

# El Salvador and Us

THE indignant trumpeting of the media concerning the viciousness and brutality of the El Salvador government has been ringing in our ears for several months now. The simple whining of the bourgeoisie press when presented with something as unequivocally evil as the filth perpetrating these brilliantly publicised crimes is a wonder to behold, the moral posturings contemptible. There is no need to document these events, nor the similar and more cold bloodedly ruthless butchery taking place in nearby Guatemala. And there is nothing more that I can say that could express my profound disgust and furious hatred of this bitter oppression.

What is significant, what we must each look critically at is both the form of opposition which we are urged to support and what we can do independently of the vacuous 'solidarity' offered by the left in the face of this concrete misery.

Like most forms of libertarian struggle the opposition movement in El Salvador is a heterogenous mix ranging from the 'theology of liberation' espoused by radical catholics (a desperate attempt to recoup their lost domination) to the Leninists and coup d'etatists of the left. Driven to arms by the cretinous fascistic mentality of the right in El Salvador the situation has turned mediocre leftie bureaucrats and catholic jesuits into apparent revolutionaries, who seek to monopolise opposition and colonise people's struggles against the authorities while the conflict is continually reproduced on a level that only organised, militarised 'freedom fighters' can engage in. The form of opposition has thus been chosen a priori: the question is not one of creating opposition, but of joining the opposition, that is joining the armed party. This encourages the desertion of young men to the liberation armies, passivity in the remaining population and because of the attitude of the establishment, the slaughter of the defenceless left behind.

If the example of Nicaragua is anything to go by we are beginning to see that the removal of Somoza has left in control a

government of national unity masking a petty local corporation which woos and accommodates itself to the arch capitalists of former regimes and asks, because of a war damaged economy that the population tighten its belts another notch (the sort of belt tightening that cuts in two) so that in effect there is little bloody change and the same heap of rubbish must be discarded. To remove the army of Somoza only to replace it by a Popular Army or Popular State, an internal dominator, is no less an obstacle.

That the seeds of revolution are present in the struggle to national liberation is incontrovertible, providing the ideologues of left and right cannot co-opt the autonomous struggles of exploited people to ride them to power as the next in a long line of oppressors.

In El Salvador the FMLN (the united opposition party engaged in guerrilla activity) is already talking about mixed ec-

onomy with private capital. The whole organisation must present itself in the best possible light to attract moderate and liberal support in Europe and elsewhere, while on another level promising to fulfil the dreams of the people of El Salvador; the two are fundamentally incompatible.

We must (from the very moment the struggle begins against the State and its functionaries) refuse to undertake any compromise on the principle of dictatorship of the proletariat or revolutionary minorities' management of the State apparatus, and put the local bourgeoisie in their class position as lackeys of the establishment. We cannot 'use' the state apparatus. There must be no government of national unity, no liberation armies, no attempted ideological usurpation of the struggles: no 'intermediate stage'. The answer is the generalisation of the conflict, a general insurrection, an unconfined revolt.

In Britain, to state the obvious we have no direct relationship to the struggles in El Salvador, but the miserable poverty and banality of the traditional response of the left is something we must go beyond if we are to show an effective solidarity. We live in a country at the vanguard of the development of the capitalist project. In order to aid the people in El Salvador we must break the domination of capital here, at this most advanced point, to loosen the grip of the domination in turn

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## EL SALVADOR

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of those oppressed in Central America and elsewhere. It is the interests of the machinery of capital in El Salvador in this country that we must discover attack and destroy. Those in political sympathy with the establishment there and the diplomatic functionaries must be put at direct risk. This applies not only to El Salvador, but to all oppressive regimes and all economic or political interest in them. We must put them at risk.

Finally, a comment on the presentation of the images of brutality the bloody imagery to which we are subjected each day, by the media. These images induce indignation and yet encourage passivity. It is horrible that we can endure what should be unendurable and sit and do nothing; there can be no excuse.

## Biters Bit

*Lawrence, Blake and Homer Lane, once healers in our English land:*

*These are dead as iron forever; these can never hold our hand.*

*Lawrence was brought down by smut-hounds, Blake went dotty as he sang. Homer Lane was killed in action by the Twickenham Baptist gang.*

— W H Auden: Poems, 1930.

In 1930 I was going to school in a North London suburb where the children were regularly beaten by the teachers. Some teachers were worse than others; one used to cane children for every mistake. He was an extreme example of the general practise that passed for education in those days. One day some of his pupils visited the local grammar school and beat the daylights out of the son. Sad to visit the father's sins on the son, as the father's behaviour wasn't improved.

Many backwoodsmen would dearly love to return to this system faced with the crumbling respect for authority. Britain is one of the last bastions of corporal punishment in the schools. There are, of course, more efficient ways of maintaining authority, but the ultimate sanction is of course force.

The events at Toxteth are only the last of a series of events in which children have responded to a more relaxed attitude to life and education by a series of people from Homer Lane to A S Neill. The crunch comes when the needs of a still powerful authoritarian society have to be met and children find themselves in a society which is at the risk of sudden termination and where the insecurity of life is increasing.

The events of 1968 had a marked effect on educational institutions every-

# SPARE THE CHILD

IT was ironic that the European Court of Human Rights made a ruling on corporal punishment in British schools on the very same week that the media were going mad over a small school in Toxteth, Liverpool, where some of the children had 'gone on a rampage' and inflicted some damage on some school property.

We have used the word 'some' more than somewhat because, once the dust had settled, and the children returned after their half-term holiday, plus another week for 'cooling off', it transpired that the damage was not nearly as extensive as had been thought. The local vicar is reported to have said that he doubted if more than £200 worth of damage had been done.

where, and one such incident occurred in that well known college in South London: Dulwich College, where one of the first school children's unions, the South London Schools Action Union marched to Dulwich College on June 21st on the school's Open Day — where the school was not as open as they thought, for their entrance was barred by the police.

The movement for children's rights by children themselves was to flourish in the years after 1968. The films *Kes* and *If* also reflected the times. An interesting, true, episode was when a principal of a free school invited a man who advertised canes for sale to visit his school — whereupon he was beaten with his own wares by the pupils.

The fact that many adults who campaign for civil rights for themselves deny them to the young, is instrumental in the continuation of our authoritarian society. Much of the violence in schools is done to pupils which is more acute the more authoritarian the school and the home background. The attack on the symbols of authority in St Saviours in Toxteth, is a change, if an imperfect one, and one which in my days at school would have been thoroughly deserved by the staff.

In an article in *Anarchy 107* Paul Goodman wrote:-

*It seems to me that, ignorant of the inspiration and grandeur of our civilisation, though somewhat aware of its brutality and terror, the young are patsies for the "inevitable" of modern times. If they cannot take on our world appreciatively and very critically, they can only confront her or be servile to her, and then she is too powerful for any of us.*

One does not have to be apprehensive about the free. Freedom from fear or anxiety is the gift that parents and real education can give the child.

Alan Albon

The worst damage, it would seem, had been done to the mental stability of the school's headmaster, who vowed his was a happy school and was so shocked that he immediately asked for early retirement. The school was a primary school and the rampaging vandals had been all of 7 to 11 years old. Not even teenage thugs yet!

The school — St Saviour's — is a Church of England Primary, opened only in 1973, and one must at once assume that the opening ceremony then and the dedication to all things was bright and beautiful somehow didn't get through to the Almighty in whose name it must have been dedicated. Unless, unless, there was something wrong with the way it was being run in His name?

Somewhere among the thousands of words in which the press and TV wallowed there was an admission that, only a week before the outburst by the 'mini-mafia', as the kids were called, their gentle head had caned seven of them — to be promptly rewarded with some lovely pigswill over his car.

The situation apparently rapidly degenerated after extra teachers were drafted in. As indeed it did in the town of Toxteth — just a brick's heave down the road from the school, when extra police were drafted in last Autumn. The close proximity of the school to the site of the riots gave the authorities a fine excuse for blaming outside influences, agitators and militants, if not actual Militants from the actual Tendency. It was, we felt, touch and go as to whether Tony Benn, Peter Tatchell and Ken Livingstone could not have been found directly responsible for the infants' mayhem.

St Saviour's was not a Victorian slum school — but it was obviously rapidly becoming a modern 'sink' school. Local parents were dissatisfied with nearly everything and it was clear — reading between the lines — that the teachers and their union were as pissed off with everything as the kids and the parents and the local education authority too.

Miraculously, after the cooling off period; after breathing fire and brimstone; after threatening to weed out the trouble-makers and generally promising to bring down the whole weight of the State upon the mini-vandals, common sense began to prevail. Somehow and from somewhere, money was found to bring in teachers who, it was thought, could cool the situation and even find better ways of dealing with it than simply acting as police.

A new strong head had been threatened — promptly labelled by the press as an 'Iron Man' — but in the event projected himself as one who was going to play it by ear, day by day, and was more interested in engendering self-discipline in the children than imposing 'order' by the

stick. His name is Mr Arnold Cowman and he must have had many naughty cowboys as his heroes when he was a little lad. Perhaps he is one of those extraordinary adults who can remember the frustrations of infancy and childhood; remembers the injustice of being told what to do by someone with the power to *make* you do it — without ever being told why.

Which sounds very much like introducing democratic government as opposed to despotic, doesn't it? Well, it's time for a new wave of rebellion. In the 1960's it was the university students. Today it seems to be the primary school kids. Where will it all end, we ask ourselves....? Meanwhile, back in Strasbourg, the European Court of Human Rights was writing the swan song for the beaters and strappers in Britain's schools. Our United Kingdom has the distinction of being the last major bastion (since Eire gave it up last year) for the thrashing of children in school.

Only the odd canton in Switzerland and a few local authorities in Germany still give teachers the right to beat children, with or without parental consent. The order has gone out to Britain: from now on (or, as soon as the lawyers can formulate their words in sufficiently articulate a form to make their meaning clear) children may be caned or thrashed with the tawse only with the permission of their parents. We mention the tawse because this delightful instrument is still used in Scottish schools. It is a strap of leather, split at the end into two or three strips, in some cases tipped with lead. Applied to a bare bottom it can mark for life, unlike the common cane, the weals from which will usually fade in a month or two — ready for the next time.

It's odd, isn't it, that in freedom-loving Britain the thrashing of adults has been abolished for years, (except for the Isle of Man — which is an archaic law unto itself) while the battering of children has gone on. Keep your ears open for the well-worn phrases: 'It never did me any harm', or 'I was thrashed as a lad — and look where I've got to now!'. Just take a look at where the world has got to and you can see the virtues of punishment. And now all we have to do is to educate the parents.....

## FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES

'WE'RE fighting for our lives.' This is the simple, powerful statement of a group of women who have camped throughout a bitter winter outside the gates of Greenham Common RAF/US Air Base in Berkshire. The women have shown great fortitude and commitment. They have demonstrated that people who are normally excluded from politics can be effective if they only take a stand. For example, the women have not lobbied politicians — politicians, including Labour Party leader, Michael Foot, have come to visit *them*. They have overcome media indifference to achieve a large measure of nation-wide support from people in all walks of life. The campers' effectiveness is revealed also by the fact that moves have now been taken to evict them. The Newbury Council meets from 22-25th February to discuss if, how and when the campers will be evicted.

I visited the camp on Saturday, 20th February. The Greenham Common Base is near Newbury, a prosperous town, set in beautiful countryside. The high wire fence of the base, some twelve miles in perimeter, is almost unobtrusive amongst tall trees. Behind the fence many large concrete structures are visible. The base is being prepared to house 96 Cruise nuclear missiles by December 1983. The camp of some twelve caravans and several tents lies at the main gate, just off a main road.

The march was ignored by the media. When their demand for a live televised debate with national policy-makers was rejected, four of the women decided to chain themselves to the main gate of the base to attract attention to their cause. For a week, from 5th September, the women, including a sixty year old grandmother, remained chained to the gate. Still the media response was negligible. Meanwhile word spread through informal channels, and supporters arrived with food, water, tents, gas stoves, chemical toilets and caravans. Many were prepared to stay. The march had become the Women's Peace Camp.

It was a very cold day when I arrived. The women were sitting with a couple of

men around a small fire built in the middle of the muddy floor of the largest tent. I was received warmly; soon after, other supporters arrived bringing supplies from gardens, supermarkets and the local tip which had provided some welcome bits of old carpet. One of the women came back from town with the mail — the campers receive up to thirty letters a day expressing solidarity and enclosing money. Four women have stayed at the camp throughout the winter and ten others have been there most of the time. Most campers have stayed for two or three weeks.

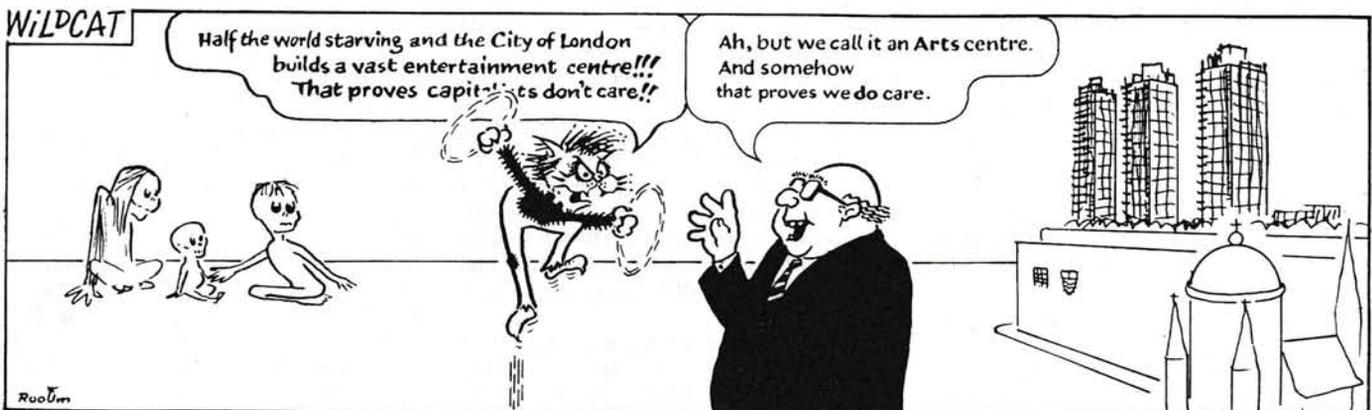
Initially men stayed at the camp and the women have many male supporters whom they welcome. However men have been asked not to stay at the camp. The women feel that they have a distinctive contribution to make against the violence which is created mainly by men. The women's practice throughout has been one of uncompromising non-violent resistance.

This committed non-violence has won them the respect of some authorities. If the Newbury District Council carries through its threat to evict the campers, finding somebody to evict them might prove difficult. The Newbury police have said that they are not prepared to participate in the forcible eviction of the women, who are determined not to be removed from the site. If necessary, they intend to call on women all over the country to prevent the eviction with a mass sit-in.

Eighteen year old Shu-shu Al-Sabbagh, who has been camping throughout the winter spoke passionately about the need for everyone, and women in particular, to act: 'It's simple. It's our responsibility. If you know about something that's wrong and don't take action to prevent it, you're as guilty as the people prepared to press the button.' The final Nuremberg Principle says something similar. These courageous women not only uphold this neglected principle, but are prepared to suffer considerable hardship in order to accept their human responsibility.

Julie Southwood

SEE CONTACT PAGE



# PEOPLE'S TRIALS?

AS ALWAYS in Italy everyone reacted in their own particular way to the news of Dozier's release. If however one wants to sum up the feelings of Italians in that moment, the words surprise and incredulity give the idea of the impact that such a sensational event had on people. After the kidnapping and 'execution' of Aldo Moro (then president of the Christian Democrats) in 1978 the Red Brigades (BR) had gained themselves the image of efficient and invincible killers, it seemed impossible that the various arms of the Italian police force, disorganised and always in competition with one another could have accomplished such a miracle.

A few days after the kidnapping of Dozier several agents and advisors of the CIA arrived in Italy to help in the inquiry. They were received, especially by far left groups, with a certain measure of disdain. However since the discovery of the BR hideout in Padova everybody has thought of them as the real solvers of a seemingly intractable problem. The US ambassador to Italy declared that the credit due for the discovery belonged to the Italians, a clear step forward for the credibility of our country in the eyes of the world! At this point came the euphoria transmitted to the public daily by the state media. The politicians began terrorist measures, to the extent that the Secretary of the Christian Democrats, Flaminio Piccoli, actually said, 'I wish that it had been me to free General Dozier.' Leaving aside the ridiculousness of Italian politicians and TV producers, who made Dozier repeat 'Thank you Italy' over and over again, it has to be admitted that amongst ordinary people the satisfaction was obvious, even if not overwhelming. Not to mention the embarrassment felt over the eulogistic praise Italy was receiving, something that the normally self-critical Italian is unused to happening and which was now one more burden to carry on Italy's already weak shoulders.

Summing up what has happened in Italy recently one has to mention various things that Italians know well but do not enjoy repeating. Central to the success of the Italian police and 'leatherheads' (heavily armed riot/anti-terrorist police) was not only the re-organisation of the secret services and the anti-terrorist training of specialist groups such as the NOCS but most importantly the self-destruction of the BR themselves. The repentance and ideological confusion of various 'Brigatisti' caused the breakdown of their once perfect 'war machine'. The increased isolation into which they were thrust by the working class and the execution of Aldo Moro sparked off a chain of confessions and arrests that hasn't ended yet. The ideological

conflict between the 'militarists', (those who had kidnapped Moro and Dozier), and the 'movementists' (those who wished to reintroduce the working class to armed struggle) broke the unity of the terrorists, not the ever more repressive public order laws. In Italy whoever pays attention to detail looks suspiciously on the propagandistic ravings of the politicians, knowing well that terrorism is invincible until its causes disappear, and that it is enough to look to South America, Spain, Germany or Northern Ireland to know that.

Terrorism could possibly be beaten here as it is not rooted amongst the people let alone the factories, nobody calls the 'Brigatisti' 'Comrades who err' anymore, they are alone. But even this would be a victory of the workers not of the state. The Italians have not rediscovered any faith in their institutions, in fact.....

GIOVANNI SPADOLINI

# HUNGER STRIKERS RELEASED

ON 24th December 1981 after a new hunger strike of 53 days, Philip Kiritsis John Skandalis and Kiriados Moiras were released from prison. Though the today's government (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) was fresh in the state of authority it did not hesitate to let the three hunger strikers reach the 53rd day of hunger strike.

Having no other way out of the problem the new government in order to avoid facing three corpses of hunger strikers preferred to release them from prison granting them pardon. This way it aimed in one hand to show a mild mood in order to check the intensive protests of the people and in the other hand to obscure the political character of the hunger strikers' problem. The same it does now with the problem of the other political prisoners who are still in prison. In the same time after the eruption of intensive protests of the prisoners in every Greek prison the new government transfers to the worst prison of Greece (Disciplinary Prison of Corfu) 120 prisoners who saw their peaceful protest to be suppressed by brute force from special forces of the police.

The prisoners' protests had as their main request a reduction of their sentence through a pardon or something like that. Some days before the cruel suppression of the protest the prisoners were visited by the minister of justice Stathis Alexandris. He tried to calm them with a number of promises which it is now evident will never be realised. He is the same one who ordered the transfers of the prisoners to the horrible disciplinary prison of Corfu.

So in one hand a pardon is granted to the three political prisoners under the pressure of their hunger strike and in the

.....Besides the general criticism of BR strategy over the past few years, implicit in the above, one can also criticise their tactical attitudes towards the pattern that they have adopted — kidnapping/people's trials/execution. This shows an obsession with propaganda through the state media and an attempt at producing a 'revolutionary' version of bourgeois justice in order to vindicate their actions. It is during this period that they also run the greatest risk of discovery. And for what? This is but a continuation of the game played daily by the state, of law and order, of justice and truth. There is no need for anarchists to participate in this farcical mimicry of the present system. Much better it would seem to merely eliminate those people who devote their lives to the maintenance of our class system while entrenching it evermore in the minds and bodies of all people. There is no need to assuage our wounds with published tracts nor justify our anger with 'peoples Trials'. There is a need for action. STEFANO

other hand the 'stick' is granted to the other prisoners of Greece. In the meanwhile Libertarians and Anarcho-autonomists occupy deserted houses of public ownership. This happened a few days after the new government got in office. In the beginning the government showed a neutral attitude towards the squatters. But before three months to elapse this neutrality turned to interest for an end of the occupations. Police and 'units for the restoration of order' (MAT) together with militarily organised groups of the Pro-Russia Communist Party of Greece (KKE) invaded in the occupied houses and dragged out the squatters. They arrested many of them and they led them to trial. The day of the invasion a demonstration was organised for protesting against the government's attitude towards the prisoners. The demonstrators protest against the police's attitude towards the squatters too. A riot takes place and many demonstrators are arrested and dragged to trial too. After the trials some of the arrested demonstrators and the arrested squatters are imprisoned. Of course the trials were separated according to the indictments, some of the arrested persons wait their trial till today. For the already tried activists the sentences range from 10 to 21 months. Now the imprisoned activists wait appeal court.

On 26th January 1982 John Skandalis, Philip Kiritsis and I (Sophia Kiritsi) attempted to travel out of Greece. On the Greek-Yugoslavian borders the police leads me out of the train takes my passport and announces me that it is prohibited to leave the country without telling me why or till when this prohibition is in force. Philip Kiritsis decides to stop his journey too and we two return to Athens while John Skandalis continues.

## IN BRIEF

I was released from prison on 24th July 1981 after a hunger strike of 50 days during which I risked to lose my life after one heart attack. My comrades Kiritsis, Skandalis, Moiras continued their hunger strike till the day of my release which happened on the 60th day of their hunger strike. So they put their lives in great danger too. This way all the 'democratic' groups and parties were forced to assume an attitude towards this government-planned murder which was to take place. This way they were forced to request my release. The today's government was opposition then and protested against the former government for the conditions of our imprisonment which led us to that hunger strike and the other hunger strikes before that. When I and Philip Kiritsis were arrested this former opposition party had protested against the pre-construction of our trial. The main reason that led the former government to construct our case was to show that terrorism exists in Greece in order to support the anti-terrorism law which had been then presented to the parliament and later became law. The first to be sentenced with this law was John Skandalis. He was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. Other convictions followed. Among them the highest was 6, 5 years. I and Philip Kiritsis were sentenced for breaking the Law 495 concerning weapons, explosives and so on. We were sentenced to 5 and 9 years respectively which are the highest sentences given to political prisoners of the left after the fall of the military Junta (1974). The accusation was construction and possession of 8 Molotov bombs! something we never accepted. It can be easily understood what the state wanted to do with us since then. It was an annihilation plan which we faced all these years. We were in prison almost without accusations. In the court we refused to accept the accusations, we refused to accept lawyers to defend us and we gave the judges a memorandum where we explained the reasons we didn't participate in the trial.

Now the state proves that it always remembers us. In order to achieve this it uses every means it has at its disposal. My release was done under 'conditions'. I am obliged to present myself in front of the police every 15 days. I am obliged to keep the police informed about my address. I am deprived from my political rights for three years. If we add the prohibition to leave the country I can say that my imprisonment is continued with every method available to the state. The struggle we undertook and we still undertake to confront the tortures of every kind is a continuous struggle against the state and the criminals and murderers of beauty, freedom and enjoyment of life.

It would be very helpful to our struggle to exchange information with you and to cooperate as far as it is possible.

yours in the struggle  
SOPHIA KIRISTI

THE Iranian authorities missed an opportunity, when they picked a street round the corner from the British embassy to rename 'Khiabahn-e Bobby Sands!' Now, people in Belgium have taken the point. A street in Brussels, coincidentally containing the Polish embassy, is to be called 'Rue Solidarite'.

MANY Chinese workers are reluctant to be singled out as 'model workers', according to 'People's Daily'. They are frequently ostracised and criticised by their workmates.

THE West Berlin government has introduced compulsory community service for foreigners who have applied for political asylum. This will include street cleaning and forestry work. Each will receive 50 marks extra on their social security. Those who refuse will have the social security payments cut off.

NEW ZEALAND is attracting a higher standard of British immigrants, according to the Immigration Minister. Apparently, in the past, many Britons had proved to be union militants or racists. However, new stricter vetting procedures have given 'higher' standards.

TURKISH military authorities have banned civilian organisations from having foreign contacts.

THE use of nerve gas, supplied by the Soviet Union, has been reported in Eritrea. The claim comes from the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front, the recipients of the gas. It is denied by the Ethiopian government. Rumours about nerve gas and chemical weapons continue to come from Afghanistan, and are denied by the Soviet Army.

POLICE in Pakistan have put on a display of weapons and explosives, said to have been seized in raids on 'subversives'. They include a hollowed out Koran, filled with explosives. A spokesman said that it was the first time that anyone had used the Koran for terrorism. He has obviously not noticed events in the surrounding countries. Either that or he has a very literal mind.

A member of Turkey's Consultative Assembly has introduced a Bill to abolish the death penalty. According to Ertugrul Alatli, a retired colonel, asking 'or support for his Bill, 'A modern state has to be strong enough and magnanimous enough not to need to wash blood with blood.'

THE Australian secret service has advertised for agents in a Sydney newspaper. Recruits should have 'stability, maturity, discretion, objectivity and sound practical judgement.'

A dentist in Bavaria is being haunted by a ghost called Chopper, who croaks out of plugholes. The police are 'taking this case absolutely seriously.' One patient told a magazine that as he sat on the dentist's lavatory seat, a voice from underneath shouted, 'Move your backside. I can't see a thing.'

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has raised its estimate of the numbers of Iranians executed since the revolution to over 4,000, and says that it has received hundreds of detailed reports of torture. Opponents of the regime claim that there have been 8,000 executions since June. Testimony collected by Amnesty includes stories of prisoners being burned with irons and cigarettes. Meanwhile, the regime denies the stories and says that up to 3,000 prisoners will be released in time for New Year (March 21st). All these points are repetitious of events under the old regime, which was condemned as inhuman by its opponents, including the people now forming the government.

THE Home Office report on the Wormwood Scrubs prison disturbance in August 1979 has received wide publicity. At the time, a non-violent sit-in was broken up by helmeted squads armed with staves. The Home Office used to deny that these 'MUFTI' squads existed at all. In fact, they were trained in secret for 18 months. After the riot, there was three and a half months official concealment and prevarication. There was widespread victimisation of prisoners. The media coverage of the news is about what can be expected. The *Observer* calls it a 'primer of incompetence and deceit' and then descends into its usual pomposity, 'The exercise of violence in the name of law and order by men rendered virtually unidentifiable by visors is totally unacceptable in this country'.

PLANS have been announced for 'adventure holidays' for the young, by courtesy of the armed forces. This would include a large proportion of young unemployed. It will not include any aspects of 'military training'. In contrast to government plans to withdraw benefit from those reluctant to participate in youth training schemes, there is no suggestion that this will be anything but voluntary. Nothing at all to do with any hints about a reintroduction of Nation Service. Further schemes to aid communication and understanding come from Wembley, North London. Here the police have offered to take sixth formers from the local high school out on patrol with them. However, this is for boys only. Parents will have to sign a special insurance indemnity form.

# INDIVIDUAL SELF-LIBERATION



I am reminded forcibly of this story by a recent correspondence. A little before Christmas in the Grauniad there was a letter from what appeared at first a naive but sincere Labour candidate. He painted a picture of loonier Leninists he had met in college, who had arrogantly laid down the law to him in complex theoretical terms, proving that socialist work in the Labour Party would inevitably fail. He, the working class boy, had not understood all this high flown debate; but now that Bennism was triumphant in the Labour Party, surely they had been proved to be wrong and he challenged socialists hostile to the Labour Party to justify their continued isolation and to consider that had they joined, the Party might earlier have been changed, in which case a significant advance to socialism might already have been made.

The letter — as it appeared in the *Guardian* — seemed honest; and an honest reformist is infinitely preferable to a crooked self-styled revolutionary. Anarchist readers will have known enough armchair theorists to be prepared to believe the candidate when he claimed the only 'revolutionaries' he ever met were such. There seemed to be a case for taking his challenge at face value and explaining as simply as possible and as briefly as possible, one reason for doubting that Bennism is as significant as he thought, and thus for doubting his *proof* that socialism could come from the Labour Party.

Accordingly I wrote to him. I *deliberately refrained* from any theoretical discussion, any mention of the possibility or otherwise of attaining socialism through Parliament. I just pointed out that the 1945, '64 and '74 elections all followed similar alleged leftward swings in the Labour Party, and none of them had achieved socialism.

I refrained — perhaps unjustifiably — from stressing the case. I did not hammer the point that in each case the Labour Right had previously claimed that the Left victory would lose the party the election; that the 'Quality' Press had lectured that Labour in 'lapsing into extremism' had abandoned the hope of power and gone into the wilderness to contemplate its navel: that Labour had in fact never been elected to form a majority government, after a period of Tory rule, without such an ostensible leftward swing: that, indeed, Ramsay MacDonald had himself represented the Left of the party and so it was arguable that even the 1924 and '29 governments were true to the same pattern.

Taking his apparent bewilderment at the strange motivations of revolutionaries

at face value; and ever over-charitable, (Though to assume a Labour candidate is honest is perhaps to assume he is incapable of his job and therefore a libellous imputation of unsuitability! If so, I now readily retract the unstated slur.) I said nothing whatsoever about the 'inevitability of failure for socialists working in the Labour Party'.

I was therefore somewhat surprised to get his reply the other day starting: 'Thank you for your recent letter and its familiar theme of the inevitability of failure...' Still more when immediately after this token — though inaccurate — reference to the contents of my letter he then confined himself to reiterating his Grauniad letter. Repeated his caricature picture of his college contemporaries; ('pure and ideologically correct, as..latest guru defined it', 'sit back in their armchairs';) and his inverted snobbery, ('I could not afford the luxury..')

The surprise was somewhat mitigated by the message that had come over on seeing the candidate's writing paper. Each page adorned with his portrait; mentioning besides his prospective Parliamentary candidacy, and sundry addresses that he was also Lord High Pooh Bah of some local governmental committee...

While anarchists yield to none in our contempt for Trots and will certainly recognize all too many in the complaints of those 'who make their contribution to socialism by the odd demonstrative act', it all appeared too reminiscent of other Labour candidates who made such attacks while themselves confining their activity to trying to get themselves elected to an ever ascending series of sinecures with increasingly fat pickings.

I confess I had not been notified of this catastrophic dearth of armchairs in the plush offices of local government. One would have thought they were somewhat commoner there than on the factory floor, but I have, all too frequently, encountered those who only talk of socialism when they are asking socialists to abandon the class struggle and concentrate on the 'serious work' of getting them elected to the Westminster dung house.

Laurens Otter

DURING the late '60's there was a story — undoubtedly apocryphal — circulating among pacifist and libertarian circles, said to be attributed to one of two characters who had defected — either from the Committee of a 100 or the Socialist Party of Great Britain — to become prospective candidates for the Labour Party. Naturally, this entailed abandoning in the process any further activity in the direct action or true socialist movement.

Challenged in consequence to justify this defection, and moreover to explain what benefit the working class would derive from this exercise — ie, potential promotion to membership of the House of Commons — the miscreant is alleged to have said:

*The working class as a whole will obviously gain nothing from my election, but it will help one particular member of that class to rise within the hierarchy of the capitalist state.'*

The above is the gist of an opening paragraph in a contribution from Laurens Otter. He continues:

Sadly it is most unlikely that the story is true. Potential Labour MPs are not that candid. If and when the day ever comes when approaches to them are met with that degree of honesty, there might even be a case for considering that one could trust them in other matters. There is some case for voting for an 'honest' rogue, none for voting for an hypocritical one.



## LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LET

## FOR THE BOMB

Dear FREEDOM,

Although J W is quite right that red rule would be fatal to active anarchists his assertions concerning the bomb are quite wrong.

Militarism doesn't defend people it defends power at the expense of people. The Nuclear weapons and military forces on British soil have little to do with defending the British population but are there primarily to defend the economic and political interests of Nato's ruling elites. The nuclear bomb is the bosses' bomb. The ruling elites of east and west are quite prepared to engage in war to protect their interests and a confrontation in Europe involving 'conventional', chemical and 'small' tactical nuclear weapons is very much on the cards. All the signs of war are round us, we've already had two major wars in Europe this century and we are well overdue for another one.

What we have to do, as Bakunin suggests, is to subvert nation state confrontations by turning them into social revolutionary wars. The statement that 'Anarchism is not a realistic possibility at the moment' is both defeatist and false. J W seems to be totally unaware of what has been going on in Poland over the last year or so, many parts of Europe are beginning to show signs of moving towards social unrest and revolutionary upheaval. Our governments see these signs and are heavily investing in the instruments of population control. The forces of oppression are getting ready, are we?

Defend People not Power

PAUL COOK

PS Why didn't you print my letter on the Pope I sent you in January, Snarl, Fume!

## Editors' Reply

We held back Paul Cook's first letter because he's calling for action at the end of May — so it's still well ahead, and here it is. Thanks Paul.

## Opportunity for protest

Dear FREEDOM,

As all Anarchist minded people will probably be aware by now, this year sees the visit of Pope John Paul II to Britain. He will be going to Canterbury on 29th May.

About a quarter of a million fanatics are expected to welcome him there and that evening he will be at Wembley. During the course of his stay he will be visiting Toxteth in Liverpool to cash in on the riots and join the list of prominent figures who have already done so.

## FREEDOM ON TV

Dear Friends,

Did you see the plug for FREEDOM on TV recently? There is a series called 'Heroes' on early Friday evenings when some worthy is invited to talk about his or her heroes. On the 12th February it was the journalist Alan Brien. One of his heroes was Louise Michel! They usually have a two or three minute film on each hero, with the hero either appearing in it (so many are in the entertainment business) or a clip from a biographical film about the subject.

For Louise Michel the 'visual aid' was the front cover of FREEDOM's earlier profile on Michel with 'FREEDOM-Anarchist Review' clearly showing at the top. About £800 worth of advertising at current rates!

Very best wishes,  
Larry

## LEFT DEFINITIONS

'You left the Communist Party in 1961. That wasn't because of Hungary?'

'Oh no. I supported the Soviet Union over Hungary. The Hungarian revolution was joined by known fascists.'

'Do you agree with Solidarity's opposition to the Polish government?'

Scargill looked doubtful. Solidarity, it seems was not quite as bad as the SDP but all the same...

'Solidarity's not a trade union. That's been clearly established.'

'You're saying it's a Catholic, reactionary movement,' I suggested; and Scargill didn't dissent.

ARTHUR SCARGILL — interviewed in *Sunday Times*, 10th January, 1982.

The Catholic Church will be making a massive recruitment drive out of this visit. Increasingly today people are being driven by despair and the misery of their daily lives to try and find escape through religious worship. By terrorising peoples' minds with ideas of heaven and hell and by distorting the concepts of love and goodwill, religion encourages submission to authority, teaching people to obey their oppressors.

As recent discussion in FREEDOM has shown, the world wide religious revival is something that has to be taken seriously and confronted. The Papal visit is an ideal opportunity for protest, maybe some form of demo or devilish street theatre perhaps? If anybody has any ideas I will be grateful to receive correspondence

Neither God, nor Guru!

PAUL COOK

## CHOOSING POLITICOS?

Dear FREEDOM,

In the course of your rambling editorial on Poland, (23rd January) you seek to attack the Trotskyist left by pointing to the Spartacist group who support the taking of power by Jaruzelski.

You must know that this group is an exception among the groups and organisations in the Trotskyist tradition. In fact Socialist Worker and Socialist Challenge have contained far more news and information on Poland than FREEDOM has ever done.

I never thought I would be defending the Leninists against anarchists. But, really, when it comes to FREEDOM using the sort of falsification that would make Stalin envious, I feel I must speak up. It's not good enough to say that the SWP are cynically supporting Solidarity in order to recruit members. Their record over the years points to a consistent anti-Stalinism.

Our criticism of Leninism has to be more profound than this. Fortunately, the articles by L Erizo point in this direction, with their attempt to reach beyond the rigid ideology and sloganising of the Leninist and traditional anarchist 'churches'.

One last thing about your editorial. The fact that you are concerned about 'our total lack of organisation, our inability to express our own internationalism in practical terms' is a healthy development. I hope you carry more discussion about this chronic state of affairs in forthcoming editions of FREEDOM.

yours for libertarian communism,

NICK HEATH

## Editors' Note

Yes it is odd to see an anarchist defending Leninism against Stalinism since we thought it had been agreed long ago that one leads to the other.

As for the discussion asked for — how about starting it off, Nick? Then we might discover exactly what libertarian communism is!



# FREEDOM CONTACTS

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Research and Resources Centre for Libertarian Politics and Alternative Life-Styles, 7/355 Northmore Ave, Lyneham, ACT 2602.

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**QUEENSLAND**  
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Self-Management Organisation, PO Box 332, North Quay.

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La Trobe Libertarian Socialists, c/o SRG, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic 3083.  
Monash Anarchist Society, c/o Monash University, Clayton, 3168 Melbourne.  
Libertarian Workers for a Self Managed Society, PO Box 20, Parkville 3052.  
Treason, Box 37, Brunswick East, Victoria, 3057.  
Chummy Fleming Bookshop, 26 Regent Arcade, 210 Toorak Rd, South Yarra (Libertarian Workers shop).

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**  
Freedom Collective and Libertarian Research Centre can be reached through PO Box 203, Fremantle.

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### NEW ZEALAND

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**AUSTRIA**  
Liberte, Postfach 86, 1033 Wien.  
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**FRANCE**  
Federation anarchiste francaise,  
3 Ternaux, 75011, Paris (Groups  
throughout France).  
Union Anarchiste, 9 rue de l'  
Ange, 63000 Clermont Ferrand.

**ITALY**  
Autogestione Casella Postale  
17127, 20100 Milano  
Editrice A Casella Postale 17120,  
20100 Milano  
Senzapatria c/o Mauizio Ton-  
etto, Casella Postale 647, 35500  
Padova  
c/o Piero Tognole Via C Battisti  
39, 23100 Sondrio

**BELGIUM**  
Revolutionair Anarchisties Kol-  
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Gent.

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**DENMARK**  
Aarhus: Regnbuen Anarkist Bog-  
cafe, Mejlgade 48, 8000 Aarhus.  
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gade 12, 1130 Kobenhavn K.  
Tel (01) - 12 26 82.

**NORWAY**  
ANORG, Hoxtvedtv, 31B, 1431  
As. (Publish 'Folkeblad' 4 times  
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**SWEDEN**  
Syndikalist Forum, Tenstiernas  
Gata 51, 11631-Stockholm.  
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synd bookshop), Husagatans 5,  
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**FINLAND**  
Anarkistiryhma, c/o Terttu Pesonen, Neljas Linja 14 D 83, 00530  
Helsinki 53.

IF you wish to contact other Anarcho-Pacifists in Canada and elsewhere, we are forming a section of the URI — our publication — DESOBEISSANCE CIVILE, c/o GROUPE THOR-  
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H2Y 3E9  
First issue in French and English

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**WOMEN ON THE NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST**  
Women's writings, lyrics and poetry wanted for an anthology on nuclear holocaust collected by a group of politically active women attempting to use words to inspire change and resistance. Send material to R Azen, Fjät 3, Honeywell Rd, London SW11

**CHAOS — Journal of the Pagan Anarchists — 1st issue due out soon — If you wish to contribute articles, comments or any other queries, write to:-  
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C/O R-YVES BRETN  
S/N PLACE d'ARMES,  
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### DATELINES..URGENT... PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

Comrades are asked to remember that we are a fortnightly paper, and we go to press on the MONDAY before publication.

So, er, like, our press date for this issue was Monday March 1st. This was too late for events that took place on 20th or 27th February — the press date for which was MONDAY 15th Feb.

We are sorry therefore that we were not able to print an appeal for Jumble for a Jumble Sale at 121 Bookshop, Brixton, nor for a Conference on Direct Action in Cardiff, notices for which reached us too late.

Please work it out for yourselves (you ARE anarchists aren't you?) that our press deadlines are the MONDAY AFTER the last issue.

Thank you:- Eds

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Tel: 247 3015

## DESIRES

**ISRAEL**  
Student, 23, whose passions include workers' collectives, Soccer, Zoology, Film-making, Kafka and Anarchy as a way of life and not only as theory, would like to hear from any individual. Please write to, R Ron, 16 simtat hagiva, Savyon, Israel.

**GREENHAM COMMON**  
ON Sunday 21st March to mark the spring equinox, the camp is organizing a Festival. The base has six gates, at each there will be a different theme. In the evening a blockade of the base is planned for a maximum of 24hrs. This will probably take the form of women being chained to each other and to the gates. Women particularly are invited to contact the camp at: Main Gate, RAF Greenham Common, Newbury, Berkshire, England.

**CND IN LAMBETH**  
CND groups in Lambeth are spending 1st-19th March bringing the issue of nuclear disarmament to the people of the borough in a series of activities and events. For further information contact David or Nicola Mezzetti on 01-673 7901

### HILLHEAD @NTI PARLIAMENT CAMPAIGN

Hello comrades,  
You will no doubt be aware that there will soon be a 'buy'-election at Hillhead in Glasgow featuring Woy Jenkins of the social demagogues.

In order to mount as effective an offensive as possible to expose this farce for what it is (and possibly attract some media coverage) we need money, ideas, rotten eggs, etc. Send what you can to:-  
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# People



# without government

## The Anthropology of Anarchy

*Among the lessons to be learnt from the life of rude tribes is how society can go on without the policeman to keep order (Tylor, 134)*

IN modern times there have been a few relatively successful cases of intentional communities which might be called anarchist. For a short period during the Russian Revolution and again between 1936 and 1939 in parts of Spain there were attempts to institute presumably anarchist type societies although the extent of the anarchic quality is certainly debatable. If we define anarchy in a somewhat narrow sense as any polity in which there is no ruler – that is, no government or state – then the anthropological record is full of examples. Such societies would largely be of the kind which Morton Fried called *egalitarian*, in which there are

*as many positions of prestige in any given age-sex grade as there are persons capable of filling them. Putting that another way, an egalitarian society is characterized by the adjustment of the number of valued statuses to the number of persons with abilities to fill them....An egalitarian society does not have any means of fixing or limiting the number of persons capable of exerting power (Fried, 33). Within these societies there are still differences between people and those between the sexes and between age groups are invariably formalized so as to emphasize the dominance of older males. Egalitarian societies on the whole have simpler forms of social organization than others in that there are no social ranks or classes or truly specialized occupational groups. Populations are highly homogeneous, kin orientated and face to face. Most egalitarian societies have been based upon a hunting and gathering mode of subsistence; some are horticultural depending upon the*

gardening of domesticated plants and a few have been pastoral specializing in herding.

There are I believe some rank type societies which can be considered anarchic. That is, a rank society following Fried again is *one in which positions of valued status are somehow limited so that not all those of sufficient talent to occupy such statuses actually achieve them. Such a society may or may not be stratified. That is, a society may sharply limit its positions of prestige without affecting the access of its entire membership to the basic resources upon which life depends* (Fried, 110). The traditional American Indian societies of the Northwest Coast and of central and northern California were rank societies which appear to have lacked any government.

We should not expect to find cases of anarchic systems among stratified societies since almost by definition a stratified society has a governmental structure and a state. There are, however, some interesting cases where government is so rudimentary one might well consider them marginally anarchic. Indeed, Kropotkin in *The State: Its Historic Role* used some examples of stratified societies as illustrations of peoples without government. For the most part (eg. the Medieval free city, the Mongols) he was wrong, but the Kabyle, Berber speaking villagers of northern Algeria, seem to have approached anarchy as also did the pagan Viking settlers of ancient Iceland.

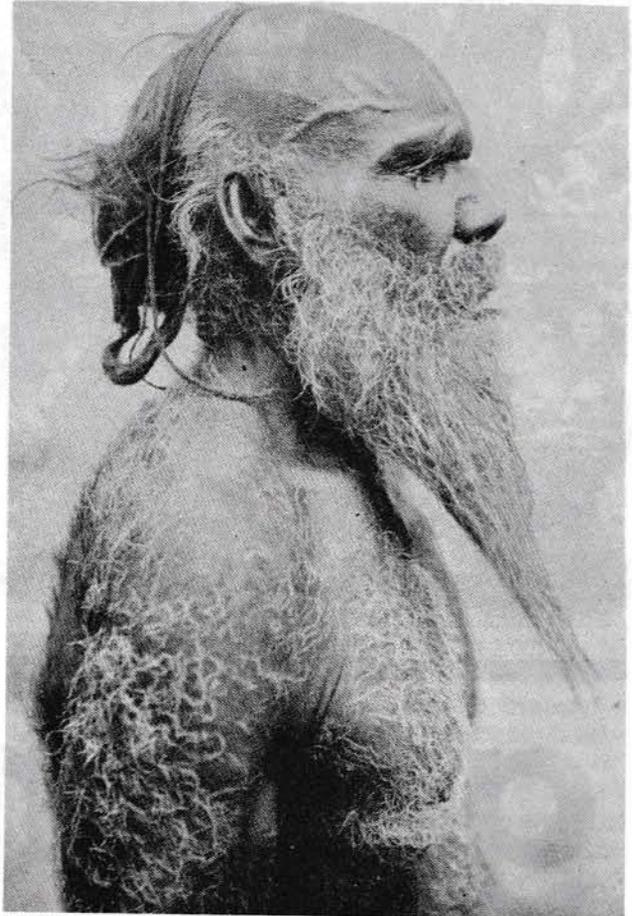
Anarchic polities occur primarily where maximum community size is between 150 and 200 persons, although there are cases of village communities in the thousands. This is to be expected since the effectiveness of the mechanisms of social control under anarchy depend heavily upon face to face relationships. These are best maintained with a small population. In addition, of course, homogeneity or minimal differentiation which often correlates with small population size, tends to reduce opportunities for conflict. Such reduction would appear to be more crucial to the survival of anarchy since it is a most fragile and brittle thing.

For the most part anarchic polities occur where there is a low density of population and where the total population of the ethnic group is in the order of a few thousands at most. Yet again, especially in Sub Saharan Africa, we find anarchic polities which encompass hundreds of thousands and even over a million (eg. Tiv, Lugbara, Nuer, Dinka). Anarchy, then, is clearly not impossible with large populations; it is, however, less likely.

Until the advent of European imperialism anarchic polities were to be found in all corners of the globe. Over and over we find Englishmen, Frenchmen, Dutchmen and others, misguided by their own cultural traditions, encountering the natives and asking to be taken to their leader or chief when they had no chief. Probably a majority of the of the societies of pre-Columbian America were anarchic. So were a considerable minority of societies in Sub Saharan Africa and probably all Australian Aboriginal societies. Many New Guinean societies have been and some are to this day anarchic as is also true of many Malayan peoples. From what little we can surmise about the nature of early social life it seems clear that until about ten thousand years ago all human societies were of the egalitarian type and were anarchic; states and governments as we know them are not more than six thousand years old. Thus, anarchy has prevailed among humans for practically their entire stay on this earth.

For the remainder of this essay I would like to concentrate on some description of what anarchy is like. The first question which always crops up in discussing the possibility of anarchy is of course: how is order maintained and chaos

averted? The Hobbesean notion that men are vicious brutes unless curtailed by government totally ignores the variety of social forces which exist in any society aside from government which aim to induce conformity and harmony. Even in our own society, rife with the powers of the police, most conform to certain general standards of behavior not because they are afraid of the police, but because of the power of their own inner police force or conscience or super-ego and because they are influenced by the attitude of neighbours and kinsmen and by public opinion in general. We note that where on occasion there is a suspension of police power, some then see this as a new found opportunity to vent their pent up hostilities and frustrations through rioting and other kinds of violence, such hostility and frustrations having been generated by what is perceived as unjust and oppressive circumstances. There is much truth in the anarchist argument that the state and government



promote violence and inhibit voluntary cooperation (see Taylor, M., 1976).

Radcliffe-Brown proposed the term sanctions to refer to the reaction of a social group towards the behavior of any of its members. Thus, a positive sanction is some form of expression of general approval. A soldier is given a medal; a scholar is awarded an honorary degree or a student an award. A negative sanction is a reaction against the behavior of a member or members and expresses then disapproval. Thus, a soldier might be court martialed, a student failed in his course work or ostracized by his fellows or a child may be slapped by his parent. Negative sanctions become the most important for any society.

Sanctions may also be categorized as being diffuse, religious or legal. Diffuse sanctions are universal to all human societies and groups; religious sanctions are nearly so while legal sanctions are restricted to those societies which have

government and the state. For legal sanctions are laws. That is, they involve the expression of disapproval of the behavior of an individual wherein (a) such expression is specifically delegated to persons holding defined social roles part of the duties of which are the execution or carrying out of such sanctions; (b) individuals in such roles have the *authority* to threaten the use of violence and to use it in order to carry out their job. Authority here means that the members of the society at least acquiesce in recognizing that individuals in such roles have a right to claim a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence in society. (c) punishments meted out in relation to the infraction are defined within certain limits and in relation to the *crime*. Therefore this constitutes a society which has policemen, courts, judges, jailers and executioners and lawmakers. This is a society which has government and the state. Anarchic polities lack legal sanctions. However, investigations



of various societies around the world show that all phenomena are not easily categorized as black or white. We find that in some anarchic polities there are sanctions which have a certain legal flavor.

In any case, ideally an anarchic polity may be said to maintain order through diffuse and religious sanctions alone. Diffuse sanctions are spontaneously applied by any one or more members of the community. Crucial to the notion of diffuse sanctions is that their application is not confined to the holder of a specific social role. In accord with egalitarian principles they may be imposed by anyone within a given age-sex grade. This is the meaning of diffuse: responsibility for and the right to impose the sanction is spread out over the community. Further, when and if sanctions are applied is variable as is the kind and intensity of the sanctions imposed. Gossip, name calling, arguing, fist fighting, ridicule, shaming, ostracism, even killing are all

probably universal forms of diffuse sanctions. Duelling and formal wrestling matches or ritualized song competitions in which two opponents try to outdo one another in insults before an audience which acts as judge are all Eskimo forms of diffuse sanctions. The effectiveness of diffuse sanctions is enhanced as the entire community joins in participation. Diffuse sanctions may also have an organized quality with concerted group action as in a vigilante action or a feud. In many societies fines and other punishments may be imposed on a person or a group by an assembly. These are still diffuse sanctions of a more formalized type if the assembly has no authority to use force to execute its decision. In such instances the assembly members act as mediators rather than as judges or arbitrators and are successful to the extent that they can convince two disputing parties to come to some compromise.

The third kind of sanctions is religious and entails the threat of supernatural punishment. Such sanctions include those which require a human mediator — executor and those which are believed to be direct and automatic. The invocation of a curse or the practice of *black magic* requires humans to initiate the action of the supernatural. On the other hand, if one believes that infractions of certain rules automatically result in acquiring certain kinds of illness, this entails the direct action of the supernatural. Of less importance is the fact that some religious sanctions bring forth punishment in this life while others are intended for a life after death.

Now it may be asked how can anarchic society engage in the uses of force even in the form of diffuse sanctions and how can it condone supernatural sanctions when especially as Bakunin taught God is as evil a form of irrational authority as is the State. It may be argued that voluntary cooperation is integral to any conception of anarchy. Voluntary cooperation, however, is a most ambiguous term presumably suggesting a freedom from coercion. Yet there are all kinds of coercion and to oppose them all is to resign oneself to a state of total inaction. By their own practice and writings anarchists themselves have not rejected coercion. Their notion of voluntary cooperation admits to the legitimacy of certain forms of coercion. They do not recognize the coercion inherent in the state or the church, but do and have resorted to various forms of diffuse sanctions. One might think that the ultimate form of coercion — threatening to take the life of another — would be universally opposed by anarchists, but anarchists have not ordinarily been pacifists. They have not adequately explained how violence can be wrong for the state, but right for a self appointed body of world saviours. Among anarchist theoreticians only Tolstoy and, in modern times, Paul Goodman, seem to be consistent in this regard, for the logic of anarchism would appear to suggest that anarchists should be pacifists just as the logic of pacifism would appear to imply anarchism. Be that as it may, the concept of voluntary cooperation must allow for the use of some kind of coercive force. Some kind of diffuse sanctions must be acceptable. Such sanctions are, I believe, amenable to both anarchy and the idea of voluntary cooperation in that as we have stated above these sanctions are *diffuse*. They are not monopolized by one or few, but available to all. There is no formalized institutionalized system external to the individual.

How can religious sanctions be justified in an anarchic system? Clearly one distinction which can be recognized immediately is that between a religious sanction imposed by some human holder of a special religious status and one presumably imposed directly by the supernatural itself. Again Tolstoy seems perhaps more consistent in rejecting

the authority of a Church — a human institution — and accepting the direct divine authority. Certainly he was more consistent than the Catholic Worker movement which claims to mix the oil of anarchism with the water of the hierarchical and authoritarian Roman Catholic Church.

In most of the anarchic polities it appears that religious sanctions are not monopolized by some ritual office holder, nor can that person claim any monopoly on the legitimate uses of violence. Rather religious sanctions amenable to an anarchic polity are diffuse — distributed among the many — and so must be seen in a different light than pure legal sanctions, just as direct sanctions from the supernatural are different from those imposed by a religious functionary.

Another important consideration regarding anarchic polities concerns the kind of leadership which prevails. In all human societies and groups some individuals come to stand out as important and prestigious persons. There is a fundamental difference between leadership in an anarchic polity and in a governmental system. In an anarchic system no one is recognized as having a legitimate monopoly on the use of force (violence). Leadership tends more often to be an achieved status based upon the proven qualities of the individual. The leader is a man of influence able to hold his position so long as he proves his worthiness. Truly his leadership stands or falls on his ability to *win friends and influence people*, because he has no police force to compel obedience. In an anarchic polity the leader may be better seen as a coordinator.

There are at least four different kinds of leadership found in the anarchist societies around the world. Among some groups only one kind prevails while in others all four may be found although usually one tends to be most important. We may call the different kinds: (1) the Big Man, (2) the Holy Man, (3) the Technician and (4) the Old Man.

The Big Man is one who becomes a central focus for attention and direction in a community because of his proven abilities to manipulate wealth, words and people. He is therefore a wealthy man and ordinarily a good orator, a skillful mediator, and a good warrior. He will also have certain abilities with the supernatural forces. By utilizing these various skills he gradually builds around him a body of followers who are in a way dependent upon him, as he in turn becomes dependent upon them. Central to the achievement of Big Man status is a man's ability to show hospitality and generosity, particularly in food. All of this is reinforced by oratorical capability. Within the system of reciprocity which prevails in such systems, once one has extended his generosity and hospitality to another this demands reciprocation which for a poorer man may mean working in some way for the Big Man. As the latter expands on his gift giving and offering of feasts he becomes more dependent upon these lesser lights to supplement his larder. In such systems there is obviously much competition between men and too often once a man becomes a Big Man he can become overbearing and too demanding. He may no longer seek to legitimate his position in his achievement and proven merits alone but may abandon these to attempt the role of the tyrant in which he might be successful until he is killed usually by one or more of his *subjects*. Today we see the Big Man as the characteristic leader of the New Guinea Highlands community. Northwest Coast Indians likewise developed a rank system and elaborate gift giving complex called the potlatch in connection with this conception of leadership. In the Philippines — the Ifugao are a case in point — influential men depend heavily upon building a reputation as go-betweens or mediators in disputes and in being able to bring successfully some dispute to a

peaceful resolution. Not only do they gain notoriety for their ability as peacemakers but since they are paid for their endeavors they enhance their wealth with each case.

The Holy Man acquires his position as a prestigious leader through his knowledge of things supernatural along with his proven ability to influence them. In some cases Holy Men have an ascribed status; they are born into families of Holy Men and inherit the position and its power. This is true of this position among Berbers and in other Muslim polities where the Holy Man is either a descendant of a saint or of the Prophet or both. An outstanding leadership feature of the Holy Man is his role as a mediator of disputes. Among the Nuer of the southern Sudan, a population of 3-400,000 cattle herding pastoralists, there is a man known, misleadingly, as the leopard skin chief. He does not rule or judge but is a *mediator through whom communities desirous of ending open hostilities can conclude an active state of feud* (Evans-Pritchard, 293). He also mediates in other kinds of disputes. In any case all the leopard skin chief can do is ask the parties to discuss a conflict and only if both sides are agreeable to arbitration can the matter be settled. The ultimate power of this chief is to curse those who will not agree to a suggested settlement. This is indeed the nearest the Nuer come to any governmental structure and for one who firmly believes in the power of the curse it possesses therefore a force similar to that of the policeman in our society ordering someone off to jail at the point of a gun. On the other hand, unlike the policeman's pistol, the curse is not a weapon legitimately confined to the leopard skin chief alone for others as well have the power to invoke the supernatural, though it may not be as potent a force. The leopard skin chief also decides appropriate compensations in accord with well established Nuer custom, but as Evans-Pritchard makes clear this does not make a legal system *for there is no constituted and impartial authority who decides on the rights and wrongs of a dispute and there is no external power to enforce such a decision were it given*.

The Lugbara, a largely horticultural people living south of the Nuer have rainmakers whose role is similar to the leopard skin chiefs. Many Moroccan Berbers whose system could not be considered exactly anarchist also rely heavily



upon holy men as mediators between kin groups in a manner similar to the leopard skin chief. They do not however have the power to curse, yet their decisions are obeyed not only because of the fear of adverse public opinion, but also because one does not want to alienate the holy men, a most influential group who can be of great help to the layman.

Another kind of holy man is the shaman whose power comes from his knowledge of proper rituals aimed at influencing or controlling supernatural forces in his favor. Such a person can become extremely influential and powerful especially in an anarchic society where one might say there tends to be a power vacuum. Thus, in traditional Eskimo society, which one might describe as almost an individualist anarchist polity, shamans have been known to employ their powers to frighten a community into submitting to them. Like the Big Man in New Guinea such a shaman can only go so far before he will be killed by one or several members of the community.

The third kind of leader in anarchist polities is the Technician. Again this is an achieved status and refers primarily to hunting and gathering societies where one or more individuals gains a reputation as a great hunter and so acquires a following. If he is not only a good hunter but also a good and reasonable man this following will tend to remain constant at its maximal size. If, however, he appears tyrannical his following will be minimal except during a famine or other hard times when it will increase. We should bear in mind that among nomadic hunting peoples there is an obligation to share food within the group and, further, group membership is not rigidly established and maintained. People leave one group to join another without much difficulty.

Finally we have the kind of society in which chief men of influence are the Old Men. This position derives its prestige not only from the age and sex of its holders but it also has a religious base as well. Old men are closest to the sources of ancient tradition and are the living persons closest to the sacred ancestors. The old men are important also because they are senior kinsmen: they are grandfathers. In Australian Aboriginal society the older men are holders of highest status. They are obeyed out of a sense of moral

obligation, but also these men know the sacred rituals and mythology of the people. Every man has to acquire this knowledge if he is to become a full initiate into the society. Thus, the elders hold it in their power to refuse to impart the necessary information to a man and so deprive him of his manhood.

Most of Africa is strongly patriarchal and thus we find many anarchic polities in which senior males of a kinship group are at the apex of a status pyramid. Their influence and power is based upon their senior status within the kinship system. The elder within each comparable kin group is equal to any other and on occasion the elders assemble in order to mediate disputes. I stress the word mediate. There is no mechanism for enforcement other than a sense of moral obligation. Incidentally as a general rule it might be said that among a very large number of societies and particularly those with anarchic polities the idea of *justice* is not to punish the guilty so much as it is to reestablish an equilibrium or harmony which has been disturbed by conflict. Thus there is an emphasis upon compensation and trying to make both sides happy.

The Old Man syndrome is different from some kind of rule by a favored class because of the simple fact that every young man who may now feel resentful of the power of his grandfather can at least look forward to the time when he will have the position of a senior male. In this system ideally all males eventually graduate to the top status.

As a final note on the character of order and decision making in anarchic polities let me say a word about how decisions within assembled groups tend to be made. Anarchists have always been suspicious of the notion of majority vote for fear of the potential oppressiveness of that majority. There are also doubts that morality or truth can be determined by majority vote. Anarchic polities as well do not resort to the exercise of majority vote. Most have depended upon the principle of unanimity or consensus. In some cases there is the use of the lot. Consensus politics requires discussion of an issue until every one involved at least acquiesces to a decision. No one in other words any longer voices opposition even though there may be lingering doubts. If such consensus is not reached the issue may be postponed for consideration at a later time. Sometimes it may never be resolved, although if an important issue this is not likely. Consensus politics invariably entails back room intrigue and quiet diplomacy as well as some *arm twisting* – usually in private. Thus, while one might say that it appears designed to protect minorities in practice some advantage might be taken of dissenters.

Incidentally this old consensus technique is the basic method used by Friends in conducting their business meetings. Nothing is decided as final until there is a *sense of the meeting*. Friends often describe their technique as democratic. In fact, it is not democratic at all, but clearly a good example of anarchic procedure.

Needless to say the consensus technique works best where there is a high degree of group homogeneity. Where there are sharply drawn parties the decision making process becomes obstructed, a factor which leads either to abandoning this kind of technique or to a break up of the group.

Order in society is not only maintained by various sanctions and the influence of its important men. Order and conformity both occur because members of society want to conform. They wish to accommodate to their kinsmen and neighbors. Human beings are conservative animals – creatures of custom and habit. They prefer the security of the predictable and the well established. We see all this in



the great tenacity of most social customs and the trauma which goes with social and cultural change. Contrary to some Marxists, conservatism and suspicion of rapid change are not entirely the product of an upper class conspiracy.

Proudhon made mutualism one of the great cornerstones of his anarchist society. This mutualism – the free and equal contract which is of mutual benefit to both parties – is merely the reciprocity which some anthropologists have since recognized as being in the very nature of social life and especially the social life of so-called primitive man. Levi-Strauss has even considered reciprocity as imbedded in the human mind. Following him Pierre Clastres argues that in the various binary oppositions deduced from the nature of South American Indian cultures we have among other things the opposition of culture to nature and at the same time the opposition of society to the state. This arises because while society is inherently reciprocal the state is a non-reciprocal institution in which those in power receive more than they give. Thus, it is anti-social. However true this kind of interpretation may be it is clear that reciprocity is a very significant social force. It is the vehicle for the distribution of goods in simpler societies and as such it compels conformity.

I have all too briefly attempted to give some idea of what functioning anarchies are like especially in terms of the mechanisms for maintaining order. These societies are not the ideal anarchist society of the nineteenth century theoreticians. Anarchic polities invariably stress discrimination between male and female and between different age groups so that there is a dominance of older males. The diffuse sanctions which prevail often entail a form of self help or a general kind of communal reaction which can readily be oppressive and severe. But while we have no statistics I doubt that the amount of deaths by violence or the extent of strife and fear of others is as great as in a governmental regime – particularly one of the present day. Anarchic polities do seem to be readily capable of producing tyranny. Usually if someone, as in Eskimo or New Guinean society, wants to bully and order people around, and he has the power to do so, there is no way to curb his behavior aside from killing him.

Perhaps these anarchic polities teach at least two important lessons aside from the one quoted from Tylor at the commencement of this article: First, that the mere absence of the state and government need not mean freedom. Second, there exists an on going tension between anarchy and organization in which the latter pressures the social system in the direction of oligarchy. And from this we may conclude that whatever the social system it will always be imperative to keep vigil for freedom.

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Harold Barclay



#### SEXISM AND SEXUALITY

Review of Anja Meulenbelt et al, *FOR OURSELVES*. Sheba Feminist Publishers, 1981 £4.50, 255pp.

NOT so long ago, this book would have been banned as obscene. One of the few positive things to be said about the western capitalist democracies is that the threshold of repressive intolerance towards honest, natural discussion of matters sexual has improved significantly in the past 10-15 years. The Women's Movement, in all its contradictory complexity, has played an important part in this process. It's important not to exaggerate this contribution, however. The sexual revolution of the sixties and seventies remains dominated and exploited by the total system of sexist institutions which anti-sexist women and men seek to change. Not surprisingly, 'feminist' thinking and practice means and aims, frequently succumb to insidious features of the sexist system.

There are two such characteristics of feminist sexism which particularly require critical attention. The first is the ideology and practice of 'feminist' *exclusivism* in all its forms. Instead of insisting on the free and equal *human* being as the subject (means) and object (aim) of one's anti-sexist endeavours, too many women exclude men from some or all of the domains of daily struggle. This is simply collaboration in sexism. A movement which aims at a society of free and equal human beings must be what it's for. In this precise sense, all Libertarians are 'feminists' (anti-sexist), but not all 'feminists' are libertarian – genuinely anti-sexist.

The second respect in which much 'feminist' thinking and practice remains warped by and trapped in the very sexist norms it seeks to abolish, concerns the tendency to reduce sexuality to sex, in two distinct but related senses. The first is the project of defining human sexuality in terms of the ideology or *object-choice*, the men, women,

beasts, machines, whatever, who are (at any particular time) the objects of one's sexual desires and the means to their satisfaction. Thus women and men label themselves and others as 'heterosexual', 'homosexual', 'bisexual', 'a foot fetishist', 'necrophiliac', or whatever.

In fact, however, human sexuality cannot be reduced to object-choice. Sexuality means the *range* of forms of free expression of our natural (and acquired) sexual powers, or it means nothing. Most of us, in large part due to the 'civilizing sheepdip' of infantile and adult social (sexist) repression, know almost nothing of our natural sexual powers. We remain in crippled, stunted ignorance of what free sexual expression in all its forms and aspects, in every domain, might be like. To reduce our sexual powers to object-choice is to substitute sex for sexuality – precisely the practice of 'normal' male sexist society.

The second sense in which many 'feminists' tend to reduce sexuality to sex concerns their immurement in an *instrumental* conception of sexual relations. In normal sexist society, men use women as instruments or objects of their own pleasure. Love-making reduces to relations of subject-object instrumental exploitation. The (Libertarian) ideal of love-making as free, reciprocal giving and receiving as an end in itself, for its own sake, between independent equals (subjects) is radically different. Many 'feminists' – perhaps in reaction to Freud's view that women were disposed by nature and conditioning to be masochistic – have remained trapped in this sexist reduction of love-making to instrumental self-pleasuring (sex), as the means and aim of the sexual exercise.

In many respects, this book by Dutch feminist Anja Meulenbelt and others, is an extremely valuable contribution to anti-sexist understanding and practice. All women and men can and should read it with profit. It should be in every library and home, for each boy and girl (Meulenbelt's co-author is 'Johanna's daughter'). Having said this, the fact remains that *FOR OURSELVES* – subtitled *From women's point of view: our bodies and sexuality* – has been put together by women for women. As such, it is of necessity restricted in its discussion of *human* sexuality. It

is, surely, obvious that we can understand the *specificities* of the sexuality of women only if we understand the sexual natures of human beings in general, and the features of male sexuality as well.

*FOR OURSELVES* chooses instead to opt for an untenable version of the ideology of 'sisterhood'. In fact, the very idea that there can or should exist such a thing as a/the 'women's' 'point of view' of 'our' bodies and 'sexuality', is nonsense. In practice, while paying lip-service to sexual-sexist contradictions concerning female-male relations, *FOR OURSELVES* is essentially a contribution to the ideology of sexist exclusivism. The principal focus is on female-female relations. As far as love-making goes, the emphasis is predominantly 'lesbian'.

From a libertarian point of view, of course, there is nothing wrong with this. On the contrary, women must be free to explore and enjoy their sexuality with whatever 'sex objects' they desire. In the book's essentially male-exclusivist limitations, however, lesbianism becomes a restrictive sexist ideology, rather than (as it should be) simply every woman's free right and option.

While *FOR OURSELVES* makes a real effort not to reduce sexuality to object choice, there is throughout a strong tendency to do so. Moreover, there is an equally unfortunate disposition to see one's 'sex objects' in instrumental terms, as objects or means to one's own sexual pleasure – an underlying ideology which vitiated Meulenbelt's otherwise admirable *THE SHAME IS OVER* (Women's Press, 1980).

*FOR OURSELVES* is wonderfully illustrated, designed and presented. Meulenbelt, her collaborators and Sheba Press are to be commended for a handsome, very worthwhile production. This is, in the best sense, a highly informative manual to help women know their own bodies. If the book is less valuable (because of its unwitting sexist assumptions) on the far more difficult subject of sexuality, it remains both a symptom of the difficulty of making sense of sexuality in our sexist society, and a stimulus and challenge to do better.

JULIE SOUTHWOOD

# crime in society

*CRIME AND SOCIETY: Readings in History & Theory*  
Compiled by Mike Fitzgerald, Gregor McLennan and Jennie Pawson

Routledge and Keegan Paul in association with The Open University Press 1981

ISBN 0 7100 0944 5 £8.95 paperback.

*CRIME and society* is the reader for the new Open University third level Deviancy course (number D 335) commencing in 1982. In construction and outlook the book appears to lean rather heavily towards that particular notion of Marxist theorising on deviance within the styles of thinking epitomised by The National Deviancy Conference, a group of Marxists who might well call themselves libertarian Marxists were this not a contradiction in terms. These are largely a break-away group of criminologists, who do not feel either the British Sociological Association or the Cambridge Institute of Criminology-type researching leads towards much fruitful discourse. Like all Marxists they are highly utopian in their aims, or at least they might

be if they could articulate any specific objectives, and spend much of their time on the periphery of academic life carping at other fellow researchers. On the other hand they have produced an, often enviable, array of books and articles on education, poverty, social problems, social policy, youth culture and, of course, criminology. Their influence is much greater than their numbers and than any outside academic life realise. This book has much merit and is likely to have a much wider readership than the limitations imposed by being an Open University student.

Until very recently much sociological theorising has neglected historical perspectives for methodological discourse but as Poulantzas has pointed out methodology is not innocent. It takes its style from the ideological perspective of the researcher. Research itself is situated within contemporary cultural forms themselves part of concurrent ongoing historical processes. It is seldom that the researcher innovates in any really creative sense. New thinking is only apparently new; it builds on its own immediate past. This however is something neglected within recently contemp-

orary sociology and needs redress. This is something which this book attempts to remedy if even from a more than, rather than less than, Marxist paradigm or world view.

The student of poverty research is usually introduced to the subject by passing mention of the journalism, later drafted into book form, of Henry Mayhew, but few have access to the textual original and must needs pass on to the more accessible Charles Booth (no relation to the Sally Army man) or the ultimately more contemporary Seebohm Rowntree. It is a great pity because the reason for Mayhew's impact in the early Victorian period was because he was a writer of discernment and depth. This book has three excellent extracts on the *rookery of St Giles*, *costermongers and other street folk* and *street children of London*. Mayhew's writing on these, the dangerous classes are well supported by other articles.

Criminal law and ideology are not neglected for there is an extract from Douglas Hay. I still feel Hay's book *Albion's Fatal Tree* coupled with E P Thompson's *Whigs and Hunters* and from an earlier context H N Brailsford's *The Levellers* should be prescribed reading for the young libertarian revolutionary to give contextual depth to their anger. Ignatieff's article on the *origins of the penitentiary* should successfully immunise against the pseudo-historical notion that the English prison system had something to do with nineteenth century reform movements. It is surprising

how many otherwise knowledgeable people fail to make the link between the monastery and prison in the notion of the cell.

The section on policing makes the book worth reading for that alone. *Theory* articles on developments in criminological thinking by Stan Cohen; *models of criminology* by Jock Young; *social disorganisation theories* by Frank Heathcote plus many others both fill in gaps for the uninitiated and make plain present trends for the knowledgeable enthusiast. Seen within the contexts of summer festivities in Brixton, Toxteth and the like much of the book's background writing and future conjectures appear illuminating. It is a very contemporary book. For those who need to read a good book on economic and social history concurrently I have only one comment: having read the latter prior to becoming an anarchist I had an awful lot to unlearn. This book and many others I could name should be on any radical's reading list. 'They do not mention anarchism?' Tough. Neither do many other good books. To answer this properly would sound like intellectual vanguardism. The authors and their writers are on the right track, provide useful directives, we are thinking individuals, let us not expect others to do all our reasoning for us. Tools exist in thinking. Information is useful. It is up to us to utilise it appropriately.

PETER NEVILLE

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