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FREEDOM



Living Anarchy Delegating Power

Magnificent Miners

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Freedom is edited by David Peers, Colin
Johnstone, Bella Melville, John Anderson,
Stu Stuart, Nick d'Nib and Cam.

Angel Alley Group

We have now restored the old tradition of
informal meetings EVERY THURSDAY
at 7:00pm here in Angel Alley, 84b . . .
alternating helping A Distribution, the
Bookshop and Freedom one week with
friendly chats the next. It is from the
regular Alley Angels, as we call them, that
people are invited to join the Freedom
editorial collective, if they so wish.

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Nicholas Walter in Hospital

As we go to press we regret to announce
that Nicholas Walter is seriously ill in
hospital. In December Nicholas had an
operation to remove about a metre of
his small intestine. He went home for
Christmas, but grew weaker and was
re-admitted to hospital in mid-January.
He had an operation on 30th January
and as we write is being drip-fed.

It is with a certain sense of awe that
we note that none of this has prevented
Nicholas from churning out letters to
the *Guardian* and the *Observer* as usual,
or articles too numerous to list (including

a review of three news items in December
'84 *Freedom*).

Nicholas' health has been a problem
since he had cancer about ten years ago
(knowing Nick, he'll probably write in
to correct that date). He has been very
firm about not wishing to be visited in
hospital and the simplest way to respect
his wishes is not to tell you lot out there
which hospital he's in. However, we're
sure he'd appreciate the odd get-well
card or friendly letter. These may be
sent to the RPA who will get them to
him the same day.

Meanwhile, since Nick will probably
be reading this very shortly, we shall
give him cause to blush with the following
message. *Get well soon, mate. We can
ill-afford to lose a man who has combined
dedication to the truth with a sturdy
fighting spirit in such an admirable
fashion these many years.*

We are certain that this message will be
seconded by an impressive army of friends
and fans around the world.

Letters to: The Rationalist Press
Association, 88 Islington High Street,
London N1 8EW

LETTERS

Broadside — A continuing saga of Anarcho's

Freddy fell out with Bert because he voted
labour at the last election. Bert's girlfriend
Flossy fell out with Freddy because he
propositioned her one evening, which
wouldn't have been so bad if Freddy
didn't smell of garlic at the time. Flossy
told Bert that Freddy was sexist because
he only saw her as a sex object.

However, Bert admired Freddy and
promised him he'd never vote labour
(or for anybody else) again. Freddy had,
by this time, gotten involved with CND,
non-violent direct action and feminism,
because he had a feminist girlfriend called
Gerty.

Bert told Freddy what Flossy had told
him about Freddy, to which Freddy
replied that he was merely trying to be
kind to Flossy because she had hairy
legs and Freddy, being an anti-sexist, was

trying to fancy girls with hairy legs.

Gerty gave Bert a lecture on how
wimmin were the most oppressed people
of all, then she drove off in her Rover,
nearly knocking Bert off his push bike.

Flossy fell out with Bert over him
betraying her confidence regarding Freddy.
Bert started to hate Freddy, Flossy and
Gerty from then on.

Bert began to publish a mag with his
friend Sid. Flossy, Gerty and Freddy also
published a mag. Both mags printed
arguments about each other and involved
people who never knew that Flossy was
Bert's lover and Freddy his closest
friend.

Sid tried to be objective, although he
always got a lot of flak for what Bert
wrote from the readers of the other
paper.

Flossy met Bert in the street one day and
they had a row over anarcho-syndicalism
and its treatment of homosexuals. Flossy
ran screaming into the street and got run
over by Gerty who was pissed after a row
with Freddy about his excessive garlic
eating.

Flossy is now in a coma and Sid feels
like it was all his fault, despite the fact
that he was collecting for the miners at
the time.

Sid spends every day at Flossy's bed-
side trying to bring her out of her coma,
but Sid's boyfriend Harry isn't too
pleased about it all and has suspicions
that Sid is going straight.

Meanwhile, Bert has made it up with
Freddy, and Gerty has gone off to Green-
ham because she says she finds male
companionship intolerable.

Harry agreed to look after Gerty's
two year old son Pansy because it is
really Harry who is beginning to go
straight and he is trying to creep around
Gerty and her money. Pansy is a first
class brat and has bruised Harry's head
with his alternative toy replica of a
bronze age oven.

Interested? Then follow it up in next
month's predictable episode of *Broadside*.

Keep it all going you lovely people . . .
lots of good.

Zeno Evil
Plymouth



Comment on Green AIT

Frank Richardson's piece in *Freedom* Jan '85 (Green AIT) linking the anarcho-syndicalist and ecological movements contained much sense, but his last sentence about everybody joining the AIT (the anarchist international, AIT or IAA or IWA) needs a qualifying note . . . namely that the AIT should be worth joining.

An influential W German magazine's opinion poll on political opinions about a year ago indicated over 150,000 Germans consider themselves anarchist/anarcho-syndicalist. Yet the German AIT branch, the I-FAU, have just received a substantial boost in membership (due to the anti-nuclear/peace movement, Green CND and anarchists please note) up to only 300.

There are certainly many more anarchists in the UK than there are in the DAM, so what conclusion can we draw? Simply that over 95% of all anarchists stay away from the AIT. It is said that in Germany workerist dogmatism and CNT-worship keep most anarchists away from the AIT. In Sweden too, the AIT affiliates maintain a distance from the syndicalist union SAC (despite that, the major SAC-haters in the AIT actually work for SAC) instead of bringing the SAC into the AIT.

The present function of the AIT is to give some anarchists a revolutionary stamp of approval rather than to internationally co-ordinate anarchists, and this must change before anarchists join in large numbers. The AIT has a long history (but no longer any prestige) behind it, but it must lose its elitism and practice a little more anarchism, co-ordinating all kinds of groups and leaving heavy hand and party line behind, before anarchists trust it again.

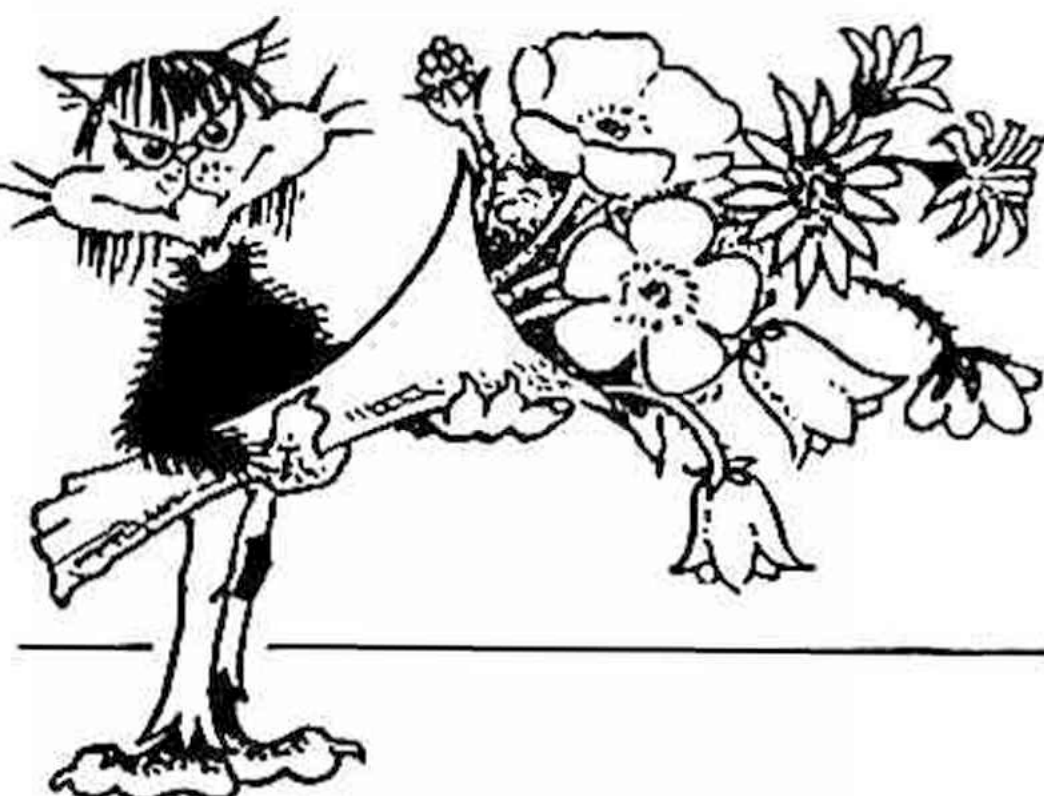
Rob
W Germany

Dear Freedom Collective,
First I like the new format. A4 size makes for easier storage if nothing else and sensible sized margins again, amazing. Secondly, even as a member of the DAM, I'm getting pissed off with all the mutual slagging-off by various people. In terms of the current faction-fight I support Mick Larkin, but filling up *Freedom* with the whole business is getting boring, as is the fight with *Black Flag*. To the vast majority of readers I should think it's equally boring, though probably easier to write than a lot of other things. It strikes me as the polemic of the impotent to fill pages up with all these diatribes. [Eds. Yes, it is].

Anyway that's the way things are, hope you all have a good year and keep up the hard work of bringing out *Freedom* despite the carping complaints of wingers on the side lines, like me.

Clem Turiff

PS I'd also like you to help me with something else if possible. A group of us in this area are looking into starting a pirate radio station and would welcome any ideas both technical and practical at this address: 28 Lucknow Drive, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 4LS.



Rainbow Fields is Molesworth's site of the second Cruise missiles base in the UK. At the present time between 100 and 200 people of all persuasions (including children) are here in a variety of vehicles and structures. This base could be the turning point in the European Theatre of War if it's planned construction due

to start in the Spring of '85 goes ahead. We would like our message to get across to as many people as possible — NO CRUISE AT MOLESWORTH.

Victory to the miners.

Stuart Wilmot
Rainbow Fields Peace Village,
Old Weston Road, Brington,
Nr Huntingdon, Cambs.

PS Everyone is welcomed at Rainbow Fields.



Swiss Aid

In our anarchist group here in Geneva we have been discussing the miners strike in Great Britain and come to the conclusion that we would prefer to support a local anarchist group in the strikers area, who are trying to radicalise the action of the miners and do some propaganda, rather than perform some humanitarian aid to the trade union committees. If it is not too much trouble for you could you give us some addresses of such local anarchist groups working on the miners' struggle?

Thank you very much.

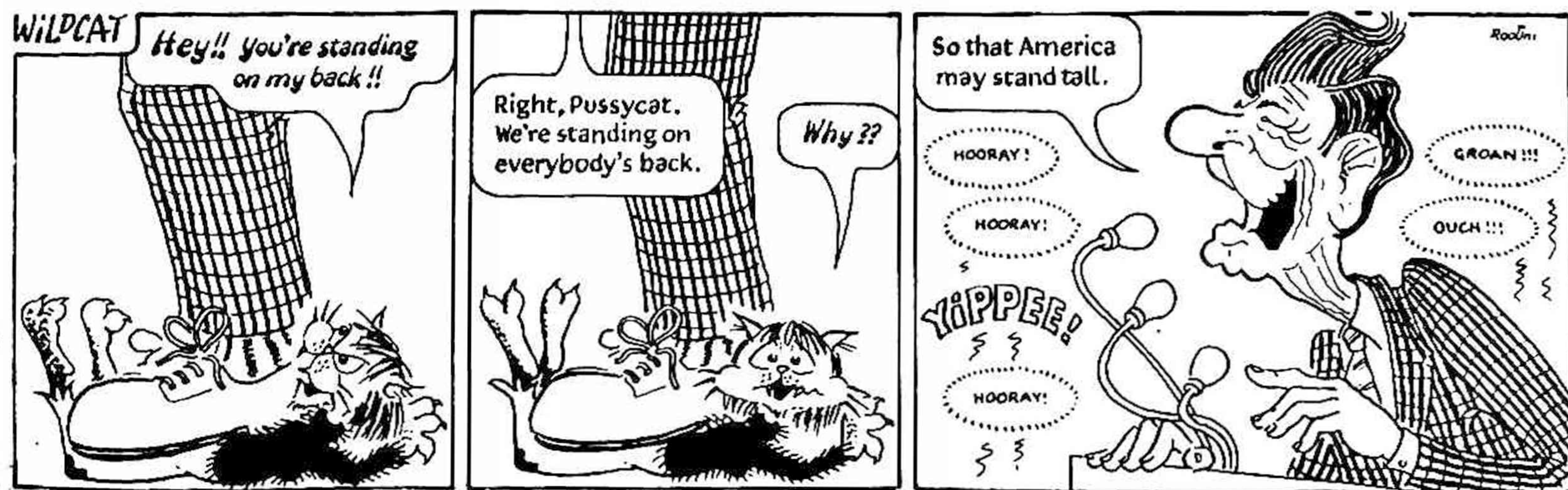
CARG
Case Postale 97
1211 GENEVE 9

[Anyone want to 'volunteer' themselves for a hand-out?]

Dear Comrades,

Please could you notify your readers that Huddersfield DAM has re-formed and can be contacted at the address below, to which all mail should be sent.

Please note that we are quite separate from the anarchist group at 'Peaceworks'.
Huddersfield DAM
Old Stewards House
Northgate
Huddersfield HD1 1RL



DAM NUM Congress

It was the biggest industrial gathering initiated by direct actionists since the Industrial Rank and File Movement in the early 1960's. Burnley DAM and Burnley Miner's Support Group deserve full credit for organising the Congress on Jan 19th, designed to improve the effectiveness of the Miner's strike.

Speakers included: Peter Heathfield, General Secretary of the NUM, Dave Douglas, Hatfield Main NUM, Tony Crowther, National Secretary of DAM (NUR), and a speaker from Lancashire NUM. Douglas, an old syndicalist sympathiser, attacked the authoritarian left and advocated a direct actionist approach and tactics.

Heathfield gave a rallying speech aimed more at the press than the Congress. His main message was 'stand firm'. He did, however, complain about the Government and Coal Board strategy to

restructure the coal industry and the economy in general, without offering an NUM alternative strategy.

Of late the NUM has, perhaps in desperation, shifted towards appealing to rank and file trade union members over the heads of their union bosses. If this gains force in the labour movement it may result in a move away from regimented 'top-down' trade unionism to genuine grass-roots industrial action and control.

What came out at the Congress and in the commissions is that direct action tactics by themselves are not enough. Of course, imaginative direct action is vital, and the information from the power workers and other shopfloor militants at Congress was useful. But what is really required, both by the NUM and the direct actionists of DAM and other organisations, is an Alternative Strategy both for

mining and society as a whole.

Of course, in the limited time available at this Congress, it was only possible to sketch the outlines for future action and organisation. Proposals included; support for a 1 day Solidarity Strike on March 6th, more action at Power Stations in the North West, and the creating of permanent Miner's Support Groups as a means of furthering rank and file organisation generally.

Ultimately, however, any social movement which seeks public support and approval, must try to develop a comprehensive alternative programme and strategy which is recognisably relevant to British society. Future Congresses must be aware of this and if possible address themselves to it.

Rochdale DAM

Police Attack CNT

The CNT of Euzkadi (the Basque country) has undergone a serious attack from the police. From 27th to 29th November last, several militants of the CNT-E (Basque section of the CNT Unificado) and one official of the Socialist dominated union, the UGT, were rounded up.

The charges were: membership of armed organisations (FIGA, Iberian Federation of Anarchist Groups, and CCAA, Autonomous Anti-capitalist Commandos); participation in the shooting to death of Casanova, a Michelin director; attacks on several banks; raising a revolutionary levy; menaces against the employers; various acts of sabotage.

Since then the UGT member has been released and all charges dropped. But the charges still stand against the others. While in prison, the comrades underwent torture, and while most of them are out on bail, three remain in prison. These are Andres Sanchez, Vicente Alvarado and Jose Manuel Collado (even though he

paid the bail demanded of 400,000 pesetas).

The CNT-U, known as workers involved in mass action, deny the charges against them and see them as a pretext to weaken their organisation and hinder its growth in Euzkadi, where it has taken off, especially in Vitoria. Only mass demonstrations in Seville got the release and dropping of charges against Ramon Rodriguez, secretary of the agricultural workers union of the CNT-U. In Vitoria 4,000 struck and demonstrated with the CNT-U against the arrests.

It has been known that the CNT-E had been planning a campaign against the introduction of a fourth shift at the Michelin factory.

The three comrades, all militants in Vitoria, have now been transferred to the Carabanchel prison in Madrid. The charges of belonging to armed organisations have been dropped by the national judiciary. This caused a clash with the

local judiciary and police who want these charges maintained.

The charges have been used as an excuse by the bosses and the 'Socialists' to start a campaign against the CNT-U in the workplaces, through the UGT, accusing them of being synonymous with terrorism.

So much for the 'Socialist' government of Felipe Gonsales, which uses beatings, electric shock and near-drowning in baths against libertarian workers.

Please write or send telegrams to the Spanish Embassy and to Felipe Gonsales demanding the immediate release of the comrades. Set up local committees to organise publicity/demonstrations against the arrests.

Nick Heath

Member of Spanish Information Network
Contact through 49a South Terrace,
Esh Winning, Co Durham DH7 9PS

Raid on Alconbury

On 20th June around 7:00am, 30 police officers raided Alconbury Peace Camp, arresting all five people present, searching the camp and removing property belonging to the campers. In the next month another four people were arrested — and the Alconbury 9 was born. USAF Alconbury is a reconnaissance base near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire, and is the home for a wide variety of spy planes and nuclear

weapons. By late 1985/86 it will be the control base of the 64 Cruise missiles that the military plan to site at nearby USAF Molesworth. The peace campers are charged with 'conspiracy to cause criminal damage', and face up to five years if they are found guilty.

It has been stated by the prosecution that the peace campers' political beliefs are contrary to the laws of this society.

The trial prosecutor further declared in December 1984: "In order to prove a conspiracy to commit criminal damage, it is not necessary to link specific incidents with specific people".

More information can be obtained from: Alconbury 9 Defence Campaign, c/o 54 Allison Street, Digbeth, Birmingham



Bedford Anarchists

Greetings and news from the Bedford Anarchist Collective!

On December 1st, just eight members of BAC made a shambles of Bedford. After distributing leaflets around the market, butchers' shops and MacDonald's junk food outlet, two of us ascended scaffolding against St Peters Church, attaching a 'Coal Not Dole' banner there.

We then went to the local NIREX office (they're the Nuclear Industries Waste Disposal Executive: they want to dump killer waste just south of the town and the local Tory MP, Trevor Skeet, is all for it) and after replacing their free leaflets with ours, it was smoke bombed.

Whilst four of us were arrested, the rest went on to hurl smoke bombs and leaflets into the Conservative Christmas Fayre, seriously disrupting it. The children of striking miners do not have the same sort of Christmas as those of Tory ministers.

The four BAC members detained were Paul Rogers, Paul Tremlett, Rick Chapman and 'Dave'. They kept us in for six hours claiming that we were going to be charged

with committing criminal damage with an explosive device (minimum sentence: one year). This was obviously a pretext to investigate the collective as the cops became abusive when we exercised our right to remain silent; either that or they were just provincial hicks who haven't been in this situation before.

Paul was strip searched and I had my height illegally and forcibly measured; to prevent being detained over the weekend (when the cops would get a court order to fingerprint/photograph us) I went on hunger strike and refused to use police toilets.

Only in the wake of other actions (eg stink bombing local butcher's shops) did the cops press a charge of breach of the peace. As this charge totally demeans the fact that our actions against NIREX were an act of civil disobedience, the first and only so far because everyone else has been fobbed off with the promise of a public inquiry, we have formed the Bedford Four Action Group.

The trial is on January 24th 1985, and we would be very grateful if you

could rustle up national publicity/support through your columns. When the promised public inquiry is exposed as a sham, like Sizewell B, we expect support of the collective will grow dramatically. We need as many people behind the Defence Committee as possible to make a lasting impression on the locals.

Yours for anarchy, peace and freedom.

P N Rogers

Bedford Anarchist Collective

PS *The Mole*, organ of the Bedford Anarchist Collective, should be printed soon. It only costs 20p and an SAE sent to Box A, BCHE, Polhill Avenue, Bedford.



ALL OUT FOR THE MINERS

11 FEBRUARY 1985 — DAY OF ACTION



Magnificent Miners And Awful Arthur!

Whenever the miners' strike has been discussed over the last year the words which have most often come to mind have been words like 'respect', 'incredible', 'magnificent'. Few people even amongst those who call themselves militants or revolutionaries would welcome the prospect of being on strike for six or seven weeks with nowhere near enough money coming in. To sustain a strike for close on a year in the face of a split within your own union has been an action which truly does inspire respect for those who have stuck with the strike. The spirit and determination with which the strike has been conducted has been incredible. The running of the strike at local level as a genuinely co-operative venture involving women every bit as men has been magnificent to watch. It is for these reasons that many of us on the left have been inspired by the strike and have supported it throughout.

Having said this there nevertheless remains one fact that cannot be ignored. The purpose of a strike is to win. Or at the very least the purpose of a strike is to avoid losing. In stating this I am well aware of the theory which says that workers should be taken through the experience of industrial struggle to prepare them for revolution. In my opinion this theory (much loved by Trotskyists) is deeply insulting. There is no question that people learn a great deal when they are involved in any dispute, but to suggest that a group of conscious 'vanguard' Marxists have the right to take ordinary people through an experience for the sole purpose of educating them is outrageous.

The miners, and the communities grouped around them, who began this strike did so with very specific objectives. In the face of the appalling level of dole payments they wanted to work and they wanted the pits to stay open. If this issue is not won then it is no good consoling ourselves with the thought that much has been achieved in this dispute. The strike

will have been defeated and many talented energetic people will feel demoralised and dejected.

If this outcome does take place then the major blame must, of course, be placed fairly and squarely on the shoulders of Margaret Thatcher and the social and economic system she defends. Throughout the strike she has shown herself to be a complete hypocrite who cared for nothing except notching up a victory over the miners. She has always claimed to be a believer in private property; yet she calmly got her courts to steal £5 million off some very hard up people. She has always claimed to believe in law and order but the courts have clearly demonstrated that their sole purpose is to use the law to enforce discipline on strikers and to allow a virtual free rein to those who are trying to suppress the strike (what sentences have been handed out to those who killed strikers?). She has talked throughout this dispute about democracy and yet the strikers have been consistently denied fair access to the media and no account whatsoever has been taken of the obvious strength of feeling behind the strike in areas such as Wales.

There are, however, other people who would bear a heavy responsibility if the strike were to go down to defeat. Before this strike the vast bulk of the miners voted for the Labour Party and placed some faith in it. It would be interesting to know how many of them now have any faith left in Neil Kinnock and co. His actions throughout the strike have communicated one clear simple message: "If there're no votes in it, I'm not interested". As such he has constantly been a damaging influence on the strike and any popularity he may once have had with miners has disintegrated. Most readers of *Freedom* will agree that this was no chance occurrence. The role of the leader of the Labour Party has always been similar. Career politicians are not interested in whether a strike is for a good or a bad cause; they are interested in their own career and they will always manipulate and exploit anyone who puts their faith in them.

What may not reach such widespread agreement is the assertion that if the coal strike does get defeated then Arthur Scargill must bear a significant amount of the responsibility and the blame. It may seem harsh to criticise the first trade union leader we have had in ages who has shown no sign whatsoever of selling out, but it is worth bearing in mind that he is a Marxist who believes in centralised control and strong leadership by a vanguard of

'conscious' workers. This has led him to make a number of important errors which have not helped the strike one bit.

Firstly, he failed to achieve unity among the miners at the very start of the strike because workers (several of whom had come out in 1972 and 1974 — forget the myth of the natural scabs) felt they had been manipulated and not allowed to decide for themselves. If even a few thousand of these workers had been drawn into the strike via a ballot it would have made a very serious difference to the strength of the strike. A ballot would also have made it easier to get sympathy action from other workers and have made it harder for the government to persuade gullible people that it had right on its side. The possibility that Scargill didn't organise a ballot because he didn't trust his own members to make up their own minds must remain a very strong one and his similar lack of trust in ordinary people has lain behind virtually every other mistake he has made.

He has, for instance, constantly placed his trust in the official trade union movement and in centralised planning of such matters as fund-raising. Thus he began the strike by believing that money could best be raised by relying on TUC levies. Experience has shown that collections organised in a spontaneous way by miners making personal contacts proved much more effective. Many areas suffered unnecessary financial hardship before this lesson was learnt.

He also put faith in centrally organised set-piece battles with police at picket gates. The police have found it relatively easy to contain these and many miners have been arrested or suffered beatings as a result, whereas the police have often appeared to be confused and uncertain about how to deal with locally organised initiatives. This is hardly surprising since to inform large numbers of people about a particular location for a show of strength is also likely to mean the police will find out at the same time. If locals organise a quick action at an unexpected spot there is no way the police can respond.

Scargill must also be open to criticism over the way he left the union's finances in the control of the centre where they could easily be taken over by the sequestrators (ie by legalised theft). What possible use is a contingency fund if it cannot provide financial help in the middle of a year long strike? At the moment it is helping to finance the rich lifestyles of barristers and accountants. It is doing nothing for the ordinary

strikers. These funds should have been placed in the hands of groups like the miners' wives support groups right from the start of the strike so that they could have been used to prevent people being forced off strike by genuine poverty. As it is they have been quite worthless.

Finally, and most seriously, Arthur has continually encouraged the development of a personality cult which glorified his leadership and his inspiration. At times it has appeared as if he was more interested in his place in the history books and in the gratification of being a leader than he

is in winning the strike. This is an appalling error. Strikes are not won by leaders but by ordinary people who are fighting for what they believe in. No one leader can get everything right and foresee everything and so to lead the people into believing that you can is totally unacceptable at the best of times, but in the middle of a strike it is almost criminal.

All this being said it is important to add one more thing. No strike is ever over until the majority of the strikers decide they want to return and no matter how badly they have been sat upon by the

government, no matter how cynically they have been ignored by the Labour Party leaders, and no matter how dubiously they have been led the miners have stuck it out with astonishing resilience which has earned the admiration of all of us. In order to continue to do so one of the main needs is financial help. Any readers who can spare cash would do well to send it off now to the address printed in this issue.

A K Brown

**Blyth Miners' Wives Support Group,
17 Cowper Hall Road,
Cowper Estate,
Blyth,
Northumberland**

A Tale of Scotch Cattle

On 6th April 1835, Edward Morgan was hanged at Monmouth jail for a crime he hadn't committed. He was judicially murdered by the British State as a representative of the Scotch Cattle, an organisation which had held the allegiance of South Wales workers for almost a generation, but which has been constantly ignored or misrepresented by historians.

This was the period when the iron and coal industry was expanding rapidly in South Wales. Since most proprietors were of non-Welsh families the workers suffered national as well as class oppression.

Recurring unemployment forced many into begging. There were few education facilities for the working class, and in any case most workmen couldn't afford to keep their children in school; the threat of starvation meant that very young children were sent out to work.

The damp and confined, when not actually overcrowded, housing of the workers contrasted with the mansions of the masters, and this distinction was particularly sharp in the southern end of the valleys, where most workers were unskilled and the masters formed a virtual aristocracy.

The *long pay*, whereby wages were paid once a month, was common — with deductions for soap, equipment, rent (for company-owned housing), drink (from pubs owned by the masters), and debts (from company shops, which often used a monopoly position to overcharge for poor quality goods). Not surprisingly debt was a major problem, with men often unable to work enough hours to pay off the debts accumulated during the previous month. From the 1820s they were paid increasingly in goods rather than cash, despite an Anti-Truck Bill which was not enforced.

This payment in goods, together with the long pay and reductions in wages, led to the appearance of the Scotch Cattle.

An examination of the Cattle's history proves false the right-wing argument that the violence of the miners' strike is something new and 'alien' to British society.

The Cattle were a secret society which

from the 1820s played a major part in strikes, using the threat of violence against scabs and people such as bailiffs who persecuted miners. Attacks were also made on mine's property.

However, whilst attacking their victims' homes at night, they refrained from taking food from them, and most of their violence was directed against property rather than people. Although they were often armed, this was for visual effect rather than use.

Other parallels can be drawn with the miners' strike, notably the use of mass picketing such as in March 1830, when the workmen policed all roads and canals to Newport in an effort to prevent coal being moved during a strike, and the street battles with soldiers which took place during the 1822 strike.

They are significant in representing an autonomous struggle on the part of the Welsh working class, without 'leadership' from the 'radical' bourgeoisie (unlike the later and better known Chartist movement) — and also without a fat bureaucracy such as the Trade Union movement later developed.

Apart from helping to squeeze concessions from the employers, the Cattle

also played an important part in developing solidarity between workers of different industries and in different parts of the coalfield.

Support from the local community made it almost impossible for the Cattle to be prosecuted, as their fellow workmen refused to testify against them.

By 1834 magistrates and employers had formed their own police in order to crush the Cattle. Workmen were forced to sign a declaration saying that they were not members of any secret society, and the 'moral' force of religious bodies was also used against the Cattle, who were finally destroyed with the hanging of Morgan the following year for a murder allegedly committed during one of the Cattle's night raids.

There will be a demonstration in Blaenavon on April 6th this year to commemorate his death: we go not to mourn, but to show our determination to fight oppression in the future. Further details have yet to be finalised but can be obtained from the 1835 Collective at 32 Heol-y-Wig, Aberystwyth, Dyfed.

Treci Rayner
Wales



Living Anarchy

This article is a much-edited (by Bella) version of David Kovan's entertaining talk at the Venice '84 Anarchist Gathering.

Thinking about the past

Of all the myths that survive from our past, the belief that existing institutions will be changed by means of a violent revolution has been, perhaps, one of the most harmful and growth arresting for our movement.

This concept was rooted in the optimism and revolutionary fervour of the nineteenth century. This conviction that *the* revolution was imminent; that the internal contradictions in capitalism portended its immediate downfall; and perhaps that most illusionary belief of all, that the masses would create from 'the ashes of the old society' a shining, brilliant libertarian future, now seems bitter in our mouths and hollow in our ears.

The nineteenth century rallying cry, 'To the Barricades', seems to have led only to the establishment of even greater totalitarian societies.

If we accept our powerful philosophical concept, rooted in our anarchist morality, *means must be commensurate with our ends*, rather than the marxist/capitalist version, *the ends justify the means*, we must re-examine the concept of violent revolution as a viable tactic for the achievement of anarchy.

Today, with our overview of history and our awareness of the failures of all revolutionary attempts that have been made; revolutions defeated from both the left and the right, we must conclude *that in no case* has the dependence on violence resulted in a more libertarian society.

It is time to stop paying dues to the concept of violent revolution, and address ourselves to the invention of non-violent

tactics that will more directly reflect our overall view of how society can be organised.

If anarchism hasn't flourished in the twentieth century, we must consider that the centralising of anarchist hopes around the nineteenth century concept of *The Revolution* created a dichotomous condition in the lives of the anarchists who preceded us. This prevented them from addressing themselves to the form of their lives and the nature of the relationships they established, and allowed them for the most part to slip into authoritarian family structures and sexist attitudes that belied almost completely the visions of anarchy they held.

Not surprisingly, the children of anarchists almost never hold to their parents' beliefs and convictions. There are a few exceptions of course, but these exceptions make even more poignant the absence of the other children of anarchist families from the anarchist movement.

Sadly, the miners and seamen and factory workers that I met when I first came into contact with the anarchists, didn't think that a life of anarchist action and struggle, a life such as theirs, full and exciting as it was, would be good enough for their children.

Like most other immigrants they wanted their children to 'succeed', to become the doctors and lawyers, artists, college professors and professionals. To a great part, these children of the movement did just that, and in so doing, most of them became liberals, at best, who disappeared into the woodwork of society.

Again, most of the anarchists that I met were also sexist, as were most of the founders of our movement. With the exception of a few extraordinary women, women were not accorded equal status in the anarchist groups.

Just as in the rest of society, they were relegated to the roles of housewife and mother. I wish the men in the anarchist movement had been more able to recognise the dichotomy in their lives between the ideas that they held and the conduct of their relationships.

The here and now

I am convinced that the most pressing necessity we anarchists face today is to invent actions and directions that will reflect the hopefulness and joyousness inherent in our ideas and approach.

Rather than allowing ourselves to get mired down in negativity and despair, we must invent beautiful and practical actions that reflect our unique understanding of the role of the state. Hopefully our ideas and ideals will inflame people's imaginations and open new directions based on the realities of their lives.

Paul Goodman, in his seminal articles written in 1945, *Reflections on Drawing the Line*, put it succinctly; "*Free action is to live in the present society as though it were a natural society . . . the libertarian is rather a millinarian than a utopian. He does not look forward to a future state of things which he tries to bring about by suspect means; but he draws now so far as he can on the natural force within that is no different in kind from what it will be in a free society, except that there it will have more scope and be immeasurably reinforced by mutual aid and fraternal conflict. Merely by continuing to exist and act in nature and freedom, the libertarian wins the victory, establishes the society; it is not necessary for him to be the victor over anyone.*"

Looking ahead

In thinking about the future of anarchism, I propose that we place most of our emphasis on positive experimentation with new directions and action, rather than continue to spend so much energy in critical response to daily events.

Perhaps not so new, for as the old adage goes, 'There is really nothing new under the sun', but, rather renew our emphasis on directions that are bold, experimental, humane and offer a joyous, exciting restructuring of the world.

Of first importance is the joining together with other anti-militarist move-



ments to counter the increased militarist threat to the world. While many of the people in these movements aren't anarchist, or perhaps even libertarian, our anarchist presence alongside them in the movement must inform them of the essentially anti-statist nature that the struggle against militarism has.

Perhaps the reason why those essentially anarchistic, courageous women at Greenham Common don't recognise their anarchistic nature because there weren't enough of us, anarchists identified as such, struggling alongside them.

To hell with the image of anarchists as cop fighters and quibblers over what sorts of violence are acceptable and correct. Even though that sort of action may relieve the frustrations and tensions caused by our weakness, let us recognise once and for all that *violence is the politics of despair*, and build our reputations as fighters and activists, but non-violent fighters and activists.

This I consider creative anti-statism, and it will gain us respect and a serious voice among those others trying to turn the world's face away from military solutions.

We anarchists have always been in the forefront of communal experimentation. We have proposed models of mutual aid groups to help us find other solutions to our needs than turning begging faces to the State for largeness.

We have recognised the needs for multitudinous services that aren't available to the poorer peoples of the world; services for the aged; the need to help feed the famine-struck in the world; help for the single parents trying to raise children in a hostile world; the inadequate health care facilities; the abysmal schooling of our children, and the never-ending array of ills that our society suffers from under capitalism.

We know that begging governments to address these needs leads either to callous disregard or, at best, slothful, dehumanised, bureaucratised band-aid solutions that give the governments even greater control over our lives.

We must try once again, try to form mutual aid societies that with those others in need of these services, move to satisfy them by acting directly. By bypassing bureaucratic solutions, we will give real meaning to our anarchist vision of mutual aid and co-operative experimentation.

For example, twenty-five years ago, a group of us, anarchists and pacifists, all of whom had resisted and some of whom had been imprisoned for their resistance,

banded together to start our own school.

We all had young children and none could conceive of turning these young minds over to the State school system. But rather than carping and railing against the State schools in the hope of reforming what we felt was unreformable, we acted directly and started our own school, Walden Center and School.

The school is still functioning, with many of the original founders still involved in its life. The founders of the school worked as the first teachers, some working for years for little or no pay, and the school grew from servicing the children of the founders and their friends to include the children from interested parents in the community. We soon grew to a school community of ninety children.

In addition to the education of our children the school, as a centre, functioned as a core of resistance against the encroaching militarism of the State.

Representatives of our school were in every struggle against nuclear testing, the draft registration, and the demos against the Vietnam War.

In fact, when the Vietnam Day Committee was prohibited from meeting on campus by the University of California, Berkeley, we opened up Walden for their use during the formative days, and the movement grew rapidly from then on. It was also through the involvement of some of us anarchists from Walden that the drive to capture and centralise the movement by various Berkeley marxist groups was averted.

By involvement with groups that try

David Koven on 'Living Anarchy'.



to satisfy human needs directly, voluntary groups such as co-op schools, consumer co-ops, and by experimenting with new forms of work relations, living arrangements and always resisting the encroachment of the State, anarchism will thrive in the here and now.

We must participate in the actions of the anti-militarist groups in each of our countries. We must support such humanitarian organisations such as Amnesty International. We can encourage and support those anarchist experiments such as the Comunidad Del Sur in Stockholm.

We can participate in our personal committee with organisations such as the Gay Panthers, those feisty, activist, retired folk who haven't retired from the human struggle. Side with and help those individuals trying to solve housing needs by attacking the rights of landlords, or outright squatting. Join with those who are forming alternative health services, schools and food co-operatives.

In so doing we will gain respect and credibility. There is no alternative. If we continue to be rooted in the past dogma and tradition, anarchism will shrivel and die.

Lastly, I can say from my own experience and the experiences of my comrades: Living anarchism inflames, informs and enlarges one's life. It's a source of enrichment and joy. Despair not, comrades, Anarchism was; is now and lies ahead: For there is no other reasonable alternative.

David Kovan
August 1984

(Stu-note: shouldn't we grow from our roots, not abandon them, David?)



Who owns Children?



Victorian values are back in fashion. Victorian sexual values are returning with them. The Victorian age is held up as a time of complete hypocrisy on the whole question of sexuality. Our anarchist predecessors of that age struggled hard and suffered for their struggle against this hypocrisy. We may have thought these battles had been largely won but we may have to repeat some of these struggles.

Victoria Gillich, Catholic mother of ten, past advocate of compulsory sterilisation of coloured immigrants and an Enoch Powell fan, has recently won another round in her battle to impose her morality on the rest of us. She objected to the guidelines sent out by the Department of Health and Social Security on the provision of contraceptive services

to the under sixteens. She lost the original case but has on appeal forced the DHSS to issue new guidelines from which the following is extracted:-

The decision (of the Law Lords) has the effect that, in general, a doctor or any other professional person providing advice or contraception or a doctor prescribing contraceptives or providing advice and treatment for abortion to a young person under 16 without parental consent or that of the Court is not lawful.

So while we wait for the DHSS to appeal to the House of Lords, how many people will suffer because of the actions of this self-appointed moral guardian. As a parent she claims to have won a victory for millions of parents. As a parent I claim she will be responsible for misery

and unhappiness in as many families.

The use of the law in matters of sexuality has never worked, still when has the use of law ever worked. However, while we are forced to live in this society, where three old men can sit in judgement on the sexuality of younger people we must 'break' this law.

I would ask that all *Freedom* readers, who work in the health or caring professions, make a principled stand against this ruling if they have not already decided to.

The current ruling makes it in effect illegal to even discuss contraception with anyone under 16. How farcical it becomes when you think of it. For years the Mrs Gillichs of this world have been saying that the best contraceptive is the word 'no'. As I interpret the judges ruling this advice is now illegal. The prospect of some Catholic doctor being hauled up before the law for giving it is amazingly appropriate.

Unfortunately for them, it is the children of those who share the 'morality' of sexual authoritarians who will suffer most from this decision. The meagre advances that have been made towards a more honest and human attitude to questions and attitudes to matters of sex and sexuality must be defended.

A libertarian attitude to these matters is one that allows for possibility without compulsion, the authoritarian responds with restrictions with compulsion. We cannot allow the Victorian hypocrisy to return. We must take up this cause and fight it in any way we can.

Clem Turff
Nottinghamshire

Mary Ward Centre

Weekly discussion meetings at this venue have been running since 1983, and have covered a wide range of subjects. Many of us have assumed that they had ended, as it is some time since they have been advertised in *Freedom*, so here's a run-down of recent events.

Anarchism and Modern Society, discussed on the 11th January was a rather ambitious effort, rooted in anthropological perspective, which stressed the continuity of instinctual anarchism from pre-history to its latent existence today. This theme was developed into a libertarian sociology of the future, built around diverse craft industries, 'traditional' and automated factories, in a moneyless economy.

The 18th January saw an excellent

debate on the theme of *Money*, which began with a consideration of Proudhon, Mutualism and 'labour cheques'. Various forms of economic action such as tax evasion were proposed, and the removal of purchasing power from the unemployed bought ideas for activities in this area. Arguments became sharper when the question 'Are you naturally greedy?' arose.

For the future, the general consensus of opinion seems to have moved away from booking regular speakers to deliver a formal introductory talk, towards a more open set-up, although anyone who wishes to speak is very welcome to do so.

There is no speaker for the 25th January but an open discussion ensued

spontaneously around *Freedom* and its contents. A Canadian comrade suggested using the meetings to develop ideas for future articles. Also mentioned was the idea of printing a very brief description of the nature of anarchism in each issue, to assist and encourage new non-anarchist readers.

Freedom's centenary in 1986 cropped up and all felt the need to mark the occasion with something special — perhaps an international conference/gathering. Such an event would obviously require careful planning and funding, so we ought to start thinking about this now.

John Griffin
Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queens Square,
London WC1. Fridays at 8:15pm

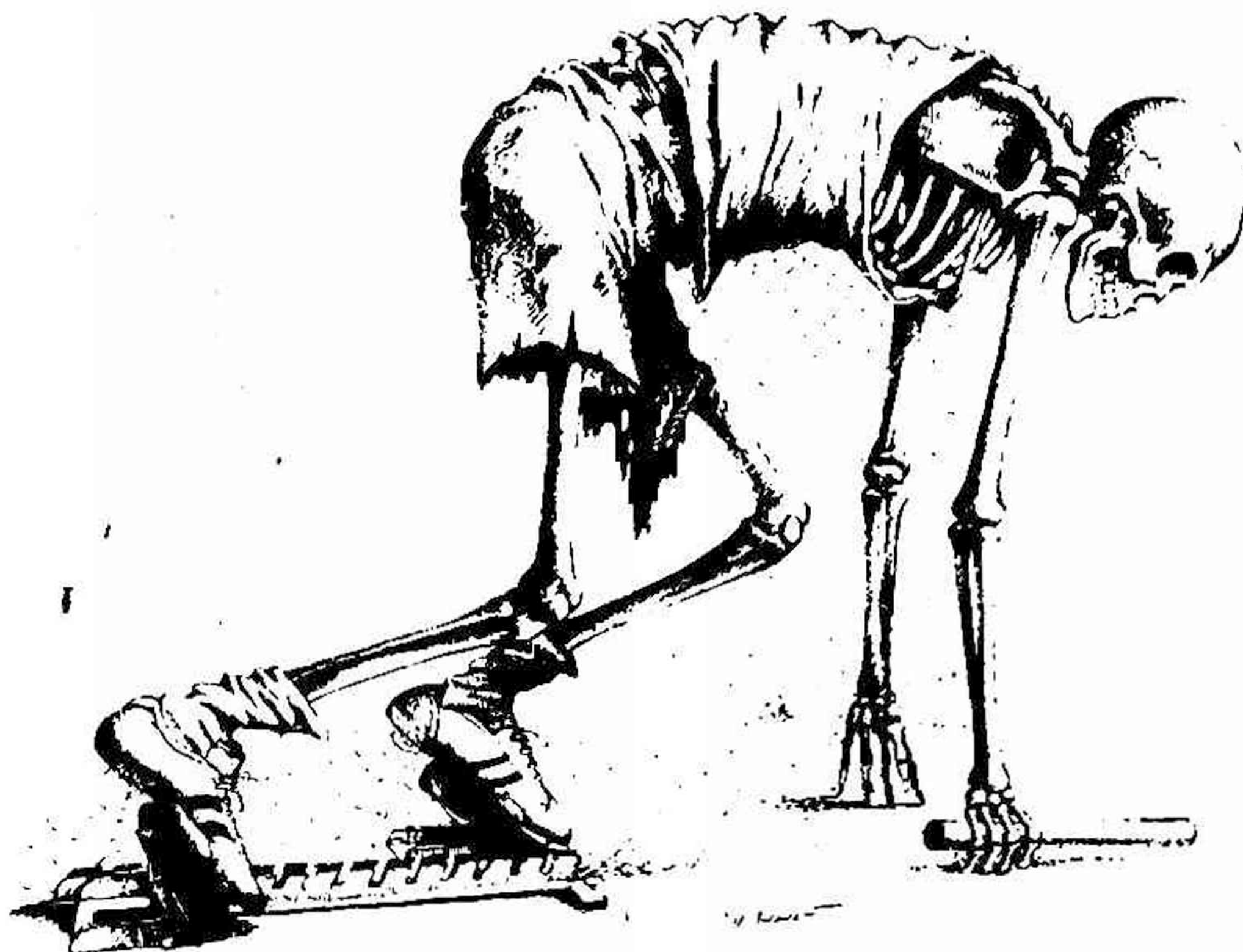
TV Lords

The obsequiousness of the media really does provide a bizarre spectacle. It only needs a public circus of the trappings of British privilege to display it.

We have been privileged to watch an historic moment. The House of Lords has appeared on television. So what? Why should anybody be interested in self-indulgent rambling by a collection of dinosaurs. (References to *Freedom* are not invited). Because these people have real power. Never mind the knowing commentaries by correspondents, who are themselves part of the system. Never mind the careful analysis of how the Lords is outdated, unrepresentative and unelected. Do we want another House of Commons, which at least manages on the third count? If we wanted to show that we had esoteric insight and first name terms with the intricacies of the system we might. If we wanted to convince people that they are better off than packs of unenlightened foreigners, solely due to the benevolence and basic good sense of the British establishment, we might.

The House of Lords is currently seen as a check on the excesses of the elected dictatorship. This is a commentary on that dictatorship rather than a recommendation. Progressive, liberal opinion is placing great store on Their Lordship's disinterested wisdom in an appeal about the right of Victoria Gillick to decide everybody under sixteen's contraceptive arrangements. The House of Lords has rejected a government proposal to allow the prosecution to appeal against 'too lenient' prison sentences. (A nice bit of media confusion here. It was reported that the Lord Chief Justice was against the proposal, which did wonders for the Lords' sensible image. Then it turned out that it was only because he thought it should be more 'radical', ie savage).

Then, the televisual event of the



moment. So much better than the vulgarity of the American inauguration, complete with a private run through for close friends and television cameras. And the weather spoiled everything. God might be a Tory, as generations of soggy demonstrators will testify, but He doesn't seem to be a republican. We do things more tastefully over here as column inches of smugness oozed. Look, we have Lord Stockton, Elder States pet, now celebrated for being a devious bastard. Those of us who always thought he was are unimpressed.

This glare of publicity ('of the Klieg lights' seems to be the in-phrase to demonstrate one's knowingness) may well contribute to the long-heralded reform of the House of Lords. Which brings us back to our first question, so what? We will then have an elected or an appointed Second Chamber, more closely tied into the party machines. And these people, probably most of the same ones, give or take a few hereditary attendance allowance scroungers, will still have real power.

The role of the media in these events is to provide a smokescreen, hypnotically shifting patterns for the punters (the other in-phrase of the moment). Just look at the nudge-nudge, we're all people of the world nonsense about a drunk importuning Margaret Thatcher at a party ('Randy VIP in Bed Bid for Mrs T'). Hell's teeth, are we supposed to be shocked? (But we do note the sexism, there's no titillation in the idea of a male prime minister having a sex life). This sort of thing counts as 'news', with about the same weighting as the tedious lives of second rate soap opera actors. And as we drown, eye high in trivia, we are supposed to be pleased about 'reform' of the House of Lords. Well, we're not. We're not interested in the details of how the system is rigged. It remains a vicious, exploitative pack of barbarians, it doesn't matter which ones. When we get down to the details of how the system is to be dismantled, that real power is to be taken away from them, then we'll be interested.

DP

Propaganda

One of London's 'local' commercial papers ran a competition last year to find the 'Best Boss in London'. Employees were encouraged to brown-tongue their way to a free holiday with 150 words on 'why my boss is best'. They received a grand total of three entries . . . all of which turned out to be highly satirical.

There is a hidden moral in this little tale for the whole anarchist movement. If you read any anarchist paper in the world, it is obvious that anarchists see their main propaganda aim as shattering people's 'illusions' about capitalism. The 'hidden' assumption being that, because people haven't overthrown the system,

they must like it.

The vast majority of people do not enjoy working for a boss. Nor do they enjoy being ruled by political bosses, national or local. Increasingly, people even resent the power that social workers exercise over them as part (the price?) of their 'help'.

Without practical, principled and realistic solutions in economics, politics and social organisations we are *mere impotent grumblers*, as Malatesta put it. Worse still, without these solutions, there is a marked tendency for anarchism to deteriorate into a sort of *secular religion* complete with self-appointed high priests, who preserve *the correct criticisms* free from all contact with outside reality.

When you rummage about a bit in the

minds of the *why work* brigade you find what they really mean is *why obey the dictates of a boss* (which is fair enough). Why don't they say so? Because they don't want to think about the restriction placed on your productive activity by the need to consider the wishes of those other people who are going to use or consume the results of it. Cliches stop thought, period.

If we are going to move beyond our impotent grumbling towards an effective *constructive anarchism* then some of these sacred-cow cliches are going to have to bite the dust. What is needed is a little more heretical use of questions like *who, what, where and how* . . . not more hysteria and blind faith.

Sti

Delegating Power

The problem with Marxism is that it has no theory of power. As George Bernard Shaw remarked, 'Put a man with a million dollars in a suitcase into the same room as a man with a gun, and pretty soon the man with the gun has a new suitcase!'

The problem with Anarchism is that it has a theory of power but fails to take it seriously, mostly because it places serious difficulties in the way of mass organisation. Facing those difficulties and figuring a way out of them is also the way out of the crank's corner we've been playing in during the last 50 years.

The most blindingly obvious fact of human history is that it is your *relationship to the means of coercion* that determines your class position. Even Marx admitted that the aristocracy owed their wealth to the armed force of the 'robber barons'.

Exercise your mind, try to strip the meaning covered by the word *control* out of the word *own*. Or remember that the majority of the world's governments are military juntas, and that there's even a bare-faced one in State Socialist Poland. You see the point?

Perhaps you don't. Marx went to a lot of trouble to *explain* the market place as *the source* of exploitation, since he favoured authoritarian government. He did this in opposition to Proudhon and Bakunin who, having correctly recognised *authoritarian power* as the source of exploitation, were thinking in terms of what we would call today a *workers co-operative type market economy under community control* to replace the state. Ninety-nine out of a hundred anarchists do not understand these anti-utopian, anti-communist ideas from the days when we were a mass movement.

For the moment let us leave economic theory till another time and focus on the question of power and organisation.

There is a central problem which most anarchists today seem to ignore. That is the built-in conflict between individual freedom and group action, which is reflected again at a higher level as a conflict between local neighbourhood autonomy and wider regional action.

You do actually need to have at least the bare bones of an alternative social structure in your head before you can overthrow the existing one. Surprisingly, considering all the arguments between syndicalists, communists and autonomists etc, etc, over the years, they all share the same 'technical' solution . . . the *Instantly recallable delegate*.

Let us just for argument's sake consider the possibility that the failure (so far) of the libertarian version(s) of social-

ism has not been due to bad luck or the cunning of our enemies. Let us take a deep breath and consider whether this 'recallable' delegate system could in fact ever deliver the revolutionary goods.

Ten seconds of thought will of course tell you that there is not and cannot ever be any such thing as an *instantly recallable* delegate. If you are in London and the conference is in Glasgow you cannot possibly have any idea what your delegate is saying or voting on your behalf until he/she has already done it, and then it's usually too late to change it.

The reason the phrase **INSTANTLY RECALLABLE** is so important is that, if delegates vote the way they themselves wish rather than the way they were instructed by the people who sent them, then you have recreated a representative (parliamentary) system, which will *govern* not co-ordinate.



What has been wrong with the anarchist movement so far is not the focus on power and government, but the failure to recognise that this corruption through power would show up in absolutely any body of humans with the *power of decision* over other humans.

Largely through contact with Marxism, there has been a lot of irrelevant prattle about abolishing money and bugger all consideration given to just how on earth you really can organise a complex society without hierarchy.

To put it bluntly, a delegate conference is a small body of people with the power of decision over a much larger body. As long as the conference is the *formal point of decision making* then structurally speaking what you have is a representative system . . . a sort of parliament with knobs on. In reality decisions flow down from the minority to the majority, not

from the bottom up as the advocates of delegate democracy claim.

To put it harshly, the power of decision is something that it is *not safe to delegate* to others . . . no matter how impeccable their track record as anarchists may be. Decisions always appear reasonable to those who have taken them and any opposition to those decisions is first seen as ignorant, then selfish, and finally evil, in rapid succession.

Influential militants always find it outrageous that anyone should accuse them of being dictatorial. They cannot see that, that is exactly what their influence at conferences feels like to those who are merely subject to conference decisions, about which, in practice, they have often not been consulted.

The enormous gap between the claims for delegate systems and their actual performance is, of course, yet another pointer to hierarchical structure. All hierarchies are covered by a protective ideology which portrays their authoritarian power as *service to the people*. The average dogmatic, dictatorial militant does actually see him/herself as a selfless martyr to the cause.

Delegate democracy broke down during the First International. It broke down in the workers councils (soviets) during the Russian revolution. It broke down in the CNT during the Spanish Civil War, lumbering the world anarchist movement with the awful spectre of an 'anarchist' Minister of Justice to haunt and taunt us through the ages.

Why on earth does everybody still believe in it? Mental laziness? Fear of change? Lack of a rational alternative? Probably all three in equal measure, flavoured with that love some people have of going to important meetings where they *speak on behalf of the entire British Anarchist Movement* . . . the revolutionary version of *speaking-in-tongues*.

Actually the only justification for becoming an anarchist is accepting the truth that *no human is good enough to be another human's boss*. Translated into sociological terms this means that any hierarchical social structure produces a class of people with power over other people and that the former rapidly cease to consider the latter as fellow humans and use them as mere tools.

The anarchist point of view is that the shitty behaviour of the ruling classes is a *structural effect, a product of the view* as Bakunin put it. The word authority in 19th century anarchist books could (should?) usefully be replaced by the words hierarchical power.

OK That's rubbished delegate democracy, now what do we do for organisation? or My God! Don't tell me an anarchist critic actually has a constructive alternative?

In order to abolish hierarchical power for real we must replace it with an egalitarian power structure. Why? . . . well let's be very unanarchistic and begin by defining our terms. Power is the ability to take and enforce decisions on others, as distinct from influence which is the ability to persuade others without direct coercion.

Hold on, you say. There will be no coercion in an anarchist society. *You're going to permit murder, rape and pillage or free individual choice of which side of the road to drive, I reply?* Ultimately any anarchist society must protect its members from arbitrary violent attacks or the fear generated will produce the conditions for dictatorship. So since there are some social decisions that we will enforce, power as I have defined it will exist in an anarchist society.

Anarchists say they want a society controlled from the bottom up. To achieve this requires a social structure where the flow of decisions is from the

bottom upwards. Since the direction of the flow of decisions must be *away from the formal point of decision* (necessarily so, both in theory and in practice) it follows that the formal point of social decision making must be at the bottom.

There is only one system (so far) where the formal point of decision is actually at the bottom and that is . . . here it comes . . . the direct ballot of all members of whatever organisation or society you're talking about. Of course, as it exists in British unions, it is mostly a sham system of direct democracy, since the choice of question and timing remains firmly in the hands of the bureaucrats who retain extensive powers of control.

In a real system of direct democracy the questions themselves would have to be a matter for direct control as well. There's no particular reason why questions couldn't be decided in a sort of perpetual paper conference, with a minimum backing of say 5% of the membership required to get a question formally put. Instead of an annual faction-fight at delegate conferences political control could be a rational, reasonable part of everyday life.

The extent to which binding decisions

at the centre are genuinely required is grossly over-estimated anyway. It is simply not necessary to impose uniform solutions to most problems. As the saying goes, *there is more than just one way to skin a rabbit.*

Allowing each local group/community to go about things their own way also permits different solutions to be *judged objectively by their real results.* By trial and error you could actually test various bits of ideology and build up a genuinely scientific understanding of how best to organise things.

Ideology and freedom are, in truth, deeper enemies than most anarchists seem to understand. Witness the fact that a member of *Black Flag/SLDAM* could ball me out for saying that anarchists did vote (in direct democratic sense) *not 48 hours after he had himself voted to expel Mick Larkin.* Influential militants seem to think voting is only (don't) voting if someone else does it. Don't Vote is a silly slogan for silly people. The word clearly has two meanings, one of which is having a direct say in decisions that effect YOU.

Stu

Dane V Eddie

I thought I would briefly reply to the points raised in objection to my article by Eddie May.

Eddie May asks 'Is it not possible a trade union could provide this feeling of community and in doing so help combat any tendencies towards nationalism'. I doubt if a trade union could do this, as trade unions themselves tend to end up as very bureaucratic organisations with very sectional interests.

Eddie May says 'The belief that the proletariat will make the revolution is based, amongst other things, on usually sound mathematics—the workers, peasants or industrial, make up the majority of the population and therefore, if united action is undertaken, stand a greater chance of success than a revolution based on a minority'.

Now, in my article I wrote 'Having said all that let me make myself clear; the creation of a libertarian communist society would obviously include the main direct action of the overwhelming majority of the population. As can be seen, that would involve the main participation of the working class taking over the workplaces and forming communist organisations'.

I agree that a revolution would have to be in the self interests of the majority (the overwhelming majority and not just workers, as Eddie May feels). It is all a question of what people see in their self interest.

I agree with Eddie May's idea about workers' control as far as it goes. I am not so sure at all about the idea of a libertarian trade union, though. I feel there is a direct conflict between trade unions and direct democracy/workers/community control.

Eddie May quotes organisations that I did not mention in my article at all. He mentions NSPCA, ALF, CND and FoE. What I said in my article was 'These groups consist of a whole range of different concerns, animal rights, activists, anti-racist groups, ecologists, feminists, gays, peace movement groups and squatters'.

There seems to be a confusion here between membership organisations and people active in these areas, the two are not always the same thing. For example, some members of local FoE groups are much more radical than FoE head office.

I do feel that the activities of some of the people involved in these various concerns is more radical but does not fit into the traditional pattern of workplace struggles.

I think revolutionary feeling, nature, etc comes from people seeing the world, wishing to make it a more free place and then with a love of life/freedom, resolving to act. Other people may have different views on the subject, but that is how I see it.

In the miners' struggle much of the support has been through networks of informal groups. Also there have been



small activist groups supporting this who have been vulnerable. Implied in what EM writes is that all I favour is small activist groups without any other form of organisation supporting them (for example, some sort of federal structure). This is just not true and is reading 'things into what I wrote that I did not say.

Finally I would like to say that much of this criticism of my article could be said to be an unwillingness to adjust anarchist ideas to a very different world from that of the time of the Spanish Revolution.

D Dane
London



Reviews

Local papers continue to arrive. Don't forget the postage.

Cambridge Anarchist News (issue 2, Dec '84, 16 pages A4, 25p from c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge CB1 2LG). Guaranteed 100% unfunded by Cambridge City Council, the GLC, KGB, CIA, MI5, MI6, IRA, UVF or any other benevolent statist bureaucracy, alive and kicking and user friendly. A nice mixture of articles and humour. Well produced, if oddly laid out. If you buy one, you'll save the perpetrators from eating a Mars bar.

Various from Bristol (boxes 010 and 110, 110 Cheltenham Road, Bristol). A collection of broadsheets/posters. *Western Daily Pest*, the self-styled 'Champion of the Pissed', is concerned about Youth Training Scheme slavery. Watch out for the social workers. A shift of identity into the *Western Daily Stress* produces a Don't Vote special, proud of local corruption.

Farts South West is unidentifiable, except as being by the noisy minority. This one runs to colour. Presumably it means something in the area.

Morning Observer (People Against Militarism, 7 Hazelton Road, Bristol, BS7 8PR). This is brought out to coincide with the anniversary of the destruction of Dresden on 13/14th February 1945. A collection of statements, quotations, reviews and cartoons. Available for 5p a copy for bulk orders.

Between the Lines (no 10, 20 pages A4, from 28 Minster Road, Oxford). More than usually difficult to find an address. Fun, thrills and vertigo as you survive the pages. Beyond that, a good collection of interesting stuff. But I'm still not convinced that denial of conventionality needs these contortions. I spent too much of my youth deciphering *Oz*.

Cwmbach Miners and Women Speak Out (12pp, 50 pence inc postage from Rod Jones, 8 Cogan Terrace, Cathays, Cardiff CF2 4AX)

This is a fund raising venture for the local Relief Fund. Cwmbach is a small community near Aberdare in South Wales. It has a population of 4,000. There are 400 men on strike in the village. Most of them normally work at the local Phurnacite Plant, the others at ten different pits. Most of these are scheduled for closure.

The pamphlet consists of discussions between three men and three women. It has been organised into various headings, covering aspects of life during the strike. Some of these are practical, for example on the organisation of collecting, on social security and so on. The discussions also cover feelings about many things, what the strike is about, attitudes towards the village's one working miner and much else.

The pamphlet says that part of its purpose is to publish these voices, that are 'rarely if ever, heard in our "free" press and media'. In this it succeeds. It is particularly heartening in its description of community organisation and self-help, one of the clichés of the strike, but true nevertheless. The role of the women is especially prominent. The pamphlet does not hide disagreements, for example one of the men tells how he never wants to go down a mine again, but has no choice.

The leaflet also looks to wider, 'political' dimensions and the speakers show a clear understanding of them. Anyone who thinks that this is Arthur Scargill's strike would do well to hear this. Unfortunately, the buyers are likely to already be sympathisers. Those who need the education most would probably reject it anyway. This doesn't alter the value of the pamphlet. Anyway, a purchase is a pleasant way of contributing to the fund.

DP

Uprooting War. Brian Martin, Freedom Press, £4.

I was tempted to read and review Brian Martin's *Uprooting War* after reading Geoffrey Ostergaard's review of the book in *Peace News*. As I began to read through the opening chapters I was enthusiastic. The book has the enormous merit of linking war with the state and the bureaucratic institutions which buttress it. This may be an obvious insight for anarchists but it is not an obvious one for those in the peace movement. However, as I continued reading I found my initial enthusiasm turning to boredom, confusion and frustration.

Brian Martin criticises military defence because it is part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Military defence does not eliminate the war system but perpetuates it. He proposes, therefore,

that we rely, instead, on non-violent defence strategies which he calls social defence.

He does not consider other options such as a decentralised militia. This would go against his premise that means should reflect ends. If we want a non-violent world it would be inconsistent to use violence.

The trouble is that social defence is as much a part of the war system or the attitudes that lead to war as is military defence. Defence is, after all, a part of war. Both defence and attack can only be conceived in a war context. Once the notion of defence is accepted, it is not surprising that people opt for military defence and it is impossible to persuade them otherwise. On the other hand, the idea of defence postulates a potential aggressor. It is only by dismantling the notion of an aggressor that the problem can be dealt with.

It is a particularly vicious circle and provides states with an almost perfect control system. People choose not to disarm because it leaves them unprotected and armaments lead to war.

Brian Martin suggests that in addition to adopting social defence, we undermine the state by creating non-hierarchical structures. But how is all this to be done? Unfortunately, the answer is not very clear.

Most of the methods he discusses are familiar and part of the currency of peace movements. Civil disobedience, marches and rallies have all been tried and have all failed. Martin seems to be aware of this but obviously sees no alternative. However, it is only by giving up methods that have failed that new ones can emerge.

Uprooting War is a step in the right direction. It is only by taking note of what Brian Martin has to say that the peace movement will become effective. War is created by state systems and it is only by changing our authoritarian social system that the problem will be solved.

JA

Chambers' 20th Century Dictionary about £12

The way to test a dictionary is to look up a few 'controversial' words. I recommend looking up *anarchy* . . . *communism* . . . *fuck* . . . just to see what sort of moral and political bias is built into the dictionary.

Chambers' is the only dictionary I've found so far that does well on these tests. For *anarchy* most of them concentrate on the meanings *chaos*, *disorder*, and add a mention of some sort of crazy political extremism. If they're so careless in compiling their dictionaries that they only include the lowest-common-denominator-meaning, as used by the *Sun*, then I wonder how accurate the rest of their definitions are.

Chambers says: 'anarchy (n)—complete absence of law or government; a harmonious condition of society in which law is abolished as unnecessary . . .' I couldn't think of a better definition myself. It goes on, after that, to give the additional meanings of chaos, etc. That's fair enough, the word *is* used in that way, so the dictionary might as well include these negative meanings, as long as they give the acceptable meaning first.

'Communism (n)—a theory or condition of things according to which private property should be abolished, and all things held in common: Marxian socialism as understood in Russia'. Again I think that's pretty good for a straight dictionary. Without labouring a point, it tells us that there's a difference between the theory and the practice, and includes both in the definition.

Fuck isn't in my edition of the dictionary at all . . . they were coy in 1960 . . . but it's in the new (1983) edition.

There's even a *joke* . . . it's in the editor's preface; an ironic little anecdote about their refusal to include 'myristicivorous' as a real word.

I'd like to know more about the politics of the dictionary business . . . who selects the editors? Who decides what's *slang* or *vulgar*? How is it that the *Oxford English Dictionary* is so incredibly Tory, and yet it's still well respected by all sorts of 'liberals'?

Jake Williams
Aberdeenshire

Just In

Anarchism — arguments for and against
Albert Meltzer, 80p

Writings of the Vancouver Five
75p

The Natural Society
Richard Hunt, 40p

A Day Mournful and Overcast
60p

Three Essays on Anarchism
Charlotte Wilson, 75p

A Woman Without a Country
Emma Goldman, 50p

A wide ranging selection here. Albert Meltzer's replies to criticisms of anarchism is back in print and there's a selection of writings from the five Canadian activists now serving long, in some cases massive, prison sentences. *The Natural Society* is by one of the editors of *Green Anarchist* and *A Day Mournful and Overcast* is a protest against the militarisation of the Iron Column, an anarchist fighting unit during the Spanish Revolution, by one of the fighters with the Column. Charlotte Wilson was one of the founders of *Freedom* and a few copies of the

pamphlet of her writings brought out by Cienfuegos Press in 1979 have recently been discovered. The same goes for the Emma Goldman pamphlet. In both cases stocks are strictly limited so it's first come, first served.

The postal address of the Freedom Press Bookshop is 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, but in reality the bookshop is hidden away at the end of Angel Alley which leads off the High Street down by Kentucky Fried Pigeon. Aldgate East is the nearest tube and the bookshop is open from ten till six, Tuesdays to Saturdays inclusive. For those unable to visit (access for the disabled is appalling) there's a mail order service. Add 10% for postage, minimum 20p, but 20% for overseas customers.

Freedom Press Bookshop

1984 was a year of major changes for the Freedom Press Bookshop. Most importantly, the range of books carried was drastically reduced. In place of the old general bookshop with a very large number of titles there is now a specialist anarchist bookshop with a much smaller number of titles. There were two reasons for this change, the first being the bookshop's site. Most bookshops have a shop-front in a busy street and therefore get casual customers wandering in. But Freedom Press Bookshop is hidden away at the end of a grimy little alley in Whitechapel and its only customers are people who deliberately seek the bookshop out. No one will go to the trouble of visiting Freedom Press in order to buy books that are widely available and so the new Freedom Press Bookshop policy is to stock the anarchist books that are difficult to obtain elsewhere. The second reason for the change in the stock was financial. Early in 1984 the bookshop owed £2,000 to publishers, a massive debt for a bookshop with average weekly takings of £75.

It was impossible to continue buying books with the carefree abandon that was possible before the monetarist recession and so the change in policy suggested by the bookshop's site was in fact a financial necessity. There was a sale in March 1984 which got rid of a lot of the old stock and raised £500 which went towards paying the £2,000 owed to publishers. (It's all paid off now.)

The other main change was in the bookshop's opening hours. These were rather haphazard before but now the bookshop is open from ten till six, Tuesday to Saturday inclusive and so visitors can be sure of finding the bookshop open.

The change in policy has been a success. Despite the much lower number of titles, bookshop sales were the same in 1984 as

in 1983, and this despite increasing unemployment and poverty (which means people have less money for buying books) and also the fact that building work on the next-door Whitechapel Art Gallery has turned Angel Alley into a near bomb-site.

However, sales are still far too low. In 1984 the full-time bookshop worker (me) was paid less money than the dole and 1985 looks to be much the same. Only an increase in sales will bring in money to pay for an increase in the bookshop worker's wage and so the question is how to increase sales.

The end of the building work going on next door will mean a more attractive environment for the bookshop but the basic problem is the state of anarchist publishing. There aren't enough anarchist titles in print (and those that are in print aren't good enough). A big increase in anarchist publishing will help Freedom Press Bookshop and, much more importantly, will mean that anarchist ideas are more widely available. So watch this space for news of new publishing ventures.

Chairperson Mo

History Workshop 18

Anarchism and British Labour History Recordings of the session available on C90 cassettes:

Cassette 1 — John Quail, 'The History of anarchism and anarchist history'.

Alan O'Toole, 'Dr Creagh — a neglected British anarchist'.

Cassette 2 — Alan O'Toole (continued).

Chris Milburn, 'Ambrose Barker: anti-state socialism and the radical tradition'.

Cassette 3 — Chris Milburn (continued).

Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in London, 1881-1919'.

Don Pedalty, 'Syndicalism, Guild Socialism and the state socialists'.

Cassette 4 — Don Pedalty (continued).

Michael Holman, 'British Tolstoyism in the 1890s: theory and practice in Croydon, Purleigh and Leeds'.

Cassette 5 — Michael Holman (continued).

Phil Ruff, 'Preliminary investigations into the anarchist movement in East London'.

Cassette 6 — Phil Ruff (continued).

Mark Shipway, 'The APCF and the Spanish Civil War'.

Laurens Otter, 'The anarchist contribution to unilateral nuclear disarmament, pre-CND and very early CND'.

Cassette 7 — Laurens Otter (continued).

Colin Ward, 'Direct action in working class housing'.

The cost is £1 each cassette plus postage (1-2 cassettes = 22p; 3 = 34p; 4 = 46p; 5 = 52p; 6 = 66p; 7 = 98p). Please send money with order (cheques payable to R W Jones) to R W Jones, 6 Lillian Street, Bradford 4.

