

FREEDOM CONTACT PAGE

PHONE 01-247 9249

Freedom Press

 IN ANGEL ALLEY
 84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST.
 LONDON E.1

Groups

ABERDEEN Libertarian group. Contact c/o 163 King St, Aberdeen.

ABERYSTWYTH. Mike Sheehan. 2 South St, Aberystwyth.

BIRMINGHAM. Meet Sundays, 8.30pm at the Fox & Grapes, Freeman St. B'ham or Ring Joanna 440 5132 also Anarcha Feminist Group

BRISTOL CITY. 4 British Road, Bristol BS3 3BW

BRISTOL Students. Libertarian Society, Students Union, Queen's Road, Bristol 8

CAMBRIDGE. Raphael Salkie, Queen's College, Cambridge.

CARDIFF. Write c/o 108 Bookshop, Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

CHELTENHAM Anarchists see street-sellers, 11.00-1.30 Saturday mornings at Boots corner, High St.

CORBAY. Terry Phillips, 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants.

COVENTRY. John England, 48 Spencer Av, Earlsdon, Coventry.

DERBY (and environs). All two of us welcome collaborators. Contact Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Av, Derby DE3 3BY, tel: 368678.

EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians. Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.

EXETER Anarchist Society, Univ. of Exeter, Devonshire House, Stocker Rd, Exeter.

GREENWICH & BEXLEY. Any trade unionists interested in forming a syndicalist group please contact John Ryan, 47 Binsey Walk, SE2 9 TU.

HASTINGS. Steve, 18a Markwick Terrace, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex.

HIGH BENTHAM. Ask at the Dragonfly on Saturdays.

Huddersfield. Meetings every two weeks. For details phone 0484-38156 (Polytechnic Students' Union).

HULL Libertarian Collective. Pete Jordan, 70 Perth St, Hull, East Yorks. Always available for any Anarchists passing through Hull for coffee, food or a place to crash. Transport, in the form of Citroen 2CV also available.

LEAMINGTON & WARWICK. c/o 42 Bath St, Leamington Spa.

LEEDS. 29 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds 2.

LEICESTER. Anarchist group. Lyn Hurst, 41 Briarfield Drive, Leicester. Tel: 0533-21250 (days). 0533-414060 (nights). Bookshop, Blackthorn, 76 Highcross St, Leicester. Tel: 0533-21896. Libertarian Education, 6 Beacrossfield Rd, Leicester. Tel: 0533-552085.

MALVERN & WORCESTER area. Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storrige, Malvern, Worcs.

MANCHESTER. c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1.

MID-SUSSEX Anarchists. Contact Resources Centre, North Road, Brighton

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE. Black Jake, c/o 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle NE1 4AG.

NOTTINGHAM. c/o Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St (Tel: 582506) or 15 Scotholme Av, Hyson Green (Tel: 708302).

OXFORD. Danny Simpson, Room 1, Turf St, Oxford.

PORTSMOUTH. Caroline Cahm, 25 Albany Road, Southsea, Hants.

READING University anarchists, c/o Students Union, Univ. of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, Berks.

SHEFFIELD. Contact Sheffield Libertarian Society, PO Box 168, Sheffield S11 8SE. Groups at above address are: Sheffield Autonomous Anarchists, Black Cross Group, IWW, Syndicate of Initiative. John Creaghe Memorial Society.

SWANSEA. Don Williams, 24 Derlwyn, Duvant, Swansea.

THAMES VALLEY. Adele Dawson, Maymeade, 6 Congress Rd, Maidenhead (Tel: 062 2974).

WESTON-SUPER-MARE. Martyn Redman, Flat 5, 23 Milton Rd, Weston-super-Mare, Som.

WILTSHIRE. Comrades in Swindon wish to start anarchist group (as well as existing Community Arts Group). Get in touch with Mike, Groundswell Farm, Upper Stratton. Swindon. Wilts.

LONDON

FEDERATION OF LONDON ANARCHIST GROUPS:-

Anarchy Collective, 37a Grosvenor Av, Tel: 359-4794. Before 7 pm.

Freedom Collective, 84b Whitechapel High St, E1, Tel: 247-9249

Hackney Anarchists, Dave, 249-7042

Kingston Anarchists, 13 Denmark Rd, Kingston upon Thames, Tel: 549-2564.

London Workers' Group, Box W., 182 Upper St. N1, Tel: 249-7042

Love V. Power, Box 779, Peace News (London office: 5 Caledonian Rd).

West London Anarchists, 7 Pennard Rd, W12.

ANARCHIST COMMUNIST ASSOCIATION (Organisation of class struggle anarchists who produce their own newspaper Bread and Roses). Local contacts:

London: Danny Jakob, 88 Speedwell House, Cornet St, Deptford, SE8.

Birmingham: Bob Prew, 13 Trinity Ct, Trinity Rd, Aston, BG.

Burnley: Jim Petty, 5 Hollin Hill.

Glasgow: Dave Carruthers, 53 Ormonde Av, G4

MIDLANDS FEDERATION

Secretariat: c/o Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Av, Derby DE3 3 BY, Tel: 0332-3686 678. Groups in Federation include Corby, Coventry, Derby, Leamington/Warwick, Nottingham, Sheffield (all separately listed), Birmingham.

KENT

Ramsgate: Peter Ford, 22 Royal Rd Sevenoaks: Jim Endesby, 70 Bradbourne Rd.

LEICESTER

See under Groups for address

MANCHESTER SOLIDARITY Group, c/o 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester 13.

MOVEMENT FOR ANARCHY Experimental Group 2. Contact M. F. A. E. G. 2 at 22 George Henry St, SALFORD 5.

NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1. Groups are: Burnley Anarchist Group, 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs. Lancaster Anarchist Group, 41 Main Rd, Galgate, Lancaster. Manchester Anarchist Group, c/o Grass Roots Manchester Anarchist Organisation, c/o Jill or Jack, 21 Holmfirth St, Manchester M13. Manchester Syndicalist Workers' Federation, c/o Grass Roots. Newsletter & quarterly meetings. Contacts in other areas.

NORTH EASTERN ANARCHIST FEDERATION Secretariat:- C/o Black Jake, 115 Westgate Rd, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4AG.

SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION Contact: Nina Woodcock, 74 Arklay St (Top R.), Dundee. Tel: Dundee 814541

KENT

See under Groups for address

MANCHESTER SOLIDARITY Group, c/o 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester 13.

MOVEMENT FOR ANARCHY Experimental Group 2. Contact M. F. A. E. G. 2 at 22 George Henry St, SALFORD 5.

NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1. Groups are: Burnley Anarchist Group, 5 Hollin Hill, Burnley, Lancs. Lancaster Anarchist Group, 41 Main Rd, Galgate, Lancaster. Manchester Anarchist Group, c/o Grass Roots Manchester Anarchist Organisation, c/o Jill or Jack, 21 Holmfirth St, Manchester M13. Manchester Syndicalist Workers' Federation, c/o Grass Roots. Newsletter & quarterly meetings. Contacts in other areas.

NORTH EASTERN ANARCHIST FEDERATION Secretariat:- C/o Black Jake, 115 Westgate Rd, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4AG.

SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION Contact: Nina Woodcock, 74 Arklay St (Top R.), Dundee. Tel: Dundee 814541

MEETINGS

CRASS, THE WALL, POISON GIRLS at ACKLAM HALL, Portobello Rd, on 26th. March 7.30pm £1.00 Anarchist Black Cross & Cienfuegos Press Benefit.

LIBERTARIAN FESTIVAL 1979 As yet no group has offered to host the Libertarian Festival '79. If any group is prepared to do so, please write to Pete Williams, c/o 178 Waterloo Place, Oxford Rd, Manchester 13 9QQ.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST CONFERENCE The next anarcho-syndicalist conference is being held in Manchester at the end of March. The exact venue and date has not been fixed yet, but any anarcho-syndicalist or sympathiser who wishes to attend should write to SWF, 109 Oxford Rd, Manchester M1 who will send details as soon as they are known. Items for discussion should be sent to the same address.

ANONYMOUS ANARCHIST If the gentleman carrying a copy of FREEDOM who got off a No. 33 or 72 bus at Barn Elms Playing Fields on Wed. 7th. March at about 3.30pm would like to contact a couple of other Freedom readers, will he please write to Mr. H. H. Hughes, 28 Lawn Crescent, Kew Gardens, Richmond

anarchist fortnightly Freedom

24 March/79
Vol 40 No 5

20p



From "Bayou La Rose"

AND THE NUMBERS GAME

MANY a compassionate person has condemned successive governments in the UK for playing the numbers game with immigrants, as doors have been slammed in the faces of weeping relatives because magic quotas have been met.

Yet in fact numbers are what states are all about. Big countries with large populations are powerful states; big countries with large populations plus technology are super states. Small states plus technology are stable states; small states without technology or resources are nowhere.

Only lucky chance, like having oil under your sand or uranium in your mountains can make a small state influential. Influential means having the means to buy weapons, first to keep your own people quiet and then to impose your views on others weaker than you.

Traditionally this 'influence' meant having large numbers of expendable people ready to march forth and fight when the state decided to expand, or stand and fight when some other state decided to expand in your direction. Because statesmen are the most reactionary of persons, these concepts - basically that big is beautiful - die hard.

Only modern technology has offered states the opportunity of remaining 'great' without enormous numbers of people. Modern weaponry gives the state means of killing far more of the enemy with fewer of your own forces than ever before, while modern means of production make it possible for the eternal capitalist quest for 'growth' to be achieved with a smaller workforce.

Having needed all the people it could get for the period of imperialist expansion over the last three hundred or so years, the capitalist West now finds people a bit of a problem. A hundred years ago Britain would have panicked at the thought of a zero growth in population - now the people that the economy does not need, except as consumers, have somehow to be contained.

One way that comes naturally to the authoritarian state (and that's the only kind there is) is to build bigger prisons. It is no coincidence that our prison population is today twice what it was 20 years ago, any more than it is that our unemployment figure is three times what it was ten years ago.

For anarchists, 'population control' was never geared to the needs of the economy or the demands of the state for cannon fodder, but to individual liberty and wellbeing. Of all the sections of the left, the anarchists were pioneers in propaganda for birth control and for women's rights to control their own fertility - but not to balance the books of available labour nor to keep down the numbers of undesirable elements, but to free women from the slavery of perpetual reproduction and premature exhaustion and death.

That is why we look with a certain cynicism on the recent volte-face in China with regard to birth control. When Mao Tse Tung announced his 'great leap forward' it was his version of capitalist growth - industrial and economic expansion aided by an expansion in population. It was power seen in the same perspective

as that of the Catholics: power through numbers. As with the Catholics, sex was astutely seen as a liberatory influence which had to be suppressed, the damned-up energy diverted into hard work and, no doubt, health-giving cold showers and exercise. As with the Catholics, birth control was banned, so that sex was linked only with reproduction and thus necessary only about once a year.

Now that Mao is dead and gone and even his widow discredited with the terrible 'Gang of Four', the equivalent of Lenin's 'New Economic Policy' - the NEP of 1922, remember - is coming in. The exiled capitalists have been invited to return, the big deal with America is signed and sealed, and China awaits delivery, not only of the armaments but also of the machine tools and the computer technology which is going to drag her into the 21st century.

Gone will be the backyard foundaries and the bicycles; gone the blue denim uniformity and the austerity. Why, already Chinese women are being allowed to have their hair curled! Gone, you may be sure, will be the barefoot doctors and the communes. Gone, too, will be the newspapers on the walls.

There is a different writing on the walls of China now. It is quite clearly going to be a country in a hurry - where a population of 900 million is simply not needed. Suddenly we learn that the Chinese are ahead of the West in the variety of birth control techniques available. As you might expect from the nation which invented gunpowder, they have a once-a-month

Continued on p2

THE NUMBERS GAME

Continued from p1

pill, a 'morning-after' pill, a paper pill, a 'visiting' pill, a coil that lasts ten years - to say nothing of widespread and easy abortion, sterilisation and vasectomy. Wow!

Could it be that, just like the Pope's pontification, Mao's mouthings never were taken seriously? After all a coil said to last ten years must have been tested somewhere!

On behalf of all Chinese men and women we throw our cloth caps into the air and give three cheers for carefree Chinese fucking. On a more sinister note, however, we can't help wondering whether a harking back to more old-fashioned methods of birth control might not have motivated the recent Chinese excursions into Vietnam. Some cynical European bastard once cheerfully described war as 'nature's pruning fork'. While the losses to be incurred in Vietnam, Laos; possibly Cambodia and even in border clashes with the Russians might not make much of a dent in a population of 900 million, every little helps - and using up old-fashioned armaments clears the way for the new American stuff too. And there's always land, power, to be gained.

For the capitalist West - and the capitalist Far East - it's going to be a golden opportunity. The rift between so-called Communist Russia and so-called Communist China is widened, and once the demand for modern consumer goods, transported gadgets and silicon chip technology gains momentum, the way will be opened for the expected liaison between China and Japan.

Superficially this is a possibility which might not seem to suit America's book - yet the opening up of a market for, say, Japanese cars, in China would surely please General Motors. And we already know that what is good for General Motors is good for America.

So, having gained its place among the nations on the strength of its numbers, now China finds those numbers an embarrassment. Mao used to boast that China could fight an atomic war and still survive with enough people to remain the greatest nation on earth. Krushchev once boasted that "Russia could bury the West". Nowadays, ten fingers on ten buttons could bury us all.

The numbers game now has a different meaning altogether.

PS



SUBSCRIBE

One Year £6.00(\$12)
6 Months £3.00(\$6)
5 Issues £1.25(\$2.50)

Freedom Press
11 ARDEL ALBERT
640 WHITECHURCH LANE
LONDON E1

READERS may remember our previous reports on the comrades of the anarchist prisoners' group of Nuernberg, arrested on 7 September 1978 after armed police raids. They had been doing hard and effective work in publicising the case of Guenter Braun, a young mentally handicapped prisoner who died of injuries inflicted while in Nuernberg prison. We now have further details.

Among the comrades arrested were Monika Rudel and Karl-Heinz Kuhn, who have since been held in investigative detention - Monika in JVA Regensburg, Karl-Heinz in Nuernberg. As far as we know, he is still being kept in a special wing of the prison in isolation from the other prisoners (solitary exercise, showers, exclusion from social activities, etc). During visits they are forbidden to speak of the Braun case, their own conditions or other prisoner activities, and can only talk to visitors through a glass pane (the notorious Trennscheibe). They have been charged with the political article 129 ('criminal association with the aim of joint common defamation and wilful destruction', according to the wording in this case). This apparently refers to the spray-painting of the words 'Long live anarcho-syndicalism!' 'Guenter

RUBBISH!

James Anderton operates under the title of Chief Constable of the Greater Manchester Area and for the last couple of years he has been harassing the inhabitants of that region with the aid of a large uniformed para-military force. Anderton is a self styled christian, and like many other members of that sect he is particularly hot on what he sees to be moralistic matters, that is matters of personal behaviour which are none of his business. Accordingly he has specialised in dealing with groups such as gays. Now, Anderton has developed the theory that a "simple, insidiously dangerous & damaging" campaign against the police is being "engineered by criminal factions and subversive elements". As we know, the police, like their masters the government, have the welfare of the community at heart and are, for the most part, idealistic and altruistic individuals, just doing their bit for humanity. Of course there have been one or two lapses, a few officers have had to be dismissed because their behaviour has not kept to the severest standards, there's been a bit of rule bending here and there, no doubt, but it would be cheap to make a big thing of it. Nothing is so hurtful as ingratitude, so perhaps we can sympathise a little with Chief Constable Anderton. With all this Christian Charity, Idealism and Altruism it must be very galling when trifles are picked on by "a few virulent opponents of the police, who press it for all their worth". Still, Anderton knows his job & he has his finger on the pulse responsible. The campaign was backed to some extent by the so-called free press and aided and abetted by fools who seemed to care little for the security of the State and the future of this country".

SOLIDARITY IN NUERNBERG



Braun murdered in Nuernberg prison', 'Death to fascism!' and 'Freedom for all prisoners'.

The anarchist prison group in Nuernberg is not the first to see its investigative activities disrupted. Several members of the Frankfurt Prisoners' Council were arrested in 1973 in connection with the shooting of a prison director by an inmate and at least one of them is still in prison and very ill, after a long spell of solitary confinement.

The Nuernberg group describes itself as an autonomous association of prisoners, former prisoners and people from 'outside'. Their main activities are putting out information on prisons, legal case work and establishing links with and between prisoners through letters, visits and so forth. Their broad aims are the release of all 'proletarian' prisoners from prisons and mental hospitals and all imprisoned 'socialists, anarchists, communists and democrats'.

"As anarchists" they say, "we reject the reactionary differentiation between political and common criminals as an arrogant division of the prison movement and proletarian class".

Further information from Juergen Kiermayr, Untere Kanalstr. 14, 85 Nuernberg.

RONAN 'ON THE BLOCK'

A BAIL application on behalf of Ronan Bennett is being made to a high court judge at the Old Bailey this Friday (23 March).

As one of the five anarchists who will be standing trial at the Old Bailey from 3 September Ronan is the last to be still held at Brixton prison. An appeal to judge in chambers was turned down just before Christmas, as had previous applications on 14 December and 23 November.

A full report on the application will appear in the next issue. Ronan meanwhile has been 'on the block' because of petty harassment by prison staff. He was recently unable to receive such provocative material as a chess book and the last Amnesty International annual report and Northern Ireland mission report. While enquiries were made by Amnesty to the Home Office Ronan was at last able to receive the literature, but dissension between him and staff during a visit when they refused him the chess book ended on the block.

Among other things this means that Ronan has to talk to visitors through a glass pane, so that no physical contact is possible and it is not easy to hear. All prisoners who have experienced it - in whatever country - can testify to the peculiarly devastating effect of this kind of peculiarly cretinous treatment.

INTOLERANT ANARCHISTS! (LIBERALS MORE LIBERTARIAN?)

Dear friends

As an occasional reader of the anarchist press, I have noted long-running squabbles among anarchists about the distinctions between anarchism and radical liberalism. As an active Young Liberal, I'd like to make some comments on this debate.

Anarchism should not be an exclusive ideology like Trotskyism - the tenets of which one must accept in order to be granted entry into Trotskyist organisations. The liberating potential of anarchism is not merely as a set of ideas for changing the whole society but is also the influence that anarchist ideas can have on people with very different outlooks on the world. Young Liberals have been influenced by anarchism in the way many of us conduct our personal lives. Young Liberals who have found their way on to local councils have proved more responsive to those they represent because of their awareness of the corrupting qualities of such power, however small, because of the influence of anarchism. The Young Liberal dream of an ideal society based on a federation of self-governing communities is drawn from anarchist visions of the future.

The above are some of the similarities. What are the differences? Young Liberals do not believe that the state can be removed by ignoring it and hoping it will fall from lack of attention. The state would be even more repressive than it is now if many pressure groups ceased to fight what the government was doing. We believe in working within the institutions which already exist because their functions impinge on our lives. In order to change those institutions, we must make a bridge from our ideals to the world people experience here and now. This means accepting electoral politics because it is the politics that people have some comprehension of - a new understanding of politics is only likely to be born out of an understanding among people generally that it is possible to change the way local councils behave and ultimately, the way the government behaves.

Young Liberals also believe in having close connections with pressure groups fighting for reforms that will lead to structures that are more sensitive to people's needs and desires - that will lead to participatory democracy in all areas of our society. We also believe in having good relationships with other political groups because of many similarities in objectives.

Radical Liberals in the British Liberal Party exist on what is seen as a boundary by many people: a boundary between outright statism and anarchism. However, the distinction is not as sharp as some anarchists might like it to be. In learning from anarchism, radical liberalism and Marxism, Young Liberals might

reasonably claim to be more libertarian than mainstream anarchist groups. Speaking from personal experience, anarchist groups seek to exclude people who deviate from their particular conception of anarchism. This intolerance, which I've encountered in a number of anarchist groups, is repressive and has nothing to do with anarchism but perhaps a lot to do with small groups pitting themselves against the colossus of the state and reacting in a psychologically self-defensive way to their situation. The Young Liberals are not immune to intolerance but they tolerate a far wider range of views than I've met in anarchist groups.

Replies/abuse etc. can be sent to the Young Liberal Office, National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1.

Peace and love,

JOHN GOLDEN

Somewhere in the UK

EDITORIAL REPLY -

We welcome John Golden's acknowledgement of the Young Liberals' debt to anarchism and would appreciate the chance of further debate, since to judge from this letter, their identification of the differences between us is somewhat off target.

You imply, John, that one cannot abolish the state by ignoring it. How true! Far from ignoring it, however, anarchists believe it must be understood for what it is, that it must be attacked and that it must be bypassed. And this is another matter entirely. No-one can work within State and existing political institut-

'MALTREATMENT'

THE government-commissioned Bennett enquiry into "police interrogation procedures" in N. Ireland has borne out findings by Amnesty of 'maltreatment' - to quote the word for torture in 'liberal democratic' countries - of detainees at Castle-reagh interrogation centre, Belfast. N. Ireland bully boy Roy Mason chose a Friday morning to make his statement to a virtually empty House of Commons, praising the Royal Ulster Constabulary for its splendid work and blaming Amnesty for not submitting their cases to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

So it is interesting to learn that various officers in the RUC itself only gave their key evidence to the Bennett enquiry on condition that their names and those of the victims were not sent to the DPP. It is also interesting to learn that the smear on the police surgeon, Dr Robert Irwin, who publicised his evidence of

ions without in some measure accepting them; if YLs can show us how the State can be abolished through compromise with it, why don't they go ahead right now and we'll join them?!

But let us define our terms. What, for instance, do you mean by 'intolerance'? Obviously we can't speak for the particular anarchist groups you refer to, but we can say this. As a revolutionary synthesis of radical, socialist and liberal ideas the several, but not necessarily contradictory, currents of anarchism make it among the most intelligently flexible of ideologies. Bakunin, you may recall, was not only the greatest critic of Marx but Russian translator of *Das Kapital*. Put in another way, anarchists have always recognised the value of Marxian analysis but at the same time have recognised its limitations and taken profound issue with Marxists both on the vagueness of the - stateless - aims they profess and on the means with which they expect to achieve them. So far we've been proved right. Over and over again Marxist compromise with the institutions has not only obscured but actively worked against the professed (but increasingly unmentioned) aims of Marxism. Much the same critique can be made of YL policies and indeed, of our comrades the Kabouters on the local councils in Amsterdam ... Where are the Kabouters now?

This critique hardly means, as you imply, that anarchists are aloof from events and that we do not take an active part in pressure groups and single-issue campaigns with non-anarchists; we could mention countless examples and suggest that you read the anarchist press more often! But if by 'intolerance' you mean intransigent refusal to compromise in any way with statist and authoritarian groups or institutions (under which heading we include all political parties) yes, we are and will remain unashamedly intolerant!
EDS

torture (according to which he was taking revenge on the police because of their failure to arrest his wife's rapist) came from RUC and Northern Ireland Office sources.

The immediate outcome of the report is that suspects are to be allowed access to a solicitor after 48 hours and close-circuit television is to be installed in the interrogation room. It remains to be seen what effect, if any, such reform will have on legislation like the Prevention of Terrorism Act, under which suspects may be held without access to a solicitor for up to 7 successive days.

Another point to bear in mind is that the police will now probably interpret the 48-hour reform as a license to hold all suspects for that length of time without access to legal advice.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

from Helen Buckingham, campaigner for prostitutes' rights -
"It's the State that's the biggest pimp of them all!"

At Last - THE SOUTH AFRICAN OIL CRISIS

EVER since the South African regime gave the Shah's father political exile status in 1941 Iran pumped crude to the racist economy in the face of world opinion. But with the demise of the Shah's dictatorship the tap has been closed. Before the recent revolution South Africa received 90 per cent of its imports of oil, estimated at 290,000 barrels of crude a day in 1977, from Iran. This accounted for more than 40 per cent of the oil used in all sectors.

Since December the South African government has been casting about for some means by which to repair the damage. Now the fascist cabal has come up with a 9-point plan designed to maintain its economic power structure intact.

The 'programme of action' attempts to cope with short falls in oil imports by cut backs and renewed projects in the area of 'oil-from-coal' plants. This is in spite of a sharp rise in the gold price to a record 254 dollars an ounce which has made it possible to purchase short term oil supplies from countries like Indonesia.

Present plans along with suggested 'possibilities' are seen by the administration as capable of supplying oil needs if consumption remains at 1978 levels.

Implied here is the beginning of the end of the growth of South African colonialism throughout the sub-continent. What combined diplomatic and political pressures from the UN, the OAU, the so-called 'eastern' and 'third world' blocs and the liberal Anti-Apartheid movements have failed to do for years the Iranian revolution, and more importantly the Iranian oil workers, accomplished in a few short months.

But to say that South African colonialism may no longer expand at its present rate is not to say that its hegemony in

the region is at an end. The Boer government has been planning its economic quasi-self-sufficiency within an imperialist mould since its takeover in 1948. The most recent plan is just another stage in the development of state subsidy for multinational supported government industries charged with providing alternatives to imported oil.

The plan calls for:-

1. A new £2 thousand million project to extract oil which is to be launched by the government oil corporation, SASOL, with 50 per cent private investment.
2. A 20 per cent litre price hike in petrol from the pump going directly to the funding of the new project.
3. Earlier opening times for service stations.
4. Intensification of control on speed restrictions with increased penalties.
5. A national education campaign for fuel conservation.
6. Requests to industry to 'rationalise and schedule road transport deliveries' and to initiate driver training programmes.
7. Acceleration of mainline electrification by South African Railways.
8. Investigation by the government electric corporation, ESCOM, into its pricing system to encourage municipalities to move to the ECSOM network and away from diesel power generators.
9. Requests to the transport industry to 'eliminate' empty return journeys.

In addition the minister of economic affairs, Chris Heunis, has said that higher taxation or licence fees on 'large' or heavy vehicles, staggering of work

Letter from South Africa

and school hours, the lowering of speed restrictions from 90 kms. to 80 kms. for private cars, the conversion to other sources of fuel like liquid petroleum gas for taxi fleets, and a coupon fuel rationing system have not been ruled out.

At the centre of this plan stands the state petrochemical corporation SASOL.

Immediately after its victory in 1948 the white settler government made clear that, in spite of its commitment to 'free market capitalism', steps would be taken to make the economy as independent of foreign capital as possible. To this end two major kinds of government intervention have been employed: high tariffs and import duties on technical and consumer products so as to encourage a local manufacturing industry; direct government investment in both light and heavy industries. In recent years government funding has amounted to about half of all capital available for the expansion of the economy.

This money is funnelled through eight major holding companies: ISCOR, The Industrial Corporation of South Africa, which produces iron and steel; AMCOR, which produces ferro-alloys; FOSKOR, a producer of phosphates; Industrial Development Corporation, a general investment organisation which has taken part in the expansion of textile manufacturing and consumer marketing; a government shipping company called Safmarine; Soekor, an oil prospecting enterprise; ESCOM for electricity supply; SASOL for the extraction of oil from coal.

SASOL was chartered in 1950 with both private and state capital. By 1955 the first 'coal-from-oil' plant was complete at a place named SASOLburg. The technology used in this process imported from Germany and the US. At the same time the corporation expanded to cover imported naphtha into ethylene for the plastics industry and later a third plant was opened to produce fertiliser. Today the corporation supplies more than half the economy's nitrogenous fertiliser needs.

In 1976 the government announced that SASOL would begin a second product to collect 'oil from coal' which would be ten times the size of the Sasolburg plant and be based on the Transvaal coal fields.

The £750 million required for the operation was to come from a special fund set up by the government.

The latest SASOL project, which forms the kingpin of the 9 point offensive, is meant to be an expansion of the 1976 blueprint. But this time the capital involved, 2 thousand million pounds, cannot be met by the government even with a 20 per cent rise in petrol taxes. Private funds will be called on and this call will change the shape of floating venture usually available for the expansion of colonial enterprise throughout the sub-continent.

The major subscribers of capital are expected to be the large South African mining concerns and the major US oil conglomerates.

Over the years the mining companies have come to own most of the firms in the manufacturing sector where their profit surplus has been put together with government investment to control consumer product production throughout the South African colonial hinterland. A recent US Commerce Department report has noted that the South African growth rate for the first half of 1979 will be less than 3 per cent, with the worst drain occurring in the manufacturing sector with factories operating at 85 per cent of capacity. The call for mining firms to invest in SASOL will mean that plans to use profits to 'streamline' and redirect manufacturing will be severely affected while expansion will be out of the question. At the same time cut-backs designed to keep oil consumption at 1978 levels will limit the extent to which resource development, like diamond, iron, and copper extraction, may be expanded in Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Zaire, and Zambia. Although the recent rise in prices for gold and diamonds has increased profits for the mining companies these profits will go into SASOL while shifts in consumer spending due to the oil price hike will ensure that the manufacturing industries will continue on a downturn.

For years US, British and French oil companies have been deeply involved in the expansion of South African industries and the underdevelopment of the sub-continent. By 1973 US investments in petroleum in South Africa added up to 12 per cent of all US oil investment in Africa.

Today Gulf Oil and Caltex (a subsidiary of Texaco and Standard oil of California) are involved in oil exploration while Mobil, in South Africa since 1897, operates a refinery near Durban and markets petroleum-based products throughout the region.

The call for private investment in SASOL will be heeded by these corporations but, mindful of the latest US government summation that "the overall picture looks unexciting", they will shift capital earmarked for expansion of present projects rather than initiate a new infusion of funds. In more practical ways this will mean decisions, like that facing Caltex as to whether to rebuild the storage depot lately destroyed outside Salisbury, will be put off and possibly never taken.

In fact for all outside investors South Africa is becoming, for the first time since the second world war, a risky investment. The massive commitment to

SASOL II which will in the end only maintain the present status quo of resource supply must confirm this situation. Already large amounts of capital are flowing out of the country and the economy is heading for its first balance of payments deficit since the nationalists took over in 1948. The US report pointed out the trend when it documented how during the January-September 1978 period the current account surplus of £78 million was largely offset by capital outflows of £60 million.

Far from being the spearhead of some new expansion of the South African economy these recent 'plans' and the inaugur-

ation of SASOL II represent a new downturn into the economy of survival for the South African regime. The fact that this turn around was forced by a revolution and not by the 'appeals to conscience' hypocritically fostered by the Western nations and their multinational allies only points up the inevitable. The 'crunch' served up by the people of Iran will come to be seen as one stage in a historical development which will include revolutionary victory in Namibia, Zimbabwe and finally Azania.

BRIAN MURPHY
Southern Africa

Letter from Greece

HUNGER STRIKE!

TWO anarchist comrades imprisoned in Greece have written the following letter to inform us of their hunger strike against the refusal to release them pending trial. This is an issue we are by now well acquainted with, and we can only express solidarity with their struggle. Apart from writing to the Tsouvalakis brothers at the address given below, we suggest that protests against their continued detention without trial be sent to:-

- Christophoros Stratos, Ministry of the Interior, Stadiou & Dragatsaniou, Athens.

- George Stamatis, Ministry of Justice, Socratous & Zenonos, Athens. Letters and telegrams could also be sent to

- Constantine Karamanlis, Prime Minister, Athens. The relevant article of the new Greek Constitution can be found at the end of the text.

Dear comrades, we are two anarchist brothers in a Greek prison. Our names are Nick and Theodore Tsouvalakis.

We are in constant struggle with the fascist, capitalist government and state of Greece. In particular, back on 19 August 1977 we robbed (according to the charge - eds.) with guns and hand grenades the National Bank of Greece. This bank belongs to the Ministry of Defence, so they charged us as criminals, as they do when their millions and capital are in danger.

We have been in different prisons because they are afraid and feel insecure when they have us together. And all this time we are in prison without sentence. Twice they postponed our trial. The first time they sent us to the psychiatrist to prove that we were mentally sick and not anarchist, but after we fought against this they accepted that we are fully healthy, both physically and mentally.

On 19 February 1979 we completed 18 months in prison, under brutal conditions, and we are still alive to demonstrate to all European anarchists that we have started a new social war against the authorities. Under art. 6, para. 4 of the new Greek Constitution* and art. 287, para. 3 of the Penal Code, after you have been in prison 18 months (without trial) you

should automatically be released till the trial begins. And as you can see from our letter we have already completed 18 months, and are still in prison without any explanation. The director of the prison called on the prosecutor to release us, but he ordered him by telephone to keep us in prison.

In protest against this unconstitutional situation we told them that from now on we are on hunger strike, that we are illegally inside as prisoners of social war and will continue our strike until we die. They have transferred us to the prison hospital.

Here in Piraeus-Athens prison there are five anarchists including Philip and Sofia Kyritsi, sentenced to 9 and 5 years just because they (police/eds) found six bottles of petrol and The Anarchist Cookbook. And they have both been on hunger strike twice in protest against the unreasonable sentence. The most fascist prisoners never get higher sentences than 1 year. As you see and read in the papers, in Greece too a deadly social war has begun against the state.

We want you to help us un any way you can, mostly by informing comrades through the anarchist press. At this moment, 10.00 pm., the second prisoner (from the psychiatric wing) committed suicide under the pressure of the system. In our next letter we will send you more information about them.

Greetings to our comrades and anyone interested in us can write to us at our mother's address: Nick & Theodore Tsouvalakis, Maragaki 16 102 P. Drapetsiba, Piraeus, Greece.

Keep on fighting. Bring war to the streets as we have done. Viva anarchism!

* Art. 6, Para. 4 of Constitution: "The law shall determine the maximum term of imprisonment pending trial, which cannot exceed one year for felonies and 6 months for misdemeanours. In the event of extraordinary circumstances the said maximum time limits may be extended by 6 and 3 months respectively by ruling of the competent judicial council". (Eds.)



REACTIONS TO WHAT IS ANARCHISM?

DEFINING ELEPHANTS

Dear editors

John Clark's essay 'What is anarchism?' (FREEDOM Review, 24.2.79) is a fine example of circular thinking. Having promised to give us a definition of anarchism which will 'take into account every aspect of anarchism' (a promise implying he already knows, before defining it, what anarchism is) Clark duly formulates a definition and justifies it as covering 'historical anarchist thought and practice'. How can we tell what that is? Why, by using his definition! Marvellous.

'Words have no meaning beyond the meaning that is given them', Professor A. J. Ayer has written, and surely that applies to the word anarchism: we may give it whatever meaning we like, as long as we explain how we are using it and stick to that usage. We must, of course,

respect its derivation from the Greek word *anarkia*, 'lack of a leader', but with that proviso we may reasonably use it for any purpose whatever.

'What is anarchism?' is really a trick question, because it suggests anarchism is a kind of natural object, like an elephant, waiting to be defined. It is not. It is just a word that has been applied to many different theories, attitudes and ways of living, which cannot, in fact, all be covered by one 'definition' - and why should they be? One may ask, 'how do you use the word anarchism?' or 'how do others (professed anarchists, political philosophers, the general public) use it?' But Clark's question is invalid.

I use 'anarchism' to mean a life without control - either external (the punishments and rewards of society) or internal (the psychological pressure of ideals, goals, the myth of 'success'). And I reject Clark's concept of anarchy as a moral ideal. As Max Stirner saw, all idealists are hypocrites, and radical change is in-

compatible with the phoney morality of society in any form. Stirner's 'strategy for change' was simple: to step right out of society, psychologically, now. I call that real anarchism. But if you make it an ideal, you never do it.

Yours sincerely
FRANCIS ELLINGHAM

Bristol

SENSIBLE

Dear Comrades

... I was impressed with the article 'What is Anarchism?' by John Clark. It seems to me the clearest and most sensible exposition of anarchism that I have yet read. How about reprinting it (with some modification) as an introductory pamphlet to replace 'The ABC of Anarchism' and 'About Anarchism'.

Best wishes
Yours fraternally,
GEOFFREY BARFOOT
Wells, Somerset.

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Dear All

Congratulations on John Clark's 'What is Anarchism?' - an excellent essay despite his inflated view of the value of George Woodcock. It would make an excellent preface to a book on the anarchist movement as a whole; or at least the first ten parts of it would.

Regrettably, however, as it is, the eleventh part of necessity - given the space limitations of an article in a journal* - only touches on the various traditions of anarchism, ignoring sub-divisions, and consequently over-simplifies. One would hope that he will in time write the book for which the first ten parts would set the theoretical framework; a book which would give him space to devote the same logic to considering the traditions of anarchism.

If one tries to comment on his varieties - and I am only concerned to take up the discussion of syndicalism - one does however see that his fourfold definition of anarchism still needs to be expanded. (He himself of course refers to a point that might make point 3 need amending - Godwin after all said "You say men cannot be equal, because no man is good enough to rule himself; I say they must be equal as no man is good enough to rule another" - so perhaps one should say "hope or necessity").

Point 4: "A strategy for change, involving immediate institution of non-coercive, non-authoritarian, and decentralist alternatives".

While it does not say that the immediate factors are all that need to be invol-

ved in a strategy for change, the fact that these are instanced, suggests that it is not equally necessary that such a strategy paints a perspective for further a-field.

Given this lack in John Clark's definition it is not surprising that he is somewhat dismissive of syndicalism; for the basic syndicalist critique of that tradition of anarchist communism which he sees as the viable successor of the anarchist communist lies not in the ultimate aim, not in the realm of immediate activity, but in the transition of the one to the other.

A strategy for change needs to involve not merely suggestions for immediate activity but a prospect whereby there may be an Hegelian (quantitative-qualitative) leap, which will transform immediate piecemeal actions into revolutionary action.

There is a lot that can be said in criticism of the social general strike following from the creation of a general confederation of labour and/or on-big-union on the basis of industrial syndicates; anyone who has read Michels, Pannekoek, Malatesta or Cardan is unlikely to ignore their cogent criticisms; and the perspective needs the theoretical elaboration of Sorel's adaption of the Bergsonian motivating myth. This said it is a theory which has attempted to show how the gap between immediate activity and revolution can be bridged.

What other intellectually respectable (to use a term that Colin Ward stressed at the foundation of anarchy) bridge is there?

Colin - in the period just before *Anarchy* was launched - and other 'permanent protestors', at one stage went so far as to demand that the whole concept of revolution and of a changed society be taken out of anarchism, so as not to impede constructive work here and now; and though - by the time *Anarchy* was launched - they and Bookchin had accepted an agnostic position as to whether the free society would ever come, the stress throughout the immediate act, not the perspective of transition.

Though many would advance urban guerrilla-ism or some such, most anarchists would regard these tactics as elitist, and even when in the past anarchists have resorted to terrorism this has usually been seen as a defensive tactic in time of temporary defeat rather than as an advance towards freedom.

Spontaneity - whether the insurrectionary *levée en masse*, or in terms of industrial action - is a respectable factor in many anarchist and libertarian Marxist theoretical systems; but it too savours of an attempt to avoid the issue, for no advocate of spontaneity ever says there is no need to work for social change. No anarchist, of course, denies the possibility, let alone the desirability, of spontaneous revolutionary struggle; but many of us feel that one can only convince people of the possibility of anarchism by suggesting a more likely means and that spontaneity can only come if sufficient people are persuaded of the possibility of revolution.

Variants of anarchist communism, which *cdé. Clark* does not mention, have suggested that civil disobedience on the Gandhi/Dolci/Chavez/Luther King models, may supply the bridge; but despite the fact that Clark claims that syndicalists have not updated their theories to meet the economic changes, and have not learned from communists as much as vice versa, it was in fact the syndicalist paper *Revolution Proletarienne* which before the war pioneered both the analysis of bureaucratic collectivist changes in social class division and the application of civil disobedience to urbanised social struggle; and though no one contemporary syndicalist paper embodies such a tradition, most modern interpretations of syndicalism show that these lessons were widely learnt.

Early in the history of the anarchist movement, some voluntarist socialists - those who truly were 'Utopian' in Marx's sense - tried to adopt Owenite co-operative ideas to a perspective of the gradual take-over of society; what has been characterised, perhaps unkindly,

'MIDDLE CLASS ANARCHOLOGIST'

Comrades

The seven pages on 'What is Anarchism?' (FREEDOM 24.2.79) reveal the writer John Clark to be an anarchologist (one who makes a hobby or profession out of the study of anarchism rather than an active anarchist).

And being an anarchologist, he naturally suffers from the delusion that the main influence on anarchist thought comes from books written by others like himself, rather than from the desires of ordinary people and their shared experience of struggle to realise them.

He refers to 'the anarcho-communist position as developed by Bookchin and others' (other anarchologists, that is). But, though the anarchologists may write the 'dictionary definitions' in this society, it is not they who define anarchist communism in practice.

As an active anarchist for over 15 years I say anarcho-communism is defined by the developing practice/theory/practice of a lot of people who may never have found the time to read Bookchin, Goodman or Guerin (I haven't), and who are unlikely ever to find the time to write at any great length themselves.

The views of such activists are often markedly different from the books of the anarchologists.

John Clark appears to suggest that anarcho-communists attach less importance to the class struggle than do anarcho-syndicalists.

He should take a look at *Bread and Roses*, the paper of the Anarchist Communist Association. It is certainly concerned with 'work, play, education, communication, transportation, ecology and so forth' - because of the desires and experiences of the members of the ACA, not because of anything Bookchin wrote.

And in all these things our paper maintains an attitude of uncompromising class

struggle, including struggle against middle class influence in the revolutionary movement.

The comrades of the Anarchist Communist Federation of North America admire the 'working class tone' of *Bread and Roses*, and hope soon to put out a similar publication themselves.

I could give examples from other countries but won't bother: This is enough to make my point that John Clark is not

can be escalated into revolutionary struggle without the suppositions eruption of now unforeseen circumstances.

Until anarchist communism generally accepts (a) the need for such a theory of transition and (b) an agreed theory; one is left with the impression that spontaneity or permanent protest are the only intellectually respectable anarchist communist positions on transition.

My experience of syndicalism, for almost 30 years, is that most are prepared to accept any importation from anarchist communism, as a theory within the context of syndicalism; but to insist on the superiority of the syndicalist view of revolution. (That is even after conceding the arguments of Michels et alia).

Best,
LAURENS OTTER
Wellington, Salop.

*In fact the article was first written for inclusion in the anthology "Anarchism" edited by Pennock and Chapman (see review in *Freedom* Vol.39 No.21 28 Oct.1978)

struggle, including struggle against middle class influence in the revolutionary movement.

The comrades of the Anarchist Communist Federation of North America admire the 'working class tone' of *Bread and Roses*, and hope soon to put out a similar publication themselves.

I could give examples from other countries but won't bother: This is enough to make my point that John Clark is not

talk about what anarchist communists think and do, but about the learned tomes of his fellow anarchologists, which have as little to do with us as Sorel has to do with working class anarcho-syndicalism.

DAVE COULL
London N5

If the comrade had just asked, we would have given it a plug ourselves! EDS.

DOWN TO EARTH

Dear FREEDOM

A couple of weeks ago I came across a copy of your journal I was amazed to see, for far from being a load of middle class bullshit, it was in fact a down-to-earth radical paper, trying to put over an alternative view.

I would not claim to be an anarchist, but I do have a great deal of sympathy for libertarian views and aims - more than can be said for capitalists and socialists, whom I despise. In short I don't believe

there can be capitalism without human suffering and abuse - and I don't believe there can be socialism without the loss of individualism and the creation of a centralised dictatorship.

I've always been against capitalism and the self-righteous bigotry of Keith Joseph and co. However, groups such as the Young Socialists and SWP are just as contemptuous. I used to support the Anti-Nazi League, but now I really loathe it, because it's just manipulation. I don't want to be used, I don't want political parties, I don't need the likes of Tom Robinson. I'm interested in the real problems of the real world - not the organised hypocrisy of British politics.

Recently I left school and I am at Worthing Sixth Form College. I wouldn't deny they get good results, but the petty rules and regulations get up my arse. Because of this myself and nine other Lower Sixth students have got together an 'unofficial' college mag. I would appreciate any help/leaflets etc. you could send me.

Yours faithfully (or whatever is appropriate)
CHRIS HARE
Sussex.



THE TEACHERS

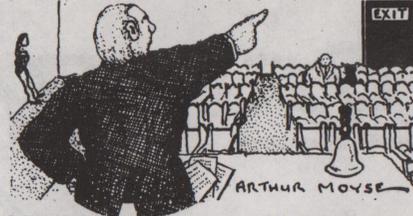
The Teachers would be great if they set out to offer another language - an extra-analytical tool - but they don't; they seek to impose upon us this one idea to the exclusion of all else. Furthermore, as this starts with the language and environment of present society and proceeds solely via refinement of the ideas involved without questioning their foundations or power structures the method is inherently conservative. The Teachers would no doubt defend themselves by claiming that this acceptance of the status quo is simply a matter of facing up to reality. Like Freud they find it necessary to change the individual rather than society when the two come into conflict - the reality principle reigns supreme. I would tend to the opposite view that conflict between the individual and society is a prima-facie indictment of society. Sure the real world has to be taken into account but it doesn't have to dictate all our actions - be they compliant or reactionary. The imagination also has its place if liberty is ever going to mean anything.

The second development of Kevin's computer background is the Teachers' computer software agency which provides their financial base. Getting money is always a problem for alternative or left wing/libertarian groups and invariably involves compromise of some sort - so it's not so much the way in which they 'earn a living' but their complacency about it that worries me. They seem unconcerned by their continuing financial dependence on existing power institutions or by the competitive spirit which keeps them afloat and seems to justify a crude Darwinian prediction/justification of their own bright future. Sure they criticise the world of big business which they serve, but not because of its concentration of power in monopoly capitalism, not for the alienation of the employed wage slave and not for its emphasis on competition in preference to cooperation. No, their concern is the good old liberals' problem of predatory business practices - it's not capitalism that's at fault but some unscrupulous capitalists. It's a natural attitude for a successful entrepreneur in a successful industry, but who's going to count the costs? Not the Teachers, they're too busy spreading the Gospel.

The trouble with Kevin is that he's been too successful. He's never had to retrace his steps and think about why things went wrong. So he's uncompromising and overbearing. He monopolises the conversation at all times and he talks at you, never with you, always from a position of assumed superiority. The feeling of smug elitism pervades the Teachers' writings.

Kevin is reputed to run the Teachers community (though the members deny this) and certainly the Teachers seek hegemony over the commune movement. But the rest of the movement resist their efforts and they are virtual outcasts in the movement they seek to run. In that sense there is no problem - except that the Teachers are so successful in conventional terms. They are about the only commune in the UK with a sound and expanding financial basis and much of this money is used in advertising and printing. Pick up any mag on the

FROM PAGE 14



fringe of the laternative scene - like Undercurrents or Practical Self-Sufficiency and you'll find a barrage of classified ads presenting the Teachers not only as a desirable commune in its own right but also as the entry point for the communes movement in general.

They've made several attempts to gain editorial control of Communes Network - the internal newsletter of the British communes movement but have been resisted, and now they've begun their International Journal of Alternative Communities. It will be noted that the first issue contains no original contributions from the British communes movement outside the Teachers themselves. This is despite the fact that articles were solicited through Network. This is because there is virtually no dialogue between the Teachers and the movement. In fact there is a widespread hostility which hasn't been helped by the Teachers' threats to sue other communes and their members for libel when criticism has been raised. This reliance on the institutions of the status quo is just another symptom of their inherent conservatism.

As for the articles that do appear in their journal - there are several reviews of overseas developments. In particular there's an uncritical descriptive piece on the Israeli kibbutzim which completely ignores the political situation in the Middle East and the smug conservatism of the more established, long-standing kibbutzim. Then there are ads for Mensa, FOE and the Conservation Society, some valuable pieces sal-

from other commune publications and a collection of writings by various members of the Teachers. Most notable amongst these is a puerile attempt at satire by Kevin which purports to be a Choice Maths discussion of schizophrenia, and a piece by Nadia which begins ominously with:-

I'm Nadia and
I'm a member of The Teachers
Why?
I have no other thinkable option'.

I find all this worrying and I wrote this to warn readers of FREEDOM of a danger I perceive. Perhaps it's unnecessary. Perhaps the Teachers are as transparent as I'd like to think. But the commune movement in this country is not very strong, and whilst it's not pursuing its anarchist potential with any vigour the potential remains. The Teachers want to destroy that potential and they may have the power. It certainly appears so when they threaten to sue other communes - a threat which could spell bankruptcy for their victims. And it's certain that they have the will and the conceit to steam-roll any voice other than their own. One thing is certain, the Teachers aren't anyone's comrades; they're too arrogant.

ALAN WESTFALL

ed Christian", wrote Stirner.

In other words, to reach the cooperative mentality does not require conversion to any god or supreme being (such as Marx, Mao, Trotsky, Humanity). It simply means the return to the natural, spontaneous condition of solidarity.

To accomplish this relational revolution we can look neither to God nor to History. We can look only to ourselves and to the treasure houses of knowledge.

JEAN-CLAUDE PETIT

*"Returned Services League". These clubs were set up by former soldiers from World War 2. They have their own rules and police and are very authoritarian as well as nationalistic.

LIBERTARIAN ALTERNATIVE

FROM PAGE 15

The bloodbaths that litter history can only be explained by the desire of one group or party to be dominant, oppressive or to seek revenge in the name of the Absolute. It doesn't matter whether the absolute is God or People or Revolution. In all cases this worship of a supreme value makes living cooperation impossible ... for this is always free, creative and without reference to absolutes at all.

"The servants of the supreme being are all pious people - the atheist or the most fanatic man as much as the most devout-

Anarchist Review Freedom

THE CULT OF THE COUPLE



ANARCHISM is a theory about possible relationships between people. Essentially it puts forward the view that interpersonal relationships do not need to be based on power, coercion, authority or ownership, but could be founded upon cooperation and mutuality - that is on a principle of mutual commitment between individuals, respecting each other's uniqueness and freedom, and rendering mutual aid in the realisation of individual and group aims. Regarding people in this way is commonly called loving them, though it is not the only concept of loving which is currently prevalent. In order to prevent the emergence of an anarchist lifestyle it is necessary to regulate, control and limit the human propensity to love. The institution which carries out this function in modern Western European society is called the family, or more generally, the couple.

Luckily this regulatory system is much weaker than it appears. Like the devil, it is a purely mental entity whose existence depends on people's unreasoning acceptance, and it is highly vulnerable to scepticism and conscious, wilful rebellion. Not only does it go away when ignored, the decision to ignore it brings with it the realisation that there wasn't anything there in the first place.

The couple, the 'natural' bonding together of two people into some mystical and romantic new entity, is simply a myth. If we will only pause to think about it we can see how limiting and uncomfortable an institution it is for most of those who participate in it.

MODE OF OPERATION

The couple operates by extending into human relationships a concept already powerful in most people's thinking - that of property. To own something is to have exclusive rights over its use and disposal. The couple works by a transference of this into one's relationship with another human being. Sexuality is used as a legitimising principle, though it would seem to me that sexual exclusiveness is nothing more than a symbol for exclusivity of regard. The couple relationship is not essentially sexual - it is essentially proprietarian. The sexual structure is something tacked on to this basic concept, where it often sits very uncomfortably indeed, because our sexual feelings are not, as a matter of plain biological fact, aroused exclusively by any specific member of the opposite sex.

..... THE CULT OF THE COUPLE

ITS EFFECTS

The couple stands directly in the path of any effort to generalise our love for one another and use it as a basis for social organisation and cohesiveness. As well as this its practical consequences include the pain of jealousy (a conditioned, non-universal emotion), the degrading competition for mates which makes up such a large part of young people's lives, and the frustration of the mother whose life is sacrificed to child-care and drudgery, and who is expected to find her very identity in relation to husband and family.

The cult of the couple is possibly the last great unquestioned and unexamined weapon of social control in the authoritarian's arsenal. Its roots reach so deeply into our consciousness that it may be difficult for us to imagine any alternative. It is a fundamental assumption of practically everything that reaches us from advertising, the mass media and the arts, just like the authoritarian assumption itself. Even feminist and gay writings and lifestyles have yet to call it into serious question. I think it is time that someone did.

GETTING AWAY FROM IT

For the second time in my life I am living, happily and contentedly, in a sexual unit larger than two. We are in fact three at the moment, striving to go beyond this number and to establish ourselves as a permanent, child-rearing multi-adult group. We envisage about five adults as a comfortable number, physically and psychologically. Within our group, all property, income and living space is shared. We sleep together on two large mattresses and spend a great deal of our lives together during the daytime, although we work outside the house. Living without private space is so efficient that we have been able to cope with up to six permanent residents in our two-bedroom flat, and it does not, incidentally, mean that privacy is unavailable if required. It is not that we are able to tolerate something essentially painful, but that we enjoy a degree of closeness and mutual support virtually impossible within the nuclear couple family. We have access to a large diversity of personalities, interests and skills, and our individual freedom is much less restricted than it would be in a conventional couple situation. We can spend time away, have outside lovers, be certain of sympathy and support when we need it, continue

functioning when someone is having a bad day, raise money more quickly for large purchases, and share our material goods so that they are used more efficiently.

CRITICISMS AND OBJECTIONS

What are the disadvantages? I am not sure that there are any. I know it isn't anarchism. I know it will not in itself overthrow world capitalism, release a single political prisoner or destroy a single institution of the state. But I ask you to consider what this lifestyle has to offer for a young mother trying to cope with work, child-care and a demanding chauvinistic husband who considers himself to have 'rights' over her. Consider how much closer it is to anarchist principles than the lives most people live. Consider what it can do for those who live it: within a limited group we are actually able to dispense with power-based relationships between human beings. Perhaps it is small, but it is a start. And it can spread.

The most frequent criticism/objection which I have encountered is "But don't you get jealous?" The answer for me is, "No, I don't get jealous". In so far as I understand what jealousy is, it is not an emotion that I feel myself. Why this should be I just don't know - if I did know I would tell you, because it is obviously an enormous advantage to be unjealous. However it seems to be an emotion that people can conquer, as Jean will explain.

DAVID

AS David said I can feel painfully jealous at times, and in the year that I've known him have put a lot of effort into overcoming the feeling. I think it's bound up with a lot of things such as early childhood experiences, attitudes to sex and self-image. I am trying to break my conditioning by talking to friends, especially Richard and David, by therapy and by thinking.

Until I met David most of my relationships with men (with possibly one exception) weren't satisfying and were sometimes downright unpleasant. I put it down to such things as men were all chauvinists or there was something basically wrong with me, and I could have ended up quite bitter. However, a year with David and four months with Richard have dispelled all those feelings - that's the self-image problem dealt with! Actually my confidence in all realms other than being attractive to men has always been pretty high. Maybe as a feminist my attractiveness shouldn't affect my self-image but I'm afraid it just does.

I mentioned before that I thought jealousy could be something to do with childhood experiences. I was a war baby so for my first three years my father was largely absent. My brother was born when I was 2½ years and I intensely resented the attention he got, though afterwards we were very good friends. Soon after he was born I was sent for a short spell in hospital and didn't see my mother for several days - possibly that felt like the final rejection as I was too young to understand what was really happening. These are the kinds of experiences I feel might be at the roots of jealousy in most people.

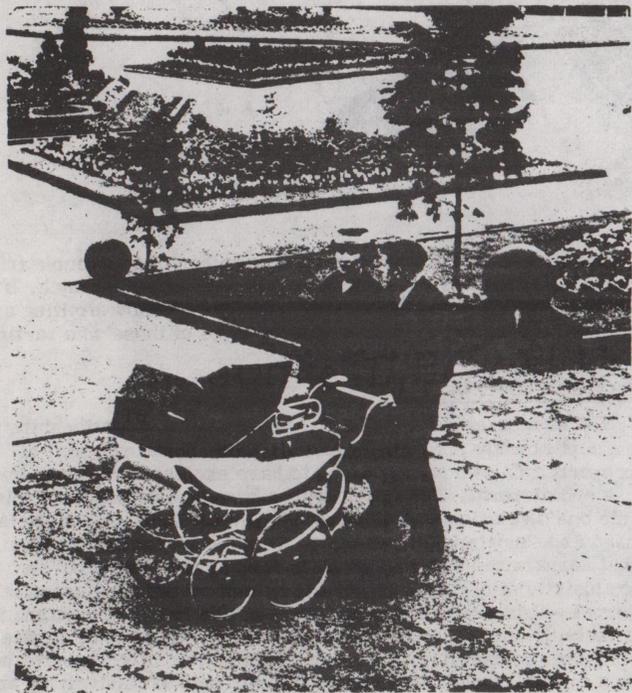
My attitudes to sex also, like most people's, are very mixed and something I'm trying to work on at the moment. I have a strong puritanical streak in me, and also remnants of the idea that men 'have their will' with women - that it is something women do to accommodate them rather than something men and women enjoy together.

Additionally the competitive element - that other women will take my man away from me - is strongly conditioned, in spite of the friends I have made through the Women's Movement. At the moment it can shock me to see other people making love, and we have been going to such films as *Emmanuelle* so that I can get used to the sight of love-making.

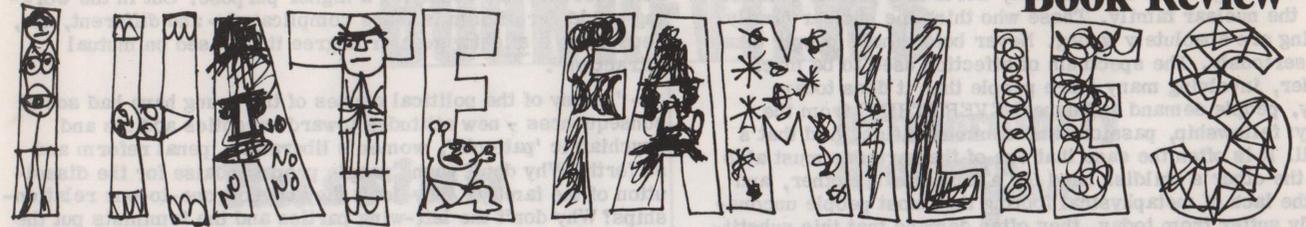
However, to conclude I think all this effort and occasional agony is well worth the rewards. My first reason for living this way was that I thought it would be the ideal way to bring up children. Now I am experiencing all the other benefits. Living in a group like this is lovely, with so much mutual support and love.

JEAN

CONTINUED PAGE 11



Book Review



Deliver Us From Love; Suzanne Brogger, Quartet Books, London, £1.95, transl. from Danish by Thomas Teal.

WHEN a man in the office where I work caught sight of the quotations on the back cover of this book ('Monogamy is legalised cannibalism', 'Transvestites are in fact the guerrillas of the war between the sexes', 'Love is the trouble with marriage and marriage the trouble with us' and so on) he subsided in a paroxysm of derisive laughter and disbelief. When, flipping through the text he got to the bit about multiple rape by the cops of Uzbekistan he almost fell off his chair; later, when he had - almost - recovered, he showed the passage to a (male) friend with much the same effect. Both of them, as it happens, and as may be relevant, have had broken marriages.

I know they were wrong; I know, personally, the terror of rape. Yet with Suzanne Brogger and her friend Bonnie - whose rape story she also tells - I couldn't help the heretical feeling that they had in a way brought these particular experiences upon themselves, and that they had done so out of an intensely solemn and self-conscious, indeed morbid and neurotic attitude to sex and in particular to male genitalia. Like a couple of scientists treating the men around them like the very objects women themselves justly hate to be, and fight being; analysing them into situations that, because of this, get out of hand. For (I maintain) the rape in Uzbekistan of the author by ten wretched Soviet policemen could have actually been avoided by her, and my sympathy with her is not total. Even though in a general sense she's right.

Suzanne Brogger has the irritating habit of taking sex so seriously that, like the Queen of Sheba, she will travel thousands of kilometres for a conversation with some wise guy on the subject of monogamy and incest - a subject she deals with very badly, in my view, as she deals abysmally with her Lesbian story (only compare Sita, or even better, Ruby Fruit Jungle with her 'Dorothea') and the daft business of the cucumbers and carrots (a significant example of the above-mentioned obsessions). Yet this is an important book for its polemical and witty treatment of the nuclear family and of children. To leave the latter out of it for the time being, Brogger's basic premise is that marriage - a property device until the nineteenth century invented marrying for love - is incompatible with love. "What good is love", she says - again to quote the

The cult of the couple. (from page 10)

EVEN from my first relationship with a girl I felt abhorrence over the idea that I had 'rights' over her. Perhaps this was because I was already calling myself an anarchist by the time I started my first serious relationship with a girl at the relatively late age of 17. She was rather upset at having to 'chuck' her previous boyfriend. I could not understand why everybody assumed that just because she liked me she could not like him too and told her this. I told her that since she still obviously liked the other boy I couldn't see any reason why she should not see both of us, and anybody else she liked for that matter. Unfortunately pressure from her friends and from the boy involved together with other factors such as his father's death resulted in their getting engaged and becoming a very extreme and more than usually restrictive couple. The incident did me good, however, for it clarified and gave rise to a lot of my thinking on personal relationships and showed me that people's unwillingness to step outside couple relationships was part of their general fear of stepping out of the 'norm'. I saw that just as people would rather be less free and have some measure of responsibility taken away from them, in the same way they

back cover - "love between two people, if by definition it excludes everyone else"?

This to my mind is something that anarchists have not considered in any depth and I was therefore interested to read John Morton's comments on anarchism and gay liberation in FREEDOM of 10 February. The gay (and feminist) movements are not in themselves naturally libertarian, any more than they are naturally anything else, but the open practice of bisexuality, and homosexuality, will certainly play the most important role in breaking down the structure of the nuclear family and The Couple, and this is a process which anarchists should think about, and to which they could valuably contribute far more actively than they have done so far.

In the meantime, where this review is concerned, I can do little better than list a few quotations from Suzanne Brogger's chapter 'From Nuclear Family to Nuclear War', which, while it suffers slightly from Marxist cliché, provides excellent material for future campaigns ...

GIULIA



- "And yet it is a fact that marriage has never played so important a role and had such enormous significance for the individual as it does today. The old social conventions are

CONTINUED PAGE 12

would rather be in a restrictive 'womb-like' relationship and feel safe within those well-defined boundaries.

Just as I was as sure that I could never hide in a couple after this incident, I was just as sure that I would never be able to attain a non-couple relationship with any girl and had more or less resigned myself to this. To be more sure I tried out a few more couple-based relationships but this only served to reinforce my dissatisfaction with the system. It was then that I came to London and met David and Jean: I couldn't believe my luck - here were people who thought and felt as I did! Since David and Jean already described the way that our group is organised I will not go into details. Suffice it to say that at last I feel that I am living my life as near as possible to the way I want, that I am actually doing something anarchic.

What has been even more encouraging is that I have recently met a few more people who think the same way as we do about couples - though they aren't necessarily consciously anarchists. It would be nice to hear from any anarchists who are interested in what we are doing, and I would like to mention that we are trying to start a North London Anarchist Group. Anyone who would like to come along should watch out for our meeting times in FREEDOM or phone us at 348-5118.

RICHARD

crumbling, and neighbourhood solidarity has disappeared. The last refuge from the workaday world is a private relationship, the nuclear family. Those who think the nuclear family is dying are absolutely wrong. Never before have people taken it so seriously. The spectrum of affection used to be much broader, involving many more people than it does today. Today, people demand and expect EVERYTHING from the family: fellowship, passion, and communication. And that's not all. It is often the case that one of the partners must also meet the other's childish need for a father or a mother, and with the lack of metaphysical footing that most people unconsciously suffer from today, they often demand that this substitute parent be a virtual Our Father or a Madonna. As things now stand, most people regard their LIVES as successful if their marriages are successful. 'Love is looking over on the divan and discovering that he's still living there after sixteen years'.

- "The fact that so many people believe they can alter marriage to suit their own pleasure has to do with our having made marriage a private concern. We do not look on marriage and the one-to-one relationship as a cultural nucleus in a larger social context, but as something completely personal. And this is why people are misled into believing that 'Our marriage will be different', or 'We won't be like our parents or our unhappy friends'. But of course they will. They will develop the same falling radiance as their parents and their unhappy friends, and they will come to give off the same dismal vibrations. For marriage is a social convention and only to some small extent a private matter. For example, even if you have never been jealous in your life, you will be in a marriage. Because in marriage people own one another, whether they want to or not. In one-to-one relationships, the desire to do what you want is a real danger to harmony, and therefore it is wrong to dismiss the broad anxieties of married people as imaginary or paranoid. Their anxiety has a real basis. For when people enter into one-to-one relationships, they marry not only other human beings, but a whole ready-made set of psychophysical reactions. The emotions that people come to feel are not necessarily their own - in most cases they are a historical inheritance. In twentieth-century marriage, people ARE anxious (unless they are utterly benighted), and they have good reason to be.

"Tolstoy's observation that all happy families resemble one another while each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way simply doesn't hold water. It is all the unhappy families that resemble one another. Marriage is a social behaviour pattern and the participants share the same basic conflicts; it is only their manner of dealing with them that differs. The problem is the same for all of them - how to survive the clash between marital and societal structure. Because it is not the husband and wife who form the marriage but much more the marriage that programmes the individuals - just as the atmosphere in a prison depends very little on the personalities of the prisoners."

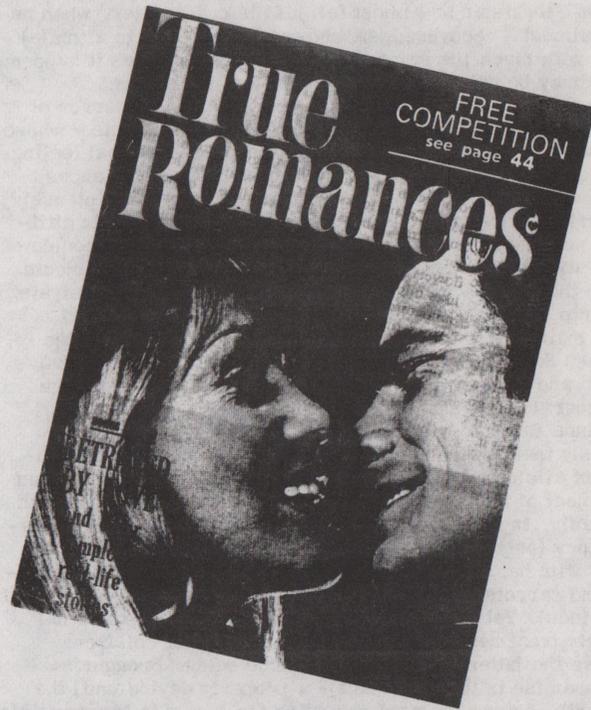
- "Collectives and extended families clearly have a much greater capacity for self-preservation (than the nuclear family). Evil tongues will insist that instead of three people who don't know anything a collective has fifteen. But it isn't true. A collective has fifteen people with at least one skill each. A larger collection of people is a larger accumulation of knowledge. And in a larger group, people help one another and learn from one another, because they own their own resources. In the nuclear family, people tear each other down in a climate of general impotence. The couple starts quarrelling as soon as a faucet 'doesn't work. 'Well don't come and tell me about it, call the plumber!' If the nuclear family can be said to produce anything at all, it is a lot of dependent ineffectual people who can be readily manipulated without ever catching on. It is perfectly amazing that the richest people in the world are willing to accept a life of such moral and material poverty."

"But since the nuclear family still has an emotional and sexual monopoly, although this is gradually becoming a little frayed around the edges, what with the pill, and women who go out into the working world and meet other men. Still, the nuclear family is the only place where a person can reach out for his or her partner in the darkness without getting no for an answer. It is still a little easier to find immediate sexual satisfaction within the nuclear family, because the partners know they're SUPPOSED TO, and feel guilty if they don't.

Sexuality is a part of marriage, and if people lose their desire, they feel they are betraying a higher purpose. Out in the working world, eroticism is more complicated - and different, too, because to a slightly greater degree it is based on mutual attraction".

- "Many of the political causes of the young have had social consequences - new attitudes toward narcotics addicts and psychiatric 'patients', women's liberation, penal reform and so forth. Why don't young people propagandise for the dissolution of the family? Why don't they boycott one-to-one relationships? Why don't the left-wing parties and the feminists put the elimination of the family at the top of their programmes? It is no excuse to say we are victims of the system and the products of capitalism. Society isn't going to be transformed by 'products', but by the people who cease to be products. Nor is the weak position of women an excuse for not taking radical steps. The liberation of women is not a prerequisite for abolishing the family, but one of its consequences.

"If the people who call themselves revolutionaries would dissolve their own one-to-one commitments and take up the motto, 'Don't Marry, Divorce!' and if they would help to



bring out thousands of people to overrun the divorce courts, there would be definite political and economic consequences. In the first place there would be confusion, wild confusion. Society would be traumatised, forced to ask some new and essential questions. Of course no one can predict in detail what situations would arise. The important thing is to shake the foundations, disrupt the way women and children and men relate to one another. Questions would be raised, and for the moment, that is enough.

"But the fact that one-to-one relationships are not considered a serious political topic is probably because most 'revolutionaries' regard them as secondary. 'Down with the government! Down with capitalism! Down with private property!' And for the rest of it, it will all take care of itself. But NOTHING takes care of itself - history's revolutionary experiments clearly show that absolutely nothing takes care of itself. All of the problems associated with the family and one-to-one relationships in general would be exactly the same as they are today even if the revolution were to come tomorrow, as they say (imaging, apparently, that it will come flying through the air like some giant beefsteak). Conversely, it is possible, and obvious, to accelerate cultural evolution within the framework of the present economic system and without the interference of the army or the police ..."

BOOK REVIEWS

Russian Fascists

The Russian Fascists by John J. Stephan, Hamish Hamilton, £7.50

THE Russian Fascists is the sad but true story of those emigres from the Bolshevik take-over who planned a national revolution to cleanse their country of the godless commissars and lead peasant Russia back to Christ and forward to capitalism by the tried patriotic route. Their banner was the double-headed eagle of the Romanov empire perched on a Nazi swastika.

John Stephan's book (he is professor of history at the University of Hawaii) has the great strength of contemporary American historiography - intensive research, copious notes, and a bulging bibliography, which suggest the use of a large team of research assistants, several language experts, and at least one computer: and also the great weakness - a general vagueness of purpose which leaves the reader with the feeling that much more could have been made of the material to hand if only the author, mug-shotted as a baby-faced young don with the words "well-intentioned liberal democrat" flashing in neon lights all over him, had been prepared to see and pursue some of the obvious implications.

As is suggested in a good quotation from Herzen at the head of chapter one, all revolutionaries in exile look at least a little ridiculous. Desperate comrade Dan, fulminating in his bed-sit against the repressive rule of the junta one minute, and taking his Y-fronts to the local launderette the next, is an inescapably comical figure, be he Lenin in Zurich or Hitler in Vienna; and the one thing which might save him from being ridiculous - a sense of humour - is the thing which statisticians of left and right most notoriously lack. The picture of Count Vonsiatsky, head of the All-Russian National Revolutionary Party, no less, building a Russian fascist navy out of Woolworth model kits and sailing them on his Connecticut duck pond belongs to this world of the absurd: so too does unheard of Vladimir I. Lenin posturing at the Social Democrat congress in London under the eyes of bored British constables and claiming to have the fate of the world proletariat in his hands. The difference between the two power maniacs is that the one succeeded in imposing his view on other people and the other did not. Between the heroic and the absurd, falls the shadow of success.

Much the same can be said of Vonsiatsky's main rival in Russian fascism, Konstantin Rodzaevsky, whose guerrillas operating from bases in Japanese-controlled northern China were disposable pawns in the sudden reversals of Japan's foreign policy, and who was ultimately reduced to the impotent gesture of erecting a huge neon swastika on a village rooftop two miles from the Soviet border in the hope that it would demoralise Stalin's frontier guards. Brave, naive young guerrillas in liberation fronts from Angola to Kampuchea have suffered the same fate at the hands of cynical superpowers before and ever since.

The case of the Russian fascists demonstrates the frailty of the persistent belief that all revolutions are progressive and all dissident minority groups by definition champions of human rights. Enemies of Stalin's totalitarian police state, Rodzaevsky and Vonsiatsky were both totalitarians who loved to be photo-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Extraordinary Groups The Sociology of Unconventional Life-Styles

William M. Kephart

Extraordinary Groups: the sociology of unconventional life-styles, William M. Kephart, pubd. Martin Robinson.

ONE day, given a bit of luck, the human mob might abandon its self-destructive pastimes and find itself stuck with a surfeit of peace, love and happiness. Bereft of the comforts of war, religion, coercive sado-masochism, excessive carbohydrates, alcohol, football, neuro-asthenia, diverticulosis and terminal consumerism, wo/man will need to devise other social groups and mechanisms more suited to a life of growth and pleasure. At the moment we can choose to either shoot our way out of the system or buy our way out, and as the gun usually opens a hole into nothing, many groups have tried to buy their new world, become self-sufficient and cut the cord to mother agony. For the most part, such groups were ecclesiastic and devoted to various theological perversions of the human spirit. William Kephart has collected a fairly ripe bunch of these lunatics, with habits ranging from prolonged coitus interruptus to the determination of baptise all the dead, by name, no less.

Among the groups which he describes are the Old Order Amish and another Anabaptist group, the Hutterites, the Shakers, the Mormons, the Oneida community and the Father Divine Movement. There is also a brief survey of some modern (post 1960) communes, but it is superficial and generalised: the most interesting part of this section is Kephart's formula for determining the number of possible interrelationships in a group. I enter it here for the pleasure of those of you who are coupled, and who know three other couples:-

Number of persons in Group	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Potential inter-relationships	1	6	25	90	301	966	3,025

(So, let's hear it for the extended family)

Kephart writes of these groups with a sort of benevolent paternalism, and whilst his writing is remarkably free of the usual sociological obfuscations, it does have a certain all-day-singing-and-dinner-on-the-ground sort of jollity about it, a sort of apparent naivete which will lead some Europeans to put it down, in both senses of the term. This would be a pity, because anarchists could learn something of traps in the future by studying the breakdown of the Oneida community. For example, John Noyes, the founder of the Oneida, also first used the phrase 'free love' to describe his idea that it was natural for all men to love all women, and for all women to love all men. He abandoned the term in favour of 'complex marriage', and the initial idea became diluted and hedged about when it grew obvious that sexual appetites varied, for whatever reason, and particularly as between the sexes. Finally, permission to ejaculate with other than menopausal women had to be sought from the community, a system of contraception about as reliable as the rhythm method. Given the inevitable fusion of anarchism with feminism, anarchists must start thinking now about love in freedom, about love as shared defencelessness

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

From page 13 col. 1

RUSSIAN FASCISTS

graphed in uniform surrounded by storm troops. If history had been a little different - as it could so easily have been - and one of these men had emerged as a generally accepted leader-in-exile awaiting the call after Stalin's downfall, the Soviet Union would have had her Ayatollah Khomeiny years before Iran, her people hounded onto the path of tradition and religion, and her women put back in purdah. If this doesn't sound too dissimilar to the Soviet Union as she actually is, the state which Trotsky perceived as paradigmatically fascist in the 1930s was described by Rodzaevsky as pure fascist in 1945. Announcing his conversion in the wake of the Soviet military victory in the The Great Patriotic War for the Defense of the Motherland, he wrote. "Not all at once, but step by step, we came to this conclusion. We decided that Stalinism is exactly what we mistakenly called Russian Fascism. It is our Russian Fascism cleansed of extremes, illusions and errors ... Long live Stalin, the People's Leader! (signed) Your unworthy slave, Konstantin Vladimirovich Rodzaevsky" (page 338/40).

Both Hitler and Stalin flew their blood-red flags. Only the pattern was a little different.

COLIN MACKAY

From page 13 col. 2

EXTRAORDINARY GROUPS

rather than as ego-boosting for the victims (and heroes) of resistance. More hopefully, most of the groups studied had little or no trouble in the practice of economic communism, although it must be said that many of the modern groups and communes floundered on possessiveness and hip bludger. Conspicuous destruction is an essential element of conspicuous consumption, and I suspect that sexual malaise and its major symptom, consumerism, will be the final obstacles to the birth of an anarchist world. Socialism, in its guise of efficiency-ism, will certainly handle the production and distribution of goods, but how many? Maybe some anarchist out there might like to pick up where Kephart has left off and produce an adequate study of the degenerative process in outsider groups. We need it a lot more than we need another critical reassessment of the Third International or any more sociology, a minor art doomed by Levi-Strauss and Heisenberg.

IAN SIME

THE TEACHERS

'THE TEACHERS' have a saying that if a commune is to survive it must either be based on religion or 'The Teachers'. To my mind this is a complete negation of anarchy; fortunately it tell us more about 'The Teachers' and their attitudes than it does about the real world. The Teachers have a widespread reputation for manifest authoritarianism both in their internal affairs and in their dealings with others. It is said that they manifest the very worst aspects of the commune idea. Effectively, the Teachers are a 'religious, based' community with Kevin as their messiah and Kevin's schemes as the path to salvation. If this is accepted, then their saying offers no real choice at all!

What follows is intended as a hatchet job - for reasons which I hope will become clear; but I have tried to be fair in my criticism.

The Teachers are a small but growing commune with premises in London and Bangor (N. Wales). Early in 1978 they had 9 adult members and 8 children. They run a mobile disco, a shop (selling educational materials in Bangor), a computer software agency (from which they make oodles of money) and a printing press. They are also planning a school (for children of the community and for 'gifted' children - Kevin appears to have connections with Mensa). By their own standards they are overwhelmingly successful. But then they could hardly think otherwise because their whole reason for being is that they know best and they shall teach the rest of us poor sods the truth. Hence their name - the Teachers.

It must be said in their favour that they have built an apparently viable alternative living space for a growing membership and enlarging people's choice in this way is usually desirable. I would add that the Utopian wing of anarchist thought is a useful, if not necessary, complement to our struggle in existing society. However, the Utopian idea is not without its pitfalls as we only need to read Orwell or Huxley to realise, and the Teachers just don't seem to be aware of the problems. Their line is - we have a vision which we find attractive and therefore it must be good for everyone - and that makes their success potentially dangerous.

The Teachers have issued several pamphlets and books and

have several more planned - they all bear the name of 'Kevin of the Teachers'. This note mainly concerns a further product of their press - their new journal - and was prompted by its appearance in FREEDOM's bookshop notes a few weeks ago. It is intended by way of a review of that publication: International Journal of Alternative Communities, no. 1. For background information I have relied on the previously published pamphlet The Teachers' Community, together with a substantial amount of hearsay evidence, picked up around the commune movement and the libertarian left. The Teachers have few friends in these areas so there is bound to be bias but I feel there are good reasons for the enmity.

The Teachers are based on the ideas of their founder, Kevin. Kevin is a computer whizz kid; he has developed this background in two ways.

Firstly he has combined the methods (notation) of the computer programmer with a particularly extreme interpretation of the logical positivists' verification principle to produce his 'Choice Mathematics'. This is supposed to be the key to the new society which Kevin and the Teachers want to build; much like the use of Newspeak by the party in Orwell's 1984. All words are to be defined precisely and then abbreviated for logical notation and manipulation. The result is claimed to make confusion and ambiguity impossible so that communication within and around the commune can be rationalised. It also claims to be able to 'cure' autism, schizophrenia, psychopathy and depression (The Teachers Community, p. 12). Well, maybe, but it also has the inevitable problems of any language-based system of thought, that it blocks out whole areas of human experience which can only be grasped intuitively or through empathy. Certainly there is considerable scope for rationalisation using the logical methods of the Teachers, and they are having success in this area, putting problems like pollution into an analysis that renders them solvable by society in its present form. The trouble is that language is ultimately a tool of containment and the more precisely the language's structure and vocabulary are defined the tighter and more effective are the limits of this containment.

CONTINUED PAGE 16

LIBERTARIAN ALTERNATIVE

ALL authoritarian and competing organisations are anachronistic. Yet almost daily the world becomes more authoritarian and one is forced still further into the battle with others.

All assumptions that people can be classified, herded conveniently into a thousand RSL* clubs of the mind, are authoritarian and have had their day - even 'humanity'.

It is clear that science and technology have outrun these creaking, primitive war horses, that evolving egalitarian and libertarian consciousness has left them behind.

But while they are anachronistic they are far from extinct. 'Humanity' may be rich in knowledge, but that knowledge is rendered useless or dangerous at the whim of mad egotists, gentle socialists, devoted Christians, committed Communists, iron-fisted imperialists ... of those with privilege, whatever the power or system.

Science and technology have not freed humankind from servitude and hard labour because neither the organisers of production nor the puppeteers of politics - the privileged - have been concerned with liberation of people. They have nothing to gain, everything to lose. Or so they think, wrongly.

Elisee Reclus knew, at the end of the last century, that the world was rich enough to supply the needs of the population. "But the distribution is actually devoted to individual caprice and the unrestrained competition of speculators" (Evolution and Revolution).

So, what's changed? The real wealth of knowledge and technology remains unexploited, except by the privileged for their own unimaginative ends. And in their hands it is squandered and diluted by competition and their continuing struggle for ever more power and privilege.

The plunderer of human achievement is the politician, the boss, the spiritual dictator. Wasteful and unconcerned, they have commandeered science, technology, knowledge ... and turned the world into a dying plant.

'Humanity' may be rich but men, women, children remain trapped in the conflict of imperialist nations, coerced into states or arrogant races, instructed to thank God and the boss for granting them the freedom to starve when the 'reward' for their labour is insufficient to induce the organiser of food production and distribution to give them something to eat.

Take a close look at any authoritarian group (the family, the church, the multinational company, the army, the political party) and you will find one thing in common: belief in the right to limitless expansion of their wealth or power - the imperialist mentality.

Yet we know the disastrous consequences of that attitude. Families feud, Christian kills Moslem (and vice versa), oil companies provide the arms for a bloody coup d'etat to wrest control of the wealth beneath the barren soil, armies exterminate one another and political parties massacre language with their promises of freedom and liberty, etc.

Clearly the imperialist course is a race to the death of the species. Yet that is the course of instruction in the schools; it's the one recommended by the newspapers, the only course there is for authoritarian 'leaders'.

What a massive contradiction! What an amalgam of lies to instruct a child on one hand that 'humanity' is rich and capable of solving all its problems and on the other that the authority of a privileged few is just and should be obeyed! The two arguments are incompatible.

The simple fact is that the progress of knowledge, science and technology could free us ... but never in a society based on competition and division.

"Competition will disappear one day", wrote Stirner, "because we will understand that cooperation is more useful than isolation". Today cooperation has become a condition for the

survival of the species.

Competition or cooperation is the only choice.

The 'political' person and the 'political' society remain at the stage of the first empires of history - hierarchic, and cruelly pitting people against people. Cooperation, on the other hand, is necessarily egalitarian and functional: a society of free people freely using their knowledge. The inventor of the plough-share was happy to see other farmers benefit from his invention... but in the same epoch the owner of armaments kept them jealously to himself, as a means of enslaving others.

Technical progress has had egalitarian characteristics. Cooperation has been essential. The building of the model of the atom, for example, was the result of cooperation by many scientists of several nationalities.

Social conflict and political struggle were not invented by the peasants or by the astronomers. They are the legacy of those who controlled the weapons and those who sought to control minds through religion and other irrational notions.

But it has taken until now for the explosive contradiction between the mentality and life-styles of the 'political' people and 'practical' people to become apparent: the contradiction, that is, between competition and creation.

Unless this is resolved the species could be destroyed, either by genocidal war or by ecological exhaustion. The glaringly mistaken example of the theory of historic fatalism is there to warn us. The violent political actions excited by Engels, Hegel and Marx are more likely to destroy than to liberate. Their main mistake was to stress the political aspects of social struggle and thereby create new imperialisms.

But there has been a cooperative, practical aspect.

Was is not the threat of nuclear destruction which led the USA and Soviet Union towards 'pacific coexistence', even though the political praxis would normally have pushed them towards a more aggressive stance?

Insular, imperialist social systems are caught in their own trap. But it does not belong to them to make history. Real advances have always been made by the practical, cooperative people, by workers and scientists.

Insular, closed ideologies do not breed ideas or make discoveries or invent machines to liberate people. People do.

It is the workers who have changed the type of authoritarian production through workers' councils.

We re-discover Proudhon's view that no social evolution is possible unless the working class takes control of economic organisation: a negation of Marxism-Leninism which re-established the imperialist power of the party, isolated the whole of society and introduced iron discipline to maintain authority.

We live today in a time of universal crisis. The only solution is the use to cooperation to change an archaic system; And hope that the solution is not beyond us can be drawn from contemporary attitudes ... the revolutionist mind, the egalitarian and cooperative point of view, the concern with the quality of life itself, the rebirth of interest in re-forming communal life styles, demands by the workers and people for self-management.

We are witnessing the rise of the new revolutionary mind.

The idea of social revolution is being increasingly replaced by a concept of relational revolution ... The social revolution pointed away from imperialism and towards libertarianism. "The social revolution will make solidarity triumphant" (Bakunin).

But how are the authoritarians and imperialists of the State, the family, the party, the company to alter their attitudes of superiority? How are they to realise that privilege is less valuable than freedom?

CONTINUED PAGE 16