

FREEDOM

ANARCHIST MAGAZINE

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The 1988
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Conway Hall
Red Lion Square
London WC1

CON GAMES

SAY what you like about commercial television, the commercials are often the best part of an evening's entertainment. They can certainly be the most honest in that you know someone is trying to sell you something for their own profit.

In the current conference season the edges are blurred. There is no clear two-minute break for the sponsor's message; it just comes as part of the entertainment. For old cynics like the anarchists — and even young anarchists are old cynics — it is not too difficult to spot the price tag in the hard sell, the hook buried in the bait.

We write after the TUC and the SDP conferences and before the Labour, SLD and Conservative ones. We suspect that at least two of those to come will be much more professionally presented, with stage management borrowed from the great two-ring circuses across the Big Pond. Perhaps without the balloons and the dancing girls, and presented more properly with English discretion — but the hype is essentially the same. And the purpose? To sell a package within which you pay for your own humiliation and exploitation.

There are those who make a living out of taking all this rubbish seriously — all the media commentators who analyse events to suit their employers' demands. Whether they *really* take it seriously is of course open to doubt, and we are always happy to note a fairly healthy cynicism among journalists. Unfortunately their livings depend upon going along with the game and however much they may despise the players they have to analyse the game.

For anarchists the scene gets more and more depressing. The present sorry state of the Left seems to indicate that Thatcher's threat — that she intends to go on and on and on — will be only too near the mark. She is now undisputed head of a regime which is nearer to being an authoritarian state than any we have had since the war years — and it bears all the hallmarks of despotism.

We have always pointed out that, once a party has been elected to power in 'our' parliament, we have virtually a one-party government — save for the check or balance of the Lords. And it is hardly fit

for anarchists to regard the protection of an unelected body of the elite, as acceptable defence of the public against an autocratic (elected) administration!

This is only one of the farces of 'democracy'; a far more serious one is regularly spelled out by the official, reformist, Left acting at its most 'responsible' or Rightist. This is the respect for the Law, an endemic disease of the Labour Party which has crippled it time and time again as far as defending the freedom of the people in general or the working class in particular — the very class for which it claims to speak.

Perhaps we should now put that in the past tense, for no one can pretend today that the Labour Party speaks for the working class, if indeed it ever did. But it did pretend to, once upon a time — a pretence that was betrayed by that very respect for the Law — for the Law is a weapon of the ruling class, as represented by the ruling party — and it was precisely to become the ruling party that Labour first sprang from the loins of the Trade Union movement over 80 years ago.

Since when it has castrated the working class by arguing against industrial action as a means of change, and time and time again betraying its brothers in the trade unions. Indeed, in 1948, the then powerful Labour government *prosecuted* London dockers for instigating a strike!

That powerful Labour government, of '45 to '50, demonstrated once and for all the true nature of social democratic government. Claiming that 'We must have an atom bomb with a bloody Union Jack on it', Ernest Bevin (once a dockers' KC!), then Foreign Secretary, laid the foundation for the nuclear dilemma that Labour has never yet settled.

But what has that dilemma really been? Apart from the necessity to be 'responsible' and always stay within the Law — as demonstrated now with the attitude to the Poll Tax, on which they are being shown up by the Scots Nats, who have the guts to say 'Refuse to pay!' — the Labour Party is now pre-occupied with one issue only: how to win votes.

continued on page 3

NOW DOUGLAS,
I WANT YOU TO DEAL
STRONGLY WITH THE
EFFECTS OF
CRIME. I WANT
BIGGER PRISONS,
LONGER SENTENCES,
SHORT SHARP SHOCKS,
HARSHER PUNISHMENT,
REGULAR REVIEWS OF
HANGING AND FLOGGING,
COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS,
INTERNMENT OF TERRORISTS,
RETAINMENT OF FRONTIERS,
THOUGHT CONTROL, CUTS IN PENSIONS AND RENTED HOUSING,
TRAINING AND PRIVATISATION AND EXPLOITATION
OF EVERYTHING FOR PRIVATE PROFIT.
THE LAST THING I WANT FROM YOU
IS ANY CRAP ABOUT **CAUSES**
OF CRIME!
(AND I DON'T WANT ANY INTERFERENCE IN
THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MY SOVEREIGN STATE!)



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London Anarchist Forum

Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, WC1 (Behind Southampton Row, opposite Russell Square. Meetings start 8.00pm, Forum people usually in ground floor cafe beforehand).

- Oct 7 Peter Neville: **Anarchism and Civilisation.**
Oct 14 Open Discussion
Oct 21 Alan Albon: **Agricultural and Ecological Politics**
Oct 28 Open Discussion
Nov 4 George Walford: **Class Politics; an exhausted myth**
Nov 11 Open Discussion

London ACF

The Anarchist Communist Federation now meets once a month, on Thursdays at 8.30pm, at Marchmont Street Community Centre, Marchmont Street, London WC1.
Next meeting 6 October, **Middle East: Revolution and Change.** Contact London ACF, c/o Freedom Bookshop.

Books requested

Books requested

Warzone, an anarchist/alternative group in Belfast, are setting up a lending library and ask for donations of books: anything with an anarchist flavour.
Contact Warzone, PO Box 148, Belfast.

THIS IS IT!

THE 1988

ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR

Place Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Time from 10am on 8 October 1988. Events Bookstalls, T-shirts, posters, badges, videos, creche, vegetarian food. Evening social and gig.

Anarchist video

TELEVISIONARIES
Anarchist Video Festival
Sunday 27 November 1988,
12.00 - 10.30pm
RIO Cinema, 107 Kingsland High St
London E8

THE TV SET present a festival of anarchist videos featuring the kind of material that TV refuses to broadcast. It will include features and documentaries, archive material, shorts, subverts, situationist videos, work from around the world, plus both a serious and lighthearted look at various issues of the day.

Starting at midday the programme will run in the main cinema and the basement. Food will be available all day at the Rio Cafe. Tickets are £4 (£3 concs) and can be obtained in advance from the TV SET, 178 Whitechapel Rd, London E1 1BJ, cheques made payable to the Rio Cinema.

Correction

IN MY article 'A filthy sort of existence' in the September 1988 issue, the sentence: 'where officers explained how naked men caged in empty cells could get access to an iron bar', should have read: 'where officers failed to explain'. It goes without saying that a person incarcerated in these circumstances could not get access to an iron bar and therefore it would be impossible to assault a prison officer, as claimed on national TV by the officers, with an iron bar! It goes without saying that this point is important in terms of revealing the official bullshit put out by the officers at Glenochil with full media compliance.

Clive M. Allsop

Leslie's Bookshop & Squatters Advice
Turner's Road, London E14
Tuesdays 6.00pm - 9.00pm
Saturdays 1.00pm - 4.00pm

1988 study meeting, Turin, 1-2 October

THE centro culturale L. Mercier Vega, in collaboration with the Centro Studi Libertari of Milan, is organising an international study meeting on the subject: '1968 - rebellion, political project and cultural transformation'. It will be held in Turin on 30 September and 1 and 2 October 1988.

The meeting could be articulated around these main topics:

The Climate

The power of imagination, the dissent, the culture (interventions on art, theatre, cinema, school education in 1968 and after it).

How, where, why

Analysis and interpretations about the origins, the meaning and the reasons of movements of 1968 (meaning of '68 in Europe, in the USA, subsequent developments and different manifestations).

The inheritance

What remains today of 1968 in policy, in ethics and in everyday life (interpretations of modern society, crisis of ideologies, revolution and social transformation, power and freedom, etc.)

The meeting will be concluded by a debate on the subjects treated in the previous sessions.

Maria Matteo

Contact Centro Culturale, Louis Mercier Vega, Corso Palermo 46, 10152 Torino, Italy.

CON GAMES

continued from front page

For years, some anarchists — this writer included — have claimed that one technique of politicians is to find out what people want and then promise them just that, without necessarily any real hope or intention of carrying it out if elected. Now we find that this is just what Labour is going to do. In its desperation to fill the vacuum where a convincing policy should be, the Labour Party is going to adopt the cloak of 'The Listening Bank' and try to find out what you want and then promise it to you. No thoughts, you see, of socialist principles, for these are seen now to be vote losers.

And that's not all that surprising, for the state socialism that was introduced in those halcyon years of 1945-50 was, as we said at the time, nothing more than a change of masters. Nowhere, in the legislation for nationalisation, for example, was there any provision for, even, *consultation* with the industrial workers concerned, let alone the concept of workers' control. National Boards were created which were, in effect, simply private boards of directors writ large. To this day, both Labour and the trades unions accept the maxim that 'Management Must Manage', which means that workers must work — and do as they are told. Is it any wonder now that Labour has lost its support among the grass roots and that union membership is declining — aided by inter-union rivalry, poaching, single-union deals with manage-

ment, etc? Is it not ironic that just about the only positive action to come out of the recent TUC Conference was the expulsion of the EEPTU for a combination of all these sins?

Mixed up with the TUC (Labour's Goldfinger), of course, is the business of the leadership of the Labour Party. The biggest union, the TGWU, has already cast its vast vote for the existing leadership duo of Kinnoch and Hattersley — just about the most boring pair that could be conjured out of a hat — indeed, neither of them, based on their oratory, could persuade a dog to chase a rabbit, much less get the British working class to fight against privatisation, let alone for workers' control.

Over, then, to the more obvious opportunists: those fighting to the death for the middle ground. As anyone who has sat up all election night will know, it is the few per cent of floating voters who effectively choose our governments. That old swingometer showed us that a swing of about seven per cent was enough to give the 'first past the post' victory to one party or the other. This was the reason that David Owen and his fellow renegades in the original Gang of Four left the Labour Party and formed the 'Social Democratic Party' — whatever that means. You all know what happened when they found the Liberals squatting there in the middle ground and we think it would be fair to say that Dr Death is getting his comeuppance in the end.

Meanwhile, Maggie marches on. If only she would go mad quietly ...

Philip Sansom

IN BRIEF

Addendum to our September article on American troops pointing guns at maintenance workers. In 1979, orders were issued to US camp commandants in Britain that every gang of civilian workers should be accompanied by an (unarmed) soldier from the gatehouse, to assure internal security guards of their bona fides. Owing to a bureaucratic error these orders were marked RESTRICTED, which meant that commandants were not allowed to pass them on to the people running the gatehouses.

Post Office workers at Redhill began work after the strike on 13 September. Management called the police and had them ejected as trespassers, on the grounds that there was no local agreement on the terms for a return to work.

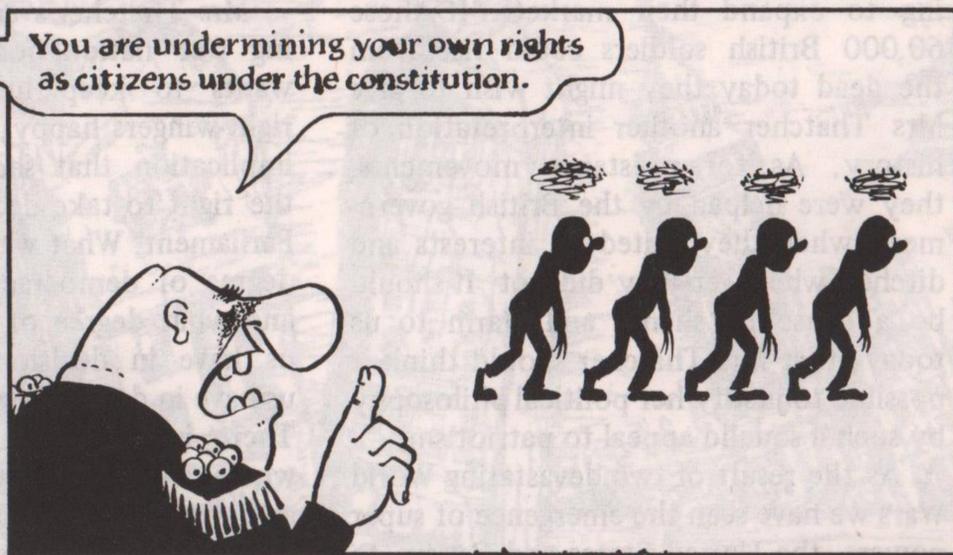
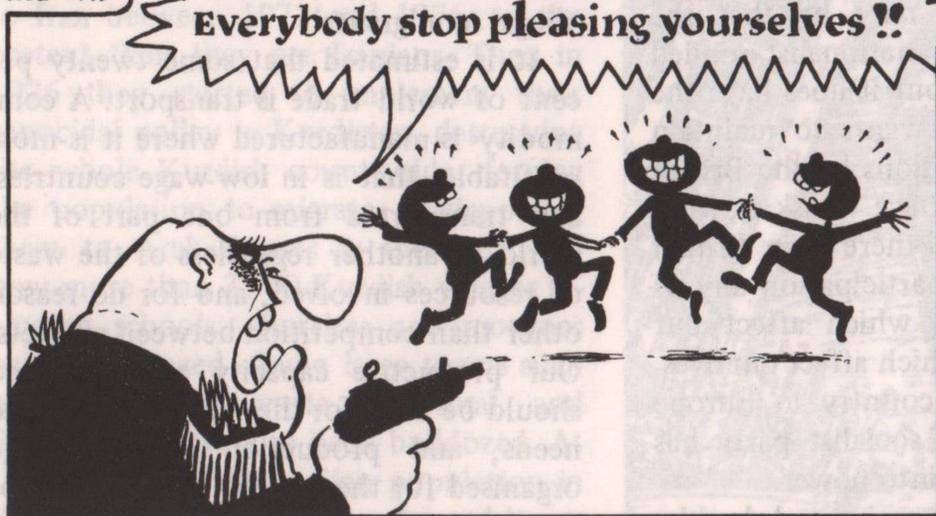
The Jersey militia, a local volunteer army who defended the island against invaders for six hundred years, has been revived. In the event of war being declared, it has been announced, the entire militia will be flown to Germany.

The Committee for the Study of the American Electorate is predicting that turnout in the presidential elections may fall below half for the first time. This has already been achieved in mid-term elections. Brazil has lowered its voting age to 16, the first 'major country' to do so.

WILDCAT

Everybody stop pleasing yourselves !!

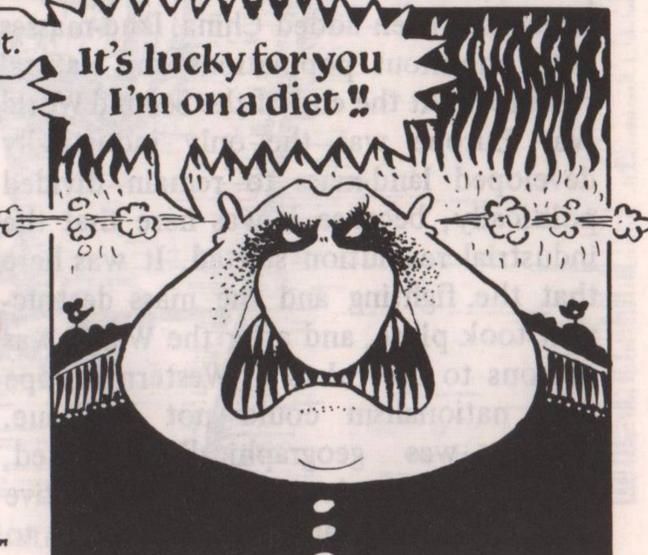
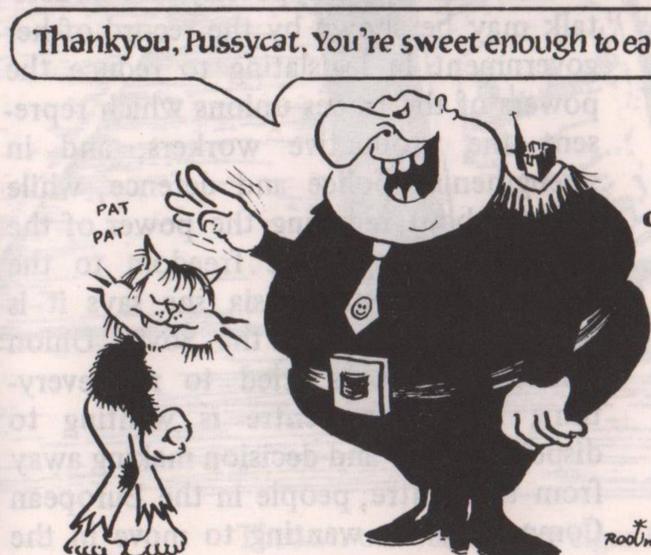
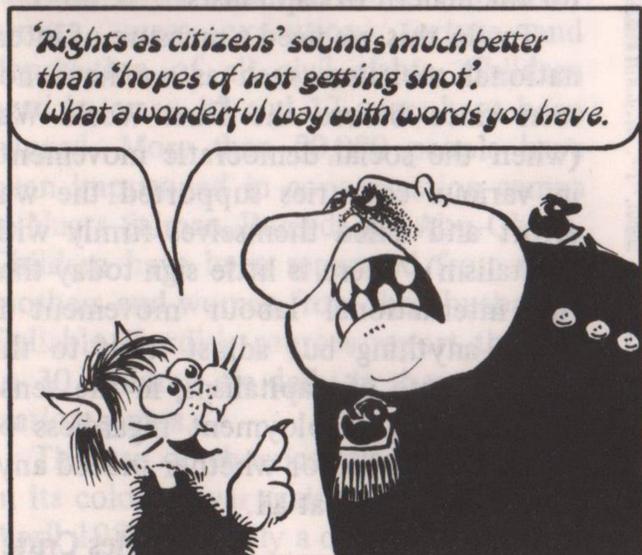
You are undermining your own rights as citizens under the constitution.



'Rights as citizens' sounds much better than 'hopes of not getting shot'. What a wonderful way with words you have.

Thankyou, Pussycat. You're sweet enough to eat.

It's lucky for you I'm on a diet !!



Perfidious Albion

MRS THATCHER'S extraordinary speech on Tuesday 20th September at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium, in which she gave her vision of Britain's place in Europe, 'shows, alas, how limited her horizons are', as the *Guardian* said (21st September, 1988), and exposes how threadbare the philosophy of Thatcherism is. All it boils down to is that she wants free movement for capital, and at the same time independent sovereign states, that is mechanisms for controlling the people.

Mrs Thatcher started her speech with so bizarre an outline of European history that it could only have been intended for home consumption:

'We British have in a special way contributed to Europe. For over the centuries we have fought and died for her freedom, fought to prevent Europe from falling under the dominance of a single power. Only miles from here lie the bodies of 60,000 British soldiers who died in the First World War. Had it not been for that willingness to fight and die Europe would have been united long before now — but not in liberty and not in justice. It was British help to resistance movements throughout the last war that kept alive the flame of liberty in so many countries until the day of liberation came.'

Over the centuries Britain adopted a policy of divide and rule in Europe, fighting over markets, setting workers against workers in the interests of rival ruling classes seeking to expand their markets. If those 60,000 British soldiers could rise from the dead today they might wish to give Mrs Thatcher another interpretation of history. As for resistance movements, they were helped by the British government when they suited its interests and ditched whenever they did not. It should be a cause of shame and alarm to us today, that Mrs Thatcher should think it possible to justify her political philosophy by such a squalid appeal to patriotism.

As the result of two devastating World Wars we have seen the emergence of super powers, the United States and Russia, to which has been added China, land-masses with enormous populations and natural resources. At the end of the Second World War Europe was the only industrially developed land-mass to remain divided politically, because it was here that the industrial revolution started. It was here that the fighting and the mass destruction took place, and after the War it was obvious to the rulers of Western Europe that nationalism could not continue. Britain was geographically isolated, avoided destruction of its productive capacity in war, and had an Empire to

sustain it. Now that it is just another European state, its economic future clearly lies in Europe, as Mrs Thatcher is aware.

Why, then, does she voice the opposition to a political union in which Britain might have to cede power to EEC institutions? The *Guardian* editorial comments:

'Who says that the new Europe seeks "to suppress nationhood and concentrate power at the centre of a European conglomerate?" Not Francois Mitterand. Not even Jacques Delors. Only Mrs Thatcher sets up this coconut in her personal sideshow. If she would pause to listen to her European friends for only a second, she might come to understand what they are saying.'

The *Guardian* goes on to ask whether Mrs Thatcher really meant what she said, and concludes that she probably does, and that since British business and financial institutions do not share Mrs Thatcher's vision the future of the Conservative Party must be in doubt. British business, it says, is not as ignorant as Mrs Thatcher, and the City of London knows the importance of Europe. Moreover multi-national companies are the thing of today and the future. May we suggest that Mrs Thatcher is not at all ignorant of such matters, and that the real reason behind her speech is that the new proposals for integration are going beyond the purely economic, and that the idea of the European Community is seen by her as opening the door to socialism?

Mrs Thatcher's emphasis on maintaining our nationhood may be that she wants to keep her nationalist-minded right-wingers happy, but it does have the implication that she wants to maintain the right to take decisions by the British Parliament. What we have to ask is, what degree of democracy there is in Britain and what degree of participation any of us have in decisions which affect our lives. There is in fact no country in Europe where any genuinely socialist party has any chance of getting into power.

Mrs Thatcher's hypocrisy and double-talk may be shown by the record of her government in legislating to reduce the powers of the trades unions which represent the productive workers, and in strengthening police and defence, while talking about reducing the power of the state and giving more freedom to the individual. About Russia she says it is ironic that just when the Soviet Union which has always tried to run everything from the centre is wanting to disperse power and decision making away from the centre, people in the European Community are wanting to move in the

opposite direction, towards the European Superstate. But she is in fact opposed to decentralisation: opposed to any measure of decentralisation in Britain, and opposed to Britain's being a decentralised part of a united Europe. At the same time she is wholly in favour of the big multinational companies and one big market for them — for instance, Nestle's buying up Rowntrees. The multinationals are determining the economy with Thatcher's encouragement, and this has nothing to do with decisions taken in Parliament.

Governments, as we have said, are mechanisms for controlling people. Here is Mrs Thatcher at Bruges:

'Of course we must make it easier for goods to pass between frontiers. Of course we must make it easier for our people to travel throughout the Community. But it is a matter of plain commonsense that we cannot totally abolish frontier controls if we are also to protect our citizens and stop the movement of drugs, of terrorists, of illegal immigrants.'

Good old bogeys — drugs, terrorists, illegal immigrants. What Mrs Thatcher really fears is the unification of peoples across frontiers. The class of people who control the economy have always been able to move freely about the world, taking their capital wherever it suits them, whereas wage-earners have always been kept behind frontiers, except where it suits the convenience of the market for labour. Today, skilled workers are able (or compelled by economic necessity) to move from one country to another, and affluent workers are able to take holidays abroad, and there is room in Britain for millions of tourists but no room for 'illegal immigrants'.

It is estimated that some twenty per cent of world trade is transport. A commodity is manufactured where it is most profitable, that is in low-wage countries, and transported from one part of the world to another regardless of the waste of resources involved, and for no reason other than competition between markets. Our productive capacity and our land should be used for the satisfaction of real needs, and production and exchange organised for the benefit of all instead of for the benefit of capitalists.

To do this we need a measure of international socialism such as we have not seen since before the First World War (when the social democratic movements in various countries supported the war effort and allied themselves firmly with capitalism). There is little sign today that the international labour movement is doing anything but adjust itself to the requirements of capitalism, in the sense of protecting employment regardless of what is produced or whether indeed anything is produced at all.

Charles Crute

Genocide in Kurdistan

KURDISTAN means 'the land of the Kurd', and is the traditional lands where the Kurds have lived since time immemorial. Until the First World War Kurdistan was part of the Ottoman Empire. During the war it was occupied by the British imperialist forces and then divided into four parts among Iran and the newly-formed states of Turkey, Iraq and Syria.

The British Government forces, including the RAF, attacked Kurdistan between 1917 and 1925, destroyed the Kurdish local government at Sulaymuniya and forcibly annexed Southern Kurdistan to the newly British-made Iraqi state. The reasons behind this imperialist action were to prevent the formation of a strong independent Kurdish state in this geographically important part of the Middle East and to allow the British to plunder the wealth of Kurdistan, especially oil. Thus the Kurdish people were forcibly subjected to a backward nationalist pro-imperialist Arab bourgeois state. With the growth of the military and economic power of this state, its apparatuses became more and more repressive and adopted more and more aggressive colonial practices in Kurdistan, deporting the Kurds from their traditional homeland, and imposing forced assimilation and Arabisation upon them. This policy reached its climax with the coming to power of the tribalist-nationalist Baath party in 1968. They started by evacuating the oil-rich areas in Sanjar Khanagin and Kirkuk of their Kurdish population, and settling Arabs in their place. They deported more than 100,000 Fayli Kurds to Iran between 1972 and 1976, on the pretext that they are Iranians. Then in 1976 they started to implement their genocidal policy in Kurdistan, destroying the whole Kurdish countryside, forcing the population to migrate, or deporting them to Arab deserts in the south. Till now more than 3,500 Kurdish villages including schools, churches and mosques have been razed. Some large towns such as Penjwin, Chworta, Khormal and Sagid Sadiq have also been bulldozed. At the same time the civilian population in Kurdish cities were subjected to arbitrary arrests, mass execution, torture and deprivation of all civil rights. Children aged between 12 and 17 years have been hanged. More than 50,000 people have been imprisoned in concentration camps in Nugra Salman, Ramadi and Abu-Ghreb. Children have been separated from their mothers and women from their husbands. Reliable Kurdish sources report that 20 to 30 children die daily in these concentration camps.

The use of chemical weapons by Iraq in its colonial war against the Kurds since April 1987 was only a culmination of the

chauvinistic policy of the Baath regime. Although the Halabja massacre in which poison and nerve gases were used, caused the death of more than 5,000 people and injuries to twice this number, neither the bourgeois media in the quasi-democratic states nor the state-controlled media in the so-called socialist states mentioned the incident; nor do we know of any behind-the-scenes diplomatic protest. This conspiracy of silence encouraged the Iraqi regime to use the cover-up of the Iraq-Iran war, and then the opportunity of ceasefire, to intensify its genocidal campaign against the defenceless Kurdish people. For two months, the Kurdish freedom-fighters (Peshmargal) have been fighting under barrages of phosphorous and napalm bombs and clouds of poison gas to enable more than 150,000 to escape from certain massacres to the Turkish and Iranian borders. More than 100,000 Kurdish refugees are in Turkey now, suffering from starvation and cold, maltreated by the Turks to force them to return to their dark fate in Iraq.

Recently and very belatedly, Western media and Western governments have taken a keen interest in what has been happening in Kurdistan. But it seems that what they are interested in is not so much the fate of the Kurds as the use of one single means of genocide, namely chemical weapons. They want Iraq to stop using this method, and give a warning to others who may contemplate imitating Iraq in using the poor-man's nuclear bomb. But the Kurds have been dying for years and it makes no difference to parents whether their children died through napalm bombardment, artillery shelling, execution or starvation.

The tragedy of Kurdistan embodies the essence of the spirit of an age characterised by racism and hypocrisy. It is the responsibility of democratic and freedom-loving individuals to take the initiative to expose the crimes of the Iraqi regime against the Kurdish people, and support their struggle for freedom.

K. Rawand

TONY EARNSHAW'S VIEW FROM THE BACK OF TOWN



Thrown off balance by cigar butts and rat droppings.

What should anarchists call themselves?

MOST anarchists and pacifists are aware that those who would rule us label themselves and their policies with highfalutin' words. But these words are used to deceive rather than to describe. One would imagine, for example, that the policies known as 'conservative' would be definite enough, and yet it is not uncommon to read that Mrs Thatcher's activities are 'revolutionary'. Likewise, the term 'labour' is meant to imply that the party which gives itself that name represents the interests of the workers, when, in reality, it does no such thing. When in power, all political parties behave in substantially the same way. (The spectacle of a party, such as the Liberals — SDP, SLD, or whatever the fashionable name happens to be — having policies that are supposed to be midway between two other parties which are already more or less identical is too



ridiculous to describe.) Socialism is another term which can mean almost anything. I have seen it applied to ideologies as diverse as those of the Labour Party and those of the anarchists.

There is nothing we can do to alter the way people describe themselves and others, but, as anarchists, we must be quite clear about the terms we use in relation to our own ideology. We must be clear because unless we are we can hardly expect those whom we would influence to understand what exactly we are advocating. In short, we cannot spread our beliefs unless we name them correctly.

Happily, most reference books today give a more or less accurate description of 'anarchism'. The new edition of *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia*, for example, explains that anarchism is the political belief that there should be no government but an ordered society maintained by co-operation. It asserts that anarchism is not nihilistic but is essentially a pacifist movement. However, when we look up the Hutchinson definition of 'pacifism', we are told that it is the complete renunciation of violence, even violence for self-defence. Now we know that many anarchists, probably most, do not renounce personal violence and so we are brought to the hub of the matter.

What exactly do we mean by a pacifist? Pacifists are people who refuse to do violence. But when do pacifists make the refusal? When it is on behalf of themselves, their families, a criminal gang of which they are a part, a revolutionary group, or their country? I remember that some time ago there was a debate within the Peace Pledge Union about whether those who reject war should also reject the use of violence to defend themselves and their families. As I recall, the question was never settled, although I have reason to suppose that many in the PPU believe that the renunciation of violence should be complete. But the pledge 'I renounce war and will never support or sanction another' does not cover personal violence. Nor does it cover revolutionary violence for that matter. I signed the pledge about fifty years ago, and I have always thought myself a pacifist, although I would certainly use violence to defend myself or my family and friends.

But besides refusing to fight in a war, I have also refused to support war. I sometimes wonder how many of those who have signed the pledge realise the extent of their commitment. Refusing to support war does not mean that one simply takes a stand against it when arguing the toss with other people. It means that one does not pursue any

activity that makes war possible. So no working on research concerned with the weapons of war and no working in factories making the weapons of war or making articles which serve the needs of those who are preparing to make war. One does not have to actually fight to help prosecute a war. This was well understood during World War Two when the British government offered conscientious objectors what was called 'alternative service'. Men and women were just as valuable to the government whether they actually killed the enemy or grew food for those who were prepared to kill the enemy. (The COs who refused to accept alternative service were called 'absolutists'.)

In our present society, it is extremely difficult to obtain a living and yet isolate oneself from the preparation of war. But it is possible, and indeed necessary, to refuse to do any violence on behalf of an organised group — be that group a revolutionary organisation or a whole country. And most anarchists make this refusal, although some believe that revolutionary violence may be useful if its use is short. (See *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* by Vernon Richards.) I sometimes wonder how many pacifists who have never been actually threatened with violence proclaim that they are personally non-violent while at the same time they earn their living at some form or war preparation.

So the statement that anarchists are pacifists which is made in the encyclopedia quoted above is substantially correct. Most anarchists are pacifists in the sense that they will do no violence on behalf of a group. Unfortunately, the public have absolutely no idea of the anarchists' beliefs. In fact, far from thinking that anarchists are non-violent, people imagine that they not only want a disordered and violent society but also want to create such a society by violence.

We know, of course, that it is government propaganda which gives the people the untrue view of anarchists. We also know that we have to offset this propaganda and spread the truth about ourselves. In this respect, however, I am afraid that the word 'anarchism' will always be tainted. We need to signal that we are not only anarchists but also pacifists. Therefore, there is a very good case for using the term 'anarcho-pacifism'. In fact, if we take the word 'pacifism' as the refusal to do violence on behalf of any group, then the term has exactly the same meaning as 'anarchism'. Nevertheless, I think that the term should be used for the effect it will have in the public. They should be told that we are Anarcho-pacifists.

Derrick A. Pike

Nothing to be proud of

IN RECENT MONTHS, spokesmen for the Right have pointed to incidents of British holiday-maker hooliganism, rural jobs and well-to-do football thugs as evidence that poverty is not the cause of violence and aggression, as the Left have apparently long maintained. Aggression is probably an innate instinct; but it is frustration in many forms that leads aggression to be manifested in cases of assault, GBH, riots etc. Economic frustration is only one form of frustration.

Having been on the dole for several years, I worked briefly on a building site as a labourer and groundworker a few weeks ago. I received more money in a day than I get in a week on the dole; but my aggression was increased rather than diminished. On the site, I was relatively good-humoured, but at home I felt bad tempered and violent. This, I've learned from talking to others, is a common experience; most people baulk at violence towards their workmates, but are quite prepared to kick the cat or shout at their wife when they get home. Among the workers that know each other, there is a ritual of mutual sadistic humour; there are abusive nicknames, ridicule of each other's work, weight and other personal attributes, as well as accusations of effeminacy and laziness. As I say, this is mutual; each gives as good as he gets, and all laugh heartily. It seemed quite nasty to me at first; but then I realised that it was a necessary evil; it's better to say abuse than to do it. On my fourth day on the site, I saw what happens when people don't give enough vent to their aggression in an acceptable way; two men were brawling. Perhaps one reason that so many site workers read the *Sun*, too, is that it provides a hefty dose of spite and horror.

The work is not always hard and unpleasant; but even the times of inactivity provide further fuel for burgeoning aggression. I know workers on building sites who sometimes get paid for doing nothing at all, and who spend afternoons in pubs. Whatever is being done (or not being done), it is the boredom, the monotony of it all that leads to frustration. On and on it goes, the same thing, interminably, hour after hour, day after day. For me, it was the nearest thing to a prison sentence. True, much energy is being expended, especially labouring and hod carrying; but it is not being directed in a way which satisfies. The Japanese have punch-bags with the boss's face on; they know that to use up energy is not in itself going to dissipate anger. Being tired is not the same as being relieved.

'You'll get used to it.' I was told on many an occasion. But who wants to? A lot of people since the Industrial Revolu-

tion and the rise of capitalism have confused ends with means on the issue of work. Work used to have a purpose; now it has become the purpose itself. We at the bottom of the pyramid of the construction industry are only small cogs in a giant machine; how can we possibly experience the usefulness of what we do? We are too remote from an end product that does far more to profit those at the top end than us.

The current climate encourages a tough, workaholic personality, obsessed with activity per se, and with the mechanics of the business rather than the final result. With a forty-plus hour week, there is little time at the end of the day for anything but rest and eating. I know men who take their work home with them and



talk seriously about it as though everything else is merely a side issue to the current construction project. Many of these people get drunk on Friday and Saturday night and fight each other on the way home from the pub and disco; the human being inside the robot finally rebels, and his aggression overflows indiscriminately.

Hard physical labour may produce a certain amount of cardio-vascular fitness, as the lungs are repeatedly stretched and the heart pumps faster to feed the aching muscles. But, on the whole, building site work is extremely deleterious to the health. Many people who have worked as labourers or in similar jobs for a number of years find that the joints in their knees are damaged and painful. Lower back problems, too, are almost universal from so much repetitive bending over and picking up awkward, heavy objects. The back is the easiest area of the body to overwork.

You might get £52 a day for these problems, plus brickdust in your eyes, your hands shredded from catching bricks (in which they use chemicals that prevent cuts from healing properly) and the constant risk of serious injury or even

death. When I was working, one man accidentally had a barrow of boiling asphalt (at about 200^o) poured over him. Since he wasn't wearing a hard hat, he could only claim insurance for his arm.

'£52 a day!' you might exclaim. 'You must be in the South-East.' That's right. Here there is currently what's known as a property boom, which means that first-time buyers and especially the poorest (eg. those in bedsit-land) are squeezed out as the better off sell and buy like mad. Brighton has possibly the worst housing situation for unemployed young people in the country. House prices are not taken into account when the figure for inflation is calculated (for some reason). They have increased at a dramatic rate as demand outstrips supply; and though economists say they are levelling out in London, they are still absurdly high.

There is plenty of money in the building trade, then. But, at least where I worked, there is plenty of evidence of those higher up in the trade trying to wring as much as possible out of us all. Workers leave and are not replaced; others double up. Then, student labour is employed on nearly half the hourly rate that I was getting.

And what's it all for? There are plenty of very expensive, new houses going up in the Brighton area, but the building I was working on wasn't even one of these. In an area previously made up of small independent and second-hand shops, a vast new office block for Lloyds International Factors was being erected. This is part of a general trend, of course; London is one of the financial centres of the world, and London and its money-processing facilities are spreading. Heavy industry is dying out; only tourism and usury are developing, with their hard-working lackeys, the builders, in toe.

From the inside, the Lloyds building looked as though it might be quite attractive when it was finished; the centre is open-plan with floors right up to the glass roof; I expect it will be a pleasant place in which to work in many ways; light, spacious and plush. But from the outside it is like dozens of other office buildings which have sprung up like poisonous toadstools to blight the Brighton skyline. No matter how many windows they install, they are drab, uniform, ugly places, with little aesthetic appeal. I never hear construction workers talk with pride of such buildings they have contributed towards. Many treat these places with contempt. The combination of being such a small part of someone else's scheme, and of the sheer banality of the buildings means that few of those involved are ever proud of the fact.

Johnny Yen

Copyright controversy

A NOTE appears in *The Anarchist Reader*, an anthology of anarchist writing published by the giant Collins publishing firm, under the Fontana imprint: 'While every effort has been made to trace copyright holders, this has not always been possible. The publishers would be pleased to hear from any copyright holder not here acknowledged.' This shows the value of putting copyright notices in books, as long as there is a copyright law. In a free society, where nobody could be proprietor of someone else's work, it would no doubt be considered polite to seek out the author or authors in person; law or no law, it is obviously offensive to reproduce a book by a living author, without consulting them.

The following anonymous article was published earlier this year in the first issue of *Resist* (20p from Resist Group, c/o Students Union, Keele University ST5 5BG, or from Freedom Bookshop).

Copy-right wrong

Welcome to the rather strange world of the 20th Century.

If you develop a curious affection for a word or phrase you can trademark it.

If you are a little more ambitious you can copyright a more substantial work.

If you've been particularly clever and your copyrighted words or pictures contain an original idea then you can patent it.

Surely all this ownership of abstract concepts is as bad, if not worse than, the ownership of means of production, and even more dangerous due to the lack of attention that is placed upon them.

Everything from an image of the Queen to supermarket price labels are owned, you may have possession but there are limits to what you can use items for. It will now come as no surprise to you that at this point I shall firmly condemn this insidious form of ownership.

However there do seem to be some 'anarchists' who seem to have faith in the current means of dealing with ownership of concepts, even if they are not prepared to go to the courts to protect what they view as owned. Why?

Surely something that is placed in the public domain becomes the property of the public.

Ah, they say, but if you are likely to be ripped off then there is no incentive to produce.

Bollocks, whatever you produce, whether artist, scientist or journalist, you should produce for the benefit of your fellow humans or for prestige, not just for your wallet.

So what if Penguin Books would not produce Woodcock's *Anarchism* if the typesetting was going to be ripped off

and thus make it economically unviable for them to print it; why do you think they print it now? Not for any social conscience reason but merely to make money. So what is wrong with that then, everybody needs to make a living don't they? Yeah, sure, but just as we reject ownership of the means of production we should resist ownership of abstract concepts. Copyright has got to be one of the first things to go in a truly free world. So what would you have instead?

Credit where credit's due, no one should have the right to take someone else's work and claim that it is their own, but single individuals or groups should not have the right to control the use of something in the public domain or make undue financial rewards from it.

It is difficult to see what is wrong with small groups reprinting works.

It helps them financially and helps spread the word, particularly to the most oppressed and thus poor individuals who could benefit most from many products, particularly when most of the anarchist material easily available is ridiculously overpriced either by greedy major publishing groups or due to the short print runs of academically orientated volumes.

What about plagiarism then?

Reply

The article is illustrated with reproductions of copyright notices from Freedom Press books, and reviews from *Freedom* of reprints made without consultation, mentioning 'the incompetent pirates who now infest the anarchist publishing business'.

The following letter was published in *Resist* number two, in August.

Dear Comrades,

COPY-RIGHT-WRONG

I agree with your statement in *Resist* number 1, 'Copyright has got to be one of the first things to go in a truly free world'. At the same time I put the copyright details in *Wildcat* anarchist comics, and unlike the examples in your illustration I do not even share the copyright with Freedom Press. An explanation is called for.

In law, of course, every work of art is automatically copyright. Publishing the copyright details does not make a book more copyright than it would otherwise have been, but simply identifies the owner of the copyright, to save trouble for potential reproducers. If you want your work not to be copyright, you have to publish some overt declaration such as 'Anti-copyright. Use any or all of it.'

The hippy artist Robert Crumb put words to that effect on the first editions of his early cartoon strips, published by himself and his brother. A couple of

years later they were reproduced in commercial magazines, whose proprietors made a profit, while the Crumbs got a wider readership which was after all what they wanted. The profitable animated cartoon film *Fritz the Cat* uses Crumb's characters and Crumb's stories, but Crumb's name did not appear among the credits (he did not give away copyright on his name). Recent strips by Crumb have 'copyright R. Crumb' on every page. Perhaps he has given up his vision of a truly free world; or more likely, it has dawned on him that the world we actually inhabit is truly expensive.

Copyright details in Freedom Press publications are not there to intimidate the rest of the non-profit-making radical press. When my work is reprinted, even without acknowledgement (as for instance across the top of page 13 in *Resist* 1), I am just flattered that anyone considers it worth ripping off. But suppose for the sake of argument *Wildcat* were to be included in a collection of cat cartoons, and copyright fees were payable to the owners of Garfield and Sylvester, then I would also like a nice cheque to go to *Freedom*.

Donald Room

Resist Group appends a comment: ((I can agree with most of the above. To be honest both the copyright notice and D. R.'s cartoon in *Resist* 1 were last minute inclusions during laying up, when we did not have access to a typewriter. However an appreciation of Mr Room did appear at the foot of the editorial, and in addition there was no copyright notice on the cartoon he refers to which was printed on the front cover of *Freedom*. In addition a fuller statement of our copyright notice should be in this issue. On the whole the article was geared towards fighting against the use of copyright laws, or allied criticism, within the non-profit making press, and with regards to us ripping off things from more financial minded institutions and individuals.))

A note in *Resist* 1 simply says: 'Anti-Copyright. Use any or all of it'. Presumably in the light of the correspondence, the equivalent note in *Resist* 2 reads: 'We do not hold copyright on any of our own writings, artwork or design, unless it is being used for blatant profiteering. Obviously we can not give away copyright on material that we ourselves have ripped off. If you do use any of this zine then we would really appreciate it if you could send us a copy of whatever you've used it in/for, just out of personal interest. TA!'

We welcome *Resist*. An intelligent but undidactic magazine, produced by (let's face it) young people, is a useful addition to the contemporary anarchist press. DR

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7 PAGES OF BOOK REVIEWS



Bernard Shaw

Volume I: The Search for Love

Michael Holroyd

Chatto & Windus, £16

BIOGRAPHY has become one of the most popular literary forms, now that so many people prefer to look at other lives rather than live their own. This trend has affected even writers, so that people often prefer to read a book *about* rather than *by* a writer. And this is especially true of writers whose writings have lost some of their original interest, as their topics or treatments have become unfashionable, but whose lives have gained new interest, as intimate revelations have become fashionable.

Michael Holroyd is a professional biographer who has acquired an inflated reputation (and income) from writing inflated books about inflated writers and artists. His previous subjects have been Hugh Kingsmill (1964, 1971), Lytton Strachey (1968, 1971), and Augustus John (1974-1975). For the past fifteen years he has been working on the 'authorised' biography of Bernard Shaw, for which he is being paid an advance of £625,000 (about £1 per word). He has now produced the first of three volumes, going from Shaw's birth in 1856 to his first success as a dramatist and his marriage in 1898.

The book has received enormous publicity, and with such a lively subject it could hardly fail to be readable, but it is really much too long (nearly 500 pages) and not very good. It is well produced, with some nice photographs, but there are no references at all, though there are acknowledgements to literally hundreds of individuals and institutions. It is very clumsily constructed and written, coming to life only when it quotes Shaw himself, and Holroyd's own comments are verbose and banal.

The volume is subtitled 'The Search for Love', but its contents show rather a search for attention. Shaw had a neglected childhood in the shabby genteel Protestant society of Dublin, and then an impoverished youth in the bohemian society of London. He lived off his mother until he married a rich wife, and didn't become self-supporting until his forties. He was a compulsive philanderer who enjoyed callous flirtations and casual affairs with free women (married, widowed, divorced),

and specialised in the sort of physical or emotional ménage à trois which had been practised by his own parents. When he eventually married it was on the understanding that there would be no sex, and by that time he was pouring all his energy into his increasingly successful writing.

Shaw is of course famous as the author of very successful plays, but although they are always great fun they are seldom much more than squibs or sermons. Holroyd treats them (and the unsuccessful novels which preceded them) as documentary texts rather than literary works, and tells us more than we need to know about the biographical backgrounds of their characters and plots, but he does incidentally tell us most of what we need to know about Shaw's hard beginnings and his long apprenticeship as an excellent journalist. His later development as a joker-sage — using the sobriquet 'G.B.S.' and the epithet 'Shavian' — is left for later volumes.

But Shaw was also a politician — a popular left-wing writer and speaker, a leading member of the Fabian Society, a busy Progressive member of the local council in St Pancras, a powerful advocate of municipal socialism (and later an admirer of both Lenin and Mussolini) — and here he has a particular interest for anarchists. Holroyd describes Shaw's shift from individualism to collectivism in his subsequent political activities well enough, but is unfamiliar with socialism and therefore unaware of Shaw's significance (or insignificance). He misdescribes H. M. Hyndman's Democratic Federation as 'the first socialist political organisation in Britain', overplays the importance of the Fabian Society during the 1880s and 1890s, and underplays Shaw's connection with the anarchist movement.

The trouble here is that he is even more unfamiliar with anarchism, introducing his account of it with the fatuous general remark that 'it was an age of secret agents and bomb makers' and making a series of elementary mistakes in his particular references. Shaw's connection was made through Charlotte Wilson, who was also a leading member of the Fabian Society and later founded *Freedom*. Holroyd patronisingly calls her 'a firebrand bluestocking' who 'entertained anarchist tendencies', though he has at least learnt that she didn't go to Girton College in Cambridge. He has also learnt that she invited Kropotkin to come to England, though he thinks that Kropotkin was 'then living in exile in Paris' rather than in prison in Clairvaux, and he repeats the idle rumour that they were lovers. He equally patronisingly describes *Freedom* as an 'anarchist fly-sheet', though he has at least learnt

that it wasn't founded by 'David Nichols' (i.e. Nicoll), as he thought in *Augustus John*. He interprets the Fabian tract *What Socialism Is* (1886) as an 'attempt to quarantine' the 'influenza of anarchism', when it was actually an attempt to explain the collectivist and anarchist varieties of socialism on equal terms. He interprets the debate at Anderton's Hotel in 1886 as 'a show-down between Fabian collectivists and anarchists', when it was actually between parliamentarians and anti-parliamentarians. He describes Stepniak as the 'most notorious of all' the anarchists, although he wasn't an anarchist at all, and he describes the well-known French anarchist Charles Malato as 'Mulato'. He mentions that Benjamin Tucker was a leading individualist anarchist, but not that Shaw had a long association with Tucker's *Liberty*, to which he contributed his important critical essay *The Sanity of Art* (1895). (Shaw was also associated with the French individualist E. Armand.) He notes the individualism of one of his other important critical essays. *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891), though not that of the other one, *The Perfect Wagnerite* (1898), and he misses the tension between individualism and collectivism in all Shaw's political work.

On Shaw's actual flirtation with anarchism, he says only that Shaw drafted an article favourable to political anarchy that, to his embarrassment, was frequently reprinted and cited as evidence of his own anarchist past', but he doesn't give any details — 'What's in a Name? (As an Anarchist Might Put It)', in Henry Seymour's paper *The Anarchist* (March 1885) and then in *Liberty* (11 April 1885), and reprinted as a pamphlet called *Anarchism versus State Socialism* (1889). And he doesn't say (or know) that Shaw also contributed to *Freedom* during its first year, or quote his letter to Andreas Scheu saying that he was 'at heart an anarchist' (26 October 1884). He refers to his 'literary spree', *The Impossibilities of Anarchism* (1891), but doesn't realise just how misleading Shaw was in that and in other earlier and later writings on the subject, when he was so much concerned to exorcise his own ambivalent feelings.

The result is a thoroughly typical example of traditional British historiography of anarchism, combining equal degrees of arrogance and ignorance, though few Shavians will notice. So in general this is a book for people who read biographies rather than for people who are interested in biography, and in particular this is not a book for anyone who is interested in Shaw's part in the British left — let alone anyone who knows or cares about anarchism.

NW

Caleb Williams

William Godwin

Edited by Maurice Hindle

Penguin Books £4.95 (paperback)

Damon and Delia

William Godwin

Edited by Peter Marshall

Zena, Croesor, Penrhyndeudraeth,

Gwynedd £14.95

WILLIAM GODWIN is known to anarchists mainly as the author of *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, the first major exposition of philosophical anarchism, which was published in 1793. But he wrote a great many other books, some of which are very important though few are very readable, including several novels.

The best known of the latter is *Caleb Williams* — or, to give its full original title, *Things As They Are: or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams* — which was published in 1794. This is in effect a companion volume to *Political Justice*, a fictional assault on all the powers that be, cast in the form of a melodramatic tale of secrets and suspicions and flights and pursuits. It has been described as the first detective story or the first psychological thriller, it caused a sensation when it first appeared, and it still makes impressive reading today.

Caleb Williams has often been reprinted, and it has now been added to the Penguin Classics series — which already includes an unsatisfactory but useful edition of *Political Justice*, a marvellous double edition of Godwin's memoir of his wife Mary Wollstonecraft and her book of travels in Scandanavia, and the famous novel *Frankenstein* by their daughter Mary Shelley. It has been edited by Maurice Hindle — who edited the *Frankenstein* three years ago — and he has provided a well-informed and well-argued introduction. This is now the best available paperback edition of this significant book.

Godwin's first novel, *Damon and Delia*, was published in 1784 and disappeared from sight for nearly two centuries. In 1978 the only known surviving copy was acquired by the British Library, which intended to produce a facsimile reprint but was prevented from doing so by the recent cuts in Government expenditure. Instead it has been produced by Peter Marshall, who is well known as the author of the best biography of *William Godwin* (1984) and the editor of *The Anarchist Writings of William Godwin* (1986).

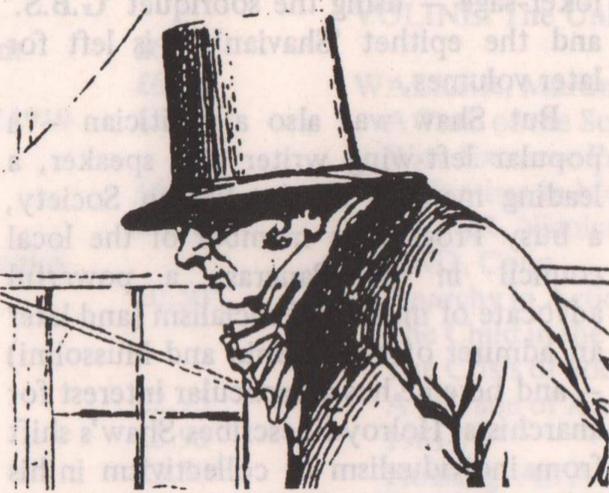
Godwin wrote *Damon and Delia* in ten days for a fee of five guineas when he was a young freelance writer, and the result is little better than it ought to be, a light-hearted parody of a conventional romantic tale in the tradition of Henry

Fielding and Fanny Burney, but far below either. Yet it is wittier and livelier than might have been expected, it contains some sharp satire of upper-class life and some good republican and feminist elements, and it includes an interesting self-portrait of the author in the character of Mr Godfrey.

The new edition is an elegantly produced little 200-page volume, bound in blue cloth with a nice blue jacket, with a clear facsimile of the text and a good straightforward introduction by Peter Marshall. The only possible criticisms are that it is a pity to use such white paper for the old text and such modern type for the new introduction and that the price is rather high. *Damon and Delia* takes a worthy place among the recent reprints of Godwin's books which are so welcome when the originals have become so rare and expensive.

NW

William Godwin at 78



A Decade of Anarchy 1961-1970: selections from the monthly journal

'Anarchy'

edited by Colin Ward

Freedom Press, £5

ANARCHY magazine, published by Freedom Press and edited by Colin Ward, was a considerable achievement although Colin Ward writes modestly enough about it in his foreword to this volume of selections. He is inclined to the view that such a journal was in some respects premature in that it is only now in the '80s that the intellectuals have started to abandon Marxism and turn their attentions to anarchism. I would say that *Anarchy* was very much a child of its time. It was not universally admired in the anarchist movement, being regarded by some as 'liberal' or 'revisionist', although a perusal of the files would reveal some splendidly 'revolutionary' polemics none of which the editor has chosen to reprint in this volume, but a journal is only as good as its contributors and if I were to criticise it, it would be for the over-emphasis on sociology and anthropology so typical of the '60s.

Colin Ward says that about one-tenth of the material published has been included in this selection; of the remainder

a fair amount has been reprinted in other formats (a notable example was Nicolas Walter's 'About Anarchism', forming issue 100, which achieved a large circulation on being reprinted as a pamphlet). It must have been a difficult task to make this selection, and I doubt if any two people would agree on what they liked.

The thirty items included are classified under seven headings — 'Restatements', in which a number of anarchists seek to link anarchist thought to the contemporary scene; 'Experiences', which are descriptions of the human condition in different parts of the world as witnessed by the writers; 'Work', consisting of four detailed essays ranging from the practical experience of the Gang System in Coventry to the theoretical future of work; 'Education', the ever-topical subject with contributions among others by Paul Goodman and Harold Drasdo; 'Deviance', yet another burning topic of the day, with contributions from Tony Gibson and Stan Cohen; 'Environments', a topic which has assumed increasing urgency ever since; and 'Retrospects', which gives Colin Ward's contemporary discussion of *Anarchy* in *Freedom* and Rufus Segar's account of doing his famous covers.

Some of the more notable covers are reproduced on the jacket of this volume, although the covers shown do not match with the contents.

I found most of the material in this book well worth having; some pieces did not appeal. I imagine you would find the same although you and I would not like the same things. This is not a book to be read at a sitting, and it is well worth the price if you only like half of it. I liked about four-fifths of it.

CC

1984 and after

edited by Marsha Hewitt and Dimitrios I. Roussopoulos

Black Rose, £7.95

PUBLISHED in 1984 (but arrived in Freedom Bookshop this year), eleven contributors including Murray Bookchin, Noam Chomsky and George Woodcock, with essays inspired by George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*. Eight of them actually mention the book.

A remark by the editors throws a surprising light on American critics: 'To understand 1984 strictly in terms of the Soviet Union is very limited; it is now all too apparent how deadly that kind of approach has become.' Among British critics it was well known at the time that *Nineteen Eighty Four* was a satire on the Britain of 1948, and this is now a commonplace among A-level literature students.

Not an essential collection, but interesting and useful.

DR

From Riot to Insurrection: analysis for an anarchist perspective against post industrial capitalism

Alfredo M. Bonanno

Elephant Editions, £1.00

BONANNO is an apologist for revolutionary violence, and after reading some of his shorter pieces, I confess I suspected him of romanticising violence because he enjoys thinking about it. In this pamphlet he puts the case for anarchists participating in irrational riots (not excluding football violence), and I am pleased to admit that it is a better case than I had expected.

He argues that the important class distinction of our time and the immediate future is a distinction of language, between the 'included' who have access to information through electronic means, and the 'excluded' who are cut off because computers are incomprehensible to them.

'Just as the coming of machines caused a reduction in the capacity for self-determination . . . destroying peasant culture and giving capital a work force who were practically incapable of "understanding" the contents of the new mechanical world . . . so now the computer revolution, grafted to the process of adjustment of capitalist contradictions by the State, is about to deliver the factory proletariat into the hands of a new kind of machinery that is armed with a language that will be comprehensible to only a privileged few. The remainder will be chased back and obliged to share the sort of the ghetto.'

The privileged, however, 'will not be able to prevent the outbursts of irrational violence that arise from feeling useless, from boredom and from the deadly atmosphere of the ghetto'. So the privileged have to protect themselves with enclaves (compared to medieval castles) and everybody is imprisoned one way or the other.

The way out is for 'informal' groups of anarchists to get in among the irrational riots, and move them in the direction of conscious insurrection. Of course, that is not the only anarchist activity. 'Certainly we will continue to bring out our papers, our books, our written analyses, but those with the linguistic means to read and understand them will be fewer in number.'

It is not contended that every insurrection must result in a freer society. 'The idea that social revolution is something that must necessarily result from our struggles has proved to be unfounded. It might, but then again it might not.' It is assumed, however, that social revolution must always take the form of insurrection, and that every insurrection has the potential to be revolutionary.

The pamphlet includes both a 'written analysis' and the text of a speech (to the

1985 Milan anarchist conference), so the whole argument is rehearsed twice over, and there is also a summary of it in Jean Weir's introduction. I hope I have got the gist of it right.

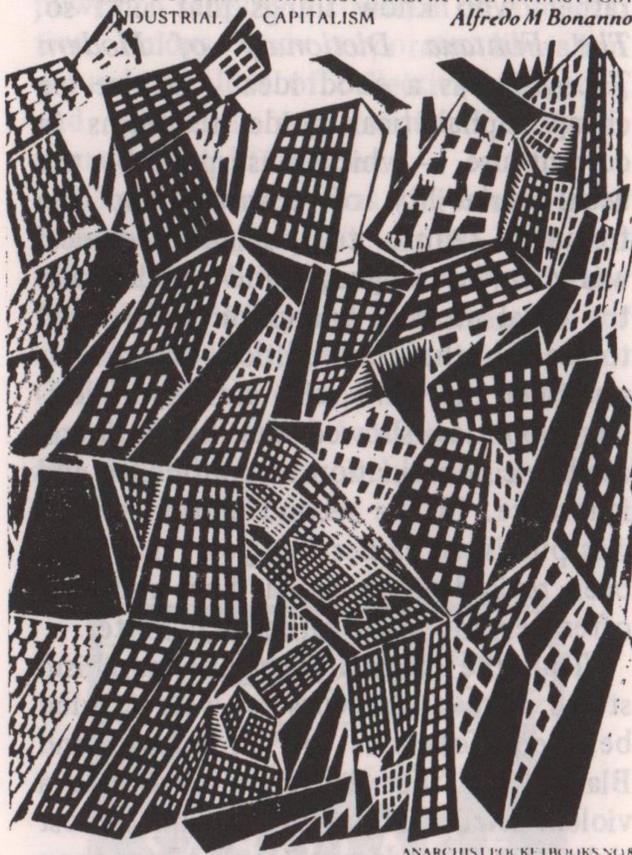
I am not entirely convinced. But I cannot disagree with the proposition that when anarchists take part in a riot, they should be trying to use it for social improvement, not just revelling in the violence.

DR

FROM RIOT TO INSURRECTION

ANALYSIS FOR AN ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVE AGAINST POST INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM

Alfredo M Bonanno



ANARCHIST POKER BOOKS NOR

The Real Terror Network: terrorism in fact and propaganda

Edward S. Herman

Black Rose, £6.95

THIS book was written in response to the best-selling (in America) *Terror Network* by Claire Sterling, and *Terrorism* by Walter Laqueur. I do not know these works, but there is enough quotation and close reference in *The Real Terror Network* to show that they are simple Red Scare propaganda.

Herman quotes 'the dictionary definition' of terror as 'a mode of governing, or of opposing government, by intimidation'. *Chambers Dictionary*, which I have just looked up, defines terror as 'a time of, or government by, terrorism'. Sterling restricts the term terror to violence in opposition to governments allied with the USA. Her book begins with a gory description of the Bologna railway station bomb, but then she says that as a right-wing act of terrorism it is outside her province. Her purpose is to demonstrate the existence of an international left-wing terrorist conspiracy, controlled from Moscow.

The Real Terror Network carefully picks Sterling and Laqueur to pieces, and goes on to set the record straight about

the vicious and greedy reigns of terror in America's client states, and demonstrates a conspiracy among them controlled from Washington (for instance, President Reagan's request to the Argentine military dictatorship for troops to support the Nicaraguan contras). Sources are given for all the detailed allegations.

The book was published in 1982, but remains a useful source book up to that time.

DR

The May Days Barcelona 1937

edited by Vernon Richards

Freedom Press, £2.50

THE importance of historical events varies with one's point of view. For most academic historians what happened in May 1937 was a skirmish among the anti-fascists, worth mentioning because it produced 500 dead and 1,000 wounded, but not significant to overall understanding. For the Communist Party it was a little local difficulty in the campaign to give Spain a Communist government. For the anarchists it was a critical episode marking, more clearly than any other single event, the transition from the Spanish Revolution to the Spanish Civil War. The anarchist collectives continued to function, and a couple of confused anarchists continued as members of the government (!), but it is not incorrect to say the anarchists were defeated in a governmental putsch.

The main document in this collection is an account of the event by a participant, Augustin Souchy, published at the time in *Spain and the World*. From the same source, a little later, come accounts by Emma Goldman of her attempts to visit political prisoners of the republican government.

An extract from a book by Jose Peirats, the Spanish historian who fought with the anarchists, describes events leading up to the May Days. An extract from the late Burnett Bolloten, the American historian, provides a well-documented summary of the events as an interested non-anarchist understood them. Vernon Richards contributes a commentary in two bits (headed 'Editorial' and 'Bibliographical Epilogue'), full of short quotations which I, personally, found more entertaining than the major passages (not that the book is intended as entertainment). I am particularly impressed by Peirats's argument for 'principled defeat' in preference to surrender of principle for a sort of victory.

The documents here included are essential reading for any historian of the Spanish conflict, and the collection as a whole is handy for every anarchist who, without claiming to be a historian, wants to cut through the myths and find out what actually happened.

DR

A Short Survey of Surrealism

David Gascoyne

City Light Books £4.50

ORIGINALLY written in 1935 (though a new introduction by the author was added in 1982), this book looks at the origins of surrealism in the works of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Lautreamont, and De Sade. Via Dada's 'anti-art' (including Duchamp's ready-made objects) and Breton's break with Tzara, it continues through the first Manifesto of 1924, the second of 1929, the 'Aragon affair' (originating over Aragon's poem 'The Red Front'), and beyond.

Based largely in Paris, the then young author looks at the movement's groupings, journals and ideas — dreams, chance, dialectical materialism, the class struggle, and attitude towards the Communist Party.

The book has a number of illustrations as well as examples of surrealist poetry (largely automatic writing) from Dali, Breton, Peret and Eluard (including his 'Critique de la Poesie').

Surrealism is seen as a universal activity of the mind unlimited to any one particular time or place. In the final chapter, Gascoyne looks to the possibility of surrealist activity in England in the future. Overall a good introduction to the subject for anyone who enjoyed the Moyse and Rosemont articles in No. 2 of *The Raven*, which took up the question of surrealism in the UK after 1935.

JM

Doc Chaos: the Chernobyl effect

Dave Thorpe

Hooligan Press £2.50

THE proceeds of this book will go towards the World Information Service on Energy, an information exchange for safe energy groups, with its main office in Amsterdam. Dave Thorpe is a script writer of adventure strips, and illustrations have been contributed by eleven strip illustrators, including the much-admired Dave McKean, Brian Bolland, and Bryan Talbot. These are single illustrations. The book is a weird prose novel.

It starts as the autobiography of someone born with a physical disability, with realistic childhood memories of visits to the physiotherapist. Staying in the first person, the child grows up into a brilliant scientist, experiments with brain transplants, and learns to transplant his own brain. After various transmutations, he ends up as the nuclear energy in the world's nuclear power stations and participates in accidents from inside. A strip cartoon plot, except that it would be impossible to draw.

Hooligan Press has a very varied list. This piece of surrealist fiction is unlike

anything they have published before, not to say anything anyone has published before. I enjoyed it.

DR

The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought

edited by Alan Bullock, Oliver Stallybrass and Stephen Trombley

Fontana, paperback, £9.95

ANARCHISM has a bad time in reference books, because it is generally covered by people who know nothing about it — or rather, who know things that ain't so. *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* was a good idea — a nice big cheap alphabetical guide to terms in current use — which was spoilt by the usual variability of coverage and the frequent failure to explain technical words in lay language, and which made the usual mess of anarchism and related topics. In the first edition, which was published in 1977, the entries on left-wing politics showed the usual liberal academic combination of confidence and ignorance. In the second edition, which was published earlier this year, they have been revised along similar lines and have often become worse rather than better.

Thus the original entry on Anarchism stated that its 'precursors' were divided between followers of Proudhon and Blanqui and that the latter 'advocated a violent seizure of power', which is almost right; the new entry states that Proudhon and Blanqui 'divided the allegiances of 19th-century anarchists in France' and that the latter 'was an advocate of spontaneous insurrection', which is quite wrong. Both entries date the split in the First International in 1876, which is four years late. The original entry referred to 'violent forms of struggle, such as the individual acts of terror ("propaganda by deed") supported at first even by such idealists as Peter Kropotkin and Enrico [i.e. Errico] Malatesta', which is inaccurate; the new entry refers to the 'romantic and suicidal craze for "propaganda by deed" which swept Europe and America', which is idiotic. The new entry goes on to say that 'Johann Moser's [i.e. Most's] obsession with the creative possibilities of dynamite was characteristic of this period, but even Malatesta, Kropotkin and Emma Goldman were tempted by the thought that assassinating the rich and powerful would lead to a workers' revolt and thence to the anarchist utopia', which is just daft.

The original entry said that 'the influence of anarchist ideas did not grow except in a few instances when they proved to be ineffective', which is pretty meaningless. The new entry says that after 1900, anarchism ceased to make much impact on the politics of developed countries' and then refers to the influence

of anarchism in Catalonia, the most industrialised part of Spain, and in France, which is quite absurd. The original entry said that 'anarchist direct-action methods continue to exert influence'; the new entry pays more attention to urban guerrilla terrorism, commenting that 'the expectation of insurrection was anarchist', and to the revival of Libertarianism and Individualism, which it finds 'of much greater intellectual interest'. The entry on Libertarianism is accordingly enlarged, though not corrected, and there is a bad new entry on Individualism — neither recognising the anarchist aspects.

There is less room for error in the entries on Anarcho-Syndicalism, though both editions prematurely attribute its origin to James Guillaume and omit any reference to Latin America. The original entry did avoid the usual nonsense about Sorel, but the new edition adds it; it also adds a vague reference to 'a non-violent version of syndicalism' discussed by Bertrand Russell, but without a cross-reference to the good original entry on Guild Socialism. The original entry on Syndicalism, which is unaltered, is much better, except for the statement that 'as a political current it disappeared from the scene as an effective force before World War I', which writes off Spain and Latin America. The entries on Collectivism and Communism and Cooperation miss the anarchist aspects, there is no entry on Collective, and the entry on Commune muddles its various meanings.

The bad original entry on Direct Action has been revised and made worse in the process. There are no entries on Propaganda of any kind, which is probably just as well. The bad original entry on Civil Disobedience, which manages not to mention Thoreau, has been revised and also made worse. There are no entries on Anti-Militarism or Conscientious Objection, and the bad original entries on Pacifism and Non-Violent Resistance have not been revised. There is no entry on Violence, and the entry on Terrorism has been rewritten much for the worse. The entry on Red Army is mainly about Japanese terrorists. The bad entry on the Underground has not been revised. The good entry on Ecology has been revised to emphasise its double meaning, and there is a bad new entry on the Green Movement. The new entry on Situationism fails to mention any of the particular ideas of the Situationists. There are new entries on Feminism. There are no entries on Freedom or Freedom of Expression, or on Liberty or Civil Liberty.

So the book isn't much use for anyone who wants to look up libertarian topics, though it would have been an easy matter to provide proper coverage if the editors had bothered to approach someone who was well-informed on the subject. MH

You Have No Country! Workers' Struggle Against War

Articles from the *International Socialist Review* 1914-1917

Mary E. Marcy

Charles H. Kerr £2.95

FIFTEEN short articles around the theme that 'the Profit System is the cause of all wars today'. Mary E. Marcy (1877 - 1922) was a member of the left wing of the (American) Socialist Party, and as editor of the *International Socialist Review* from 1909 until its suppression by the US government in February 1918, advocated direct action and IWW as opposed to parliamentary politics and the craft unions. In Europe, social democrats were against war — until war broke out, but in the US, as Franklin Rosemont points out in his introduction, matters were somewhat more complex, as those for the war tended to leave the socialist movement, and although the Socialist Party maintained an anti-war position because of pressure from its left-wing, in practice the party bureaucrats did little.

Marcy advocated direct action against the capitalist class as the only way to end war, and was sympathetic to anarcho-syndicalist views, but she was what one might call an anti-authoritarian Marxist. Rosemont says that her writings are valid today because she 'transcended the simplistic versions of economic determinism that passed for Marxism in her time' but she wrote before the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks, and we need to test Marcy's ideas against our own.

Nevertheless these articles are splendid polemic, which in their immediacy take the reader right back in time, and together with Rosemont's informative introduction form a booklet of value to all who are interested in the American labour movement.

CC

The Rise and Repression of Radical Labor in the United States 1877 - 1918

Daniel R. Fusfeld

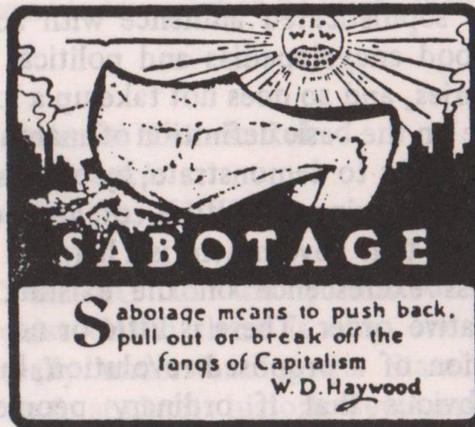
Charles H. Kerr £1.75

NOT a political polemic, but a carefully researched dissertation. The question is why did a socialist-orientated labour movement seem to rise and then die out in the United States. The orthodox view is that 'prosperity and high wages, economic opportunity, and democratic institutions defused the class struggle', or that the experience of US workers led to their developing a 'job and wage consciousness, in the special conditions of the American industrial environment. Fusfeld's thesis is that 'both these explanations ignore the role of repression in eliminating labor radicalism as a visible alternative for American workers.'

Fusfeld surveys the mass strikes of railway workers in 1877, the growth of the Knights of Labour in 1885-86, the Eight Hour Day Struggle and the Haymarket affair. In the 1890s workers were trying to build industrial rather than craft unions in the basic industries. The Homestead Steel strike of 1892 and the Pullman strike of 1894 were crushed by the bosses. The Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902 brought about the confrontation of two ideologies: class struggle versus peaceful negotiation; both unions and bosses being split over the use of state power to support a coalition of conservative unions and corporate liberalism around the idea of collective bargaining and peaceful settlement of labour-management differences.

The next stage was the crushing of radical labour, in particular the IWW, and culminating with American entry into the First World War, and the aftermath of anti-Bolshevist hysteria. The author concludes that 'repression by the state was the key difference between 1910, say, and 1920'. This book has a full bibliography.

CC



On Strike for Respect: the Clerical & Technical Workers' Strike at Yale University (1984-85)

Toni Gilpin, et al

Charles H. Kerr £3.50

I RECALL an American visiting London and being surprised to learn that we'd had a Miners' strike in Britain, and avidly buying the relevant literature. I have to confess that I hadn't heard of the Yale Strike until I saw the Kerr Co's new title. The American labour movement has been demoralised from economic causes, aided by government attacks — naturally enough, the Air Traffic Controllers Union dispute of 1981 was the only one we read about in the British press — but we in Britain are facing similar issues.

In 1984 the un-unionised clerical and technical workers at Yale University (a major employer in New Haven, Connecticut) joined a union, went on a prolonged strike, and gained much of what they wanted from management. Yale University is a powerful organisation with a liberal reputation, but its students are largely from an economically privileged

section of society, and the book notes the impact of the strike on students and academics who realised the concept of class divisions for the first time.

The strike was as much for 'respect' as for pay and conditions, and women and ethnic minorities played significant parts. This book is a detailed and well-written account, and my only criticism would be that some of the union terminology is unfamiliar to British readers.

CC

Life & Deeds of Uncle Sam

Oscar Ameringer

Charles H. Kerr £2.75

'THE largest consignment of Englishmen ever loaded on a single ship came over in the Mayflower. In fact, nearly everybody in America is one of the multitude of first cabin passengers in the Mayflower ... Another class of involuntary immigrants were the criminals and prostitutes sent over by the English authorities. But these people either died on the passage over, or soon after landing, for I never heard of a single man whose ancestors were condemned to emigrate.'

The style is Mark Twain, and the author is Mark Twain's most successful imitator. The first edition of *Life & Deeds*, published in 1909, sold half a million copies before 1917, making it the best selling history of America. All without benefit of official support or media hype, for it is a subversive history, intended to puncture the official and media myths.

Ameringer mixes fact with outrageous exaggeration: after the Thirty Years War, for instance, 'Germany was a howling wilderness ... Mothers had to be watched to keep them from eating their new born babies'. But his version of history is more truthful than the schoolbooks which mix fact with patriotism. 'These school histories are fairytales with the "Once upon a time" cut out and dates inserted instead'.

He was not an anarchist. In the concluding chapter he advocates a workers' political party to take the government over from 'our enemies' and institute 'public ownership of the means of production'. (This was in 1909 before the anarchist prediction that 'working class' governments would be no less oppressive, had been tested in practice.)

But we do not have to agree with Ameringer about everything, to enjoy and use his iconoclastic humour. The Kerr edition is enhanced by a readable introduction from Paul Buhle, who tells us that the book was translated into fifteen languages including English (from the German, by someone who omitted to read the title-page of the German translation). Well worth the money.

DR

Anarchy
Errico Malatesta
Freedom Press £1.50

ABC of Anarchism
Alexander Berkman
Freedom Press £2.00

Anarchy in Action
Colin Ward
Freedom Press £3.00

Anarchism and Anarchist Communism
Peter Kropotkin
Freedom Press £1.75

SUCH are the lurid fictions about anarchists that many intelligent people, including incipient anarchists, form the view that anarchists are imaginary beings like invaders from outer space. Meeting real anarchists, people often demand a concise and lucid account of the anarchist position; a demand which various anarchist writers have tried to fulfill.

Malatesta's *L'Anarchia* was published in Fulham (a district of London) in 1891. The same year it was translated into English (probably by Malatesta himself assisted by an English editor), serialised in *Freedom*, and published as a pamphlet in 1892. The pamphlet went to eight editions, mostly with slight alterations as successive editors tried to make the meaning clearer. Then in 1970 Vernon Richards made a new translation from the original Italian (current reprint 1987).

To anyone who thinks in caricatures — Italians as garrulous and nineteenth century writers as excessively verbose — Malatesta's *Anarchy* is surprising for its readability. The questions to be answered have not changed. People still ask anarchists to state in detail what the free society will be like, how children will be educated, how production will be organised, whether there will be large cities, and so on; and it is still true that if they 'expect a reply ... which is more than our personal opinion at this particular moment, we have failed in our attempt to explain what anarchism is about'. Like modern anarchists, Malatesta will not settle for anything less than a totally free society, but recognises that if any increase in freedom is achieved 'we will have performed a worthy task for, after all, human progress is measured by the extent to which government and private property are reduced'. What distinguishes him from 1980s anarchists is his use of the genderless 'he' and 'Man' to mean people in general, and his characterisation of human co-operation as 'the war of all against nature'.

Berkman's *What is Communist Anarchism?* was published in America in 1929, and again with a different title in 1936. Freedom Press published the second and third parts (the first part was

a description of the world in 1929) in 1942 under the title *ABC of Anarchism*, which is slightly misleading because there is nothing of alphabetical arrangement in the format. It has gone to the third edition (current reprint 1987).

The chapters are numbered continuously, but the join between the old parts still shows. The first half (old part 2) covers much the same ground as Malatesta's *Anarchy*, but more in the style of a platform speaker answering the usual questions. Like Malatesta, he declines to say in detail how a free society would work. But in the second half of the book he offers what looks like a very simple-minded blueprint of progress towards a free society: step one change everybody's ideas, step two 'the revolution' as a one-off event, step three sort out the problems of organisation without coercion. Presumably this is a deliberate over-simplification, but it does not make the idea more digestible for today's audience, as the starting point of his revolution is the industrialised world in 1929.

Ward's *Anarchy in Action* was first published in 1973 by Allen and Unwin, then by Freedom Press in 1982 (current reprint 1988). It is addressed to a somewhat sophisticated audience with access to good encyclopedias and political dictionaries, and so does not take up a lot of space on the basic definition of anarchism. Ward seeks to demonstrate, by examining the underlying structure of our own society, that government is a harmful and useless excrescence on the existing co-operative order. There is little or no description of a proposed revolution, but it is obvious that if ordinary people in general were convinced of the thesis, a revolution would be inevitable.

Kropotkin wrote the article on 'Anarchism' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, first published in 1910 and reprinted in several subsequent editions (latterly with a supplementary entry on 'Anarchism since Kropotkin' by Harold Laski). Now replaced in *Britannica*, it was published by Freedom Press in 1987, bound together with an essay on 'Anarchist communism', first published in *The Nineteenth Century* in 1887. An admirable encyclopedia item, it is concise and informative about what anarchists think and how their ideas are developed, without overtly saying whether they are right or wrong. The pamphlet is edited by Nicolas Walter.



Freedom Press also offers a one-page leaflet headed *What is Anarchism?* in the format of a *Freedom* front cover (the reverse side is about Freedom Press and how to find the bookshop). Odd copies free, a hundred for £2.50 including postage.

Among the Freedom Press books currently out of print is *Anarchy or Chaos* by George Woodcock, which includes a lot of historical material and may be seen as a first draft, both of Woodcock's *Anarchism* (Penguin £6.95), and of his article in the current *Britannica*. Also out of print, regrettably, is Nicolas Walter's excellent *About Anarchism*, first published as number 100 of *Anarchy* magazine. Besides explaining anarchism in general, this pamphlet explains the various 'tendencies' of anarchist opinion, impartially. I hear an updated version is in preparation, and I look forward eagerly to seeing it. DR

Fascism Down the Ages: From Caesar to Hitler

F. A. Ridley
Romer Publications, £4.95

FRANK Ridley was a frequent contributor to *War Commentary* (as *Freedom* called itself in 1939-1945), the author of two Freedom Press pamphlets, and a speaker at anarchist meetings in the 1950s. Last year we published a note congratulating him on his ninetieth birthday.

Now 91, he has not written a new book from scratch. *Fascism Down the Ages*, we learn from the preface by the anonymous editors, has been taken mainly from four of Ridley's books published in the 1930s. It is good to see this useful work revived. Ridley is erudite, thorough and incisive.

But something strange has happened to the language of the books during the past fifty years. It is as if they have been translated into German or Dutch, and retranslated into English by a young student who can get by in English with the aid of a dictionary, but is unfamiliar with it. So there are sentences like, 'The in imperial purple clad demigod with his brow adorned by the diadem depicts precisely that, which had cost Julius Caesar his life', and 'That was combined with official adherence to archaic Hellenistic pagan cults and from different sources originating mysticism of the "Broad Church" Neoplatonist school of Porphyry and Iamblichus', and words like 'hided' and 'swimmed'. The meaning is mostly clear, but it takes some getting used to.

Freedom Bookshop has a limited number of copies signed by F. A. Ridley in person, at no extra charge.

DR

Act for Yourself: articles from 'Freedom' 1886 - 1907

Peter Kropotkin

Freedom Press, £2.50

THIS book reprints Kropotkin's articles from the early years of *Freedom* which he always intended would form the backbone of a book relating to Britain, as a parallel to the articles he wrote for the French press and which were collected and edited to form *The Conquest of Bread*. The editors, Heiner Becker and Nicolas Walter, are modest, I think too modest about the importance of this work, saying for instance: 'It will be noticed at once that the style is often rather clumsy', but I would suggest that perhaps it was a good thing that he didn't have time to work this material into another large book. If you find, as I do, that his best-known classic works are inclined to be prolix, you may find this new and fairly short work a pleasant change. There is naturally a certain amount of repetition in the chapters of this work which would no doubt have been removed had this book been produced a century ago as intended, but this does not seem to matter when the chapters appear, as they do here, as a series of dated articles, so that reading the book is rather like looking through a file of the old paper.

The editors have ably provided the historical and bibliographical context in their introduction, as well as notes which explain references to individuals mentioned in the text which contemporary readers would have known about but who may be forgotten today, and the usage of words which have changed their meanings: collectivism, communism, social democrats, for example. Like all good notes they reminded me of my own ignorance of the matters to which they refer.

I found Chapter Two, 'What Revolution Means', of particular interest, and for those socialists who propose a new form of government or to retain the wage system here is the anarchist review of what a revolution means. Kropotkin dis-

tinguishes anarchists as those who believe in expropriation, not nationalisation, sharing each according to need, not according to work.

In the final article, looking back from 1907, Kropotkin asks why in the British labour movement, 'socialism' was abandoned for social democracy. Socialists, he says, have so many answers according to different schools because they want to disguise the true meanings of the terms they use; and if you want to know why the hopes of the late nineteenth century idealists were betrayed, read what Kropotkin has to say about the British labour movement: the betrayal of the 'leaders', especially John Burns, the rallying of the middle classes and Parliamentarism, the persecution of the anarchists and the intimidation of sympathisers (points particularly relevant to today), followed by attacks on the Trade Union Movement.

I feel that many of the revolutionaries who write in anarchist papers today would have a lot to learn from this book, and I recommend everyone to read all of it. Here is the voice of Kropotkin the revolutionary anarchist, as he wrote it at the time, and full of ideas which are as relevant today as when he wrote them.

CC

The State: its Historic Role

Peter Kropotkin

Freedom Press, £1.75

ACCORDING to the author of this anarchist classic there is only one way of 'really understanding the State' and that is to study its historic development. Originally written in French in 1897, the first English translation appeared in *Freedom*, then as a pamphlet. It was newly translated in 1969, and this translation has now been revised by Vernon Richards, who adds a new and provocative 'translator's note' contrasting our situation in 1986 with that in 1969, and Malatesta's view of government with that of Kropotkin. Worth buying the new edition for this alone.

CC



The Raven

Anarchist quarterly, Volume I, 1987-88

IN May 1987 Freedom Press launched a new journal, *The Raven*, which was intended to carry on the work done by *Anarchy* in the '60s. A year's issues have about the same number of pages as a year's *Anarchy* did, the quarterly publication being dictated by economic factors, particularly the increase in real terms of postal costs which has affected all periodicals which are sold largely by subscription. Now that the new periodical has achieved its first birthday and a bound volume with index is available, mainly for libraries, let us have a look at its achievements.

It is a pleasure to find three long articles by Colin Ward all very relevant to the Britain of today, historical articles which expand on the material published in the *Freedom* Centenary issue, and a wide variety of topics. There are articles by Denis Pym and Paul Rabin on information technology and on computers, articles on free schools in England and in America, Geoffrey Ostergaard on India, Murray Bookchin on ecology, and a very lively debate on surrealism with contributions from Franklin Rosemont, Arthur Moyses, Conroy Maddox, George Melly and Philip Sansom. A feature of this new journal is the presence of illustrations in each issue and the layout is enlivened by the raven drawings of Donald Room.

The fourth issue extends the range of topics to criminology and geography, and suggests that a greater variety of possibly shorter articles may form the pattern for the future, and replies to some of the earlier articles are starting to appear. I was also pleased to see the re-publication of John Hewetson's long out of print pamphlet 'Sexual Freedom for the Young' and suggest that *The Raven* would provide a good opportunity to give a new lease of life to more material buried in inaccessible files.

My impression is that *The Raven* is, in a sense, more 'anarchist' than was *Anarchy*, and the question is whether such a journal can hope to achieve the circulation of one with possibly a wider appeal. Years ago I had a fairly complete set of *Anarchy* but had to travel light and so gave away my copies, which I now regret. I suggest all comrades should support *The Raven* by subscription as it is a journal to file on the bookshelf and refer to in the years to come.

CC



RADIO

Cafe Kropotkin by Bernard Kops
8.15pm Monday 5 September
BBC Radio 4

ACCORDING to the *Radio Times*, Bernard Kops based this play on real experiences among anarchists in Soho in 1948. I would seriously like to know if anyone living around Soho at the time who heard the play can remember people who resemble the characters in this production. I found them rather stereotyped on the whole. I'm not sure whether it was partly the preconceptions of the (over) actors or simply the playwright not giving the characters enough depth or cohesion to make them credible; certainly there was an absurd element of ritualistic sloganeering and chanting of cliches.

Kops' message appeared to be that most of those attracted to anarchism had lives filled with personal tragedy. Bella, the lead character, was frequently referred to as a 'heartless bitch' for being 'unable' to cry. She is a parallel for Kops himself, who, in 1948 had turned to the company of anarchists 'to escape his Jewish roots'. Bella is capricious and unhappy in love. Another character, Maxie, rapes a young girl who later gasses herself. Typifying the concept of anarchists as naive, ineffective and troublemakers is Frank, who climbs Big Ben and then goes to Spain to throw sticks of dynamite. 'Practising what we preach', (!) comments another of the anarchists. In fact they preach anarchism in a rather

wooly, emotive manner, at one moment appearing to be pacifists, at another threatening to shove their placard up the backside of the police and fascists. The majority of the regulars in the Cafe Kropotkin are apathetic. Most sounded as if they were over thirty years old, but almost all spoke like rebels without a cause. Even Bella and her sometime boyfriend privately admitted that the revolution would never happen. One of the play's more redeeming scenes was when Maxie confessed his guilt and self-deprecation over the young girl's suicide. Bella sagely invites him to extend the same compassion to himself that he had always shown to others and to stop punishing himself. However, such common-sense wisdom was the exception rather than the rule.

Radio 4 saves Monday night for its weightiest play of the week; its drama 'showpiece'. Yet I felt that this melodrama, with its childish protagonists and simplistic storyline would have been better suited to their Saturday Night Theatre slot, where the emphasis is usually on cops and robbers and there is a fast moving and often predictable plot.

I suppose it was naive of me to expect the established media to depict anything but a rather sorry, negative view of anarchism. But with several interesting-looking programmes about people with strong anarchist connections ('Rebels' recently featured Wilhelm Reich and Albert Camus) currently being broadcast on Radio 4, I thought perhaps there were a few enlightened souls at the Beeb. Perhaps there are.

Johnny Yen

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