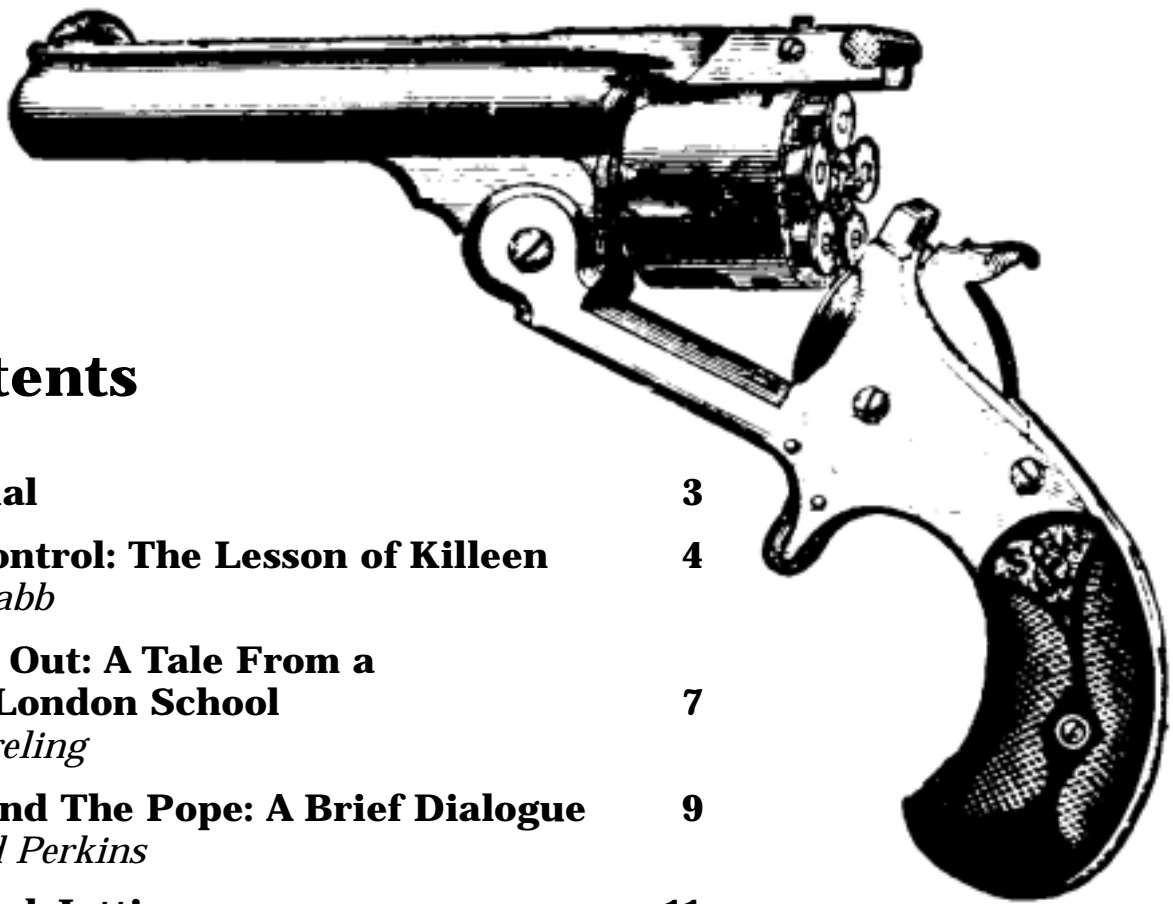


FREE LIFE

A JOURNAL OF CLASSICAL LIBERAL AND LIBERTARIAN THOUGHT

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**The Libertarian Alliance,
25 Chapter Chambers,
Esterbrooke Street, London SW1P 4NN,
England.**

Telephone 081 461 1392 for *Free Life* Editorial and advertising calls only.

Telephone 071 821 5502 for calls regarding *Free Life* subscriptions, LA subscriptions and other LA publications, conferences and activities.

Fax 071 834 2031 for all matters

Editor: Sean Gabb

LA Director: Chris R. Tame

Editorial Director: Brian Micklethwait

Free Life is a journal of Classical Liberal and Libertarian thought published quarterly by the Libertarian Alliance.

Free Life is named in honour of an earlier journal of the same name founded and edited by the great, but now largely forgotten Libertarian, Auberon Herbert, in the years 1890 to 1901. The statement of purpose, "One Fight More - The Best and the Last", that appeared in the first issue of the original *Free Life* remains today an incisive declaration of our aims:

"Why have you come into existence, and what have you to say?" is the question which will be asked of us, and which it is our task to answer. We have come into existence to preach a great but simple truth, on which, as we hold, all real improvement of the human race depends. That truth is ... that a man's consent as regards his own actions is the only basis on which social relations can be happily and permanently founded; and that the struggle for power over each other, in which all classes are recklessly engaged, is a mere madness from which they have to be recalled. The gospel we preach is that force, when not carefully and exactly confined to the one purpose, for which it may be used without positive wrong, - force to repel force - the force of self-defence - whenever it exists as an organised system, under which some men compel other men to accept their view of what is right or convenient, under which some men are the regulators and some regulated, is a mere survival of barbarism, a mere perpetuation of slavery under new names, against which the reason and moral sense of the civilised world have to be called into rebellion ... We have broken the force of kings; we have broken the force of churches; we have yet to break the force that pretends to be of the people and to speak in their name."

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EDITORIAL:

NO TIME FOR *NUNC DIMITTIS*

When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, the words of Simeon went through my head:

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

I had long known that Communism was doomed. I knew on what wretched intellectual foundations it lay, and how it had created and was maintained by the most tyrannical system of government that ever existed. Even so, its collapse left me stunned. I had expected at best a slow decline - never the joyous, and largely peaceful, repeat all through Eastern Europe of the 1848 revolutions. It really was one of those times for putting aside any sceptical doubts and falling back on Scriptural quotation.

But that was two years ago. Today, the triumph is over and we must put the flags away. There are certain pleasurable duties still to be performed. There is, for example, the great witchhunt of traitors and fellow travellers. The KGB archives in Moscow have been opened, and I look forward to seeing what they contain. But while Communism may be smashed, and its apologists crying out that they were never Stalinists - as if there were a difference here of more than sound - we have not won all the arguments. History from now on will not be the story of automatic progress. The other enemies of freedom remain; and they have grown more formidable than ever.

There are the authoritarian conservatives. These have often been our allies in the past, and may be again in the future. But such alliances can only ever be negative - a joint resistance to some change that neither desires. In all positive matters, we disagree. We are already arguing over drugs, pornography, immigration, and the direction of scientific research. These arguments will widen and grow louder in the coming years.

There are the health fascists. These are socialists in all but economic doctrine. They do

not tell us that unregulated capitalism can only make us poor, because hardly anyone now believes that. Instead, they tell us that it can only make us ill; that, without their supervision, we shall eat too much sugar or fat, or smoke or drink ourselves into an early grave. This may actually be true. But, as a libertarian, I ask - so what? Freedom means the right to do what others consider to be foolish. Until the public can be brought to tell these people to mind their own business, they are a threat; and we must do our best to slow their advance.

Above all, there are the greens. These are a threat not only to liberal democratic civilisation, but to all civilisation, and perhaps even to the continued existence of mankind. What else can we say of people who value trees and elephants above human beings, who openly call for a two thirds reduction in human numbers, and who greet AIDS as a means to that end? There have always been people like this, eaten up with hatred and apocalyptic longings. But it is only once in three or four centuries that they stumble across a doctrine that is also taken up by and allows them power over an entire society.

Their specific claims are false. The Earth is not about to die on us. Even if there were something wrong, there is still no reason why, given proper regard for life, liberty and property, we should not still expand without limit through the universe. But, until we are clear in our own minds why the green claims are false, and can counter them with repeated overwhelming refutations of the kind that wore down the academic socialists, we shall all remain under threat from this most bizarre of suicide cults.

This is, then, an exciting time in which to revive *Free Life*. The great battle of the 20th century may be over. Those of the 21st are only just beginning. It is my wish that *Free Life* shall take an increasingly prominent place in these battles on the side of right, truth and justice.

Sean Gabb

GUN CONTROL: THE LESSON OF KILLEEN

Sean Gabb

When I was a boy, I read about the old Malay custom of running amok. A man would lose his all at gambling, or suffer some other reverse, and then, having inflamed himself with drugs, would run about stabbing people until he fell down or was cut down. How quaint, I thought, filing the Malays in my mind along with the Kallatioi who ate their dead parents, and the Mingrelians who ate their children. Each custom seemed to me as unlikely as the others, but might one day come in useful to impress an examiner.

But there is nothing quaint or unlikely about an insane gunman. When one of these runs amok, he usually kills a lot of people - quite often people rather like me and in the sort of places I frequent. George Hennard, for example, of Killeen in Texas, has just shot 22 people in a cafeteria. Our own Michael Ryan shot 16 in Hungerford High Street. I fully share the alarm raised by these massacres.

What I do not share, however, is the common English opinion regarding the best means of their prevention. Hennard's Congressman is calling for gun control. "Restricting lethal assault weapons" he says, "is just a reasonable step towards saving some lives".¹ His call will, I am sure, be ignored. The National Rifle Association will see to that. Here, it would be immediately taken up. The Ryan shootings in 1987 produced the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1988, the intention of which was to complete the disarming of the British public. The chief debate was over whether it went far enough. It was simply taken for granted that the fewer the people with legal access to guns, the less frequently guns would be abused.

Now, this is not true. Gun control is no guarantee against our being shot at as we go about our everyday business. Despite all opposing claims, what evidence can be found suggests that control does far less good than harm. Consider the two following points:

First, there is no simple correlation between guns and crime. We hear endlessly about

America, where guns can be had nearly on demand, and where the murder rate per capita is 11.3 times our own.² We hear little about the trends behind these statistics - how between 1900 and 1930, the possession of handguns remained stable, and the murder rate rose tenfold;³ how between 1937 and 1963, handgun ownership rose by 250 per cent, and the murder rate fell by 35.7 per cent;⁴ how between 1968 and 1985 handgun ownership rose by another 250 per cent, and the murder rate fell by another 10 per cent.⁵

Nor do we hear that the American murder rate per capita with knives alone is far higher than our own from all causes together - and, as any schoolboy just back from France will agree, we have no effective knife control.⁶ It seems that what keeps York a safer place than New York is not a difference in the law regarding gun ownership, but the facts of national character. We are less violent than Americans, and this is reflected in the criminal statistics

This is, I grant, a purely negative point. Free access to guns and soaring armed crime rates are not necessarily connected. But it can still be claimed that control may have some reducing effect from any level. It might have made an already peaceful England still more peaceful, and might make America less violent. But this brings me to my second consideration - that gun control does not work.

Take the level of professional armed crime in England. If control worked, we should expect to see some connection here between it and choice of weapon. We should expect, therefore, to see little use of fully automatic weapons, these having been wholly prohibited since 1937. Use of handguns, these having been merely controlled since 1920, we might see more often. But shotguns, not controlled at all before 1967, we ought to see as the commonest firearm.

We see nothing of the kind. Choice of weapon is determined more by fitness for the job in hand than by theoretical availability. In 1967,

shotguns were used in 21.3 per cent of armed robberies, handguns in 45.6 per cent.⁷ 20 years later, these proportions had hardly changed: by 1985, the use of shotguns had risen by 5.5 percentage points.⁸

These figures are not surprising. The law can only control those guns the Police know to exist. How many others there are no one knows. But during the four amnesties held between 1946 and 1968, more than 200,000 unlicensed weapons were handed in.⁹ During the 1988 amnesty, 45,000 more were handed in.¹⁰ It is generally agreed that these form only a fraction of what remains available for potentially criminal use.

If the use of guns in professional crime is increasing, the speed of the increase is almost wholly determined by fashions within the criminal classes. Control may raise the opportunity costs of purchase. But anyone who wants a gun, and is ready to accept those costs in order to get one, will not be affected by the most rigid scheme of paper control.

Nor is it the case that gun control reduces the number of domestic murders. The kind of people in America who shoot their spouses fall into two categories: those who kill with the first weapon that comes to hand - and knives are more deadly than guns; and those who are criminals already, and so, where fashion dictates, will have guns regardless of control.¹¹

All this applies equally well to the unbalanced. Gun massacres are never committed by ordinary members of the public who just happen one day to snap. These people are always funny in the head long before they run amok. They are overwhelmingly likely to have had - and satisfied - a pre-existing interest in guns. Michael Ryan, for example, was so obsessed by them that he gathered up a whole armoury. To be sure, many of them were held legally. But many of them were held illegally. The Firearms Act 1968 did not prevent his acquiring an AK47. Texas has no gun control. But George Hennard had been a prey to paranoid delusions for so long that he would sooner or later have bought a gun regardless of the law.¹²

It is, therefore, unlikely that gun control prevents, or can prevent, a single massacre.

What it does achieve is to disarm the respectable public. It is argued on both sides of the Atlantic that this is desirable; that people are safer on the whole not to fight back when faced with an armed thief or rapist than to

reach for guns of their own. I find this "submission theory" incredible. It may convince the white, middle-class males who tend most often to hold it. Standing so little chance of being attacked, they can afford to hold it. Women, blacks, the aged, anyone who lives in the inner cities - these know better.¹³ American feminists and civil rights leaders have repeatedly opposed any moves toward gun control.¹⁴

But, whatever success one may have with an armed criminal, there is no standing and reasoning with an armed maniac. There is no turning away his wrath with soft words or submission - no running away. The only defence is to have a gun of one's own and to shoot first. In an armed society, Michael Ryan might hardly have had time to aim at his first victim before being cut down. So too might George Hennard had any of his victims exercised their rights under Texan law and been carrying arms for their self-defence.

The Israelis know this. In March 1984, three Palestinians opened fire with machine guns at a crowded cafe in Jerusalem. Their intention was to go round a succession of crowded places, killing and then escaping before the authorities could arrive. They killed one person. Nearly everyone at the cafe was armed. Only one of the attackers survived to be arrested.¹⁵

I am not saying that without gun control, and with a high rate of gun ownership, there would be no armed crime and no massacres. That would be silly. So long as there are violent criminals and people with a grudge against the world, we shall always be at risk. The world will never be perfect. But I do say that if people wish to draw a true lesson from the Killen shootings - and they seem pathetically eager to draw a false one - it is this: that a citizenry is like any nation state: unarmed is unprotected. There is good reason, continuing the analogy, for collective security - to set up an agency for the common protection. But there will always be occasions when the only help is self help. And it shows ignorance, or stupidity, or dishonesty to use such occasions to make any other point.

NOTES

1. *The Daily Telegraph*, 18th October 1991.
2. From a table compiled by Don B. Kates Jr, in his *Guns, Murders, and the Constitution*, Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy, California, 1991, p. 42. For the 1980s, he gives the following intentional

- homicide rates per 100,000: United States, 7.59; France, 4.36; Canada, 2.6, Australia, 1.95, Switzerland, 1.13; England and Wales, 0.67.
3. D. Lunde, *Murder and Madness*, San Francisco Book Co, California, 1976, p. 1.
 4. Don B. Kates Jr, *Why Handgun Bans Can't Work*, Second Amendment Foundation, Washington, 1982, p. 23. Kates, I should mention, does believe in some gun control.
 5. Kates (1991), p. 40.
 6. In 1981, 19.4 per cent of intentional homicides in the United States were committed with knives (*Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1981-82*, Washington DC, 1982, Table 298). A little arithmetic gives a rate of 1.47 per 100,000 - still more than twice the total English rate.
 7. Colin Greenwood, *Firearms Control: A Study of Armed Crime and Firearms Control in England and Wales*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972, p. 244.
 8. I can give no better source for this figure than a telephone conversation with the Secretary of the Shooters' Rights Association.
 9. Greenwood, op. cit., p. 236.
 10. *The Daily Telegraph*, 25th October 1988.
 11. Take the evidence of those who favour control:

"More than the availability of a shooting weapon is involved in homicide.... The type of weapons used appears to be, in part, the culmination of assault intentions or events and is only superficially related to causality"

(Marvin E. Wolfgang, *Patterns of Homicide in America*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958, p. 82 - quoted Greenwood, op. cit., p. 130);

"[A Kansas City study of 1977 made by the Police Foundation] revealed that in 85 percent of homicides among family members, the police had been brought in before to break up violence.... [i]n half the cases... five or more times. Thus, the average citizen who kills a family member is not a non-violent solid citizen who reaches for a weapon in a moment of temporary insanity. Instead, he has a past record of illegal violence and trouble with the law. Such people on the fringes of society are unlikely to be affected by gun control laws"

(David B. Kopel, *Trust the People: The Case Against Gun Control*, Cato Institute, Washington DC, 1988, p. 6 - citing M. Wilt, G. Marie, J. Bannon, R.K. Breedlove, J.W. Kennish, D.M. Snadker, and R.K. Satwell, *Domestic Violence and the Police: Studies in Detroit and Kansas City*, Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1977).
 12. I quote from Hennard's letter of explanation for his massacre: "I would like to personally remind all those vipers that I have civil rights too.... Please give me the satisfaction of some laughing in the faces of all those mostly white treacherous female vipers from those two towns who tried to destroy me and my family"

(*The Daily Telegraph*, 18th October 1991).

These are not, I think, the words of an ordinary man. Regarding common murderers in America, I read that "in a special data run for the Eisenhower Commission, the FBI found that 74.7 percent of murder arrestees nationally over a 4-year period had prior arrests for violent felony or burglary"

(Kates (1991), p. 46 - citing FBI, *Uniform Crime Report*, Washington DC, 1971).
 13. Take the case of

"[the] elderly Chicano whom the San Francisco Examiner reports has held onto his grocery by outshooting fifteen armed robbers [while] nearby stores have closed because thugs have either bankrupted them or have casually executed their unresisting proprietors";

and of

"welfare recipients whom robbers target, knowing when their checks come and where they cash them";

and of

"the elderly trapped in deteriorating neighborhoods (such as the Manhattan couple who in 1976 hanged themselves in despair over repeatedly losing their pension checks and furnishings to robbers)"

(Kates (1991), pp. 34-35).
 14. "In 1966 the police in Orlando, Florida responded to a rape epidemic by embarking on a highly publicized program to train 2,500 women in firearms use. The next year rape fell by 88 percent... burglary... by 25 percent.... Five years later Orlando's rape rate was still around 13 percent below the pre-program level, whereas the surrounding metropolitan area had suffered a 308 percent increase"

(Kopel, op. cit., p. 3).

From a poster designed by radical feminist Nikki Kraft:

"Men and Women were Created Equal... And Smith & Wesson Makes Damn Sure It Stays That Way"

(ibid, pp. 17-18).

"Based in local churches, the Deacons for Defense and Justice set up armed patrol car systems in cities such as Bogalusa and Jonesboro, Louisiana, and completely succeeded in deterring Klan and other attacks on civil rights leaders and black residents. Sixty chapters of the Deacons were formed throughout the South. Of the more than 100 civil rights workers martyred in the 1960s, almost none were armed"

(ibid, p. 15).
 15. *The Economist*, 7th April 1984. When presented next day to the press, the survivor was said to have been bitter about the number of guns carried by Israeli citizens.

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If you reckon that the desktop publishing that went into this, very rapidly produced, issue of Free Life was adequate for the job, then maybe the name and phone number of the Desk Top Publisher might be useful to you. These are: Brian Micklethwait, 071 (Central London) 821 5502.

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OPTING OUT: A TALE FROM A SOUTH LONDON SCHOOL

Paul Kreling

Yesterday (Monday February 11th 1991 - ed.) I attended a meeting at a school in the Pepys ward in Lewisham-Deptford, citadel of socialism and an area of considerable poverty. I had to pinch myself slightly to remind myself that I was not dreaming - a Conservative Barrister, member of the Inner Temple and once a pupil of two fine Chancery sets in Lincoln's Inn, sitting in on a meeting deep in enemy held territory.

The people present had come together to discuss a proposal that their school should opt out of Lewisham's control. There were all types at the meeting - the Headmaster, a Cambridge man, highly respected for his insistence on discipline and order (the children still ate lunch in silence) to the ordinary parents, some with dull eyes, others anxious to know what the future held for their children. The Chairman of the Governors, dressed much as the parents around him, admitted that he had no conception of what opting out would mean. When presented with a petition signed by twenty percent of the parents he had no idea what to do. So he rang the local Education Authority - and needless to relate, they were completely unhelpful. After all, such a move threatened their power base.

And power was what they had attempted to exercise over the school. First, they had attempted to reorganise the school (or was it two schools and should they have used the statutory amalgamation procedure? - I have yet to discover). Secondly, they had produced a report, which was damning of the ethos of the Junior School - too disciplined, too formal, too strict, too regimented, they said. Should be more like the Primary School, should read more "real" books. And should, it was whispered, get rid of the Headmaster. And, yes, that was another point. Who *was* the Headmaster? Before there had been two. (Was that legal under the 1944 Education Act as a school ought to have one Headmaster?) As they did not use the statutory amalgamation procedure it was presumably only one school. I made a

phone call and learned that the Headmaster could be appointed by the new Board of Governors - but they would have to advertise the post. See the 1986 Education Act.

Then there was the problem of whether the Secretary of State's decision to allow opting out could be appealed against by Lewisham. No, I was told, it could not. Of course, if could be, for the Department of Education is considered a lower court by the Crown's Courts and *Anis-minic* shows that judicial review is nearly always possible. Especially if you take the wide view, which would make all rights of appeal redundant. On what grounds - well *Wednesbury* unreasonableness and ... Nobody eventually seemed to be interested in hearing any more of my fascinating speculations. There were far more important things to discuss.

First - what about my child's special needs? Would they still be catered for or would I have to pay? Rumour had been circulating about the cost of going Grant Maintained. The platform categorically denied that such payments would have to be made. The Labour councillor looked glum. Her own people stirring up problems. And horrors, they even tried to take her to task on the expense of the mugs that Lewisham gave out to celebrate their new education role after the end of ILEA. And the giving of money to Millwall football club. Was it £1 million or £2 million? Really, people should be seen and not heard. It was intolerable. The Government should not be allowed to put such potent weapons into the hands of the common people. Really, it was too much.

Then a young black couple were teased into asking a question by the Chairman of the Governors. They had been silent all night. What, the lady said, about the nursery school? No categorical answer was possible. It was DES policy that nursery provision should be included in the new Grant Maintained schools. But the law was unclear, as, in s8(2) of the 1944 Education Act, it defined primary education as full time education! Was nursery education full time? So it could be challenged by

Hammersmith, who have the same problem. The platform said that the lawyers would make a packet if such a case were taken to the House of Lords. (Pity I do not have a seat in Chambers. Might keep me in work till I retire. Just right for that little country mansion I have my eyes on. But never mind, there's always another dispute just around the corner.)

But there was a threat to all our hopes. Saint George might not slay the dragon. There was at first a problem with doors that one could only go through one way. Once Grant Maintained always Grant Maintained. But could one be forced to go back through the door by the Dragon? That was what we now all had to fear. I felt a common sense of purpose with these people, in the way that I never thought I would - the Dragon was the spectre of a Labour Government. They would thrust us back through the door in the twinkling of an eye. The fresh fragrance that only freedom can bestow would be snuffed out and the darkness of local authority control would once again descend. The £2,000 to knock down a shed in the play ground. The right to send an "illiterate" teacher back to the school when once rejected by the Headmaster. We shared in the common horror.

But putting that aside, could the school still be closed down in the future? Well, yes, but only if the Secretary of State gave seven years notice. Longer than the length of any previous Labour Government. So if no new statutes were to be introduced they would not be able to close us down. Sighs of relief all round.

Then a curious dispute arose about who made new law. Always an interesting problem even to highly experienced Barristers. Especially when attempting to discern the 'intentions of Parliament'. Shades of Lord Denning. But the view seemed to be that legislation made the law, not the Secretary of State. I nearly directed everybody to look at the ninety percent of law made by Statutory Instrument by Secretaries of State. But I decided that my observer status might be compromised. Anyway, if I opened my mouth I might reveal something of my independent school background. Not a good idea - do not want to associate this too closely with the Conservatives. It is really to do with the way the school is run.

When I reached the school I noticed there was an election for Parent Governors going on. Was that right as the administrative oper-

ations were suspended? We were sternly told from the platform that we were wrong and that this was the best illustration possible that we could not possibly run our own affairs without making a hash of it. In fact that view of the election turned out to be wrong in itself. The election had sensibly been held when many parents were going to come to the school anyway. And it was to select potential parent governors for the new governing body if the ballot result meant that a Grant Maintained school had to be set up. That is perfectly correct under s66(5) of the Education Reform Act 1988 in the situation where there are no or at least less than five parent governors willing and able to serve on the new governing body. Looked as if we could manage our own affairs after all.

It seemed that we would be eligible to receive 15 percent extra to compensate for the services that Lewisham used (sometimes) to provide us with. The Headmaster would be responsible for the Budget. But was it really 23 percent? The Director of Education for Lewisham told us that that was so. The Headmaster told me afterwards that they would save money from that because they did not need most of Lewisham's services - no doubt some of the "Advisory" teams do become a little tiresome when one is actually truly committed to the exhausting task of teaching children. The colour of children's faces is, it seems to me, irrelevant. Stretch the strong and spur on the weak.

Finally, I went back to a friend's house, who had introduced me to the problem in the first place and had given me a lift to the meeting. We talked through the points. He had made a strong speech willing the parents to take the future into their own hands. Then I arrived home at midnight and retired to bed. Uneasy. Why? Because these wonderful, loyal human beings, some bright, some dull, some with prospects, some without, just might have been jumping from the frying pan (Shrove Tuesday was, after all, just beginning) into the fire. For instead of being funded by Lewisham, at least a local body, they were to be funded directly by the Government. Was I not urging them to vote for the effective nationalisation of their school? Why was the Labour Party not clamouring for it? Especially when you could never pass through the door the other way. Truly, the reversal of roles was complete.

DOPE AND THE POPE: A BRIEF DIALOGUE

Howard Perkins

Passing down Fleet Street to work the other morning, I was stopped on the corner of Whitefriars by an evangelist. Such people I normally try to avoid. But this day I was early, and the sun was shining. For once I decided to stop and listen to what he had to say.

“Sir” said he smiling, “of all the religions that have ever existed anywhere in the world, there has been none so frankly blasphemous and abominable as the Church of Rome. Its High Priest claims not merely a sovereignty over mankind extending to the binding and loosing of political allegiances, but also an absolute infallibility in certain matters of morals and doctrine. Common sense alone might declare these claims the sure signs of a false religion. But we have in addition the express Word of God. For with what else but the Church of Rome does the latter part of John’s Revelation deal?”

“I will not call membership of that Church a passport straight to Hell. Many of its humbler devotees cannot see where the Truth lies; and perhaps these will receive some part of the Divine Indulgence. But what of the better classes of Papist? What particularly of those living in a Protestant country such as our own, everywhere faced with evidences of that Truth - yet willfully remaining ignorant of it? These I believe are at serious risk of receiving Damnation.

“Now it may be, following Tertullian, that one of the keener joys of being in Heaven is to watch from on high the torments of the Damned. For ourselves, though, we must surely feel distress at the prospect of so much suffering that might so easily be avoided. We must also bear in mind that to look idly on while sin is committed may be partly to share in its guilt. I say, then, that both altruism and self-interest compel us to make war on the Errors of Rome.

“What use, though, telling every Papist of the risk he runs? That risk is clearly evident, yet even the wisest Papists deny it. I cannot im-

agine that any sane person could want Damnation. Therefore, I must conclude that every papist who is not impenetrably stupid is mentally ill; and the mentally ill, everyone agrees, merit a little brotherly coercion in their own interest. Popery must be discouraged by law, Papists until they recant being made second class citizens - barred from the professions and any office of trust. Naturally, their children should not be made to suffer by their parents’ obduracy, but should be removed into public care and brought up as good Protestants.

“At the same time, we must cut off the infection at its roots. We must close down all the Roman churches and expel or lock away the priests. All trinkets and books which seem to promote or sustain Popery should be seized - a due allowance being made for purposes of research. It should be made a very serious offence for anyone to be converted or to convert another.

“All this will, of course, require continuing action. The Police will need additional powers to maintain close watch and prevent any lingering of the Church in secret, financed perhaps by our enemies abroad. There will need to be a relaxation of those rules of procedure and evidence which derive from an age less threatened than our own by Popery. We are at war with a disease, let it be recalled - at war over the future well-being of countless millions of our fellows. If the means appear in any way to be harsh, they are justified a thousand times over by the glory of the end to which they direct.”

“Sir” said I, appalled, “yours is a monstrous doctrine - one to which our law, thank God, has been effectively deaf for centuries. Whether or not the Roman Catholic faith be an abomination I do not care to enquire. But even granted you are correct, no right of persecution follows from it. The rule of a free society is that people are to be left to live as they please, each responsible to himself. If he should lay hands on the life or property of another, by all means, let him be taken up and

punished. But if what he does harms only himself, that is his concern. As Mill has said,

There [may be] good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise.... Over himself, over his own mind and body, the individual is sovereign.

"I grant the matter is different for children. Given a strong danger of their coming to harm, there is a case for removing them into another custody. But this is a power to be used sparingly, always asking - 'is this interference for the safety of a child or a concealed persecution of the parents?' Catholics as a group do not violently assault their children. Nor can I believe that God would punish children brought early before Him for their parents' doctrinal mistake. And so long as there is no bar on the right of young adults to make free enquiry for the truth, I see no reason for concern.

"You go to Heaven in your way" I ended, "and let others go in theirs. More will get there so, I believe, than chained in single file behind you."

Quite unperturbed, still smiling, my evangelist replied: "Certainly, Mill and the other liberals would be formidable opponents had I any real need to meet them. Luckily, perhaps, there is none. Their arguments are still brought out in some matters, but have mostly long since not been merely abandoned but repudiated. You say that my doctrine is no part of English law. Have you never heard of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971?"

I nodded. "A wise and necessary law" I added.

My evangelist continued: "Together with supplementary legislation, its end is to reduce the consumption of many drugs to the smallest degree compatible with their continued medical use, and to ban others entirely. The maximum sentence for dealing in controlled drugs is imprisonment for life. Then there is the Drug Trafficking Offences Act 1986, the express purpose of which is to reverse the normal burden of proof in certain criminal cases, so making the confiscation of a trafficker's assets easier. There was a small outcry at the passage of this Act from the consistent liberals. But who listened to them while so much else was being said about the 'War on Drugs'?"

"And why this 'War'? Is it that drugs inflame those who use them to the point where harm

to others inevitably or frequently follows? No. The effect of cannabis - by far the most commonly used illegal drug - and of heroin - the most currently reviled - is to relax the nervous system. The incidence of violent crime committed under their influence is so small that no separate figures are published. There are other drugs which do excite - cocaine, for example, and amphetamine - and taking which does sometimes lead to violent behaviour. But the incidence is still too small to deserve separate notice. Who has never met an aggressive drunk, or heard of the Drunken Driver?

"There are crimes related to the use of drugs. Between 1979 and 1984, convictions for possession or supply rose from 14,054 to 22,882, and have since risen far higher. But these are entirely a product of control, without which they would register only as higher sales of pharmaceutical goods.

"The same is true for organised crime, which is said in 1989 to have drawn £4.8 billion from the supply of illegal drugs. It presently flourishes by encouragement on a scale that could hardly be improved by deliberate public subsidy. But how long might these profits last in open market, with Boots competing for the retail trade?"

"Of petty crime among addicts, some results from high prices, some from the fact that those made to do business with criminals seldom preserve many scruples of their own.

"Whatever else may occasionally be said, drugs are controlled for one reason, and one alone - because they are believed to harm the user. This has been the reason behind every scheme of restriction since the Great War - why a Commons Committee in 1985 opposed the legalising of cannabis; why efforts are now made to prevent homosexuals from buying amyl nitrate; why every March the British Medical Association and other health activist groups demand higher taxes on drink and tobacco.

"Protection from his own folly is held to justify every interference in the drug user's life. Who stops to think that he might take drugs from choice? that, mindful of the risks involved, he might still think a shortened life fair exchange for the pleasure given him by his drug? Who ever compares drug use with all those other activities undertaken for pleasure, but which shorten or endanger life? Mountaineers and gluttons are left largely in peace. Drug users

alone are thought mad for not preferring a longer life; and when ordinary compulsion fails, are regularly shut away in prisons or mental hospitals. Of course, their children can be taken away. Where drug users are concerned, your J.S. Mill and all the other liberals might never have learned to write.

“All this; yet it has been argued with some show of success that drugs are nowhere near the great scourge that people imagine them. There is scarcely a shred of evidence that cannabis is more harmful in the long run than equal amounts of tobacco. Indeed, since no one could smoke as much cannabis as tobacco without falling asleep, it may carry less chance of lung cancer. Cocaine, says Martindale’s *Pharmacopœia*, causes ‘no physical dependence’; and unlike with alcohol, lethal overdose is almost unknown. Heroin, discovered in 1874 and sold for years over the counter as a patent cough medicine, remains for many a safe and indispensable painkiller. These three drugs being freely available, who would turn to such substances of less predictable effect as glue and lighter fuel? It is said that the worst personal harm of taking drugs is, again, a product of control - of adulterated black market drugs and infected second-hand needles.

“But I take no position on drug control. I say only this: that the public tolerates and encourages a set of policies which are to suppress no

more crime than they have themselves created, are not justified on the grounds of preventing harm to third parties, and which many claim may not even be for the good of drug users as others define that good. Why then treat me as some absurd relic of the past? By all means, declare yourself a Papist and me wrong, and let us argue from there. But spare me your part-time liberalism. Every type of argument supporting drug control supports me equally on the suppression of Popery. I say further - the drug controllers want merely to save bodies: I save souls. My case is infinitely stronger at least in this respect. How, without gross inconsistency, can you allow one and not the other?

“Come then, Sir, let me write your name in my Book of Life. It has room only for 144,000, you know and -”

But I was late for work now and had to leave. When I looked back, he was still smiling, still apparently reasonable, as he began preaching to a small crowd that was gathering on the text “Compel them to come in”. He was, even so, quite mad. There is all the difference in the world between stopping the vile trade in drugs which so threatens our society and his wicked scheme of persecution.

At least, it would be awful if people ever stopped thinking so.

EDITORIAL JOTTINGS

ONE

Last July, I was sent a pamphlet called *The Longest Hatred: An Examination of Anti-Genitilism*. Its author shelters modestly behind the name Inter-City Researchers. There is, however, a Publisher’s Foreword by Lady Jane Birdwood, the eminent national socialist.

I did consider reviewing the pamphlet, but had other things to do. I may return to it in 1992. For the moment, those of my readers who wish to know why the holocaust never - though perhaps should have - happened, and why Dar-

winism is the Devil’s Revenge for Calvary, must find out for themselves. The publishers are: The Inter-City Research Centre, 31 Eastvale, Acton Vale, London W3 7RU; telephone: 081-749-0629.

What causes me to return now to Lady Birdwood is another of her mailshots, this one not confined to the editors of small magazines. Some time during 1990, she acquired several thousand leaflets laying bare, she believed, the iniquities of plutocratic Judæo-Bolshevism. She sent these to Members of Parliament and to various Anglican clergymen picked at random from the pages of *Crockford*. They fell, not surprisingly, on stony ground; and her La-

dyship, having printed her address on the leaflets for return correspondence, was visited by the Police.

She was charged under Part III of the Public Order Act 1986 with having published written material that was "threatening, abusive or insulting", with the intention thereby to stir up racial hatred. She was brought to trial last October, and was found guilty.

She may be, as I am told, a thoroughly nasty piece of work. She is more likely, I believe, a harmless old crank with more money than sense. But, whatever she is, on one point I am in complete agreement with her. I quote from her closing speech to the Jury:

The essence of this case is whether in a free country there can be free speech, even involving the most controversial subjects as in the present case.

(reported in *The Daily Telegraph*, 17th October 1991).

Exactly. Free speech, and free speech alone, was the essence of her case. She had not gone into the streets and incited the lower classes to riot. She had not stood outside Jewish gatherings and committed acts liable to lead to a breach of the peace. She had done nothing that could reasonably be construed as a direct attack on the Queen's peace. She had simply tried to bring the attention of Parliament and the Established Church to matters which she, rightly or wrongly, considered important. It was by a monstrous perversion of law that she was arrested and put on trial.

The fact is that what passes in this country for 'liberal opinion' is not liberal at all. It is a set of prejudices held by people who have nice voices and live in nice houses but who are only slightly more tolerant than the average bus queue. They will make a show of accepting any opinion - no matter how offensive it may be to the population at large, or a large section of it - that does not offend them. But anything that does offend them, or seems likely to disturb the pleasant course of their lives, they will stamp on with all the ferocity of the book-burning Southern fundamentalists whom they have spent five generations affecting to despise.

Considerations of free speech aside, the decision to prosecute was also a practical mistake. What did the trial achieve? It got Lady Birdwood into the newspapers. Even sneeringly reported, her claims reached a far wider audi-

ence than they ever could have by her own efforts.

She has, moreover, suffered for her beliefs. And, as the Roman Government once discovered, persecution can do wonders for the most nauseous people, and the most absurd doctrines.

TWO

I attended the last Conservative Party Conference in various capacities. Acting in one of these, I went along to the Tory Reform Group fringe meeting to hear William Waldegrave boast how much of the taxpayers' money he is wasting and planning to waste on the National Health Service. I sat myself at the front of the room, directly opposite him.

As soon as he strayed on to the subject of smoking, I began my heckling. "Monster" I cried. "Health Fascist! Go back to Nazi Germany." Mr Waldegrave gave his standard answer to all this - that he stood in a long tradition of public health reformers; and that 19th century liberals had raised exactly the same outcry against the first clean water and food purity legislation. "Aye, and they were right to cry out against it" I replied.

A look of horror flitted across his face, and there were little moans of disgust from the closet socialists sat around me. But I had made my point. I had asserted the immemorial right of Englishmen and women to light up in peace and freedom.

I had also exercised another immemorial right. I had got into the fringe meeting without being searched or even having to show proof of identity. I had sat no further from a Cabinet Minister than from a dining companion, and had abused him according to my conscience. His only protection was some boy of a Chairman and a few Policemen lounging outside the hotel. I might have been some maniac tired of waiting 20 years to have his varicose veins done. I might have lunged at him with a knife or iron bar - or even shot him with one of the millions of illegal firearms in circulation. No one could have stopped me.

This country is atrociously governed. But its governors have still not taken to hiding from us. They have not yet retreated behind a screen of armed bodyguards and bullet-proof

glass. I had intended to come away from the fringe meeting with hands raised in pious despair at the thought of that £32 billion just wasted. Instead, I came away with more respect for our politicians than I have had since I was a child.

After John Major's speech, of course, it wore off.

THREE

I have before me a press release from Grey-Green Coaches of Stamford Hill, together with a 5,000 word supporting document. Now, bus companies are not in the habit of sending press releases to the Editor of *Free Life*, nor - as anyone will agree who has ever received a letter from one - of extended literary composition. But these, it seems, are unusual circumstances. The press must be told how "unworkable and against the public interest" the Government's plans are with regard to the regulation of the London Bus routes. Allow me to explain.

Under the Transport Act 1985, the old system of road service licensing, under which operators had needed a licence for each route, and other operators and local authorities could object to the granting of a licence, was abolished outside London. Henceforth, operators were required simply to register with their local Traffic Commissioner what services they intended to run; then after six weeks, they could run them.

I grant that having to register is still an onerous regulation. I regret also that quality of service and vehicle safety are regulated, and that local authorities are allowed to subsidise unprofitable routes. Even so, the Act has brought a vast improvement. Bus services are now better proportioned than before to what the market will bear. Passengers pay something like the full cost of their journeys, neither very much more nor very much less. Workers living in central Coventry, for example, no longer pay a surcharge to reduce the fares paid by their managers living in the outlying Warwickshire villages. Short of full deregulation, what could be more just?

The Department of Transport now proposes to extend this system to London.

I have no doubt that the owners of Grey-Green Coaches really do believe this proposal to be against the public interest - that their hearts bleed at the thought of all those cheap little mini-busses darting where once the double-decker loomed, and of how fare structures and time tables will be wrenched from their old certainty.

Their opposition surely has nothing to do with the fact that Grey-Green benefits from the current system. It is licensed by London Regional Transport to operate nine routes, with 113 vehicles, which travel around 3.5 million miles each year. This is its largest single business activity.

Perhaps despite its relationship with the State, the company is a lean, fit, "competitive tiger", well able to hold its own in even the most comprehensively deregulated market. Perhaps we should all write to our Members of Parliament, asking that this be put to the test.

FOUR

Another press release before me I reproduce in full. It is from the National Federation of Meat Traders:

LOCAL BUTCHER JOINS PRESTIGE SCHEME

Mr D Howard, of Sweetland and Howard, The Parade, Sandhurst Road, Catford, has become one of the first seven butchers, nationwide, to qualify for the Shop with Assurance Scheme organised by the National Federation of Meat Traders.

Before a shop is accepted into the scheme, it must pass a rigorous independent inspection to ensure that it meets the high standards of service and hygiene laid down in the scheme's code of practice. The inspection covers all aspects of hygiene, safety, quality assurance and service. It also includes the handling, storage and display of meat.

Mr Howard said: "Customers can shop with complete confidence at any shop belonging to the scheme. When a customer buys meat at a Shop with Assurance Butcher, it means that the wholesomeness of the product and the quality of service is guaranteed."

Bravo, Mr Howard! Bravo, National Federation of Meat Traders! No calls for State interference. Not a whisper for monopoly privilege. Bravo!

TWO CHEERS FOR SWITZERLAND

Paul Marks

Caroline Sinclair's article in the *Spectator* of July 27th 1991 is to me sadly typical of many modern articles in that it is a series of observations and complaints rather than a logically thought through argument. It does not lead anywhere. No real principles can be gleaned from it.

The article is on Switzerland. It attacks the place for various things.

It lists a series of abuses - people committed to mental hospitals, a child taken from a mother, interfering and nasty police, lots of petty regulations about mowing the lawn, no noise after ten o'clock at night (in France it is 10.30pm in similar residential areas), regulations on brackets for flower pots, and so on.

However, this sort of thing is hardly unique to Switzerland. Similar tales could be told of other welfare states such as Germany or Sweden.

Caroline Sinclair presents no evidence that Switzerland is more interfering than, say, Sweden, and shows no knowledge of the differing ways of operating of different Swiss Cantons, more on which later. Instead she says:

... the Swiss civil and criminal codes are orientated not to the needs of the individual, but to the minimisation of that individual's impact on the state and society.

All welfare states would claim that their regulations are for "the needs of the individual". The question is not putting different people in charge or what words they speak, but who makes the decisions, officials or individuals with their own money and at their own risk. This choice should be faced not avoided with waffle.

However some specific charges are made against Switzerland. First: Swiss secrecy laws. Yes, it is wrong that a man should receive a twenty year prison sentence for leaking the information on his company, the worst that should happen is that he should be sued for breach of contract if he had a duty of confidentiality.

But what is also wrong is that the "laws" by which the European Commission forbids "price rigging" and encourages informers. Price rigging is an agreement among companies to charge similar prices. There is nothing wrong about this if it is not enforced by violence and of course the principle source of violence backed price rigging is the EEC itself.

The main attack in the article however is the attack on the Swiss system of near universal military service. Here there is failure to understand the Swiss concept of citizenship. To the Swiss a citizen is someone who is prepared to defend his fellow citizens. If the people who do not wish to serve also stated that they did not wish to vote - which enables them to help decide when others should fight and with what equipment they should fight - the libertarian would support them. However, the great majority do not wish to opt out of the state. Far from it. For the most part they wish greatly to expand it, for example with ever higher welfare benefits. In short they are quite happy for violence to be used to finance their schemes, but not to train to defend their fellow citizens.

There is another issue here. If those who do wish to serve were genuine pacifists who would not call for help if attacked they could be respected, but would they not expect help if attacked?

There are not arguments for compulsion, merely for thinking. But are Swiss conceptions of citizenship outdated?

They are indeed ancient. The armed freemen of a local community deciding their affairs, electing their leaders, originally by a public show of hands and the like, were once widespread amongst Indo-European tribes, but are not quite dead even outside Switzerland. For example in New Hampshire, each March, the inhabitants of each town come together to decide a large portion of taxes and regulations without the aid of a priestly caste of politicians and administrators to decide for them. If one does not like arrangements in one town, one moves to the next rather than out of the whole

state. New Hampshire taxes are the lowest in the USA. Even in Britain there is still the Territorial Army, successor to the old militia - once the *fyrð*. A ghost of local organisation and individual responsibility remains.

Things have changed. Women today are full citizens and recent evidence in war would seem to indicate that they are certainly capable of the obligations of citizenship.

Switzerland today is no longer a true Confederation of Cantons united for common defence. The federal government has grown. It seeks ever more taxes, regulations and inflation. But Switzerland is still more free than many lands; Cantons still vary and therefore compete for population. The central state is still more restricted than elsewhere. Did Caroline Sinclair not wonder *why* the house she mentions fell by 75% in value when transferred to France? It is not because the Swiss distort the rented property market. Indeed 75% of Swiss rent their homes. It is because Switzerland is a better place to live. To put it crudely, the Canton taxes and federal taxes she complains of are much lower than French ones. Only in June, against the will of the government, the people, by referendum, threw out the introduction of VAT.

As for "no right to strike on economic grounds" the lady means no right to break contracts. The masses of the unemployed in "progressive" countries are no doubt cheered by their "right to strike".

Perhaps the notion of the armed free citizen is outdated. Perhaps the future is a hi-tech tyranny of government and "private" companies in a corporate state. But some hope not, and that a man does not have to be Rambo, that the ordinary citizen, rich or poor, can cooperate with others to help in his own defence.

Yes Switzerland is a land of "chemical and pharmaceutical multinationals", but the Swiss do not believe that liberty and industry are incompatible. Indeed liberty promotes industry and industry creates the wealth to buy weapons and defence and the leisure to learn to use them.

New Hampshire has the highest output per person in America. It also has one of the highest memberships of the National Rifle Association. Again like the Swiss, the people of New Hampshire keep their personal weapons and ammunition at home, a thing Police States tend to discourage, although partly due to the

laws, automatic weapons are rarer in the USA than in Switzerland. Neither of these areas is known for violent crime.

It may be that the future holds nothing but darkness and evil, with people writing pathetic letters to the European Commission, the European Court and the United Nations about the International Convention on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, not realising that the EEC, UN and the like are threats not aids to liberty.

But not all is confusion. Some remember or half remember what law, obligation, duty, really mean.

In the words of the New Hampshire state motto, which could also still be the motto of Switzerland: "Live Free or Die".

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For further information, please contact:

David Botsford, Editor, Millenium,
167 Clarence Gate Gardens, London NW1 6AP
(071) 262 6803

REFORM AND REACTION IN HEALTH CARE

David Marsland

Introduction

At least the founding fathers of the National Health Service were serious in their belief that it was essential and that it would be effective.

Indeed, so fervent were they in their commitment to the new principles, policies and forms of organisation established in 1948 that they claimed, apparently with straight faces, that after initial investment costs health care would become rapidly and progressively cheaper. They were convinced that the level of public spending required to fund the NHS would diminish as the population grew healthier.

As we now know, they were gravely mistaken. Costs have continuously risen to the point where they seem to be out of control. The effectiveness of the NHS in reducing sickness and optimising health is patchy. It has not proved to be the bargain basement panacea which its initiators imagined they had created. But at least they were serious in their misconceptions.

This is more than can be said for today's champions of an unreconstructed NHS preserved in the aspic of antique collectivist principles. For Mr Cook, the public debate about health care is no more than an opportunity to demonstrate his socialist credentials. For Mr Kinnock, it provides merely a promising arena for extravagant display of his habitual emotional rhetoric. Vote Labour, he proclaimed with laboured effort at political rhyming verse in his Brighton speech, and "build up the NHS": vote otherwise and "break up the NHS". "After nationalisation" he might more honestly have urged, "ossification. After change, the status quo for ever".

The Trade Union sector of the resistance movement against health care reform - from NUPE and COHSE to the BMA and beyond - is even more disingenuously cavalier with the facts and with people's needs. In their jaundiced eyes, reform of the NHS is just the latest "class challenge" to be answered with all the intelligence and finesse of General Ludd. For the social researchers and social policy academics whose tax-financed role is to celebrate

the ideology of the welfare status quo, health care reform is a threatening omen of imminent capitalist restoration. While for the media, including not least the BBC and the so-called quality press, the whole thing is a Thatcherite leftover and a calculated insult to the suffering poor.

Yet none of them - not the Opposition, nor the unions, nor the self-proclaimed experts, nor the journalists - are really serious in their resistance to reform, or genuine in their apologies for the status quo. They all know that the unreformed NHS is hog-tied with bureaucracy; that it squanders public money and precious skills, that its service to patients is crippled by labour practices as selfishly destructive as any in the docks or the print industry; that continually expanding investment is almost entirely swallowed by a limitlessly expanding wage bill; that attention to individual patients' needs is routinely obstructed by paternalist omniscience; that it has become in the end a pathetic travesty of its founding fathers' romantic dreams.

Radical reform of health care in Britain is transparently and unarguably essential. After careful consideration and widespread discussion, rather late in the day, and more than somewhat cautiously, the Government has set the requisite reform in train. It has been met by partisan reaction. It is this reactionary resistance to reform that I propose to examine here.

The Aims of Reform

A proper understanding of the character and meaning of resistance to reform of the NHS requires first an examination of the Government's purposes and plans, and honest consideration of the main thrust of the reforms now being implemented.

The NHS is a monopoly, a State monopoly, a huge State monopoly, and a huge bureaucratic State monopoly. The reforms directly address the problems, the inefficiencies, the inequities which predictably and inevitably flow from these basic characteristics. Increased resources without reform - which is the Opposi-

tion's only policy for health care - will make these problems even worse, reduce efficiency still further, and aggravate existing inequities.

Waiting lists will lengthen. More wards will close. Buildings will decay. New technologies and drugs will become luxurious fantasies. Basic research will wither. GPs will have even less time for their patients. And facilities for the elderly, the mentally ill, the handicapped, and for community care and preventative medicine will slip inexorably further down the list of health care priorities. Without radical reform such as the Government now intends, for the first time since 1948, the NHS will gradually collapse into the squalid conditions of the health care systems of Eastern Europe - where the art of comprehensive State monopoly health care has been perfected.

The reforms privatise not a single unit of the NHS. They offer not the slightest challenge to free and comprehensive delivery of health care. They leave the essential elements of the wartime reconstructionist settlement of health care absolutely intact. They are nonetheless radical, addressing as they do the problems caused by monopoly, bureaucracy and inertia.

The crux of the reforms - acknowledged by the Opposition's categorical commitment to cancel them immediately on coming to power - consists in the organisational separation of purchasers and providers of health care, by the establishment of Hospital Trusts and of GP budget holding, and by fundamental changes in the structure, operations and funding systems of the Health Authorities.

Together, these reforms will challenge monopoly and bureaucracy by introducing, after four decades of artificial and enervating insulation, a little healthy competition into the NHS. They will inaugurate at long last a modicum of attention to costs: extravagant and careless waste in the NHS remains enormous. They will demand from Health Service personnel some attention to patients as individuals and as consumers. They will permit the front line managers of the NHS to get on with their work untrammelled by bureaucratic interference from Whitehall, from Region, and from District. They will allow the health needs of each community to be looked into, and genuine priority needs to be dealt with at the expense of established habits and fashionable hobbies.

All this can - and is being - achieved by the current reforms, without a hint of the privatisation which the reactionary opponents of re-

form pretend to detect. Accompanied as they are and will be by continuing expansion of the resources devoted from public spending to health care, they represent our last and only chance to modernise British health care, and to raise it to the standards that our children will demand in the prosperous decades ahead.

Political Expediency

We should be in no doubt of the Labour Party's determination to play the Health Service card for all it is worth and more in the long election campaign which has already begun. The speeches of both Party Leader and Health Spokesman at the Brighton conference provided ample evidence of their intention to scare the voters silly about the Government's alleged ambition to privatise the NHS.

Mr Cook stated categorically that "On day one of the Labour Government we will halt opting out. We will bring the hospitals which have already opted out back into the NHS." He also promised - despite his Party's consistent historical record of sudden savage cuts in NHS funding - to restore what he called, with a disingenuous lack of specificity about actual sums of money, "proper funding for the NHS". Competitive tendering is apparently to go down the same black hole of voter deception as Hospital Trusts, GP budget holding, the "commercial spirit", and the internal market.

Pressed by consultants and television interviewers convinced of the transparently positive value of the separation of purchaser and provider functions - which is the essence of the internal market, and the primary mechanism initiated by the reforms for putting a stop to bureaucratic misallocation of funds and ensuring that resources follow patients to wherever the real needs are - he could do no better than mumble incoherently about the supposed threat to "public service" from any sort of market.

The shrill tone and shallow character of the Brighton debate demonstrated that the leadership of Her Majesty's Opposition are only too well aware that the NHS needs urgent, radical reform, and that the Government's plans are for the most part as sensible as they are overdue. Their hysterical resistance to reform is a product not of genuine conviction, nor even of nervousness about left wing or trade union pressures, which they could ignore as easily as they have in the spheres of defence and the market economy. It is a merely political tactic, designed to capitalise on the public's under-

standable anxieties about the spurious threat of privatisation.

Ideology

While political expediency provides at present the most influential of the several grounds for resistance to health care reform, ideology is also playing a significant part. It is the main source of ideas and arguments for the Labour Party's scare-story campaign. It provides a convenient framework of assumptions for the media's one-sided treatment of health care. It subtly and surreptitiously fuels and distorts the worries of the man and woman in the street about what is happening to the NHS.

The Brighton conference provided plentiful evidence of the continuing popularity among socialist activists of the pure wine of NHS ideology. "In 1948" thundered Caroline Crolley of the TGWU, "the pride of the Working Class was born". "Every vote for a Tory" she continued, hoisting the Red Flag, as it were, on the ship of health care, "is one more nail in the coffin of the NHS. Every vote for Labour is a kiss of life for the NHS." A Mr McNulty condemned "the chronic underfunding and lack of planning in health care" as an "obscenity", and claimed that providing proper help for the elderly, the handicapped and the mentally ill was "socialism at its most pure". One might almost have imagined that neither liberals nor conservatives had ever done anything but deliberately harm them, and that only socialism could offer them any real help at all. Provided, that is, that socialism in health care consists of infinite funding casually dispensed and totalistic central planning.

The Tories, it was urged to loud applause, "were ripping the guts out of the NHS" and a doctor was cheered to the rafters for the bold assertion - wholly unsupported by argument or rational justification - that "We do not intend to become budget-holders".

Underlying all this tosh - and much more of the same - was the influence of a specifically socialist ideology which has no necessary relevance whatsoever to maintaining a genuine National Health Service in Britain such as its founders envisaged. This same sectarian and partisan ideology is peddled from beyond and outside the Labour Party by academic and media opponents of health care reform. Its essence, which the reforms explicitly challenge, can be summarised as follows:

- * The NHS must in all circumstances be the first priority of Government.

- * Proper health care requires centralised control and comprehensive detailed planning.

- * Competition of any sort is incompatible with planning and with the caring ideology of decent health care.

- * Attention to costs and cost-efficiency is in principle a threat to the quality of health care.

- * Comprehensive health care means that standards and quality of service must not be improved anywhere unless they can be immediately improved everywhere.

- * Private health care is a mediæval anathema, which, if it cannot be outlawed or bankrupted, should at least be kept at arm's length from contaminating the NHS.

- * The special nature of health care work and the unique character of health care workers as such entitles the personnel of the NHS to producer self-management and to exemption from interference by consumers.

None of these dogmatic assumptions was shared by Lord Beveridge or by any but an exceptional few among the founding fathers of the NHS. Each assumption has been wholly invalidated by experience and by the practical history of the NHS over the past four decades.

Public spending on health care has to take its competitive place with other urgent national priorities, such as defence, education, and social security. Availability of resources for health care is conditional on economic prosperity and progress. Centralised planning and detailed operational control of health care has proved, as in every other sphere, impossible in practice, and, to the extent that it has been insisted on, counter-productive. It prevents innovation, inhibits creative individuals, and entirely precludes attention to the unpredictable diversity of health care needs. Exclusion of competition between doctors, between hospitals, and at other levels has robbed the NHS of the best and most normal social mechanism for encouraging innovation, for improving standards, and for disseminating high quality service.

Studied neglect of costs has driven standards down rather than up by excluding a crucial criterion of efficiency and a fundamental stimulus to quality enhancement. Even more damaging has been the consistent unwillingness in the NHS to give a positive welcome to

new technologies and improved patterns of service unless they can be replicated all round and "inequalities" avoided. This institutionalisation of socialist envy frustrates innovation and denies the NHS the benefit of competitive emulation - the most dynamic equaliser and improver of standards known to man. Instead of dogmatic resistance to an imaginary two-tier system, we should welcome with acclaim a multi-tier service with the tiers regularly catching up with and overtaking each other, and overall standards improving all round.

Atavistic opposition to independent health care is similarly socialist rather than civic in spirit, and counter-productive. Cooperation between the NHS and the modest independent sector can do nothing but good. Finally, the ideologically socialist commitment, imported entirely speciously and illegitimately into the NHS, to a level of "workers' control" unimaginable even in the motor car industry of the 1960s and 1970s, has been wholly destructive.

Thus each of the core assumptions in socialist health care ideology is mistaken and damaging. Each of them is decisively challenged by the current reforms. And - since none of them is a plausible, let alone an essential, principle of genuine high quality public health care - doctors, nurses, and above all patients and consumers will be much better off without them. Sensible voters will be as contemptuous of dogmatically ideological as of blatantly political resistance to reform of the NHS.

Vested Interests

Health care workers, particularly nurses, have a proud tradition dating back to long before 1948 of disciplined commitment to serving their patients selflessly. The high public reputation and positive image resulting from this tradition have been grossly abused by employees of the NHS in recent decades.

Yet the public seem already to have forgotten the cruel absurdity - the obscenity, one might in this case justifiably call it - of members of COHSE taking it upon their under-qualified selves in 1979 to decide which patients were and were not emergencies, and therefore to be condescendingly allowed or denied access to proper treatment. So much for "comprehensive health care". Again, in recent years, the media, especially television, have consistently taken the BMA's dubious word for the altruistic motives speciously claimed by its leaders for this or that piece of obstructive recalcitrance.

And again, enormous waste in the NHS is occasioned by ancillary workers' arrogant opposition to sensible management. Given a choice between hospitals opting into Trust status and remaining under District management with wholehearted application of competitive tendering, NUPE leaders would soon be out campaigning for Hospital Trusts all round!

A substantial part of the current noisy resistance to reform of the NHS is a precise analogue of the print unions' opposition to (fairly) new technology, or even of the NUM's insistence on reserving jobs for their children in mines already empty of coal.

Morale in the Health Service matters, of course. Dialogue and cooperation are essential. But elections are lost not by resisting illegitimate industrial pressure (Mrs Thatcher in 1984), but by craven surrender in the face of intolerable union tactics (Mr Callaghan in 1978-9; Mr Heath in 1972-4). Much of the resistance to reform in health care is based on nothing nobler or more rational than last ditch defence of antiquated vested interests. The Government ought to demonstrate this carefully to the public, to press for acknowledgement of the real facts in the media, and keep on steadily and unapologetically with the reform process.

Habit, Anxiety, and Social Inertia

Resistance to reform of the NHS is being orchestrated by the Opposition and the media for purely expedient and narrowly political purposes. It is stiffened by ideologues for whom an unmodernised Health Service is an essential vanguard arena for their socialist campaign to strengthen the grip of alien collectivist principles on British social life. The resistance movement is manned by foot soldiers from professional associations and trade unions in the NHS, and their primary objective is to defend at all costs outmoded working practices and vested interests.

There is one further source of reactionary resistance to these essential reforms: our sometimes useful, often dangerous British tendency to prefer things to be kept more or less as they are, and to settle for a quiet life.

From the very start of the reform process, politicians, academics, and journalists opposed to it have sought to capitalise at least as much on habit as on attachment to the positive value of the NHS. They have been saddeningly suc-

cessful in their shameless appeal to reflex conservatism and misplaced anxiety.

This can only be countered effectively if the case for reform is put clearly, fully, dispassionately, and unambiguously. This argument cannot and should not be avoided, or fudged by finding extra resources, over and above planned expansion, and imagining that this will serve instead of persuasion.

We need to see more of our best GPs who now manage their own budgets explaining on television precisely how they have been enabled to look after their patients better. We should expect news and feature programmes to allow the public to see the radical improvements already apparent in the quality of service offered by Hospital Trusts. We should be hearing regularly from health economists who understand the lethal dangers for standards of health care from Labour's "policy" of reversing the whole programme of reforms while continuing to pour taxpayers' money into bottomless black holes in the bureaucratic machinery of the NHS.

Aversion to change may be natural and understandable, but is also a certain precursor of decay in the NHS and of collapse in the modest standards of health care we have, with so much effort and at so much cost, so far achieved.

Reform in Practice

Egregious even among the suffocating welter of sentimental nonsense which largely comprised the Brighton debate on health was the ringing banality of the claim that the NHS is "the envy of the world".

It really is marvellous how people who have spent a lifetime running down almost everything British can nonetheless heap unconsidered praise on those few British institutions which suit their own partisan book: "Play-Away" schooling, the trade unions, "public service" broadcasting, and above all the NHS in pristine bureaucratic condition.

Considered objectively, health care in Britain is better than in some few other advanced societies, but a lot less effective by any criterion than most. There is much to be proud of, but huge room for improvement. Radical reform is essential if the whole system is not to collapse in the face of new and escalating challenges.

Despite the noisy campaign of reactionary opposition which I have examined, the reforms

are being, and will continue to be, implemented. The orchestrated programme designed to block the installation of Trust Hospitals and to prevent the expansion of GP budget holding has failed at each attempt so far. Competitive tendering is gradually being extended as hysterical bursts of local resistance fronted by militants collapse one after the other. New systems of management and the whole structure of the internal market are steadily taking root as staff begin to understand and appreciate them.

Until the coming general election - and, assuming the Conservatives win it, for some time after - resistance will continue. The implementation of reform will even so continue, and will begin to deliver the substantial improvements in quality of service which it promises.

Alternatively, the Opposition's scare-stories might, with media collusion, turn Health Service reform into a winning trick for the Labour Party. I find this outcome rather less likely than many commentators and social scientists seem to believe. Labour will have to win more seats than looks possible. Their Shadow Ministers may be popular with the media, but nearly all look to me likely to prove hopeless when it comes to electoral in-fighting, and implausible as Ministers. Moreover, economic issues are more important in general elections than welfare problems, health and education included - and the economy is plainly coming round.

Even in relation to health specifically, the Opposition's supposed winning card, the argument is only just beginning. As I trust I have shown, opposition to the reforms is wholly negative, and the case is amazingly poorly argued. As a recent analysis in *The Economist*¹ unambiguously demonstrates, the Labour Party currently has no policies whatsoever to offer the electorate as an alternative to reform - beyond simply saying "no" to reform.

"Intellectual laziness and political opportunism" to quote *The Economist* analysis, have left the Party of the NHS without any escape from domination of the Health Service by producer interests, without any coherent strategic plan for modernising health care as a whole, and with no option, supposing they were to be elected, except their usual oscillation between splurges of misdirected new spending and spasms of savage and arbitrary cuts.

Given a further decade of Conservative rule, health care reform will have been completed. At the same time, resources will have been expanded at no less than the same remarkable rate as during the past decade - that is, by 50 per cent in real terms. The quality of health care will have been improved immensely, as the scope for doctors, nurses, and managers (including not least managers who are also doctors and nurses) to apply their skills and commitment to the real health care needs of the whole population is opened up fully for the first time.

Conclusion

There will remain problems, of course, and countless issues which will require careful study and vigorous debate. I conclude by touching on a few of these:

* Even with the internal market in full operation, costs will continue to be a problem, as will waste. A rapidly ageing population and sustained innovation in expensive technology and treatment will increase pressure on resources. Without the external competition provided by a real market, the reduction of waste - such as the one in four X-rays said to be unnecessary - may be slower than the Government hopes.

* Even the stiffening of the reforms provided by the proposed Health Charter may not prove adequate to ensure that patients are treated as consumers. The producer-oriented habits of four decades will not be easily or quickly overcome.

* It would be foolish for any government or any party entirely to exclude the possibility that, as prosperity increases, an increasing number of people may wish to arrange their own health care. Surveys regularly suggest that even now 50 per cent would do so if they could afford it.² It would be foolish were the Labour Party to repeat its earlier mistake of not realising until too late, because of its outmoded collectivist prejudices, the extent of demand from council tenants to buy their own homes. It would be even greater folly for the Conservatives.

* Reform of the NHS ought to provide an opportunity for rethinking the dangerously autocratic paternalism that emerged during the age of unreconstructed monopoly health care. Health promotion can as easily produce "health fascism" as improved health. "Health for All" must not be allowed in a free society to

be used as an excuse for repressing unfashionable life styles or freely chosen activities condemned as "risky" by actuarial commissars of proper behaviour.

In the meantime, the proper focus of serious analysis of health care is an honest comparison of the Government's health reforms with the Opposition's opaque and reactionary alternative. So far, the former have been investigated minutely, while the latter has been conveniently ignored. It consists mainly of the wild and logically incoherent accusation either that the reforms themselves comprise or that they prefigure privatisation. Since one excludes the other, it is impossible for both propositions to be true, and the Government has issued a categorical denial and comprehensive refutation of both charges. Duncan Nichol, Chief Executive of the NHS, has put it plainly:

It simply is not true. There is no foundation for it at all. How many different words can I find to say that the Health Service is not going to be privatised? It is not on the agenda at all.

And again:

There is no truth in it whatsoever. The idea is so unbelievable I don't even give it house room.

It is Opposition leaders rather than Ministers who are busy "cooking up" policies which contradict their public commitments. The reported inclination of Labour thinking towards a specifically hypothecated Health Tax, in a context of references to the public's apparent willingness to pay higher taxes provided they are not lost in generalised public spending, quite plainly suggests that a so far entirely unacknowledged increase in taxation - its scale unspecified - is intended. Resistance to reform of the NHS may prove very expensive for the British people.

NOTES

1. "Few Recipes in the Cook Book", *The Economist*, 28th September 1991.
2. Peter Saunders and Colin Harris, in their *Popular Attitudes to State Welfare Services: A Growing Demand for Alternatives?*, The Social Affairs Unit, London, 1990, suggest that this may be an understatement.

REVIEWS

CAPITALISM

Arthur Seldon, Basil Blackwell, 1990, 419 pp., £19.99 (0-631-12558-2).

Samuel Johnson put it succinctly: "Political liberty is good only so far as it produces private liberty". It is to be hoped that the European Community will realise that integration of diverse economies cannot be accomplished as a political and bureaucratic process, but can only occur as a result of the withdrawal of the State and its agents - ie, by delegating the task of integration to markets. So far, capitalism has not been allowed to show what it can do, to deploy its potential for fostering prosperity and liberty. This is one of the lessons we can learn from Arthur Seldon's latest book.

Economists call the free private market economy capitalism. A politico-economic system is less capitalist and more socialist the larger the sector of collective decisions by the State relative to the sector of individual decisions in the market. All existing systems thus contain elements hostile to their main character: capitalist systems have socialist State sectors; socialist systems have capitalist market sectors.

A comparison (or contrast) of capitalism and socialism is significant only between both as they are with all their faults or as they could be in an ideal form. Socialists like to contrast imperfect capitalism with perfect socialism. Arthur Seldon invites us to make significant comparisons between capitalism and socialism; and he then asks us to reflect on capitalism as it could be strengthened by its so far unrealised potential.

In the competitive market in tracts on capitalism, (Michael Novak, Charles Murray, Milton Friedman, to name only a few of the best sellers) *Capitalism* ranks as a catichism for the advanced, interesting for the specialist yet understandable by the layman. Its message is that capitalism is superior to all other systems for welfare and freedom. One of his main arguments indicates the general flavour of the book.

The market, says Mr Seldon, has many advantages over the political process. It allows individuals to express their personal preferences. The freedom of the common man is

much greater in the market, where one man has many choices every day, than in the political process, where he has only one choice between few alternatives every one thousandth day.

The principle of private property is indispensable for ensuring responsible exchange and trade. Only when success brings personal rewards, and failure personal penalty, can responsibility be learned. And only thus can effective motivation be created. Extensive private property is the best way to tame the Leviathan of government and check its kleptocratic appetite.

Capitalism promotes specialisation by competition. If the consumer can compare alternative goods and services, fewer people are inclined to produce those in which they do not excel. Incentives to effort produce innovation and improvement in quality. The prices emerging in competitive markets perform the function of signals to what and how much to produce; without them, the information cannot be found. Because socialism lacks free market prices, it cannot promote welfare.

"Selfish" people can serve themselves only serving the wants of others in the market. To quote Mr Seldon,

Even bad men are led by the market process to do good, but good men are induced by the political process to do harm [p10].

The capitalist system promotes moral behaviour: people risk their own money. The political process enables people to buy votes with other people's money.

An order based on a market economy requires only a minimal state that protects private property. property rights can be respected in a 'state of nature', but the legal framework of a private rights society makes it much easier. The more tasks are solved by the market, the less important is the political process.

Mr Seldon rejects the myth of "active citizenship": they typical citizen has more important matters to attend to. He leaves the essential government tasks to specialists. But there there is danger. Governments tend to over-regulation (as in health standards and financial transactions) because the risks of under-

regulation are more obvious and therefore less rewarding in votes; but for the general welfare too little regulation is better than too much, because it suppresses new enterprise in services and industries.

Governments tend to raise taxes too high and to extend their remit unobtrusively as far as possible. But for general welfare, too little government is better than too much - because it is easier to enlarge government where essential than to reduce it where excessive.

Most undesirable features of existing capitalism are caused by the political process. Politicians tend to politicise economic problems, bureaucrats to bureaucratise them, and group interests to gain at the financial expense of others. The result is paternalistic social democracy.

The market is the best way not only to economic growth and efficiency, but also to improve the well-being of the poorest. Involuntary poverty is better cured by easing free movement from industries and regions with lower to those with higher incomes than by redistributing income by the methods of the political process, which blunt incentives and repress growth.

The common people stand to gain more from capitalism as it could be with less political management than from socialism, which requires extensive political management. It is easier to ease up differences in purchasing power in the market than differences in the 'cultural' skills required by the political process. Socialism has not removed inequalities, merely institutionalised them.

For the third world, the fastest way out of misery is to introduce capitalism. For relatively wealthy countries, the fastest way to the economic backwardness of the "third way" (favoured by some in Eastern Europe) between the rejected communist socialism and the liberal market capitalism that has raised living standards for the masses is to implement discredited "social democratic" values.

Capitalism as we know it is by no means free of fault, but it can be corrected. In socialism, every improvement - necessarily capitalistic - makes it less socialist. The market mechanism is far more self-correcting than the state: it is easier to escape from a commercial monopoly than from a political monopoly. Only State protection creates long-lived monopoly. Concentration in State industries (railways, postal services, telecommunications, and so on)

is always uneconomic - at the cost of the consumer who they also deprive of freedom of choice and of innovation. As the State monopolist fears no loss of buyers from competition, he has no incentive to respect consumer preferences.

The market is indestructible. If it is forbidden, it seeks welcome environments or the so-called underground economy, where it often stimulates production. But only in the minimal state with private property can capitalism fully realise its wealth-enhancing potential.

Capitalism is in no sense a one-sided hagiography of the capitalist system. The author undertakes a painstaking examination of the criticisms levelled at its economic working and moral foundations - especially from social democratic thinking. There are signs that the social democratic era is slowly coming to an end, and that there is a rebirth of liberal political thought - "liberal" in the sense of classical liberalism. So says Milton Friedman in discussing the change from the "Fabian tide" to the "Hayekian tide". The Thatcher revolution of 1979 is such a sign; so is Reaganomics, the economic creed of which has inspired many books and given the Republicans three election victories.

Arthur Seldon as a founder-President and Editorial Director of the Institute of Economic Affairs, the oldest and most prominent of the market-oriented "think-tanks", has for over 30 years performed a decisive service in the transformation of public opinion in Great Britain to favour the open market economy. This book is the quintessence of his work and the intellectual autobiography of a life dedicated to the idea of the open society.

Gerard Radnitzky

**DEMOCRACY AND CAPITALISM:
PROPERTY, COMMUNITY AND THE
CONTRADICTIONS OF MODERN SOCIAL
THOUGHT**

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986, £12.95 (0-7102-1056-6).

In 1976, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis produced their *Schooling in Capitalist America*. In Great Britain, at least, this was a very influential neo-Marxist work. Their thesis - which already seemed daft to me - was that the main function of American education was to prevent socialist revolution by creating a passive, conformist workforce. Today, could anyone buy the idea that only state-schooling

stands between capitalism and history as undertaker? The thesis simply cannot be squared with casual observation of schools in Britain, the USA, or Australia.

Economic success in such countries occurs mostly in spite of their education systems. Where they fail, in terms of shortages of skilled labour, for example, education is manifestly involved. Illiteracy, innumeracy, hooliganism, antinomianism, cultural, political and historical ignorance: all are widely apparent products of our educational arrangements. The education system often transmits indifference or even hostility to the political order, and guilt and shame about our civilisation. The perfect index of this, among so called better educated people, is cultural relativism - witness the synthetic and unhistorical breast-beating about the aborigines in Australia.

By the 1980s, though all this was often hypocritically denied, everyone had realised that it was true. The problem for neo-Marxist education theory was: What to do about it? How was one to deal with a theory whose parts no longer added up?

Some devotees wobbled around for years, trying to square facts, such as truancy and the wholesale rejection of the curriculum, with a thesis which those facts obviously violated. Apparently, obstreperous children were "resisting" capitalism and so on. This did not wash for long. Marxism has for years been a dying paradigm, in education as elsewhere, together with the socialism it inspired. Just as spatchcock manipulation cannot save an economy based on the abolition of property, so auxiliary hypotheses about "resistance", or race, or gender, or culture, could not save neo-Marxist education theory. By the middle of the decade, the former flood of Marxian apologetics had become a feeble trickle.

Such a demise, however, had - and has - its sinister side. After all, what happened to all those Marxists - in education, sociology, the media, and so on? The answer is one that the Flews and Partingtons who have harried them so effectively over the years nevertheless fail to bring out as fully as appropriate. They have gone to the raggle-taggle hate-relations complex; and, oh dear, Bowles and Gintis, to judge from this book, went there too!

It is not that Flew and Partington did not follow and harry the Marxists in their new redoubts. They did. They did not, however, draw sufficient attention to the transition.

Marxism will probably perish in these new redoubts too. What, however, if the enemies of our society regroup in their latest fastnesses and come up with some novel and more menacing, less raggle-taggle theory? I have been wondering about this for more than a decade. Perhaps *Democracy and Capitalism* belongs to a first wave of attempts by former Marxists at a major rethink of the socialist prospectus.

Has it been or will it be effective? Certainly, it was received rather coolly on its first publication. To try to break new ground when radical socialism was falling apart was difficult; and there were many whom it obviously outraged with its off-handed abandoning of treasured positions. But it did not fall on entirely stony ground. It has gradually acquired a following among those in the State education establishment who wish to continue believing in socialism, but who can no longer believe quite as they would have been able to believe in the late 1970s.

This being so, I now proceed to an examination of the book.

In terms of its authors' previous opinions, *Democracy and Capitalism* involves a breathtaking theoretical insouciance and didactic impertinence. It breaks airily with the crude neo-Althusserian grind of a decade ago: "We will not propose the superiority of planning... or of the Marxian economic categories". Moreover, the base-superstructure model which they learned from Marx and Althusser, and which was the very fulcrum of *Schooling in Capitalist America*, is quite unceremoniously dumped. From now on, Marxism is to be nothing more than an important strand in a rethought radicalism.

Even more "radical" is the precise moment (in reference 4 to Chapter 6) when the authors formally jettison "false consciousness". Given the mountains of statistics their earlier book devoted to mensurating this alleged human predicament, it is perhaps a matter of empirical decency that the new book contains nothing of evidential substance.

Bowles and Gintis now insist on the primacy of politics and action. Their aim is the furtherance and strengthening of personal rights. The capitalist economy is still identified as the major obstacle to rights, and it will have to go if they are to obtain: "The beleaguered realm is the capitalist economy itself". Structural analysis, however, is demoted. The authors invoke no theory of history, suggest no pat-

tered, immanent developmental process as a vehicle for the enactment of such rights. This is a drastic change, one which in spirit moves in the opposite direction to their erstwhile Marxism, that is back from depersonalised, unfolding structure to an ahistorical and romanticised personalism. Bowles and Gintis now admit that “we find labour and production a restrictive conceptual grid”. This turnabout is roughly on a par with what a Darwinist would be saying if he formally abandoned natural selection.

In *Democracy and Capitalism*, the property-war is replaced by a war for rights: the clash between proletariat and capital gives way to a conflict between democracy and capitalism. Democracy, however, is conceived in terms of the contemporary rights afflatus; and here the destructive sentimentality and implacable rage of the latter are hidden behind the authors' elegant prose. One does not regret the passing of the base-superstructure metaphor, a deadly conceit which nullifies law and politics. Nor need we mourn false consciousness, that condescending dismissal of ordinary people's competence. Only when we ask who is to do the defining of rights and priorities do we see that the same game continues - the old socialist power-chase: the rule of the intellectuals. But the false, tight schema of yesteryear has yielded to an amorphous rightsology with no central structure that can be refuted. It consists rather in a set of moralising obsessions arbitrarily gummed together within a curious metaphysic of action, in which becoming is everything and actual outcomes a matter of indifference. This strange ontology is sometimes pompously masqueraded as a version of Marcuse or even Hegel. Its true affinity is with the sloppy “process model” of teaching which has ruined so many of our primary schools. It is the ideology of universal, “caring” commitment.

In some ways, though, the book has spelt out ideas which were always implicit in neo-Marxism. Classical Marxism was about abolishing politics as a sham and a fraud. Neo-Marxism, in direct contrast, has seen politics as ubiquitous and attempted to subvert and refashion it. In both cases, the practical implication has been a very marked increase in bureaucratic power. In communist societies, a hypertrophied state seeks to suppress capitalism and “plan” its alternatives. In the open societies, swollen, publicly funded bodies seek to pursue various obsessions defined as “political” issues - eg, in race, culture and gender: to impose

the new orthodoxies: and, worst of all, to punish infractors.

The authors maintain that personal rights are more important to people's self-development than property rights - indeed, that the two collide. The eighteenth century Rights of Man, it seems, have become our contemporary civil rights movement, feminism and the “right” to a job. Their chosen trio here shows that they do not know about category errors. The rights of non-whites and women are disputable. It is not clear that they are separate from human rights in general; and the philosophic basis of human rights is itself contentious. But at least the debate touches on universality. The “right” to a job, by contrast, can never be more than an administered or legislated convention, unworkable outside a highly developed economy.

Property and person are seen here as two opposing logics within the liberal capitalist order. From the truth that the emerging democratic franchise of the last three centuries has involved shifting patterns of conflict and accommodation amongst the social strata, the authors derive the false proposition, that property (capitalism) and personal autonomy (democracy) are in fixed and irreconcilable conflict. This is bad history and bad political and economic sociology. The ferment which developed from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution involved individual rights and economic growth, in a symbiosis, as writers such as Rostow have shown. While the exact connections between capitalism and freedom are harder to specify than, say, a Milton Friedman or Arthur Seldon will allow, there is no doubt that a fundamental etiological bonding unites them, as does a broad functional compatibility. Moreover, just as intellectual reflection was integral to economic modernisation, so modern affluence is indispensable for the luxuriating contemporary indulgence of the preoccupation with “rights”.

What is, furthermore, especially bad for the thesis here presented is that the socialism which still lurks unexplicated in the book's interstices has always in practice meant a morally and politically inferior way of life, quite apart from its disastrous economic shortcomings.

Readers must make what they will of the contention that “Post-Liberal” democracy was doomed, despite the material successes of capitalism, because of its failure to think in terms

of community - ie, collectively. Bowles and Gintis claim that liberalism had the individual priorities correct, and Marxism the the collective "action" priorities; and that somehow they must be brought together. This seems to me to carry the retrospective implication that Lenin, Stalin and Mao would have been all right had they only read this book.

Like most socialists, the authors are very confused about market rationality. If businessmen are profit maximisers, it ought to follow that, say, white and black or male and female differentials in the long run reflect not convention or prejudice but variations in productivity. If they are functions of bigotry, then the capitalist system is not profit maximising. The authors describe casuistical loops around this problem without getting to grips with it.

They themselves are in the grip of the "anti-sexist" mania. They attack capitalist society for its patriarchy. They link this to the view that labour markets do not diminish discrimination against women. Both contentions, I think, are wrong. Women are not subordinated in the family in our sort of society. Indeed, the law is running the opposite way: witness in our own country, for example, the recent House of Lords ruling against marital rape, or the gradual equalising of income tax allowances. As for the labour market, we can see the differences melting before our very eyes. It is the welfare merchants and poverty pimps who keep women and non-white people poor in the advanced economies, forcing them into an endless cycle of dependency. Most other types of society have been much worse than ours in terms of the treatment of women and of relations between different races. Modern socialism has often exacerbated racial prejudice, and even its claim to have advanced the interests of women needs to be set against its lack of a citizenry, male or female.

Recoiling (rightly) from economic reductionism, Bowles and Gintis now give us political reductionism. They plump for politics everywhere, as in their choice little hymn to participatory democracy:

Markets inhibit participation by ensuring that the option of exit is always present, thus undercutting the commitment to choice.

There you have it. People must not work to better themselves, to leave their slums or rotten schools. Rather, they must join some local committee. The poor and blacks need "voice", not cash in their pockets. What does this

leave room for, but the ascendancy of the welfare-expertocracy?

The book is a kind of angst-exhortation manual for corrupted local government, the welfare-syndicalist nexus, and the poorer kind of higher education institution - absolutely perfect, for example, for one of our polytechnics. Everyone sits on committees moaning about "rights" and "principles", as the various sub-Marxist shibboleths are called. Nothing of any intellectual worth gets said, and problems are created, not solved. Meanwhile, a closed, explicit ideology is bit by bit imposed, and a deadening conformism spread. Everything is to be controlled - as the authors at one point do admit. "Democratic" accountability, to give a single instance, may entail the prevention of capital flight - or, to put abstractions into plain English, the forbidding of people to protect the value of their savings. Morality aside, it is hard to imagine a policy more perfectly conceived for slump-making.

It is appropriate that this incorrigibly perverse book should end with a quotation from Schumpeter - a man for all his genius totally wrong about the prospects for capitalism. Bowles and Gintis agree with him that capitalism is doomed, practically irrelevant and intellectually indefensible. What was that again about neither holy, nor Roman, nor empire?

Dennis O'Keeffe

**AIMING FOR THE BEST OF HEALTH:
HOW WE PLAN TO COMMISSION
HEALTH CARE FOR THE RESIDENTS
OF LAMBETH, SOUTHWARK AND
LEWISHAM IN 1992/93**

South East London Commissioning Agency,
October 1991.

There was a time when the National Health Service was little more than a rotten borough for the Labour Party. It employed a vast tribe of ancillary workers whose ugly, stinking bodies made every patient wish he were rich or had fallen sick abroad, but who could be trusted to vote Labour. Of course, the current reforms are doing much to end this abuse. I read, for example, that the management of Guy's Hospital is planning to sack several hundred of its porters, starting with the ugliest and dirtiest. Not surprisingly, the Opposition is in a tremendous sweat, and will soon have trouble concealing its real motives behind its facade of mewling concern for "the old, the ill and the poor".

We must not, however, be deceived by any of this into thinking that the Health Service is really being reformed. It is beyond reform. No administrative changes or increase of budget can cure its defects. These are terminal. It cost £8 billion in 1979, and was a mess. It costs £32 billion today, and is still a mess. By the end of the next Parliament, it may cost £70 billion - but, most assuredly, will still be a mess. It is like a dog with worms. No matter what sustenance it is given, it will not grow healthier. There will simply be more waste and more hungry worms. But where a dog can be wormed, the only cure for the Health Service is abolition.

The Government, I suspect, knows this. Certainly, the practical effect of its reforms has not been to improve the standard of medical care, but to start shifting the electoral balance within the Service. Labour worms are being replaced with Tory worms. This explains the startling growth of higher management. It is inconceivable that the accountants and copy-writers now being hired in their thousands will hasten or improve the cutting out of a single haemorrhoid. Perhaps they will be less offensive to the medical staff than the old porters were, and drink better coffee. But they are there to ensure that at least some of that £32 billion goes to Conservative voters.

I am confirmed in this belief by the Report now before me. It is as sure a sign of an underworked managing bureaucracy as little droppings are of mice. Let me describe its physical appearance. A deep burgundy cover with black and white print and ten sheets of the finest 120 g/m² art paper are folded into an A4 booklet. The pages are printed black and red, and there are numerous graphs and other charts.

The Chairman of The South East London Commissioning Agency is a Mr Ron Kerr. When I telephoned his office, he was unavailable for questioning. The person to whom I spoke refused to give his name, and refused to tell me even if he knew how many people, working how many hours at the public expense, had been involved in the Report's preparation.

But I was able to take my copy to a local printer. Assuming a run of 1,500, from word-processed copy, anything of mine of similar length, and published to the same standard, would cost me £7,550 plus VAT. A run of 20,000 would cost me £11,350 plus VAT. Since economies of scale always impress a commit-

tee, I imagine that a very large run was ordered. I have no wish to offend my Editor, but thousands and thousands would need to have been printed for one to be sent out to a magazine as obscure and as far removed from South East London as *Free Life*.

On page 11 of the Report, I read that "[t]he amount of money SELCA currently spends on health care is greatly in excess of what we will receive in future. As a result we will have to reduce our expenditure by at least £22 million (7 percent) in the next four years on hospital and community health services". Yes, the Commissioning Agency has a clear understanding of its priorities.

As for the rest of its contents, these vary between the sort of platitudinous drivel one finds in Department of Health circulars and increasingly inventive ways of spending a reduced budget on anything but medical salaries and equipment. Sometimes, they combine both. Thus, I read that no one in the area lives more than a 27 minute bus ride away from the next nearest hospital; and that lots of small hospitals - or "polyclinics" - are to be built, so that "health care" can be made "community based". This will please the local estate agents and builders, not to mention the clerical recruitment agencies.

Unless one happens to believe that the National Health Service can and ought to be made into an efficient provider of medical treatment free at the point of use, this Report is in every sense an encouraging document. I look forward to many more like it during the next few years.

Anthony Furlong

THE UNMENTIONABLE FACE OF POVERTY IN THE NINETIES: DOMESTIC INCOMPETENCE, IMPROVIDENCE, AND MALE IRRESPONSIBILITY IN LOW INCOME FAMILIES

Digby C. Anderson, The Social Affairs Unit, 1991, £4.00, 32pp. (0-907631-42-8).

As a libertarian, I desire nothing less than the total abolition of State welfare. Let those who are hungry work, or let them beg. Even in a market not completely free, they will find no shortage of employers, nor perhaps of charity. Otherwise, let them starve. But, above all, let there be no handing out of public funds. From both a moral and an economic view, the £58 billion now spent on keeping the feckless poor

alive would be far better devoted to cutting the taxes of the respectable classes.

But this is not yet an acceptable position to take in the debate on poverty. It will become acceptable, I am sure. For the moment, though, the best hope is the limitation of damage. The means must be argued for of containing the rate of increase in the welfare budget, and of ensuring that it shall not too greatly demoralise its recipients.

This is the virtue of Dr Digby Anderson's latest pamphlet. As a Christian and a conservative, he does believe in the principle of State welfare. He shares enough of the basic assumptions to be able to argue for change without abandoning his right to a hearing. And how he argues! Whether we look to the force and cogency of what he says, or to its reception in the media, Dr Anderson may be regarded as the most deadly critic of our poverty lobby.

His argument is condensed in the title of the pamphlet. The worst effects of poverty in this country, he says, are the fault of the poor themselves. Low incomes alone cannot be blamed. For these nowadays are usually enough to buy all the necessities of life. They are usually enough, indeed, to buy somewhat more. Even among the poorest fifth of households, there is mass ownership of the main consumer durables. If, as is the case, many low income households cannot manage without falling into debt, the cause is not lack of money, but simple incompetence. The cure is not more money, but better behaviour.

Dr Anderson rejects the usual reply to this for the nonsense that it is. The poor, he says, can change their ways. They are not the passive victims of external forces, but "are poor in part because of the things they, or those close to them, choose to do". How people manage their money, not how much they earn, is the real determinant of poverty. He looks at one low income family, the male head of which is in work but also deep in debt. They saved nothing. "He spent £5 to £10 a week, out of the £90 earnings, on tobacco, drink and gambling". Does anyone wonder why, at the first stroke of adversity, the whole family sank into destitution?

He looks at another, this time unemployed. "I go fishing at night" says the husband. "I dig my own bait.... I've got a freezer full of cod: it's a good meal, cod, full of protein". Dr Anderson comments: "Let us be judgmental. Let us moralise. For this man deserves our praise.

His wife is a lucky woman." If this be true, surely the other family deserves our blame?

These may be the extremes. But repeatedly, Dr Anderson sees mismanagement linked to poverty. The poor insist on buying

expensive convenience foods, designed for people who do not have time: tinned peas,... packets of shepherd's pie,... fish fingers. They overlook cheaper, often more nourishing, foods - ie, breast of lamb (75p each... and yielding over 1lb of lean meat),... ox-liver or kidney (both under 50p a pound),... inexpensive pulses, dried peas and lentils.[p. 18]

They do little to maintain their clothes, or to minimise transport costs. Nor do they seem to fear being in debt. Rather than save and then shop around, they prefer to buy on credit through relatively expensive mail order catalogues. "Many families are in debt paying an average of 11.5 per cent of their net incomes in repayments." They take out loans and never seem to care what the interest rate may be, or how many instalments must be paid. At best, they worry only about the level of repayments.

Here is the truth about poverty. Each year, we pay more in taxes to support the poor than we have paid to finance every war fought by this country since 1945. Much of it is spent on fish fingers and crowding my husband's morning train with idlers out on a spree. What better case is there, I ask, for abolition, or at least really savage cuts? But Dr Anderson is not an abolitionist. Instead, he proceeds, on the most rational statist assumptions, to argue for certain reforms.

What must be done, he says, is to recall the poor to sounder, if less fashionable, ways. They must be taught that a wise domestic economy lies in management, regularity, prudence, and thrift. The benefits are more than the simple avoidance of want. Rather these virtues bring others in their train - self-respect, patience, perseverance.

The poor must be made to realise that poverty is something that they, by their own efforts, can do much to avoid.

It is suggested that domestic economy be given a leading place in the national curriculum. Alternatively, it might be worth teaching the discipline directly to those claiming welfare. In Switzerland, for example, benefits are made conditional on improvements in domestic management. If the relevant official is not happy with how a claimant has managed over the previous fortnight, money is stopped out of the

next cheque. Again, in the more socialist areas of the United States, wasteful behaviour is hindered by giving not money but food stamps to the poor.

But one point is clearly and repeatedly made. If the poor are to be helped by the State, they cannot be helped merely by handouts.

If incompetent shopping is the problem, larger handouts will not cure it. Higher subsidies will not reform bad budgeting. Whatever be the behavioural cause, be it isolation,... illiteracy, poor motivation, depression, self-indulgent... spending by husbands,... a failure to look beyond today, simply increasing social security spending will not solve it.[p. 27]

In return for their benefits, the poor must be made to change their attitudes and way of life. The question of how this is to be done must be moved to the top of the public agenda. Otherwise, Dr Anderson concludes, much more of the Department of Social Security's £58 billion budget will simply be "thrown into what is currently a black hole".

Of course, it all does currently go into a black hole; and the real answer is to stop throwing any of it in. But, this not being an answer likely to be considered, Dr Anderson's is probably the best answer available - to suggest ways in which the rate of growth may be checked, and the acceptance of State welfare made less initially attractive than it has been for the past generation. This is a step in the right direction. Bearing in mind the drift of almost every other participant in the debate on poverty, it is a very considerable step.

Marian Halcombe

THE ANARCHIST COOKBOOK

William Powell, various publishers, 1971.

This book has enjoyed a wide, if often clandestine, circulation since it was first published. It has been fashionable even for those who have never seen a copy to refer to it with a knowing air whenever the subject of explosives or drugs is raised. Certainly, it has been called a "manual of terror" by Max Geltman, writing in the *National Review* for the 22nd July 1971. I find this phrase aptly descriptive, but not in the same sense that Mr. Geltman would have us believe.

The "Cookbook" consists of three basic parts: an introduction by Professor Bergman entitled "Anarchism Today"; and two much longer sec-

tions by William Powell on drug and explosive manufacturing.

If ever there was an example of Orwellian doublespeak, this is it! "Anarchism Today" is basically an interpretation of the philosophic roots of anarchism, awkwardly coupled with sketchy reference to current events. Almost all of the intellectuals discussed are from the nineteenth century; and there is virtually no mention of writings from 1930 to the present. This may be expected from someone who appears to have briefly studied the topic while at college during the 1920s, and thereafter relied only on superficial newspaper accounts. Professor Bergman should have been aware of Albert Jay Nock, for example; and anarchists today are certainly aware of Murray Rothbard, Karl Hess, *et al.*

Professor Bergman considers Nihilism to be a form of Anarchism, and Anarchism a form of radical revolutionism. He interprets Marxism in an anarchistic light, and correctly suggests that communist governments are feudalist and reactionary. However, his emphasis on the Marxist element in anarchist intellectual tradition is clearly one-sided. A more thorough and fair analysis covering the same time period can be found in *Native American Anarchism*, published in 1932 by Eunice Minette Schuster.

The emphasis on the Nihilistic and destructive aspects of Anarchism I find disturbing. This emphasis seems to arise from the axiom that the State is all, so to oppose the State is to oppose everything. Anarchists do not have to propose a concrete alternative because that would be authoritarian.

The rest of the book consists mainly of drug and explosive recipes relayed to us by William Powell. His motivation for doing so is supposedly to allow the "silent majority" access to information which he claims only the radical groups now possess. The idea of a "silent majority" comes from classical Greek literature and in that context referred to the dead who are the real majority. If you follow the steps outlined in these recipes, you may soon join them! *The Library Journal* for the 15th March 1971, puts it this way:

Much of it is so sketchy as to be harmless, but there are a number of booby traps still for the nitwit who wishes to try them. There are drug making recipes... that may make one very ill... There are also a number of stunts which could backfire on the idiot who tried them.

Ed Rosenthal told me that he had spent a lot of time trying to track down the rumours of pot growing in the New York sewers. Well, I may just have stumbled on the origin of the "New York White" rumours. Despite what Powell may think, plants are not as adaptable as alligators and need light to grow. Another choice quote: "...strangely enough, insects ignore marijuana and do no harm".

The United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has a Precursor Control Program watch list. This means that if you buy large quantities of the ingredients for illegal chemicals, the Federal Government may take an interest in your activities. Several chemicals on this list are used in Mr Powell's LSD recipe, such as acetonitrile, trifluoroacetic anhydride, dimethylformamide, and diethylamine. Benzene is also on the list, and may also arouse the interest of the Environmental Protection Agency because it is a known carcinogen.

The British Government remains rather less paranoid about drugs, but is rapidly catching up with the Americans. And, while the Home Office has as yet no similar list, chemical suppliers are legally obliged to report suspicious purchases to the local Police.

Much the same can be said regarding Mr Powell's other recipes, and in some cases the ingredients are as hard to get as the final products. For instance, his recipe for DMT starts out with indole, which is quite hard to obtain. Much better methods using L. Tryptophane (available in health food shops) are covered in various back numbers of *Synthesis*.

Again, ground nutmeg is suggested for a psychedelic experience. Yet in the quantities needed for one to get high on it, nutmeg is rather poisonous! However, the oil extracted from nutmeg, containing myristicin, can be used in the synthesising of MDMA - a better and mellow drug than MDA - more information about which is in the *Journal of Psychedelic Drugs* (vol. 8, no. 4, Oct-Dec 1976).

On page 58 of the *Cookbook*, nalline is described as "...a freak - a drug someone forgot to make illegal". Perhaps the Americans forgot because nalorphine is a powerful narcotic antagonist, which may produce violent convulsive reactions in morphine addicts. I should also point out to British readers - whom, I grant, Mr Powell is not mainly addressing - that the substance is in the controlled schedule of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, and is as illegal in unauthorised hands as amphetamine.

For more information, I would refer the reader to "The Clandestine Drug Laboratory Situation", in the *U.S. Journal of Forensic Sciences* (Jan 1983, pp. 18-31). This article, written by the Chief of the DEA, reports that none of the 17 laboratories busted during the previous year was successful in producing what was intended to be produced. The busted chemists were relying on recipes from popular underground drug manufacturing books. It was noted that such books contained errors which prevented the manufacture of the desired chemicals, while at the same time urging purchases that drew the attention of the authorities.

This being said, I turn now to Mr Powell's recommendations for the manufacture of explosives.

His method for producing mercury fulminate is incomplete and dangerous. Between steps 2 and 3, the solution should be cooled. Do not breathe the fumes. For further information, see *A Dictionary of Applied Chemistry* by Sir Edward Thorpe.

The recipe for TNT is also incomplete and dangerous. In step 1, mixing sulphuric and nitric acid will most likely result in fulmination and red toxic fumes. And the crude method described does not cover the removal of the ortho dinitro groups. If this were not done, the TNT would be extremely unstable. However, they can be removed with great ease by heating the crude material with aqueous sodium sulphite. For further information, see "Chemistry of Explosives", by George Wright of the University of Toronto, in his *Organic Chemistry*, p. 974.

The description of picric acid does not sufficiently emphasise its unstable nature. For example, storing it in a cracked glass container may cause it to explode. Conversely, on page 120, Mr Powell describes two relatively safe and easily obtained chemicals - potassium bichromate and potassium permanganate - as very sensitive, unstable, and too hazardous to work with.

There are a couple of pages devoted to general safety precautions, but the language suggests that they have been lifted from a military manual. Also, German spellings are used for some chemicals. If you attempt to order chemicals from an American or British supplier using German spellings, your order may be looked at with suspicion, even if what you are ordering is not in itself suspicious.

The Anarchist Cookbook was originally published in 1971. The review by *The Library Journal*, in which the above and other errors were exposed, came shortly after. Why has the book been reprinted many times since then, but never corrected? My theory is that Mr Powell is not an anarchist, but is spreading disinformation to actual or potential enemies of the United States Government. In 1971, he was an unknown undergraduate aged 21. Where did he get access to his "information"? He says he got it from radical friends, both left and right.

The Minuteman Manual is listed in the Bibliography. The original Minutemen were Colonial American revolutionaries. In the 1960s, the name was adopted by a radical offshoot from the John Birch Society: this offshoot has since been disbanded by the FBI. It is not likely that these modern Minutemen would have handed out their manual to a long haired undergraduate. Add to this that both the above movements were opposed to the United Nations, and that Mr Powell's father was a very important official in the United Nations. For further information, see *Newsweek*, 12th April, 1971.

This same William Powell has also written *Saudi Arabia and its Royal Family*, published in 1982. This consists of a series of interviews with members of the Saudi Royal Family and other observations that came to his mind while he was teaching at the University of Riyadh. It does not seem likely that the Saudi Royal Family would give such generous treatment to a real anarchist. Reading through the book, I came across some interesting quotes. Take, for example this:

Were something or someone to cut the flow of oil from the Arabian Gulf, the result would be truly apocalyptic for the United States, Western Europe, Japan, and much of the developing world.... In a worst-case scenario, all gasoline available would go to essential services such as the military, the police and fire departments, and the transport of food-stuffs. Most nonessential businesses and industries would close. Unemployment would skyrocket.

All major cities would, in all probability, have to be placed under martial law. Curfews would be imposed at gunpoint.... Inflation would metamorphose... into a lethal epidemic. We would enter a wheelbarrow economy like that of Germany before Hitler's rise to power....(p. 17)

I could go on, but I think you get the idea. His pessimistic analysis does not take full account of the market's ability to conserve and switch to alternative fuels. Moreover, I am concerned that Mr Powell seems to believe that government is as essential as the transport of food-stuffs, and that it can solve the fuel crisis through the draconian methods he describes. A real anarchist would point out that such a crisis would make the government easier to overthrow - which is the prime objective of anarchism.

It just doesn't add up, unless the alternative theory is accepted, that Mr Powell's information was fed to him by some organ of the American State. A U.S. Air Force combat controllers group studying guerilla warfare has arrived at a similar conclusion.

Let me conclude by quoting Mr Powell from the 12th April 1971 issue of *Newsweek*:

My book places power in the hands of the individual, where it belongs. The right calls it communist, the leftists call it profiteering, the liberals call it neo-Nazi.

Well, Mr Powell, this reviewer calls it bullshit!

Esperanza Godot

EDITORIAL NOTE

This Review was sent to me with an American postmark, but without a return address. Neither I nor anyone I have asked has ever heard of its author, and I assume the name "Esperanza Godot" to be a pseudonym. I have decided to publish it, but feel that I must add the following:

It is illegal to make or possess explosives or controlled drugs. It is illegal to possess certain ingredients for making the same, or any materials or equipment intended for their making. It is illegal to publish information that can be construed as intending to aid or abet the commission of the above offences.

The reader is advised to regard Ms Godot's Review not as an incitement to break the law, but as a warning to keep it. Though I am ignorant of chemistry, I am now persuaded to doubt the truth or safety of every recipe given in *The Anarchist Cookbook*. At the same time, I cannot judge the truth or safety of the improvements recommended by Ms Godot, or by *The Library Journal* article to which she refers. At least one of these is spreading falsehoods, but I cannot say which. Therefore, if for no other reason than the avoidance of some ghastly chemical mistake, it seems best to leave the making of explosives and controlled drugs well alone.

A NOTE ON CONTRIBUTORS

Sean Gabb is the Editor of *Free Life*. He has a yellow belt in Karate, and is currently a senior policy adviser to the Government of Slovakia.

Paul Kreling is a barrister, and Vice Chairman of the Lewisham-Deptford Conservative Association, in South London.

Howard Perkins is a civil servant working in the Lord Chancellor's Department in London.

Paul Marks is a freelance writer who specialises in philosophy. His most important work so far has been an analysis of the meaning of liberty in the writings of John Locke.

David Marsland is Reader in Social Sciences in the Department of Health and Paramedical Studies at the West London Institute of Higher Education, where he teaches epidemiology and research methods. He is also a member of the Social Sciences Committee of the Council for National Academic Awards, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Health, and Treasurer of the Radical Society. In 1991 he was the first recipient of the Thatcher Award.

Gerard Radnitzky is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy of Science at the University of Trier, Germany.

Dennis O'Keeffe is Senior Lecturer in Education at the Polytechnic of North London. He is Britain's foremost educational sociologist. His works include *The Wayward Curriculum* (1986), and *The Wayward Elite* (1990). He also writes for, among others, the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*. His educational ideas are currently being echoed by the British Education Secretary Kenneth Clarke.

Anthony Furlong is a freelance writer who specialises in issues relating to civil liberties.

Marian Halcombe is a housewife living in Essex.

Esperanza Godot sounds like the pseudonym of an American spook, and probably is.

In addition to publishing *Free Life*, the Libertarian Alliance also produces a large (around 300 as of now) and quite rapidly growing (i.e. about one new one per week, on average) range of pamphlets and monographs on a wide range of libertarian themes, not only narrowly political and economic, but also on cultural, historical, philosophical and scientific topics.

Write to: Libertarian Alliance,
25 Chapter Chambers,
Esterbrooke Street,
London SW1P 4NN,
for the LA catalogue.

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