

MOTHER EARTH



MOTHER EARTH

This is the first issue of Mother Earth, what we hope will eventually be a magazine including not only libertarian 'news and views', but articles of general interest on widely differing subjects, cartoons and poetry.

Basically the aim of this issue is to interest people in the idea of this sort of magazine and to gather together a group of comrades, each prepared to take a share in writing and printing it, in any capacity they can, and with ideas on what the ultimate aims of the paper should be. We apologise for what may seem a lack of original material; our excuse is the general lack of student participation in anything but academic work after the beginning of the summer term, and the fact that this issue has been edited and printed virtually singlehanded.

We hope that the next issue (in 2 to 3 weeks) will contain articles from anarchists all over the country, as well as plenty of contributions from people in the university and college - and more illustrations with luck.

If you are interested in helping in any way with Mother Earth please contact Marion McCartney c/o Libertarian Socialist Society pigeon hole or at 21d Pearson Ave. Alternatively you can come and see us at the Libertarian Bookstall which we will be running every week in the Union.

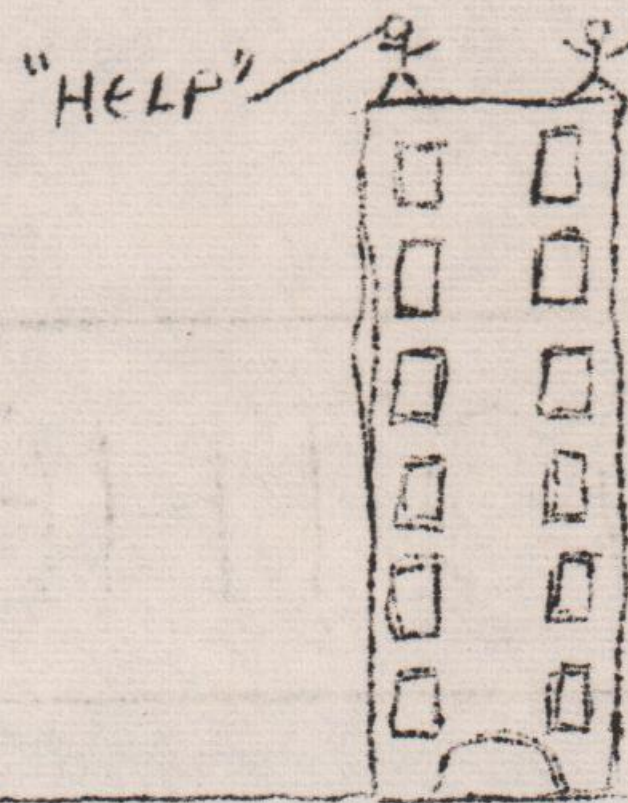
COVER BY MICK MCCARTNEY

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THE UNIVERSITY

THAT I'D LIKE



"One had to cram all this stuff into one's mind, whether one liked it or not. This coercion had such a deterring effect that after I had passed the final examination I found the consideration of any scientific problems distasteful to me for an entire year.... It is in fact nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry; for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation, stands mainly in need of freedom; without this it goes to wrack and ruin without fail. It is a very grave mistake to think that the enjoyment of seeing and searching can be promoted by means of coercion and a sense of duty. To the contrary, I believe that it would be possible to rob even a healthy beast of its voraciousness, if it were possible, with the aid of a whip, to force the beast to devour continuously, even when not hungry - especially if the food handed out under such coercion, were to be selected accordingly."

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Once a student has registered for a degree course he submits, for the most part, to studying what other people see fit for him to study. And in case the student should attempt to assert his autonomy by straying away from the curriculum, and concentrating exclusively upon aspects of the curriculum that interest him, the authorities have powerful sanctions with which to bring him to heel. Examinations covering the whole course ensure that the student keeps to the letter of the curriculum. And essays- time-consuming and difficult because they are forced upon the student, rather than arising from his personal choice and enthusiasm- occupy most of his time. In fact a lot of time is wasted, spent in apathetic dejection, trying to avoid doing what one is compelled to do. Whatever spare time the student may possess is soured and overclouded by the thought of all his academic obligations. The student has just about enough time to appreciate what he would like to study, but he has the frustration of hardly ever being able to pursue these matters to their logical conclusion due to lack of free time. If a student is required to study four, and perhaps even more, branches of his course simultaneously, this seems to delimit the attention he can give to any one of these branches. The result is superficiality. Superficiality is not necessarily to be condemned, provided that one's approach has been freely chosen. The complaint that I have against the notion of an enforced curriculum and degree course is that one has to read superficially willy-nilly. Not only is the approach superficial but the content is pre-ordained and selected by someone other than oneself. Admittedly there is a certain amount of choice of topics after the first and second year, but the choice is relatively limited, and the the content of one's chosen topics is decided, to a large extent by the person who gives the lectures sets the essays and exams. This means that the student is largely denied the excitement of personal discovery which is so essential to any real learning and enthusiasm. It seems that under the present system of schools and Higher Education, nobody is going to do any real learning

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until they become free people-- free to study what they like, when they like and how they like, with nobody breathing down their neck hounding them with absurd essays and exams. It is significant that there are so many people willing to testify that they only began to do any serious work after they left the institution. No doubt people doing research at University would attest that they have greatly benefitted from no longer having the thought of exams hanging over their heads and no longer having to do essays enforced by other people. Once liberated from a "predetermined, pinched, examination-harried course of instruction" the individual is free to go at his own pace, set his own standards, and achieve his own goals. This will not lead to a slack time, quite the reverse, self-imposed standards are notoriously high and yet they are much easier to fulfil because one has the consolation of being a free man, with no-one to denigrate you if you fall short (except yourself). Freedom is such an essential ingredient for human beings that without it they can never fulfil their best potential, they become distraught, neurotic, apathetic, and, just like the lion pacing up and down in his cage, they are lesser people.

One educationalist who has correctly diagnosed the need for freedom and acted accordingly is A S Neill. He realises that play is an essential ingredient for a child, and that the child should be free to play as much as he wants. When asked whether he believed in homework, he replied "I don't even believe in school lessons unless they are voluntarily chosen. The homework habit is disgraceful. Children loathe homework, and that is enough to condemn it." Considering the similarity between University and most schools-- once one has decided to attend University one is forced to do essays, exams, attend lectures, tutorials, and study a predetermined course just like at most schools-- it is surprising, perhaps, that no-one has applied the insight of A S Neill to Universities.

Of course the University is a more flexible institution than most schools, and allows the student a certain amount of freedom. Nevertheless it is central to my argument, and no-one can gainsay that the University is basically a coercive institution. Let us imagine that an enlightened body of people set up a University along the lines of A S Neill's 'Summerhill'. The student would be informed, on first arriving, that there are no degrees or formal qualifications to be obtained. This would cut out the large number of people who enter University merely to obtain a job-coupon and as such have no place in any genuine establishment of learning. The student would be told that they are completely free to study whatever they like and when they like-- there would be no exams or essays and no regular lecture courses. The students would be reminded, however, that the so-called members of staff have various specialisations and strong points, and will be very willing to advise and help a student in pursuing his researches, and willing to comment on any written work that they might do at any time. Seminars might be arranged by students on a voluntary, 'ad-hoc' basis, and lectures might be given from time to time by anyone who felt he had something to say of especial interest.

How would things then develop? Some students might spend all their time talking to other students and members of staff (this seems hardly likely, although there would be definitely more talking than goes on at the moment) and if this is the case, fair enough. There is a great deal to be gained by getting to know other people and absorbing their insight and experience. It seems unlikely that people would wish to spend more than a year just talking, in which case they would either leave or spend more time studying books than they had done in the first year. There is no question that some very concentrated, productive and mature studying would take place. People would feel absolutely free and able to do what suited them best at any particular time. A lot of writing would be done. At the moment students probably do very little writing outside of the compulsory essays -- usually done grudgingly and badly. In short, therefore, a great deal of learning would take place; and there would be a real communication between student and so-called members of staff which appears to be

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singularly lacking under the present system.

Let us dismiss at this stage the absurd opinion that before one is mature and competent enough to pursue one's own researches it is necessary to go through the rigmarole of a 'formal' grounding such as in a first degree. This is more or less an excuse by authoritarians to keep students in thrall and postpone the day when they can undertake their own researches. The validity of this excuse is easily refuted. People like Colin Wilson and Arnold Wesker were already doing advanced studying (certainly not in a university) before they were eighteen. And people like Gerald Bienen and Michael Holroyd, without ever attending university, have done academic work of the highest quality. As A S Neill says, "All that any child needs is the three R's; the rest should be tools and clay and sports and paint and freedom"

It might be argued that an A S Neill ~~xxxx~~ approach applied to university education would suit the liberal arts; but would it be suitable for learning science? The main point to remember is that science is, for the most part, a practical discipline and, therefore is best learned at the places in which it is being practically applied. This medicine would be learned in a hospital and architecture and engineering would be learned on a building site and railways and in factories. Under the present system a lot of the science taught at first degree level is somewhat useless. Thus "the technology or science graduate enters industry only to discover that everything he has been taught is years out of date" and he has to be retrained all over again. When it comes to the field of pure scientific research done in laboratories, miles away from anywhere, scientists know as well as everybody ought to know, that complete freedom and autonomy are essential. Can you imagine an Einstein or a Rutherford being told what to do?

Once we have realised that schools and universities hinder the process of real learning, and tyrannise the student, we also realise that at the present moment learning is by no means their sole raison d'etre. One becomes aware of the insidious objectives of conditioning students to be servile and to provide the manpower necessary to perpetuate a society run on the basis of tyranny and exploitation. It is, for the most part, these functions that have prompted the recent student unrest throughout Europe and America. So far, our attention at Hull has been focussed mainly upon examinations and the scheme of democratic decision making. It is time that we expanded our critique to include criticisms of the whole concept of degrees, preordained courses, curricula and the idea that a university is somewhere special and sacrosanct. Surely any place of learning has a complete right to style itself a university?

ANDREW JAMES

AS A MATTER OF INTEREST

Now the Union has taken its money out of South Africa is it now going to lend large amounts of money to ex-members of Union (and close friends of Union bureaucracy bosses) to buy houses so they can charge exorbitant rents to students to pay the large amount of interest Union is charging them. Complicated? But no prizes as to who loses - landlords have the rents, Union has the interest, Students subsidize.

FOR NAMES, ETC READ MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS LAST TERM

LEEDS INFORMATION

BULLETIN

Bulletin of LEEDS^S Information Point, anything tackled, info onⁿ what's on-clubs-communes-flats-jobs-mags, crash pads etc- LIP has grown out of BIT London and has merged with 'Alices Restaurant' an information sheet already in existence in Leeds. LIP is federated to other information services in Britain and relies on information from you to exist.

LIP temporarily resides at the Bookshop, University annexe, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds2 Yorks from 11.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday, Saturday.

Progress to Date

After

After three months of existence with very little income to cover initial expenses and limited by the lack of publicity we have accumulated a sizable file of contacts both in Leeds and elsewhere. We have benefit concerts lined up, a barrister for free legal advice who we will contact for you, a working relationship with Leeds claimant's union, the Council of Community Relations with opportunities for translation and interpreters into immigrant languages. We must emphasise the WE as there is no formal leadership or bureaucracy. We are managers and workers, 'cos we are both at once hence neither. WE DEPEND ON YOUR FEEDBACK!

COPIES OF LEEDS INFORMATION BULLETIN AVAILABLE FROM L.S.S. BOOKSTALL

INTRODUCING O.R.A.*

We are active in the Anarchist Federation of Britain but we recognise the libertarian nature and/or possibilities of groups such as Solidarity, Socialist Current, sections of International Socialism, the ILP, and various other groups.

We believe that a Libertarian Federation containing all these, acting and interacting together, could be very fruitful. This is our longterm aim.

Our immediate task is to establish the means of joint discussion and work. We are producing an agitational paper under the control of its producers, writers and sellers. At present it is brought out monthly.

We ask people who agree with our outline to contact us and help to work for a founding conference. The organisational ideas we proposed in O.R.A. No 1. Towards a History and Critique of the Anarchist Movement in Recent Times are the starting point for discussion on the nature of the organisation.

We also ask those interested in the paper as suggested to send us articles and help with its launching whether they agree with our other proposals or not.

AVAILABLE FROM L.S.S. BOOKSTALL:-

- O.R.A. No. 1 5p
- O.R.A. No 2: Theory and Praxis in Anarchist Organisation 3p
- O.R.A. No. 3: The Bombthrowers - A Study of Terrorism 10p
- O.R.A. No. 4: Neither Washington nor Hanoi but Libertarian Socialism 2p
- O.R.A. No. 5: Introduction to Revolutionary Anarchism 10p

*ORGANISATION OF REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISTS

HULL UNIVERSITY

OXJ TRICKETT

The purpose of this article is not to give an exhaustive account either of the nature of the relationship between universities and general and society, nor can it indicate anything but the broad outlines of the nature of Hull University. However, the authors hope that enough will be said and given as evidence to reveal about British universities. Moreover, we hope that this will stimulate more research by others into the various aspects that we mention and others which we have not mentioned in relation both to the situation here at Hull and at other universities.

Perhaps it will be as well to state some of our assumptions. We believe that they can be generalised as follows; the 'function' of universities (and all institutions of education) is to provide a particular product for a particular market. We (the student) are the commodity which is being processed and packaged to meet quite explicit needs of industrial capitalism. From the University we shall be pushed out into the market to sell our labour power in the middle and upper levels of industry.

The University, for the vast majority of its members, has no other role. At the national level the University system as a whole fits neatly into the slot ascribed to it by society. At local level this university has quite close and firm links with E. Yorkshire-based industry. Internally, it resembles a factory. The point is that it is you and I who are travelling down the assembly line. This article hopes to show some of these facts in more detail below. Enough. The reader must draw his own conclusions.

THE UNIVERSITY'S TIES WITH INDUSTRY

Before we begin this section, we should again emphasise the limited nature of our knowledge which has resulted from lack of time and also poor facilities. However after only limited research it has become clear that a number of companies are closely tied to the university; Reckitts and Colman (Holdings) Ltd. being the principal culprit here.

Perhaps the most powerful institution of Hull University is the Council. Council, according to the Charter of Incorporation is 'the governing body and the executive of the University and shall have the custody... of the management and administration of the revenue and property of the University and the conduct of all affairs of the University.'

Of the members of council a numerically strong group is made up of owners of large amounts of property - mainly industrialists but also descendants of the aristocracy. The composition of the Council in terms of the interests of its members can be categorised as follows:

- 6 academics
- 11 representatives of local councils
- 7 administrators
- a number of others
- 9 industrialists

This is not a comprehensive breakdown, we are unable to ascertain the reasons why some members of council have been chosen as such. Also, there is some overlapping i.e. some of the local authority members are also businessmen.

Merely the numerical strength of the industrialists, while striking in its large size, does not fully indicate their probable influence. A number of other factors should be considered. The industrialists are fairly active and are found on many of the sub-committees.

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Council. Thus, for example, W.B. Hall (director of three companies including Priestman Brothers who own seven subsidiary companies) is to be found on the Finance, Wages and salaries, maintenance, and building committees of Council (coincidentally, these are the committees most concerned with financial matters). Similarly with B. N. Reckitt and Colonel J. B. Upton (both past chairmen and directors of Reckitt and Colman (Holdings) Ltd. - about which we shall have more to say later) these two are both on the finance, and Building sub-committees.

But not only are the industrialists active men, they are also to be found in some of the most important and influential offices of the council; of the three officers of council - Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary - two are occupied by the industrialists. H. I. Loten is chairman and L. H. Downs is Treasurer (concerned with accounting for the £15 million shown on the University's 1969-70 balance sheet). Both Downs and Loten are past Presidents of the Hull Chamber of Commerce and Shipping - the institution which represent the interests of local employers.

The nature of the role of Reckitts and Colmans (Holdings) Ltd. is one which requires special analysis. Here are some facts:

a) Three members of the single most important institution of the university - Council are all past chairmen or directors of that company: B. N. Reckitt, Colonel J. B. Upton, and Colonel R. J. L. Jackson.

b) Reckitt and Colman (Holdings) Ltd. owns 140 subsidiary companies (give or take one or two). It had a turnover of £156,800,000 in 1970-71, and profits of nearly £18 million. Included in this empire are companies in 38 different countries. Perhaps not surprisingly, this includes ~~xx~~ ~~xx~~ companies in S. Africa Rhodesia and Greece, for in such countries there is a subdued labour force thus permitting cheap costs and therefore high profits per worker which amounted, for the whole complex, to over £680 per worker in the year 1970-71.

c) The chairmen and directors of Reckitt and Colman are clearly powerful and influential (immoral?) men both in the outside world and within this institution. Since we have no inside knowledge of the workings of Council we do not know precisely how powerful they are, but perhaps the following may give some indication: 1) the University has, we have very good reason to believe, a sum of money not unadjacent to £1,700,000 invested in Reckitts and Colman.

2) In the recent S. E. Asian studies sit-in it was noticed that Reckitts and Colman had taken considerable interest in the department - it had distributed prizes to students, and it was also claimed that the company was offering scholarships and jobs to students. When the students requested that the prizes be discontinued on the grounds that they did not want money which had been obtained from a company with investments ~~tax~~ in S. Africa, they informed the Head of Department, the Dean of the faculty and the Vice-Chancellor. All three appeared to be very reticent on the matter with the result that the issue was never really discussed at all. The silence by the staff puzzled the students at the time. Perhaps it is clearer in the light of the above facts.

We live in a world where the ownership of large amounts of property is the key determinant of social and economic power. The shareholders and landlords have great influence over the lives of the property-less - they buy and sell our labour as they wish, they determine prices, and regulate our living conditions. Universities are not islands of independence in this situation but are subject to similar pressures as the rest. Perhaps it is not surprising that the 'lords of labour' should wish to oversee the workings of the universities.

What is more surprising is that academics are prepared to accept this situation without a murmur. If the claims of integrity and the 'pursuit of the truth' are not hollow then surely such elements

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packaging us for the market. It is striking, incidentally, that the system of continuous assessment, frequently seen by many students as progressive, is merely an alternative method of categorising and defining us. In fact in many ways continual assessment ensures that students are subjected more closely than ever to the university's influence. Students who have all their exams in the third year are able to minimise the time they spend on their courses at least in the first two years. In contrast, continuous assessment ensures that students are subject to the university's intellectual discipline from their first essay - often in the second term of the first year.

How far the analogy of the university as a factory can be taken is a question open to great debate. Students are largely free to organise their time as they feel necessary, and there is general freedom in many areas of academic life. But this independence exists to a lesser degree than is often claimed. This fact can be demonstrated by the following set of statistics taken from a report on the Hull University Health Centre for 1970:-

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	No. taking finals	% of finalists who experienced 'stress'
Men	635	10.5%
Women	342	20.2%

'Stress' is a generic term used by the Health Centre to describe a variety of ailments - boils, tonsillitis, etc - which are more or less directly attributable to nervous tension induced by the impending examinations. A number of other interesting facts come to light in this report; in all but three cases those who were suffering stress were required to take their exams despite their illness, moreover, 73 students whose was considered sufficiently severe to be given a bed in the Health Centre were required to take their exams and some even had to take their exam standing because their ailment prevented them from sitting! Not surprisingly, the report notes that "A large proportion of those we have treated have attained poor degree results." It need hardly be noted that these statistics tend (as do most statistics) to conceal the meaning which they ought to convey because they negate individuality i.e. figures cannot convey the anguish, sleepless nights, neuroses etc experienced by most students - whose future rests on a three hour section of their life.

A very good argument can be made out to show that the university is, in many ways, a dehumanised institution. It is certainly not an intellectual 'community' - a large number of staff regard lecturing as their secondary role - the first being research and publication on which their status and therefore advancement depends. Thus the lecture theatre is frequently the only point of contact between ~~xx~~ staff and students. Typical of the staff-student dichotomy is the fact that the two groups have separate social and dining facilities also the fact that students have no power in decision-making while the staff committee is a very influential unit at the departmental level.

Students are, in fact, led to believe that they do have some power in the running of and the decisions of their departments; through the staff-student committees. However, experience has shown that the achievements of these bodies is negligible. This is partly because those students who participate in no way represent the others in their department, they solely represent themselves. But the principal cause of failure is the fact that the staff and especially the professor makes the final decisions, and obviously he is not going to agree to change suggested by students that in some way challenges his authority, that is, his position in the hierarchy.

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as the industrialists can only function to pervert such aims. If this is accepted then in the first place we must demand that the intrests of University councillors be clearly stated, and that Councillors be clearly subjected to the University's intrests as seen by the whole academic community ; and secondly ,we must demand that the workings of the upper echelons be made as public as possible so that it is clear how they operate and where the power lies. But these can only be solved by a free UNiversity run by and for its members, in a free society.

THE UNIVERSITY IN SOCIETY.

In a society where individuals are motivated, in the main, by an acquisitive impulse, effeciency, profitability and utility usually form the bases on which our judgements of gooda and bad are centred. In allocating funds to any social institution, society can almost be seen calculating the profits and losses resulting from the existance of that institution, and pressures are continually brought to bear requiring increased profitability. Thus it is with universities, which are continually subjected to pressures and encroachments resulting in the increasingly clear definition of their role within the socio-economic system. There can be no doubt that the principal aim of the university is to produce a specific commodity to meet the demands of the market place i.e. a class whose labour is mainly of an intellectual nature and which fits into the middle and upper managerial positions in society. The universities may be seen as factories processing, grading and packaging their human products.

Many instances of these processes can be found. In the way, for example, that not only the university's but the whole educational system categorises individuals and then isolates each category, preparing each for its different future role. Thus universities usually form isolated territorial and social units, with little interaction with other social groups. The campus at Hull is clearly divided off, by a line of bushes and barbed wire from the College next door. Similarly, the College students are limited in the permitted use they may make of our massive library while theirs is comparatively tiny. University social and athletic facilities which are considerable are limited for students while town facilities are inadequate. These examples while perhaps trivial in themselves, are part of a pattern whereby the hierachical divisions are first established in the education system and subsequently transmitted into the wider economic strata.

Having isolated university students off, the next task is to prepare them for their future role. This process is not, incidentally, something which lecturers, teachers or 'the Establishment' simply sit down and decide is their 'social function'. But, nevertheless, because the actors are not aware of the situation does not prove that the situation does not exist. Consequently one can say that the universities have certain objective functions, though these functions (processing, grading etc) do not use the straightforward methods used in, say, grading eggs (to state the obvious).

Nevertheless, one can discern various pressures which operate in the direction of enforcing intellectual conformity. The most direct pressure is the system of sanctions and rewards functioning via the examination and assessment system. The student is rewarded, by high grades, for work which corresponds to the conceptual framework within which the lecturers work. As Tolstoy has put it "his talent for assimilating and expressing clearly the thoughts of others had brought him to the top - at school and university where this ability is highly prized." This statement may not be universally true, but most students have experienced such pressures - that ideas which are xxx subversive, new, or even which the lecturer disagrees with are discouraged.

Both exams and assessment essays are methods of grading students -

MOTHER EARTH (no connection with US) 9 ECOLOGY PROJECT (M.E.E.P.)

Ecology is the study of living things in relation to their environment. All living things interact with each other and with the environment. A dynamic equilibrium is established between different life forms, but now, man, with his great numbers and powerful technology, has upset the balance. The results could be catastrophic. Ecology is the science which attempts to predict what these results will be.

Ecologists agree that life on this planet is now facing a crisis. Some of them predict that the pollution of the environment and the exploitation of natural resources, caused by over-population, will result in major ecocatastrophes and possibly in the extinction of our own species and many others as well. It is estimated that this will happen in ten to twenty years time, thus fulfilling the ancient prophecies that the end of the world will come before the end of this century.

The function of M.E.E.P. will be threefold:-

(1) to do research in ecology and futureology and thus try to predict the future course of events.

(2) to work with other conservation and anti-pollution groups and to try to persuade people to limit the size of their families to no more than two children.

(3) to learn how to survive during an ecocatastrophe and how to begin the new age after it.

SPACESHIP EARTH

The following paragraph is taken from "Population - Resources - Environment" (issues in human ecology) by Paul and Anne Ehrlich.

'Spaceship Earth is now filled to capacity or beyond and is running out of food. And yet the people travelling first class are, without thinking, demolishing the ship's already over-strained life-support systems. The food producing mechanism is being sabotaged. The devices that maintain the atmosphere are being turned off. The temperature control mechanism is being altered at random. Thermonuclear bombs, poison gasses and super germs have been manufactured and stockpiled by people in the few first class compartments for possible future use against other first class passengers in their competitive struggles for dwindling resources, or perhaps even against the expectant but weaker masses of humanity in steerage. But, unaware that there is no one at the controls of their ship, many passengers ignore the chaos or view it with cheerful optimism.

Will everything turn out all right?'

Anyone willing to participate in this project, or requiring further information, contact Spencer Camp ell, c/o MIP, Leeds University Union Annexe, 153, Woodhouse Lane, LEEDS 2

DID YOU KNOW - WHEN SOME NICE, WELL PAID JOBS
IN THE UNIVERSITY OVER THE SUMMER WERE SENT
TO UNION LAST TERM THEY NEVER ACTUALLY REACHED
THE PUBLIC NOTICE BOARD IN UNION BUT WERE SNAPPED
UP BY PROMINENT MEMBERS OF UNION BUREAUCRACY.
WILL THINGS BE BETTER UNDER MORRIS? SEE ~~THIS~~ ~~THE~~
NEXT ISSUE

ANARCHIST GROUP HANDBOOK

PYRAMIDS OR NETWORKS?

Authoritarian institutions are organised as pyramids, libertarian associations as networks. The state, the capitalist firm, the public corporation, the army the police the church - they are all pyramidal hierarchies with the boss-men at the top and the broad base of dogsbodies spread out below. Power, authority, the making of decisions, the status, and the high living, the people who make things happen are all at the top. The people that things happen to are at the bottom.

The anarchist conception is entirely different. It doesn't demand the changing of the labels on the layers of the cake, it doesn't want different people on top, it doesn't want to overturn the pyramid, it wants us to clamber out from underneath. It advocates a spread out network of individuals and groups taking their own decisions, controlling their own destiny. The anarchist theorists the whole social organisation built upon such local groups: the commune, or council, as the territorial nucleus, the syndicate, or workers council as the industrial one, federated together not like the stones of a pyramid, where the biggest burden is borne by the lowest layer, but like the links of a network, the network of autonomous groups.

Anarchism as an individual attitude is a philosophy of personal autonomy. As a social philosophy it is a theory of social autonomy. In either aspect it is, as the word implies, a refutation of the principle of authority. "No masters high or low" as they used to say in the last century. And the network of autonomous is not just a blueprint for a free society, it is something people need today if they are ever to seize control over their own lives, it is something the anarchist movement needs today if it is ever to become socially effective. What is the best method of making anarchist propaganda? Not in the backrooms of the metropolis, where FREEDOM AND ANARCHY are cooked up (though the anarchist press is an essential raw material for the propagandist) but locally, on the ground, on the spot. How exactly do people become infected with new ideas? By contact, by word of mouth, by example, by action. These are things which happen locally or not at all.

Individuals can accomplish a great deal. The impotence of the individual is a myth. Outstanding individuals can accomplish wonders. But most of us are not outstanding individuals and are endowed with quite ordinary talents and potentialities. Association in groups with others in any sphere of life adds enormously to the potentialities of the individual. A group's output, or its influence provides an "increment" over and above the sum of the capacities of the individuals composing it.

There are of course, in-groups and out-groups, the internal network and the external network, and they each have a function in the life of a successful group. The external network of a group is the personal network of each individual member and when a group has a need which cannot be satisfied by its own members' capacities, some member has in his own network, some person or some contact which can be drawn upon to supply the lack. the ad hoc group which springs up for some particular need is usually simply a regrouping of people from existing networks with an increment drawn from people attracted by the particular function of the ad hoc group. This was certainly the experience of CND groups, the Committee of 100, and, most dramatically, of the Spies for Peace.

AD HOC ORGANISATION

"One lesson to be drawn from 'Spies for Peace' is the advantage of ad hoc organisation, coming rapidly into being and if necessary disappearing with the same speed, but leaving behind innumerable

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centres of activity, like ripples and eddies in a pond, after a stone has been thrown into it.

"Traditional politics (both 'Revolutionary' and 'reformist') are based on a central dynamo, with a transmission belt leading outwards. Capture of the dynamo, or its conversion to other purposes, may break the transmission entirely. 'Spies for Peace' seems to have operated on an entirely different basis. Messages were passed from mouth to mouth along the route, documents from hand to hand. One group passed a secret to a second, which then set about reprinting it. A caravan became the source of a leaflet, a shopping basket a distribution centre. A hundred copies of a pamphlet are distributed in the streets: some are sure to reach people who will reproduce them.

"Contacts are built on a face to face basis. One knows the personal limitations of one's comrades. X is an expert at steering a meeting through procedural shoals, but cannot work a duplicator. Y can use a small printing press, but is unable to write a leaflet. Z can express himself in public, but cannot sell pamphlets. Every task elects its own workers, and there is no need for an elaborate show of hands. Seekers of personal power and glory get little thrill from the anonymously and skilfully illegal. The prospect of prison breeds out the leader complex. Every member of a group may be called upon to undertake key tasks. And all-round talent is developed in all. The development of small groups for mutual aid could form a basis for an effective resistance movement.

"There are important conclusions. Revolution does not need conveyor belt organisation. It needs hundreds, thousands, and finally millions of people meeting in groups with informal contacts with each other. It needs mass consciousness. If one group takes an initiative that is valuable, others will take it up. The methods must be tailored to the society we live in. The FLN could use armed warfare, for it had hills and thickets to retreat into. We are faced by the overwhelming physical force of a state better organised and better armed than at any time in its history. We must react accordingly. The many internal contradictions of the State must be skilfully exploited. The Dusseldorf authorities were caught in their own regulation, when the disarmers refused to fasten their safety belts. MI5 cannot conceive of subversion that is not masterminded by a sinister Communist agent. It is incapable of dealing with a movement where no-one takes orders from anyone else. Through action, autonomy and revolutionary initiative will be developed still further. To cope with our activities the apparatus of repression will become even more centralised and even more bureaucratic. This will enhance our opportunities rather than lessen them."

ANARCHY "29": THE SPIES FOR PEACE STORY

STUDENT GROUPS

Groups spring up like spring flowers in colleges and universities. You have only to call yourself an anarchist in many a seat of learning and some nut comes rallying round. But what do the student anarchists do? Well, very often they invite a series of mini-big-noises from the anarchist movement to come and talk to them and on such occasions a good time is had by all. But is this the way such a group should conduct itself? In the first place, why bring in speakers when you ought to be developing your own abilities in the techniques of effective speaking? You will probably find you can do it better yourself. In the second place, if we assume that universities are really communities of scholars shouldn't we expect anarchist students to be doing the new anarchist thinking that we talk about but seldom get around to? Paul Goodman, in his new book 'Like a Conquered Province' remarks:

"The operative idea in participatory democracy is decentralising in order to multiply the number who are responsible, who initiate and decide. Is this idea viable?

"In principle, there are two opposite ways of decentralising: either by dividing overcentralised organisations where it can be shown that decentral organization is more efficient in economic, social

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and human costs - or at least not too inefficient; or by creating new small enterprises to fulfil needs that big organisations neglect or only pretend to fulfil. Obviously the first of these, to cut the present structures down to human size, is not in the power of students; but it happens that it does require a vast amount of empirical research and academic analysis, to find if, where, and how it is feasible. In the current American style, there is no such research and analysis, and on a hundred and fifty campuses I have urged students to work on such problems, in business and engineering, education and communications, science and municipal administration. The students seem fascinated, but I do not know if they are coming across. (To say it wryly, there is an excellent organisation called Students for a Democratic Society, but it is not enough evident that they are students for a democratic society)" Are there any anarchist students using the facilities offered by their universities to seek anarchist's solutions to one contemporary problem?

Letter to editor: I have a suggestion as follows: that seminars be conducted by people interested and competent in social research and whose orientation is neither Establishment nor Marxist. They would be by invitation... Each one would begin with a carefully prepared paper which developed a revolutionary thesis (I do not say necessarily anarchist). That the proceedings of such seminars should be published in pamphlet form. How say you?

WELLWISHER London, N.5.

Reply: Go ahead and do it. EDITOR

It is not suggested that student anarchists should do our thinking for us, or that they should confine their activity to the study of anarchism. They could for example seek some control over their own destiny as students. This is a struggle which has been going on for several years in America, and erupted, for example, in the sit-in at the L.S.E. "Direct action does work: the monolith can be moved" declare the authors of the pamphlet on the successful struggle there.

PARALLEL ORGANISATIONS

Goodman's discussion of American student action continues, "The opposite way of decentralising, by creating new enterprises, better suits the student zeal for direct action, and they have applied it with a lot of energy and some inventiveness. It has been called parallel development. Typically students have set up a dozen little ~~xxx~~ 'free universities' in or next to established to teach in a more personal way and to deal with contemporary subjects that are not yet standard... Some of these courses are 'action sociology', like organising labour or community development. Students have established a couple of neighbourhood radio stations, to broadcast local news and propaganda, and to give poor people a chance to talk into a microphone. They have set up parallel community projects to combat the welfare bureaucracy and channelise real needs and grievances." He mentioned that he was hired last year by the Associated Students of San Francisco State College who use part of their income in student dues for "untraditional purposes" including "organising a tenants' organisation helping delinquents in a reformatory, running a tutorial programme for Negro and Mexican children (with three hundred collegian tutors), sponsoring a weekly television programme, running an 'experimental college' with fifty offbeat courses, and hiring their own professor."

Parallel organisations have of course a much wider relevance than that of student life. A revolutionary workers' council is a parallel organisation to management. It is contending for control. A shadow cabinet is not a parallel organisation. It simply wants to change the political labels. An anarchist parallel organisation is contending for control from the bottom up, it is propagating a different style of managing human affairs.

Andrea Caffi put it like this: "As long as today's problems are ~~xx~~ stated in terms of mass politics and 'mass organisation', it is clear

that only States and mass parties can deal with the . But if the solutions that can be offered by the existing States and parties are acknowledged to be either futile or wicked, or both, then we must look not only for different 'solutions' but especially for a different way of stating the problems themselves. There are men and women. As units in a 'mass', they submit to uniform rules of housing, eating and dressing, go to the factory or to the movies, vote for a party or acclaim a leader....Yet each one of them has been a child. Each one has made by himself and for himself, the discovery of the world and of his own consciousness. Each one, as an adolescent has experienced 'unique' moment of love, friendship admiration, joy of living or unmotivated sadness. Even in the greyest existences there are traces of aspiration to a life less debased, to a real communion with one's neighbours. One can hardly imagine a human life without some moments of carefree enjoyment and enthusiasm, or without dreams...Friendships should be strengthened through some constructive enterprise carried out in common. The aim remains the rebirth of true 'popular' communities. The humblest aims, from an association for mutual help to a club where people meet to spend time together, can eventually lead to an association whose unwritten norms will actually inspire both the private and the public life of its components. Two conditions are obviously indispensable: the first is that the number of people so associated be limited, so as to permit each individual to get to know well all his companions; the second is that such an association be not made dependant on an authority endowed with means of coercion"

JOHN SCHUBERT

MOTHER EARTH the original

Emma Goldman was the most famous woman anarchist of her day. Coming from Russia at the age of 17 she settled in America as a practicing anarchist a labour agitator, a pacifist, a feminist, a street-fighter for justice. We have named this magazine after the one which she and Alexander Berkman published and which became a very influential (and equally persecuted) paper. Here, in her Autobiography, she describes the naming.

"...Everybody who longed to escape rigid moulds, political and social prejudices, and petty moral demands should have a chance to be published without fear of the censor.

While visiting the little farm one Sunday, Max and I went for a buggy ride. It was early in February, but already the air was perfumed by the balms of spring. The soil was beginning to break free from the grip of winter, a few specks of green already showing and indicating life germinating in the womb of Mother Earth. "Mother Earth," I thought; "why, that's the name of our child! The nourisher of man, man freed and unhindered in his access to the free earth!" The title rang in my ears like an old forgotten strain. The next day we returned to New York and prepared the copy for the initial number of the magazine. It appeared on the first of March 1906, in 64 pages. Its name was Mother Earth."