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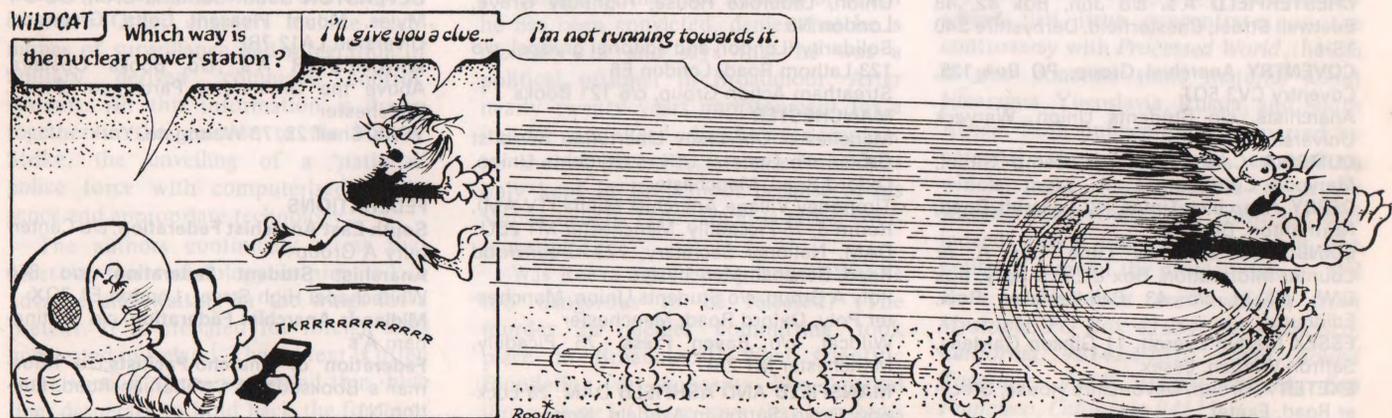
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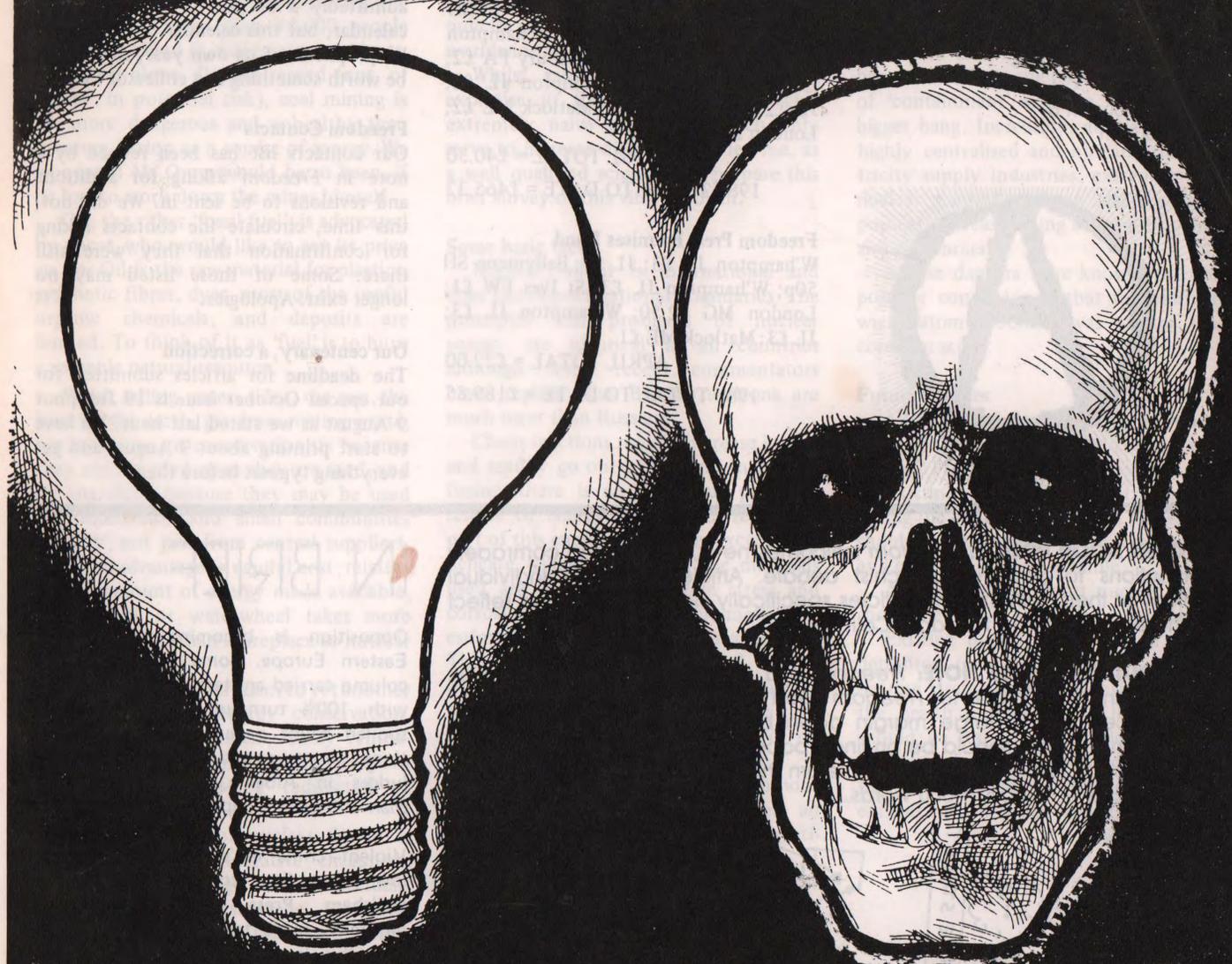


FREEDOM
1886 : CENTENARY YEAR : 1986

ANARCHIST MONTHLY

VOL 47 No 5 JUNE 75p

NUCLEAR POWER



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50 YEARS OF PEACE NEWS**

FREEDOM

1886 : CENTENARY YEAR . 1986

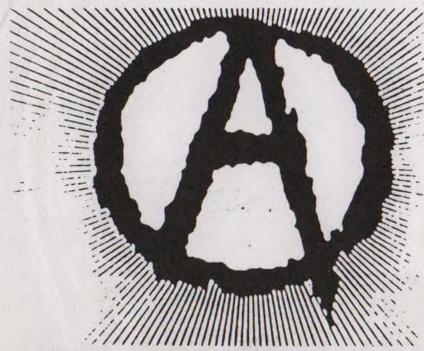
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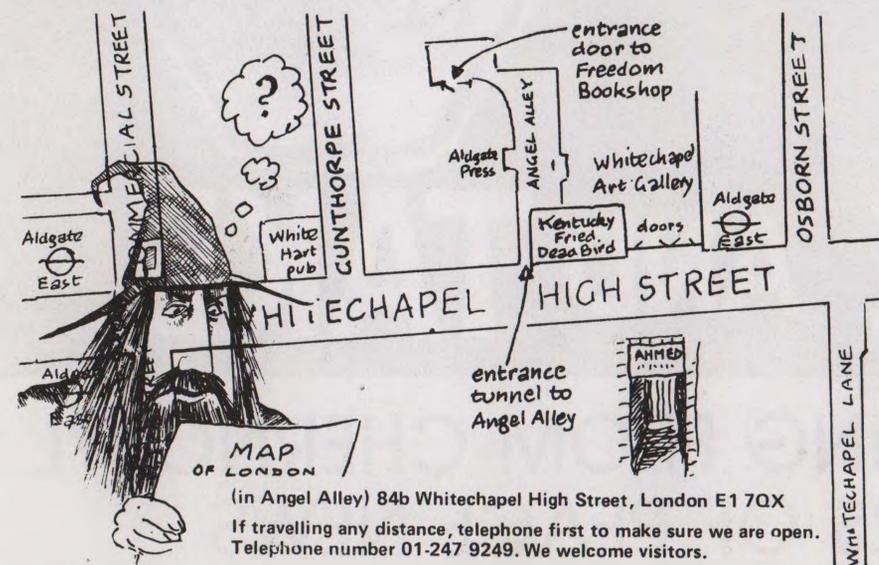
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NEWS FROM ANGEL ALLEY

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This month's cover illustration, by Ron Cobb, is from **Doomsday 1986 anti-nuclear calendar** (Housman's — remainder price £1.50, or £1.75 including postage). Twelve of Cobb's magnificent drawings, and dates of past nuclear events. June is admittedly a bit late to be reviewing a calendar, but this calendar turned out to be prophetic of its own year, so it could be worth something as a collector's item.

Freedom Contacts

Our contacts list has been revised by a note in *Freedom* asking for additions and revisions to be sent in. We did not, this time, circulate the contacts asking for confirmation that they were still there. Some of those listed may no longer exist. Apologies.

Our centenary, a correction

The **deadline** for articles submitted for our special October issue is **19 July**, not 9 August as we stated last issue. We have to start printing about 9 August and get everything typeset before then.

IN BRIEF

Opposition is becoming rampant in Eastern Europe. Some years ago, this column carried an item about an election with 100% turn-out, but saluted one spoiled ballot paper. In Sunday's elections for town and local councils and judges in Albania, there were *more than 400* spoiled papers.

Violent crime is 'statistically relatively low' according to Lord Chancellor Hailsham. Press reporting 'not unnaturally' leads to a sense of outrage, 'But this leads to levels of fear which are not justified by the actual risks'.

Chinese officials have said that people should not be forced to support Marxism. 'Relying on political authority or administrative means to force ideas on people will not yield good results'.

A survey finds that the proportion of journalists using press releases from PR firms as news items has risen from 37% in 1982 to 67% in 1986. There has been a similar rise in those who see such material as 'factual'.

IN THIS issue we publish an article on nuclear power by the eminent radiation biologist Norman Albon. We hope it will help to sort out the confusion of sales talk from different energy groups, which we have all heard and read since the Chernobyl accident.

Every energy source has advantages and disadvantages. Stan Orme, Shadow Minister for Energy, has been acting as salesman for coal, promising a coal-dependent energy policy when Labour is next in power. Since the first nuclear power station was started there have been something under 200 known deaths from nuclear accidents, nearly all at Chernobyl, none in Britain. During the same period more than 14,000 people have been killed in coal mining accidents, in Britain alone. On the record (not, of course, in potential risk), coal mining is far more dangerous and unhealthy than uranium fission as a source of energy. We wonder if Mr Orme would be so keen, if he had to work down the mines himself.

Oil, the other 'fossil fuel', is advocated by those who would like to see its price go up. Oil is the raw material for plastics, synthetic fibres, dyes, most of the useful organic chemicals; and deposits are limited. To think of it as 'fuel' is to burn a valuable natural resource.

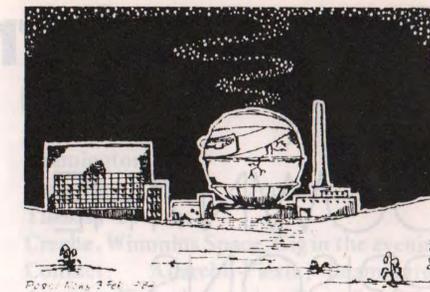
Wind, falling water, tides, the sun, the heat of the earth, gas from rotting waste, are attractive to conservationists because they are not used up as they are used, and to anarchists because they may be used by households and small communities directly, not just from central suppliers. Their disadvantage is capital cost; relative to the amount of energy made available, a windmill or waterwheel takes more energy to build than a fireplace or nuclear reactor.

Economically equivalent to yet another energy source is energy conservation. Energy wasted on heating badly ventilated buildings, or misused in weapons manufacture, could be redirected to useful ends.

The advantage of nuclear fission is said to be its comparative cheapness. The main disadvantage is that an accident may lead to a catastrophe. Statistical calculations are made, that the probability of an accident in this or that type of station is practically zero; but it is assumed for the purpose of calculation that stations are always built and operated as specified. A dangerous oversight of Sod's Law, as we have seen at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. Nuclear weapons are not needed to wage nuclear war, against a population which uses fission power. All that is needed is a guidance system and a chemical explosive to damage the nuclear reactors.

Nuclear fission is a source of energy whose disadvantage clearly outweighs all the advantages. **Editors**

Chernobyl THE FINAL WARNING



THE recent nuclear disaster in Europe is a warning that present nuclear programmes constitute a serious threat. Governmental policies of secrecy have inevitably led to a worldwide crisis of confidence.

Whilst saying that the public lack expertise in this area, politicians give extremely naive comments which only serve to increase distrust. This led me, as a well qualified scientist, to prepare this brief survey of this vital problem.

Some basic facts

Nuclear fallout is international and does not respect national boundaries. The principles and problems of nuclear energy are identical in all countries although some recent commentators have implied that British neutrons are much nicer than Russian!

Chain reactions rapidly increase in rate and readily go out of control. In nuclear fission there is an enormous potential release of energy. The useful release of part of this energy involves an exceedingly delicate balancing act. All the materials used are subjected to severe stress and corrosion. There is no reliable method of estimating the safety of such a process. The 'calculations' often quoted by the industry imply much higher performance than I have ever observed and have now been shown by experiment to be of no value.

The fission products are an enormous biological hazard. There has been an astonishing official reluctance to investigate these hazards. Official estimates of casualties are certainly too low and neglect entirely most of the harmful effects of radiation exposure.

My own research has shown that phosphoryl-ester bonds are particularly sensitive to ionising radiation. These bonds are vital for the integrity of genetic information and for most, if not all, life processes including the nervous and immune systems. The potential long-term effects give cause for great concern.

Why nuclear power?

We should enquire whether such hazardous processes are needed for energy supply when there are several alternative energy sources which can be developed without these major problems

and there is much scope for greater conservation.

When studying or using hazardous chemicals it is good practise to use small quantities and isolate them from other hazards and from the populace. The effect of 'containment' is often to produce a bigger bang. Incredibly, at the behest of highly centralised and bureaucratic electricity supply industries, extremely large nuclear plants have been placed close to populated areas; posing a threat to people and governments.

As the dangers were known, the only possible conclusion is that the desire to wield atomic bombs was greater than common sense.

Future policies

All proposed developments such as at Sizewell and Dounreay should be cancelled now.

Existing nuclear power stations (including the expensive failure at Dungeness) should be operated at lower temperatures and closed as soon as possible.

All information about nuclear energy should be readily available to the public.

Existing nuclear waste should not be deposited into the sea, rivers or water bearing strata. A major investigation into the health aspects for all living species should be started and would necessarily take several years. This would then enable the best procedures for disposing of existing nuclear waste to be developed.

Norman Albon



Penal reform TEAR DOWN THE PRISONS

AT THE end of April there was an overtime ban among prison officers. The number of screws on duty fell to about half the usual, and prisoners at 18 different prisons took the opportunity to improve prison conditions by means of destruction. About 840 jail places were taken out, mostly in the nasty 'local' prisons.

Most successful were the inmates of Northeye, a prison built to hold 150 but holding 447 men, none of whom had a record of serious violence. The officers' overtime ban began at Northeye at 2:00pm on 30 April. At 6:00pm it looked as if a group of prisoners were trying to break into the canteen. Six officers went to stop them and found themselves confronted by 60 or 70 men (their own estimate), wearing hoods made of pillowcases and jumpers with holes cut in them.

The governor ordered staff to withdraw, to forestall the taking of hostages. Left to themselves the prisoners spent an enjoyable night burning the place down. A few escaped, but most surrendered to the police, who surrounded the prison, at 8 the following morning.

After the initial reports of the riots, so little was published about subsequent events we suspect a D Notice was in force (the British government does not censor news; it circulates documents called D Notices, instructing the media to censor themselves). Presumably the police are interviewing prisoners with a view to charging some with arson or criminal damage to Her Majesty's property, and learning that the fire at Northeye, for instance, was not started by anyone. 'Certainly not me, inspector; I was quietly doing my bird when these hooded men burst in . . .'

Anarchists are opposed to prisons as such. This is not to say we are willing to be dominated by the psychopaths and thugs at present contained in prisons; we are not willing to be dominated by anybody. We will be satisfied only with a society of sovereign individuals where all relationships are voluntary. Nobody should be kept anywhere against their will, not even if they were confined to Buckingham Palace with all the flunkies in attendance.

Our view is extreme, but most people

who consider the matter go with us part of the way, to the extent of conceding that too many people are confined in British prisons at present. The proportion of prisoners to total population is higher than in any other country in Europe, with the possible exception of Turkey. The Howard League for Penal Reform estimates that about half the people in British prisons are there because they are mentally handicapped, or sick, or in debt.

The nastiest prisons in Europe

British prisons, many of them built more than a century ago to Victorian hygiene standards, would be the nastiest in Europe anyway. Overcrowding has made them utterly abominable. People are locked up 23 hours a day, three to a cell, in cells so small they have to take turns to get out of bed. In some prisons there is only one latrine to every 250 prisoners, the latrines are incapable of draining the ordure produced, and the water supply is unreliable. In an effort to keep down the smell somewhat, prisoners shit on newspapers, which they then fold up and bung through the cell windows into the exercise yard. New prisons are being built, not so much to replace the existing horrors as to supplement them, since the prison population continues to grow at a ridiculous rate.

One cause is that judges sentence people to longer terms of prison than they did. Their aim, paradoxically, is to reduce the prison population in the long run, on the theory that prison deters people from crime. Judges deal with people who have committed crimes or are alleged to have committed crimes, not with people who are deterred from committing crimes. They have no special knowledge of what deters. Their opinion that a ten-year sentence is more of a deterrent than a five-year sentence is no more than a guess. It does not sound very plausible and experience shows that it is quite mistaken, but the judges have yet to learn from their mistake.

About one-fifth of the prison population are not serving sentences at all. They are in prison awaiting trial, often for months at a time. Half of these, about ten per cent of the total prison population,

are not sentenced to prison eventually, but found not guilty, or given some non-custodial sentence. For those that are sentenced to prison, the law of most countries is that all the time in prison counts towards the sentence. In Britain, however, the time spent in prison before trial counts for nothing, on the ground that remand prisoners 'enjoy privileges' not afforded to convicts. If a convicted person appeals, the time between the original conviction and the appeals trial counts, but only up to a maximum of six weeks, although the total waiting time may be more than a year; this is meant to discourage 'frivolous' appeals.

Magistrates sometimes remand people in custody who are accused of offences for which there is no prison sentence. Mental patients are imprisoned 'for psychiatry reports' when psychiatry reports are already available in court.

A way of reducing the prison population might be to pay remand prisoners a modest sum by way of compensation, say £10 a day. Of course no judge or magistrate would dream of remanding someone in custody as a punishment; that would be to pass sentence before trial. Nevertheless, if remands in custody were worth something to the prisoners, I'll bet they would be fewer and shorter.

Order without Law

In 1688 the jails of London were destroyed. Most of James II's army deserted and he fled with the rest, leaving London to 'mob rule' for a few days, until William of Orange's army arrived. In the interregnum the jails were burned down. The Great Fire being still fresh in London memories, the mobs commandeered the fire pumps and soused the neighbouring buildings before firing the jails, so that the fires would not spread. It is said that William's troops 'restored law and order', but the evidence is that the lawless mob had no shortage of order.

Of course the new government licensed a new lot of jail-owners (the prison service was not nationalised until the nineteenth century), but the new jails were not the same filthy slums as the old.

The rioting prisoners of 1986 have struck a similar blow for prison living standards. Good for them. DR



Reading

SUBSCRIBERS to Berkshire County Council's 'Viewdata' computer network were recently surprised to find their screens filled with an item expressing praise and admiration for the activities of Reading Anarchists.

Two days after the message appeared anyone trying to access the 'Viewdata' system found it closed down for the day with the screen offering nothing but the flashing words 'Security Alert'. Despite the fact that this was seen by several users, Berkshire denied that there had been a security alert and suggested that the words 'Security Alert' had been typed in by someone else!

This was not a piece of sophisticated 'hacking' by a computer whizz-kid. It was a comrade with a little knowledge taking advantage of a situation which presented itself. The point we were making in our publicity was that you *don't* need to be a computer freak in order to disrupt the 'information technology revolution'.

An interesting side effect was the coverage in the two local papers — neither of which could be described as friends of anarchism. Both produced light hearted and uncritical articles — it seems anyone who leaves hi-tech with egg on its face becomes a sort of Robin Hood type character.

Anyone can play on unattended state or business computer terminals. The basic rules are 'work fast' and 'be adventurous'. Just a little computer literacy will take you a long way. If you know nothing at all just press all the keys — particularly

command keys — in turn and see what you get. Be imaginative. If you can't even do that then at least drop paper clips down the air vents at the back of the terminal!

John Doe

Camp in Spain

From 1 July until 15 September in Tiermas — a lovely and deserted town over Yesa Lake in Zaragoza province — people interested in experimenting commune free and natural life will coincide. The 'anima mater' that inspires this meeting is the one that makes us practice the philosophy of sharing all and our right of daring the presages that the communalism is in retrocession.

The pleasure of knowing each other and treat ourselves during some weeks and the decided will be 'packing', even though during a short time, the individualism so hegemonic, is something that from itself justifies this commune and the organisation of this meeting.

Nevertheless, the will is not to limitate the living together to a time that does not endure and to a circumstantial space, but to impel the definitive commune procedure, or to various or to some other communitarian settlements.

If you decide to come during the time you desire, please announce it first, due to organisative effects, tell us of your arrival and the approximate dates of the same to **Aquarius, Can Patequet, Joanetes (Girona), Spain**. At this address you can also obtain more information.

Events

Leamington Spa

Leamington Spa
Anarchist Fiesta, Jephson Gardens,
Tuesday 21 July
Creche, Wimmings Space, Gig in the evening
Contact: Anarcho-Fiesta, Leamington
Anarcho-Fishcakes, c/o Box 7, Other
Branch Bookshop, 12 Gloucester Street,
Royal Leamington Spa.

The secret anti-media picnic on 23 July, announced in *Freedom* events column in May, has been cancelled.

Anarchist Forum

May 30 Bill Green
What is the Price of Freedom?
June 6 Alan Albon
Walter Segal's Self Build
June 13 Will Langworthy
Attitudes to children: anarchist solutions
June 20 Open Meeting on
Anarchism and Feminism
Fridays at 8:00pm
Mary Ward Centre
42 Queen Square, London WC1

Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists
Sunday 8 June at 1pm, Dick Sheppard
House, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1.
Mostly a business meeting. Please bring
food to share.



Politics

AMERICA, LIBYA, AND US



THE American attack on Libya on 14 April has various kinds of significance for America and its allies in the Western world, for Libya and its friends and enemies in the Muslim and African worlds, for Russia and its satellites in the Communist world, and so on, some of which demand comment a month later.

The general significance of the confrontation between the United States of America and the Socialist People's Libyan Arab 'Jamahiriya' (mass state) is to be found in the context not so much of the current dispute about 'state-sponsored terrorism' — that is, terrorism carried out not by and for states (as in the normal course of international politics) but by individuals for states (as in the course of so-called intelligence and counter-intelligence) — as of the historical rise and fall of Western imperialism.

The Libyan predicament

Libya is one of the many countries of the Third World created by European conquest and collapse during the past century. From the seventh century it consisted of various North African provinces of the Arab and then the Turkish empire. The area became famous (or infamous) as a centre of Barbary pirates or corsairs — that is, perpetrators of protection rackets exploiting Mediterranean trade — which provoked attacks from several Western states at various times during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; indeed the United States fought two wars with the rulers of Tripoli between 1801 and 1815. Several Western states then became rivals in attempts to conquer the area during the nineteenth century, the eventual winner being Italy, which completed its conquest after a series of bitter campaigns between 1911 and 1928, and finally united the country into a single colony in 1939.

During the Second World War Libya was the site of a crucial campaign between the British and German armies, the victory of the former being one of the turning-points of 1942. After the War Libya was administered by Britain and France under United Nations trusteeship, and in 1951 it became the first independent state created by the United Nations. But King Idris was a Western puppet, and

Libya remained part of the Western imperialist system, with military control through American and British bases and economic exploitation through American and British oil companies.

In 1969 a revolution on the Egyptian model installed the military regime of Muammar Qadhafi, combining nationalism, socialism and Islam with an appearance of popular administration and the reality of tribal and ideological oppression. The system is violently authoritarian — indeed totalitarian since the further changes of 1977 — dealing ruthlessly with dissent both at home and among exiles abroad, but it wins reluctant support because of its defiance of Western imperialism which has ruined the country for nearly two centuries, and because of its opposition to Israel which is seen as a symbol of Western imperialism.

The essential factor in this situation is oil. Libya is rich in this awkwardly distributed fossil fuel, and this is the real reason why the West continues the old exploitation — thousands of Westerners, including American and British citizens still working there — and why the regime can cause so much trouble.

The American connection

The particular significance of the recent events is to be found in the role played by Britain, as part of our special relationship with the United States, which again must be understood in the context of the historical connection between the two countries. North America has been dominated by settlers of British origin for three centuries, and the United States began its existence two centuries ago with a war of independence against the British government. But despite all the obvious differences between the two countries, they always were and still are intimately connected by descent, language, culture, law, politics, economics, and so on. These connections have been considerably intensified during the twentieth century by cultural influence (especially through the popular media of music, cinema and television), by economic dependence (as the United States has taken Britain's place as the leading industrial and commercial country), and by military alliance (especially during the two world wars and the Cold War).

Since the Second World War, in fact, Britain has been virtually absorbed into the economic, political and military system dominated by the United States. Economically, Britain is a sort of subsidiary company of America Inc. Politically Britain is a sort of fifty-first state of the Union. Militarily, Britain is a sort of aircraft carrier for the American air force. The military situation, which was first established during the Second World War, was quickly re-established immediately afterwards. A secret agreement was made as early as 1946 to allow the American air force to use bases in Britain, which it did during the Berlin Blockade crisis in 1948, and it has stayed here ever since, American nuclear weapons being based here since 1950.

The British authorities have made occasional attempts to retain some degree of independent control of the use of the American bases — especially on such questions as what weapons may be kept in and which countries may be attacked from them — but these attempts have been repeatedly frustrated. In 1952 Truman and Churchill made an informal agreement that 'the use of these bases in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision . . . in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time', but this agreement was never formalised or ratified by either side, and in practice it depends on the good will of the American authorities. The only technical co-operation was the 'dual-control' system used for the Thor intermediate-range ballistic missiles stationed in Britain from 1958 to 1963, and all other American military systems in Britain during the past thirty-eight years have been under exclusively American command.

Some former Prime Ministers (Conservative and Labour) have claimed that they have resisted American requests to use British bases in some former crises, but there is no reason to believe that any future Prime Minister of any party would (or could) refuse a serious request in a genuine emergency. Meanwhile there is no evidence that British doubts had any effect on American adventures in Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, Chile, Lebanon, Grenada, and Nicaragua. On the other hand, American opposition to the last

British independent adventure — the Anglo-French attack on Egypt in 1956 — quickly halted it by the threat of economic sanctions. And American support for the last British military action — the reconquest of the Falklands from Argentina in 1982 — was essential to its success.

So Britain's unique action, as the only country allowing the United States to use its bases in and fly aircraft over its territory for the attack on Libya on 14 April, may be seen partly as a direct act of repayment of the Falkland debt four years ago and partly as a vicarious act of revenge for the shooting of a policewoman from the Libyan embassy in London two years ago, but it is above all a symbolic act of submission to American foreign policy and military strategy.

The British position

This should have a profound effect on the political situation in this country, but it hasn't done so yet. Despite the large majority of public opinion opposed to the action and the large membership of anti-war and left-wing organisations, the spontaneous protests during the days following 14 April and the organised demonstrations at the weekend of 19/20 April were on a very small scale — more like those during the Falklands War than those during the Suez or Cuba crises of 1956 and 1962, let alone those during the Vietnam War. The demonstrators were also divided by theoretical differences between anti-militarism and anti-Americanism (roughly represented by CND and the Marxist parties) and by practical differences between non-violent and violent methods (roughly represented by sit-downs and fighting). The unpredictable behaviour of the police, veering between gentle containment and brutal assaults, confused the situation still further.

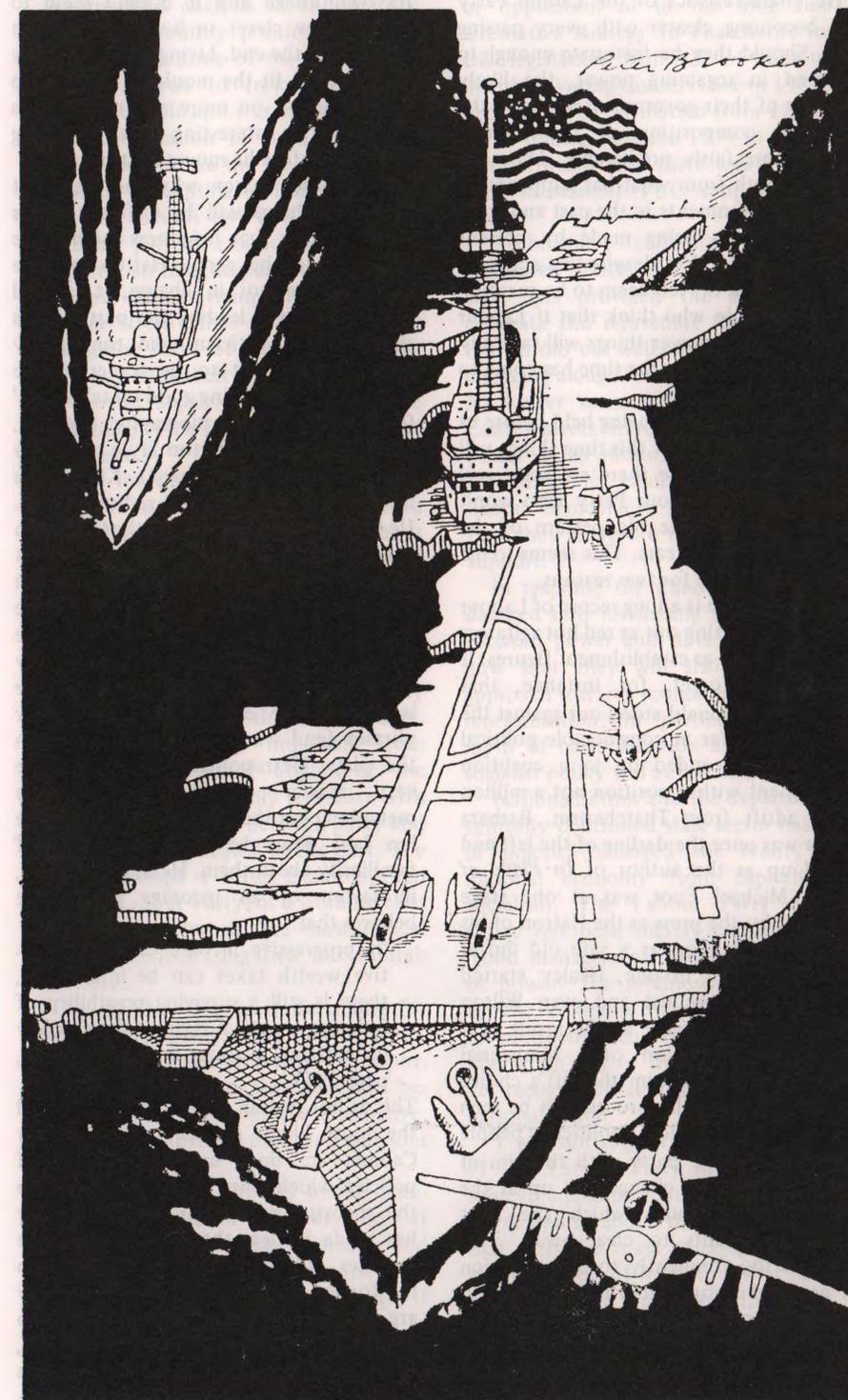
In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which was completed when American bases were being installed in Britain, George Orwell described this country as Airstrip One of the Western empire of Oceania, and this has been our geopolitical position for nearly forty years. There is no point expecting any of the established political parties to alter this position. Churchill's Coalition Government established it, Attlee's Labour Government re-established it, Churchill's Conservative Government confirmed it, and every subsequent government — Conservative, Labour, or Labour with Liberal support — has continued it. Thatcher's Conservative Government has merely proved what it really means; the Labour Social Democrat and Liberal parties, however much opposition they express, would have done the same thing in the same circumstances.

The only way to alter the position is to alter the system which got us into it — not to argue about the small print of the

American alliance (getting rid of the bases but staying in NATO, or vice versa, or making any other unenforceable compromise), but to leave the alliance (and all the military and economic deals involved); not to move from one side to the other (using anti-Americanism as a front for fellow-travelling with Soviet Russia and its equal but opposite imperialism, and its attacks on Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Afghanistan), but to leave both sides (and oppose them both); not to play off Washington and Moscow against each other in an opportunistic

balancing act (like most of the Third World), but to cry a plague on both their houses (and mean it); not to elect a new government at the next election (to play the same tricks as all the previous ones), but to take control of our own fate (and let other people and peoples take control of theirs). It is time to understand the nature of imperialism (Western and Eastern, Zionist and Muslim, military and economic), and to get out of it as quickly and cleanly as we can.

FC



Drawings by Ranan Lurie (opposite) and Peter Brookes (above)

Politics WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN?



THE characteristics of the Labour Party are becoming clearer with every passing day. Should they be fortunate enough to succeed in regaining power, the likely policies of their government and even the probable composition of the internal factions are fairly predictable. They can be read both from what has happened to Labour governments in the past and from the statements being made by present party members. Yet despite this apparent clarity, we on the left seem to be surrounded by people who think that if Labour does return to power things will radically improve, so perhaps the time has come to state the obvious.

The worst illusion being held before us at the moment is that this time things will be different because there are some real radicals in the Labour Party who won't let it slide into the old pattern of the Wilson/Callaghan years. This seems to me to be implausible for two reasons.

Firstly, there is a long record of Labour politicians starting out as red hot agitators and ending up as establishment figures. It is easy to forget, for instance, that Ramsey MacDonald stood out against the First World War at considerable political risk and yet ended up in a coalition government with a position not a million miles adrift from Thatcherism. Barbara Castle was once the darling of the left and ended up as the author of *In Place of Strife*, Michael Foot was at one stage regarded by the press as the Hatton of his day and ended up as a safe old duffer who frightened no-one, Healey started out as a Communist and even Wilson made his way largely as the result of a principled resignation of a Ministerial place which made him the left's choice for leader. A similar process can be seen again and again in local politics as people who entered the party with the aim of creating a radical change end up as the establishment figures which the next generation wants to clear away. This happens too frequently to be a function of personal corruption or lack of determination, it is a socialisation process which the political system subjects new recruits to. Spend long enough in any Parliament or on any local council and you begin to resemble those who surround you. The system sucks you in and recreates you in

its own image and it doesn't seem to matter how clever or honest you are it gets you in the end. Livingstone is already beginning to fit the mould as he lines up with Kinnock on more and more issues and it will be interesting to see how long it will be before he moves centre stage.

The other reason why the idea that this time things will be different seems implausible is that it ignores the balance of forces in the party. Hatton and the Militants are not in charge, it is Neil Kinnock who is leading the party. He is the sort of politician who can calmly admit that 'I got to be leader of the Labour Party by being good on television' (see Robert Harris' biography, page 11. For a critique of Hatton style militancy see *Freedom* vol 47 no 2). Kinnock is most unlikely to lead any radical change. He was a founder member of the Campaign for Labour Democracy but didn't let that stop him opposing mandatory reselection and has a long history of siding with safe causes like anti-apartheid so long as he doesn't have to tie himself down to any specific action of any consequence. He is a complete expert at using empty phrases (and was effectively satarised in the play 'Metropolitan Mikado' as the very master of the multi-purpose metaphor) but the few specific policies he has laid down have an awful ring of familiarity about them. He is, for instance, in favour of an incomes policy. He believes that:

'if progressive income tax and effective wealth taxes can be introduced, there is still a surviving possibility of inducing practical support for a policy of national incomes control.' (Harris, page 145).

This is not just an isolated statement, all the most likely members of a Labour Cabinet are lined up behind a set of policies which owe virtually nothing to the theorists of the far left. Hattersley has made it clear that they will impose incomes policy. Healey's statements to the foreign press have suggested that they are ready to dump any commitments to nuclear disarmament and John Smith, the trade and industry spokesman, has made it clear that they will remain in the EEC, raise private sector profitability and not engage in any widespread nationalisa-

tion policy or rescuing of 'lame ducks' (see the *Guardian* 11 Feb 1986). They aim to regain the territory occupied by the SDP and become the party of the industrialists with a programme to revive the economy and they are probably privately overjoyed that Thatcher has done the job of battering the unions into submission to make things easier for them.

A significant portion of the Labour Party membership has, for a long time now, consisted of groups who are heavily dependent on government spending to earn their living. The main aim of these social workers, teachers, housing officials, civil servants, etc, is to get rid of the Tories in the hope that their job prospects and conditions will improve. The Labour Party seems to gain its strength from the endless ability of many people who work in these jobs to believe that with just a few more social reforms the system can be made to function. Its leaders will use these hopes and illusions to try and get themselves elected and will probably create enough new jobs in these sectors to make a few of its supporters feel that they have gained. This holds in prospect the horrifying possibility that the problems of the inner city will be dealt with by appointing a number of highly paid advisors to write reports for each other which explain the need for even more advisors. Problems such as poverty will be 'eased' by creating more social workers who are experts at helping people to cope with living on income levels which would demoralise the social worker much quicker than the client. The dreadful tedium of living in a system which expects people to commit themselves with enthusiasm to the role of office worker and where the bureaucracy strangles spontaneity and initiative seems likely to grow rather than diminish under a Labour government. Above all there is not the slightest prospect that a Labour government will make any moves to significantly remove power from the wealthy. Kinnock has already used his mastery of the TV medium to reassure David Frost's listeners that the Royal Family will be safe in Kinnock's Britain. It is strange to think that when the Trotskyists have finished knocking on people's doors to persuade them to vote the right way, then we are likely to find back in power the same type of smooth operators who were kicked out in disgust seven years ago. If they seriously believe that this is the way to radicalise people then it is time the traditional left woke up to the fact that they are out of date and out of touch. The bankruptcy of their strategy is currently being hidden only by the fact that the Labour Party are at present out of power. It will be fascinating to see what excuses they have to offer if it ever regains it!

A K Brown

Politics LIBERTARIANS WITHIN LABOUR



ON THE political left, there seems in general to be two reactions to anarchism. One is of open hostility, the other tending to regard anarchists as stubborn mules; purists, utopians. Few non-anarchists (poor souls!) would regard anarchism/libertarian socialism as a viably pragmatic alternative to the failures of Labour Party socialism.

I am sure comrades will forgive me for being presumptuous, when I wonder if anarchists are doing all they can in the socialist movement. Do anarchists take full advantage of the opportunities to propagate anarchist ideas when particular situations emerge and then evolve?

I wish to draw attention to certain developments on the Labour Party left, which I feel should be of interest to anarchists.

'We need a critical, thinking left that is not content with hand-me-down formulas from programmes of earlier periods ...'; 'Statist models of socialism which shut people out are not socialist'. These are quotations from an editorial in *Chartist*, a periodical which, along with the LCC publications, *Tribune*, and *Herald*, has a significant influence amongst Labour Party activists. The *Chartist* editorial is typical of much current opinion in such journals. For Labour Party socialists on the left to have arrived (arrived back?) at this position, is I believe a major and hopefully irreversible step forward. While as anarchists we are likely to remain sceptical over the Labour Party's attempted monopolization of new socialist ideas, we must surely welcome and encourage such an important theoretical shift.

We are unlikely to see the leadership of the Labour Party taking account of such developments, either tomorrow or the day after. Libertarians within Labour are at present over-shadowed by a representation of the Labour left (a deliberate creation of the media) as consisting of the authoritarian Militant Tendency and 'personalities' such as Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner. *Because* the libertarian elements within Labour have neither influence with the leadership nor a high public profile, there is now more than ever a role for anarchists alongside and amongst the Labour left.

An anarchist analysis of, and strategy for, local/community politics is imperative. For while some of the Labour left may have begun to (re)consider anti-statist decentralization as an alternative in the formulation of socialist policy, they still do not see the inherent contradiction in attempting to build socialism from the 'bottom up', and at the same time being part of a national parliamentary party, an integral part of a hierarchical society which attempts to co-ordinate socialism from the 'top down'. By resisting the drive of any revolutionary ideas, they turn their concern for liberty into another support or prop to ensure the stability of a hierarchical system of government.

Sadly for the moment, regardless of what political position has been reached and whether we see promise in it, Labour Party activists will continue to regard 'the party' as the only vehicle for socialist change. But there is also a growing recognition on the left, of the problems that an inherently conservative and hierarchical TUC has posed and will pose for any libertarian influence in the Labour Party. This seems specially important considering the historical origins of the Labour Party and the holy reverence with which the relationship between party and unions has been treated in the past. The TUC is perhaps a better example, even than the Labour Party, of a working class institution soaking up the most radical ideas and rehabilitating them into capitalist society.

One of the dangers those calling for revolutionary change have had to avoid, whether from inside an institution or not, is the alternative to the spectacle becoming the spectacle of the alternative; rebellion as a novelty, packaged and sold like a commodity.

'Participation' is the key to the maintenance of capitalism and every form of 'participation' must be defined and channelled into accepted organisations. All other avenues, all perspectives are if possible shut down, allowing no room to manoeuvre or breathe. For too long the Labour left had accepted those limitations (defined by a ruling class), assuming that there was a finite amount of power and therefore to be able to move towards

a socialist society, power had to be taken from someone else. This is the orthodox Marxist justification for 'smashing' the bourgeois state only to construct another state in its place, calling it a 'workers' state.

Given the lack of analysis of power and the state, and the orthodox complacency which seemed to have infested the Labour left in the late 70s, it was of no real surprise that the TUC needed a heavy handed nudge to wake them up from deep slumbers, when it became necessary to knock together some kind of opposition or in the long run an alternative strategy to Thatcherite industrial legislation. With 32% of trade union members voting Conservative in 1983, the decline in TUC affiliation from 12 million to 10 million between 1979 to 1984, it is not surprising that there was a failure to gain substantial TUC support for the miners.

Technically, capitalism has surely exhausted itself, yet the power of the state has provided the ability to recuperate and rejuvenate the system, and like an old but well oiled machine keep it chugging along. The collapse of capitalism no longer seems inevitable. Thatcherite Conservatives have recognised that the power of an authoritarian state alone, in defending the capitalist economy of a liberal democracy, is not enough, and that they therefore need to win popular support.

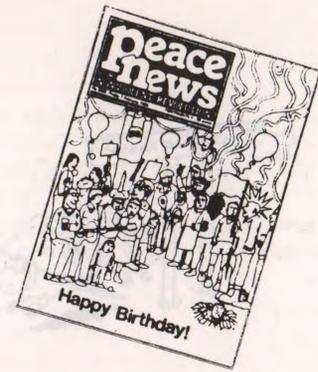
In response the Labour left has been shocked into reassessing the relationship between power and state. We may hope now that they will also reassess their approach towards economic and industrial reorganisation; in particular, that the myth of nationalisation as a supposedly socialist policy will at last be broken.

Nationalisation and the expansion of a centrally controlled state sector has never in practice changed the reality of a national economy from capitalism to socialism. The Labour Party once in office has been merely concerned with 'good management' and the maintenance of power. The infamous clause IV calls for the 'common ownership of the means of production and distribution' and the libertarian left of the Labour Party may yet recognize that this is not the same as nationalisation.

I will not suggest yet more 'entryism' of the Labour Party in an attempt to achieve anarchist objectives. But, what I do recognise about the Labour Party, is that it is *the* mass working class party, and regardless of how it may or may not continue to be a point of integration for the working class into capitalist society, it would be complacent, smug, and above all lazy not to take note, or to take hope in a Labour left that increasingly develops a libertarian strategy rather than an authoritarian one.

Roland Wood

Fifty years PPU AND PEACE NEWS



THE main pacifist organisation (the Peace Pledge Union) and the main pacifist paper (*Peace News*) in Britain both began in 1936, and their joint fiftieth anniversary gives a good opportunity to consider their history from the anarchist point of view.

There have been pacifist organisations in this country since the emergence of the Society of Friends (Quakers) during the English Revolution of the mid-seventeenth century, and there have been moderate peace organisations since the formation of the Peace Society during the Napoleonic wars in the early nineteenth century. But the modern movement began with the establishment of the National Peace Council in 1904 and the development of a more militant pacifist movement in the opposition to the First World War in 1914 and especially in the resistance to conscription in 1916. After the end of the war in 1918, the particular campaign against conscription (led by the No Conscription Fellowship, but also joined by the specifically anarchist Anti-Conscription League) was transformed into a general campaign against another war (led from 1921 by the No More War Movement and also by the War Resisters International, which was based in Britain from 1923), and the traditional peace movement (led by the League of Nations Union) was overtaken by increasingly militant pacifism.

Organisation and paper

The pace was quickened during the early 1930s by the growing war mongering activities of the new dictatorships – Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan – and several new initiatives were tried. A Peace Army to intervene in international disputes was proposed in 1932 by Maude Royden and again in 1935 by Joyce Pollard; the organisation which became the Progressive League was founded in 1932 by C E M Joad; new Christian pacifist organisations were founded during 1933 and 1934 by several denominations. Then in October 1934 Dick Sheppard, a charismatic Anglican priest, launched a new movement based on a simple pledge: 'I renounce war and never again, directly or indirectly, will I support or sanction another'. This grew dramatically during 1935, and what was first known as the Sheppard Peace Movement was formally established as the Peace Pledge Union on 22 May 1936. This quickly gathered a remarkable group of prominent sponsors (including Bertrand Russell and Aldous Huxley, Laurence Housman and Rose Macaulay) and gained remarkable support. In 1937 Max Plowman became general secretary, the PPU absorbed the No More War Movement and became the British section of the War Resisters International, and it became the

main pacifist organisation in the country.

All the peace organisations had their own papers, and although the PPU began without one it soon acquired one. The Wood Green Peace Study Group, a non-denominational religious organisation in North London, found difficulty in selling existing pacifist publications, and in 1935 its members decided to produce their own popular weekly newspaper. It became the Peace News Group, and after several months of discussion and preparation they produced a specimen issue of *Peace News* on 6 June 1936 – a fortnight after the formation of the PPU. This was described as 'The only Weekly Paper serving all who are working for Peace', and it was edited by Humphrey Moore, a Quaker journalist. The first issue won wide approval, and weekly publication began on 27 June. Almost at once the new paper was approached by the PPU, and from 25 July it was adopted as the paper of the organisation, although it retained editorial independence, and it became the main pacifist paper in the country.

The new organisation and paper represented a genuine mass movement on a scale never known by pacifists before or since. The main inspiration was religious, although the movement was kept non-denominational, but there was a strong socialist influence. The PPU had a membership of well over 100,000 – at first only men, as those potentially subject to military conscription (an ironical reversal of later sexual separatism in the peace movement), and later about one-third women. *Peace News* had a circulation of well over 20,000, rising to 40,000 at times of crisis (such as the Munich conference in autumn 1938 or the beginning of world war in autumn 1939). The PPU developed a system of more than a thousand local groups, and *Peace News* developed a system of more than a thousand local street-sellers. Both operated as semi-commercial enterprises, employing (badly) paid staff and occupying permanent premises. The PPU acquired its own property in Bloomsbury in 1939, and has stayed there ever since. *Peace News* was at first produced from Moore's home in Southgate; for a time it was published from the PPU office and then from a small office in Holborn, but in 1938 it moved to Finsbury Park, where it stayed for more than twenty years.

The PPU and *Peace News* flourished partly because they appealed to many groups and individuals with very different ideas about war and peace and because, although differences of belief and behaviour were not suppressed, they were not pressed to the point of division. Both Stuart Morris, who ran the PPU for most of the time from 1939 to 1964, and the various editors of *Peace News* during the same period tried to act as peace-makers within the movement as well as beyond it,

the sectarianism was kept to a minimum. From the beginning there were definite libertarian tendencies in the movement. Most pacifists were relatively conventional in their politics, but some were concerned not just with traditional opposition to war but also with the examination of the political and social structures involved in war and with the exploration of ways violence could be replaced and non-violence could be extended between and within countries. In particular there was much interest in non-violent resistance (as practised by Gandhi in India and preached by Richard Gregg in the United States) and in non-violent revolution (as advocated by anarchists in the international peace movement, especially Bart de Ligt in the Netherlands). But the main unifying factor in the increasing crisis of the late 1930s – the Japanese attack on China, the Italian attack on Abyssinia and the Spanish Civil War (which brought total war back to Europe in July 1936) – was the campaign to prevent world war. In this both the PPU and *Peace News* were tempted by the policy of appeasement, which infected pacifists as well as orthodox political parties, but the temptation was resisted and finally removed by the coming of the war in September 1939.

World War and decline

The beginning of the Second World War was a terrible blow to the whole peace movement, but support for pacifism actually increased for several months. To people like George Orwell pacifism might seem 'objectively pro-Fascist', but pacifists themselves were mainly concerned to prevent Britain following Europe into Fascism as part of the war effort. An initial 'Stop the War' campaign was very popular, and in early 1940 the membership of the PPU reached a peak of more than 130,000 and the circulation of *Peace News* reached a peak of more than 40,000. But neither the organisation nor the paper was prepared to use this strength to move from negative opposition to positive resistance to the war, and a reaction began with the end of the Phoney War in spring 1940. When the fall of France was followed by the Battle of Britain and the Blitz and the threat of invasion became a serious matter, pacifism lost its appeal and the pacifist movement suffered serious setbacks. Neither the PPU nor *Peace News* was ever banned (unlike some Communist and Fascist organisations and publications), but both came under severe pressure and began to decline.

In May 1940 several PPU officers were prosecuted for displaying a poster saying: 'Wars will cease when men refuse to fight. What are YOU going to do about it?' In June the PPU officially withdrew the poster and the officers agreed to be bound over. The intention was to save the

THE PACIFIST



PPU from suppression, but the effect was to suspend serious opposition to the war. At the same time *Peace News* was suddenly boycotted both by its printers and by its wholesalers. The issues of 17 and 24 May 1940 were hand-printed by Eric Gill's press in High Wycombe, and from 31 May it was printed by Ashley and Hugh Brock in West London. The loss of the trade distribution halved the circulation, and the reliance on subscriptions and street-selling reduced the paper's influence.

Meanwhile the more radical tendency in the movement was expressed by the Forward Movement, appearing within the PPU during the first months of the war, calling for more positive opposition to the war and at the Annual General Meeting in April 1940 for 'a revolutionary movement on a non-violent basis'. This failed to convert the organisation or the paper, but its members pursued a courageous campaign of open-air speaking which brought repeated prosecution, conviction and imprisonment. Some of the members turned to the anarchist movement and took an important part in the work of the Freedom Press (Fred Lohr, John

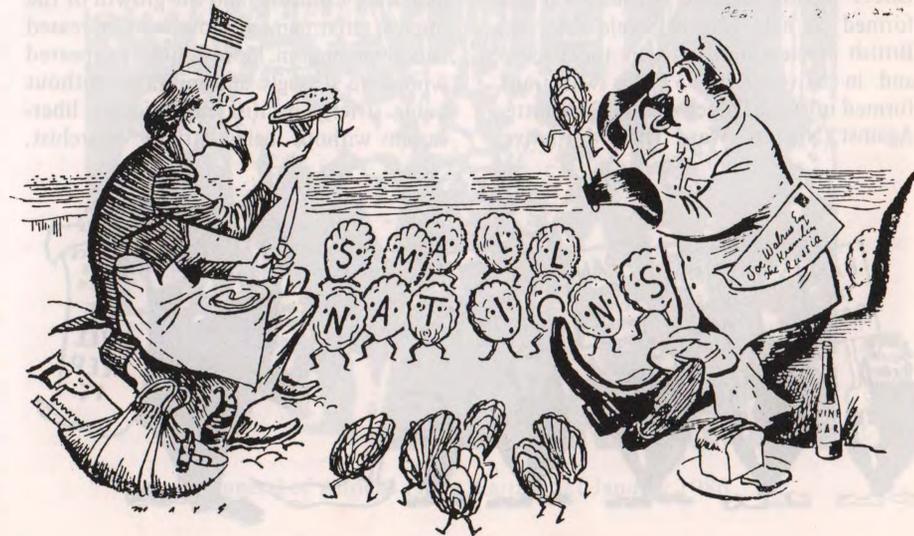
Hewetson, Tony Gibson). The PPU went so far at the Annual General Meeting in April 1945 as to pass a resolution supporting the imprisoned editors of *War Commentary*, but the pacifist movement remained committed to non-violence rather than revolution.

In July 1940 the editorship of *Peace News* was taken over by John Middleton Murry, the well-known writer and editor, and he maintained a high level of journalism for the rest of the war. But the paper and the movement were restricted by caution to campaigning on secondary issues – the status and treatment of conscientious objectors (there were 60,000 during the war, the proportion of conscripts falling from 2 to 0.2 per cent), the policy of unconditional surrender, the use of terror bombing, refugee assistance, famine relief, and so on. By the end of the war in 1945 *Peace News* had almost restored its circulation to 20,000, but the PPU never regained anything like its old membership.

Cold War and the Bomb

After the war both the PPU and *Peace News* faced the new situation of the Cold War and the nuclear bomb, the struggle against colonialism abroad and racialism at home. In 1946 Frank Lea succeeded Middleton Murry (none too soon, since the latter's doubts about pacifism had become an embarrassment), and in 1949 Bernard Boothroyd became editor. In 1951 he was succeeded by J Allen Skinner, and then in 1955 Hugh Brock, who had provided printing in 1940 and had been assistant editor since 1946, became the most important editor for a decade. Meanwhile Harry Mister, who had been a member of the original Peace News Group and had joined the staff in 1940, became the general manager in 1948, and during the 1950s the paper and its publications and the associated enterprise of Endsleigh Cards and Housmans Bookshop were developed into an efficient business.

The peace movement was pushed in





two directions by the development of nuclear weapons and by the use of non-violent resistance in India, South Africa, Sicily and the United States. On one hand there was a shift in policy from opposition to war in general to narrower opposition to nuclear weapons, and on the other hand there was a shift in technique from conventional demonstrations to civil disobedience. Pure pacifism continued to decline, the PPU losing members and *Peace News* losing readers for a decade, but during the 1950s these two new influences began to increase and to converge. The testing by Britain of the atom bomb from 1952 and of the hydrogen bomb from 1957 prompted the growth of a movement specifically for nuclear disarmament, and the use of civil disobedience spread in this movement more readily than in the old peace movement. The PPU leadership resisted these tendencies, but *Peace News* supported and indeed helped to stimulate them.

In 1949 the PPU formed a Non-Violence Commission to study the subject, but in 1951 some of its members started 'Operation Gandhi' to initiate a programme of non-violent direct action. During 1952 this organised the first anti-nuclear sit-down in London (at the War Office), the first demonstration at Aldermaston, the first sit-down at an American nuclear base (at Mildenhall), the first demonstration at Porton, and so on. In 1953 'Operation Gandhi' became the Non-Violent Resistance Group and continued to widen its activities. In April 1957 the Emergency Committee for Direct Action Against Nuclear War was formed to help Harold Steele enter the British nuclear test area in the Pacific, and in November 1957 this was transformed into the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War. These initiatives

were led by the *Peace News* staff and organised in the *Peace News* office. At the beginning of 1958 the same group began to organise the first Aldermaston March, and the more conventional Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was formed. The two wings of the nuclear disarmament movement began to win the sort of support known by the peace movement before the war. At the first Aldermaston March in April 1958 it dramatically entered the political stage and also acquired its universal image in Gerald Holtom's semaphore ND Symbol.

After a series of large legal demonstrations organised by CND and small illegal demonstrations organised by DAC, the Committee of 100 was formed in October 1960 to organise large illegal demonstrations, and the radical wing began a major confrontation with the authorities with the support of *Peace News* but the disapproval of the PPU. This theoretical difference led to a practical division in April 1961, *Peace News* becoming a completely independent paper. Meanwhile it had acquired a sympathetic printer at the Goodwin Press in Finsbury Park in 1953 and suitable premises in King's Cross in 1959, and it now became a separate organisation in the peace movement. The PPU had published other papers at various times – the *PPU Journal* from 1946 to 1952 and then an internal newsletter until the end of 1960, and also *Non-Violence*, the bulletin of the Non-Violence Commission, from 1956 to the end of 1960. From April 1961 it published *The Pacifist*, which still appears and has maintained the old PPU pacifist line while *Peace News* has followed other paths.

Later developments

These developments had a considerable effect not only on the left in general but on the anarchist movement in particular. There had always been an overlap between anarchism and pacifism, occupied at various times by people like Ethel Mannin and Reginald Reynolds, Herbert Read and Alex Comfort, and the growth of the nuclear disarmament movement increased this phenomenon. More militants appeared who were strongly anti-militarist without being strictly pacifist and strongly libertarian without being strictly anarchist,

and the revival of anarchism attracted many members of the peace movement. *Peace News* itself, which was the main spokesman of the radical peace movement throughout the period of its greatest activity, drifted steadily away from traditional pacifism towards non-violent anarchism. It even supported the Spies for Peace in 1963 – more than it knew, since it unwittingly supplied the paper for the pamphlet *Danger! Official Secret! RSG-6* – though it was not yet prepared to reprint the sort of information which later became the common coin of left-wing journalism. In 1964 J Allen Skinner was briefly editor again, the American writer Theodore Roszak took over for a year, and then Rod Prince was editor from 1965 to 1967; but in 1967 an editorial collective was formed, and since then *Peace News* has been in effect a libertarian paper with special interests in pacifist, feminist, communitarian, and ecological topics.

In 1974 *Peace News* made two drastic decisions – it changed from weekly to fortnightly publication, and became a magazine rather than a newspaper; and it moved from London to Nottingham, leaving behind Housmans Bookshop and the Goodwin Press. The latter decision followed the decentralist tendency of the time, but its permanent effect was to isolate the paper from current events and national developments. It has continued to have notable successes – the exposure of a strike-breaking army in 1974, the support for the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign when it was prosecuted in 1974-1975, and the exposure of 'Colonel B' during the ABC official secrets trial in 1977 – but it has failed to become the general forum of the revived nuclear disarmament movement since 1979, it has fallen into sectarianism in several areas (feminism, religion, animal liberation, peace camps, affinity groups, non-violence), and it sometimes seems to represent an introspective group rather than the expanding movement.

But if *Peace News* can no longer be said to be 'serving all who are working for peace', it still provides a better service than any other paper; and if the Peace Pledge Union now seems rather marginal, it still keeps the pacifist faith alive better than any other organisation. They both deserve good wishes for their fiftieth anniversaries, and for the next fifty years. NW

(Thanks are due to past and present members of the staff of the Peace Pledge Union and *Peace News*. Contact: Peace Pledge Union, Dick Sheppard House, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1; *Peace News*, 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham 3; Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1.)

Obituary Alfonso Failla

THE DEATH of Alfonso Failla in Carrara, Italy, on 26th January at the age of 79, severs yet another link with the generation of anarchist militants who fought against fascism and were imprisoned for their beliefs. Alfonso was an outstanding figure in the anarchist movement and is indissolubly connected with its history.

He spent 13 years exiled on various Italian islands together with many other anarchists and anti-fascists, including Sandro Pertini (President of Italy 1978-1985).

Anarchists from all over Italy came to Carrara for his funeral. As the funeral procession crossed the city, led by a band playing anarchist and partisan songs, people at windows began to sing along with the procession. He was buried in the cemetery in Carrara next to Alberto Heschi, Giuseppe Pinelli and other anarchists.

Born in Sicily in 1906, he encountered anarchism at an early age and soon became active in the anarchist movement. Fascism was growing and armed gangs of black-shirts were spreading terror. Failla, together with other comrades, organised an underground network of anti-fascist propaganda and was forced to go into hiding on many occasions.

He was arrested in 1930 and exiled on various islands until 1943. During his years of confinement he continued to resist the fascist authorities, refusing, for example, to give the fascist salute.

Very few anti-fascists spent such a long time in confinement and during those years he got to know the thousands of people exiled by the fascists. These included many who were to become politicians after the war, such as Pertini. The large community of anarchists in confinement looked to Alfonso for guidance and support in the heated discussions that took place there between the inmates, most of whom were communists and, at the time, Stalinists. The arguments became even more heated after the events in Spain.

In 1943 all the political prisoners, with the exception of the anarchists, were released. The anarchists were held for almost another two months and then sent to a concentration camp. Thanks to Alfonso and others, a mass escape was organised.

In September Alfonso joined the resistance against the Nazis and Fascists working with a number of anarchist groups. Among the episodes he was involved in was the freeing of dozens of people destined for German concentration camps.

After the war Alfonso went back to Sicily and started the anarchist paper

La Diana Libertaria. He took part in many strikes, demonstrations and conferences, moving to Carrara in 1949 after a brief stay in Rome.

Alfonso was among those who reorganised the Italian anarchist movement after the war. It was he who replied to the greetings sent by Pertini to the founding meeting of the Italian Anarchist Federation. While recalling the struggles they had taken part in, he also pointed out to Pertini (then Secretary of the Socialist Party) that the parliamentary road which the socialists were taking would never be in the interests of the exploited and would lead to an ever-increasing division between the Socialist Party and the anarchist movement.

Following in the tradition of Malatesta, Alfonso was convinced of the need for a specifically anarchist organisation. He set himself to work to stimulate an co-ordinate activity. He was open to all positive tendencies within the movement even if he did not agree with them and remained aloof from factionalism and personality clashes.

For many years he was associated with *Umanita Nova* as the person legally responsible for its publication. He was therefore the one who got hauled into court whenever a problem arose with the authorities. In a recent case his past with the resistance and his imprisonment was used against him to suggest he had a criminal record, while Italian politicians used their anti-fascist past to get positions of power.

At the Congress of the International



Anarchist Federations in 1968, with the events of May still fresh, there was a confrontation between Alfonso's traditional anarchism and the confusion of libertarian ideas which emerged from the student revolt. Alfonso replied to Daniel Cohn-Bendit and others who were mixing anarchist and marxist ideas, explaining the basis of anarchism as an independent school of thought and a way of life.

Four years later Alfonso fell ill and retired from taking an active part in the anarchist movement.

The courage shown by Alfonso Failla, his absolute honesty and profound sensitivity in a world which grows ever colder and more cynical remains an inspiration and part of the heritage of the movement for social emancipation. Thanks to Alfonso the struggle for a more just and free world is less of a utopian dream today.

JKA

Source 'Rivista A' March 1986.



Funeral of Alfonso Failla, Carrara, 27 January 1986



Ireland SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

GIVEN the general ignorance of Irish history in Britain, this article is an attempt to set the record straight and also encourage debate. It is primarily in reply to the item by M McM 'Ireland: The Referendum Election' in the January/February issue of *Freedom*, which despite the title had nothing to say about the recent by-elections (and little about anarchism either).

M McM's article stated that 'Britain' organised a county by county referendum on Home Rule; however, no such referendum was held. I also personally disagree with the suggestion that 'if Ireland were united the censorship and sex legislation which afflicts the Republic would be applied island-wide' or that there would be a reverse 'tribal' oppression in the Six Counties.

Most importantly, it is erroneous to assume the British Government 'eventually gave in' to demands for Home Rule. Had the Government really given in all of Ireland would have had Home Rule. In fact they were forced by armed nationalist and socialist men and women to make what seemed the least painful compromise allowing the ruling class to retain any political control over its economic interests in Ireland, mainly in the industrialised north-east. One could argue this was the only way to reconcile the rival aspirations of nationalists (including many Protestants) and loyalists (mainly Ulstermen). However, to ignore that partition was a response to open revolt and the threat of armed loyalist violence (by 1914 the UVF had over 80,000 rifles and revolvers with thousands of men trained to use them) would be to credit the British State with a sympathetic interest in Ireland which it manifestly never had. The Irish people were no more consulted about Partition than were the people of Ulster on the Anglo-Irish Agreement last year.

The only event which could possibly be construed as constituting a referendum was the December 1918 post-War General Election. In Ireland this was fought largely on the Home Rule issue.

Admittedly, a sizeable vote in the north-east went to Unionist candidates, but it is wrong to infer from this that 'the six counties nearest Scotland, where the

Scotch-Irish were the majority, voted to stay in the UK'. They did not. Nor were the 'Scotch-Irish' (itself a misnomer) a majority in all areas or even all six counties (nor were they all Unionists). The original Scotch-Irish, whose descendants could be Protestants or Catholics today, settled mainly in counties Donegal, Londonderry, Antrim, Armagh and Down. In Tyrone, Fermanagh, Cavan and Monaghan most Protestants are Church of Ireland of northern English extraction. Furthermore, the 1911 census reveals that counties Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal were about two-thirds Catholic (with large non-Catholic enclaves), counties Armagh, Londonderry, Tyrone and Fermanagh were split almost evenly, and only in counties Down and Antrim was there a clear Protestant majority (of about two-thirds). This disregards age or sex, and since voting was very restricted it is impossible to translate these data into likely voting figures (even assuming Catholic-Nationalist and Protestant-Loyalist, which is over simplistic); but certainly there would have been no clear Unionist majority in Ulster as a whole or even in four of the six partitioned counties.

A plebiscite for Ulster was mooted in 1920 (under the influence of President Wilson's 14 Points for Peace guaranteeing the right of national self-determination, although the British delegation prevented Irish representatives speaking at the 1919 Versailles Peace Conference), but was rejected since the voting strength of the two factions in the province was virtually equal and the result therefore foreknown to be useless. Neither side wanted a plebiscite anyway, realising this would not solve the problem.

So how did Partition come about? It was first suggested in Parliament in 1888 and even before the War had been rejected by Nationalists and Progressives. James Connolly (a founder of the IWW) wrote that partition would lead to 'a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish Labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements while it lasted'. (*The Irish Worker*, 14 March 1914). The first serious proposals came in 1916. In

response to the Easter Rising and the threat of Civil War in Ireland while the Army was involved in Europe, Lloyd George proposed that the Home Rule Act, shelved at the outbreak of war, should be implemented and as a sop to Unionists suggested that six counties in the north-east be excluded from the Act. Many Unionists at first held out for the whole nine-county province, but obviously they could not maintain the Union against an equal number of Nationalists. In 1920 Captain Craig (Unionist MP) told Parliament: 'We quite frankly admit that we cannot hold the nine counties... Therefore we have decided that in the interests of the greater part of Ulster it is better that we should give up the three counties... rather than take on a bigger task than we are able to carry out.' The Government, without any referendum at all, then opted for partition. The six counties were the largest area over which the Unionists could exercise control. It was as simple as that.

Partition was presented as a temporary measure, and rather than Northern Ireland remaining under direct British rule two parallel governments were set up, in Southern Ireland and the Northern Ireland client statelet. This was a badly thought out scheme, intended to rid the British Government of the problems of the North. The Government of Ireland Act (December 1920) said: 'Although at the beginning there are to be two Parliaments and two Governments in Ireland, the Act contemplates and affords every facility for union between North and South, and empowers the two Parliaments by mutual agreement and joint action to terminate partition and to set up one Parliament and one Government for the whole of Ireland', and it provided for a Council of Ireland with 20 representatives of each Government.

Unsurprisingly, the North wanted nothing to do with this. In the 1921 General Election in the South, 124 of 128 seats returned Sinn Fein members to the Second Dail. That December 'Articles for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland' were signed, giving the Irish Free State self-governing Dominion status within the Empire. However, the Treaty contained the provision that within a month the Northern Ireland Parliament could present an address to the King to exclude the Six Counties, and this was done. In so doing, the North had to accept a Boundary Commission to determine the international border. This was delayed until October 1924 because the North, knowing it stood mainly to lose territory, refused to appoint a Commissioner. The Commission's first draft was leaked in November 1925, suggesting areas of Tyrone, Fermanagh and Armagh be incorporated into the Free State and parts of Donegal

and Monaghan ceded to Northern Ireland. On the 3rd December the three Governments conferred, withdrew the powers of the Boundary Commission and despite the report decided the border should remain unchanged. The Northern Ireland Government now claimed the Free State Government had given de jure recognition to the border, as indeed it had. On the 1st April 1926 the Council of Ireland, which had never functioned, was formally dissolved. The partition of Ireland was complete.

To deal briefly with my other disagreements with M McM's article. It is assumed a united Ireland would lead to 'tribal' and religious oppression of Irish Protestants. This is indeed the view of many Northern Protestants, who (unlike most Catholics) tend to see the problem as one of religious belief. It is possible to see it in other terms — cultural, economic, political, psychological — but the ordinary person in the street probably doesn't.

It is of course customary to point out that the United Irishmen were essentially a Protestant organisation, that historically many leading anti-British parliamentarians were Protestants (necessarily since Catholics could not be MPs), and that until the mid-19th century the Protestant Dissenters of Ulster were the most vociferous Republicans. This is true — as long as the analysis is confined to the educated middle class. Besides the intelligentsia, however, are ordinary people who believe what they are told. The Irish people have long suffered from division, fostered by the ruling class, and merely to remove the border would not create a united Ireland in human terms whatever

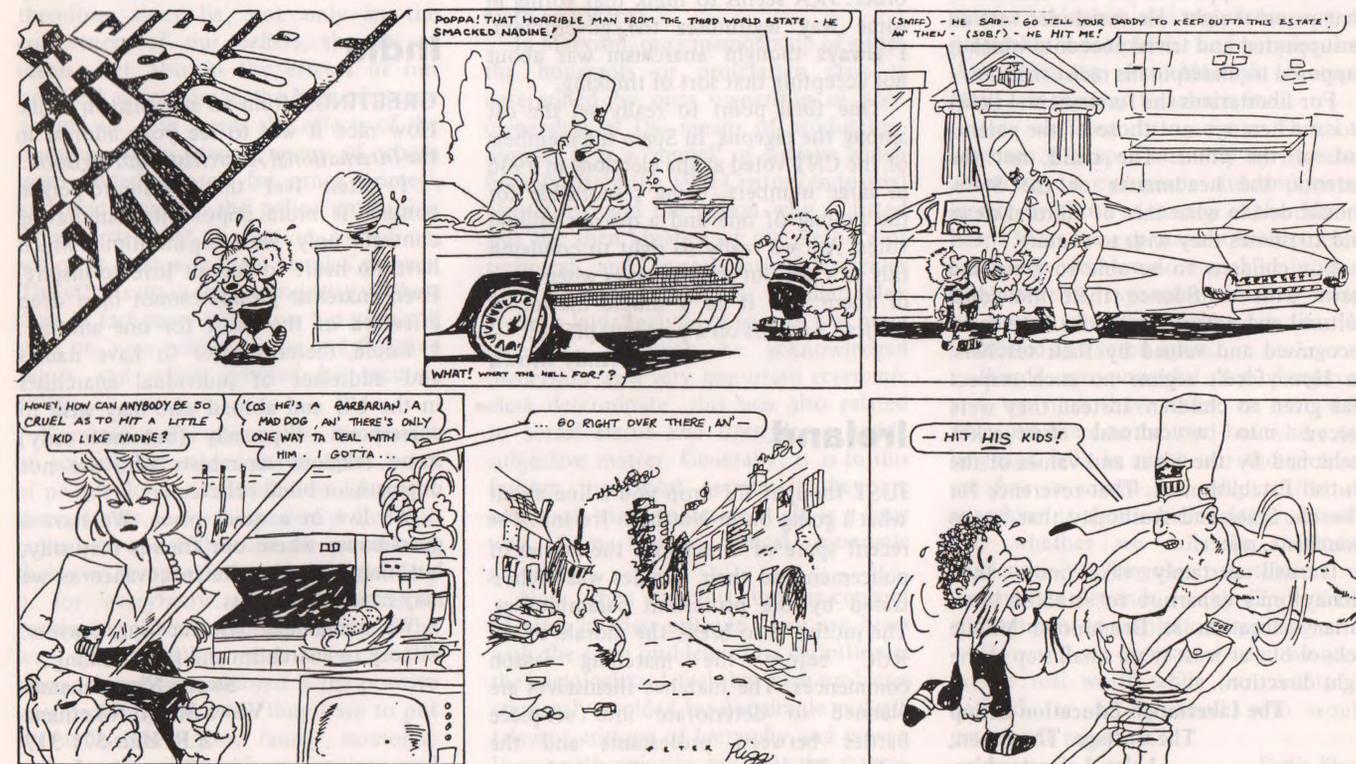
the geopolitical situation. This does not mean there would be a genocidal pogrom against Protestants were British rule removed, whatever certain vote-catching Unionist politicians maintain; however to truly unite Ireland the whole Irish people themselves would first have to be freely united. The fact of the border makes this impossible; because the border is there people in the North are divided into their 'tribes' and kept there by fears which are largely groundless. What 'keeps tribal oppression going in the Six Counties' is not that 'both oppressed and oppressors think of themselves in tribal terms' — this is a circular argument. What keeps it going is the partition of Ireland and the continued British involvement in the Six Counties.

It is true the Republic is not particularly libertarian, but may I disabuse readers of any illusions as to the nature of censorship and sexual mores in the North — this is also a very repressive society. Devout Catholics follow the Church teachings assiduously without them being enshrined in State law, and the Protestant Churches are just as puritan. Perhaps we've forgotten Ian Paisley's speech about homosexuality (still a crime in the North). The position of women is dreadful, and abortions in Northern Ireland remain impossible to get. 'Morality' sees to censorship, and politically whilst we have no Section 31, self-imposed media censorship (eg reference upwards) works equally well under British Government pressure. (The repressive presence of the British Army and State Security Forces goes without saying). What clearly upsets many

Northern Irish Protestants is not the moral stringency of the South's laws but their basis in Catholic teaching — most would wholeheartedly accept these laws otherwise since they largely reflect their own opinions. However, I feel it is wrong to assume a united Ireland would be merely an amalgam of the worst aspects of both the present political entities. It is over-pessimistic to assume that Irish people would continue to exhibit traits which have flourished as a result of partition. Fear, oppression, ignorance and the need to express a perhaps-spurious ethnic identity have contributed to the cultural manifestations of Irish society, North and South. Were Ireland politically united, which could only be achieved by cutting support from under the present leadership, this must entail a changed perception of 'Irishness'. A united Ireland under these circumstances would be a pluralistic society capable of greater personal freedom than either of the present states afford. Furthermore, the removal of British rule from Ireland can only be a force for good, although removing British influence after 900 years of shared history is impossible. Of course, Ireland would still be a State with all the paraphernalia of Government, and thus uniting Ireland may well be irrelevant in the short term from an anarchist point of view.

I cannot fault M McM's conclusion, but individuals will not be able to cooperate freely with each other as individuals until political oppression has been ended, by individuals co-operating with each other on grounds of shared beliefs to end it.

Katy Andrews



Letters



Listen, Freedom

IT WAS distressing to find Chaz Bufe's dishonest and sectarian screed, *Listen, Anarchist!*, given such uncritical favor in your March 1986 issue.

If your reviewer prefers Bufe's unimaginative and authoritarian marching orders for the anarchist movement, that is his/her business, but to ignore the lies and smears the pamphlet contains against so many people and publications (including ours) without the slightest attempt to check their veracity seems highly irresponsible.

Suffice it to say, you have been suckered into a nasty argument of which you admittedly know nothing, and you fell for it.

**E B Maple for the staff
The Fifth Estate
Detroit**

Ethnic Rights

TREVOR Artingstoll's letter replying to your Honeyford article had so little to do with anarchism we wonder why you printed it. He claims that parents have the right to ensure that their children are educated without fear of influence from alien cultures. He argues that Honeyford should be supported for his defence of that parental right. He concludes with an unsupported and trivial anecdote which is supposed to underpin his racist theories.

For libertarians the fundamental rights at issue here are not those of the parents but of the child. The child, not the parents, the headmaster or the State, should decide what mix of cultural views and attributes they wish to acquire.

For children to be able to grow and learn with confidence their individual cultural and personal histories have to be recognised and valued by their teachers. In Honeyford's regime no such respect was given to children. Instead they were forced into a cultural strait-jacket fashioned by the ideas and values of the British Establishment. That reverence for Church, State and Authority that we, as anarchists, reject.

It will certainly take more than Honeyford's departure to establish libertarian education at Drummond Middle School but at least it's a small step in the right direction.

**The Libertarian Education Group
The Cottage, The Green,
Leire, Leicestershire.**

Why Vote?

IF THE anarchist movement has one major weakness it is that we do like to use phrases which sound good but don't stand up to careful consideration. I place firmly in this category a number of the statements made by JKA in the article in the May issue. It strikes me as bizarre in the extreme to argue that 'the responsibility for the current violence belongs not only to President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher but also to all those who lend their support to murder by voting' and downright crazy to suggest that 'a vote for Labour or the Alliance legitimises the government elected...'

People vote for a lot of different reasons but very few people vote for a party, they usually vote against the other lot. Does this make them responsible for every crazy act carried out by the mob that happened to get in? Virtually nobody who votes expects or wants their vote to be treated as a complete endorsement of every policy they voted for and certainly not for the party they voted against. Many people vote reluctantly and because they can't see any alternative, but they don't in any way see themselves as supporters of the party they vote for. It seems rather harsh to accuse them of murder because of a choice they felt forced to make three years ago, especially if they voted against the government which participated in the murders. The people who are responsible for Thatcher and Reagan's actions are Thatcher and Reagan themselves, their close associates, their advisors, and any jingoists who currently support them and in that order. JKA seems to think that voting in some way legitimises the government. I always thought anarchism was about not accepting that sort of thinking.

One final point to really set the cat among the pigeons. In Spain the members of the CNT voted at the elections in 1936 in large numbers, being responsible for the polling of one and a quarter million votes. Are we really so right to condemn this as a sell out on *principles* when most of them saw it as a simple matter of tactics? Answers on a postcard please!

Andy Brown

Ireland

JUST thought I'd drop you a line about what's going on in Northern Ireland. The recent spate of attacks on the homes of policemen and their families was orchestrated by the protestant paramilitaries. The motive is to break the morale of the RUC before the marching season commences. The marches themselves are planned to deteriorate into set-piece battles between protestants and the police. This, in turn, will provide the

atmosphere in which a General Strike can occur with some likelihood of succeeding. The recent Day of Action was a prototype for the action which is being contemplated. Already, food, fuel and weaponry is being stored on loyalist estates and a co-ordinating committee has been set up to run the strike.

The signs are not hopeful. Sectarianism is increasing markedly. Already there have been three hundred attacks on catholic families. The provisionals are organising in their own areas in case of protestant attack. The irony is that the two tribes in Northern Ireland are almost indistinguishable. One hates the British presence; the other loathes the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Both identify themselves with different versions of the Christian faith; both have their own armies (IRA, INLA, UDA, UVF, etc); both are misogynistic and defend segregated schooling; both are overwhelmingly working-class. The symmetry even extends to the way in which British politics views 'The Troubles'. The Left favours the Republicans because of guilt and the anti-imperialist legacy. The Right favours the Loyalists because of pride and imperial remembrance. In reality, the two peoples are mirror images of one another, refracted through a glass of religious bitterness. With the sole exception that for half a century Britain enabled protestants to discriminate freely against catholics. Now Britain has moved to foreclose this right to discriminate and the first paragraph detailed the Loyalist backlash against this.

J M McLoughlin

India

GREETINGS from an anarchist in India. How nice it was to see your address in the *International Anarchist Address Book*.

I often feel that person-to-person contact is more important than having contacts only with organisations which have no heart to feel or love to inspire. Even anarchist groups cannot have deep affection of the heart for one another. I would therefore like to have names and addresses of individual anarchists in the UK and abroad who may wish to correspond. Especially (but not only) some religious anarchists who are not dogmatic or blind believers.

We live in a quiet place. We have a guest-house where our friends may stay, but they should write in advance as we may have other guests.

We remember you in our prayers. Victory to anarchism and free thinking.

**Swami Nirmalananda
Viswa Shanti Nikethana
B.R. Hills-571 317
Karnataka, India.**

Flo Replies

IN reply to the points made in letters in your March issue that I was being complacent, and defending a woman's right simply to be exploited because I criticised the burning of sex shops in Leeds last year. I do think these actions reflect a general problem amongst nearly all shades of 'left' opinion from socialists to feminists and to anarchists in the UK — that is, their lack of interest in what people actually do and think, as distinct from what our ideologies state they ought to do and think. We all seem to fit into the smug intellectual grin when faced with something we don't agree with, given half the chance, although we might look a little prettier than your cartoon.

There is 'more than one view' as the article from FACT in your last issue pointed out, but I don't think this only applies to feminism. The point I was trying to get at in the article was, just because we have an ideal, belief or set of principles which we call anarchism or feminism or socialism or even conservatism for that matter, does not mean we can claim some 'right' to impose our belief on everybody else, whether they like it or not — as I think the women in Leeds did by their actions in this particular instance.

I have always thought the aim of anarchism and feminism was to liberate people, or women, to make things better, so that they could make their own choices instead of being told what to do — not make things worse for them. This does mean that, when we put our theories into practice, we are accountable for the consequences of our actions. This accountability therefore, does lie, not only in the correctness of our beliefs, theories or ideals, but also in the effects of our practical actions upon the lives of people around us — in Leeds the effects of the burnings upon women, many of whom were raided, busted for other 'crimes', and beaten up by the police until those who carried out the action owned up, which at least won them peoples' respect. The effects upon the sex industry workers may in fact never be known but porn still goes on, now behind closed and fortified doors and often guarded by security thugs.

Sometimes it's easy to see the results of actions but sometimes it isn't. A lot of people don't even bother looking, and there seems to be a tendency amongst radicals to ignore the difficult question of their own accountability, while demanding it for everybody else, and to issue continuing tirades against people and the way they go about their lives. At the same time what is ignored is the positive way people, given what they have to put up with, (their daily family, economic and emotional problems, racism and

discrimination and so on) can and have to deal with everyday life. In our analysis of what is wrong with the world, we seem to be only emphasising the divisive aspects of society such as racism or sexism, and very little that is positive or creative about human relations emerges as a basis for building much needed alternatives.

I don't know all the answers myself either, but if anarchism and feminism are to help create alternatives to exploitation the theory, practice and action have to take account of peoples' wants or needs and be able to fulfill them, or allow fulfilment, rather than like every other political ideology or system, impose a set of ideas and rules upon them. **Flo**

Anarchism and Class

ACCORDING to my dictionary, the word 'anarchy' is derived from the Greek 'anarkhos', meaning without a ruler. Consistent with this, anarchists have always opposed all hierarchies and the coercive power of the state which underpins them. Our critique is essentially a very simple one and may be summarised thus:

The presence of power wielded by all rulers is disruptive of community; the re-establishment of community is reliant upon the dissolution of power and the hierarchies it gives rise to.

Given this very clear approach, I wonder why many anarchists seem willing to use the concept of *class*, which especially nowadays is difficult if not impossible to define. The sociologists wrangle interminably over different versions, which stem essentially from Marx and Weber.

In Marxism, ones membership of either the bourgeois or proletarian class is determined by ones ownership or non-ownership of the means of production. Simple. It is a 'model' of society which broadly fitted the 19th Century industrial capitalism, and the reason why it fitted was the then absence of the plethora of technical and bureaucratic hierarchies with which we are now familiar. Max Weber's later analysis of society was more complex. Although he acknowledged ownership as a very important *economic* class determinate, this was also related to *social status and lifestyle*; a highly subjective matter. Generally, it is in this fashion that most people, if they are aware of 'class', perceive it. It is a long way from Marx's clinical *economic* definition.

Now, when anarchists use the concept of class in their critique, they are beset with the same problem of its definition as the sociologists. I feel that such problems are neatly avoided by our simple and still relevant critique of hierarchy and power. It is worth pointing out that the scrupu-

lous Weber has this to say: 'Classes, status groups, and parties are *phenomena* of the distribution of *power* within a community.' (my emphasis). Modern sociologists, not surprisingly, tend to be careful to leave this aspect of Weber very much alone. They would, wouldn't they! The fact that society is now divided into continuous chains of order givers and order takers, does not undermine the validity of the anarchist analysis one jot. Indeed, it only demonstrates its *flexibility*, and shows the underlying error of the Marxist analysis, which has its roots in *economic* criteria only.

To get back to the here and now, one wonders for instance what criteria *Class War* use to determine 'class'. Does my ownership of a house in a leafy suburb make my windows their legitimate targets? I would like to know. Furthermore, it follows that anarchists who accept the concept of class as a tool for understanding *society* must presumably accept the notion of *themselves* being classified... .

To finish on a personal note. I am content only with the use of a *human* classification as a recognition of the difference between my species characteristics and those of others on the planet. I strongly resent being dumped into any 'class' analysis of human society, and particularly if someone else's analysis is going to make *me* a target in *their* war.

Jay Freeman

Language Games

WHAT people in the real world want is obviously and forever the aim of anarchism. And plain and simple language — preferably a lot plainer and simpler than that used by Pat Murtagh (Letters, May) — is the way to achieve it.

But we have to recognise that our language is shaped not only by ourselves according to our needs and desires but largely by those at the top of the cultural heap. There are experiences in this society for which we have no names; only when they receive expression in the words of those who feel them can they be identified and acted upon.

Words are powerful and dangerous and we must have them on our side. They are there to be used but where our language fails to name our thoughts we are free to invent and adapt. After all, anarchism is about challenging structures, and whether we call the inevitable challenge to language mutilation or reclamation depends on the depth of our commitment to revolutionary change.

How will we ever know what we want in the real world while our 'reality' is defined for us by those who would perpetuate injustices?

Sadie Plant



Techno-Cop

BSSRS Technology of Political Control Group/RAMPET. £3.50, 112 pages, p/b. Free Association Books, 26 Freegrove Road, London N7.

THIS book is largely an update of *The Technology of Political Control*, with which it shares two authors. That book was itself the product of a process of evolution. It began in 1974 as a pamphlet, *The New Technology of Repression - Lessons from Ireland*, produced by the radical rump of the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, after the respectable academics had left. (There was a BBC 2 'Open Door' programme.) That was extended into the book (reviewed *Freedom* 11 June 1977) and a later revised edition. The new book is produced in co-operation with the Group for Research and Monitoring of Police Equipment and Training.

It opens with a scenario 'some years after the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984'. Worsening local conditions lead to street and industrial confrontations, countered by ready-prepared police measures which are justified by the new events. The authors then go on to examine whether 'it couldn't happen here'. They examine the increasing scale of cross-linkage of police computerisation. These can give access to several, apparently innocuous and practical files. The real practice is that they are already linked and include the majority of people, whether for criminal causes or merely 'of interest'. Other chapters include techniques of surveillance and integration of military derived 'command control' systems. All this information is drawn together in the reaction to the Miners' Strike, the unveiling of a 'national' police force with computerised intelligence and appropriate technology.

The authors continually stress that most of this technology is prepared in advance and waiting in the wings for a pretext. It is prepared for foreign sales and tested in Ireland. The pretext is often some version of the embattled thin, blue line, desperate to hold back the forces of

anarchy. Some of us will remember watching in Lewisham High Street as riot shields were calmly unloaded from a van for their mainland debut, presented to the media as a last-ditch defence. The plastic bullets, gas and sub-machine guns are already available, waiting for their cue. It is police mistrust which keeps back the water cannon.

This book is a good survey of the state of the art. It avoids the occasional Leninist shrillness which crept into *Technology of Political Control*, adopting a vague left-wing stance. They end with a call for people to be more vigilant towards 'police accountability'. Apart from this concluding let-down, I have only one qualm. Have you ever read one of those books or pamphlets by a right-wing journalist exposing the revolutionary left, and had a good chuckle at their naivety? I hear an echo of a blue-uniformed or pin-striped chuckle. **DP**

Notes From a Waiting Room

Alan Reeve, Heretic Books, £1.20

What used to be called hospitals for the criminally insane are now known as special hospitals and Alan Reeve writes about them from a personal knowledge since he spent nearly twenty years in Broadmoor. It's difficult to decide what to make of his autobiography beyond that he's unusually clever and of exceptional mental toughness. He denies committing the second of the three murders of which he has been convicted, denies that he is mentally ill and says that he was a political prisoner in Broadmoor. After nearly twenty years imprisonment for a murder committed when he was a teenager he should have been released and was only kept in Broadmoor because of his Maoist beliefs. (The jargon is rather overpowering.)

Was Reeve a political prisoner? Was he too dangerous to be released? (The murder he denies committing took place in Broadmoor.) What scientific foundation do concepts like 'mental illness' have? (Reeve says that bourgeois

psychology ignores the part social background plays in the make-up of the individual.) What social function do special hospitals perform? What would be done with a psychopath in an anarchist society?

In *Notes From a Waiting Room* Reeve writes about his childhood criminality which culminated in the murder for which he was imprisoned in Broadmoor. Then comes his political awakening, involvement in prison protests and the realisation that he is gay. He is now serving a fifteen year prison sentence in Holland (in an ordinary prison). He escaped from Broadmoor and shot dead a policeman in Amsterdam while being chased for shoplifting. If caught he risked being returned to Broadmoor, which is presumably what will happen when his prison term in Holland finishes.

Brian Moseley

Turning a Deaf Ear

Brian and Lawrence

Rabies

Issue 1

Our reviews of Chaz Bufe's pamphlet *Listen, Anarchist!* (March) and the paper *Processed World* (April) have prompted some angry letters from various anarchists in the United States (one of which appears in this issue). We don't want to get involved in the sectarian controversies of the American any more than the British anarchist movement, but we should make it clear that there are even more strongly differing views there than here about how anarchists should and do behave. Meanwhile we have received two relevant publications from that part of the world.

Turning a Deaf Ear is a free pamphlet by Brian (Kane) and (Ed) Lawrence replying to *Listen, Anarchist!* concentrating on its critique of anarchist tendencies towards self-marginalisation, anti-work, anti-organisation and pro-violence, and containing frequent references to individuals and events in the American anarchist movement which makes it almost meaningless to outsiders. *Rabies* is a new apparently free, badly produced magazine whose first issue concentrates on the controversy with *Processed World*, though it also contains some material about Nicaragua, Yugoslavia, Russia, and South Africa. Both publications are marred by personal abuse and wild accusations which make it impossible to know where (if anywhere) the truth lies and indeed make one wonder about the sanity of some of the protagonists. **MH**

Both publications are available from *Mystopia, PO Box 41051, San Francisco, California 94141-0151, and Bound Together, 1369 Haight Street, San Francisco, California 94117.*

Revolutionary Self-Theory: a beginners manual

Spectacular Times

BORED? Dissatisfied? Tired of waiting for authentic community, love and adventure? If so, this situationist booklet is aimed at you. It's about thinking for yourself, analysing why the world is the way it is and why your life is the way it is. This adventure of self-discovery and personal programme for revolution is roughly what 'Revolutionary self-theory' means in situationist terminology. We are promised that the journey 'is as erotic and humorous as an authentic revolution'.

Unfortunately, the way out of alienation isn't as easy as it seems for towards the end we read, 'By now it should be obvious that self-demystification and the construction of our own revolutionary

theory doesn't eradicate our alienation: 'the world' (capital and spectacle) goes on, reproducing itself every day'. So it looks like you are going to have to wait for the revolution after all.

Among the first pitfalls to be avoided before you can have the pleasure of making your mind your own are ideologies, especially those that require self-sacrifice - whether for 'the common good', 'the national interest' or 'the revolution'. On your way you will also have to pass through 'Point zero, the capital city of nihilism'. If you manage to get through this together with absolutism and cynicism and assuming you are not side-tracked by mysticism, drugs or everyday conversation (a sedative) you will be well on your way to becoming a situationist. But beware! Situationism is just another trendy ideology. Says the booklet, 'For those

who newly discover it, SI theory has a way of seeming like "the answer I've been searching for for years", the answer to the riddle of one's dead life. But that's exactly when a new alertness and self-possession becomes necessary'.

The last 'ism' to be demolished is councilism, ie workers control, syndicalism and self-management because it deals with only one aspect of our existence.

For a taste of the unique flavour of situationism, this is probably as good a place to begin as any. **JKA**

A crematorium worker in Sweden has appealed against a retrospective tax demand for 58,000 kroner (£5,300) based on the 'unlawful acquisition' of 3 kg of gold fillings removed from ashes.

CONTACTS

ABERDEEN Anarchists, c/o Boomtown Books, 163 King Street, Aberdeen

BANGOR Anarchist/Libertarian Collective, c/o Greenhouse, 1 Trevelyan Terrace, High Street, Bangor, Gwynedd

BEDFORD Anarchist Society, Box A, Bedford College of Higher Education, Polhill Avenue, Bedford

BOLTON Anarchists/Direct Action, c/o Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood Street, Bolton, Lancs BL1 1DY

BRACKNELL A's, Box 21, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham Street, Reading

BRADFORD A's, c/o Starry Plough Bookshop, 6 Edmond Street, Bradford

BRISTOL A's, Box 010, Full Marks Bookshop, 37 Stokes Croft, Bristol

Anarchist Society, University Students Union, Queens Road, Clifton, Bristol

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE A Group, Bucks College of Higher Education, Newland Park, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks.

BURNLEY A's, 2 Quarrybank, Burnley

CAMBRIDGE Box A, c/o Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir Street, Cambridge

CANTERBURY Anarchist Group, 20 Uplands, St Stevens Hill, Canterbury

CHELtenham Green Anarchist Group, c/o Tom, Flat 3, 19 Glencairn Park Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

CHESHIRE Mall Housing Action Group, 87 Mill Lane, Macclesfield, Cheshire

CHESTERFIELD A's, c/o Jon, Box 42, 48 Beetwell Street, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1SH

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

Anarchists, c/o Students Union, Warwick University, Coventry

CUMBRIA Cats Cradle, 20 Camp Street, Maryport, Cumbria

DERBY Anarchist Times, 40 Leacroft Road, Normanton, Derby

EDINBURGH Little by Little, Box A, or Counter Information, Box 81, or Angry, Box C/W: all at c/o 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

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

EXETER A Group, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, Exeter

GLASGOW Here & Now, Box 2, c/o Changes, 340 West Princes Street, Glasgow CT4 9HE
Clydeside Anarchists, c/o Clydeside Press, 53 Cochrane Street, Glasgow G1

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

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

KINGSTON Thompasorus People, c/o Mathew, 7 Elmers Drive, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9JB

LEAMINGTON AND WARWICK A's, Box 7, The Other Branch, 12 Gloucester Street, Leamington

LEEDS Box DAM, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 3AW

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

LIVERPOOL Direct Action Group and DAM (confusing isn't it), c/o 82 Lark Lane, Liverpool 17, Merseyside

LONDON

Freedom Bookshop in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. Tel: 01-247 9249

Freedom Box Number Users: A Distribution, Anarchist Communist Discussion Group, Rebel Press, South Atlantic Souvenirs, Spectacular Times, Virus.

Anarchist Group, QMC Student Union, Bancroft Road, London E1 4NS

121 Books, 121 Railton Road, London SE24

Class War, PO Box 467, London E5 8BE

Greenpeace (London), 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 - meet Thursdays at 7:00pm

Leslie's Bookshop, 17 Turners Road, E3

North London Polytechnic, c/o Students Union, Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove, London N5

Solidarity (London and editorial groups), c/o 123 Latham Road, London E6

Streatham Action Group, c/o 121 Books

MANCHESTER

Manchester University Libertarian Socialist Group, c/o General Office, Students Union, Oxford Road, Manchester

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

DAM, National Secretary, 223 Greenwood Road, Benchill, Manchester

Poly A Group, c/o Students Union, Manchester Poly, Oxford Road, Manchester

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

MANSFIELD AND ASHFIELD DAM, 28 Lucknow Drive, Sutton in Ashfield, Notts

MIDDLESBOROUGH A's, Box A, Red & Black Books, 120 Victoria Road, Middlesborough

NEWCASTLE

Tyneside Libertarian Group, 41 Bishopdale House, Sutton Estate, Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne

Careless Talk Collective, PO Box 294, Newcastle, Staffs ST5 1SS

NORTHAMPTON A Collective, c/o Rainbow Bookshop, 33 Collwell Road, Wellingborough.

NOTTINGHAM A's, Box A, Mushroom Books, 10 Heathcote Street, Nottingham

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

PETERBOROUGH A Group, 5 Feneley Close, Deeping St James, Peterborough PE6 8HN

PLYMOUTH A's, c/o 115 St Pancras Avenue, Pennycross, Plymouth PL2 3TL

PORTSMOUTH A's, c/o Spice Island, 30 Osbourne Road, Southsea, Hants PO5 3LT

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

READING A's and DAM, Box 19, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham Street, Reading

SHEFFIELD A's, PO Box 217, Sheffield 1

SOUTHAMPTON Verbal Assault, c/o Box A, 4 Onslow Road, Southampton

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA A's, c/o Graham, 13 Palmeira Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex

SPANISH Information Network, 37 South Terrace, Esh Winning, Co Durham DH7 9PS (*Sinews* 50p)

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

SWANSEA Black Sheep Collective, Box D, Mandela House, University College, Singleton Park, Swansea, W. Glamorgan, Wales

ULVERSTON South Cumbria DAM, c/o J F Myles, Mount Pleasant Cott, Greenodd, Ulverston LA12 7RF

WINCHESTER A's, c/o Books Upstairs, Above the Grainstore, Parchment Street, Winchester

YORK Shelf 22, 73 Walmgate, York

FEDERATIONS

South East Anarchist Federation, c/o Canterbury A Group

Anarchist Student Federation, c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

Midlands Anarchist Federation, c/o Nottingham A's

Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists, c/o Housman's Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1