

FREEDOM

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Welcome Kосygin!

The Belle of Barnoldswick

THE LAST BIG yawn was 13 months ago this coming April, when elections will take place within the Greater London Council, at present controlled by Labour. The whole farcical ritual being enacted again—even on a diminished scale—doesn't bear thinking about. Originally the plans for a '67 spring election were shelved, but the chance to give the lesser lights of the parties a chance to dish out political humbug, with a two-month build-up, was too good to resist, and while Parliament was still in its post-Christmas stupor, the flea-circus which is local politics, was busy as worker bees at rank-and-file level—the 'Socialists' defending what they've got, the Tories straining to get back by appealing to voters as the more 'socialised' party.

Pledges, aimed at the voters with the shortest memories, have been drawn up, alongside other grandiose plans which cover the next 15(!) years, time enough for the person with the keenest memory for dates and facts to forget, such is our mind taxed and preoccupied these days. Anyhow, both sets of pledges have a similarity to identical twins, and if either party had an original thought between them, the official manifestos wouldn't look like a cribbing job or sheer plagiarism.

In actual fact these wordy seductions remind one more than ever of rival supermarket stores, with the glass windows solely there for the purposes of glued stickers, with today's bid outdoing yesterday's—except that election time is one of the few occasions when the real business of politics, things like homes, schools, work, land, and the general well-being of millions of people, is brought down from the dusty shelves and made into groundwork for alluring pledges.

The Tories have the most ground to make up at both national and local level, yet if their ideas, which have leaked out to the national press, are anything to go by, they've scraped the bottom of the barrel while in 'exile' after 13 years too many as the ruling party. As I shall reveal, some of their gimmicks are so desperate and dubious, that the party can hardly have faith in the bread-and-butter issues which are the very stuff of elections while parties are in a state of flux.

The Conservative Club of Barnoldswick, near Skipton, decided in their shrewd far-sighted Yorkshire way to introduce a little erotic entertainment into the town's right-wing politics. A stripper was hired to appear Friday nights with the idea of increasing membership and boosting morale. The stripper herself being a Tory, and no doubt reared on pyjama parties, a curious and inane way young Tories socialised in the Macmillan years, at least in the South.

My mind boggled, to think that the Tories were at their wits end, that they had to bring sex into politics; that they found it so hard to get votes that the

female members might be required to disrobe to catch enough votes for a majority. Fair exchange is no robbery, as the saying goes, and the Yorkshire Tories seem to think a bit of tit and buttocks every Friday night is a bargain in return for making the sign of the illiterate on a slip of paper.

Think what the Tories could do if they put on strippers all over Lancashire. Why, they could take Huyton for a start, since Wilson has only the 'freeze' to offer in his policy—surely the Tories can win hands down up North! Anyway, stripping has become well and truly respectable now, except some of the Tory elders at the top of the party ladder don't seem to like sex in its proper printed context away from elections; perhaps a little madness settles like dew upon certain individuals.

But there was bad news just before the eagerly awaited night when 'outside pressure', otherwise Tory Central Office, told the depraved, lecherous local officials to call off the idea. The groan that greeted the announcement of the cancellation could be heard in Wigan.

Nobody can begrudge the local Tories, otherwise hard-working citizens, their pint of beer and a bird before embarking on the weekend, except if they did find a real sexual revolution on their doorstep, I would expect them to oppose it. It still seems the party is virtually strangled by head office—but as I say the cat is out of the bag; Toryism, or, if you like, one of the many branches of capitalism has to pepper the wind-oags' tirades with a weekly dose of eroticism, before the cyclonic campaign develops into flagrant touting for votes.

As for the Anarchists, they know their message is true and can be substantiated, without recourse to gimmicks; perhaps that is why we're thought dull and misunderstood.

RON PEARL.

*The girl was a professional stripper.



BUT DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD!

ON FEBRUARY 6, Alexei Kосygin, the Prime Minister of the USSR, arrives in London for a week's visit to Britain. It is the first time a Russian Prime Minister has come to this country for more than 10 years. What is our attitude to such a visit? Kосygin, like all his colleagues in the Russian Government, is a member of the Communist Party. The Communists have ruled Russia for nearly 50 years, which must be some kind of record. How did they get power, and how have they kept it?

Everyone knows about the Russian Revolution—or do they? Do they know that the February Revolution, which replaced the Tsarist régime by the Provisional Government, was the work of the people of Russia, and that the political parties—including the Bolsheviks (extreme Marxists)—not only took no part in it but were completely

taken by surprise when it happened? Do they know that the Revolution continued to be carried out by the people, while the political parties—including the Bolsheviks—quarrelled with each other, that the army was abandoned by the soldiers, the land was taken by the peasants, and the factories were taken by the workers?

Do they know that the October Revolution, which replaced the Provisional Government by the Councils (Soviets) of soldiers, peasants and workers, was really a *coup d'état* by the Bolsheviks? Do they know that the slogans 'All power to the Soviets!', 'The Land to the Peasants!', 'The Factories to the Workers!' were borrowed from the Anarchists by the Bolsheviks to obtain popular acceptance (if not approval) for this *coup d'état*? Do they know that the Soviets were never in fact allowed to exercise power? Do they know that the Bol-

shevics built up the army again, took the land back from the peasants, took the factories back from the workers, and set up the Secret Police again? And do they know that the so-called 'dictatorship of the proletariat' really meant the dictatorship of the Communist Party (as the Bolsheviks decided to call themselves), just as Bakunin had warned half a century before?

Once they had got power, the Communists crushed every other political organisation in Russia—including the Constitutional Democrats (liberals), the Social-Revolutionaries (peasant socialists), the Mensheviks (moderate Marxists), and the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists—and took over the peasant communes, the trade unions, and the co-operatives. The Constituent Assembly, which was the result of the first (and last) free election in Russian history, was forcibly dispersed by the Communists in January 1918, because they had won only a quarter of the votes and a clear majority had been won by the Social-Revolutionaries. No wonder that in the Civil War of 1918-20, the Communists were fought not only by foreign interventionists and monarchist 'Whites', but by liberals, socialists and anarchists as well.

The Anarchists have the dubious honour of being the first victims of the Communists, from the time their Moscow headquarters were attacked in April 1918. In the Ukraine, the White armies were defeated by the Anarchist forces of Nestor Makhno, who was promptly attacked in November 1920 by Trotsky's Red Army. Peter Kropotkin, who had returned to Russia after 40 years of exile to support the Revolution, died

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(A reprint of this article in leaflet form is obtainable from Freedom Press)

WHY WE ARE AGAINST GOVERNMENTS

ANARCHISTS are often asked why they are opposed to government and authority. Quite often, the people who put this question do not dispute the evils which result from authoritarian institutions, but they tend to attribute them to the weakness, corruption or inhumanity of particular individuals in positions of power rather than to the institutions of power themselves. Consequently, their solution of how to remedy these evils is usually by the replacement of those delinquents in office by other, more suitable people. They do not realize that these replacements too will inevitably be called upon to carry out the same work of subjugation and exploitation as their predecessors.

The most insidious function of the State machinery is not so much the coercion it can exercise against this or that (presumed) malefactor, as its power to force an entire population to do what the great majority of them do not wish to do, namely, to go to war. This has already been the case on several occasions this century, and is the case with the USA today.

Surely the American people do not wish to be involved in a war? All moral considerations apart, it is contrary to their innate sense of self-preservation, and besides, there is the alarming possi-

bility that, in the long run, the enterprise might not prove to be profitable—except to those concerns supplying arms, napalm and the like.

Those critics of anarchism who worry about their possible exposure to the occasional homicidal maniac, and who justify the existence of a government and police force on account of the meagre protection it offers them against such an occasion, should ask themselves what protection the State affords them against the collective massacre it can ordain against its own citizens.

In Vietnam, now, hundreds of Americans are dying every week in a country where they have no right or sane reason to be, exposed to a severe and alien climate, and confronted by the determination of a hostile people to defend their country at all costs, and to prolong as long as possible, even against a greatly superior military power, a struggle which shows no sign of being resolved. And why do thousands of young Americans find themselves in this suicidal predicament? Merely because it suits the policy of their so-called democratic government to oppose Communism wherever it happens to crop up.

Can people really believe that the State guarantees our existence and safety? What could be more dangerously anti-

social than the deception and bullying practised by the American government on its own people and on the Vietnamese? Can it be true that this State, which so predictably breaks its promises, and which commits so much murder, violence and destruction, protects its citizens, as is pretended, from the consequences of anti-social acts?

No, of course not: we are right to claim that it is the State itself which, by its very nature, is anti-social. It isolates the people of this world from one great human society, dividing them up into warring nations, and pitting them in conflict against each other, man against man, brother against brother.

And surely one of the outstanding reasons behind the failure of the United Nations to stop the war in Vietnam, or even prevent it from escalating, is simply because the States which belong to it are all, by their nature, equally anti-social, that is to say, criminal.

Public welfare and the safety of its citizens is not, never has been, and never will be, the concern of the State, and general well-being and international peace will only be accomplished through anarchism—in other words, through the permanent suppression of all governments and authority.

DAVEY JONES.

ANARCHY 72
OUT NEXT WEEK DISCUSSES
ANARCHISM

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IS REQUESTED**

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The Economics of Affluence

WE LIVE in a strange world of want and waste, of affluence and hunger. In the West, hunger is almost unknown, at least physical hunger. What my children waste would feed me, there has been a dramatic change since before the War when I remember people were prosecuted for raking over the tips for food. Even then the food was there if one had the money.

Boyd-Orr saw the poverty before the War, and the malnutrition, and campaigned against it. He forced the politicians to start the school meals scheme and was responsible for the war-time food policy that was so successful. *As I Recall* is a simple account of his life and work, an account of a valiant attempt to secure a world food policy free from politics and finance. He did not succeed in his wider vision and the post-war Labour Government must take a big responsibility for blocking this attempt. Instead the World Food and Agriculture Organization was set up and its recent report indicates that no significant progress has been made. Funds to implement policies for birth control have been blocked in Western countries where there is large Catholic influence, so population has overtaken food supply increases.

Vietnam rightly attracts the condemnation of all sane and reasonable men but the constant and nagging starvation which kills millions every year must account for more human suffering.

Boyd-Orr's book is a condemnation of the shortsighted expediency of politicians and those who support them. It is also a condemnation of the peculiar financial system that the present Government of Wilson, and Co. are trying to make work. Boyd-Orr, as an agricultural and nutritional expert, says that, generally speaking, if the peasant is given the tools he will produce the food. The West has found it cheaper to give advice rather than the tools. Quoting the ground-nut scheme he shows that this sort of expertise is not always right.

Before the War, what stood between many families and malnutrition was the allotment which, in the new-found affluence, has tended to be despised but in terms of world food shortage could have a new significance. The activities of organisations like Oxfam can only have marginal results in the face of this problem which can only be resolved by a completely radical approach. The problem is to break through the unenlightened self-interest—such as that shown recently by the Durham traders who barred the efforts of Oxfam to open a shop in their city for the Christmas period. It is as well to remind the men of Durham that there was a time when they marched south to remind that relatively prosperous area of their own plight.

Anarchists are often accused of being hopelessly impractical and idealistic. It is true that many think in political terms of revolution, and solutions that will only come with utopia. Basically, however, the ideas have a relevance, and an urgency, if we have the wit, and the imagination, to break away from the old clichés that stand in our way. The cardinal difference between the anarchist

Coal Board, who pointed out that intensive factory farming is no answer to the world food problems. He pointed out that: 'The average American farm worker has behind him an investment of £10,000 and farm productivity per man is among the highest in the world. But productivity per acre of agricultural land was only half of that of Britain, which in turn was a quarter of that of the United Arab Republic.'

Today we are in a period of economic crisis, an impasse of a system of financial mumbo-jumbo that so-called Socialist politicians are vainly trying to make work. At the mercy of the whims of this modern fetish, which has no basis in rationality or usefulness, men are willing to live their lives. The honeymoon of post-war prosperity has come

fiercer and fiercer and the pace will get faster and faster and the workers will tie themselves to an industrial treadmill that is without purpose or satisfaction. In face of the continued world food shortage the price of this most essential of all needs is likely to rise steadily. The vulnerability of Britain's economy is obvious to all but the economist who urges greater production. The sad fact is that we are gradually covering our greatest asset with concrete and buildings. The soil and climate of Britain is a peasant's dream and although productivity in agriculture in Britain has far outstripped that of industry, its potential in the context of a sensible social and economic policy could be immense.

The cry is, of course, that one cannot turn back the clock, but if the direction one is taking is a cul-de-sac one has to turn round and try another way and if the approach can be made without preconceived ideas and traditions so much the better. In terms of human happiness even the affluent West cannot contend that industrialisation has been an unqualified success. There is little quality in life or production—houses and rubbish dumps are lumbered with the bric-a-brac of industry; cities and roads are so clogged with cars that there is no longer any pleasure here; the benefits of lying in the sun are more than counteracted by the nervous energy expended in getting there. Yet the only solution according to the politician is the production of more and more of this mediocre trash. Many anarchists have fled this madness, failing to convince their fellows of the folly of such a system. To continue to talk in political terms is to fail to make ourselves understood. People are not unaware of the unsatisfactory nature of the times in which they live and, if they hear the same sort of terms that they hear *ad nauseam* from the political parties, anarchism will continue to be dismissed.

The problem for man is two-fold: to humanise industry and to deal with the spectre of famine that haunts the world—this requires the participation of people, a study of the problems and what action people can take. The problems of the Factory for Peace and the various communities indicate that it is not easy to counteract the habits of generations, but I am sure that the growing problems of our industrial age must find solutions that will undermine the growing power of impersonal State and private corporations. The individual must regain control of his environment. The ability to grow food and to control the source of food is probably the best way to secure this independence. Until the industrial worker realises this he will remain essentially a slave to the vagaries of a market economy. The trade union

and the co-operative movements have deteriorated into the same sort of impersonal corporations that abound in our society mainly because the mass of members fail to participate. They control vast funds, the membership still has constitutional control over these organisations, a small revolution could take place if they exercised their power. Trade unionists contribute vast sums in political contributions to a fund which, after all, goes to a political party that maintains the *status quo*. Every local authority is obliged to supply an allotment to those who have no garden. There are acres of disused land by roadsides that could be used which are a burden on the local authority. It may seem irrelevant when the shops are crammed with food but is it irrelevant to the millions who go hungry every day? The biggest contribution that anybody can make to the world food problem is to say we do not need to exact a contribution from the world larder. Everybody was a peasant once, it was the way mankind achieved some sort of control over his environment. Today he has to achieve an independence from an artificial system that prevents a full enjoyment of all life has to offer. Modern techniques have to be fashioned to man's needs—physical and psychological. The modern Briton could do this, it must be his reply to redundancies. Do not say to Wilson that you must do this for us, but say 'We are going to see that our families are going to secure a more stable community' and use the unions' funds to this end. Not only to procure a more stable community here but also abroad by using industrial knowledge to enable the hungry to stabilise their agriculture.

The limiting factors in agriculture are low rainfall, soil impoverished of organic matter and sometimes basically deficient. The first factor is sometimes aggravated by man's activities, the second is almost always caused by them. Often communities are caught up in a circle of poverty which they themselves cannot break. They burn the dung and the cover for fuel which makes the soil more and more arid. A big factor could be the provision of simple paraffin stoves and supply of fuel, the study of solar machines, wind generators, pumps, desalinators, improved hand tools, seeds, animals, provision of windbreaks, vermin-proof food stores. Just the indication that somebody cared would encourage enthusiasm and participation. We have made progress in breaking down religious objections here to population control. Perhaps some progress can be made in India with the sacred cow, we all have them, they are our biggest problem.

ALAN ALBON.



approach and the political approach is this, that the party seeks mass acceptance and we seek mass participation.

Man has come to the end of his reserves of productive virgin land so the land we have has to be farmed in the real sense of the word. Farmed to feed and to continue feeding. To those who still think that industrialisation will solve these problems I will quote Dr. E. S. Schumacher, Economic Adviser to the

to an end without an understanding of the real state of the world.

Most of the newly-independent nations pin their hopes on industrialisation. It is thought to be a source of power, and it is in political terms, but in the long term it is going to be a source of weakness, danger, enmity, strife and human misery. If mankind retains the present financial set-up the competition to sell industrial products is going to get

A Tricky Subject

IT'S A TRICKY subject to deal with, surrounded and permeated as it is with so much bitter class feeling and snobbery. Among left-wingers generally it has grown into something of a sacred cow and even some anarchists tend to be at least inconsistent, not to say conservative, in their approach to it. The fact is, however, that very few people give any thought at all to what education really is. Yet on few subjects do people feel so sure of themselves and so certain that no sensible person could harbour anything but a conventional opinion. For the most part they take it for granted that they know exactly how and where an education can be got: that they can tell exactly just who has and who has not got it. This unquestioning certainty in so many people should make us highly suspicious from the start. And make no mistake: this is a question of the first importance for anarchists. For as long as we are misled about the true nature of education, the real worth of individual human beings, and the real value of what individual human beings have to contribute, will always be misrepresented, ignored, and forgotten.

At the trial of Socrates it was said that he was a corrupter of the young, that he was placing wrong ideas in their minds. In reply to the charge he explained what his teaching method really amounted to. It's called the maieutic method—from maieutikos, Greek for midwifery. It was Socrates' belief that he stood in the same relation to his pupil as the midwife does in relation to the woman in labour. That's to say, his

whole concern was bringing forth, drawing into the light of day what is already in the pupil. It is, as you see, the very opposite of hammering in ideas. It's a case of bringing ideas out.

To this day of course even the ultra orthodox educationalists pay lip service to this ideal but in truth Socrates still stands condemned. The bringing forth method is never applied. The hammering in method is all we know.

Now, with respect, I would like you to know that by education I do not mean simple instruction. Instruction is one thing: education is quite another. Instruction amounts to no more than the elucidation and explanation of purely mechanical systems—as in grammar, science, or engineering.

But today it is as though the idea of education and the idea of simple instruction have been confounded and made to signify one and the same process. And the basic error of thinking of education as no more than mechanical instruction leads of course to greater errors. Because if a child proves incapable of absorbing, say, the rules of arithmetic or geometry, by and large he falls into the category of those who are taken to be incapable of profiting by an education. It wouldn't matter at all which category the individual child was assigned to if in fact the lower classification did not breed in him a real sense of inferiority and make it virtually impossible for him ever to seek out genuine education. And so, with his so-called education brought to an abrupt halt in this arbitrary way, he is marched off to

the factory where he'll spend the rest of his days, believing himself to be somehow inferior and not 'brainy' like the people who are set in authority over him. Common prejudice is against him. Everybody imagines the case is as plain as ABC. The child's a dunce and that's all there is to it. His status in society is established.

Yet who has the right to say what that child may or may not be capable of? What happens in the classroom, in all sanity, is as unimportant as what happens to the school football team on a Saturday morning. Academic systems are simply games, like chess or snakes and ladders, more or less complicated but in no sense a true gauge of the power inherent in any individual. It is of no essential significance and has little or nothing to do with real education. It has nothing to do with real, felt knowledge. It has nothing to do with being even moderately wise.

Sooner or later the dunce may acquire a taste for this or that branch of learning, and do well in it. But if he has not been shown that he must look inside himself for the truth: if he has been taught the direct opposite, that he must never simply consult his own feelings and tastes, and make his own personal decisions, no amount of book-work will make him a man.

Because the truth is this: Real knowledge—and by real knowledge I mean knowledge that enhances life, knowledge that enables you as an individual to live as an individual, knowledge that frees you from the cant and prejudices of schoolmasters and any other kind of master—real knowledge cannot be taught in systems like theology or academic philosophy or science or maths or dead languages. Real knowledge is nearer to us than any discipline. Nature doesn't supply us with the complete works of

Kant when we're born. She supplies us with blood and brains. And it's in our own blood, in our own heart and brains and soul, that we'll find true knowledge. What is good for us.

Every individual lives within his own personal mystery. Every individual has his own personal slant on things. What comes to you from without is not yours unless you can match it with something you have inside yourself, something of your own.

In society today schoolmasters are accepted as being the moral guardians of the young. They are paid, not only to instruct the young in this or that subject, but to bring to bear on the young mind a direct and powerful moral influence. Simple mechanical instruction often blossoms out into political and religious indoctrination. History is mangled and distorted to fit the prejudices of the State System under which we live. Literature is emasculated and dished out piecemeal as milk and water so that young people come to prefer 'Z Cars' and 'Dr. Kildare'. All this is bad enough. But the real trouble is to be found in the basic conception underlying the educational system. The root cause of all our miseries in this connection is the nature of the relationship fostered between the teacher, the one with the authority of knowledge, and the pupil, the inferior who knows nothing. It is a one-sided relationship. It is an authoritarian relationship. The young are forced willy-nilly to accept any so-called teacher the State sees fit to set over them. The young can't attempt to argue with or contradict the teacher. Even at university level to disagree with a tutor is nearly always fatal when the exams come along, if not before.

Such a set-up could never have come into existence, and would not remain in

existence one day, without coercion. All the power lies with the teacher—in his right to inflict corporal punishment and in his right to give a poor mark in an examination. The child is at his mercy from beginning to end.

All this has been going on for so long that people have come to accept it as the only correct way of doing things. Every hateful aspect of our society can be traced back to the authoritarian teacher. The parents were bludgeoned into submission in this way and they take it for granted that wee Johnnie, their son, should be likewise bludgeoned into submission. The authoritarian parent passes wee Johnnie over to the authoritarian teacher, and the authoritarian teacher makes sure that when wee Johnnie leaves his hands he'll be just as servile and just as doltish as mum and dad. The vicious circle is complete if wee Johnnie happens to be 'brainy' and ends up as an authoritarian teacher himself.

So what's the solution? It's simple. Don't send the children to school. Ideally that is the anarchist position. But the difficulties of this course are considerable. Being so few in number, the anarchist parents are in a vulnerable position. The question is: would the anguish and anxiety involved for both parent and child in defying the State in this respect be just as gruesome as the results of a successful State education? Personally speaking, I don't think they could be. But here I'm not out to offer anybody a ready-made solution. I wish only to spread awareness of the wrongs our children must undergo and the lie at the root of what passes as education. If I have done something in that way, my time has not been wasted. Awareness of the wrong must be the first step in putting it right.

FARQUHAR MCLAY.

