

DESTRUCTION of the Sarawak rain forest has been slowed down by direct action of the forest inhabitants. The Dayaks have expressed concern about habitat destruction since logging started. They have appealed to the timber companies, which ignored them, to the Sarawak state government (responsible for issuing logging licences), which also ignored them, and to the Malaysian federal government, which made vague promises to discuss the matter with state officials.

About one third of Sarawak forests have already been destroyed, and despite appeals not only from Dayaks but from environmentalist organisations, logging quotas are increased annually.

Early this year the Penan, a Dyak tribe, issued an ultimatum to the Sarawak government:

Stop destroying the forest or we will be forced to protect it. The forest is our livelihood. We have lived here before any of you outsiders came. We fished in clean rivers and hunted in the jungle. We made our sago meat and ate fruit of the trees. Our life was not easy, but we lived in content. Now the logging companies turn rivers into muddy steams and the jungle into devastation. The fish cannot survive in dirty rivers and wild animals will not live in devastated forest.

You took advantage of our trusting nature and cheated us into unfair deals. You take away our livelihood and threaten our very lives. You make our people discontent. We

want our ancestral land, the land we live off, back. We can use it in a wiser way. When you come to us, come as guests, with respect.

It was ignored. What, after all, could nomadic hunter-gatherers do against the technica might of timber companies?

What they in fact did was to surround a logging camp and prevent the movement of lorries by blockading the forest road. The drivers had no compunction about habitat destruction but drew the line at running down women and children. Work stopped, and seeing the success of the operation other Dayak tribes imitated it. Work has now stopped entirely at 30 camps. The action is supported by all sorts of organisations throughout Sarawak and Malaysia.

In June, the Chief Minister of Sarawak set up a committee 'to find out the exact needs of the Penan'.

As a supplement to local action, it is requested that letters be sent from other places, urging the withdrawal of logging licences on tribal land. The address to write to is:

YAB Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarawak, The CM's Office, 93502 Kuching, Sarawak, East Malaysia.

Messages may also be sent to:

YAB Dato Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, The PM's Office, Jalan Dato Onn, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Please send copies of correspondence to the international co-ordinators:

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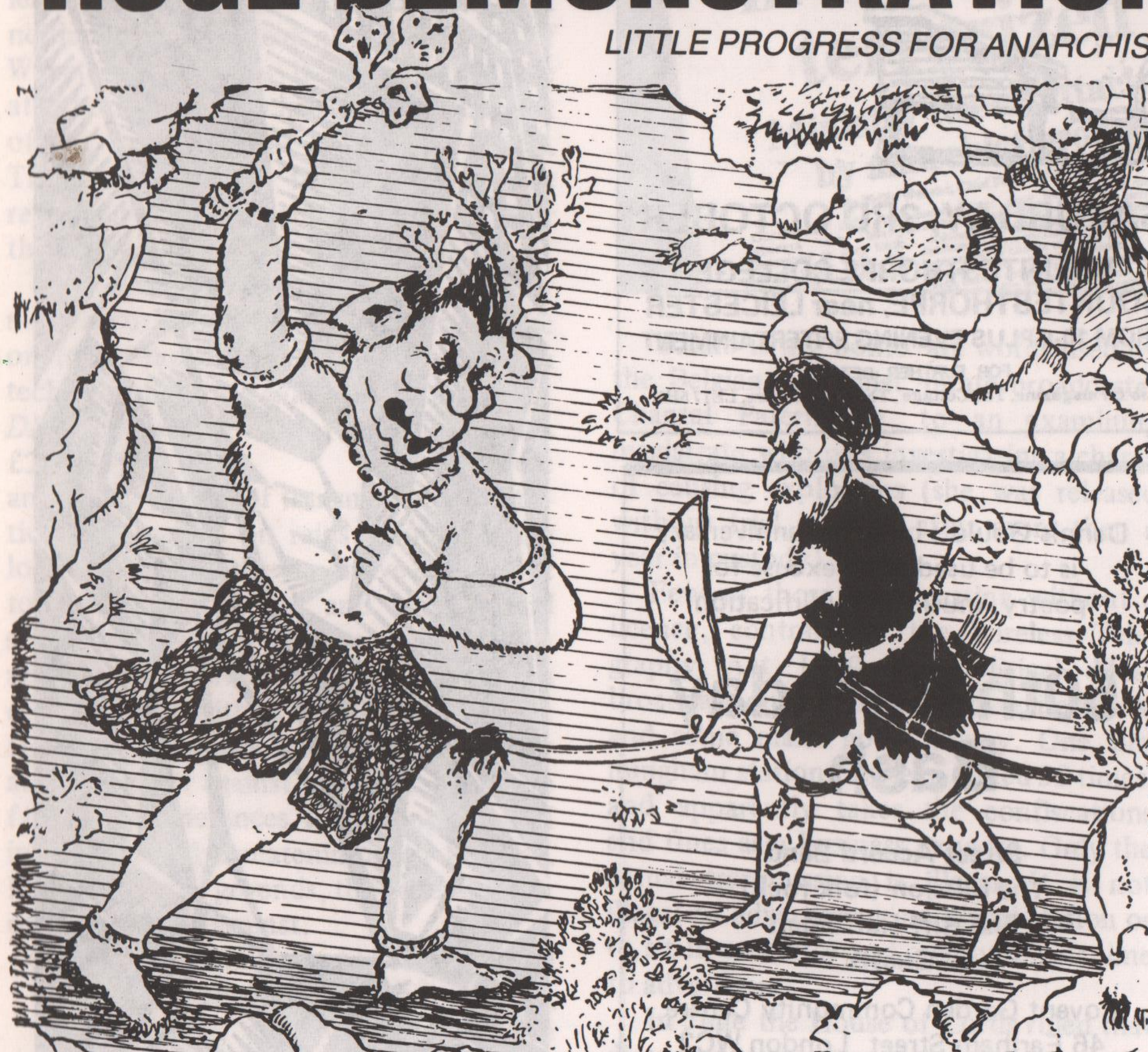
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HUGE DEMONSTRATION IN TEHRAN

LITTLE PROGRESS FOR ANARCHISM



Rustem battles with the White Demon, from a 16th-century Persian manuscript.

BEING at the centre of progressive world forces can be wearing. With Imam Khomeini winding the ratchet of excitement and the conspiracies of the heretics and godless playing along, it can become exhausting.

Events in the Middle East must be a source of frustration and distress to any reasonable minded person. Unfortunately, given the historical record of humanity, we can't be surprised. The motives of the principals, Iran, Iraq, Saudi and USA, are apparent. These are the collective nouns for gangs of self-righteous, paranoid megalomaniacs, with vested economic and political problems. Manipulating populations of mixed loyalties, external distractions are useful. War is the health of States.

The Iranian theocracy has problems (those of the other 'nations' are left to other informants). These are not overwhelmingly the apparent ones of international isolation and a bogged-down war. These are part of the game. When

you are right, it doesn't matter if everybody else is wrong, this only confirms your rightness. 'French folly [about the diplomatic row] clearly shows the weakness of our enemies, how low they are prepared to stoop to inflict a blow, however ineffectual, against the Islamic Republic. They are unintentionally telling the world Iran is a great and mighty power in the Middle East.' (*Jumhur Islami* — Tehran newspaper.) Self-appointed anarchists will recognise the feeling.

The war can be kept going indefinitely. The losses of young men are horrendous to their families and to outsiders, but they do have their martyrdom and the birth rate can keep up. The flow to the Basij ('volunteers') will soon be of post-revolution children who know no other world. The supposed shortage of weapons can be by-passed, as the world knows by now, providing some Iraqi and American motives. This weeks demonstrations in Tehran had enough AK47's waved around to launch a major new offensive.

Even the economic problems of a Third World country, based on one export, with transport problems and a world glut, are not without their compensations. Orthodox economic activity has all but collapsed, which means that production, distribution and exchange is in the hands of the state. In practice, this means food rationing through the local mosque, which is a useful form of social control. The working class had little of the pre-revolutionary glitter anyway.

There is resentment and opposition, but it tends to stay at the traditional level of grousing. There are a number of more or less organised tendencies. The Mojehedin ticks over, mainly in exile. There's an occasional bombing. They claimed the taking over of two Pasdaran (revolutionary militia) stations in Baneh, in the north-west, recently. Although they have effectively cornered the market in progressive (ie. non-royalist) opposition, they have image problems. This is partly the fault of their leadership (Rajavi has his own messianic tendencies), and the Iraqi help too apparent. Under this, there is a healthy mistrust of their motives. Iranis have learned to be cynical about promises of freedom, especially in the name of Islam. The Royalists seem limited to traditional kings in exile, with local misty-eyed nostalgia. In the regions, the Kurds, as ever, ferment. Those in Iranian territory, together with the remnants of the marxist Fedayin, maintain an active wasps' nest. In Iraqi territory, they take Iranian aid, with clearer vision than last time. There is a lot of toing and froing across the Turkish border.

The regime's problem is in sorting itself out. It has, for the moment, reasonably effective internal control. It can play its foreign affairs as it likes, gaining sympathy from the dispossessed in moslem countries. It is not very embarrassed by failing to deliver the promised war victory by New Year (European end of March). The Army has been side-lined — pre-empted by the Pasdaran, which is now expanding its naval capabilities. (The Great Satan can be humiliated with a simple mine and a small boat with a nippy outboard motor and an RPG7 could take out a frigate.) The external

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DEMONSTRATION IN TEHRAN
continued from front page

opposition is neutralised by lack of focus, emigre squabbling and an occasional murder.

The problem is to take advantage whilst the going is good. The focus is diffused while everybody waits for the Supreme Guide's promotion to glory. Hence the current frenzy. They have to present a united front and purpose before Allah intervenes... And the regime is still deeply split. Montazeri, broadly the candidate of the traditional merchant 'bazaari' interests, was compromised in the American/Israeli dealings and has been demoted from Heir Apparent. As usual, Rafsanjani, broadly fundamentalist front man, but seen by the Americans, arms dealers and so on, as a pragmatist, makes progress. He still has the problem of his relatively low religious status, he doesn't rate 'ayatollah', but versatility has never been his weak point.

Which brings us to this week and Mecca. The corrupt Saudis have finally revealed themselves and massacred god's pilgrims. (Known locally as 'moslems'. Riff-raff, pretenders and hypocrites, like the Sunni 90% of the faith, don't receive the title.) We now have a glorious distraction, as the forces of Shaitan gibber and gesticulate all around. This leads to spontaneous demonstrations, said to be a million in Tehran, but somehow it doesn't seem like the old days.

Amidst this grand drama we have our usual natural tragedies. Heavy rain in the mountains caused a flash flood in the northern suburbs of Tehran. A partially built covered section of the bazaar in Shemiran collapsed, killing over a hundred. Popular morale has sunk far enough to blame the regime.

Meanwhile, anarchism has made little progress.

Ali

FREEDOM

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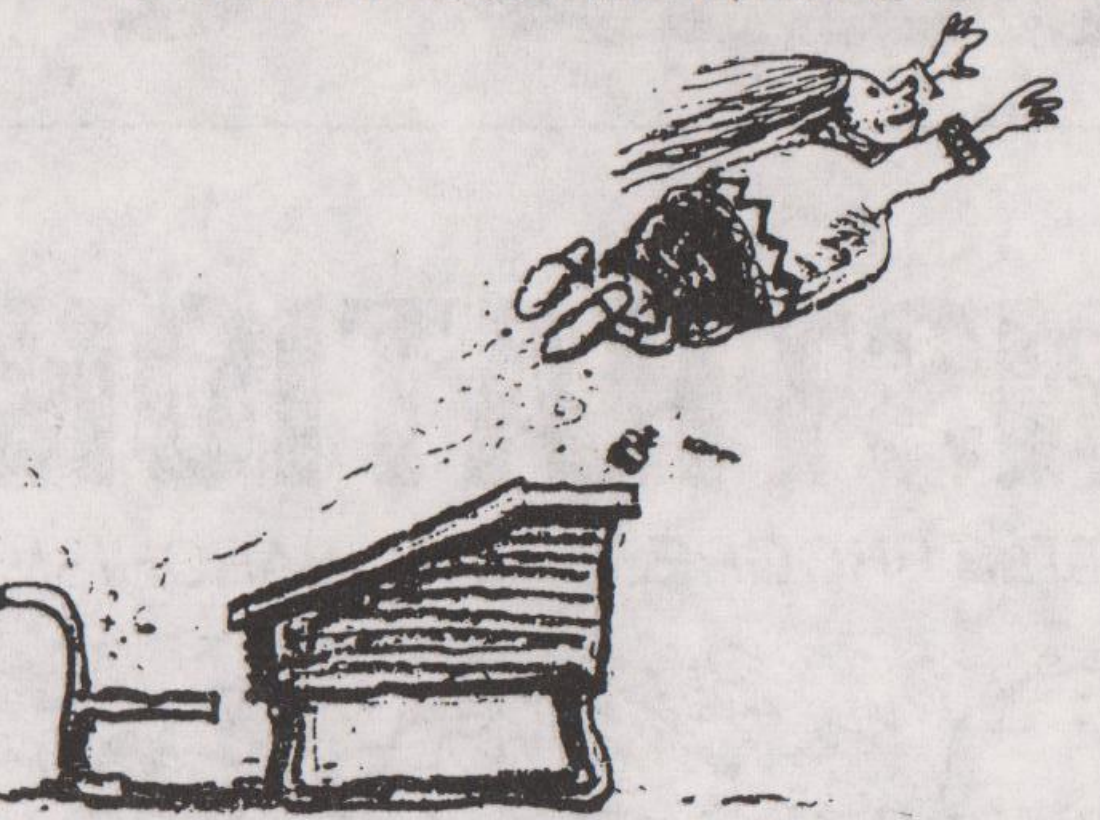
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In September 1987 the second International Anarchist Meeting will be held in the Netherlands. For more information write to: I.A.B./S.W.P.
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JEWISH ANARCHIST GROUP

Newly formed group welcomes new members to discuss our heritage and debate about where we stand as Jews and anarchists. It is hoped to form a network of contacts and organise activities. Interested? Contact: Jewish Anarchist Group, Box ASS, 52 Call Lane, Leeds 1.

ANARCHY

A Graphic Guide
Written and Illustrated by
Clifford Harper



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Pirates

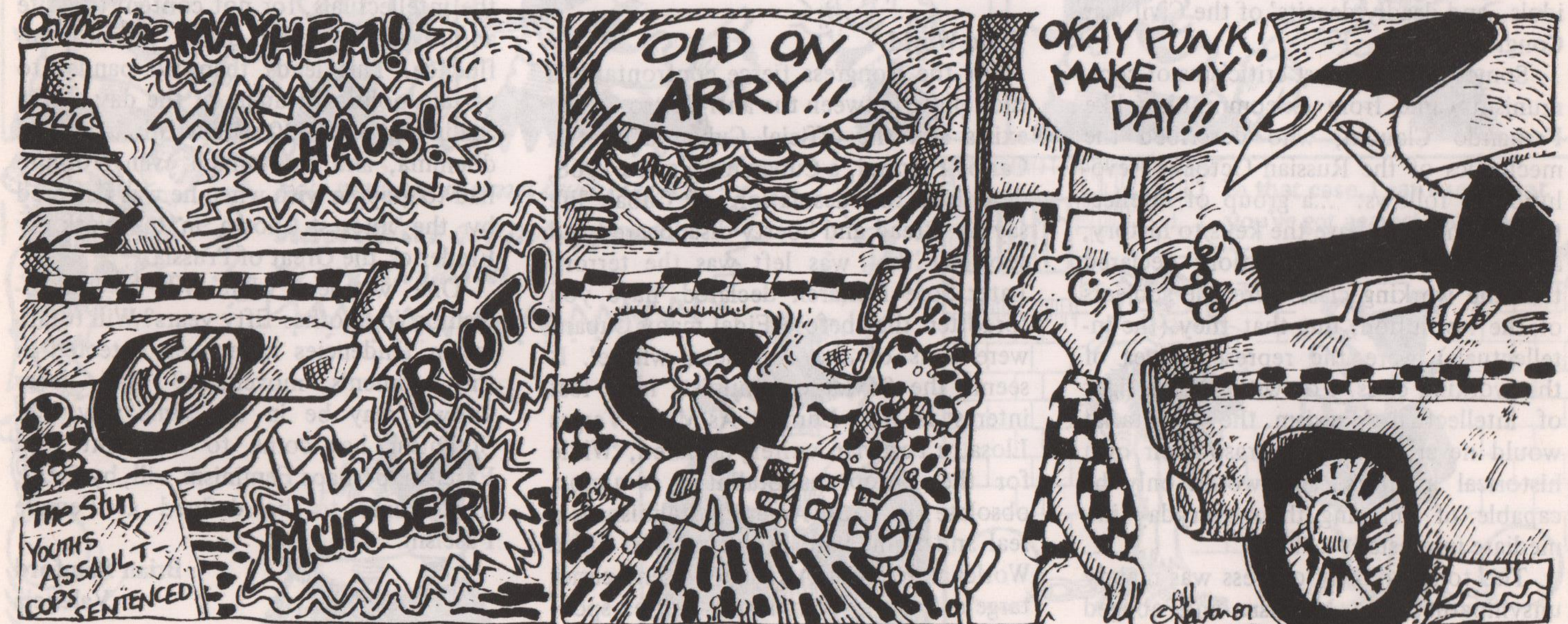
THE TIMES on 28 July 1987 carried the striking front page headline, 'Pirate radio investigators terrorized: Ministry teams attacked by anarchist groups'.

The article was credited to Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent, and based on a 'leak' (i.e. a press release) from the Department of Trade and Industry. DTI inspectors have been violently attacked on two occasions, but neither in the DTI leak nor in the body of Webster's article is it alleged that the attackers were anarchist groups; that part of the lurid headline is pure invention. Think again if you thought *The Times* remained a sober paper of record after the Murdoch takeover.

The *Daily Telegraph* had a slightly more accurate headline, 'Anarchists advise on terror tactics'. The advice comes in a technical book, *Radio is my bomb; A DIY manual for Pirates* (Hooligan Press £2.40). *

Somewhere among the details of transmitter construction is a section on raids, about posting lookouts, hiding the expensive equipment to prevent forfeiture, and so on. And somewhere within this section is a bit about confrontation, 'a good trick if you can get away with it'. Conforming to the Hooligan Press rule of commending any and every act against the state, there are favourable references to beating up DTI inspectors and threatening their families. But on tactical grounds, the general tenor of the advice is against.

The problem is that in future you'll have to change your station name, frequency, even your radio voice and they'll always be on your trail... Remember, they have the entire state apparatus backing them up, any form of direct attack should therefore be anonymous and never spoken of or boasted about later, or before hahahahahahahah [sic].



'Radio is my bomb' are words used by the Belgian, anarchist, pirate broadcaster Chantal Paternostre, to an examining magistrate who was investigating a charge of causing explosions (she was released without trial in 1986 after more than a year in custody).

Few of those broadcasting without a licence, contrary to the Wireless Telegraphy Act 1949, are political. Most broadcast only music and advertisements, and some make good money. One Birmingham station has been raided 30 times, and apparently takes the confiscations and fines as a business expense. Only the actual transmission is illegal. It is not illegal to advertise on an illegal station or to sit in an office and openly sell air time to advertisers.

In June the House of Lords ruled that discs and tapes are not broadcasting apparatus within the meaning of the Act and ordered the DTI to return 310 such items to a radio pirate in Liverpool.

During 1986 there were estimated to be 84 unlicensed stations broadcasting, inspectors made either 203 or 218 raids

(our sources disagree), and there were three instances of physical resistance. Figures for the first half of 1987 are 115 stations, 205 raids, and seven physical confrontations, two of which were violent attacks.

None of the defenders or attackers have been publicly identified and none of their opinions are known (so much for the *Times* headline). Nor is it known why someone at the DTI decided to 'leak' this non-secret information now.

Late last year a proposal to give licences to 21 'Community Radio' stations was published then mysteriously withdrawn, indicating a difference of opinion between two power centres within the DTI. We guess the present 'leak' is another symptom of the same dispute.

* If you buy *Radio is my bomb* by post from Freedom Bookshop, please add as a contribution to postage 24p in the UK or 48p elsewhere. We asked a technically competent comrade to review the book for *Freedom* and will publish the review whenever it arrives.

SPAIN

Intellectual Fashion Show

FASHIONS are almost as prevalent in the realm of ideas as they are in the rag trade. While Madrid and Barcelona have gained a reputation in the latter, Valencia with its recent 'Congress of Intellectuals and Artists' has made a bid at the former.

The occasion was to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the 'Congress of Anti-Fascist Intellectuals' held during the Spanish Civil War in July 1937. At that Congress a nasty attack had been made upon André Gide, the French writer and libertarian, for his criticisms of Stalinism in Russia following a visit there. His view contrasted with the fashionable fad of many left-wing intellectuals of the time, most of whom were in a state of rapture about the Soviet system.

Fashions change and Octavio Paz, the Mexican writer, in his opening address, condemned the attacks on Gide by the Communists in 1937 as well as the silence of others. By this, he said, the Congress of 1937 had helped to 'petrify the revolution'.

Deadly Deceits

Working people distrust intellectuals because viewed from the factory floor they seem to have an easy living. But their desire to influence events can often be more dangerous than their lazy lifestyle. They can and sometimes do manufacture lies. Some lie for the Government and produce an ideology justifying the ruling class; others spend their lives trying to demonstrate the virtues of some cause or party.

Stalinism is unfashionable in Europe, and this year's Congress, in the words of its manifesto, could safely devote itself to studying the 'truths, half-truths, false idols...and deadly deceits' of the Civil War Congress.

Some of the clearest criticisms of communism came from ex-communists like Fernando Claudin, who described the mechanics of the Russian October Revolution as follows: '...a group of intellectuals claiming to have the keys to history, and therefore the revolution; declared that the working class were the subjects of the revolution, but that they (the intellectuals) were the representatives of the working class. For without the light of intellectual Marxism the proletariat would never be able to grasp their own historical interests, and would only be capable of pursuing their everyday immediate interests.'

The tone of the Congress was mainly unsympathetic to Marxism and obliged

José Saramago, a Portuguese writer, to say '...this is, I think, an anti-Marxist Congress' which 'has condemned the intellectual to the archives of history'. Yet it is difficult to disagree with Octavio Paz when he says elsewhere about 'post revolutionary' Russia: 'the new society is not, and never will be, socialist. Nor is it, as some intellectuals on the left claim, a degenerated Workers' State, and still less is it a society in transit to socialism. It is a new form of material, political and economic domination, more complete and more despicable than that of oligarchic capitalism. It is a despotism more cruel than the traditional dictatorships.'

With so many self-evident practical disasters scattered around, the Marxist intellectuals have to work overtime to rescue Marxist theory from its practical consequences. The usual line put up by the academic Marxists is that the practitioners of the faith called communism, have failed to perform the doctrine as it is preached.

This is just moral cowardice. I much prefer the universal thug theory represented by a character in the book by Manuel Vazquez Montalban (a Congress organiser and himself a member of the Catalan Communist Party) called *Murder On The Central Committee*; this character said quite frankly as I recall — 'I accept responsibility for all Stalin's crimes; the Purges; the transportations; the millions eliminated; the Soviet secret police etc, because I want all my crimes to be big ones which carry the weight of history within them.'

This is perhaps what sets the Marxist aside from the rest of the human race, engaged as we are in our ordinary tin-pot transgressions. Above all the Marxist craves to be a shit on a grand scale.

Third World

At the Congress fierce confrontations took place between the anti-Castro Cuban exiles and the official Cuban delegates. Carlos Franqui, a Cuban exile since 1968, described the desolation of Cuban life saying 'Bread and liberty disappeared and soon all that was left was the terror'. Later Jose Picharch declared 'have you forgotten that before Fidel many Cubans were sons of the American whore'. It seems the Soviet communists have lost interest in West Europe. As Mario Vargas Llosa, a Peruvian writer, declared, 'While for the Europeans Stalinism is almost obsolete, in Latin America Stalinism is a real and immediate problem.' The Third World and South Africa represent easier targets for the communist parties spon-

sored by Moscow. In the Third World, according to Fawaz Traboulsi, a Lebanese, 'many intellectuals have become Marxists because they are anti-imperialists' and '...democrats'.

While the West European working class has never been enthralled by communism, the Soviets seem to have cornered the market in anti-imperialism in the poorer countries. Though, as so often with Marxism, one wonders if this merely means they have won over the outspoken intellectuals rather than made inroads with the workers and peasants.

Speaking on Latin America, Carlos Franqui demonstrated his concern when he argued: 'We say no to the old interventionism', but 'don't let us turn to Soviet interventionism. Bolivar and Martin gave us a beautiful word: Revolution. Revolution for them meant liberty, independence, democracy, and unity throughout Latin America. But for the Russians, who today have the monopoly in World Revolution, this means for us to be a poor province of Moscow, a gulag with all the barbarian tyranny and misery that goes with it. It is with the peoples of the Communist World that we should ally ourselves, not with their masters and exploiters.'

Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who was an anarchist activist in the Paris conflicts in 1968, insisted on the independence of the intellectuals: 'The independence of the intellectuals is only possible if we condemn both Stalinist methods (in reference to the assassination of Yoyes by ETA), and also the Francoists in the Spanish police'. He continued 'The liberty of Spanish intellectuals is attained by saying no to ETA, and also no to political torture'.

Independence is a knotty problem for the intellectuals, for not content to write about events, they desire political influence. This leads them to pander to certain political leaders of the day — like Stalin in the 1930's. Yet this is an old dilemma, and one which even Voltaire had to grapple with when he was flattered by the interest shown in his work by Frederick the Great of Prussia.

One wonders what will be out-of-fashion in another fifty years? Will totalitarian tendencies have been detected in the women's movement? One never knows, may be in the same way that Stalinism has come to represent Red Fascism, perhaps Feminism will, by 2037, have come to be defined as Female Fascism.

Brian Bamford
Valencia

Anarchism kills Communism

I slam-danced my way into anarchism, courtesy of punk rock. Anarcho-punk, above all, was idealistic: pacifist, vegetarian, pro-animal liberation. It placed its faith in the innate 'goodness' of people and their ability to co-operate without authority.

Bands such as Crass worked totally outside the music industry, selling huge amounts of their cheaply priced, self-produced records; playing only benefit gigs at squatted venues, thus refusing to use greedy promoters and rip-off clubs. In the euphoria of a twenty-band free festival at the squatted Zig-Zag club, fuelled by liberated ale, many of us believed anarchy was just around the corner. Reality, however, was lurking there.

There had been a lot of grand talk about changing the world by changing our own lives. And many people, like a previous generation of confused rebels, did just that; by 'turning on, tuning in and dropping out'.

Like hippydom, punk tried, and failed, to create in the here and now a lasting alternative culture opposed to the system. It failed, I reckon, through misunderstanding human nature. I also believe the same error is common throughout most anarchist thought; we should change our lives, but in a somewhat different manner!

Most anarchists, I'm sure, would accept that anarchism is about individual liberty. They usually express it something like this: 'Everyone has the right to do whatever they want, as long as they harm nobody, and respect the right of everyone else to do likewise.'

Nonsense! Freedom is absolute. It has no morality. Everyone has the 'right' to do anything (or if you prefer, no-one has the 'right' to do anything). Your boss has the 'right' to exploit you, and you have the 'right' to steal from him or kill him. You have the 'right' to produce, sell or enjoy pornography, sell or shoot smack, rape, murder — whatever takes your fancy — and everyone else has an equal 'right' to protect themselves from you. You have the 'right' to do anything you can get away with.

So hate the rich and powerful by all means, but *learn* from them. You can have anything they have if you go out and take it. Stop glorying in being working class, fighting for the right to rot in a factory or office. Renounce, even, your God-given right to slave down a pit. Instead, try to emancipate yourselves using any skills you possess — become self employed, get into the arts, the entertainment industry, do a big crime ... anything.

Now to the inevitable objection that what I am proposing is going on now any-

way, that I am appealing to the same base, selfish instincts as Thatcherism ... yes, I admit I have learnt from my exploiters, but I see through their trickery too! They benefit because they understand the nature of freedom — if you are rich enough you can get away with anything.

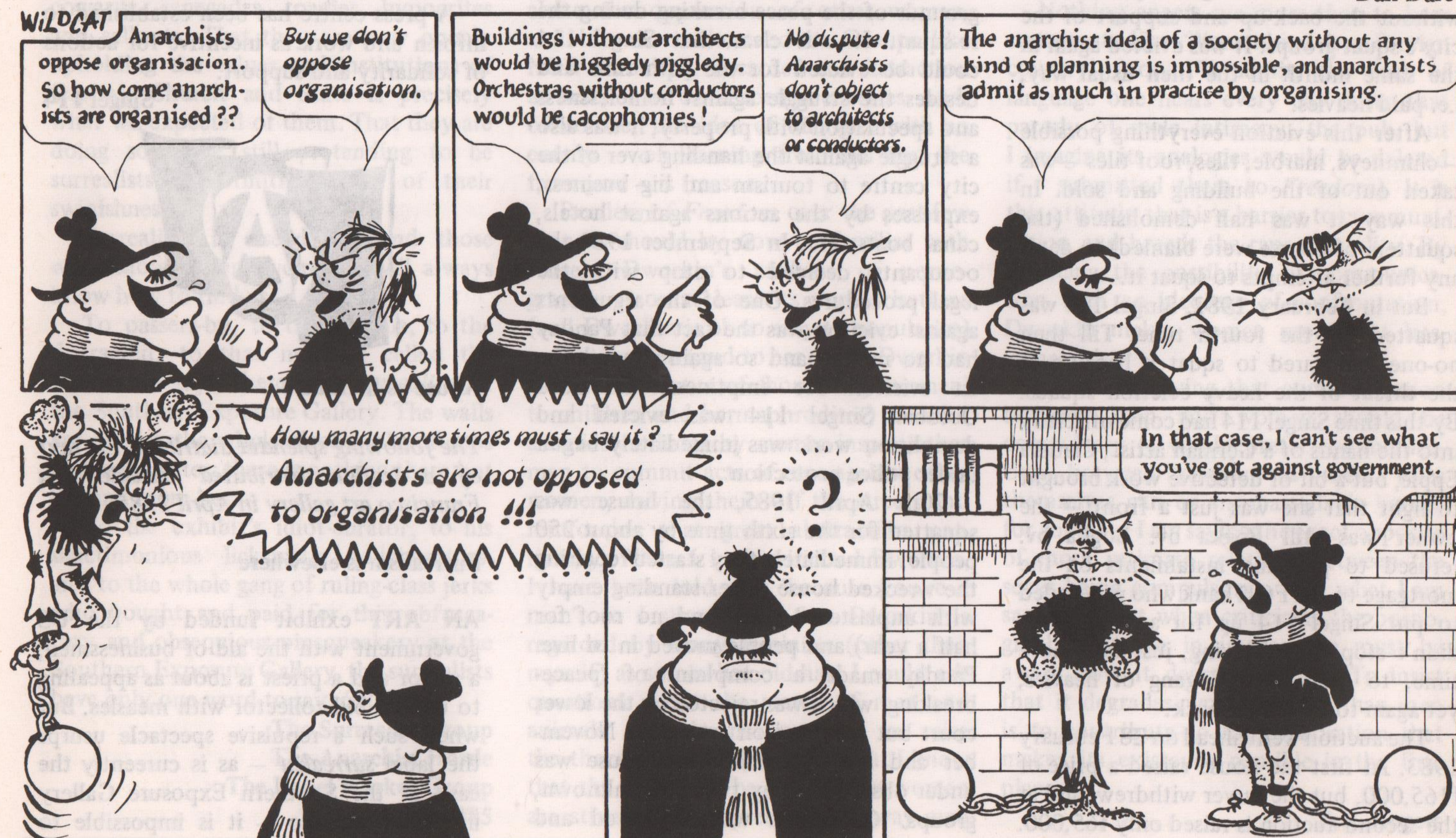
Few anarchists are conned by these (still widely held) beliefs. But we must be careful not to help our masters by retreating into a pacifist-anarchist-punk-hippy-vegan ghetto. I for one intend to stand up and fight back. I've wasted too much bloody time already!

Anarchism doesn't have to be a contradiction between reality and idealism. I recognise and rejoice in the fact that I am motivated purely by self-interest. Foster in every human being this sense of sovereignty over themselves, and the world that they alone create about them. Let them discover their complete uniqueness and independence and ... Bingo, Come on down, You've hit the jackpot ... Anarchy! For as we all know, governments and police only serve a small minority, and fully self-realised individuals will have no use for them.

This is not just one way, but the only way to achieve anarchy; if we fight for 'class interests' we fight for something greater than ourselves and will become slaves to the collectivity. And any anarchist who places faith in any form of morality or religion is a drowning kitten tied in a sack. Let us have the courage of our convictions, and state proudly that we are anarchists because we understand that there is no authority but ourselves.

We can do whatever we want!

Dan Dare



Squat in Amsterdam

SINGEL 114 is the address of a squatted building in Amsterdam, now threatened with eviction for the sixth time. It was squatted for the sixth time on 20 April 1985 after standing empty for 1½ years. The owner, EMM Panday, had no money to improve the property and no bank would finance him further.

Singel 114 has become a symbol for us: a symbol against property speculation, against city-planning, against the ever growing homelessness and failure of council and police policy, against fascist thugs paid to beat us out of our homes.

Singel 114 was first squatted in June 1977, when the owner was a notorious speculator and thug, Ronald van der Putte. He sold Singel 114 and the neighbouring house for a profit of f500,000. That June he tried to evict the house with 'heavies' but was beaten back. In December he tried again, this time with success.

February 1978 the house was squatted again. The new owner, Bogka bv., tried twice in October to evict with paid thugs and on both occasions failed. 28th November, another bunch of heavies with more experience, working on a 'no success, no pay' basis, evicted the squatters, putting two of them in hospital. (The same heavies tried to evict another well known squat, the 'Grote Keuser', but had to give up due to the 200 squatters who were waiting for them.)

The house then remained empty until June '79 when it was again squatted, but without the back-up and support of the city's squat groups. It was evicted again in the same month in the then usual way, i.e. paid heavies.

After this eviction everything possible — chimneys, marble, tiles, roof tiles — was taken out of the building and sold. In this way it was half demolished (the squatters of course were blamed) to deter any further attempts to squat it.

But in February 1982, Singel 114 was squatted for the fourth time. Till then no-one had dared to squat it because of the threat of the heavy eviction squads. By this time Singel 114 had come officially into the hands of a German artist, Claudia Eppe, but a bit of detective work brought to light that she was just a front — the owner was still Bogka bv. Bogka bv. refused to pay the instalments on the mortgage to the FGH bank who proceeded to put Singel 114 up for auction. This didn't stop Bogka trying, just one more time, to evict with a gang of heavies, yet again to be beaten back.

The auction went ahead on 28 February 1983. At first the house raised a price of f165,000, but the buyer withdrew, and at the second auction is raised only f65,000.

The new owner of Singel 114 was Citex Bussum bv. owned by Evert Maxwell Mahabiek Panday. A few days later some large gentlemen arrived, who ordered the squatters to leave and made noises about the unpleasantness of fire-bombs. Again detective work discovered that these heavies were part of the militant / militarist wing of the 'National Freedom Council for Suriname' (Panday is himself Surinamese) and that Singel 114 would perhaps be used to house mercenaries.

This threat was then taken seriously and the house barricaded. On the 15 December the house was cleared in a surprise action by riot police — the occupants thrown out of bed and their things thrown into storage containers. It seemed that part of the auction contract was that the house had to be handed over with vacant possession to the new owner (Panday) one month after the sale. The bank didn't (couldn't) do this and police support was given.

After just two days (17th December) the house was invaded by about 250 squatters who overcame and evicted a group of guards who were armed with sticks, chicken wire (for strangling), fire extinguishers, knives, dogs and a harpoon gun. The council decided not to immediately evict at the last moment.

Citex Bussim bv. pressed a charge of breaking domestic peace, the beginning of almost a year of legal struggle. In the end the auction trick was declared illegal, but the squatters could be evicted on the grounds of the peace-breaking during the re-squat. It was clear that Singel 114 could be evicted for the fifth time and besides the struggle against homelessness and speculation with property, it was also a struggle against the handing over of the city centre to tourism and big business, expresses by the actions against hotels, canal boats, etc. In September 1984 the occupants decided to stop with the legal procedures. One of the arguments against eviction was the fact that Panday had no money and so again it would be an eviction for emptiness. On 23rd October Singel 114 was evicted and demolition work was immediately begun under police protection.

20th April 1985, the house was squatted for the sixth time by about 250 people. Immediately they started repairing the wrecked house (after standing empty with unplastered walls and no roof for half a year) and people moved in to live. Panday made a complaint of 'peace-breaking' which was rejected by the lower court but accepted on appeal. In November and late December the house was under observation by two, still unknown, groups. Occupants were followed and

rumours produced an eviction 'early 1987' — all contacts can only say that they 'can't say anything'.

Mayor van Thijn, and the police, claim that 'squatters will only be evicted from Singel 114 if there are watertight guarantees' that the house will be let to tenants. We know what that means and don't believe a word of it. Much the same was said 2½ years ago, but still Singel 114 was evicted and stayed empty until we re-squatted it.

It will cost at least f700,000 to make good Singel 114 so any owner will lose money on it. But apart from the financial niceties, we now claim the house as our own. The different owners have done nothing but demolish it, split it up and use it for speculation. We have built it up, lived in it and fought against speculation, homelessness and the teams of thugs every time.

Homelessness is ever increasing — now 10% in Holland and approximately 50,000 homeless in Amsterdam. The last eviction cost the state f1 million — and us our home. The new Leegstands (empty property) Law merely accentuates the fact that the squatters are being put under even more pressure and that the repression is increasing, e.g. raids on squatted houses and cafes.

The resistance to this — the action night against eviction of Singel 114 shows clearly that the tension is mounting and people are prepared to take more risks. Two police stations were attacked: one with a fire bomb and a tear gas grenade, another with stones, paint and butyric acid (it stinks!), slogans were painted and a pi car attacked with paint bombs.

A press centre has been established to inform and work as incentive for actions of solidarity and support.

Singel 114



Abuse as literature

The following splendid diatribe is the text of a leaflet distributed outside San Francisco art gallery in April 1985.

Surrealism is elsewhere

AN ART exhibit funded by the US government with the aid of businessmen, a major and a priest is about as appealing to us as a bill-collector with measles. But when such a repulsive spectacle usurps the label *surrealist* — as is currently the case at the Southern Exposure Gallery in San Francisco — it is impossible to

allow such a contemptible fraud to go unchallenged.

We are not surprised, however, that the word *surrealism* should be increasingly subjected to such stupid and criminal abuse by confusionists of every stripe. 'Communism' long ago came to signify, for most people in the US, not a free and classless society, but rather an oppressive bureaucratic/military system. More recently we have seen self-styled 'libertarians' supporting capitalist slavery and running for President. Indeed, no emancipatory idea — and certainly no word — can remain entirely free of miserabilist degradation. But just as real communism has nothing to do with Stalinism, the real libertarianism is a synonym for anarchism and thus has nothing in common with the repressive machinations of profiteers and politicians, so surrealism remains irreconcilably subversive and revolutionary — the great cause of the unfettered imagination — and consequently has nothing to do with imbecile commercial conformism of the sort presented at the Southern Exposure Gallery.

Nor are we surprised to find, in the list of fake surrealists peddling their wares at this cheap bazaar, a few names of individuals who, some years ago, tried to insinuate themselves into the activity of the Surrealist Movement. It did not take long for us to recognise that these money-hungry crybabies were utterly lacking in the spirit of revolt; parting with them was neither sweet nor sorrowful. Their complete immersion in this cesspool of an exhibit will not help to convince us that we were wrong in regarding them as cowards, renegades, toadies, hypocrites and sellouts. That they are now openly upholding the values and institutions of Capital, Church and State is precisely what we expected of them. That they are doing so while still pretending to be surrealists is definitive proof of their swinishness.

Surrealism is elsewhere! And those who know 'where we're at' will always know how to find us!

To passers-by, to the curious, to the distracted, to that monster called the Public, we say: There is *no surrealism* at the Southern Exposure Gallery. The walls are empty; the whole place stinks of cops and holy water; there is nothing there but lies and more lies.

To the exhibit's idiot-curator, to his sanctimonious lickspittle collaborators, and to the whole gang of ruling-class jerks who bought and paid for this obfuscatory and obsequious pipsqueakery at the Southern Exposure Gallery, the surrealists have only one word to say: SHIT!

**The Surrealist Group
The Anarchist Horde
The Rebel Worker Group
April 1985**

The Right to Reply

SOME short time ago, I heard the 'founder of the Philippines' Marxist-Leninist Womens organisation's Gabriella-Juilletta Sison, speak on what she termed feminism. This was rather like being trapped in a time capsule dated 1965, as she nonchalantly advocated that women should wait until the struggle for national and social liberation ends, before attempting to liberate themselves (you tell me whether the guerrillas — big, strong, macho men that they all are, of course — will be interested in women's liberation after they no longer need the undivided support of the better half of the Philippines populus). The point was that Sison described groups like the Philippines National Organisation of Women as 'upper-class women like Mrs Aquino . . . liberal, even conservative . . . interested only in unimportant issues like pornography and prostitution (and) diverting other women away from the progressive movement'.

Given that it was these sort of attitudes that led to the formation of the Women's Liberation Movement in the UK and the US (e.g. Stokeley Carmichael's famous put-down — 'The only position for women in the Black Panthers is prone'), I imagine readers will not exactly be in accord with the sentiments expressed by Mrs Sison. The point is that she has prioritised the struggle for national and social liberation to such a degree, and entrenched it so deeply in the dogma that is part-and-parcel of her cause, that she cannot recognise her own oppression, let alone the oppression of other women, and how to understand it. Groups like NOW are simply discarded as a distraction at best, or at worst seen as enemies. And, of course, the idea of dialogue with an enemy — of learning from her and she from you — is treason.

Readers of *Freedom* over the past few months should by now be familiar with Angela Dworkin's analysis of pornography — or at least its popularisations (and Dworkin is oh so easy to popularise) — that women (and to her credit, Dworkin grants the status of 'honourary women' to children and hermaphrodites) are used as voiceless icons by men to inspire other men to commit acts of rape against other women, driving them off the streets and reinforcing that great abstraction, patriarchy. When I have criticised Dworkin, I have been told it is 'because you're a man', so I should say that Dworkin is regarded by many feminists (other than myself) as somewhat old-hat. I could ask questions about the status of men and animals used in pornography or raise the thorny issue of gay porn, but I know that the reply will be simply that women are structurally oppressed in a way men

are not. Leaving aside the adequacy of this answer in respect of some of the categories mentioned above, I must hasten to point out that no anarchist (please hurry and write to contradict me if this is not so!) is going to espouse the Marxist idea of social structures being guilty of acts of oppression, leaving the individuals that actually compose that structure blameless.

Once we grant the element of personal responsibility in all our actions — as opposed to arguing, for example, that 'Please, your Honour, I raped the woman because I was socially conditioned to do so' — the motives of those that consume porn and its effect on them does have to be considered. These people — and if I am to be chastised for attempting to interpret women's consciousness simply because I was born with testicles, I expect no interruption from such biological reductionists when meditating on the motives of my own sex — are quite pathetically uncertain about their own sexual identity. That they try to disguise this behind a mask of macho rhetoric (what has regrettably been called the 'repressed homosexuality syndrome') does nothing to refute their insecurities about female sexuality, and the isolation that accentuates their insecurities, when they turn from confronting female sexuality to pictures that don't respond to or challenge them. In terms of communication between the sexes, pornography silences and alienates both men and women.

Nothing angers me more than to hear statements like 'Womankind is a foreign country' (not, I'll admit, the sort of language one hears every day down that parody of male intimacy, the pub, but I imagine its analogies would be deleted if I submitted them to *Freedom*). It is this attitude that is a barrier to communication and breeds the rape-mentality. By repalcing the possibility of communication with an ideology of confrontation, Dworkin makes women more, not less, vulnerable.

I am not saying that communication between men and women should be compulsory (I would prefer communication between *people*, as these roles themselves can be an unassailable barrier for some) — I am saying the exact opposite of more intimate relations between the sexes being compulsory — but what I am saying is that when criticising the pornographers' trade in images, we must be aware how it degrades us all. To insist that it degrades women rather than men is to contribute to the polarisation that makes its existence possible in the first place.

P.N. Rogers

Information Technology — oppression or liberation?

TECHNOLOGY has always been a controversial issue among anarchists. Attitudes range from a whole-hearted embrace of the machine as a liberator, to advocacy of a retreat to a handicraft based society. The development of Information Technology (IT) has brought a new set of threats and promises for the creation of an anarchist society.

Some pundits have portrayed IT as if it were a driverless express train to Utopia. For example, Christopher Evans claims that 'fantastically cheap' computers will bring about universal affluence (he does not specify how) 'within the capitalist frame-work...without a revolution by the proletariat' [reference 2]. This view of IT ignores the fact that the effect of computers upon society will be determined by the aims of those who own the machines and those who write their programmes.

Established and predicted effects of IT upon certain human activities will be considered in an attempt to assess whether it will help or hinder the creation of a free society.

Computers At Work

Existing technology has made it possible for us to be liberated from eight hours per day of labouring to produce and maintain our own means of life support. The fact that the majority of people are still trapped in sterile jobs does not relate to any technical limitations of IT, but is a result of its operation within the existing capitalist system; Computers will only improve the way we work if they are employed within a co-operative ethos rather than a competitive one. Society must find the will to evolve a new social and economic structure to reflect its technological capabilities — and a good starting point would be a divorce between the work we do and our means of subsistence.

It is now possible to link many computers together and form 'networks' connecting distant locations. This development may enable everyone to work in their homes. Alvin Toffler [6] predicts that since there will be no need for people to move to new areas of work there will be an increase in community stability. This development will allow greater opportunity for community organisation and may eventually act as a force to reduce centralized power. Furthermore, since the fixed working hours of office and factory would become obsolete, work would no longer be synchronized to the clock and work schedules could be set by the worker.

Denis Pym's view is less optimistic. [3] He claims that to 'encourage distance between people and compound isolation', by adopting a home working pattern, will prevent co-operation and thus intensify and maintain the old order.

Enthusiasts of IT [2,6] have suggested that work will be made more rewarding and less demanding by the introduction of computer controls in industry. Buchan-Buchanan and Boddy [1] examined the effects of computer controls on two types of job in a biscuit factory. The 'doughman', once able to exercise skill and judgement in mixing ingredients, became a mere button-pusher as a result of computerised dough mixing. The job became repetitious and stressful. The introduction of computer controlled biscuit weighing, on the other hand, removed the task of constant weight checking and gave the 'ovensman' greater opportunity to take decisions. 'Ovensmen' reported that their work had become less stressful and more satisfying.

The vastly different effects of IT upon two sets of workers in the same factory demonstrates that work will only move towards the ideal kind (variety, meaning and control for the worker) if that is the goal of those who install and programme the computers.

Computers and Power

'The thinking machines, of course, will be owned, programmed and employed by the technocracy. They will not be our servants.' — Theodore Roszak [5].

The late Christopher Evans forecast the emergence of a more open society as a direct result of the use of computers to spread information. His argument ran like this: power in a tightly controlled state can be easily retained by the ruling clique as a result of downward information flow (ie from the government to the people). Largescale ownership of interconnected microcomputers will allow greater lateral information flow (free exchange of information between people with the same level of power) and the result will be that '...new freely communicating societies will control their own destinies'. [2]

He went on to herald the dawn of a new, more participant form of democracy — with government making policy on the basis of instant referenda conducted via computer networks.

The flaw in the assumption that IT will create a freer society is that we will only enjoy the kind of benefits Evans predicts if governments allow us to. For example, Mrs Thatcher's attitude to

consensus politics makes it likely that the Tories would use computer networks for purposes less democratic than instant referenda.

Knowledge is sometimes hoarded by quasi-masonic professional groups for economic benefit. Expert Systems are a development in IT which may undermine the power that these experts hold over us. In programming a computer system to replicate the 'know-how' of a human expert, all technical jargon is cut out and the knowledge made transparent so that it can be expressed in logical rules. In addition, multiple copies of an individual's expertise can be spread throughout society. Since this knowledge becomes more accessible and less scarce, the expert's mystique and power are diminished.

There is, however, a danger that developments in IT will merely transfer expert power to new types of expert. There is a tendency (reinforced by simplistic 'wonders of the silicon chip' items in the media) to treat the computer as an omniscient electronic guru. Joseph Weizenbaum created a computer programme, 'Eliza', which parodied a psychiatrist interviewing a patient. [7] The programme could produce fragments of dialogue but had no understanding of psychiatry or any other real world activity. In spite of these limitations, 'Eliza' received a euphoric reception. It was claimed that the programme could solve mental health problems, and Weizenbaum's secretary consulted 'Eliza' as if it had some deep insight into her life. This is an extreme example of our general tendency to surrender our judgement to the computer as a result of the mystique it acquires through our lack of understanding.

Since most of the population have little knowledge about how a computer works, or what its true capabilities are, society is heavily dependent upon a small group of designers and programmers for its access to IT. This group, since they are the only initiates in the language of computer culture, constitute the priesthood of the information age. While computers remain a mystery to many of us, the agenda for their use will be set by a clique of technocrats. They are, currently, powerful tools which most of us are unable to make use of.

Thinking About Humanity

One of the greatest dangers of IT is related to its effect upon the way we think about people and society.

Scientists have used the computer as

a model for the working of the human brain, and this tendency to recast man in the image of his machines has been given popular appeal by the media. The radical biologist Steven Rose has pointed out that the use of computer analogies for human activity ('machinomorphic') has powerful implications. [4] Thinking about ourselves as if we are machines may eventually lead us to behave in a machine-like way. Speaking of people as having 'inputs', 'outputs' and 'programs' may legitimise behavioural modification as a means of social control and, at the very least, will lead to a gradual abdication of personal responsibility and autonomy.

The reduction of human behaviour to 'programs' may have disturbing consequences for education too. If learning begins to be seen as merely 'data input' (ie teachers presenting facts without interactive discussion and *active* learning by the student) the most subversive of human traits, an enquiring mind, will fail to be developed.

A side-effect of one of humanity's greatest technological triumphs, the printing press, was to fix the spelling of written words. An analogous effect of IT may be to produce a standardized mode of thought. Admiration for the digital computer may lead to logical reasoning being seen as the only acceptable style of thinking. This represents an impoverished view of people since many facets of behaviour (eg altruism) and modes of thought (eg intuition) cannot be accommodated by it.

The promotion of logical reasoning,

at the expense of experience of the world through our sense organs, will render us less able to operate critically and autonomously. By using the computer as a design for thinking, instead of recognising it as a tool with potential uses and abuses, we may fling ourselves headlong into the dystopian nightmare of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* where human beings are programmed to fit their 'appropriate' categories and to think in an 'acceptable' way.

Conclusions

It is unclear whether IT will facilitate or prevent the development of an anarchist society — it depends upon the amount of use anarchists are able to make of it. Computers have not been developed in a social and political vacuum — they have been created by the capitalist state to satisfy its industrial, military and bureaucratic needs. The role of IT in the future will be determined by social, economic and political pressures, since such developments represent a social imperative as well as a technological one. We cannot disinvent the computer, so we must participate in the IT revolution to prevent its hijack by the ruling capitalist clique. If we are to minimize the dangers and capitalise upon the opportunities offered by technological developments, we cannot remain ignorant about them. I am not suggesting that everyone should take a crash course in Computer Science, but we should all develop a clear understanding of the capabilities of the computer and become acquainted with the

technical jargon. We will then be able to conduct a vigorous critique of current uses and abuses of IT from a position of informed scepticism.

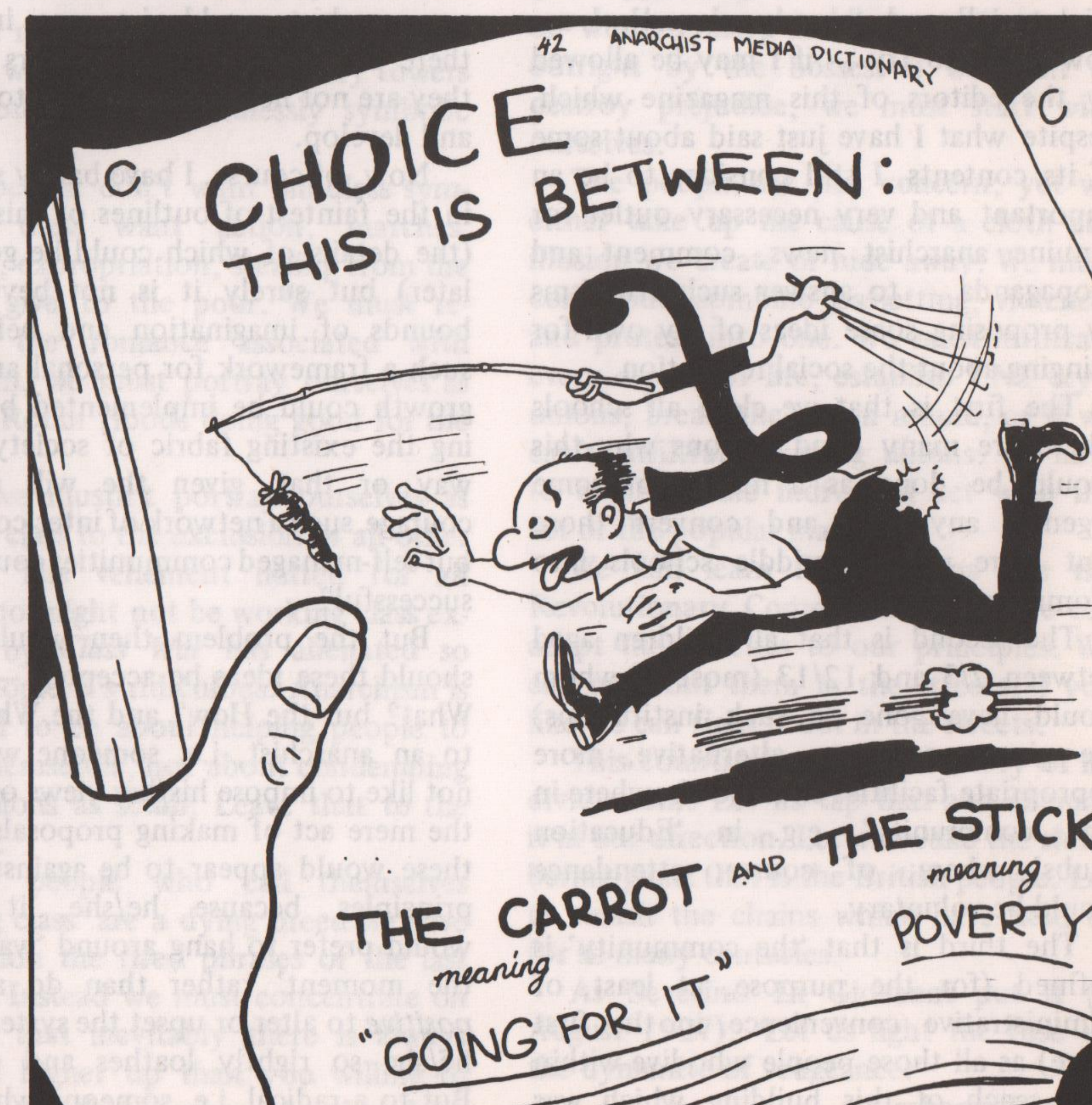
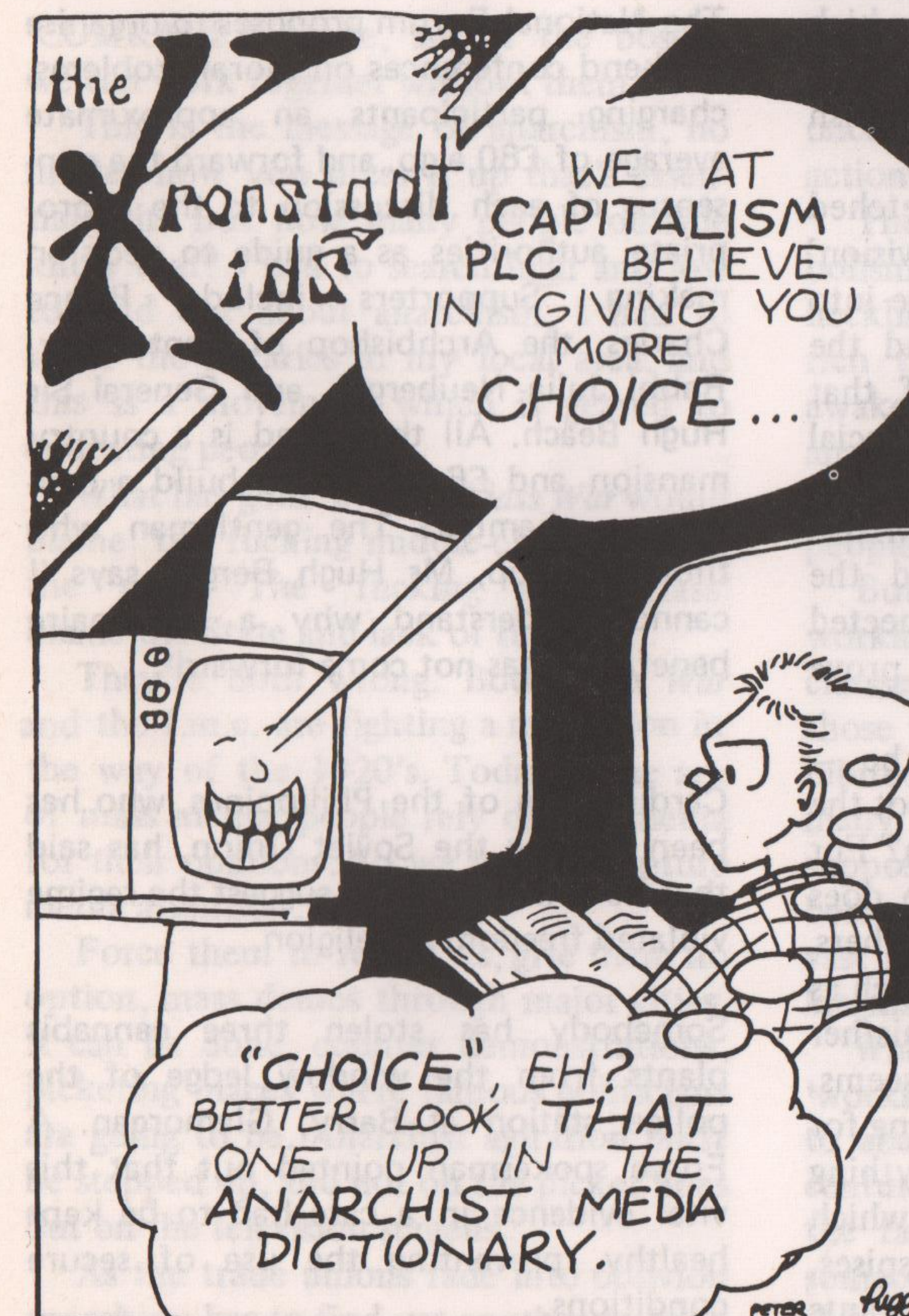
Optimistic Postscript

A government spokesperson, speaking recently on BBC Radio 4, urged industrialists to attend courses on 'New Technology' since there was a 'grave danger' that, in some firms, the workforce was gaining a clearer understanding of how company computers worked than the management!

Andrew Hedgecock

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Close the Schools

TO ME the June edition of *Freedom*, while providing many of the reasons for anarchy's singular lack of real success throughout history, encapsulates all that is wrong with the anarchist movement today.

For a start, because it has a V-sign on the front page (telling power-seekers where to go) and a facile poster inside its covers (telling people not to vote), it is, as usual, off-putting and negative. Then, because it includes some articles which may be interesting in themselves but contain little of any substance to add to the anarchist cause (e.g. 'Racists in Notting Hill' and 'Nuclear Danger is Jargon'), it is, sometimes, diversionary and irrelevant. But, worst of all, because it embodies passages which hint that there might be something within anarchism which is better than anything the status quo can offer (e.g. on page 7 the quotation from Kropotkin that we must 'find new forms of self-organisation for the social functions that the State fulfills through the bureaucracy', and on page 13 'There must be a fundamental shift in the ability of mass participation in the organisation of society as promoted by the anarcho-communists. Avenues for this to be brought about already exist.') but consistently fail, in this and past issues, to put forward any constructive and practical suggestions as to what these 'new forms' and 'avenues' could be, it is, as ever, disappointing and annoying!

Well, at the risk of myself appearing 'dictatorial' and 'bloody clever!', I am now going to try — if I may be allowed by the editors of this magazine which, despite what I have just said about some of its contents, I still consider to be an important and very necessary outlet for genuine anarchist news, comment and propaganda — to answer such criticisms by proposing some ideas of my own for bringing about the social revolution.

The first is that we close all schools (there are many good reasons why this should be done as a matter of some urgency anyway!) and convert those that were primary/middle schools into 'Community Centres'.

The second is that all children aged between 2/3 and 12/13 (most of whom would have gone to such institutions) are given access to alternative, more appropriate facilities situated elsewhere in 'the community', e.g. in 'Education Clubs' where, of course, attendance would be voluntary.

The third is that 'the community' is defined (for the purpose, at least, of administrative convenience in the first place) as all those people who live within easy reach of this building which was

once a school, e.g. in towns and cities, within walking distance of its doors.

The fourth is that all the inhabitants of these recently established neighbourhood areas organise themselves into small face-to-face groups (in which everyone present, say six or seven people, has an equal chance to take an active part in making decisions on matters which affect them and their surroundings), to begin with, in and around their homes and then, by a system of delegation, at the nearest 'Deme House' and, thereafter, in the 'Community Centre'.

The fifth is that all the functions and responsibilities of 'local' and central government (if only for the sake of ensuring that all of the Earth's natural and human resources are eventually put to the best possible use) are gradually and carefully handed over to these *new forms* of social organisation which are now operating through this system of 'Direct Democracy'.

The sixth, and last, is that all of these independent units (in order to meet their own and other's needs and those of the planet) federate with one another, by becoming horizontally linked mainly through their 'Centres', at first locally, then regionally and, finally, globally.

Thus a flexible structure (as compared with the current straight-jacket) for creating a society based on sound libertarian principles of voluntary association, self-determination and mutual-aid will have been provided and the beginnings of an anarchist world, i.e. one in which there are no permanent leaders because they are not necessary, enabled to flourish and develop.

Now, of course, I have barely sketched in the faintest of outlines of this 'vision' (the details of which could be gone into later) but surely it is not beyond the bounds of imagination and belief that such a framework for personal and social growth could be implemented by adapting the existing fabric of society in this way or that, given the will and the courage, such a network of inter-connected but self-managed communities could prove successful?

But the problem then would be — should these ideas be accepted — not the What? but the How? and the When? For to an anarchist, i.e. someone who does not like to impose his/her views on others, the mere act of making proposals such as these would appear to be against his/her principles because he/she, it seems, would prefer to hang around 'waiting for the moment' rather than do anything *positive* to alter or upset the system which he/she so rightly loathes and despises. But to a radical, i.e. someone who wants

to see fundamental change to that system NOW! — before it is too late, taking the initiative by 'selling' realistic ideas such as these to the general public is, in my opinion, essential, if we are to avoid any of the disasters, e.g. ecological, political or financial, which could lie ahead.

Why not, therefore, in the run-up to the next local and/or general election, instead of telling people not to vote, encourage them to 'VOTE ALTERNATIVELY', i.e. for a different but more healthy and desirable method of arranging human affairs such as the one suggested here? Or perhaps, this is moving too far too fast for some people, while, for others, it is going too much against the grain — in which case I am left wondering where these 'ideas of change' belong!?!
C. Millen

IN BRIEF

Another unsurprising poll result. As part of a study of scientific literacy among the British public, King's College London asked MORI to interview a random sample of adults, asking among other questions, 'How long do you think it takes before radioactive waste from a nuclear power station ceases to be radioactive?', and 'What do you read about in newspapers?'. There was no association between expressed interest in 'sport' and knowledge of radioactivity, a strong correlation between 'new scientific developments' and knowledge, and a strong correlation between 'news about the royal family' and ignorance.

The National Forum proposes to organise weekend conferences on moral problems, charging participants an approximate average of £80 a go, and forward the consensus of each discussion to the appropriate authorities as a guide to decision making. Supporters include Prince Charles, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rabbi Julia Neuberger, and General Sir Hugh Beach. All they need is a country mansion and £6 million to build a conference chamber. The gentleman who thought it up, Mr Hugh Berger, says 'I cannot understand why a millionaire benefactor has not come forward'.

Cardinal Sin of the Philippines, who has been touring the Soviet Union, has said that he saw nothing to suggest the regime violated freedom of religion.

Somebody has stolen three cannabis plants from the window ledge of the police station at Barry, Glamorgan. A Force spokesman pointed out that this vital evidence in a case had to be kept healthy, preventing the use of secure conditions.

All we have to do

'A DON'T vote campaign is a tactic, not a principle, and it is important that we don't confuse the two', remarks Andy Brown in the election issue. Indeed, one couldn't agree more. It is possible to go further and assert that it's a damn bad tactic as well, the way it's put. Just not doing something is not the negative exercise of power; it's just not doing something. Not doing something when and where you should be doing it; that's negative power.

This is not the first time I have taken issue with the thoughtful Andy and it seems we have opposite but complementary ways of thinking which cause us to do battle occasionally! Specifically, the negative way Andy has put the don't vote issue has, I believe, made him lose sight of a scam which could create Establishment uproar and force it to usher in enough patently repressive measures to inflame the masochist buried deep in the heart of every true anarchist. It won't half open the eyes of the unaware and the uncommitted, too, which is the name of our game.

Imagine not voting in a positive way, as a movement across the country. Over 52% of the registered voters voted against

Her, as we now know. At least 30% of the enfranchised didn't register to vote and this significant, very significant, bunch of bum-sitters was predictably grabbed by every party as its own. It had sat on its collective bum because it had a) been satisfied with the way things are, trilled Mrs T., or b) simply not understood how much its votes were needed, moaned the various losers.

How about c), eh? Suppose it knew and didn't give a damn? Suppose it was, insofar as Parliamentary democracy is concerned, more antiparliamentarian than even the most advanced anarchist theoretician? You disagree? Have you any statistics? Polls? Referenda results? I thought not.

So, how about forcing a referendum on the voting system in the UK? It is quite easy. All we have to do is launch a Vote Informal campaign in the lead-up to the next election, which is bound to occur earlier than later, the way the place is falling apart.

Its target will be the bum voter, the guy who usually sits home elections and watches sport on the telly, or, more rarely, strolls across the street to a booth and votes for the most ridiculous party

he can envisage, as a form of spitting in the eye of the returning officer.

The technique is simple. Register to vote; accept the ballot paper, write anything except X on it and correctly insert it in the box.

The result? Such a vote will be, of course, declared informal. All informal votes have to be counted and recorded. Can you imagine Mrs T. the morning after, contemplating the 42% she has scraped in by and which she has to use as justification for whatever unpleasantness she gets up to next, and contemplating also the misted Dracula of informal votes cast in a 90% turnout? It could easily send Labour socialist again. Ho, ho!

Such a cluster can only mean a plague on all your houses, can't it? It is the voting equivalent of opening your front door in the morning to find someone has pinned a wreath to it with a bayonet!

Don't stay home and waste your vote in the next election! Register, go to the polling station and waste it there. Be a bum voter; vote informal! Just for once, your vote will count!

The whole notion is heaving with slogans, you know. And the logos!!

Trevor M. Artingstoll

Whither Anarchism?

'COMRADES, unite, smash the bosses, we can work together without them.'

This is the message of anarchism, no matter how you dress it up that's essentially it. But how many people outside know that? I had to search high and low to find out about anarchism, I had to scour the libraries in my local area, and this is a movement which is geared to educating people.

What has gone wrong? *Class War* would blame 'the fucking middle-class, living in the past'. The 'fucking middle-class' blame the State and lack of funds.

They're both wrong. Both *Class War* and the f.m.c. are fighting a revolution in the way of the 1920's. Today is the age of mass media; people rely on the media for their opinions. So we have to capture media attention. How?

Force them to report us, give them no option, mass demos through major cities, it can be done, counter demonstrations, picketing places where famous politicians are going to be. Anarchist agitation *must* be stepped up, and not on the picket lines but on the television screens.

As the trade unions fade into oblivion anarchism has to find yet another to latch

onto the revolutionary movement, otherwise we will retreat into our ivory towers once more making mindlessly symbolic actions.

The people don't want mindless symbolism, they want action, marches, heckling, expropriation, stealing from the rich to give to the poor. We must reawaken the romance associated with anarchism, we must portray ourselves as modern Robin Hoods doing good for the people.

But we mustn't portray ourselves as working class to the exclusion of all other classes. The vehement hatred for all those who might not be working class exhibited by *Class War* has alienated so many people it's ridiculous. Anarchism is supposed to be about helping people to better themselves, not about condemning vast millions as scum. Leave that to the Marxists.

When people who call themselves 'working class' are a dying breed we have to abandon the tired phrases of the last century. Instead we must concentrate on the fact that inevitably there is always someone higher up than you willing to shit on you, that workers, be they blue

or white collar, are still being bought outright by the bosses. If we want to destroy prejudice, we must start with ourselves.

The people are our concern, yet we either take up the cause of a cloth cap illusion we create or hide away. We must come out, combine leafletting, violence, and protest into one. We must infiltrate every aspect of life, establish CNT style unions, break the union mould, or if we can't, infiltrate existing unions. We have to combine the individual act with the act of the popular mass.

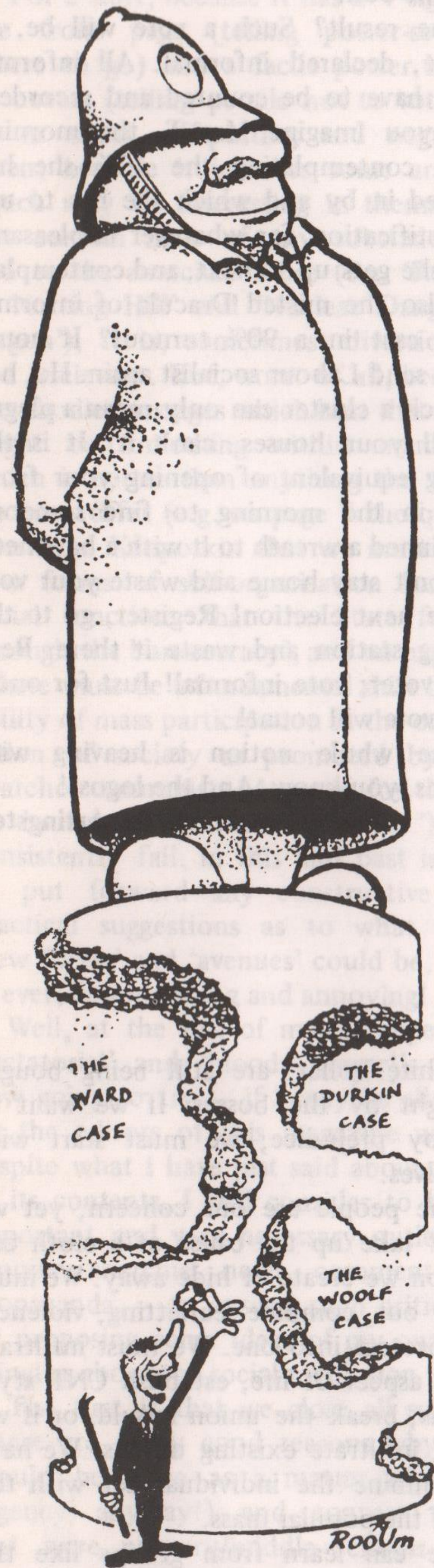
We can learn from groups like the Revolutionary Communist Party. We can adapt their tactics to our principles. We can confront them in the streets; if you like we can fight it out in the streets.

This country has a great history of individualism. Let us tap that and channel it in our direction. Let us awake the slumbering giant that is the British people. Let us smash the chains which have held us for so many centuries.

As Severino Di Giovanni put it (1 August 1927): 'Let us light the fuse on the dynamite of vengeance.'

Grahame Jackson

Challenor as the police hero



'I've dislodged a bit of brick'

1963 cartoon from Peace News. The acquitted 'brick case' defendant brags about the hole he has made in the pedestal on which the police are placed. But much bigger holes were made the same year, by three cases in which people died.

Coppers :
an inside view of the British police
Mike Seabrook
Harrap, 222 pages hardback, £9.95

THIS is not a work of bookish research. 'When I set out to write this book I was clear in my mind that, whatever it might be, it was not going to be a work of profound scholarship'. The author relies on what he experienced and heard when he was a Police Constable. So he tends to get his facts wrong; but he rings true when he writes, with a frankness which most police apologists will find alarming, of how policemen see the world.

As an example of this unreliability as to fact but plausibility as to attitude, I take his treatment of the Challenor case. Some readers are as familiar with the case as I am, but let them bear with me as I recall it for younger readers.

In December 1962, Detective Sergeant Harold Gordon Challenor was featured on the front page of the *Daily Mail* with a full-length portrait and a headline, THE GANGBUSTER, over the story that he had ended a reign of terror among Soho protection racketeers.

In July 1963 a State Visit of the king and queen of Greece occasioned demonstrations against Greek fascism. The demonstrators were peaceful as always (fights with the police did not begin until much later), but they booed the queen, and Challenor decided to prove they were violent.

He recruited as collaborators three constables in the uniformed branch who wanted his recommendation for transfer to the CID. The four of them arrested four peaceful demonstrators who did not know each other, and a group of four local residents on their way home from a tennis match, and charged all eight prisoners with carrying bits of brick for use as missiles.

Seven of the defendants were up against corroborative testimony of two or more policemen, and one against the word of a Detective Sergeant who had eighteen years' service and a heroic reputation. But success had made Challenor over-confident. In the case of the defendant against whom he was sole witness, he said he had found the brick in the prisoner's pocket, but he omitted to put the brick in the pocket; and he kept the man in custody until his court appearance,

allowing him no opportunity to change or clean his suit. The defendant, alarmed by Challenor's assurance that he could get two years (though in the event those found guilty were fined £5), hired a forensic scientist to search his pockets for brick dust, and a barrister to make the magistrate listen to the evidence, and was acquitted.

There followed a series of late appeals against earlier cases, on the ground that the jury would not have convicted had they known Challenor was a liar. 28 people were either acquitted on appeal or given free pardons. Among those released from prison were the five convicted in the 'gangbuster' case, one of them a small-time villain and the other four, including one serving seven years, just dragged in to make up a conspiracy charge.

So Challenor's career and reputation were ruined by a careless oversight, which he could blame on nobody else. He had a nervous breakdown, and was declared unfit to stand trial. (I heard recently he died by walking out of a mental hospital into the path of a lorry, some time in the 1970s.)

The above facts may be checked in the report of a Public Enquiry (Cmnd 2735) and *The Challenor Case* by Mary Grigg (Penguin). Below is Seabrook's version (abridged by me).

Challenor by his colleagues

'Years ago, before I joined the job, the first chilly draught penetrated the cosy love affair between the British public and the British bobby, in the form of the Challenor affair. Harry Challenor was a very tough Detective Sergeant on 'C' Division of the Metropolitan Police, which I was to join later. He had a reputation for being utterly fearless, and also for having an uncompromising loathing, amounting to an obsession, of organised vice.

'I have been told by officers who worked with him that Challenor was so feared by the big-gang villains that if he walked into a nightclub where the Kray brothers were drinking (they were then in their heyday as kings of London's organised crime) they would immediately get up and walk out, leaving their drinks, their companions and their premises.

'The reason, I was told categorically, was that if they remained in their seats he was more than likely to walk straight up to them and announce quietly, "you're nicked". The charges would be formulated later, when he had time to decide what he had arrested them for.

'If this is true it is, of course, a very serious infraction of the law. Yet I speak for the majority of policemen, I believe, in feeling that where people like the Krays are concerned the gloves must come off, simply because they start with so many advantages that the public and its defenders cannot afford to bar any holds. So if you can't take them by fair means you take them by foul and everybody else cheers you on. I certainly never heard anyone condemn Challenor. Indeed, all the accounts I heard of him from those who remembered him were told with immense admiration and approval. I shared both.

'He was assigned to a demonstration. In the middle and late sixties, some demonstrations became very nasty indeed. What he apparently did was to "stitch up" two students, by planting half bricks in their pockets. He then arrested them both for carrying offensive weapons. It is impossible to say, this long after the events, why he did so. It may well be that he thought the two were not real students at all but political agitators, paid by the Russians. And he may have been right.

'Unfortunately, forensic scientists were able to prove beyond doubt that the two half-bricks found in the young men's pockets were the two halves of the same brick; and it was proved by other evidence, also beyond doubt, that the two students could not have been in each other's company for a very long time beforehand. Challenor was undone. He escaped imprisonment but he was finished for ever as a policeman.'

Challenor: the official story

The official story of Challenor is that he was mentally ill for a long time before his nervous breakdown. The fact that he fabricated evidence, his fondness for long walks, and his reluctance to admit he was hard of hearing, are held to be retrospective evidence of insanity, which he was able to disguise thanks to his police training. I doubt if anyone, ever, seriously believed this diagnosis.

I find it easier to credit Seabrook's testimony, that Challenor's colleagues knew he fabricated evidence and admired him for it, and that after his departure a heroic legend grew up around his memoir in which the petty crooks and innocent parties, who had been his victims, were replaced by the formidable Kray brothers who had never in fact crossed his path.

Policemen, says Seabrook believably, utterly detest bent coppers who take bribes from gangsters, or use their knowledge of police whereabouts to burgle with impunity. They have no sympathy for those recently convicted of beating up fabricating evidence is ordinary police work; they respect and admire Challenor for doing what they all do, with more aplomb than most.

Police rely on their own and each others' toughness, not only for facing crooks and rowdies, but also for dealing with dead bodies, gory accidents, and panic. Consequently police humour 'tends to be personal and most cruel ... with the subconscious intention of either getting rid of weaklings or, far better, toughening them up until they aren't weaklings any more'.

Recruits are attracted by the glamour and 'dull it isn't' advertising, then discover it is a boring job with unsocial

hours and sudden compulsory overtime, and stay on for the power. 'You do enjoy the power; it takes different forms with different people, but everyone must take some satisfaction from his position of authority'.

'Of all the epithets used to revile police by their enemies, the most frequent is probably "fascist". This is a misuse of that highly-charged word amounting to a gross slander even of most bad police officers.' But if we use the word, not in its swearword sense of uniformed thug, but in the technical sense discussed under 'fascism' in dictionaries of politics, it is perhaps no slander, even of most good police officers.

Songs of Anarchism and Revolution
traditional songs of the international
anarchist movement
Spectacular Times,
Box 99 Freedom Bookshop

EVER longed for a cheap, good quality compilation on cassette of songs from the international anarchist movement, that you could sit down and relax to? Well, sadly, this is not it.

That is not to say that nobody will enjoy listening to this tape. Sixteen songs play for just under half an hour on each side, and comprise songs both old and new in several languages. As such it is an interesting production and could provide useful ideas for a future project. Anybody happy just to have a collection of anarchist music for the sake of it, and who is not too concerned about understanding all the lyrics or about the quality of recording, will probably enjoy this tape. A small accompanying booklet contains the song titles and a few photographs.

Overall I found the cassette disappointing. One would have to be a polyglot to get the most from it, and although anyone who has contacted the anarchist movement abroad knows it is bigger than the movement here and has a tradition of songs, few people I know in Britain speak more than one second language. There are six languages other than English on the tape.

We may accept Seabrook's estimate that racism in the police is no more common than among the population at large (though of course racists in the police have more power to do harm). But racism is not necessary to fascism in the strict sense; Mussolini was anti-racist until 1938, when he adopted Hitler's race theories for diplomatic reasons.

Seabrook tells us even the nastiest police are pleasant enough in the pub after duty. But who says fascists are not matey among themselves?

Among attitudes which Seabrook says are common in the police, which strike me as tending to fascism, are ruthlessness in the cause of public protection, contempt for weaklings, admiration for Challenor's fanaticism, and belief that social dissent is due to agitators in the pay of Russia.

Any society must deal with public dangers. Seabrook takes it for granted this is best done by an elite group of trained specialists. But his book shows, albeit unintentionally, that a professional police force is a public danger in itself.

This is an entertaining book in a lively, readable style. I recommend all anarchists to read it. **Plod**

Not all the songs are traditional. One is by the French singer/composer Leo Ferr and another was made during the miners' strike to the tune of the Laughing Policeman.

The quality of the recordings is very variable. On one song, in Spanish, the lyrics were unintelligible even to a Spanish friend of mine. As to the choice of songs, one of the 'Guantanamera', is a Cuban song written originally in Spanish, and recorded since by many people in that language; yet the compilers have inexplicably chosen a mediocre French version, though there are already five other songs in French on this cassette.

But the main criticism is the editing, which is just plain bad. The clicks of tape stops and starts are clearly audible, and in one case a song is cut off in full flow. Even on a moderately good domestic cassette deck these problems are avoidable (I've recorded better on mine). The little booklet with the tape is uninformative, only crediting one artist/composer, and the photographs in it are unexplained and uninspiring, mostly depicting groups of people standing around in various militaristic uniforms.

On the question of price, £3 is not cheap for a rather bad quality recording made by simply dubbing from a master tape onto blank cassettes which are obtainable in bulk for under £1 each.

Cloth Ears



Immature

WE WERE totally nauseated by the self-congratulatory tone of the July 'Anti-Election Campaign' review which followed hot on the heels of the fatuous anachronistic reactionism which characterised the June 'Don't vote' extravaganza. It's high time we cast a critical eye over the arguments for non-voting as a political tactic. We know all the arguments [full and fair summary omitted to save space—eds].

The 'Don't vote' message spread by *Freedom* and *Class War* has probably done more damage than good — it's easier to organise on a 'pittance for all' than with a size 12 boot in your face. How many of *Class War*'s readers didn't bother to vote, thus possibly affecting the outcome in any number of Tory marginals? It's about time anarchists grew up out of this immature moral preaching, and looked at the political strategies, tactics and options available in a more pragmatic way. **Jon B, Jon P, Sheri, Bradford**

Bonnot Gang

I WOULD like to comment on the review of *The Bonnot Gang* in the last issue of *Freedom*. I do not intend to defend the book against Nicholas Walter's many criticisms, nor to thank him for his occasional, rather grudging, praise. However, I do wish to raise the question of which direction anarchist publishing should be taking.

Your reviewer leaves me with the impression that he would have been far happier reading more thorough academic-style prose, with copious notes, sources attributed line by line in the text, plus a 'thorough account of the [sic] anarchist approach to law and crime' and 'careful analysis of the influence of Stirner and Nietzsche'; turning to the centre pages one would find glossy photographs printed on expensive art paper, while the bibliography would contain a whole host of books and periodicals, anarchist or otherwise, of only marginal relevance. Finally such a book would be 'professionally' edited to cut out the quirkiness and idiosyncracies of a new author's developing style.

Of course, I may have misjudged the reviewer's intention, but then there is such a tendency within the anarchist movement, one which to my mind is redundant, to say the least.

I suggest that the most suitable approach to anarchist publishing lies in the production of books and periodicals that are readable, reliable and discursive on the one hand, and cheap and well-produced on the other. I think this has been achieved in *The Bonnot Gang*.

It is surely no coincidence that the most influential and best-selling anarchist publishers at present are 'Rebel', 'Hooligan' and 'Bash 'em', all of whom believe in the virtue of accessibility, in producing good cheap publications that can be widely read. The sooner anarchist publishers break out of the ghetto of the converted to a wider audience, the better.

Richard Parry

PS I am not a doctor.

Reasons please

I have not seen many copies of *Freedom* (not having been involved for very long), but on nearly every occasion that I have there has been an article about Spain. Why is this? *Freedom* members are 'propagandists', you say so yourselves, yet you print articles which seem to me to be of interest only to the converted. Surely as propagandists you should be aiming at people who know nothing about anarchism. Though obviously you have your reasons, I would just like to know what they are.

Grahame Jackson

Quite right, many of our articles are of interest to the converted. Most of our readers are subscribers. We try, however (not always succeeding), to include in every issue some part of an article, or letter, or editorial comment, which says anarchism is opposed to all coercive institutions and gives part of the reason why. Fuller accounts of anarchism are available in FP books like Berkman's ABC of Anarchism (£2), Malatesta's Anarchy (£1) and Ward's Anarchy in Action (£2.50).

In the paper we like to print new material, and are dependent on what is available. The main reason we have so many articles on Spain is our prolific and interesting correspondent in Spain. Elsewhere in this issue we publish a couple of articles, one of them from Grahame Jackson himself, addressed to existing anarchists and telling us what we should do.

Fat cat

I WANT to nominate the queen of this dis-united kingdom as top anarchist. Look at the grand style of life she has, all without handling money!

I feel sure she would rather live in less splendour if only to avoid eating rat at the behest of some bourgeois fat cat.

After all, surely it's the aim of anarchists to make everyone an aristocrat.

Paul Rothwell-Hartmann

Free

SINCE *Freedom* doesn't have 'small ads', I'm using the letters page to offer readers the use of my caravan.

There are two houses here, in a clearing in a forest. I moved here intending to be a hermit, when the other house was empty. Now it is advertised for sale as a 'Game Sports Centre'.

I am at home most of the time, but go away occasionally. I would like someone to be around to speak to any potential buyers and let them know, as politely or rudely as you like, that there are better uses for the place. That is the only duty in return for which I offer a free holiday. Of course, I wouldn't expect you to be 'on guard' all the time.

Even better, does anybody have money to form some sort of a consortium to buy the place? I can put in some money myself.

**Jake Williams
Bogancloch
by Rhynie
Aberdenshire**

The Koran has been converted into a computer programme. 6,616 verses take one megabyte. Test questions are included to help memorisation.

Israel's intermediate range missile has achieved a test flight of 500 miles. Nuclear warheads are said to be available. The weapon appears to be outside US-Soviet arms reduction triumphs.

Carnivorous turtles are being released into the Ganges, to clear the remains of partial cremations. Last year 40,000 bodies were burnt along the river. Another 3,000 unclaimed bodies and an indefinite number of cattle contribute to the problem.

Waiting lists for new cars in E. Germany have reached the stage that your position can now be bequeathed to your family.

REVIEWS

Troublesome People: Enemies of War, 1916-1986

By Caroline Moorehead
Hamish Hamilton £14.95

THE history of the peace movement is interesting and important, but there have been few good books on the subject, and this isn't one of them. The title (taken from a friendly remark by Bernard Shaw about the conscientious objectors of the First World War) was originally used for a booklet about them in 1919, and is now used for a readable but unreliable book about them and their successors. Its publication last Easter was accompanied by considerable publicity, including the author's BBC television programme with the same title and also by her *Listener* article called 'Passionate Pacifists', and it has received generally favourable reviews — most by people who are sympathetic to but ignorant about the peace movement, some by people who are unsympathetic but equally ignorant, and a few by people who are sympathetic and knowledgeable but unwilling to criticise a book which is itself sympathetic to but ignorant about its subject.

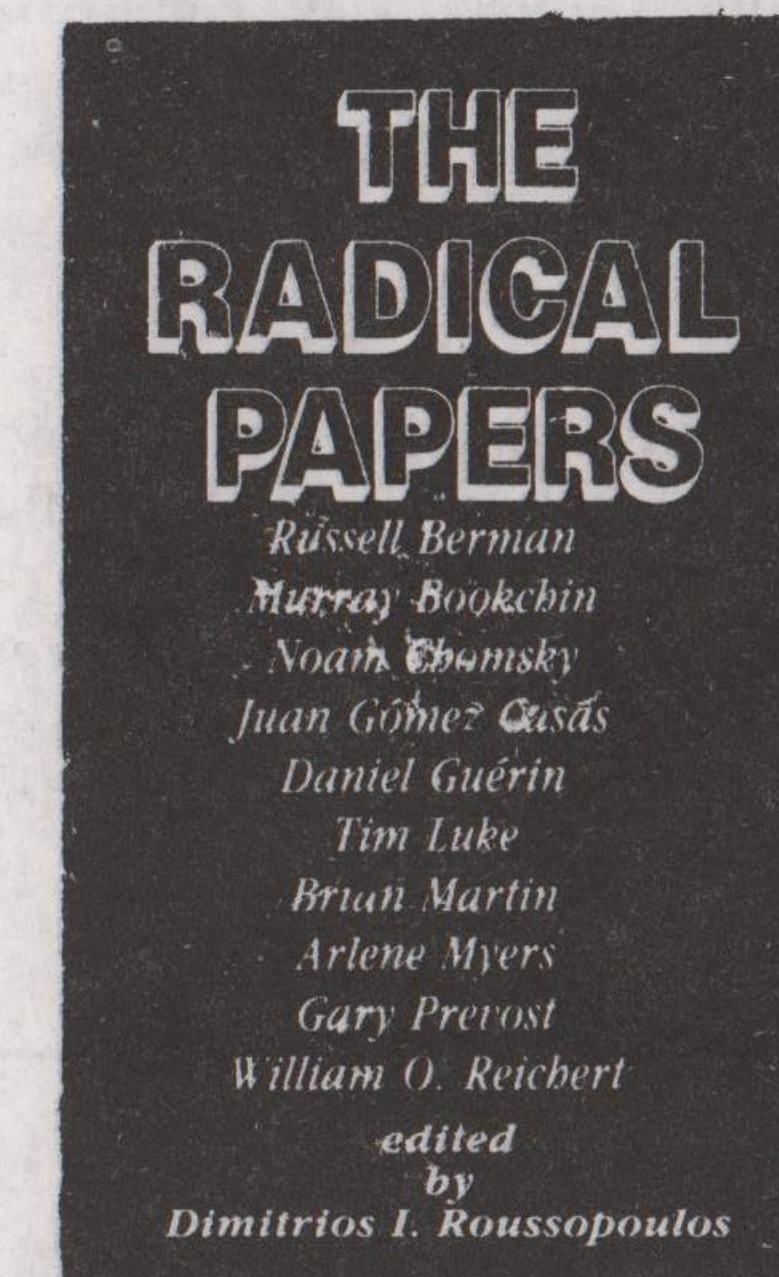
The main problem is that Caroline Moorehead (like her father Alan Moorehead) is a better journalist than historian, and the best parts of the book are the most journalistic. According to her foreword, it is intended to be 'not a history of 20th century pacifists, nor a comprehensive account of the peace movement since the First World War', but 'a picture of what modern pacifists are actually like', and its most valuable contribution to the literature of the movement is the interviews with and profiles of some of the many individuals she has spoken to during the past few years. However, the bulk of the book is in fact a potted history of the movement during the past 70 years which is both superficial and inaccurate.

The book is divided into two parts — from the First to the Second World War, and since the Second World War. Some of the first and more than half of the second part concern the movement in the United States, West Germany and Japan, but the book tries to cover the British movement in about 250 pages. It runs into difficulties at once, when the author says, 'Nowhere have I tried to define the term *pacifism*,' and adds that '*pacifism* has meant different things to different people at different times'. No doubt this is true, but it is surely necessary to distinguish some of the theoretical and practical meanings and to disentangle pacifism and pacifism, anti-militarism and war-resistance, non-violence and nonviolence. She is obviously aware of

the various levels of conviction and commitment and of the various types of religious and political and humanitarian motivation, but not of the changing complexity of belief and behaviour. (Incidentally, although she did talk to a few anarchists, she makes no mention of the anarchist aspect of pacifism.) A further difficulty is that the author can't be trusted to get the simplest facts right, so that over and over again her account is spoilt by absurd mistakes and misunderstandings. (The captions to the illustrations are a particularly rich source of errors, but they are spread pretty evenly through the whole book.)

All this is a pity, because pacifism — like anarchism — is little understood even by its own followers, and a well-written and well-produced book by a well-known journalist which might have increased understanding will instead make the situation worse and will also make it harder for future writers to make it better. The latest news is that Caroline Moorehead is now writing a book about Bertrand Russell; the ways of the media are really incomprehensible.

NW



The Radical Papers

Edited by Dimitrios I Roussopoulos
Black Rose, £6.95

A YEAR ago we reviewed some recent issues of the Canadian quarterly magazine *Our Generation*, together with a book reprinting some articles from them rather oddly called *The Anarchist Papers* (July 1986). We have now received some more issues of *Our Generation*, and another book reprinting some articles from them just as oddly called *The Radical Papers* (one wonders what titles future volumes will have), again with no indication in either the magazine or the book that material from one appears in the other.

This instalment of reprints includes nine items — Brian Martin's discussion of 'The Limits of the Peace Movement'; Daniel Guérin's description of the transi-

tion 'From Proudhon to Bakunin'; Arlene Meyers' 100th-anniversary account of 'The Haymarket Affair and Lucy Parsons'; Noam Chomsky's analysis of 'The Soviet Union and Socialism'; Murray Bookchin's 50th-anniversary account of 'Looking Back at Spain'; Russell Berman's and Tim Luke's essay 'On Gustav Landauer'; William O Reichert's discussion of 'The Anarchist as Elitist'; Gary Prevost's discussion of 'The Anarchist Critique of the State' with special reference to the Spanish movement, and a Comment by Juan Gomez Casas.

These items were generally worth publishing in a magazine but not necessarily in a book, and the editing is often perfunctory. Thus we are told that Martin's contribution is extracted from his book *Uprooting War*, but not that this was published by the Freedom Press in 1984. We are told that Guérin's interesting article has been translated, but not where it came from. We are told that Meyers' superficial article on Lucy Parsons (and to some extent on Lizzie Holmes) is taken from a work by Carolyn Ashbaugh, but not what kind of work it is. Chomsky's attack on the socialist pretensions of the Russian regime is good but brief and orientated to the past. Bookchin's reconsideration of the Spanish Revolution is also good but long and orientated to the present. The survey of Landauer is acceptable but adds nothing to easily available books. Reichert's polemic against some academic critics of anarchism is itself rather academic. The exchange between Prevost and Gomez Casas is interesting but inconclusive. Altogether the book is rather unsatisfactory.

The latest issue of *Our Generation* (Volume 18, Number 2, Spring/Summer 1987) includes much transient material — including George Woodcock's review of the *Haymarket Scrapbook*, first published in *Freedom* (August 1986) — but also two really important items. Murray Bookchin's essay 'Thinking Ecologically: A Dialectical Approach' is a powerful polemic against some irrational and anti-human tendencies in the Green movement; and Noam Chomsky's essay 'The Scandals of 1986' is a powerful polemic against current American foreign policy, taken from the revised edition of his recent book *Turning the Tide*. Both are difficult — Bookchin is characteristically full of complex ideas, and Chomsky is characteristically full of complex facts — but both are well worth reading and re-reading. This is the kind of thing that makes *Our Generation* — and the books recycling its best articles — such a valuable if irritating publication.

MH

Our Generation (£4.50 per issue) and Black Rose books are both distributed in Britain by Freedom Press.