

# HOBGOBLINS ARISE!

OVER 160 years ago now, Black Dwarf, in a perspicacious missive to his friend the Yellow Bonze, remarked that 'In England, the great art is not to avoid tyranny, but to disguise it'.\*

The wave of riots across Britain this month, however, bearing in their wake serious threats about the introduction of rubber bullets, water cannon, even tanks; the re-instatement of the Riot Act and the establishment of special riot courts and army camps for convicted rioters and looters, shows just how poor that disguise really is. Margaret Thatcher admitted as much when she said 'The veneer of civilisation is very thin. It has to be cherished if it is to continue. Whatever Margaret Thatcher actually means, it is certain that she was referring to a certain scale of values guaranteed by the police - or at least that large section of them who subscribe to the views of the chief constable of Manchester, James Anderton. These have predictably adopted the attitude that the riots were not caused by any social factor, but militarily organised by masked guerrillas on motor bikes, with London accents and CB radios. This is known as the conspiracy theory, or what Jeremy Bentham once described as the 'Hobgoblin Argument' - i.e. using the claim that we are 'close to anarchy' in order to sit tight and do nothing. Or rather, in this case, to sweep aside the hopes and ideas of community groups in favour of 'heavy policing'. Thus will the veneer of civilisation, if not the actual disguise of tyranny, be preserved.

There have, of course, been dissenting voices. The stock Labour response has been to deplore the decay of the inner cities, Tory monetarist policy and unemployment

\* Black Dwarf, a well-known radical paper, was published in the early 19th century.



- for all the world as if unemployment had not risen continuously throughout successive Labour governments - and to promise the complete abolition of unemployment when Labour resumes power.

Foreign newspapers and press agencies have largely blamed the Thatcher regime for the beginnings of what they see as civil war, by ignoring racism and fostering un-

employment and (in the words of the Soviet press agency, Tass) "unleashing (police) terror" in the cities; while the South Afrikaaner *Die Vaderland* fondly hopes that the riots will create greater sympathy among Britons for apartheid.

Sociologists have dwelt upon the problem of 'lax' parents, creating children "seven times more delinquent than others"(!) while attribut-

ing the laxity and the sevenfold delinquency to poverty and overcrowding; others have stressed the break down of traditional communal values and the frustration of expectations aroused by the consumerism of the '50s and '60s - the growth, in fact, of the society of the spectacle.

The Social Democrats, of course, with an eye to their by-elections, have managed to lay a large part of the blame on extremism of right and left. Denis Healey, too, from the front rank of the Labour right, spoke of the 'criminal fantasies' of the 'mindless militants of the Left as well as the Right (note the order of emphasis here) who say that political change must be brought about on the streets rather than in Parliament'. And from the front rank of the Labour left, Tony Benn warned that riots were not a means of 'social progress'.

Here, surely, we come closer to the heart of the matter. Not only is it a question of who controls the streets, but of what we may regard as genuine or legitimate political action.

Ironically, it is to Italy that we must turn to find a measure of good sense about the riots. In an article in one of the mass circulation dailies, *La Repubblica*, a correspondent writes "... it would be silly to link the height of the flames at Liverpool to the number of unemployed of the city. Great Britain, after all, has a long and vigorous tradition of street violence, so much so that in the eighteenth century the English system was described as 'a Whig oligarchy tempered by riot'. It can indeed be said that from the French Revolution onwards British politics have been dominated by the terror of 'mob rule', government by the multitude ..." Since then, Edgardo Bartoli goes on to observe, its political system has been implicitly based on the prevention of grave social disturbance by means of a mixture of reformism and repression as laid down in Bagehot's constitution. What the Black Dwarf so aptly encapsulated as not the avoidance, but the disguise of tyranny.

With this observation from abroad we begin to see things in perspective and, pace FREEDOM's somewhat caustic and abbreviated view of our radical past (last issue) recall just how long and vigorous the tradition

To give just a few quotations and references:-

Christopher Hill writes of pre-revolutionary England that it was "notorious throughout Europe for the violence of its politics", and refers to the findings of a sociolog-

ist who "has calculated that between 1450 and 1640 there were more internal disturbances in England than in any other European country".

Leaving aside the bloody mutinies of the New Model Army after Putney (see Review), which hardly qualify as 'street violence' (but after all, there wasn't really just Oliver Cromwell, as we know well!) and skipping on to the 19th century, we see the Bristol riots of 1831, the Birmingham Bull Ring riots of 1839, the Luddite riots, the East Anglian riots, the 'Last Labourer's Revolt', the Rebecca riots, the Plug riots and so on, until cooperatives and trade unions gradually began to channel agitation into more institutional forms. As for the 18th century, surely that goes without saying. Still, one might mention the Wilkite demonstrations following the massacre of St George's Fields, leading to riots at Mansion House and the building of barricades. While in 1780 the Frenchman, Sébastien Mercier, observing the Gordon Riots not long before the outbreak of the French Revolution, remarked that such events would be inconceivable in Paris, whereas in London, well ...

More recently, open revolt has been commoner than residents of a placid 'democratic' Britain realise. In 1886 there were massive riots in the west end of London, with a mob sweeping through fashionable areas smashing windows. (This seems preferable to destroying one's own living area, but the urge to destroy, etc ...) The next year, Trafalgar Square developed as a site for protest meetings. Eventually the police were used to clear them. In one particularly large confrontation three people were killed.

Around the same time groups of militants were patrolling working class areas to prevent evictions. In the early 1890s there was a wave of working class militancy and strikes. As an example, during the miners' strike of 1893, coal stocks were burned, pit machinery destroyed and food stores looted. Dockers' strikes were particularly violent. In one, Hull docks were burned down to drive out blacklegs.

This activity died down around the end of the century. There was a surge of patriotic fervour around the time of the Boer War. The next wave, if anything, was even stronger. The years 1910-1916 saw enough militancy to be labelled the 'syndicalist revolt'. Libertarian, decentralised 'anti-political' organisations sprang up everywhere. Perhaps it is significant that this followed the first entries of 'Labour' representatives into councils,

parliament etc.

During this period the number of working days lost through strikes never fell below 10 million per year. The peak was 1912 with 40.8 million days lost. During strikes in Manchester, Dundee and Liverpool, the organising committees controlled the towns, regulated transport and so on. Hull docks were burned down (again).

The war defused a lot of this. However, there was so much disillusionment by the end that troops could not be trusted during civil disorders. There were several mutinies.

The immediate post-war years saw a similar build-up. In 1921 no less than 85.8 million days were lost through strikes. However, the British Communist Party was founded at this time, and the glamour of bolshevism made spontaneous, decentralised militancy unfashionable.

The first Labour government was elected in 1924. In 1926 Trades Union 'leadership' sold out the General Strike.

It has been traditional to see the Gordon Riots as originating in the whipping up of racial prejudice by the Protestant Association against Irish Catholic immigrants; yet what can scarcely be denied is the way in which they developed into a massive attack against wealth and authority in general. In the same way, particular causes may be attributed to the recent riots in London, Manchester, Liverpool and elsewhere, yet it can scarcely be denied that they constituted, above all, an attack on authority, and even more, on authoritarianism. No, the rioters were saying, the streets will not be the terrain of the police, or the police alone.

To see this happening gives us a spontaneous, a natural sense of exhilaration. But we must also reflect upon where it leads. "Is this the Beginning?" asked FREEDOM. Most probably not. The Gordon riots resulted in little more than a strengthening of the police and a reinforcement of the government executive. The Bristol riots of 1980, it is said by blacks themselves, changed nothing except that the police tried to smile a little, and stayed out of the Black and White Cafe. Revolutions are made by a lot more than this, and, besides, what kind of revolution do we want?

The recent riots, though they may lend weight to the words of Tory 'wets', and though they may well have the highly beneficial effect of bringing a sense of pride and dignity to the black, Asian and

disenchanted communities, are not likely to bring the aims of anarchism itself much closer.

Perhaps, as we continue to combat authoritarianism, in whatever form, the best policy, paraphrasing Black Dwarf, is not to avoid conflict, but, in a certain sense, to disguise it. To go about it, that is, in such a way that we make it more difficult for governments to act repressively against us. In doing so we must remember to act coolly, intelligently and with discrimination. More specifically, to try to avoid taking the police (and soon the army?) head on. For, far more than being a direct street struggle against the police, who are the guarantors of the veneer of their civilisation, the anarchist struggle is against the heart of that civilisation itself.

G & D

# Mein Camp

WITH the present flood of prisoners being sent down following the various riots of the last few months the Prison Service has a problem. Even before the riots the prison population had broken through the official limit of 42,000 and had risen to 44,600. Considering that the prison population does not usually peak until November (early Christmas shoplifters perhaps?), there appears to be no sign of this latest crisis easing this year. With many prisoners already sleeping two to a cell such gross overcrowding is bound to lead to demonstrations and riots inside the prisons not unlike the Hull Prison riots of the early Seventies. Just to make matters worse the prisons themselves seem to be in danger of imminent collapse. In FREEDOM Vol 42 No 10 we re-



ported that one of the wings at Brixton Prison had been closed due to structural defects. Now it seems that another wing has been closed for 'security reasons' and half of C Wing has closed, again due to structural faults. The governor of Brixton has told a Commons Home Affairs committee that 'I would not be surprised if the senior foreman of works walked into my office tomorrow and said "I am sorry but the rest of C Wing has to close" or "a wing has to close due to wet rot"'. The Commons committee has also been told that Pentonville's walls 'are in a parlous state' and that the whole prison is 'literally falling to bits'. Wakefield and Parkhurst Prisons are also in danger of collapse. It is not just the older prisons that are in trouble. Risley Remand Centre, built in the Sixties, is reported as having deteriorated to the point of collapse. The prisons built during the war years, the Committee was told, are being 'held together by paint'. Duncan Buttery, the officer in charge of buildings, is wailing that 'the prisons are collapsing around our ears'.

Of course, one reason for the shoddy work that is about to end British Prisons as we know them could be the use of prisoners as labour to build and maintain them. Somehow the motivation to do a 'job well done' must be rather lacking. Another reason could be a desire to share in the cake this government is handing out to the forces of Law and Order. (Alas, see Maggie's 6 percent pay guideline fall by the wayside as our gallant constabulary

advance, shiny new riot shields and water cannon at the ready, to claim their 13 percent increase). The slice needed to upgrade the Prison Service is rather large, £1000 million to be precise. Alas for the 'Service', the committee has put the block on that and has instead directed that priority should be given to patching up the more serious damage. It also recommends that the four new prisons be built in the cities alongside the courts. This would save on transport costs, make it easier for families and legal advisers to visit prisoners. It would also 'cut the social isolation that prison officers suffer'. Perhaps that last item could explain this sudden concern among prison officers for the state of the prisons. Most prison officers couldn't give a shit for the conditions that the prisoners have to live in. Unfortunately for the screws they also have to work in these conditions. Following the failure of their attempt to get higher wages this concern reveals itself as just a desire to improve prison officers lives. A usual little will be done to improve the lot of the prisoners.

But still, somewhere must be found to put all these excess prisoners. The Home Secretary, Willie Whitelaw, has 'asked' the Army to make available some of their camps to be used as temporary prisons. The first of these camps, Rollestone on Salisbury Plain, will soon be opened. It will take 500 low risk prisoners who are serving the last three months of their sentences. It will be staffed by Prison Officers. The camp was last used during the Officers strike when Army personnel and police did the guard duty. Though explained as a temporary measure, what with the large number of prisoners about and the state of the prisons, these prison camps look like becoming a permanent part of the British Penal System. I wonder if they will put a notice above the gates? Something uplifting, like perhaps 'Arbeit mach frei'?

MAK



# Liverpool Burns



The much-propagated face of that heroic constable . . .

And now some anecdotes:

\*The large number of Unigate milk floats commandeered by the crowd presented a bizarre spectacle.

Many were simply steered at police lines, but one was seen driving up Cearns Street, the driver calling out 'Anyone want a fridge - anyone want a colour telly - they're all new.'

\*Little publicity has been given to the police use of plastic bullets as well as CS gas. As Liverpool hospitals were full of injured police it's hard to get information on where rioters were treated and what for.

\*A black teenager sitting in the wreckage of the T. S. B. was heard to announce: 'The office is open - would you like a loan?'

\*A couple driving home with their young child had their new car struck by four CS gas canisters, which should make for an unusual insurance claim.

EVEN as I write this, the riots in Liverpool 8 are being put in perspective by incidents all over the country. The troubles here remain important for several reasons; they illustrate perfectly the unwillingness of police, press and politicians to deal with members of the community as human beings capable of forming a view of their situation (instead we have the archetypal rioter - a mindless black thug and hooligan aged 10 or under, riding a motorbike and burning with greed); they show up an extraordinary incompetence and lack of judgement from the police; they remain the most serious defeat ever for the police force and in my view signal the return of the crowd as a force in English politics after an absence of nearly 100 years.

The events in Liverpool 8 were sparked off by the arrest of Leroy Cooper for a number of absurdly exaggerated assault charges arising from scuffles following a chase between a police car and a motorbike. The Cooper family are a local cause celebre because of the degree of police harassment visited upon them over the last 18 months, extraordinary even by local standards. Their case ( see July 17th issue of New Statesman) raises the question once more in Liverpool of how the community can be protected from the police. (The raids and reprisals which have already begun will focus attention still more.)

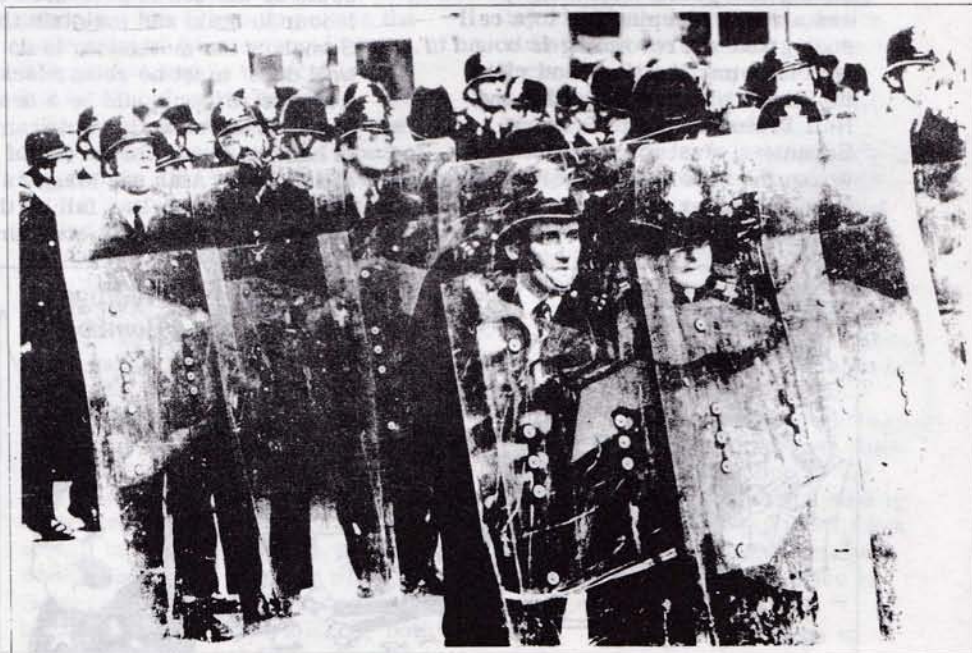
This spark was all that was needed to fuel three nights of street battles. It just goes to show how arrogant the police are that they were never able to come to terms with the ferocity and hatred vented at them, nor to put up any sort of a fight in the face of such great ingenuity and courage verging on lunacy.

In spite of this it's amazing how badly the police did, especially on the Sunday night (in which events I must say I did not take part). The police could not prevent the crowd driving them back for over half a mile even though both sides knew full well that the target was the Rialto, a huge ex-cinema then a much-hated second-hand furniture dealers, and currently a hole in the ground. The only concern on the police side was to prevent the crowd reaching Hope St. police H.Q. about

$\frac{1}{4}$  mile away. All the talk of organisation and conspiracies is shown up as hollow when you hear participants talk about how difficult it was to co-ordinate attacks on the police.

Similarly the accusation of indiscriminate thuggery doesn't look so good when you hear people describe the evacuation of the old peoples' hospital and see from the devastation surrounding it how impossible it would have been to evacuate it without the rioters' co-operation.

The third night of rioting, in the Park Road area, was almost exclusively white and was aimed at Leo's superstore. By then looting was the main driving force and certain elements in the black community had decided to put the stops on it, some resentful that while black youth were risking life and limb at the Rialto, a mainly white crowd had looted Lodge Lane and burned much of it to the ground. I'm not suggesting that people objected to looting as such but that there was and is a feeling that the community's assets should be protected now. As it turned out the police 'won' the third night and the large number of police placed inside Leo's were not needed. The crowd did get close though - I understand £1 million worth of damage was caused that night, in spite of 2,000 police being deployed in the area.





having a good time?

Caroline Tisdall

# White Law's Nightmare

ONE State is much like another, under the variety of veneers designed to cover the essential truth. Those 'social democrats' who bewail the attitudes within the Labour Party are strangely silent at the growth of ideas of a distinctly undemocratic character concerning the setting up of prison camps to supposedly deal with rioters and looters.

A steady rule for anarchists is that anything that gives us pleasure will scare authority. Thus the eleven days that has shaken English complacency (where are you Scottish brethren?) is the high of a libertarian's half realised dream and the nightmare of Whitelawanorder.

I wondered at Bristol over a year ago whether we could look back at that expression of anger as the beginning of the end. Now it seems we should view it in that way.

\*Young people in Lodge Lane were helping those who felt unable to enter premises by bagging goods up for them and placing them on the pavement.

\*One woman was heard criticising her friend who, unable to overcome the habits of many years, was stealing margarine instead of butter.

\*A man walking down Lodge Lane asked a passer by for a cigarette and was given a box of 200.

\*The owner of the A delphotis kebab house on Parliament Street was drinking a can of lager and watching from an upstairs window when a petrol bomb sailed into the room. He ran out of the premises still clutching the can of lager and was

arrested for looting, spending 24 hours in custody.

\*Of the hundreds arrested only two have been given bail. The work of the defending solicitor in many of the cases may have been hampered slightly by the fact that his office used to be in the same block as the Rialto.

\*On Monday night one was entertained by the sight of groups of policemen from Wales, the Lake District etc., standing round nervously trying to understand scrappy maps of the area that they'd been given.

E. S.

The predictable reaction of the baying wolves of right and left - howling for blood and whining with self-pity - can be ignored, unless you are in the firing line. The 'cause' of the riots has been with us for years: oppression. What is extraordinary is that in widespread direct action a response of a deep and thundering anger has been made manifest for all to witness. People have hit back. But it is not enough and the direction of this expression of feeling will be meaningless without the assistance of our rulers.

They will harden the resolve for sure. Surely they will be studying techniques developed in Russia, Spain, Nazi Germany, Northern Ireland, South Africa and Chile for 'stamping out illegality'. Naturally our rulers would like to kill all the rioters on sight, to hang the corpses mutilated beyond description for the general throng to see. Why not? It might not result in the objective of placating the body politic. It would be messy, crude, barbaric, uncivilised - but would it work? God shakes his head for the Devil is at work his wonders to unfold.

So let us say just these words of truth: all good women and men salute those who in our streets resist the oppression of the State. Methods of direct action prove, yet again, their strength and value. This is the end of parliamentary politics and the beginning of a real struggle for liberation. May our rulers shake with fear before they rot. You ain't seen nothing yet.

Next time is here.

J.W.



# REPORTS

## Tyne and Wear

Tyne and Wear Anarchist/D.A.M. Group.

FOLLOWING an Anti-Royalist demo culminating in the arrest of six comrades (FREEDOM 18.7.1981) Northumbria Police are harassing members of the Tyne and Wear Anarchist/D.A.M. Group.

Recently the anarchist punk band 'Total Chaos' distributed an anarchist leaflet at a gig. The police warned one of the band members against further distribution on the grounds that it was conducive to incitement to steal. After the gig the comrade was shadowed by a plain clothed policeman for a considerable period of time.

Comrades street selling Xtra have also been subjected to police interference. Alleging that the paper was probably seditious they confiscated a copy saying that it would be scrutinised to see if there was anything they could 'get you for'. When a comrade raised the issue of freedom of expression the reply was: 'You are as free as we permit you to be.' During this episode an individual kept furtively appearing and disappearing among the pedestrians snap-shooting the sellers from different angles.

A well attended successful public meeting on anarcho-syndicalism was addressed by Dave Thompson, National Secretary D.A.M., in a Newcastle pub. Prior to the meeting the police pressurised the landlord in an attempt to cancel the hire of the room.

A copper's nark infested the meeting. It is hoped his limited intellectual horizon was broadened.

D. H.

## Belfast

WITH two more hunger strikers - Kieran Doherty, T.D., and Kevin Lynch - nearing death in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh, a massive demonstration took place in Dublin Saturday July 18th. About 15,000 people marched through the city in an attempt to reach the British Embassy. Large numbers of people (including families of the hunger strikers) were there from the North, making the long journey in hired vans, coaches and private cars. I travelled down with a small but determined contingent from the Markets/Ormeau district of Belfast, who had few illusions about the possible outcome of the march, but who, nevertheless, were in good heart.

The Gardai, in what seemed to be a new issue of small bright-blue helmets with plastic visors, were out in force round the more sensitive areas in the city such as British Home Stores (a favourite target), the G.P.O., and along the main streets. At first glance their presence seemed to be casual and almost token. Some of them could be seen leaning against shop windows, legs crossed, hands in pockets, looking rather like characters in a western movie lounging outside saloons waiting for the noon train.

The demonstration moved from St. Stephen's Green at about 3pm and, at about 4pm, reached a large garda cordon drawn up across the main road at Simmonscourt Road. The cordon was in several long lines, behind metal barriers, and although it was impossible to see from behind the very front lines of the march, film taken at the time shows large garda forces arriving behind the cordon all the time. Gardai faced a barrage of missiles from the crowd which continued to try to move forward in an angry mass. At one point it seemed as if the garda line would be broken, but having taken about twenty minutes of barrage, they charged the crowd and laid into them mercilessly with batons. It is a cruel irony that many of the injured demonstrators were not those who had been involved in the fighting, but were those whose lines were exposed when the fighters moved rapidly to dodge the baton charge. The violence, both physical and verbal, of the Gardai,

was blatant. 'Go back to Northern Ireland, where you belong, you bastards', was one of the choice phrases. Many people passed us, their heads pouring with blood, and even some elderly and peaceful marchers who took refuge in back gardens along the road, were flushed out and beaten 'without quarter'. Members of the press were also flailed and ambulances ferried the injured from the scene for about 35 minutes after the battle had ended. We heard that the Irish army was also on stand-by.

It is evident that the state forces of the South are ready and equipped to deal with mass demonstrations of this kind. The injuries sustained are unlikely to give confidence to people ill-equipped to defend themselves either physically or tactically. It would seem that general public outrage at state violence is short-lived when faced with authoritarian justification and media concern about the numbers of injured police. What would seem to be needed here in Ireland, and in all such areas of rebellion, is sporadic and autonomous demonstrations of small numbers that cannot be easily contained and which stretch the state's forces to their limits. The RUC in Northern Ireland, and even the police in Moss Side, Manchester, have learnt the value of speedy fleets of small vehicles crossing areas of rebellion in waves. They fire on demonstrators, take photographs for future use, and use snatch squads to pick up 'ring leaders'. New tactics must be rapidly and thoughtfully devised, unless we are to see the number of horrifying injuries from batons and plastic bullets and the number of arrested increase. It is important for confidence to be established and for objectives to be reached.

Street battles in Dublin do something to assert the right of people to express their anger and to put pressure on a seemingly uncaring State that permits the continuing deaths of hunger strikers and others, in a climate of intransigence. Whilst the State does not feel sufficiently threatened (by physical attack or by mass public opinion) and whilst it can be seen to be containing all manifestations of dissent, then it will continue its policy of 'no quarter' and a people exhausted by token rebellion and defeat will lose heart and energy. The time to devise such thoughtful tactics is now.

Ann

# LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LET

## Nice Change

Dear FREEDOM,

Having read Alan Morrison's letter all I can really say is how much of a change it makes to hear of someone who's doing something to counter the more general apathy that pervades not just social work, but society at large. I hope I haven't given the impression that the types of 'home' I was in for most of the time were of the large 'community' type because although I did spend my early years in such an institution, mainly I was in a smaller 'family group' home, but needless to say, the scale of ill-treatment meted out to others as well as myself in the latter was far the worse of the two. In other words the argument often used by Directors of Social Services and the like, that the smaller the institution the more caring it will be, doesn't necessarily follow. Again, I was brought up by the same authority as was Paul Brown, and the only conclusion I can draw is that the reason why children continue to be ill-treated has fuck all to do with the particular arrangement, be it large institution or just fostering, but the type of person that is entrusted to look after what are, in most cases, already disturbed children. Don't get me wrong, I don't mean to indict a particular type of person, but there's something wrong with a system which continues to appoint as its matrons, houseparents, or whatever name you want to use, people of dubious prior experience in bringing up children, or often with no such experience at all. It strikes me that society at large remains unaware of these things, which is why I'm trying to communicate my own particular experience not to people who I know aren't listening, but to people I believe do care about these things, and I believe that anarchists who purport to want change could maybe gain some encouragement from that despite my, what are in many ways still with me, problems I'm trying to do something about. Finally, my own opinion is that it's not before time that people are prepared to expose the myth that's the 'welfare state' and that instead of paying people, the community should look after what is its other side, those people in, not just children's homes, but also mental hospitals, special schools etc., those people who are conveniently forgotten while this government increases expenditure

on military weapons but is everywhere cutting back on the only real services that it provides, no matter that these 'services' are already patchy. Anyway, I hope I've posed a few questions which maybe others could think about.

Yours with love,

Liverpool JOHN GODDARD

## Turning Point

Dear FREEDOM,

It was highly instructive to read your articles on the Brixton People's Uprising. I had no idea how much harassment was involved in an area like Brixton.

As a libertarian I have, like many others, advocated a society of egalitarian co-operation with such things as collective peoples' transport, instead of the mindless private transport ownership promoted by the atom bomb cultures of China, Russia, U.S.A., U.K. etc. Yes even in China there are private motor vehicles and television channels for those wealthy enough to own a T.V. When the people are free they won't need to own a death T.V. Obviously Utopians cannot expect people to easily grasp the realisation of collective sharing whilst yet living in and being brainwashed by capitalist consumerism. However it was the same capitalist society that several years ago painted a rosy picture of a technological society with fewer working hours served by grandiose leisure centres and increased educational facilities to offset any possible boredom. Remember all those popular press visions of a society serviced by robots, with the people enjoying a life of luxury. Now we have reached that stage - the ability to produce more with a smaller working week, the reality is the exact opposite. Leisure costs more and is available to fewer. Free festivals, like Windsor, were suppressed and the cultural harassment continues. Mind depressants like alcohol are O.K. but anything psychedelic is still surrounded by all the bad vibes of money deals and ten year prison sentences.

History is reaching a turning point. The A bomb programmes could soon be obsolete as capitalism both Soviet and Monopoly engages in a life and death struggle with its own societies.

Thatcher will be looking for further billions to equip the police - too bad Thatcher that you can't drop an atom bomb on Brixton and Bogside.

A. VOICE

## More Fun or not?

Dear FREEDOM,

Ann's article on Free Market Fun was just great, I have never seen such a stunning demonstration before of anarchists coming out honestly against the pleasure principle. Her complaint that Wencke showed a film in which no-one was crying, threatening anyone or giving two fingers to the camera is extraordinary. Why should anyone want to see people crying? Or threatening one another? It's bizarre. You know, some people are not happy unless they're miserable. Happiness is the great political act just as isolation is the great anarchist stance. It's just back to lewd old Lenin, the one that said socialism plus electricity equals communism and meant love of misery plus repression of sexuality equals the USSR. What have anarchists learned from Soviet history? If we learnt anything at all it's never, never, never put production before sexuality, never trust anyone who puts party before people, who puts power before happiness. There's only one worthwhile object in life and in anarchist revolution. That's the pursuit of happiness for all. If you are into misery, count me out. Friedrichshof is one of the few places in the world that acts on facts and acknowledges sexuality as the basis of human personality. The model provided by Friedrichshof, where in true anarchist style people have responsibility for their own lives and live collectively rather than in isolation should be a shining beacon, guiding us out of the swamp. Wencke herself was very much involved in anarchist and feminist politics - she is not blind to the war or to the dangerous stupidities of world leaders; but in going to Friedrichshof she has chosen to reject the cult of misery in favour of being powerful, dynamic and autonomous.

MARTIN CHRISTOPHER  
Bradford.

P.S. I especially liked Ann's postscript, the sort of Government Health Warning. Of course Friedrichshof is dangerous; it is dangerous to the state and to the nuclear family state ideology that still infests people's minds and deforms their lives.

# FREEDOMS CONTACTS PAGE

## Groups

**ABERDEEN** Libertarian Group  
c/o 163 King Street, Aberdeen.

**ABERYSTWYTH.** David Fletcher,  
59 Cambrian Street Aberystwyth.

**BARRY.** Terry Philips, 16 Robert  
Street, Barry, South Glamorgan.

**BELFAST** Anarchist Collective,  
Just Books, 7 Winetavern Street,  
Belfast 1.

**BRIGHTON** Libertarian Socialist  
group, c/o Students Union, Falmer  
House, University of Sussex,  
Falmer, Brighton.

**BRISTOL** Beaminster, 110 Gren-  
ville Road, Bristol 3.

**CAMBRIDGE** Anarchists, Box A,  
41 Fitzroy Street, Cambridge.

**CANTERBURY** Alternative Research  
Group, Students Union, University  
of Kent, Canterbury.

**CARDIFF.** Write c/o One-O-Eight  
Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Road.

**COVENTRY.** John England, Stud-  
ents Union, University of Warwick,  
Coventry.

**CUMBRIA** 12 Bath Terrace  
Drovers Lane, Penrith, Cumbria.

**DUBLIN.** Love v Power, Whelan's  
Dance Studio, 51 South King Street  
Dublin 2.

**EAST ANGLIA DAM**  
Martyn Everrett, 11 Gibson Gardens,  
Saffron Walden, Essex.

**ESSEX.** Oral Abortions, The Cat-  
skills, Maldon Road, Gay Bowers,  
Danbury, Essex.

**EXETER** Anarchist Collective c/o  
Community Association, Devonshire  
House, Stocker Road, Exeter.

**GLASGOW** Anarchist Group, John  
Cooper, 34 Raithburn Avenue,  
Castlemilk, Glasgow G45.

**GLASGOW** Books Collective, c/o  
128 Byres Road, Hillhead, Glasgow.

**HASTINGS** Anarchists, 18a Mark-  
wick Terrace, Saint Leonards-on-  
Sea, East Sussex. (0424)420 620.

**HULL** Libertarian Collective,  
70 Perth Street, Hull HU5 3NZ

**KEELE** Anarchist Group, c/o  
Students Union, The University,  
Keele, Staffordshire.

**KEIGHLEY** Anarchists c/o Simon  
Saxton, 1 Selbourne Grove, Keighley  
West Yorkshire BD21 2SL

**LAMPETER** Anarchist Group,  
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Dyfed SA48 7ED, Wales.

**LIVERPOOL** Anarchist Group, c/o  
Hywel Ellis, Students Union, Liv-  
erpool University, Liverpool.

**LEAMINGTON** and Warwick, c/o  
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**LEICESTER.** Blackthorn Books,  
74 Highcross Street (tel 21896), and  
Libertarian Education, 6 Beacons-  
field Road (tel 552085).

### LONDON

Anarchist-Feminists, Box 33,  
Rising Free, 182 Upper Street N1.  
Anarchy Collective, 37a Grosvenor  
Avenue N5 (01-359 4794 before 7pm)  
Meets each Thursday at Little@  
Press, C1 Metropolitan Wharf,  
Wapping Wall, Wapping E1. (22a  
bus or Wapping tube).  
Anarcha United Mystics meet each  
Thursday at 8pm, Halfway House  
Pub, opposite Camden Town tube.  
Freedom Collective, Angel Alley,  
84b Whitechapel High Street E1.  
(01- 247 9249). Aldgate East tube,  
near Whitechapel Art Gallery.  
Greenpeace, 6 Endsleigh Street,  
London WC1. Meet Thursdays 7pm.  
Kingston Anarchists, 13 Denmark  
Street, Kingston upon Thames,  
(01-549 2564).  
London Workers Group, Box W,  
Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, N1.  
(01-249 7042) meets Tuesdays 8pm  
at Metropolitan Pub, 75 Farringdon  
Road, EC1.  
Middlesex Poly Anarchists, Students  
Union, Trent Park Site, Cockfosters  
Road, Barnet, Herts.  
Black Bomber Anarchists, Hackney/  
Lambeth/Barnet, Box 29 Rising Free  
182 Upper Street N1.  
121 BOOKSHOP and meeting place,  
121 Railton Road, Herne Hill, SE24.  
Xtra! Structureless Tyranny, 182  
Upper Street N1.  
MALVERN and Worcester area,  
Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Stor-  
ridge, Malvern, Worcestershire.  
NORWICH Anarchists. Student  
group and town group and Freewheel  
Community Bookshop Collective, all  
c/o Freewheel, 56 Saint Benedicts  
Street, Norwich, Norfolk.  
NOTTINGHAM, c/o Mushroom,  
10 Heathcote Street (tel 582506) or  
15 Scotholme Avenue, Hyson Green  
(tel 708 302).  
OLDHAM. Nigel Broadbent, 14  
Westminster Road, Failsworth.  
OXFORD Anarchist Group and  
Solidarity, c/o 34 Cowley Road,  
Oxford.  
PAISLEY Anarchist Group are un-  
fortunately contactable through the  
Students Union, Hunter Street,  
Paisley, Renfrewshire.  
PLYMOUTH Anarchists, 115 Saint  
Pancras Avenue, Pennycross, Ply-  
mouth.  
PORTSMOUTH area anarchist  
group, c/o Garry Richardson, 25

Beresford Close, Waterlooville,  
Hants. or Duncan Lamb, Nirvana,  
Chichester Yacht Basin, Birsham,  
West Sussex.

RHONDDA and MidGlamorgam,  
Henning Andersen, 'Smiths Arms'  
Treherbert, MidGlamorgam.  
SHEFFIELD Anarchists, c/o 4  
Havelock Square, Sheffield S10 2FQ  
Libertarian Society, Post Office  
Box 168, Sheffield S11 8SE.  
SOUTH WALES DAM c/o Smiths  
Arms, Baglan Road, Treherbert,  
Mid-Glamorgan, South Wales. Write  
for anarcho-syndicalist contacts in  
Treherbert, Rhondda, Pontypridd,  
Penarth, Barry and Cardiff areas.  
SWANSEA - Black Dragon, Box 5  
c/o Neges Bookshop, 31 Alexandra  
Road, Swansea, SA1 5DQ. Meet  
from Mondays at the Mountain Dew  
Inn, Swansea. Baby-sitting can be  
arranged.  
SUSSEX anarchist group, c/o  
Students Union, Falmer House,  
University of Sussex, Brighton.  
SUNDERLAND anarchists/DAM  
c/o 183 Durham Road, Sunderland,  
SR3 4BX.  
SWINDON Area. Mike, Groundswell  
Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon.  
TAYSIDE Anarchist Group, 3L 188  
Strathmartine Road, Dundee.  
TORBAY Anarchist Federation,  
This Hedown, Milton Street, Brix-  
ham, Devon, TQ5 9NQ.  
WAKEFIELD Anarchist and Peace  
Group, c/o E. Fazackerley, 36  
Bowen Street, Agbrigg, Wakefield,  
West Yorkshire.

## Meetings

London Workers Group  
Public meeting: 8.15 pm, Tuesday,  
4th August in the Metropolitan Pub,  
Farringdon Road, London, EC1.  
entitled 'Glass War: Have you got the  
Bottle?'

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Anarchist Review

# Freedom

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# THE PUTNEY DEBATES



*In 1647 the earliest recorded public debates in England on fundamental social and political issues were held in the parish church at Putney on the Thames just outside London. The protagonists were leaders of various factions of the victorious Army following the Civil War. We are describing their arguments in this issue to coincide with the latest public debates on similar issues, being held at the Elephant Fayre in Cornwall over the week of 30 July - 2 August.*

THE English Revolution of the seventeenth century is remarkable for many things. One is that it was the first time the people spoke with its own voice, both in person and in print. And one of the most interesting examples of this new phenomenon was the Putney Debates of 1647.

The background of this event is rather complex but is necessary for a proper understanding of what happened. The English Revolution was as complex as the French and Russian Revolutions which followed it, and no episode makes sense in isolation. The Putney Debates followed seven years of intense political activity, and were followed by political activity which in a sense has lasted until the present situation, more than three centuries later.

The English Revolution began with the non-violent resistance to the regime of King Charles I by the Parliament - that is, the majority of the House of Commons, which controlled most taxation, and a minority of the House of Lords, whose members owned most of the property in the country. This resistance began when the King had to call Parliament to help him in his quarrel with the Scots in 1640. The Revolution continued with the violent resistance by Parliament to the King's attempt to subdue it by force in 1642, following its destruction of his chief ministers, Strafford and Laud, and its attack on the Church of England.

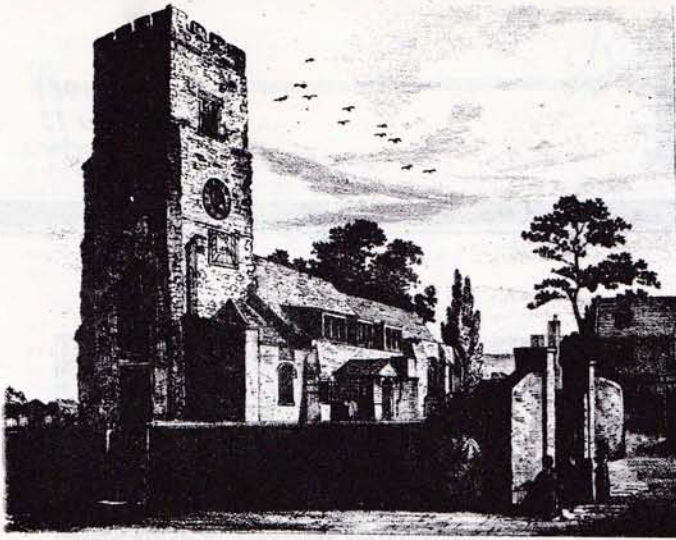
The result was the Civil War between Parliament and the King, which lasted for four years, and which ended with the complete victory of Parliament and the first defeat of a British monarch without any attempt to put someone else in his place. The problem in 1646 was what to put in the place of the monarchy as it had been before 1642. Almost everyone agreed that England

should continue to be a monarchy, but almost no one agreed what kind of monarchy it should become; and in the resulting argument there first came into the open ideas of democracy and republicanism, even of socialism and anarchism.

## After the Civil War

The Civil War ended with the fall of the Royalist headquarters, Oxford, in June 1646. But in April Charles had already escaped, and in May he surrendered to the Scots at Newark - as his own people (the Stuarts ruled Scotland for centuries before they ruled England), his most sympathetic (and distant) enemies, and his most likely allies in rescuing him from his military failure and in restoring him to his political position. Charles began this process by trying to negotiate with and to make trouble between all the various parties which were trying to work out a permanent settlement for England.

The true Royalists, who were eclipsed for fifteen years, were mostly Episcopalian - Protestants who wanted the Bishops and Priests of the Church of England as established by Henry VIII and Elizabeth and as defended by James I and Charles I. There were also still some Roman Catholics, who looked to Ireland, which had successfully rebelled against the English regime in 1641, and to Charles's Catholic queen, who had taken refuge in her native France, and who hoped for intervention from Catholic countries - France, of course, but also Spain, the traditional enemy of the Armada and the Gunpowder Plot; they were only a minor threat, but they were a major scapegoat for all other parties.



Most of the opponents of the King were Royalists of some kind and only very moderate revolutionaries - just as in the later French and Russian Revolutions. The Scots and the majority of the English Parliament and of the economically important City of London were Presbyterians - Protestants who wanted the Church to be ruled by elected Elders (Presbyters), and who formed the bulk of the Puritan opposition to the old political and religious regime. But they wanted a quick settlement with the King, partly to safeguard the bourgeois regime which had financed the war and which would be endangered from either a Royalist reaction or a more radical revolution.

A minority of the Parliament and the majority of the Army were Independents - Protestants who wanted a much more democratic system of Church government, generally based on the independence of individual congregations (hence the later name Congregationalist), and also a much greater measure of religious toleration for all Protestants or even for all Christians. And to the "left" of the Independents were various radical groups and individuals - religious extremists, such as old Anabaptists and new Ranters, and political extremists, later called Levellers, whose best-known leader was John Lilburne and whose brief period of significant influence was about to begin.

## The Army takes over

Charles soon alienated the Scots by rejecting their extreme Presbyterianism, and in January 1647 they handed him over to the English Parliament, which held him at Holdenby House in Northamptonshire and tried to negotiate on its own, proposing a more moderate Presbyterian settlement. But before it could deal with the King, Parliament had to deal with the Army which had actually won the war.

This army was not a mob of mere mercenaries or conscripts, though it included both. The New Model Army, which was created in the middle of the war, was based on men who fought for what they believed, following the Dutch and Swedish armies before and foreshadowing the French and Russian revolutionary armies. Its commander was Thomas Fairfax, but its real leader was his second-in-command, Oliver Cromwell, a military genius and at the same time a religious Independent and a political operator of great skill. As the Thirty Years' War drew to a close on the Continent, the English Army of 20,000 disciplined and experienced men was a formidable body indeed.

Yet Parliament proposed to demobilise most of the Army, sending the rest to reconquer Ireland, and to settle England without it. The trouble was that the Army didn't trust the Parliament, and anyway wanted its pay, which was up to a year in arrears. In May 1647 the House of Commons voted to disband the Army; however, the Army not only refused to disband, but took matters into its own hands, and in June seized the King and took him to Hatfield House in Hertfordshire to negotiate on its own.

Meanwhile the rank and file had made one of the most significant steps of the English Revolution, by choosing representatives called "agitants" or "agitators" (meaning agents or deputies rather than trouble-makers)

to meet at the headquarters in Saffron Walden and to communicate grievances both to the Army commanders and to Parliament. It is not too fanciful to see their council as a Soldiers' Soviet, and to see the factions in the Army as Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, and the conservative revolutionaries in Parliament as Social Revolutionaries.

During the summer of 1647 the Army leaders worked out the terms to be offered the King, which were published as *The Heads of the Proposals*, the chief draftsman being Cromwell's son-in-law Henry Ireton. To enforce these terms, the Army occupied London and began to purge Parliament. The King was moved to Hampton Court, and the Army headquarters was established at Putney. In September the King accepted the Army terms, however insincerely, but Parliament rejected them. The Army leaders could have dissolved Parliament and called elections in the name of the King and the proposed peace settlement, but they preferred to continue negotiations. Meanwhile the Army rank and file also rejected the Army terms, distrusting not only the King and the Parliament but their own leaders. Inspired by the Levellers, who produced a stream of pamphlets, the Agitators began to develop an alternative solution going far beyond anything imagined by King, Parliament or Army leaders. In a series of debates, beginning in Reading in July, representatives of both sides in the Army argued about the basic questions to be answered in any settlement.

What had the war been fought for, and who had it been won by? What was the aim of a settlement, and who should make it? What religious and political and even economic principles should be followed? What form should Parliament take, and who should vote for it? In October 1647 the Agitators drew up what was optimistically called *The Agreement of the People*, the first democratic constitution of the modern world, and at the end of October 1647 the whole situation was debated by the two sides of the Army in the Putney parish church.

## The Debates begin

By an extraordinary series of fortunate coincidences a large proportion of the proceedings at the Putney Debates has survived. A shorthand record of what was said was not only made and preserved but was subsequently transcribed and also preserved in the papers of William Clarke, assistant to the secretary of the Army Council. These papers survive in the library of Worcester College, Oxford, and were edited by C. H. Firth, the great historian of the English Revolution, and published as the *Clarke Papers* in four volumes from 1891 to 1901. Here we may read what was actually said during the Putney Debates in perhaps the first genuine record of a revolutionary argument; and a more generally accessible version was edited by A. S. P. Woodhouse and published with much other relevant contemporary material as *Puritanism and Liberty* (Dent 1938, new edition 1951). Here is the English equivalent of the debates between Jacobins and Girondins in the Paris Convention or between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in the Petrograd Soviet, the only obvious difference being that the English arguments still tended to be expressed in religious terms, and the obvious similarity being that even when the radical cause seemed to win it led to dictatorship and counter-revolution.

The General Council of the Army, including representatives of the officers and the rank and file and also of the Levellers in London, met in Putney Church under the chairmanship of Cromwell, Fairfax being ill, the Army leaders being mainly represented by Cromwell himself and Ireton, the religious fanatics by a soldier called William Goffe, and the political extremists by Edward Sexby, John Wildman and Thomas Rainborough.

The first meeting was on 28 October 1647. When the proceedings had been opened, Sexby set the scene:

We have been by Providence put upon strange things, such as the ancientest here doth scarce remember....The cause of our misery is upon two things. We sought to satisfy all men, and it was well; but in going to do it we have dissatisfied all men. We have laboured to please a King, and I think, except we go about to cut all our throats, we shall not please him. And we have gone to support an House which will

prove rotten studs - I mean the Parliament, which consists of a company of rotten members.

He then attacked Cromwell and Ireton. "Your credits and reputation have been much blasted" for trying to please both King and Parliament. When they both defended themselves, a soldier identified in the record as "Buff-Coat" insisted on the essential point: "You are resolved every one to purchase our inheritances which have been lost, and free this nation from the tyranny that lies upon us." The immediate problem was whether the Army was bound by its agreement with the King to restore him to the throne, the leaders arguing that it was and the rank and file arguing that a wrong agreement should be broken; while some realists argued that "if we tarry long...the King will come and say who will be hanged first". Even so, the first day was spent in futile argument; and the second day began with a prayer-meeting. But later on 29 October the real debate began.

An officer remarked that "while we debate we do nothing" and that "whilst you are doing you will all agree together". Cromwell agreed: "Let us be doing, but let us be united in our doing." But Rainborough insisted that they should debate The Agreement of the People in order to agree what they were doing. When this was read, there was immediate disagreement over the first article, which stated:

That the people of England, being at this day very unequally distributed by counties, cities, and boroughs, for the election of their deputies in Parliament, ought to be more indifferently proportioned, according to the number of the inhabitants....

Ireton objected to the idea "that every man that is an inhabitant is to be equally considered, and to have an equal voice in the election of representers"; but Rainborough answered with a classic statement of the democratic principle:

Really I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the greatest he. And therefore truly, Sir, I think it's clear, that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government; and I do think that the poorest man in England is not at all bound in a strict sense to that government that he hath not had a voice to put himself under....

This statement really contains two assertions, one of equality and one of liberty. The first is that all men are equal. This was perhaps best put by the former Leveller Richard Rumbold, who continued his resistance to Charles II and James II and who said before his execution in 1685:

I am sure there was no man born marked of God above another; for none comes into the world with a saddle on his back, neither any booted and spurred to ride him.

The second is that all men are free to accept or to reject a government, which is based on a social contract rather than on divine command; though no one seems to have considered whether anyone is free to reject all government, and hardly anyone seems to have wondered whether the same principles apply to women.

Ireton immediately panicked and insisted that any such principle would go "to an absolute natural right, and you must deny all civil right". His own principle was quite different:

I think that no person hath a right to an interest or share in the disposing of the affairs of the kingdom, and in determining or choosing those that shall determine what laws we shall be ruled by here - no person hath a right to this that hath not a permanent fixed interest in this kingdom.

And the people who do have such a right are "the persons in whom all land lies, and those in corporations in whom all trading lies" - that is, the property owners who already sit in the House of Lords or who already elect those who sit in the House of Commons:

And if we shall go to take away this, we shall plainly go to take away all property and interest that any man hath, either in land by inheritance, or in estate by possession.



COL. RAINBOROUGH

Rainborough stuck to his position:

I do hear nothing at all that can convince me why any man that is born in England ought not to have his voice in election.... I do think that the main cause why Almighty God gave men reason, it was that they should make use of that reason, and that they should improve it for that end and purpose that God gave it them.... And therefore I say that either it must be the law of God or the law of man that must prohibit the meanest man in the kingdom to have this benefit as well as the greatest. I do not find anything in the law of God that a lord shall choose twenty burgesses and a gentleman but two or a poor man shall choose none; I find no such thing in the law of nature, nor in the law of nations.

Apart from such theoretical questions was the practical question. What had the common soldiers in the Army fought for, if they were to have no voice in the settlement following their victory? And what about the middling men who had lost their small property in the war? Ireton answered that he wasn't concerned with such issues, "because I would have an eye to property", insisting that this was "the most fundamental part of the constitution of the kingdom, which if you take away you take away all by that". After all, he asked, if men without property could vote, could they also vote to take property away from men with property?

Rainborough answered that property would be protected by the divine commandment, Thou shalt not steal, and complained: "I wish you would not make the world believe that we are for anarchy." But he pressed on to the deeper question about property: "I would fain know how it comes to be property." And he answered it himself:

I deny that there is a property to a lord, to a gentleman, to any man more than another in the kingdom of England. If it be a property, it is a property by a law... I think that the law of the land in that thing is the most tyrannical law under heaven... And this is the law of England - and that which enslaves the people of England - that they should be bound by laws in which they have no voice at all.

Other people made other points, but Rainborough nagged on and on: "I desire to know how this comes to be a property in some men and not in others.... The thing that I am unsatisfied in is how it comes about that there is such a property in some free-born Englishmen and not others.... I think we are still where we were, and I do not hear any argument given but only that it is the present law of the kingdom.... I see that it is impossible to have liberty but all property must be taken away.... I would fain know what the soldier hath fought for all this while. He hath fought to enslave himself, to give power to men of riches, men of estates, to make him a perpetual slave...." This extraordinary man later served in the navy for a few months, and was murdered at Pontefract by Royalist assassins in October 1648; he deserves to be remembered.

The same line was defended by Sexby (who continued to work for the republican cause until he died in prison in 1658) and by Wildman (who did the same and survived Cromwell, Charles II and James II, becoming

Continued on page 16.

# BORN TO BE QUEEN

(BORN TO BE QUEEN published by Penguin/Private Eye, July 17) by Sylvie Krin as told to Arthur Moyses.

'THE story so far: His Royal Highness Prince Charles is still unmarried at the age of thirty two. Searching for a suitable bride, his eye lights on the lovely nineteen-year-old Lady Diana Spencer'

He stood in the opening of the french windows the sun illuminating the trembling edges of his spreading ears and his knee length medals and campaign ribbons that his dad and mum had given him on his fourteenth birthday. Lady Diana Spencer laid aside the sixteen, bound volumes of 'My Life and early Struggles' by Harold Wilson that she had been browsing through and fell on the floor in a deep curtsy before the young prince.

Prince Charles, for it was he, drew his cavalry sabre and with one bold cut and thrust extended the blade to raise the lowered head of the young girl. 'On your feet Di my own darling dumpling you don't have to kneel before me in private.' The young prince hesitated then added 'I don't think so' and with one bold careless leap into the centre of the room he threw off his busby, his cavalry breastplate, his spurs, his scabbard and sword belt and his aqua-lung outfit and crushed the lovely young girl to his medals crying, 'Gosh Di I've forgotten what Aunt Margaret said we have to do next'. From beneath the great oak table within the room was heard the beautiful voice of Dame Barbara Cartland authoress extraordinaire enunciating in clean cut syllables the guest list for the Royal Wedding until with a sob and a cultured raspberry in the direction of Buckingham Palace she pushed her blue rinsed head through the Irish linen tablecloth as surrounded by the residential American television crew she sank with the three movements of the trained high born lady into the Adam fire place. To a royal fanfare of State trumpeters they raised her and lowered her into the warmth and safety of the genuine and attested Harrods high chair with it's magnificent David Hockney decoration in red and royal blue watercolourings and watched in awe and wonder as the eighty four year old lady stretched out a jeweled arm for a plate of living bees while with the other arm she wrote her seven hundred and forty third six hundred page best seller all within the space of one single gracious movement. 'Always remember Diana my darling little granddaughter', she cried in modulated tones that dredged up memories of the Smart Young People of the nineteen thirties, 'i before e except after c and you can claim entry as a right into every noble house within these islands except' and she paused, then added in a bitter voice, 'to hell with the Greeks they may own Las Vegas but they don't own my free born English soul.' The old lady moodily ate a protesting bee. The bee stung the scarlet bee stung lips as it flew away but Dame Barbara was indifferent to the pain. There high up beneath the painted ceiling and above the Swedish chandeliers newly bought from Fortnum and Mason's branch at Royal Brighton swooped and swam and swung Lady Diana's beloved father the Earl of Spencer. One of the world's leading exponents of indoor hang gliding he ducked and dived and dove swing high swing low with Shirley Williams in one aristocratic arm and the public admittance money in the other and to each victory roll Shirley screamed and whispered of tummy rumbles. It was then that the lovely Lady Dartmouth daughter of Dame Barbara and mother of the lovely Lady Diana rose to her aristocratic feet and taking aim with her twelve bore she blasted the late Earl of Spencer and the late



Shirley Williams out of the story and into the index then throwing the bird gun aside she raised her hands to high heaven crying up to Sir Hugh Casson of Your Actual Royal Academy cringing among the crystals of the swinging swaying chandelier 'Easy on the highlights you bum Chinese white don't come cheap'. It was then that she turned to her daughter the lovely Lady Diana and with a voice that was heavy with emotions, that was old when Rome was young, and in a key of F sharp cried, 'Do not let yourself be bemused by all this wealth and privilege. All the gold and diamonds whereunder we have reason to believe your grandmother lies sunk we hope without trace are not worthy of a good man's love. Remember the old song stone walls do not a prison make for its the poor that gets the blame kind hearts and some stuff about coronets so if you love Charlie in spite of his background and his flapping lugholes then hold your nose and dive feet first into the Royal Wedding Bed my darling daughter Di and to you Charlie lad turn your head side saddle to ease your ears into this room and take my daughter and Dame Barbara to your bosom'. They stood transfixed like unto a still from My Fair Lady, creatures caught in an Einsteinian time warp and only the sound of Dame Barbara Cartland's heavy breathing beneath her diamonds the sound of her felt tip pen as she wrote her seven hundred and forty fourth six hundred page best seller and a bee demanding its Royal Jelly back broke the royal silence for there in the great doorway garbed in all the awful panoply and accoutrements of war stood a lone horseman. He leaned forward across the neck of his sweating mount then fell to the carpet and rolling over to the feet of the young prince he raised himself on one elbow, saluted and cried, 'Lieutenant Roy Jenkins sire of the Common Market cavalry raised in Limerick the French are in retreat' and the young soldier fell back dead. 'I say that's an awful load of crap Mr. Jenkins for even I know that we are not at war with France for if we were my parents would have told me. You were a school teacher my darling, dear, delightful, dorable, ducky Di are we at war with the ghastly French?' and the young girl raised her gentle eyes heavenwards to the face between his ears of the man she loved and whispered 'No' conscious that at that moment in time she now played her part in shaping the destiny of nations. Lieutenant Roy Jenkins raised an eyelid and raising himself on the secondary elbow saluted and cried 'I'm sorry I got the messages balls up sire its the first and second class stamps that get me confused the message sire is that there's a rotten swine, postmarked E1, who claims he has the legal eagle style of stuff apropos seven Guinness shares and a paid up private grave in Hammersmith cemetery that grants him the right to have droit du seigneur with Lady Diana' then with the cry of Vivat regina on his lips the young lieutenant

saluted and fell back dead in a puddle of claret.

'A part from the fact that it sounds foreign and filthy my own Diana you did A level sociology and biology and all that rot so what does it mean?' asked the young prince. Lady Diana's pretty lips trembled as she cried 'M'Lord I don't know' when a stranger's voice was heard gentle firm and authoritarian and stepping from behind a riot shield stood the uniformed runner up for the Firestone tyres television advertisements.

'Knacker of the Yard marm at your service', he saluted with a swing of velvet covered length of gas piping, 'Droit du seigneur relates to feudal times and I quote', he said pulling out a number of notebooks, 'the right of the lord to have sexual intercourse with a vassal's bride on her wedding night and I am afraid marm and young prince that the law has never been repealed so,' and he leered at Dame Barbara. The young prince turned white with anger and pulling Lady Diana to his medals he cried 'How can you pull that filthy foreign muck on us but if its legal my lovely little Di then I'm afraid it's you for the old Metropolitan line to Aldgate but Knacker you were responsible for the hanging of four innocent men so you know your law is it true?'. 'Three young prince the last one got away with a fine and a suspended sentence but we got him later in bed on a sus charge but I am afraid that the swine after his Droit is within the law if he really owns seven Guinness shares and a private paid up grave in Hammersmith cemetery it all carries seigneur droit.' 'But you are wrong' cried Lady Dartmouth rising to her four foot five, 'we are no southern fry grits eating dirt farmers but your actual landed aristocracy and this young girl's father was shot down in full flight,' pointing an aristocratic pinkie at the late Earl curled and kaput in the A dam fireplace, 'therefore my Lady Diana ain't no vassal whatever the hell that means'. 'I am afraid that in law she is marm' said Inspector Knacker, 'so she had better start packing her frillies and check on the trains from Trafalgar Square to Aldgate'. From beyond the window came the sounds of an old violin and through the closed french windows Prince Phillip entered leading with one hand the winner of the third race and with the other Her Majesty the Queen while behind them slightly bemused by the whole business smiled the Queen Mother. 'Is there nothing that we can do mother' cried Prince Charles and the Queen shook the Royal head. 'It's all democratic constitution stuff my first born and Guinness shares are the foundation of this great nation of ours so I'm afraid that you will have to start packing the Lux Palm Olive soap as used by England's finest aristocracy Diana but by heavens I will cancel my subscription to the Socialist Worker and Peace News'.

From beneath the blazing heap of diamonds came the agonised cry of Dame Barbara and the young Lieutenant staggered to his feet holding aloft the great regimental eagle and in a voice dust stained and claret stained with his long forced ride cried 'If I did not have a previous meeting I'd die for you your Ladyship' and raising his ink stained arm in salute the young lieutenant fell dead at their feet. 'Then all is lost' said Lady Diana as the black bitch gripping an Aldgate Underground ticket in her mouth leapt into the room but there was a sound of thunder and the heavens opened and the great lightning lit



the face of the world. The great seas flooded the face of the earth and the very stars in their course illuminated the darkness of infinity and the ancient gods threw down their crowns and the annual Labour Party conference was cancelled as a voice cried out in the wilderness 'I am Mrs. Thatcher and I bring you salvation and by the way this is my husband Denis'. You have an answer you have a plan they cried and a defiant yes answered them for the only way to bring down the cost of living and defeat inflation is and the lovely Lady Diana took the hand of the young prince as in a soft sad voice she said 'I suppose I had better buy my ticket to Aldgate with my frillies and Lux toilet soap so good night sweet prince and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest'. The young prince held her in his arms murmuring, 'I say my ol' darling dimply dimples did you make that up?' 'No' she whispered, 'Hamlet wrote it we did him at school'. And turning she turned and left the room followed by the black bitch.

ARTHUR MOYSE

## Obituary

# William C McDougall : A Tribute

WILLIAM C. McDOUGALL died on 21 June, 1981, after close to seventy years' dedication to the Cause of libertarian and non-sectarian socialism.

Willie was born on 22 January, 1894, in Partick, Glasgow. When about 20 he joined the Glasgow anarchists and served as secretary to the Glasgow Anarchist Group. Though a small group, the Glasgow Anarchists held Sunday meetings at the foot of Buchanan Street and were part of a burgeoning network of anarchist groups bringing the message of anarchism to the workers.

Fortunately a photograph of the Glasgow Anarchists, taken in the Herald League rooms on George Street on 1 January 1915, survives. It shows a group of some fifteen or so determined-looking men, women and children. Hanging on the walls is a giant poster of a Will Dyson cartoon and another proclaiming that 'The great are only great because we are on our knees. Let us rise'. No trace of Walter Crane sentimentality here! Standing at the back of the group is the twenty-year-old William McDougall, as determined as the rest and at the start of over sixty years' dedicated service to the cause of

non-authoritarian socialism.

The First World War was a difficult time for anarchist propaganda. Prior to the war the Glasgow anarchists had little police interference with meetings, but when the war broke out they were abused and interrupted by stooges from various patriotic bodies. Willie recalled a meeting in the Botanic Gardens where, when he proclaimed the king a parasite, the platform was rushed and threats were made to dump him into the nearby Kelvin River.

Apart from this there was the constant threat of being arrested for refusing the call-up. Willie was arrested in 1916 and, after being beaten up by the local police, was handed over to the Army. Refusing to acknowledge military orders, he was put on trial and sentenced to 2 years, which he initially served at Wormwood Scrubs, then at Denton Camp near Brighton, and finally at Dartmoor. At Dartmoor he tried to organise a strike in support of a victimised man, but got little support. Eventually, with the encouragement of comrades, he decided to go on the run back to Glasgow. Cycling part of the way (to Plymouth and from Wakefield to Glasgow) he successfully eluded arrest and resumed his activity as an anarchist propagandist in Glasgow. This included his economics classes in the Herald League rooms (using 20" x 30" 'Crown' size paper to illustrate his lessons, like Tressell) and speaking at numerous open-air meetings. The period after World War I vibrated with activity. A great fillip had been given to the movement by the success of the October Revolution in Russia, and Willie and other Glasgow anarchists had welcomed it as a triumph for revolutionary, anti-parliamentary socialism. Some idea of Willie's activity as a Spur missionary at this time can be gauged by an advertisement in the November 1919 Spur detailing his open-air meetings for December 1919 and January 1920. These included a meeting at Kirkcaldy on 'Lenin's anarchy', 'Revolution a necessity' (under the auspices of the Milrigave ILP), and, at the Glasgow Panopticon, 'Dictatorship, democracy and government'. Soon afterwards in 1920 faith in 'Lenin's anarchy' quickly evaporated and the Glasgow Anarchist Group became the Glasgow Communist Group to emphasise the need for unity on the basis of real communism. In 1921 this group became the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation and Willie, together with Guy Aldred (the main inspiration of the group), Jenny Patrick and other Glasgow anti-parliamentarians kept this group active into the 1930's - Willie keeping the APCF going until 1941 after Guy Aldred left to form the United Socialist Movement in 1933. Though never a large group, the APCF played a vital role in keeping the anarchist and anti-parliamentary tradition alive.

One notable focus of activity was the free speech fight for Glasgow Green. This issue came to a head in 1931 with the arrest and imprisonment of Tramp Preachers for speaking without a permit. Willie, together with Guy Aldred, Harry McShane, John McGovern and others, played an active part in the subsequent agitation for the repeal of the bye-law which forbade 'unauthorised' public speaking in the park. He was one of the speakers charged and tried for speaking on the Green and though the subsequent appeals were lost the bye-law was later repealed thanks to the excellent case put forward by Guy Aldred.

The movement really came to life again in 1936 with the Spanish Civil War and Revolution, Willie noting 'I was never so active in speaking at street corners as in 1936 to 1939 during the Spanish crisis'. Besides such speaking, he also printed, published and edited a number of papers at this time, concerned largely with the events in Spain and trying to get the CNT-FAI view across to British workers. Advance in 1936 was the first, followed by The Fighting Call in 1936-37 (which also incorporated the London-based FREEDOM), the Barcelona Bulletin (edited with Guy Aldred) in 1937, the Workers' Free Press from 1937 to (?) 1938, and finally Solidarity from 1938 to 1940.

Apart from giving the anarchist perspective on the Spanish Revolution these papers were important in trying to provide an open forum for both anarchists and Marxists. Solidarity, in particular, had its pages open to all aspects of the movement from Trotskyists to American Council Communists (Paul Mattick being a contributor, for example), with Willie's own

leavening tolerance also much in evidence. Willie's general approach is very well summed up in a statement of the APCF position written for one of the last issues of Solidarity in 1940:

The A PCF... repudiates the orthodox party conception. We see in the internecine struggle to 'capture the leadership' of the working class, one of the most potent forces of disruption and disintegration... Loyalty to party - or self - takes the place of loyalty to the working class....

We of the A PCF... nevertheless welcome every leavening influence among the workers, every piece of revolutionary education and propaganda. We extend the hand of comradeship to the rebel workers of all parties or none, urging the ultimate absorption of every section in the all-in councils of the workers, and other organs of proletarian struggle.

It is our mission to educate, agitate and enthuse; perhaps even to inspire. We will gladly give service as propagandists, as advisers or as delegates. But we do NOT seek to boss or control. We would impel, not compel, seeking the maximum self-initiative and direct action of the workers themselves.

This non-sectarian spirit infused the meetings he held in Brunswick Street every Sunday.

Later, during the Second World War, Willie, together with Dugald Mackay, founded the Workers' Revolutionary League (WRL) as successor to the A PCF. Subsequently, together with an ILP branch, he formed the Workers' Open Forum, another attempt at providing a platform for all points of view in the movement to try and stimulate unity. This continued until the late 1950's, eventually renting premises at 50 Renfrew Street, the previous, and renowned, home of the SLP Printing Department. The demise of the Workers' Open Forum marked, as John Cladwell has noted (in his unpublished biography of Guy Aldred) 'the end of the period of proletarian meetings in austere halls of wooden benches and bare floors'.

This did not silence Willie, however, for he still continued to publish his libertarian socialist view of the world in the form of papers - the Industrial Republic in the 1970's and SENSE in the last year before his death (the latest issue being still at the printer's). In addition, he always did his best to bring out a May Day leaflet (with a superb one on the need for a political General Strike in 1980), and published a number of pamphlets including Marxism made easy, An Open Letter to Mr. Callaghan (lambasting the last Labour Government!) and his excellent Anthology of Revolt, where Marx, Lenin and DeLeon easily rub shoulders with Kropotkin, Bakunin and Ingersoll.

Willie was at it right until the end. Apart from discussing the next issue of SENSE, his first thought on visiting me in his 87th year was to try and arrange a meeting and to give me a list of topics on which he could speak. His work for the Cause was always guided by the urgent need to get over the message of socialism and to illustrate the insanity of capitalism to the workers by the simplest means possible - a lesson still to be learned by today's revolutionaries. He always had infinite faith in the development of the struggle, despite its ups and downs, and never developed an ounce of cynicism. His death thus marks the breaking of one of the last ties we had with the much more open and less sectarian socialism that characterised the movement before 1921 or the rabouts. Together with other dedicated workers, he has kept alive the anti-parliamentary and libertarian form of socialism against all the odds, and has put the lie to all those who see such socialisms as some form of 'infantilism' en route to the 'maturity' or 'realism' of a parliamentary Labour Party or some form of ideal Communist Party. Because of this, his name may be ignored by the history books, but it is the few selfless comrades like Willie that make the socialist movement a movement of real revolutionary change and not a mere shuffling of the loaded cards of capitalism that so many are content with. His death is an irreparable loss to both his comrades and to the British Socialist movement.

BOB JONES

Bradford

# STREET LIFE

IT'S only been three years but it seems a lifetime. Don't go away. Listen to my story. It may happen to you, and if it does you'll need to know how to handle it. What is it anyway? No one knows and take my word, enough professional people have tried to find out. Excuse me while I scratch my head. Don't worry, these unwelcome visitors can't traverse across paper.

If you live on the streets lice are just one of the occupational hazards, along with continual harrassment by the police and numerous teenage subcultures. The punks are the worst. Don't get me wrong, some friends have opted to show their boredom and disillusionment by being punk, but in a group with alcohol or drugs in their systems, kicking you in or shoving their knives into you is a great laugh.

Why do I stay on the streets? Aren't there all those hostels homeless young people can go to? Have you ever tried to stay in one, even visited one? No privacy, no freedom, sharing a room with six or more females, being woken up at some unearthly time and chucked out at 8 a. m. and not allowed in till the evening. The food is usually inedible. No, the street is preferred. At least I'm my own master. I may not have a roof over my head every night and there have been times when I've been hungry, but I can choose where I'll sleep, when I'll sleep and when I'll arise.

Six days of the week I'm broke and one day I'm a millionaire. Every time I collect my money I think to myself where's the nearest bed and breakfast, and then a friend joins me and the next morning, nursing a sore head, I try to piece the facts together. Either the money is blown on booze or drugs, depending upon who I meet. For the rest of the week I have to depend on handouts. I hear you say - disgraceful. Well I can assure you I don't like it, nor do my fellow companions, but your so-called Welfare State, your educational system has not come up with a solution to prevent it happening. It's our choice, but is it?

I found myself on the streets, because I couldn't remain at my parents and I did not know what the

hell I was going to do with myself. London seemed the answer. I haven't got far, except I've grown harder, more cynical and learned how to survive on the streets. If I did not accept the handouts I'd sink, so I go to St. M for tea and biscuits some afternoons, to the nuns in H for lunch (sandwiches) and if you can put up with the tambourines and hallelujas, supper is very good at the Sally Army.

How do I keep clean? Easy. A bath is no problem, just pop along and visit a friend. I wash most days at New Horizon. They provide soap and also shampoo. When I'm fed up and want a rest I ask one of the social workers if they can get me into one of the hostels. Don't know how they manage so many people constantly asking for accommodation and numerous other problems being pushed into their faces.

At least in New Horizon I can keep warm during the day, even con one of the workers to give me a cup of tea and the occasional cigarette. Prevents the boredom which strikes when you've no job or money and the streets are slow. The government likes New Horizon as well. You see, when it's open, us dossers are off the streets so the tourists plus you respectable members of London can't see us. Makes London a little neater.

You may have gathered I don't much like authorities. I may lead a life that is frowned on but I am still a person and just about have some self-respect left. Places like the social (DHSS) often forget this little fact and try their damndest to kill that self-respect. You are often reduced to grovelling for your money, correction the tax payers' money. Even in hostels you are made to feel that the workers are sacrificing everything for us ungrateful people. It's no wonder people on the streets become cheats and thieves. I've been hungry and to get some food I've had to resort to lying, especially to Christian establishments. I'm grateful to them but is there any real need to preach and sing hymns while we're eating. Jesus only preached at the feeding of the 5,000 because they asked him to. He never pushed. So why do people today?

On the street it's survival of the fittest. If you back down from a fight, you're a weakling and will be continually picked on, fight back and win, then you will always have to prove yourself, but at least you don't get picked up that often. Survival is also who you know, get on the wrong side of current big boy then hide-up. If you're a friend of the cops and if you grass someone up, don't expect to escape their revenge. They, or their friends, will find you.

Once on the streets it's difficult to escape. They have a hold on you. I lived in a squat, but I was soon back. You're never on your own, always someone to have a laugh with. Doesn't mean you're lonely, it can get so bloody lonely at times it becomes pretty unbearable. That's when New Horizon is handy. Always a worker around to have a good chat to and you may get a cup of tea if you're lucky. They call it counselling, to me - it's having someone sitting and listening. Seriously listening and you know they'll remember and if need be try to help you.

Some girls on the streets have a bed every night, but that's their choice and although I could never do that, I see no reason why people should condemn them. Once again it boils down to the basic need to survive. If that's how they survive then fair enough. I usually sleep on the floor of friends, stay a few nights, not too long, so they don't get pissed-off with you, then move on to the next one. They don't complain, but they often try talking me into finding permanent accommodation and the dreaded job. It's not that I don't want a job, I'm not frightened of a little work. I've often taken on a casual job at night to earn a few extra pence, especially to buy new clothes. Often we are depicted as dirty, scruffy people with rags for clothes. Only a few dress like that, the majority of us like to appear tidy and clean and most of the girls are fashion conscious or follow one of the subcultures. It helps our self-respect. I often think that it's time to stop running, to find a job and a home. I never do though - I haven't the guts to carry it through. The thought of a job, having to get up for 9 o' clock and working through to 5 p. m. Maybe one day I'll do what society calls conventional, get that job but for now the street is my life.

K. C.

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a Member of Parliament and a knight under William III before he died in 1693). But Cromwell and Ireton defended the rights of property, and even the most extreme Levellers were reluctant to give the vote to servants, beggars and apprentices, because they were dependent on other people.

The Putney Debates went on to consider the problems of the power of the King and the House of Lords, where again the Agitators and Levellers mistrusted the Army leaders for restoring powers which worked against the House of Commons and the people, and to consider whether God was on the side of the Army, where they sound like French revolutionaries invoking the natural rights of man or Russian revolutionaries invoking Karl Marx. The later debates are not reported, as if the clerks had lost interest, and they petered out in deadlock on 8 November.

## After the Debates

Such discussions were soon overtaken by events. On 11 November, frightened by threats of being put on trial, Charles escaped from Hampton Court to Carisbrooke on the Isle of Wight. A few days later Cromwell suppressed a Leveller mutiny at Ware - the first of several violent confrontations which he always won without any difficulty. But Charles soon formed a new alliance with the Scots, which led to the second Civil War in

May 1648. Cromwell's second total victory and final impatience with constitutional forms led to the drastic purge of Parliament in December 1648, the trial and execution of the King in January 1649, and the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords in February 1649. Yet there was no true democracy, and neither the purged Parliament nor the dictator Cromwell could win a real majority of the people. Cromwell became Lord Protector - King in all but name - in 1653, and was succeeded by his son Richard, but Charles II was restored in 1660. The distribution of constituencies and votes wasn't reformed until 1832, poor men didn't get the vote for another half-century, and women for another half-century after that. For half a century all adults in Britain have been able to vote, but we still haven't got beyond this stage, nor have we got as far as the questions about property asked in the Putney church more than three centuries ago.

Yet as long ago as 1649, just after the execution of the King and the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords, an answer was given by the True Levellers or Diggers, who tried to take over the land on behalf of the people and to establish anarchist communism rather than limited democracy or military dictatorship, through direct action rather than parliamentary election or force of arms. This still seems to be the best solution to the issues raised for the first time in the Putney Debates of 1647.

N W

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