less than half a page — he sums it all up in one sentence: ‘I am only too aware of my own shortcomings, but I have been able to bear up under such circumstances because people afraid to act because they might make a mistake will never do anything — and that would be the biggest mistake of all.’

If one is writing one’s autobiography, it is surely not enough to limit one’s self-criticism to one sentence! I have searched in vain in these *Fragments* for what I would call *action* as opposed to *propaganda*. Dolgoff describes himself somewhere as ‘a bit of a rabble rouser’, but this does not make him into an activist any more than when he ‘like Rocker, and by far the bulk of the anarchist movement who had opposed World War I ... agreed that we must support the war against the Nazi fascists and their allies and this included the Spanish refugees in France’. What did *he* do, other than use words? He didn’t (unlike Kropotkin who supported the First World War and re-

gretted being unfit to take up arms) join the ‘struggle against Nazi fascism’ in 1939 — indeed not even when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour suddenly made Roosevelt & Co decide that the war in Europe was part of their struggle for world supremacy. Dolgoff the man of action cannot ‘understand how intellectuals such as John Hewetson, the liberal academic George Woodcock and the London *Freedom* group, not to speak of the “pure” anarchists (which included Marcus Graham, editor of the defunct anarchist journal *Man!*) could oppose the war’.

John Hewetson did three prison terms for his opposition to the war and Philip Sansom and John Olday two, and one has only to go through the files of *War Commentary* to realise how many comrades paid with their liberty for opposing the war with words and their persons. What did Sam Dolgoff, the man of action who cannot understand why these comrades didn’t join the mass slaughter, do in 1939? He can’t plead his great age. In 1939 he was a fit 36-year-old ‘activist’ who ‘together with Rudolf Rocker, Gregory Maximoff, and by far the bulk of the anarchist movement who had resolutely opposed World War I, now felt that the very existence of what was left of civilization depended on the decisive military defeat of the fascist barbarian hordes’ (page 1; my previous quotation on the subject was from page 112, and I have given them both as evidence of the need for a conscientious editor/publisher). Dolgoff goes on to state: ‘We had to fight fascism on condition that nobody profited by the war, that social justice must simultaneously accompany the defeat of fascism’ — followed by more blah blah.

He was even younger in 1936, when the military uprising set off what he religiously calls ‘the Civil War and Revolution’ in Spain. Did comrade Sam, the activist, pick-up-his-musket and join the fight? Not at all. Like the despised ‘purist’, ‘quietist’, ‘utopian’ anarchists, who are the target of his miserable *Memoir*, he picked up his pen to defend his Spanish comrades.

I do not propose to analyse Dolgoff’s arguments and references in any detail, but I can only judge the value and accuracy of his *Memoir* by his references to people and events about which I have personal knowledge. For instance, the section on the Libertarian Book Club, in which he includes himself as one of the founders, deals with the problems of pub-

lishing and distributing the Club’s first title: Voline’s *The Unknown Revolution*. He writes: ‘Since commercial publishers rejected the manuscript, the book club collected enough money to publish it themselves.’ No mention is made of the fact that the two-volume edition was printed by Freedom Press at Express Printers here in Angel Alley, and that half the edition was paid for and carried the imprint of FP. The same arrangement made possible the publication of another Club title, Eltzbacher’s *Anarchism*. All the ‘proof reading, layout, dust-jacket design for the three volumes were done here at Freedom Press. How forgetful of comrade Dolgoff and his publisher!

At this point I must declare an interest in that the longest section — a mere seven pages — is headed ‘Controversy: Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution’ which refers to an exchange between Sam Dolgoff and myself in the columns of *Freedom* (22 November 1975 — 21 February 1976), sparked off by his review of Carlos Semprun Maura’s *Revolution et Contre-Revolution in Espagne*. I attempted in these articles to counter Dolgoff’s arguments by pointing out, amongst other things, that Dolgoff often quoted out of context, as well as rewriting, what somebody had to say on a particular topic, so that it fitted nicely into what he wanted them to say.

I cannot make allowances for age — we are both old — as he was rewriting Leval, Peirats and myself ten years ago and is still as dishonest in deforming what others write as any seasoned politician. For instance, he quotes from Abel Paz (‘who fought in the Revolution’) ‘his eye-witness account’ *Durruti: the People Armed* (pp224-5), telling ‘how Durruti, always alert to the dangers of bureaucracy, investigated’. All the stuff about ‘who fought in the revolution’, ‘in his eye witness account’ refer to Paz and are irrelevant to what Durruti had to say — but vital for ‘rabble rousers’ like Dolgoff. Even more significantly, Dolgoff didn’t say that the piece he was quoting from Durruti via Paz referred to a statement made by Durruti in August 1936 — that is, before the CNT-FAI had even entered the central government! In August *revolution* was still a reality.

Another example of Dolgoff’s intellectual dishonesty. I wrote in the article in *Freedom* on the New Bureaucrats (27 December 1975):

The decision to join the Popular Front in government resulted in another bureaucracy, springing up,

much larger, more sinister and dangerous for it extended to every level in all the institutions of local and national government. When, for instance, the civil guards and the assault guards were disbanded in Catalonia in the first days they were replaced by ‘patrullas de control’ whose role was to maintain order, and this 700 strong corps was manned by 325 nominees of the CNT, 145 of the UGT etc., and in their turn were controlled by a Central *Comite* of Patrols consisting of 11 Section delegates of whom 4 were from the CNT, 3 from the UGT etc., and a CNTer, Jose Asena, was the Secretary General. This is only one of the hundreds of other examples that could be given to build up a picture of bureaucracy not of professionals such as the Civil Service might but of a politicised bureaucracy which though appointed by the various organisations and parties (one wonders how the appointment of the CNT nominees was made) received its orders from the Government.

This is Dolgoff’s summary of the above (page 122):

The replacement of the brutal professional police, the Civil Assault Guards, far from being as Richards contends an ‘... example of a politicized bureaucracy,’ constitutes one of the truly great achievements of the revolution. His own evidence contradicts his charge that the patrols received orders from the

government. The patrols were chosen not by the government but by the people themselves: ‘various organizations and parties, CNT-FAI, UGT etc.’ (Richards)

And Peirats fares no better. Dolgoff (page 124) writes:

Richards ignores a most revealing passage in Peirats’ *Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution* (English translation p.188): ‘We all understand perfectly that leading to the period of collaboration was a chain of events that placed the CNT in a helpless situation ... the only alternative of those who consistently opposed collaboration with the government ... was a *heroic defeat* ... they could offer no solution that would simultaneously preserve victory in the war against fascism; progress in the revolution’ etc ...

That ‘revealing passage’, by the substitution of dots for Peirats’ significant conclusions, is yet another example of Dolgoff’s intellectual bankruptcy. This is what Peirats wrote between ‘helpless situation’ and ‘heroic defeat’:

I believe this process is common to all the great revolutions of history. If a thorough analysis of the process were to be made, the idea of a revolution itself might be brought into question.

From a distance of twenty years, I believe that those of us who consistently opposed collaboration with the government had as our only alternative a principled, heroic defeat.

Apart from Peirats’ interesting reflections on revolution as such which Dolgoff does not consider relevant, he refers to ‘those of us who consistently opposed collaboration’ thus making his position clear. Dolgoff rewrites the whole passage, leaving out Peirats’ personal commitment, or his reference to a ‘principled’ heroic defeat. One begins to wonder from reading this book whether Dolgoff has ever heard of the word.

This self-styled anarchist (who in recent years has been calling himself by other names — see *The Match!*) supports some capitalist wars; fifty years after the events of Spain still thinks that anarchist Ministers in the government was OK; has nothing but contempt for anarchist ‘affinity groups’ (in spite of the fact that the whole basis of the FAI in Spain was the affinity group!), and has even invented a word ‘groupsicle’ to describe them; has no time for Murray Bookchin’s ‘view that the free society is unattainable without abundance’. For Dolgoff, ‘abundance, far from promoting the Social Revolution, leads rather to the bourgeoisification of the proletariat, making it the staunchest supporter of the status quo’. Most anarchists would agree with him, but also with Bookchin, because unlike Dolgoff we don’t believe that starving people will make the revolution: they will follow *anybody* who promises to fill their bellies — and not surprisingly, comrade Dolgoff! Or are you still a partisan of that long discredited view that ‘The worse things are, the better they will be’?

VR

