

Civilisation as we know it

THE PRESIDENT of the United States is supposed to be allowed to rape, pillage and slaughter in the name of freedom, justice and democracy. In fact it is upon his ability to do so with a smile on his lips and the merest of murmurs of disapproval from his electorate that great Presidents are made. For this he uses, guns, money and the media. Not only does he not worry about how repressive or brutal the regimes he supports and defends with these weapons are, but also back home, as protection against their own society he encourages brutalised and repressed human beings to wander the streets armed to the teeth.

The attempt on his life will not cause him to change his mind. Rather than see it as an example of the violent society that the 'American way of life' both causes and sustains he will use the event solely as a way of boosting his popularity with a saturating media coverage of everything that happened around

him that day. After all how can one deny the right of people to carry guns when the State itself is constantly supplying any governments willing to pay for American protection by oppressing the people they rule over and carrying out american policy.

In El Salvador the military junta launch another offensive with american guns. Meanwhile american camera crews invent the news if they have to so as to beam to the patriots back home the glories of this anti-communist regime. As Kissenger said about Chile, 'sometimes the people must be defended from themselves.' Even the CIA that bastion of unbiased reporting can find no evidence of Soviet or Cuban intervention in El Salvador, but the State Department knows this is a war it can win.

Haig goes to Jerusalem and promises that America will 'do something' to stem the Syrian attacks on the right wing christians in Lebanon, a nation plunged into

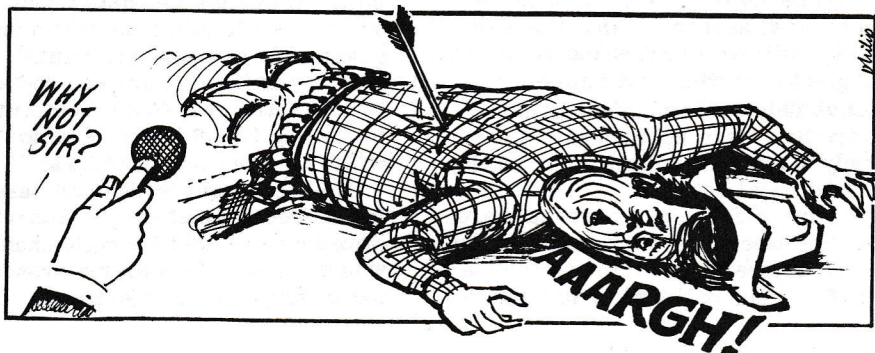
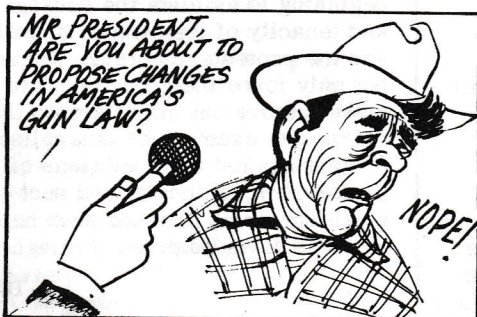
CONTENTS	
Page no.	
2 ...	Ireland/Kronstadt
3 ...	Reports
4/5	Autonomy
6 ...	Speciesim
7 ...	Letters
8 ...	Contacts
Review	
9 ...	Anarcho-Academia
12 ..	SDP part II
16 ..	El Salvador then & now

civil war as a result of American backed Israeli intervention in the first place.

More arms are promised to Pakistan and General Zia's dictatorial regime, but then again they have a border with the Soviet Union's Afghanistan.

And nuclear weapons shall pour into Europe, both east and west, as all must be prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to stem invading hordes from destroying civilisation as we know it.

So this is Civilisation? Guns and TVs, money and power. Which government can command more people to die for it. Which government can destroy more of its enemies. Which government can succeed in bribing more voters. Which government can convince you that there is no alternative.....



Irish hunger strike

A SECOND hunger strike has begun, with Bobby Sands, who is serving 14 years for possession of a gun, refusing food on Sunday, March 1st.

He has been joined by three others, who are Patsy O' Hara, Frankie Hughes and Ray McCreech.

On March 2nd the 460 blanket men and 28 women in Armagh announced the end of the no wash protest... so as to concentrate all energies on the basic demands of no prison uniform, no prison work and free association.

The no wash protest in Long Kesh began when the men were humiliated and often beaten on their way to the toilet and wash room. They refused to leave the cells and emptied the pots out of the window and under the door. But when the windows were boarded up and the urine swept back into the cells, protesters wiped their human waste on the walls.

The women in Armagh were forced on to a similar protest last year when their cells were wrecked by male screws and the toilets were locked up for a week.

Now that the prisoners have abandoned this tactic, they will presumably face the same conditions of harassment which forced them on to it. But they say this will be risked in order to highlight the hunger strike for their 5 demands.

Protest

On the outside the action groups have regrouped but with reduced membership which is explained by the confused ending of the previous hunger strike. Then the prisoners were given only a verbal promise a victory march was held within days of this before the consequences could be known.

There was also the famous document which said very little in concrete terms and few people in the action groups have been able to get hold of a copy.

While there is determination and a general agreement that this campaign will be different there are few signs yet of what that implies. Obviously peaceful mass demonstrations were not enough but the only alternatives seem to be rioting or political action.

For the former to succeed there would have to be more coordination than before in order to stretch the RUC. The political action planned

So now you know...

FOLLOWING the 60th anniversary of Kronstadt, readers may be interested to read the official Stalinist version of what took place. This is a direct quote from the History of the CPSU (bolsheviks), which for a long time was the official history book of the USSR (it was said to have been written by Stalin himself).

'All kinds of counter-revolutionary elements - Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Anarchists, White-Guards, bourgeois nationalists - became active again. The enemy adopted new tactics of struggle against Soviet power. He began to borrow Soviet garb, and his slogan was no longer the old bankrupt "Down with the Soviets!" but a new slogan "For Soviets but without Communists!"

A glaring instance of the new tactics of the class energy was the counter-revolutionary mutiny in Kronstadt. It began in March 1921, a week before the Tenth Party Congress, Whiteguards in complicity with Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and representatives of foreign states, assumed the lead of the mutiny. The Mutineers at first used a 'Soviet' signboard to camouflage their purpose of restoring the power and property of the capitalists and landlords. They raised the cry: "Soviets without Communists!" The counter-revolutionaries tried to exploit the discontent of the petty bourgeois masses in order to overthrow the power of the Soviets under a pseudo-Soviet slogan.

Two circumstances facilitated the outbreak of the Kronstadt mutiny: the deterioration in the composition of the ships crews and the weakness of the Bolshevik organisation in Kronstadt. Nearly all the old sailors who had taken part in the October revolution were at the front (civil war?) fighting in the ranks of the Red Army. The naval replenishments consisted of new men, who had not been schooled in the revolution. These were a perfectly raw peasant mass who gave expression to the peasantry's discontent with the surplus-appropriation system. As for the Bolshevik organisation at Kronstadt, it had been greatly weakened by a series of mobilizations to the front. This enabled the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Whiteguards (no Anarchists this time) to worm their way into Kronstadt and to seize control of it.

The mutineers gained possession of a first-class fortress, the fleet and a vast quantity of arms and ammunition. The international counter-revolutionaries were triumphant. But their jubilation was premature. The mutiny was quickly put down by the Soviet troops. Against the Kronstadt mutineers the Party sent its finest sons - delegates to the Tenth Congress, headed by comrade Voroshilov. The Red Army men advanced on Kronstadt across a thin sheet of ice; it broke in places and many were drowned. The almost impregnable forts of Kronstadt had to be taken by storm; but loyalty to the revolution, bravery and readiness to die for the Soviets, won the day. The fortress of Kronstadt fell before the onslaught of the Red troops, The Kronstadt mutiny was suppressed.'

So now you know what really happened !!

seems limited to the establishment political parties interpretations. Thus a call to make the North ungovernable at a mass delegate meeting in Dublin has been reduced by the National H Block Committee to forcing SDLP councillors to withdraw from the chambers!

For the hunger strike campaign to succeed against such a determined government its main chances would seem to lie with the broadening in scope of its objectives. The

threat of unemployed people eg; beginning to emulate the courage and tenacity of the hunger strikers and the protesters outside, would not only force the government to make a move but might create the spirit and example of generalised protest against the conditions of exploitation, authority and sectarianism which produce such hell-holes as Long Kesh and Armagh.

REPORTS

Freedom's MP

OUR local MP, Ian Mikardo, has given us a plug in parliament. He was referring to the time when the Post Office left a receipt from the Special Branch in a bundle of our mail. He said that about 400 addresses in London alone had their mail intercepted on a permanent basis. Unfortunately, he only referred to us as 'FREEDOM Bookshop in my constituency', omitting the address, times of opening and so on.

Business as usual

The Womens Royal Voluntary Service is making plans for coping with nuclear war. 'We intend to provide the same service we have always provided in peace time.' This will include 'Meals on Wheels' and a 'jigsaw on wheels' service, to stop children getting bored.

Computer weakly

OFFICERS responsible for the computer used by the Thames Valley Police Force maintain, in the magazine Computer Weekly that stringent safeguards prevent misuse of the information that it contains. This is the computer which was found to have entries like 'well-known local druggie' & 'likes the boys' (overheard in a shop). Well, now we are reassured about output. If we could only feel as secure about entry.

Such niggling doubts are not ass-

uaged by reports on an agreement between the British Medical Association and the police. Medical matters are to be passed on. This also happens in USA. South Yorkshire already has a firm agreement.

Sir Cyril Philips, ex-chairman of the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure and new chairman of the Police Complaints Board wants an investigation into why nearly half of all complaints against police officers are withdrawn. The RCCP's final report (see FREEDOM vol. 42 no. 1) recommended that the police should be given wider powers but that there should be careful procedures to avoid abuse.

PTA - OK

The Home Secretary has rejected demands for an inquiry into the working of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The PTA, described as 'draconian' by the then Home Secretary, was rushed through in one night by a 'panic-stricken mob of MP's' (same Home Secretary). Since then there have been many arrests, particularly of Irish people. About 1% result in charges. Closer to us, Ronan Bennett has been arrested twice under the PTA. Total effect: 1½ years in prison and then acquittal for 'conspiracy to rob.'

All together now

James Anderton, Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, has suggested that the police service should be freed from 'torpid bureaucracy' by streamlining into 10 regional forces. These should be based on the Home Office's plans for defence. 'Surely no-one would seriously disagree that if it is thought desirable to group police forces together for home defence in wartime, it must be equally viable and more beneficial to operate a similar structure in peacetime.'

'Viable is understandable. 'Beneficial' depends on your point of view.

The BIG Count

While we get on with not co-operating with our Census, the Chinese government is preparing for its own, next year. The last one, in 1953, discovered at least 100 million people more than expected. Today's population is estimated at about 1 billion, or a quarter of all the people on earth.

RAF hunger strike latest

AS at 4 April, the number of Red Army Fraction and 2 June prisoners still on hunger strike is as follows:

Luebeck: I. Moeller, C. Kuby, I. Hochstein, A. Reiche

Bruchsal: G. Sonnenberg

Schwalmstadt: L. Taufer, J. Roos

Straubing: B. Roesner, R. Heissler

Hamburg: S. Debus

Celle: K-H Dellwo, H. Herlitz

Stuttgart-Stammheim: S. Haag,

R. Maier

Hohenasperg (hospital): K. Volkerts, S. Hoffmann

Koeln-Ossendorf: G. Schneider,

H. Krabbe, A. Speitel

Aichach: I. Barabass

Berlin: A. Vogel, G. Sturmer,

G. Rollnick, M. Berberich, R.

Nicolai, A. Goder, W. Warmbier

Valpreda charge

THE anarchist Pietro Valpreda (see also last issue), has been notified by the Italian judicial authorities that he is to be charged with inciting to commit crimes.

The charge relates to Valpreda's participation at a student meeting in Milan on 17 January, when he was asked to speak about his experiences relating to the Piazza Fontana affair.

It appears that while addressing the students of the Manzoni language school he told them: "The real terrorism is that of the State, not of the Red Brigades" and that "Killing an official or a politician does not generate terror, but is a normal event (fatto normale)."

WILDCAT

It makes me furious, the hair-splitting, pedantic theorizing that sometimes gets into Freedom!!



The only anarchists who advance the revolution are those who call a spade, a spade!!



I get so worked up about it, I've bust me bloody shovel.



'We've found the crime, now let's find the criminals.'

SEVENTY-EIGHT people imprisoned in Rome were last week ordered to stand for trial - though at a date which is still unspecified.

They belong to - or are allegedly associated with - a movement called Autonomia Operaia Organizzata (Organised Workers' Autonomy). They were arrested on 7 April and 21 December 1979, and among the charges is article 284 of the Italian penal code, 'armed insurrection against the powers of the state', which carries a life sentence. This charge has not previously been used, even against Red Brigadiers, and is all the more mysterious in that no insurrection seems yet to have taken place. What then makes the autonomists so dangerous to the 'powers of the state'?

Last weekend's international conference on Autonomy, 'After Marx, April'* at Chalk Farm, London, went some way towards providing an answer. An Italian autonomist in exile explained how proletarian values founded on work had lost much of their significance. 'New' forms of political and organisational structures and concepts outside the parties and the unions 'who no longer understand us' and based on the collective, were being discovered. 'We are beyond the law and ungovernable'. The refusal to work from within the institutions, the ungovernability practised and preached by the autonomists and the manner in which the practice of illegality had been integrated with the life of the community - in contrast to the form of illegality practised by the Red Brigades, who had limited their aims to the area of the workplace and whose narrow military outlook had increasingly isolated them - all this showed the dangers of Autonomia, and the state's need to suppress it.

The '7 April' case is a remarkable illustration of the way in which the agents of the 'liberal democratic' state set about doing so. To recapitulate: on 7 April 1979 in Padua, an important centre of the Italian Autonomy, police arrested a large number of people, among them staff of the political science faculty of Padua University, including the well-known Autonomy theorist, Antonio Negri.

* a slogan from the Metropolitan Indians of 1977.

They were charged with subversive association, involvement in armed bands and later with insurrection. Specifically, Negri and others were accused of being the real founders and leaders of the Red Brigades, of operating these through Autonomia and of having planned and executed the kidnapping and murder of the former Christian Democrat prime minister, Aldo Moro.

What was the evidence which the prosecuting magistrates had amassed in order to bring such imposing accusations? The texts of the interrogations before the investigating judges show that they were based on contradictory testimony, often later withdrawn or modified by the witnesses concerned; on pure hearsay; on extrapolations from theoretical articles or books written by the defendants or said to be written by them, or with which they were supposed to sympathise; and finally on an analysis of the development, organisation, links and aims of the Autonomy movement which is idiosyncratic and ignorant at the very best.

The convoluted prosecution thesis whereby the Red Brigades and the Autonomy were one and the same thing, under Negri's occult leadership, a thesis which served to justify the transfer of most of the defendants to Rome (where the murder of Moro had taken place) and to charge them with armed insurrection, was abandoned three months after the arrests. A new warrant, issued by the Rome prosecuting magistrates on 7 July, and replacing that of 7 April issued in Padua by Communist judge Pietro Calogero, made no further mention of the Red Brigades. The specific reference to these was replaced by vague references to a 'subversive association consisting of several armed bands with a variety of different names'.

At the beginning of 1980, following depositions made by a 'repentant terrorist', Patrizio Peci, and the findings of voice experts who had concluded that the voice on a taped telephone call to Moro's wife was not that of Negri, as alleged, the Moro murder charge had to be dropped. Finally, at the end of 1980, the prosecution explicitly recognised that the '7 April' defendants had nothing to do with the Red Brigades

Autonomia Operaia (Workers' Autonomy) is a movement which developed around 1974 with a wave of unrest in the factories and worker dissatisfaction with the unions and Communist Party. It became prominent in 1976 and 1977 especially in Padua, Bologna and Rome. Its basic ideology is Marxian, while in effect it draws much from anarchism (in its anti-statism, 'refusal of work', i.e. wage-labour, and belief in self-managed collectives) as well as from situationism. Many of the 'free radios' set up in Italy, like Radio Sherwood and Radio Alice were organised by autonomists, and their papers included Rosso, Autonomia and Controinformazione. Their aim was, and remains, to generalise revolt against the establishment among the community as a whole, rather than to take on the state as 'underground' guerrilla groups like the Armed Proletarian Nuclei, Red Brigades and Prima Linea.

and requested that not only the Moro charge be dropped, but that a whole series of other charges involving acts of terrorism be dropped as well.

Despite the apparent collapse of this house of prosecution cards, the broad charges of subversive association, 'banda armata' and armed insurrection were not withdrawn. They remain levelled at the heads of a number of prisoners who have not been questioned by the investigating judges for almost two years (a good example is the case of Luciano Ferrari-Bravo, one of Negri's assistants at Padua University). Against other defendants, such as Negri, a confusing multitude of completely new accusations have been brought on the basis of dubious assertions by 'repentant terrorists' anxious to get out of prison alive.

In fact, of 78 defendants who are to stand trial in Rome, 45 of them (i.e. all the original '7 April' defendants with the exception of Negri) have not been charged with any specific act, but only with the highly political, and highly generic crime of belonging to subversive groups. In addition to this, it is now clear that of those items of 'evidence' which survive, after successive alterations and reformulations of the charges over a two-year period, not one was collected prior to the arrest date of 7 April 1979. This means, of course, that all the collecting of 'proof' was done subsequent to, and not prior to, the arrest of the defendants and that these were,

...but only chronologically...

A report on the conference 'After Marx, April', held in London, 3-5th April.

LIKE a fool I went along to this conference expecting to learn something of recent theory and action and post-Marxian politics. However it turned out that the central figures were merely interested in what to do after you've read Marx.

Basically there were two conferences organized, or perhaps I should say disorganized as one. The publicity made no separation between the idea of discussing the recent history of the Autonomia in Italy and the plight of Italy's 3500 'political prisoners', (their term, not mine), and the quite different idea of discussing the present and future of autonomous political theory and practise amongst revolutionaries in Britain and especially London. Both topics have their interest and of course common ground but no-one seemed to know which they were supposed to be discussing at any one time.

It all started off badly when people arrived on Friday night having come from all over the place including Berlin, France, Italy, New York and all over Britain etcetera - to find that nothing had been organized for the evening except 'registration' and 'possibly' a disco.

On the Saturday morning about 250 people gathered to listen to a series of short speeches introducing the ideas of autonomy. After lunch there were supposed to be more short speeches and discussions starting off with the subject of class composition and the restructuring of capital. The first speech dragged on for forty minutes. There was promise of something more interesting emerging when various women got stuck into the speaker demanding to know just which 'work' was being talked about when he talked of the growing

in effect, preventively held, simply taken out of circulation.

The extraordinary affair is far from over. It remains to be seen what kind of an armed insurrection Autonomy is supposed to have carried out. In the meantime, the basic aim of the state - that of defeating the Italian autonomy movement - seems to have been fulfilled - At least we are given to understand this by some of the Italian autonomists at Chalk Farm, who are nevertheless hopeful that on a European level Autonomy will yet spread its roots, blossom and flourish.

In view of these hopes, and the

refusal of work in Italy. However this dissipated and there was much heated and divergent discussion on the form of the conference which did seem to exorcize some of the discontent with the lack of communication and the difficulty of doing it at all with that structure.

Then came Sunday morning. When I arrived the organizing group were trying to organize themselves into a small meeting so that they could discuss whether or not they needed to discuss organization(?!!). One of them even said 'What happened yesterday was not 'democracy'. It was anarchy, and I oppose anarchy.' The idiot doesn't even know what anarchy is - even the Oxford Dictionary gets closer than he did.

At this point I considered leaving but I'm glad I didn't because better (or worse) was to come. To avoid the 'anarchy' they deliberately set up the chairs all facing roughly one direction with about eight facing them. This was to make it clear where 'the chair' was. They then had the gall later on to claim in reply to criticism that they hadn't intended to set up the speaker as a guru and there was no need to assume that all points should be made in that direction.

The discussion in the morning started with 'criminalization' but drifted off into other areas which some found very interesting but which I found infuriating as I had indicated when I arrived that I wanted to speak on the subject yet I was ignored by the chair. Eventually as they were about to try and break for lunch I was able to speak but only by standing up and demanding the right to do so, despite the fact that I had re-asserted my desire to speak to the organizers during the

consequent need for autonomists to cooperate with other anti-state groupings, it is a pity that some of the organizers of the weekend meeting were reported to have blamed an 'anarcho fringe' for disrupting it when the fault lay with a whole range of participants, not excluding the organisers themselves. Were they riled, perhaps, by comments made by one participant that he was at a loss to understand in what way Autonomia, as presented, portrayed anything new - anything, that is, which has not been propagated by the anarchist movement for over 50 years?

coffee break. During all the speeches and discussions on criminalization I had been amazed by the ridiculous and, by the speakers' own admissions, unsuccessful attempts to analyze criminalization in Marxist terms. I pointed out that any anarchist 100 years ago could have told you better and that although there certainly was much more to be considered, such as the socialization of the prison (not to mention the state and capital) a classic anarchist analysis was extremely useful. Unfortunately I fear that it fell on deaf (Marxist) ears. The state seems to be something many people cannot consider other than in Marxist terms despite the fact that states had been around for 6000 years before the advent of industrial capitalism.

The afternoon session had the appalling title of 'Post political politics'. However there was a lot of interesting discussion on the subject of needs and desires. Unfortunately this bored, confused or annoyed something like two-thirds of the audience, who sat staring blankly or confusedly into space, and under the circumstances being surprisingly patient. It would have been far more useful if they had been able to go away and discuss something they did want to do rather than listen to things they didn't care about, or in some cases understand.

The discussion raised some very good points about the interiorization of capital and could perhaps be described as an attempt to define where revolutionary politics begins and to emphasize the need for new forms of action and organization.

Then after all this a confused discussion about practical support for the Italian prisoners could only come up with sending a message calling for an independent international enquiry, and picketing the Italian tourist office and Brixton prison where an Italian guerrilla is being held pending extradition. And come the Monday morning the organizing left for the picket in taxis 'Flying Autonomous Taxi Pickets for World Revolution' as someone remarked.

I sincerely hope the appallingly bad organization at this event does not put people off from maintaining links in the future because there clearly is, from this conference a desire and need for it - as well as far more people wandering about the non-Marxist revolutionary than I imagined.

Free - market shit

THE Chancellor's relaxed regulations on the starting of small businesses and all the talk of encouraging the workers to invest their redundancy pay cheques in launching businesses at precisely the time when the capitalists themselves are pulling their money out of investments reminds me of a cautionary tale.

Following the First World War (possibly also the Second) many servicemen were released with gratuities which, like the present redundancy payments, were larger sums of money than they had ever had before. The then Marquis of Bath devised a scheme for benefiting himself.

Appearing very charitable he advertised a scheme whereby he - in order to supplement the gratuities - would sell land for poultry farming to such servicemen.

The appeal was advertised to demobilising troops from regiments that had been recruited in urban areas. Country people would have known what was being sold was badly eroded with little or no top soil, exposed to winds and unsuited for agriculture, and that the lack of transport would have made small-holding unwise even had it been fertile.

Two years after the launch the Marquis was able to buy back more than three quarters of the land for considerably less than he'd sold it. But of course the soil was by now fertilised with poultry shit and suitable for forestry plantation. (Naturally the Marquis made great play talking of ne'er-do-well workers who had not been able to make a go of his most generous scheme, through their own idleness, though there were many inhabitants of Warminster who knew when the scheme was launched that the Marquis was assuring the townspeople that he was not bringing "Vurriners and Yarkshiremen" to the area permanently - they'd be gone within three years).

Getting people to launch businesses at the present moment, a method aimed at getting the unwary, not used to business life to sink their hard won funds and so 'dung' the ground for the recovery of capital, is the same sort of dirty trick.

No doubt the heirs of Geoffrey Howe will find some way of credit-ing him with a similar generous impulse, and deduce yet more proof of the stupid fecklessness of those so cheated.

L. O.

Mushrooms, awake!

Reply to 'Biological Realities'
(Alan Albon). FREEDOM, Vol. 42. No. 4. 27th Feb. 1981

IT IS sad that Alan Albon, and others, persist in casting-confusion on the principles of veganism and on the non-specist activists in the Animal Liberation movement.

It does nothing for the cause of clarity to point out that 'the emotional British attitude to animals is well-known', to catalogue the failings of an uncaring and violent society and to imply that vegans or non-specists look arrogantly down from their towers whilst patting over-fed doggies on their heads, thinking of nothing beyond their wet noses. To heap the injustices and sectarian attitudes of the world upon vegans seems to be over-doing the sensitive farmer bit slightly. It is as fair as to imply that the Anti-Nuclear movement cares little for the homeless of Aberdeen or that Gay News does

nothing to promote the cause of those fighting for their lives in Spain. Point taken, I hope.

In fact, the reverse is often true, and interests and activities overlap to a larger extent than Alan is assuming. On a personal level, I wish to point out that I do not, to any degree, regard the Eskimo and the Red Indian as 'inferior' to those in other climates living as vegetarians. 'Inferior' is not a word I use. It amazes me to read Alan's implication that vegans are so arrogant as to make that kind of oppressive judgement. The Eskimo, to take the first example; in a part of the world where there is little alternative, relies on animal life for survival. Similarly, the animals, fish and birds in such a climate, survive in a chain of inter-dependancy. As an aside, however, I wonder how many Eskimos Alan has met who do not depend nowadays on the nearest Safeway drive-in? Where there is no choice, then survival depends on whatever is available. But we, in the non-wild world, DO have a choice and all I am suggesting is that we make it, and pretty quick.

. It heartens me to read that Alan does concede that 'modern farming methods are bad', but is he implying

also that vegans want to chain all humanity in light-less cages, torture them in the name of science, imprison them as 'pets', push them past endurance in the name of 'sport' - in some kind of obscene revenge ?? The implication would be as extreme and sectarian as the accusation. Equally, to refute as 'untrue' the statement that arable farming is ecologically sound is facile. Present methods and those being researched, may well be, but why will Alan insist on implying that vegans wish the land to be turned to deserts of grain?

Has he never heard of harvesting enough for individual needs? Does he believe that vegans suddenly lose all intelligence and responsibility when they take a decision to fight the oppression and exploitation of another form of life?

The enforced over-breeding and selectivity involved in animal farming (not to mention disposal of wastes, extreme and exclusive use of land, transportation, slaughter, growing of enormous crops to fatten an imprisoned population) is FAR from ecologically sound. He makes the point for me slightly when he bemoans the fact (as I do) that many small animals have disappeared from our cities as a result of the demands of a growing population of cats and dogs. Why has this population grown thus out of proportion? - because of humanity's past activities in enforced breeding of these animals, kept in large numbers in confinement for 'pleasure', 'work', 'research' - then abandoned to their fate when their usefulness or capacity to amuse is ended. Why condemn a starving cat for eating a few frogs if that is the only way it can survive? Do you think I would take away a bowl of beef tea from a starving child? You'll be telling me to lay off the poor little mushrooms next!

However, at the very end of Alan's article, we find a glimmer of hope! Ah yes - he says that 'what has to be dealt with is the commercial attitudes that reduce activities to questions of profit and powers.' At least we are of one mind on that. I make the point that this is not all that has to be dealt with.

Ann

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTI**Musical jails**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Got some good news and some bad news. First the good news. Just got back from Washington State after winning another Federal Civil suit around treatment and conditions in the Washington State Penitentiary's segregation unit! The forces of evil settled out of court. They gave me \$7500.00 plus written guarantees that they would respect my Civil Rights!! The latter don't mean shit as we all know, but them bucks make a hell of a difference in my case and the Collective's work. The judge gave me a fine speech about how the system works and how I was lucky to be a slave in America for only in America and England are slaves allowed to complain and often win over their masters in court!!! I wrote him a good letter about that bullshit afterwards. Was up there almost a month and all the way up and back they played musical jails with me. I landed in isolation and segregation in every one of them. Was an assault on my whole being and this morning I puked blood, but am O.K. and it was worth it. Working on my next move now! The Collective (Anarchist Black Dragon) has been busy too. 1981 issue of The Anarchist Black Dragon is now out in Canada Contact Roy Johnson, 683 Markham St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6C2M2 or North American Anarchist.

The bad news is they got me back in San Quentin. While in Washington State they would not let me even near a Washington State Prison! I'm too dangerous they claim, smile. So far against these transfers we just aren't doing too swift. We managed to get a few back, but that's all. Please keep sending those Protest letters demanding the return of all prisoners transferred against their will from Washington State to the Governor of Washington State, Olympia, Wn 9850H. Also we lost a brother in the Washington State Penitentiary. His name was George Simmons. He was a Native American Indian. He was in segregation for over two years, accused of killing a guard. They harassed him so bad he attempted suicide. When he asked to go to the Mental Health Unit they threw him back in segregation. The mandatory suicide watch was not put on him and he hung himself.

They killed him. Drove him to suicide. Remember him and how the state murdered him, that the state murdered him cruelly. The struggle continues in the penitentiary and here in his memory, in memory of all murdered by the state.

Anyway, expect a donation soon from me and the Collective. Won't be much, but at last I can pay for my subscription uh? My book LOVE & RAGE by Pulp Press is out and well received inside and out. The forces of evil are pissed so it must be good! For copies send \$3.95 plus postage to: Claire Culhave, 3965 Pandora St., Burnaby B.C., Canada. If you get a copy hope you like it. Those who have written me about it thank you for all the comments. In closing I want you all at Freedom and around the world to know I love you and appreciate your support. This victory, even though small, you all helped me to achieve. Your love and support gave me the strength and courage to struggle and win. You were here fighting with me as always so know I alone only did what you helped me do. Without you the forces of evil will kill me, would have killed me way back. You helped the Collective come into existence and do all it has done too. For myself and the Collective I thank you. Thank you all for the literature, letters, cards, stamps, funds and more. We in here are only as strong as we are together with you out there. Lets get closer and stay together. The future is ours! My love to all the brothers and sisters locked-down all over the world. Don't forget our brother and comrade in China who is again active!!! Well, I guess that's all for now from the Western Front. Be good to yourselves and eat your vegetables.

San Quentin, USA CARL HARP.

Do something

Dear FREEDOM
Re Adrian James' letter in your 13th March issue.

Surely if someone is being handed a pile of shit we do anything that will work to try and stop it - even writing to MPs and stuff.

The arms trade means someone, somewhere, gets a bullet in the head, (and we all know which side they're going to be on.) The same goes for the other things mentioned.

Point 2: All the groups mentioned are questioning authority in some way to some extent. Surely we as Anarchists should be there and try and help people to work it out to its logical (anarchist) conclusion. This may be a slow business, but if we ever want to stop being isolated and start being effective we will have to put up with it. Everyone needs a starting point.

Point 3: What the fuck is this legitimate activity bit? Come on, we'll have a 'party line' next. You make your own rules. If (?) there's things to be done you work with who you like - but do something.
love and kisses

AL MOORE

Bristol

Biological realities II

In The Natural Peoples News which I came across the other day it said 'God save us from missionaries'. If people want to be vegetarians O.K., I eat very little meat myself and think that people would be better off with less of it, they would also be better off with less sugar, starch and cigarettes (all of vegetable origin), that being so I don't propose to start an evangelical campaign to convince people of these opinions.

Specious arguments and emotive words produce less understanding and it is understanding that will bring real change. A journey through the horticultural and agricultural scene has led me to modify many of my attitudes. Working with animals you become a servant, and it often induces calm and patience, for agriculture is an art and it is about understanding relationships in a living world, animal, vegetable and human. It is because of the failure to understand this that industrial agriculture has become another facet in the desecration of the environment.

The statement of Ronnie Lee's that 'of course if we really need animal manure we can use human dung' reveals a totally simplistic attitude as does the paternalistic statement that we can persuade these poor tribes to give up their nasty flesh eating habits. Success in agriculture in achieving a high degree of fertility, and freedom from disease is produced by copying nature in its infinite variety of plant and animal life.

To feed world population a controlled use has to be achieved and also human beings have to be persuaded to achieve a more manageable population

Free ranging goats have reduced vast areas of the middle east to semi-desert: if Ronnie had ever had his crops wiped out by clouds of pigeons or fruit plantations by rabbits and hares he would take a less dogmatic view of life

Modern animal husbandry can be criticised on several counts, but not on the grounds of cruelty. The aim is to produce a completely bland environment, reducing stress to a minimum, similar to the city worker who leaves his air conditioned office in his heated car to his centrally heated home. It is the artificiality of such methods that are objectionable, divorced from arable farming and requiring a vast support system

of energy, medication and capital.

Animals do not anticipate death like human beings and a lot of human neurosis is centred around this awareness. Farm animals add greatly to the throughput of energy that enlivens the soil and each has different properties to it; human manure is particularly poor.

Those that oppose abortion use very similar arguments.

To suggest that anarchism has anything to do with the extremities of A. L. F. is not correct for anarchism has a pragmatism and a capacity to understand humanity and life in all its facets, its relationship with the total environment and what this could mean in reversing humanity's egocentricity and become part of a balanced world.

London

ALAN ALBON

APOLOGY

IN his article on the Social Democrats ('Will the real Mussolini ...', 28 March) Laurens Otter identifies as a single person two completely different people - David Marquand, academic, writer, journalist, former Labour MP, biographer of Ramsay MacDonald and supporter of the Social Democrats, and David Markham, the actor, veteran anarchist, pacifist, campaigner for Soviet dissidents and supporter of Freedom Press.

We apologise for this serious error of editing, which was not noted until after FREEDOM had gone to press.

FREEDOMS CONTACTS PAGE

Owing to pressure of space the Contacts page will be generally confined to notices of events, desires and new contact addresses. A full national and international Contacts page will still appear from time to time.

Desires

Anyone interested in starting an anarchist/libertarian/direct action group in the Stafford area please contact Gary on Stafford 48465.

Meetings

London Workers' Group public meeting 8pm Tuesday 14th April in the Metropolitan Pub, Farringdon Road, EC1: 'Never a Dole Movement?'

Confederation of Student Anarchists conference 10am - 7pm Saturday 2nd May at Sussex University. Contact Sussex University Anarchist Group, c/o Student Union, Sussex University, Brighton.

SIZEWELL Reactions, 48 Stratford Street, Oxford for action against the PWR Inquiry in solidarity with the East Anglian Alliance.

Groups

SOUTH Wales Direct Action Movement c/o 'Smiths Arms', Baglan Road, Treherbert, Mid-Glamorgan, South Wales. Write for anarcho/syndicalist contacts in Treherbert, Rhondda, Pontypridd, Penarth, Barry and Cardiff areas.

SWANSEA - Black Dragon, Box 5 c/o Neges Bookshop, 31 Alexandra Road, Swansea, SA1 5DQ. Meet 8pm Mondays at the Mountain Dew Inn, Swansea. Baby-sitting can be arranged.

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Anarchy in Academia

Anarchism : A Theoretical Analysis. Allen Ritter.
Cambridge University Press, 1980. £12.00

SOME thirty years ago when I was a student of political philosophy, I was told by my teachers that the central question to be answered was: Why ought citizens to obey the state? As someone who had already discovered anarchism, it seemed to me to be a very good question indeed. But I soon discovered that it was a loaded one. The underlying assumption of those who asked it was that a positive answer could be found. The possibility of a negative answer, the anarchist answer that there are no good reasons why the state should be obeyed, was never seriously considered. No books on anarchism figured in students' reading lists or were readily available in the library.

In the last decade things have begun to stir in the groves of Academe where political philosophers meet. One interesting sign of this was R. P. Wolff's confession that, half-way through his course at Columbia University, it suddenly dawned on him that there was no theoretical justification for the authority of the state. The result was his little book, In Defense of Anarchism (Harper & Row, 1970). Wolff's conversion to philosophical anarchism appears to have been a highly cerebral affair - which perhaps explains the book's singular absence of references to historical anarchist theorists and movements. But by the time of its publication, anarchist ideas had already been vigorously re-asserted in the context of the New Left and war resistance movements of the 1960s. It was happenings in the world of action, rather than developments in philosophy, which compelled at least some academics to begin to take anarchism seriously. Just how seriously was seen in 1974 when the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy decided to devote its annual meeting to the topic, the proceedings of which were later published in the influential Nomos series (Anarchism edited by J.R. Pennock & J.W. Chapman, New York University Press, 1978). In addition to such general works, publishers have vied with each other in reprinting anarchist classics and in producing scholarly monographs on particular anarchist thinkers. The upshot of it all is that the situation in academia today is very different from what it was when I was a student. Anarchism is no longer simply ignored or swiftly dismissed.

So when Allen Ritter, author of The Political Thought of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (Princeton, 1969) begins his new book by saying that its main purpose is 'to establish the right of anarchists to a leading voice in the debate among political theorists over how a good society should be created, organized and run', he is to some extent pushing at a door that is already unlocked. He admits that since the late 60s anarchists have become 'more intellectually respectable', but he argues that they have not yet received the place they deserve partly because their thought is still believed to suffer from 'a seriously discrediting contradiction'. This alleged contradiction is their favouring 'untrammelled freedom', while, at the same time, using the constraint of 'public censure' in order to control behaviour in their good society.

It is true that some critics of anarchism have accused anarchists of substituting for physical coercion 'the tyranny of public opinion' and that even George Woodcock (echoing a point made by George Orwell) has suggested that anarchists have accepted much too uncritically the idea of an active public opinion. But it seems doubtful to me whether the

freedom actually advocated by anarchists, namely, equal freedom - the freedom to do what one wants that respects the similar freedom of all others - is seriously contradicted by the practice of 'public censure'. Except in rhetorical moments, no anarchists have advocated 'untrammelled freedom' because they have realised, as R.H. Tawney once put it, that 'freedom for the shark means death to the minnows'. In an anarchist society, the constraint of censure is to be invoked only when some individuals fail to respect the limits implied in the principle of 'equal freedom'.

The goal of anarchism

In discussing the alleged contradiction, Ritter fails to make what seems to me to be the obvious retort, but it soon transpires that the discussion is really designed as a spring-board for his central thesis. This is that, contrary to common belief, freedom is not the goal of anarchism. Rather, the anarchist goal is seeking to combine the greatest individual development with the greatest communal unity. Freedom is prized not as an end but as a means to a more ultimate value, namely individuality in community or what Ritter calls 'communal individuality'. In championing this value, anarchists deny that individuality and community are in conflict with each other. On the contrary, they argue, communal awareness springs from a developed individuality and, in turn, a developed individuality depends on a close-knit communal life. When one appreciates that 'communal individuality' is the anarchist goal, the practice of censure in anarchy falls into place and is seen to be an essential requirement. Since a person's sense of self depends on others sanctioning that person's own judgements, a strong self-image can be developed only if others tell me what they think of my conduct. The censure of others also helps us to cultivate our feelings. Further, censure serves to make individuals reciprocally aware of each other. Thus it supports community by opening the opportunity to enter into the minds of others.

Ritter's contention that 'communal individuality' is the chief goal of anarchism involves taking a firm but controversial position on the issue of who is to be included in the anarchist camp. In fact, his entire discussion of anarchist theory is conducted in terms of the writings of four anarchist thinkers: Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin; and he asserts, cavalierly, that anarchist theory has not developed much since Kropotkin's time. Stirner's claim to be considered an anarchist is briefly considered but quickly dismissed. Stirner reached anarchist conclusions but his philosophy of egoism lacks 'cogency'. This may or may not be true, but what is more evident is that Stirner has to be excluded because he champions individuality simpliciter, not communal individuality. What is more surprising, coming from an American, is that Ritter does not appear to acknowledge the existence of the individualist anarchist tradition. But, again, to do so would not sit easily with his central thesis. Ritter's analysis is, therefore, restricted to social anarchism - admittedly the anarchism of the mainstream or classical anarchist movement. (One has some doubts, however, how well Godwin, close in some ways to the individualists, fits into the tradition of social anarchism.)

Ritter's chosen four differ among themselves over how communal individuality is to be articulated, with the result

that it is possible to distinguish different varieties of anarchy. Godwin's highly rational anarchy, Ritter suggests, is like 'a thoughtful candid conversation'; for Proudhon and Bakunin, who favour more emotional forms of individuality and community, anarchy resembles life among collaborators in a 'productive enterprise'; while Kropotkin's anarchy, with its stress on mutual benevolence and emotional solidarity, is like 'an extended group of friendly neighbours.'

Anarchists as critics

More controversial than such a classification are the points Ritter makes in a chapter on anarchists as critics of established institutions. The general drift of this chapter seems to be that anarchists are not quite so wild or extreme as they sometimes appear to be, even to themselves. Thus, Ritter argues that, although anarchists denounce authority, they give public authority a place in their good society; while they attack punishment, they do not utterly condemn it; and, contrary to popular belief, they are not radical egalitarians. Ritter's arguments on these points are subtle but not always convincing.

As he himself recognises, anarchists do not challenge the kind of authority based on special knowledge or expertise, the kind he calls 'personal authority', exercised for example by a doctor or ship's pilot. The question then is: Do they totally deny the other kind of authority, the kind based upon occupying a certain position or office? (The distinction between the two kinds of authority, personal and positional, is more frequently referred to as the distinction between being 'an authority' and being 'in authority'.) All the evidence seems to suggest that anarchists denounce positional authority, but Ritter argues that what they oppose is giving authority to holders of special office. 'All members of society must have a right to wield authority before its directives deserve to be obeyed.' This condition means that the authority favoured by anarchists is 'extraordinarily limited', but it is still authority because it is a way to control behaviour 'based on the subject's belief that something about the issuer of a directive gives him the right to be obeyed.'

This way of putting the anarchist position strikes me as obfuscatory in the extreme. Ritter fails to note that in an anarchist society, where no person exercises positional authority by virtue of holding a special office, the statement 'All members have authority' is equivalent to 'No one has authority'. A society in which every individual is sovereign (or ultimate authority) is the same as a society in which no individual is sovereign. Ritter's failure to see this leads him to write a curious footnote: 'A situation where everybody has public authority over everybody else is difficult to grasp. What happens, for instance, if two members of an anarchy issue contradictory directives? Which one has the right to be obeyed? The anarchists evade this question.' But the situation is neither difficult to grasp, nor have anarchists evaded the question. In an anarchy where everybody has equal (positional) authority, there would be no point in any one issuing 'directives' since no individual, or group of individuals, would have more right than any other to be obeyed. Each would obey him/herself. And if the anarchy were faced with the situation where it was necessary for one policy to be adopted to the exclusion of other policies, the members who were unable to accept the policy eventually decided upon would quit the anarchy. This explains why anarchist organisations adopt the unanimity principle in decision-making and how they maintain it. In the absence of unanimity, the dissenters simply opt out and, perhaps, then proceed to form another organisation with whose policy they can agree.

On the issue of punishment, Ritter's argument turns out to depend on the definition of the term. He points out, correctly, that anarchists reject all three of the standard theories purporting to justify punishment: retribution, reform, and deterrence. But they do not object to the practice of rebuking offenders in order to prevent them repeating their offences. Such rebukes stop short of subjecting the offender to physical force, but they may well cause mental, as distinct from physical, suffering. Since punishment can be defined as 'suffering imposed by an authority on an offender for his offence', if anarchists don't call their rebukes 'punishment', then they

should. To this the anarchist might well retort that punishment is usually thought of as suffering imposed on an offender by a superior authority and that it is more misleading than illuminating to call rebukes made by one equal authority to another 'punishment'.

Ritter's argument that anarchists are not radical egalitarians is also rather perverse. As is well known, anarchists have differed over the question of how rewards should be distributed, the main difference being between those favouring distribution according to work done and those favouring distribution according to needs. Since Kropotkin, the latter has found most favour among social anarchists. Most people, I think, would regard distribution according to need as radically egalitarian, but Ritter does not. He appears to interpret radical egalitarianism as implying a simple equal distribution of benefits: two pence for you, two pence for me, and so on. I doubt, however, whether any egalitarian has regarded simple equality as more than a starting principle. In other words, if a cake has to be divided between different individuals, one begins by assuming that each should have an equal portion. Deviations from this can be justified only if there is a relevant reason for some having a larger portion than others. Need is clearly a relevant reason; and in a society of anarchists it is difficult to think of a more compelling reason. Distribution according to need implies treating people differently if, but only if, their needs are different - as they often are. It is radically egalitarian because it recognises that each person is an end in him/herself. Radical equality does not mean uniformity of treatment but the equal entitlement of every individual to have his/her needs equally considered and, as far as possible, met.

Anarchist strategy

Perhaps the least satisfactory chapter of Ritter's book is the one devoted to anarchist strategy. He begins by observing that anarchist strategies are too diverse to have a common character and then proceeds to discuss in a rather abstract way the strategical and tactical ideas of each of his chosen four. Thus, Godwin 'trusted to reason alone'; Proudhon started with the same idea but on realising its inadequacy withdrew the free credit scheme before finally advocating embryonic anarchist institutions; and Bakunin and Kropotkin advocated 'enlightenment through action', Kropotkin's version of this being 'less morally impure' than Bakunin's since he was more restrictive about the use of coercion and did not countenance deceit. Ritter's conclusion is that part of the reason why anarchist strategy fails lies in the radicalism of the objective: the vastness of the change needed makes the achievement of anarchy difficult. But, on top of that, 'the special character of the needed change makes achieving it virtually impossible'. The weakness of the chapter, however, lies not so much in the arguments leading to this conclusion as in Ritter's failure to consider other anarchist strategies. The history of the classical anarchist movement shows that anarchism exercised its greatest influence when anarchists adopted the syndicalist strategy. The strategy of anarcho-syndicalism has not, of course, achieved its objective but its application, notably in Spain in 1936, suggests that it was a highly promising strategy. To ignore it altogether constitutes a glaring omission! Central to the anarcho-syndicalist strategy was the idea of mass non-cooperation culminating in the social general strike in the course of which the workers would take over from employers the control of production. The same idea, but in a form not linked exclusively to revolutionary trade unionism, has emerged more recently in the strategy of anarcho-pacifism. Since Ritter discusses anarchist strategy in terms of 'the dilemma of ends and means', his failure to note this development is all the more striking, if only because anarcho-pacifists claim that their strategy of nonviolent non-cooperation and direct action avoids this dilemma. (Whether the claim holds good is another matter, but, certainly, Gandhi, the key figure in anarcho-pacifism, made an important contribution to solving the problem of ends and means in social action.)

Anarchism's place in the political spectrum

Ritter's penultimate chapter discusses the place of anarchism in the spectrum of political ideas. His main contention is that anarchism is neither, as some hold, an extension of classical liberalism nor, as others believe, primarily socialist. Rather, it occupies its own distinctive position in the political spectrum. Briefly, anarchism is not liberalism because the latter lacks commitment to the value of community; and it is not a form of socialism (libertarian) because, although anarchists share with socialists the goal of communal individuality, they ascribe to the state what socialists do not - an independent causal efficacy of a detrimental kind. Anarchism is unique in combining a socialist commitment to community with a liberal view of the state's effects.

As far as the relation to liberalism is concerned, Ritter's conclusion follows in large part from his unwillingness to recognise individualist anarchism as a variety of anarchism. Individualist anarchists from Josiah Warren through Benjamin Tucker to Murray Rothbard might well be regarded as extreme (or logical) liberals. But Ritter also fails to note that the social anarchism of his chosen four rests on essentially liberal foundations. Central to social anarchism is the notion of 'natural society' and this notion has its origin in the liberal political philosophy of John Locke. Locke argued (contra Hobbes) that 'the state of nature' that existed prior to the institution of 'civil government' was not a war of all against all but did constitute a society with a system of natural law. It was only the 'inconveniences' of the state of nature, particularly the absence of impartial judges when disputes arose, which led humankind to enter into a 'social contract' to form a 'political society', or state. From this intellectual starting point, anarchism develops later as, in Burke's phrase, 'a vindication of natural society', the anarchists rightly deeming that any inconveniences of such a society were nothing compared with the inevitable tyrannies that result from setting up the institution of the state. The theme of 'society versus the state' found in the writings of Kropotkin and the juxtaposition of the 'social' and the 'political' principle attest to the essentially liberal basis of anarchism.

As far as the relation to socialism is concerned, Ritter's arguments are more convincing. He is surely right in describing as 'inadequate' the commonly held view that the clash between anarchists and Marxists in the First International was simply over the effectiveness of the state as a means to reaching a mutually shared goal. The anarchists' insistence that the state - any state - cannot be used for revolutionary ends rested on the conviction that the state was something more than merely the class instrument that the Marxists held it to be. My main doubt arises over his contention that the communist society envisaged by Marxists after the state has 'withered away' involves only the disappearance of the coercive element, legal government being retained for 'the administration of things' and the 'general functions' of supervising the economy. The pronouncements of Marx and Engels about communist society are too vague to allow us to draw firm conclusions on this score. But Ritter is right to suggest that for Marxists the state's significance as a source of political effects arises from its contingent 'class character', whereas for anarchists the state's political significance lies in its 'independent, self-contained, unchangeable existence'. Ritter might have added that the recent spate of theorising by Western Marxists about the state has centred on just this point. Belatedly recognising that the standard Marxist theory of the state as a class instrument is overly simple, their attention is now focused on the extent to which the state has become an 'autonomous' institution, standing over and dominating society.

Evaluating anarchism

Ritter's final chapter is devoted to an evaluation of anarchism. The moral value of anarchism as an ideal social order can be considered, he suggests, from two perspectives: first, on its merit as a complete achievement, and secondly, on its merit as a critical standard for judging present society and

as a practical guide for moving from the old to the new. Considered from the first perspective, he observes that anarchy, like any alternative ideal society, is not perfect: because all values are not compatible with one another, to achieve some values others have to be sacrificed. complete anarchy, he argues, would exhibit certain deficiencies. Among these he lists an incomplete recognition of privacy, a failure to reward conscientious effort, and a repudiation of the Rousseauian ideal of active citizenship. Nevertheless, despite such drawbacks, anarchism is well endowed with assets and thus merits serious consideration. However, Ritter judges that the chances of reaching complete anarchy are slight. This leads him to emphasize the evaluation of anarchism as a critical standard and practical guide. From this perspective, he argues that anarchism is preferable to the 'incrementalism' of Karl Popper which accepts the existing social system and leaves undisturbed its underlying, inherent evils. Anarchy as a critical standard has the great merit of exposing the defectiveness of law as a means of controlling behaviour.

The problem, however, remains, argues Ritter, that, if anarchists continue to assume that complete anarchy is readily attainable, they will be encouraged to ignore the constraints the ideal sets on practice and do harm in an effort to realise it. He suggests, therefore, that anarchists should set aside their strategic aim of replacing the nation-state and work for something less, what he calls 'partial anarchization within the nation-state'. Some recent anarchists, more despondent than their predecessors about realising their ideal, are, he notes, already doing this. Their activities lead to two types of change: (i) rearranging some particularly significant social activity, while leaving others undisturbed - for example, establishing free schools and working for self-management in industry; and (ii) rearranging all social activities in a particular place, but not elsewhere, as exemplified in the setting up of anarchist communities or colonies. Both types of change are in accord with Landauer's oft-quoted observation: 'The state is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of behaviour; we destroy it by behaving differently.'

My own predilections are in favour of such activities, particularly those of the first type. But three comments on Ritter's argument may be made. One is that these kinds of activity are not new: even in the hey-day of the classical anarchist movement, some anarchists were actively engaged in them. The second is that the vigorous pursuit of such activities may well depend on the retention of belief in the realisability of complete anarchy. In other words, 'the abolition of the state' may be essential as a Sorelian 'myth' to galvanise anarchists into action; if anarchists abandon the 'myth', they may deprive themselves of the incentive to 'behave differently'. One might add, thirdly, that the present time is an odd time to give up the strategic aim of replacing the nation-state. As part of their search for a new 'world order', there are now others besides avowed anarchists who are questioning the validity of the concept of the nation-state, if not the state *per se*. It would be ironic if anarchists who have themselves transcended the idea of the state were now to settle simply for 'partial anarchization within the nation-state'.

As might be expected of an academic, Ritter's 'theoretical analysis of anarchism' is a severely rational exercise that is directed at, and most likely to be appreciated by, other academic political philosophers. As such, and despite some limitations touched on in this review, it is to be welcomed. It is likely to encourage further serious discussion of anarchism inside academia. But it also deserves the attention of anarchists outside academia, most notably because of its clarification of the ultimate value of social anarchism: communal individuality. The secret of anarchism's endurance lies largely in its championing of a value that is genuinely universal. As Ritter concludes: 'To exhibit strong personality without losing touch with others, to unite with the whole without sinking into it, to live in a society both warmly receptive to self-expression and gratifyingly unitary - these for us are pressing aspirations . . . So long as communal individuality remains an aspiration, the path to anarchy, despite its hazards, will continue to be travelled.'

Will the real Mussolini....

Part two

It is time to have done with all the popes and priests; we want no more of them, even if they call themselves 'Social Democrats'.

Michael Bakunin (God & the State).

Moderation

OUTSIDE the arena of politics, no one wanting expert guidance would deliberately seek out an authority with a name for being merely moderately intelligent; nor would most people readily trust their financial destinies to those who glory in the name of being but moderately honest; is it not therefore surprising that so many are transfixed by the obvious integrity of politicians whose proudest boast is that they are moderate advocates of their policies?

One need not stress in an anarchist paper that the abolition of class divisions based on economic privilege and power, and on the exploitation of the majority by a small minority is a matter of fundamental morality. Nor that since the exploiters have a near monopoly of power, since the very nature of their everyday activity is designed to aggrandize yet further that area of power, while the exploited only struggle to defend their position as an addition to their everyday work at exceptional times; the cards are permanently stacked in favour of the privileged class.

Being moderate in one's opposition to class society is at best to be but moderately intelligent and unable to understand the true balance of power; it is all too often however not a matter of moderate intelligence (or not merely such) but of being only moderately honest.

Moreover when in the name of such moderation our 'socialist' advocates no measures whatsoever to redress the imbalance of power and wealth, when furthermore s/he opposes all such measures advocated by others, and indeed when s/he actively supports measures which emasculate the defensive organizations of the exploited, doubt as to honesty gives way to positive disquiet in the certainty that honesty is lacking; disquiet in no way alleviated by a newly dawning appreciation of the Moderate's cleverness.

It is important nevertheless to make a clear distinction between the false friends of socialism who still pervade the Labour Leadership (and the Communist of course) and the leaders of the new party. Indeed it is essential to avoid twin errors (like the Scylla and Charybdis of ancient legend); the one, the belief that all exploitative parties are the same, that fascism as a distinctive system has no particular interest or danger as far as a revolutionary is concerned; the other, that we worry about the CSD, (as some people who ought to know better have said), because it will damage the Labour Party and leave Thatcher in power.

Though it would appear to be the logic of some of the arguments that K. Ronstadt voiced in FREEDOM last year, the Stalinist 'third period' argument that all outside the ranks of the revolution are the same and that reformists however honest and courageous are nothing but 'social-fascists', has nothing to do with anarchism.

Such an approach confuses the workers, fails to warn them of the special dangers inherent in fascist policies, ends communication so that it is impossible that the revolutionary can further attempt to convert the reformist who is irretrievably alienated by unmerited abuse, and without that effort to convert the reformist there can be no hope of revolution.

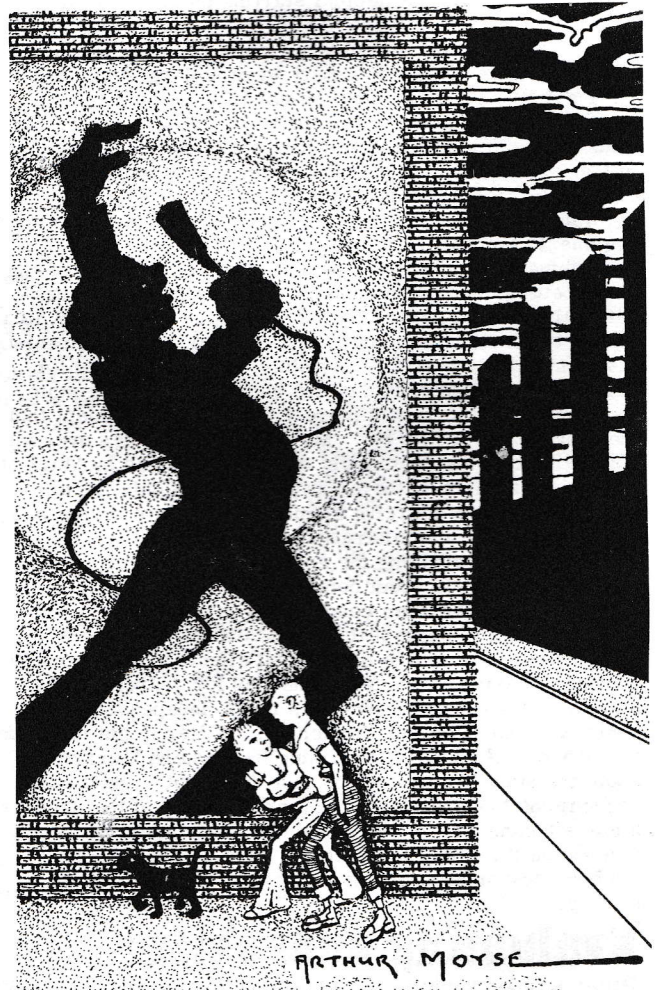
The danger of fascism lies in the fact that it takes from the workers the power to organize at all; the danger of reformism is that while leaving the workers' organization intact it lessens their combativity and consciousness; certainly there are parallels, but the distinctions are more important. (Stalinism of course when in power operates similarly to, or as a form of, fascism in suppressing workers' organization, though Poland testifies that it is less efficient; only when

Stalinism is out of power does it operate as a form of reformism.)

While the workers' organizations remain intact there is always a possibility that rank and file pressure will restore the militancy of earlier years. If the workers have no power to organize at all that possibility is ended.

This said we have no reason to mourn the weakening of the Labour Party, indeed we might well say that if it were true that the secession of the CSD was going to destroy that party, then there would be for the first time for many years a serious possibility of a mass self-organization of the working class; in which case - whatever the subjective desires of the CSD members - their actions would be objectively socialist.

Being now 50 my earliest informed political memories are concerned with the 1945 Labour Government. Labour came to power when British capitalism was in ruins, the capitalists had lost heart and nerve, the workers were totally disillusioned. The Labour Party in six short years restored and re-established the capitalist system, handing it over in a healthier state than it had been for decades to the Tories.



"Have you considered trying for a job with Roy Jenkins
breakaway group?"

"I wouldn't stand a chance blossom, I can't sing or play a guitar!"

Throughout its existence the Labour Party has been the major barrier to the dissemination of socialist consciousness in the British working class and has actively emasculated all working class self-activity. It is therefore the essential prerequisite of any hope of the self-liberation of the working class that the Labour Party be destroyed and that a new movement be created on its ashes.

Nevertheless though anarchists have no love for Labour it is essential that we stress the distinction; Labour - including until now the CSD members - has always in practice acted to limit - particularly in the realm of ideas - the workers' strength; I am alleging (and I concede that I have as yet no proof) that the CSD, in contrast, will strive not merely to curtail, but to abolish this strength. Unfortunately it is not a matter that one can afford to just leave to time to decide.

No doubt the CSD will not operate in the same way as did Mussolini in its attempts to abolish trade union rights. When it extends EEC practices (practices which were formed under the fascist regimes and have been only partially liberalised since) to Britain, it will of course be merely because as internationally law-abiding people the CSD is anxious to implement Common Market regulations, as of course Britain is legally bound to do if the present Treaty of Rome remains unchanged; and assuredly CSD representatives in the EEC parliaments will not be agitating to change the regulations, still less to make a socialist transformation of the European community which is the only possible long term alternative.

Ah, but you will rightly interject, Mussolini could not have instituted his Labour legislation merely with the strength of the state's coercive forces behind him, if he had not been able to supplement those forces with his own thugs. Yes indeed, and my case stands or falls on the ability of the CSD to enlist people ready to enforce their governmental decisions against any resistance.

The idealistic element in fascism

It is important not to fall for the over-simplification that all fascist recruits are merely semi-criminal scum with psychological disorders, anxious for a fight for the sake of a fight, with no ability to think and consider the demagogic utterances of their leaders. No movement so composed would ever have been any real danger. Indeed it is because they are only so formed that the British Movement, the National Front and so forth are doomed to remain always in a twilight fringe world.

While she was fighting for the CNT in Spain Simone Weil** wrote an article about a fascist airman analyzing his motivations and showing that he was an idealist manqué, that he could so easily have worked for a far better cause. Indeed so sympathetic was her treatment of the young man whom she nevertheless regarded as an agent of everything that was evil; that right wingers after her death tried to pretend that the article represented a renunciation of her anarchism and a conversion to their politics.

**Actually Audrey Beauchamp - who was also there - says that the CNT were male chauvinist and would not allow either Simone or herself near the front line.

Likewise there was an article published (I think in the ILP's *New Leader*, and possibly by Orwell) in the Thirties, by a socialist who having chased away from a town centre sellers of Mosley's 'Action' was able to trap one of them and engage him in an extended argument. The socialist at the end, while in no way at the end less certain that everything for which the fascist stood was vile in the extreme, nevertheless found to his astonishment that the personal motivations of the fascist concerned were markedly idealistic, that the man really did believe he was serving the cause of humanity as a whole, and that moreover he was prepared to act in a very self-sacrificing way to further what he mistakenly believed was humanity's good.

If one thinks for a moment it is obvious that there must be such self-sacrificing idealists amongst the true fascists. The hit squads that always act together and never risk confrontation with the Left unless they are in large numbers may well be composed of sado-masochists unable to think and never likely to do anything unselfishly; but when, as in the

Thirties, lone Action sellers were prepared to risk penetrating overwhelmingly socialist areas, without a cordon of police around them, and unprepared for a fight, and risk considerable physical hammering in order to push their arguments, these must have been motivated by something other than mere bestiality; (to be unpardonably unfair to the beasts.)

Look further; Bordiga stressed that the actual personnel of the Italian fascist party at its formation was drawn almost equally from former members of extreme parties of the traditional (pre-fascist) Right and the far Left; even if one assumes that all the previous members of the Far Right had always been nothing more than thugs, and that (putting it the easiest) most of those who had been on the Far Left had been insincere, there is nevertheless a *prima facie* case for believing that some of the early members must have been sincere. That they had been deceived there can be no doubt, but that is not the same as saying that they had become incurably corrupted.

One of the earliest English anarchist papers - the *Torch* (it was published as a sort of popular appeal companion of *FREEDOM*) - was produced by the daughters of William Rossetti, (nieces of Dante Gabriel), both of whom were later to marry prominent supporters of Mussolini, and themselves joined and wrote on behalf of the fascist party. (The younger, Mrs. Angeli, returned to a philosophical belief in anarchism in advanced old age, in the 1960's.) There were others who, like them, while fascist professed to retain a belief in Kropotkinist or other anarchist beliefs. Indeed some had turned to fascism, on the argument (acknowledged by Kropotkin himself) that the fullest expressions of Mutual Aid amongst men are produced at times of natural disaster, war, or other similar dire threat; from which they proceeded to argue that the situations fascism created would themselves engender Mutual Aid and prepare the way for a truly socialist society to supercede fascism.

What made people who were by nature gentle, who understood the nature of society, who had in the past at least sincerely believed in the need and desirability of creating a free and just society, (some of whom professed that they were continuing to work for this within the framework of fascism), support such a vile movement? What made them - at least by consent and approbation - join in physical assaults on their former comrades, and on workers to whose emancipation they had previously devoted themselves?

These were people who would in the normal way of things have been incapable of so acting. No I am not claiming that every ex-anarchist who has ever gone over to fascism has retained an element of anarchism; obviously this would be absurd; most have sold out totally; with a few - for instance with a former member of the *FREEDOM* group who subsequently became a political organizer for Mosley - one could pinpoint psychological causes that account for the change; but it is too simple to use the John Larkmans (or for that matter the Colin Wilsons) of this world as an excuse to close our eyes to the more serious perversions of people who should never have been so perverted.

It is in the knowledge that such good radicals have in the past gone that way, not just for some half-hidden psychological urge, (there have after all been others in our movement quite as disturbed as J. L. who did not after all go the same road), that I warn that the very fact that many of those who are now being attracted to the CSD are by nature far more humane, far more honest, far less selfishly ambitious than the leadership to whom they are being drawn, and who so turn to CSD apparently oblivious of what its policies really are, of what the past political actions of the CSD leadership have been, means that they will act uncritically.

Being people prepared to sacrifice their own comfort for a cause, prepared to risk the sack to protect another, they would, if once convinced - due to an uncritical attachment to a leader - that they ought to act in a fascistic way for the eventual good of mankind they will be prepared to sacrifice themselves so to do. The prospect is quite frightening.

The Grauniad editorial (March 3rd) talks of the Three 'chucking away the rewards of the system' - 'salaries, chauffeur-driven cars and retirement rest in the Lords'. Balls. Nothing in the past of the Three suggests a readiness to make such sacrifice for their beliefs. Moreover if over-

night they had changed their characters and were resigning on points of principle they would hardly have made such an highly orchestrated and publicised song and dance to do it. The manner of their going is proof enough that they are acting not on principle but on calculation. They believe - and very possibly rightly - that they are on the road to power.

The Liberal Party's attempts to coordinate strategy is a pathetic sight. Reminiscent of one of those dreadful Hollywood B Movies about the Prohibition era in which Reagan may have acted. Small time gangland chief thinks he can benefit by an alliance with the big boys and so invites in the Mafia offering them a 20% cut in takings, or even a fifty fifty deal. Two months later the Mafia chief says he is going from then on to take the lion's share and it turns out that he has taken the precaution of previously bribing the local hoodlum-chief's bodyguards, so he cannot resist. Think again Mr. Steel, this lot didn't get in the big league by playing patsy.

One of the factors that in the past allowed fascists to recruit idealists is the use of a bogeyman; a picture of a ravaging leftie potential tyrant or advocate of destruction for its own sake. Benn is a somewhat feeble candidate for this role, nevertheless he has so been painted by the British press for a long time and evidently some people are deceived.

It is well to remember - because it casts light on the character of fascist parties, and later because it is a factor when we come to discuss how to oppose them, that both Mussolini and Hitler, just before they came to power, made an alliance with the Traditional Right which until then they had opposed. That in both cases this alliance created political divisions with fascism. (The Spanish Fallange was of course from its inception an alliance of the fascist party with the traditional forces of the right; but even this produced ideological divisions within the strictly fascist ranks.)

What is to be done?

If there is one thing of which we can be certain it is that we should not be following the example of groups such as the ANL in our opposition to CSD. Tyndall and Co. operate only on a twilight fringe of the political spectrum and never were any real danger so that it probably doesn't matter other than to the ethnic victims of lynch mobs, that they were positively aided by the errors of much of the 'Left'; even the Thatcher-like Enoch Powell - is only a temporary menace, however odious her policies are essentially self-defeating, so unless she actually sets off World War III and blows us up, we will in a few years' time remember her only as a bad dream. Shirley McMusso is a different kettle of fish, any aid she gets the mistakes of the Left will not be temporary disaster, still less a little extra publicity for a curious psychological aberration affecting a fortunately strictly limited dissident youth culture.

Looking at an act of the ANL as a supreme example of what should not be done it is worth recounting what happened on the Leicester demo during the election against an NF march.

1. The ANL was so eager to make certain it had good pictures taken that instead of - as it had been asked by all the ethnic minority associations and the Trades Council - staying in the area of dense coloured habitation where the NF had said they would hold their meeting and protecting this area from NF intrusion; the demo moved - on the off-chance that the NF might march through the town centre - into a large square by the Library.

Had they remained within residential areas where there were many criss-cross narrow roads and backyard paths, it would have been impossible for the police to have cordoned the anti-fascist demo off and sallies could have been mounted against the NF march; as it was no serious obstruction was made to the NF march and the Black community was left unprotected.

2. When the NF was finally caught by the ANL demo they were already in the school where they intended to have the meeting, the school fields and some of the approach roads were lined by a chain of police, while the SPG were a second line of defence ready to be

moved where their leaders felt they were needed.

(Obviously opinions differ as to what should have been done then and I will not go into the arguments for a civil disobedient approach, but will - at least for the sake of argument - assume that anti-pacifist anarchists do not want inefficient violence.) This demo put up a platform - on the far side of the road from the police lines - from which it started to declaim that we would in a few minutes time rush the police cordon; it then started to brag about 'our victory on this demo in Leicester'.

Not unnaturally the SPG moved up and long before the demo was ready to rush the police cordons the SPG did its rushing. There were a few stones desultorily thrown as protest about being rushed, and a few well-modulated upper middle class voices were to be heard chanting 'The workers united will never be defeated'; but the main act was ignominious flight.

Soon the platform was put up elsewhere - further away from the school precincts - the same promise of an imminent charge was declaimed, the same brags about a supposed victory were made, and another SPG charge brought renewed flight. This was then repeated a further three times.

The Labourer is worthy of his hire and one can only deplore the mean, ungrateful and curmudgeonly nature of the right wing personality, that did not cause the NF to pay a fat fee to the ANL in recompense for this unsolicited work on their behalf. It's sad and a pity when it happens vis a vis the NF; it could be that one way and another the ANL's bungling has caused some hundreds of people to be attacked, and we should all be shocked by this, but fortunately it is not a road that will lead Tyndall to power and the establishment of the gas chambers. We can have no such assurance of the relative insignificance of mistakes in face of the CSD.

It has been said in defence of the ANL that if its supporters were not staging street-dramas to publicize the NF they would probably be doing something even more pernicious. Just as the NF/BM it/themselves direct into right wing politics criminal characteristics that would be there anyway; so the ANL manages to redirect and give a spurious leftist and quasi intellectual veneer to otherwise loutish upper middle class rucker buggers who would normally celebrate sports victories and defeats by attacks on wet lefties, deviants and Blacks.

The ANL has put the desire for visual and media-reported opposition to the NF etc., over any consideration of what would have been effective action. Talking incessantly of Cable Street they have not learnt the lesson of it, not taken the trouble to ask why the victory was won at Cable Street, and not at Oxford Circus. While deriding civil disobedients as cissies, they have not thought that the successful use of violence depends on keeping the initiative in one's hands, not waiting to react to the initiatives of the opponents; (actually we had the same arguments among Civil Disobedients, but that is another story.)

It is obvious that one cannot use the Media against the CSD, a movement which basks in almost total Media backing.

We have to be clear about the difficulties. Though now the Media are painting a touching picture of self-sacrificing former Cabinet Ministers on a matter of principle resigning their future prospects of future gain; those who have over the last ten years followed the development of thought that has led to the CSD will remember that there have been a series of sociological surveys which have been adduced to suggest that there is considerable potential support for a centre party in new social strata that feel themselves clearly distinct from both the working class and employers. (Strata that no doubt classical socialist theory defines as workers by brain, or even just clerical workers, but which include the proliferating 'caring professions', as well as 'Middle Management' which of late has spent a lot of time agonizing that no one in politics has their interests at heart.) These strata may well be coalescing into a class of and for itself, though Leninists find it convenient to dismiss them as the petit bourgeoisie they in no way fit Marx's definition of the lesser bourgeoisie.

These are spheres which are apt to be quite Leftist on a number of issues, nuclear weapons, etc.; (though they were repelled by our 'dogmatic' insistence that it was not possible to get a state to abandon its major weapons of coercion without abolishing the state and the social injustices that cause the state to exist; some of them, however, will have been interested by New Society reprints from Anarchy and may even temporarily have paid lip service to Permanent Protest; and of course they will have shared anarchist beliefs that there was no possibility of disarmament being achieved by the Labour Party and consequent criticisms of the Labour Left calls for us to leave it all to Labour MPs.)

Some of the issues involved (not just nuclear weapons) have revolutionary implications and revolutionary demands have been made on them, without those who campaigned realizing the implications. The CSD leadership has been notable for the fact that it has understood the implications and has therefore fought bitterly - and by its own admission, dirtily - against any movement with such implications; (notwithstanding Shirley McMusso's recent belated interest in 'Small is beautiful'.)

It is essential to oppose CSD that one exploit contradictions such as these between the idealistic desires of these new

social strata and the policies of the CSD; that we demonstrate that these desires can only be won by reintegrating demands on these issues into the Left; in so doing obviously we have to make sure that the campaigns on the demand are not subordinated to Labour Party bureaucrats - such subordination would merely confirm the instinctive fears of those we would reach and help the CSD's case - and that the campaigns are not dominated by self-styled revolutionaries whose only 'revolutionary' action is to shout down in meetings all positions that they describe as reformist.

Looking - largely from outside - at the present resurrection of CND it appears to be tied even more helplessly to the wheels of the Labour Party chariot than was the early CND intended to be by its early executive. The conflict between this and the revolutionary demand of unilateral disarmament has not yet been felt, and nothing as yet suggests that a new CND will be followed by a rebirth of the C of 100. Nevertheless there is a potential there; a potential that necessitates that revolutionaries at one and the same time free the campaign from Labour Party dominance, and bind it more closely to the rank and file of the labour movement.

L. O.

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The new issue of our contemporary is devoted largely to sex, love and romance. Such discussions are singularly rare even in anarchist journals. The field is mostly left to the puritans, pornographers and psychologists.

Yet the whole set of relationships between people, female and male, and the nuclear family, are related to the structure of society.

There is a down to earth article by Charlotte Baggins entitled 'Towards an Anarchist Alternative to Laying the Table'. A delightful cover wraps up this offering which contains a long article by Dave Morris on Labour Organisation and Resistance ('In Britain Today')
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A. A.

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WHEN it finally became clear that Ronald Reagan would be enthroned as 41st president of the United States, those of us who were somewhat perturbed at the thought of having a senile delinquent at the helm of the world's most powerful nation were invited to believe that the real power resided in his team of advisors, and, that while this team would lean heavily to the right they could not fail to be more moderate, more humane and less pigheaded than the mad old man in the White House. After all, to think that the American people could be so easily manipulated into voting for Reagan and nothing but Reagan was even more frightening than the thought that they might re-elect Jimmy Carter.

El Salvador, then and now

Like many other ex-Spanish colonies and like Spain itself, El Salvador was born into feudal mould in which it is still contained. A strong landowner class, based around a few families, a large and powerful army, a clergy that with a few notable exceptions still now supports the status quo and an impoverished and oppressed peasantry.

In the 50 years up to 1979 El Salvador had been lorded over by a series of right wing military dictatorships, sponsored and supported to various degrees by the USA, who have traditionally regarded Central America as their personal fiefdom. In October 1979 however, in response to growing discontent amongst the people, a heightening of activity by the left wing guerillas, but more specifically in the wake of the overthrow of President Somoza in Nicaragua, several of the younger Army officers took over in a bloodless coup. This was supported by the USA, and the powerful clergy, who would rather introduce some reforms than have another of their puppet states suffer the same fate as Nicaragua.

A predominantly civilian government was formed which in a matter of a week had found itself torn to pieces by factional infighting while still unable to control the military. By January 1980 all the civilian members had resigned and Jose Napoleon Duarte had been brought back from exile in Venezuela to lead the new right-wing military junta.

The various left-wing guerilla groups, Marxist-Leninist mostly with few Trotskyist groups, immediately declared an all out war against the junta. Within a year this melange of disparate and squabbling groups had managed to form themselves into a unified front under the banner of the FMLN. What would happen to this alliance and their supporters were the junta to be overthrown is not clear. No doubt anarchists won't have much to write home about. However in a life and death struggle with the military and security forces the FMLN seems to be the people's only hope.

INTERVENTION

America has always used its foreign aid programme to influence the countries that receive its dubious benefits. Originally, in the Carter days, American aid was tied into implementation of agrarian reform and bank nationalisations, not to mention a military aid programme aimed at making the Salvadorean military more efficient and humane! This changed in 1980 when a greater proportion of aid was pumped into Honduras to increase the efficiency of units patrolling the borders which just happens to be where most of the El Salvador guerilla bases are. 54 US military advisors also went over to give training in rural counter insurgency.

Since then the White House administration has changed. This brings us back to Alexander Haig, who is currently seeking backing for \$7.65 billion foreign aid programme which stresses military aid. His lever in this attempt is the well worn 'Communist menace' and a reworking of the 'domino theory', claiming that the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua was part of a communist plot which would later escalate into taking over El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, and that all the problems in Central American countries was due to Soviet and Cuban intervention.

The fact that there is no proof that Russia or Cuba are supplying arms and advisors to El Salvador doesn't seem to

Reagan's team of advisors, however, is exactly what is to be expected. A collection of millionaires, businessmen and a five star general, whose sum concern over the well being of their fellow human beings is epitomised in the sterling qualities of Alexander Haig, the Secretary of State, a career soldier/politician, ex-commander in chief of NATO and an old accomplice of Nixon. A traditional all-American hero, believer in truth, justice and killing commies. Yet he would no doubt agree, along with Mao, that 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.' And it is on the people of El Salvador that Haig is practising this particular theory.

both him in the least. The guerillas seem to be mainly armed with American weapons either taken from the security forces or bought from the large blackmarket in armaments centred on Miami.

The intervention is completely one-sided, with the US sending in 10 Hercules transport aircraft every day. They have a military headquarters separate from the US embassy and a team of US foreign policy advisors working with the El Salvador Foreign Office. The new ambassador is Deane R. Hinton, former ambassador to Chile and Guatemala. Military advisors are growing in number and on 22 March fifteen Green Berets landed in San Salvador ready to train an elite fighting force of 1000 men in urban and rural counter-insurgency techniques.

The USA has also suspended all aid to Nicaragua and threatened a blockade of Cuba. In Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador they are busily training ex-Somoza supporters who along with the Honduran army have repeatedly attacked Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Haig himself has been to see the Venezuelan foreign division and General Vernon Walters (ex-deputy-director of the CIA) has been to see President Figuerdo of Brazil and President Videla of Argentina in an effort to drum up support for the suppression of human rights that American backed South America specialises in. The US is also resuming joint US-Chile naval exercises in the Pacific.

EUROPE

Internationally, the most publicised event at attempting to get NATO support for US strategy was Mr. Eagleburger's visit to Europe. His agenda included an attempt to stop any humanitarian aid (the Red Cross specifically), including such subversive items as powdered baby milk, from getting to the Salvadorean refugees. Presumably the US administration agrees with the army officer who said, 'We are killing the children of subversion.' (after a massacre of 600 peasants, children and babies that took 6 months to be reported in the west.)

Most western governments refused to be fooled by the American rhetoric and even FDR minister for development aid can be quoted as saying 'The cause of the conflict (in El Salvador) was intolerable social injustice,' not supposed shipments of arms from Cuba and Nicaragua. The one government that came out in support of this new round of American genocide was Britain. Maggie Thatcher, on behalf of us all, decided to support the right wing death squads, the US military intervention, the international bankers, the Salvadorean landowners living in Miami, and a military junta that murdered 13,000 people in 1980.

The American ruling class has once more jumped in to defend its 'sphere of influence' and 'friends' in Central America. Supporting a right wing military junta in the systematic extermination of all those who would question its authority. The British PM has come out of her lap-dog closet to define us as an 'ally, staunch and true' of American imperialism. And the Salvadorean people are being killed and terrorised while trying to fight for their liberty.

For once it's as simple as that.

STEFANO.