

WORKERS' OCCUPATION OR STATE CONTROL

TWO ROADS FOR CLYDESID

AUGUST 6 is the date fixed by the liquidator for the completion of his task of winding up the affairs of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders. After that it is the dole for 7,500 workers—unless they operate their decision to occupy the shipyards and carry on production themselves.

The liquidator has dismissed the idea of a workers' occupation as 'illegal'—as though illegal meant the same thing as impossible. However, when pressed by reporters to say what he would do if the occupation did actually take place, he said that he could stop it at once by simply lifting up the phone and instructing the suppliers to cut off the water, gas, electricity and other essential raw materials. No doubt he could—but only on condition that the workers in the supplying industries agreed to carry out his instructions.

But what if they didn't agree? What if they kept the supplies moving into a worker-occupied UCS? Who would the liquidator phone then? The police, the troops? And what does he think the rest of us would be doing in the meantime?

Where do YOU work, dear reader? In gas, electricity, water,

steel? Would YOU meekly obey orders to cut off supplies to a bunch of working men who, rather than be shoved on the dole, had decided to run the yards themselves? And if you told those who gave such orders to go to hell, what on earth could anyone do about it?

Many years ago, when the late George Lansbury was the Mayor of Poplar, the council broke the law in protest against the method of maintaining the unemployed. Asked by the judge to say what he thought would happen 'if every council broke the law in this way', Lansbury replied, 'In that case, your honour, we'd win!' As in Poplar so on Clydeside. If we ALL refuse to connive at the closure of these shipyards, if we ALL 'break the law', the UCS workers will win.

RELY ON THE WORKERS

The 'liberal' *Guardian*, in a feature article, has said that an occupation of the UCS yards couldn't succeed because the workers couldn't find customers and they couldn't get credit. Certainly they wouldn't get customers for battleships and luxury liners—but they don't have to make such useless things if they run the yards themselves. They could, for

example, build ships specially designed to house the homeless, which could be bought by housing authorities in seaports like Glasgow, Liverpool and London to provide homes for the thousands who are now forced to live in appalling conditions. Or they could make prefabricated homes. Shipyards have made them before. Or dredgers to clear our canals. Or sewage plants to help stop pollution of the rivers and the sea. They could do all these things providing we didn't stand aside and let the State close them down and force them on to the dole to rot.

Credits? Would we stand aside and let the banks and other institutions refuse credits to a worker-occupied UCS while allowing them to give unlimited credit to Big Business? There would be all sorts of problems, but if reliance is placed on the initiative, the imagination, and the sheer practical know-how of working people, these problems could be overcome.

BEWARE THE POLITICIANS

Will the Clydeside events lead on to the sort of situation we have described? It is somewhat doubtful because it is now clear that the

politicians—the trade union leaders, the ex-Cabinet Ministers and, above all, the Communist Party—have moved in to take the initiative away from the workers and turn what could be a truly popular assault on the system into a noisy, but empty, political campaign for nationalisation, state control and a new Labour Government.

The original demand for a workers' occupation of the shipyards is now being smothered—especially by the *Morning Star*—with calls for nationalisation. Who wants that, apart from the politicians? UCS workers want jobs and security. They certainly won't get them through nationalisation. Ask the workers in the nationalised mines, railways and steel works. Sackings and closures have become part of their lives.

It won't bring better wages and conditions. Ask the postmen. They couldn't get an improved wage offer despite a strike lasting nearly nine weeks.

And nationalisation certainly won't give freedom to workers to decide what is produced, how it is produced and who should get the products. Ask the workers in Russia, or Poland, or Czechoslovakia. In those countries everything is nationalised—but workers have to riot to get a bit more food—or even a bit of free speech!

If workers can succeed in occupying an industry and run it themselves, what the hell do they want with nationalisation? Why bring in the State and its bureaucratic managers if the workers are doing very well without them?

TWO ROADS

Workers' occupation and nationalisation are two quite different things—and they require different methods for their achievement. A take-over by the workers cannot be successful

without popular support of a very practical nature. It needs a direct appeal to fellow workers to set up Workers' Committees in every industrial centre to aid the take-over, keep the supplies moving, and to frustrate all attempts at intervention by the forces of the State. A workers' take-over is something in which every working man and woman can, and must, participate. It is an attempt by workers to run the economy of the country and therefore it is revolutionary.

Nationalisation, on the other hand, is something for governments. It is advocated by men and parties who hope one day to form such governments. The workers are asked to do nothing—except support such men and parties and vote for them, if and when an election is arranged. Workers' take-over means an upheaval in the existing order of things—the producers for the first time run things themselves. Nationalisation is an attempt by parties and politicians to run the State which, in turn, will run the workers. There is a world of difference.

What happened in France in 1968 has lessons for us all. What started as a student occupation of the universities spread to a workers' occupation of the factories—including the nationalised ones! The Government couldn't govern and De Gaulle fled the country. If that struggle didn't end in the fall of the old order it was because the politicians—especially the Communist ones—persuaded the workers to call it off in favour of a General Election. So we have all been warned.

Will the workers of UCS carry on where the workers of the French Renault works left off? Or have the politicians already got too big a grip on the movement? The next few weeks will surely give us the answer.

JOHN LAWRENCE.

FORD STRIKERS

Defence of Shop Stewards

THE STRIKE at the Ford factory at Halewood concerned one of the basic principles of trade unionism—the defence of shop stewards. Workers there brought the factory to a standstill after the company sacked John Dillon, a shop steward in the paint shop.

The company accused him of breaking the 'Blue Book' agreement, between themselves and the unions, by calling an unauthorised meeting during a strike in the preceding week. They also say that he led an 'unruly demonstration' and that he had been warned about his activities.

In all industries there are agreements which set out the time-consuming, petty and often degrading procedures through which stewards have to go in order to carry out their duties. Many make it practically impossible to breathe without getting permission. They can be so widely interpreted that the management can act more or less when it suits them. What prevents them victimising a steward is the likely response from those that he represents, but often there comes a time when the management decides to act despite the possible consequences and sometimes it pays off.

Since the return to work after the ten-week strike, Fords have tightened up on discipline and have been playing it strictly according to the 'book'. Disputes over suspension of stewards and manning have been weekly occurrences. Many feel that Fords are trying to break the strength of the shop stewards at Halewood as during recent years it has taken over from Dagenham in giving a militant lead to other factories.

DAGENHAM 1962

Comparisons have been made with Dagenham in 1962 when the successful sacking of 17 stewards led to industrial peace, higher productivity and speed-up. Then, as now, Ford workers stopped work, but in 1962 they returned to work

relying on the trade union leaders to negotiate. These unions even threatened strike action, but each time they put it off until all the heat had gone out of the dispute and a factory suffered a defeat from which it is still recovering.

It can be said that Fords would not want a strike so soon after the ten-week one, but equally the same can be said from the workers' point of view, especially as the holiday period starts shortly. Although the response at Halewood was practically solid, including the gear-box section which supplies other factories with parts, the strike did not show signs of spreading to other plants. Active support would have been far more important than a management closure.

COURTING DISASTER

In fact a meeting of convenors was more intent on trying to secure official backing from their unions, rather than getting the support of the rank and file in other plants. It is true that mass meetings are to be called in factories, but these seem to have been aimed at putting pressure on the unions for support, rather than spreading the stoppage. Past experience has shown that to give the union leaders the initiative is to court disaster. The union's attitude to its rank and file is summed up in this week's *Economist*, when it was written that since the strike ended on April 7, 'Halewood has only been kept going by the combined efforts of the unions and the management to stave off one crisis after another'.

Union leaders, like the management, do not like unofficial disputes, militant stewards and undisciplined workers. They would equally like to curb the power and influence that shop stewards exert. However, shop stewards, unlike a lot of union officials, are elected because they are trusted and will do a reasonable job of representing the interests of the men on the shop floor. Equally, unlike union officials, they can

soon be voted out if they are not doing their job properly.

AFFECTING ALL TRADE UNIONISTS

This dispute was an important one, affecting not only Ford workers, but all trade unionists. It is a struggle in defence of shop stewards being allowed to carry out what they consider to be their functions and duties. As such, the dispute should have been controlled by the rank and file and it cried out for and deserved the support of the workers at other Ford plants. It is important that battles are not fought alone and in isolation and that recriminations, at a later date, are not made against fellow-workers for not giving support and that all Ford workers show such solidarity that the management are forced to reinstate John Dillon. It is also important that union leaders are left more and more in the background.

Considering that the Transport and General Workers' Union paid out £2m. in strike pay recently, it is extremely unlikely that they will make the dispute official. The danger is that they will hedge and put off any support. Rather than get into this position, Ford workers should act for themselves and put into practice the principle that an injury to one is an injury to all.

SETTLEMENT

The decision to return to work means that Fords have gained a victory in that they have determined who can be a shop steward. John Dillon will also NOT be working in the paint shop where he was steward. The early settlement and the failure to spread the dispute in the early stages gives Fords and the TGWU a successful conclusion to a dispute which could have brought out the whole Ford empire in Britain. Neither would have relished this. Although John Dillon has been reinstated, Ford workers have lost the stew

Unfit to Print?

ONCE, WHEN SUCH IDEAS were attractive—and to smear the tabloids—the *New York Times* had on its masthead the proud motto 'All the News That's Fit to Print'. Newspapers, not least in New York, have fallen on evil days, partly through competition with papers which printed news 'unfit to print', and partly through television which provides all the news, fit or unfit. With what seemed to be a revival of the bold crusading muck-raking American tradition, the *New York Times* went ahead and published a serialization of confidential studies on the Vietnam war; the Nixon government with the ham-fisted stupidity we have come to expect of them clamped down on the paper with an 'injunction to restrain'.

This, although the US boasts of its lack of censorship, was sufficient to gain the *New York Times* publicity and for them to cease the serialization. Mr. Dooley, the American humorous commentator once said, paraphrasing someone else, 'I care not who makes the country's laws so long as I can get out an injunction'. The injunction is a powerful legal weapon, in the US as well as here, for disobedience carries with it guilt of 'contempt of court' involving indeterminate sentences at the whim of a representative of the ab-

straction Justice which has thus been slighted.

Emboldened by this blow for freedom of the press, the *Washington Post* went forth to do battle, with a shortened lance. They started publishing an abridgement of the studies—which was syndicated throughout the US. Again the Nixon government fell for it. An injunction was slapped upon the *Washington Post*.

It is claimed by many that the truth about Vietnam is 'unfit to print'. That it is disloyal, unpatriotic and an official secret. The same criticism has been made of the Calley case publicity. Fortunately or unfortunately, the Americans have a fetish about the public's 'right to know'. This is partly a hang-over from the pioneer emigre American's genuine concern for freedom of speech—since he himself was often a fugitive from repressive regimes. America herself gained her freedom from the repressive British. Unfortunately like many admirable sentiments it became enshrined (like Mother's Day) and became part of the gigantic machinery of publicity and public relations wherein everyone must know everything about everyone in the public eye, even if they had been deliberately placed there. The American's 'right to know' is a sentimentalism in

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WHEN THE HOSANNAS have risen to that high note of mass hysteria and the Bleeding Heart of the hour and the Genius of the week have spewed their conscience into the world's lap, the calm clear voices of the realist and the cynic can be heard asking the most basic of questions. 'Who pays your wages?'. It is the most basic of questions for if one is hawking one's conscience or one's craft in the public marketplace then the buyer will dictate the terms. It is most fortunate for the artist or the salvation-hunter if his paymasters share his taste but if not then he must either conform to dictated standards or go pearl-diving for Joe Lyons for the weekly bread.

When the royal and papal courts and their straps controlled the purse, the artist conformed and painted popes as royal kings and royal kings as popes, and when the middle classes gained political control of their economy they hired the artists of the day to portray them as frock-coated Greek gods surveying their world in splendid pictorial isolation, eyes calm, chin out and a misty painted Valhalla background to impress the rank and file at the shareholders' meetings.

The role of the artist in our age is that of the hired clown and his paymasters are our *nouveaux riches* middle-class. The sons and the daughters of the golden years of slum property extortionism and the industrial take-over swindles, they now spend daddy's money to kill the dancing boring hours, and the artist, with his gallery contract and token weekly wage, bends his head, sucks his brush, whines of the independence of the artist and conforms to the fashion of the hour. Our middle class of today are as feckless and as anti-social as the brute beasts of the nineteenth-century, but with this difference—that they share a sly animal cunning that finds its outlet in the worldly pleasure they openly display in the additional

Every Picture Yells a Story

acquisition of their own personal mean wealth. They are a class whose men sprawl in the canvases of Hockney and Proctor. The world of the gay wave of the hand and the tailored jeans, all skin-tight working-class virility and property shares in Bethnal Green. Loosely drawn, crudely coloured and with a deliberately sketched-in slipshod background, the artist portrays in his crude craftsmanship a class of people as worthless as the works of art they hire and inspire.

Bryan Organ's exhibition at the Redfern Gallery at 20 Cork Street, W.1, now forms a trinity with Hockney and Proctor in this social style of painting. The same half-finished work, the crude colouring of the areas of space beyond the face, the same feeling for a background of a world of monied boredom. Bryan Organ's contribution to the act is to portray the distaff side of the brute beast. Organ first burst into public flame with his portrait of HRH Princess Margaret, and the loosely-drawn portrait of Maggy had the Town's Old Faithful beating their heads with rage on the steps of the National Gallery. But, despite the rumours of the unseathing of swords by junior officers of the Household Cavalry and whispered tales of black-draped flags hanging from the windows of the Royal Academy and the King's Road, Chelsea, the portrait gave history a recorded hint of Maggy, the toast of the Toast of the Town. Bryan Organ's latest mini masterpiece is his portrait of *The Director, Keeper and Secretary of the National Portrait Gallery*, and Organ gives us, and I mean no offence, the clerk in office, demeaning the culture he acts as the storekeeper for

by highlighting his office and degrading the work within his guardianship.

And what can one say in defence of Pietro Annigoni? A fine draughtsman, a magnificent copyist and pure ham. Annigoni is the permanently gifted student forever peering into the reproduced past for inspiration. The Italians appear to have produced a thriving school of Renaissance copyists, yet seem incapable of bringing forth any good or original work in their own right.

Arts Unlimited at 80 Grosvenor Street, W.1, is displaying Annigoni's self-portrait among a number of other works, and here is a magnificent piece of quattrocento Victoriana that falls apart when, like Organ, Annigoni is left to paint his own thing in the delineation of the body and the materials covering it.

Even David Tindle at the Piccadilly Gallery at 16a Cork Street, W.1, has departed from his own high standards. There is still the same brooding air of erotic melancholy. The figures still haunt his shadowed canvases with the hint of suppressed and hesitant violence, but it is below Tindle's usual high standard as an artist.

For the Kasmin Gallery at 118 New Bond Street, W.1, only awed admiration that they should continue to persevere with this dated corn, for it is beginning to look a little mildewed. The huge canvases of a single nursery colour, the iron girder from the building site, the heap of sand dumped onto the gallery floor, and the ancient trousers dangling loosely from the bare gallery wall a few years ago had the Town and his frau panting like curs in summer, but now

they are as dated and hallowed as police-punched CND banners. David Troostwyk is at the moment carrying the torch for the Kasmin Gallery's tradition with his exhibition of welded strips of plastic sheeting, and they dangle like unto huge and loveless trousers and braces, in sad isolation until the next heap of sand arrives, and the female liberation movement within the Kasmin Gallery have to stagger in with the half-ton iron girder for the next exhibition of art in our time.

And all that leaves the Town to the mercy of Edward Kienholz at the ICA at Nash House within the Royal Mall, S.W.1. Before 1958 Kienholz belonged to the 'junk and trash' school of sculpture finished off by 'using a broom as a paintbrush' but in 1961 Kienholz discovered his true *forte* with his tableaux of Roxy's Las Vegas brothel. Exhibited at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles meant that Kienholz had arrived. His impact on the London scene was this year's exhibition at the Hayward Gallery and Kienholz's *Portable War Memorial*. A juxtaposition of the American adoration of the heroic dead warwise and a

luncheon room with Kate Smith's recording of *God Bless America* coming from an included dustbin and the whole sprayed with silver metallic paint, it made a cynical and gentle protest against... what? Kienholz's work is a marriage of Dali, the waxworks' Chamber of Horrors and Victorian narrative painting wherein, as with Dickens, an audience, by buying a book or paying admission, can feel that in some way they have helped to solve a social evil.

We queue to peer through the small window at the model of the elderly insane man strapped to his cot in the USA asylum, beaten by guards and forgotten by our society. We gape at the model of the abandoned old woman and gawp at the chair and torn cushion illustrating the *Illegal Operation* and squeeze in and out of the overcrowded model *beanery*. What we pay for is the same vicarious excitement that we expect from the waxworks' Chamber of Horrors, the Ian Fleming books, the tough and bloody crime films and the sadistic pornography hawked from Soho to the suburbs.

By these standards as thriller material Kienholz's work is woefully inadequate, as works of art they are third rate, and as a social protest they are housed in the wrong buildings and exhibited to an audience indifferent to its human suffering that provided its basic material.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

NOT FIT TO PRINT!

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total war. It springs from a hypocritical conviction that States can wage wars without doing anything that they'd rather the folks back home wouldn't know about. This urge for publicity makes for a bad press when one fights a war. The military and State establishment's talent for covering up and fostering public relations is not equal to the journalistic talent of the American press and the God-given conviction of the average American that he has the 'right to know'.

It is not the first time, nor the last that revelations will be made giving an entirely different slant upon history. The most noteworthy was the release of the details of the Allied war deals by the Bolsheviks in 1917. This was an opening-up of the Tsarist archives. Since then there have been many 'leaks' and the 'leak' itself has been adapted to diplomatic use by the deliberate release of information which appears to be accidental rather than 'planted'. The Americans themselves instituted one of the greatest inter-war revelations of 'scandals' when they set up the Nye Committee to enquire into the private manufacture of armaments. This was part of the American mania for information via Committees. Indeed, they themselves set one up on the war in Vietnam.

Perhaps, the most noteworthy 'leak' in British history, barring Budget scandals and the Profumo affair, was the Spies for Peace affair when the existence of Regional Seats of Government were revealed by anti-bomb demonstrators. Who revealed it, has never been discovered. Its effects on the course of history were probably minimal and marginal, but unlike most of the 'leaks' it was motivated by public spirit and a concern for the welfare of mankind, not for that of

a small minority.

With the *New York Times* stories we are in a different atmosphere. It is claimed by some that the source of the leak was a man who had worked on the different projects and had been disillusioned and now, stricken by conscience, had made the files of the studies (with his notes) available to the *New York Times* for copying. If this is so, we cannot but acknowledge his sincerity.

However, the *New York Times* story was in one sense of the words 'fit to print'. A substantial proportion of the American thinking public has decided from one motive or another, that the Vietnam war is, if not lost, un-winnable so this story of the mistakes and blunders of previous (and continuing) administrations would find an eager public, if only to rationalize and justify their present stand. With the 'silent majority' presumably sitting before their television sets drinking up the wisdom of Richard Nixon, Spiro Agnew, Billy Graham *et al* presumably the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post's* circulation managers have nothing to fear.

The only puzzle is why the Nixon administration have taken it so hard. They could indeed blame it all on the Johnson administration but it seems that governments are as usual zealous in preserving their little secrets along with their law and order.

Finally, it was obvious to any reader or student of the left-wing press (without necessarily being a supporter of the Viet-Cong) that such deals were going on and that the tactics of the Americans were to get themselves a foothold in Indo-China and merely sought to utilize the attacks of the North Vietnamese to justify it. Meanwhile the people of Vietnam, for whose 'benefit' the war was allegedly fought (by both sides) are ground beneath the upper and nether millstones.

JACK ROBINSON.

Postal Strike in Retrospect

SORTING OUT THE POSTAL STRIKE by Joe Jacobs (Solidarity pamphlet No. 36, 3p).

IN THIS SHORT PAMPHLET (nine pages) Joe Jacobs briefly outlines the recent dispute in the Post Office, and makes a number of tentative suggestions for possible action in the future.

Most of what Comrade Jacobs says was largely covered in *FREEDOM* during and immediately following the strike; whilst certain aspects of the dispute, such as the attitude, and the activities, of the scab Telephonists' so-called Union, and the tactics and statements of the Communists, are not mentioned in this Solidarity pamphlet. This is a pity if the pamphlet is aimed at postal workers as well as the general reader. It is, however, pleasing to note that the Solidarity writer takes almost the same

line, and advocates almost the same tactics, as I did in my articles in *FREEDOM*.

Moreover, Comrade Jacobs does bring out a number of important points right at the beginning of his pamphlet, some of which I did not mention or did not sufficiently emphasise.

Following months of negotiating, and when the talks eventually broke down, Joe Jacobs states that Tom Jackson announced that he would call for strike action at the earliest possible date (this rather contradicts Jackson's later statement that he was not really in favour of an out-and-out strike in the first place). And, comments Jacobs: 'Strange as it may seem, he said this even before he had reported back to his full EC.' But, he continues: 'The EC decided to instruct members to withdraw their labour as from January 20. At the same time, postal workers gathered

through the press, TV and radio that there would be no strike pay. The rank-and-file had not been consulted over timing or tactics. Or on anything else until the very end. They just awaited instructions.' This is a point worth making—and, incidentally, one that I did not make at the time. Comrade Jacobs also stresses that, except for the small number of Telephonists, the response for strike action was 'almost unanimous'. Actually, it wasn't quite as good as that: it was about 98% among Postmen, Postwomen, Cleaners and P&TOs, and around 60% among female Telephonists, but it was probably well under 20% among male Telephonists. As I pointed out at the time, the Telephonists—and particularly the male Telephonists—were the weak link in the chain. Joe Jacobs is more than correct though when he says that: 'The strike continued without much increase in the number of scabs'.

Of the seven-week dispute, the Solidarity pamphlet observes: 'The postal strike will live in the minds of all who took part. It was a great display of solidarity and courage. It will also live in working-class history as one of the longest national strikes without strike pay. We hope it will give rise to some serious rethinking among militants. This strike could become a starting point for alternative methods of struggle, now open to many workers in industry. It highlights the need for rank-and-file organisation on the shop floor as the alternative to following "leaders" of unions or political parties.' He can say that again—many times! Despite one or two aspects of the dispute (which I mentioned above) not discussed by Joe Jacobs, I recommend this short pamphlet to, not only readers of *FREEDOM*, but, more importantly, to Post Office workers. There will be many struggles to come.

RANK-AND-FILE TRADE UNIONIST.

PS: The 'London Communist Party Postmen' (84a Rochester Row, London, S.W.1) have just issued a leaflet in which they write: 'Still on our feet—for united working-class action to defeat Tory policies', and 'We need a government that will stand for the advancement of workers' living standards.' Bloody hypocrites!

FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

Owing to growing demands on our space we have abbreviated this group list (with the concurrence of Peter Le Mare of AFBIB). It is now largely a list of federations and regional groups.

afib
All correspondence to
Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road,
Rotton Park, Birmingham 16

**ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN**

Address all letters to AFBIB at above address. Material that cannot wait for AFB Bulletin should be sent to R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York. The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is available for urgent information. Please inform AFBIB of new or changed addresses of groups and federations. New enquirers should write direct to the Regional addresses listed below or AFBIB office in Birmingham.

AFB REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND/OR GROUPS

There are now anarchist groups in almost every part of Britain. To find your nearest group, write to—

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS.
Correspondence to LFA, c/o Freedom Press.

REGULAR WEEKLY MEETINGS
Wednesday, 8 p.m. at Freedom Hall, 84B Whitechapel Hill Street, E.1 (Aldgate East Station).

N.E. ENGLAND. M. Renick, 122 Mowbray Street, Heaton, Newcastle on Tyne.
N.W. ENGLAND. Ray Brookes, 79 Norfolk Street, Skerton, Lancs.
ESSEX & EAST HERTS. Peter Newell, 'Acgean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester, Essex.
DORSET. Bob Fry, 30 Douglas Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset.
CORNWALL. Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall, or Hazel McGee, Hillcrest Farm, Hicks Mill, Bissoe, Truro, Cornwall.
HERTS. Val Funnel, 10 Fry Road, Chelms, Stevenage, Herts.
DURHAM. Mike Mogie, 6 Nevilles Terrace, Durham City.
NORTHANTS. Terry Phillips, 70 Blenheim Walk, Corby, Northants.
LEICESTERSHIRE. The Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne Street, Leicester.
SOMERSET. Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath.
KENT. Brian Richardson (phone Knockholt 2716).
HANTS. Ken Bosworth, 26 Hambledon House, Landport, Portsmouth, Hants.

BERKSHIRE. c/o New Union Building, White Knights Park, Reading, Berks.
SUSSEX. Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton, Sussex.
EAST ANGLIA. John Sullivan, Students Union, U. of E.A., Wilberforce Road, Norwich, Norfolk.
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE. Jim Hewson, 43 Henry Road, West Bridgeford, Nottingham.
CAMBRIDGESHIRE. c/o AFBIB Birmingham.
SURREY. Lib. Grp., 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey.
YORKSHIRE. Trevor Bayage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.
SCOTTISH FED. Secretary: Mike Malet, 1 Lynnwood Place, Maryfield, Dundee.
WALES. c/o AFBIB Birmingham.
I.R.E.L.A.N.D. c/o Freedom Press.
STUDENT FEDERATION. c/o R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.
I.B. TEACH. ASSN. Peter Ford, 36 Devonshire Road, N.W.7.
EXETER. Nigel Outten, Westerly House, Culmpton Hill, Bradninch, Exeter.
OXFORD. Jeremy Brent, 1 Woodstock Road, Oxford.
SHEFFIELD. Tikka, 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield 10.
MANCHESTER. Jenny Honeyford, 33 Clyde Road, West Didsbury, Manchester 20.
EIRE FEDERATION. c/o 20 College Lane, Dublin, Eire.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South, NSW 2000.
BELGIUM. Groupe du journal Le Libertaire, 220 rue Vivegnis, Liège.
RADICAL LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE. Box 2104, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. P.O. Box 9885, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440, USA.

Please notify us if entries in these columns need amending.

PATTERN FOR TYRANNY

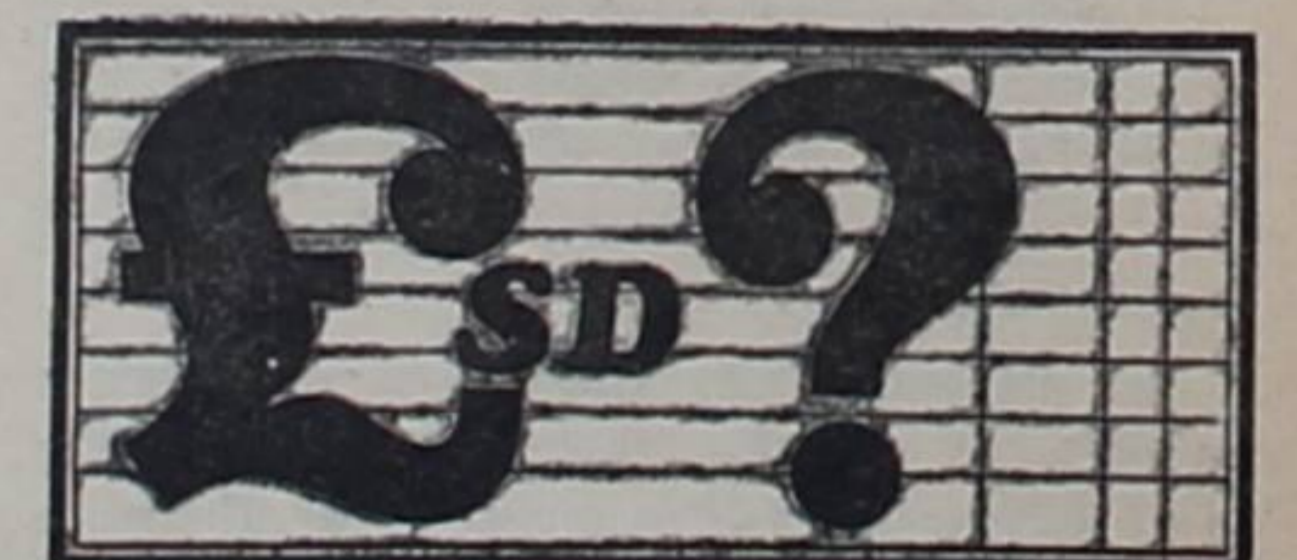
ROWLAND BOWEN maintains the patrilineal/non-patrilineal clause in the Immigration Bill although 'widely acknowledged' as being racialist, in fact, not so.

He grants what the Tory intention was but considers their incompetence resulted in 'the patrilineal business having nothing at all to do with race'.

It is true there are exceptions but the patrilineal clause with reference to parents generally specifies black rather than white immigrants. The Australians were angered when the grandparent clause of the Bill was defeated in the committee stage in the House of Commons. This stated that the country of origin of grandparents was a decisive factor in distinction between patrilineal and non-patrilineal. Obviously, this favoured whites rather than blacks.

As in many spheres of life in Britain today racialism has learnt a certain craftiness to get around the Race Relations Act 1968. People say we should 'house Britons first', when what they mean (and we know they mean) is 'house whites first'. The Government follows the example of the fascists and has learnt the language of subtle racialism.

KALI.



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Total	£29.43
Income Sales and Subs.	£284.281
	£313.711
Expenditure (2 weeks):	£300.00
Deficit Bt./fwd.:	£440.121
	£740.121
Less Income:	£313.711
DEFICIT:	£426.41

Roger N. Baldwin (Editor): **KROPOTKIN'S REVOLUTIONARY PAMPHLETS** (Constable, £1.25).

P. A. Kropotkin: **SELECTED WRITINGS ON ANARCHISM AND REVOLUTION**, edited by Martin A. Miller (M.I.T. Press, £5.85; paperback £1.85).

PETER KROPOTKIN has real claims to be taken seriously as a social and political thinker, and there is at least more chance of this happening now than at any other time since his death exactly half a century ago. As the best-known anarchist writer, he is getting his share of attention in the current revival of interest in anarchism. It is becoming easier to read what he wrote, as distinct from what other people have written about him. Of his dozen books, most of those in English have been reprinted in the United States during the past few years, and during the next few years we may hope to see new translations of those published only in French or Russian, as well as new collections of the many shorter writings he never published in book form. Meanwhile, here are two American selections which are mainly useful because they show how the job of getting Kropotkin into print is not to be done.

Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets is one of a new series of reprints of anarchist titles begun by Dover Publications last year. It is a paperback facsimile of a book first published in 1927 (and already reprinted in an expensive cloth edition in 1968). Roger Baldwin, secretary of the American Civil Liberties Union for many years, was drawn towards philosophical anarchism by the influence of Kropotkin, and compiled the book as an act of homage. It gathered together thirteen of Kropotkin's shorter writings which were mostly familiar but were not otherwise available in one place, and in some cases were not otherwise available in English at all (thus it contained the first translations of his pamphlet on prisons, of part of his postscript to the posthumous Russian edition of his first book, *Paroles d'un Révolté*, and of his last fragment on the Russian Revolution).

Unfortunately many items were cut—up to half of the original text at times—often without any indication. They were jumbled up in no particular order, and linked by a sloppy commentary. Baldwin added an eccentric bibliography and an unreliable series of introductions. Then he foolishly made high claims for his work, not realising that nearly every detail he carefully mentioned revealed his ignorance of some other detail. In fact the book was a mess; and of course it still is a mess, since the method of reprinting means that it is completely unaltered. Baldwin has even managed to make things worse by contributing a new introduction which, far from correcting any of his old mistakes and misunderstandings, actually perpe-

Kropotkin's Anarchist Communism

trates several new ones. Yet the book will remain valuable as a miscellaneous collection of elusive material by Kropotkin until it is superseded.

Selected Writings on Anarchism and Revolution might have been expected to do just that, but it does nothing of the kind. Despite its fantastic price, it contains little more actual Kropotkin material (100,000 words, rather than 90,000), and as it happens there is no overlap at all between the two books. Martin Miller, an academic who has written a thesis on Kropotkin's formative years, has attempted a work of scholarship rather than homage, but it is not much better than Baldwin's amateurish effort. It gathers together eleven of Kropotkin's shorter writings, the most important being the first translation of his first major political work—the long memorandum he wrote for his colleagues in the Russian populist movement in 1873. The manuscript was seized by the police when his group was broken up in 1874, and it has remained in the Russian state archives ever since, being printed in 1921 and 1964. It is good to have this in English at last, but the translation (by Victor Ripp) is so literal and the comment (by Miller himself) so jejune that much of its appeal is lost.

Apart from that there are two articles on the Russian revolutionary movement written for liberal periodicals in England, which are interesting but unimportant; three essays which are familiar and already accessible; and five letters, of which four—on the First World War and the Russian Revolution—are important. As an extra, there is the first translation of Bonch-Bruевич's account of the meeting he arranged between Kropotkin and Lenin in Moscow in 1919. Miller hasn't mutilated his material as Baldwin did, but his editorial apparatus is full of errors and omissions, and its professional pretensions make it more rather than less irritating. The long introduction contains nothing fresh, and the whole book adds little to our knowledge or understanding of Kropotkin. The sad thing is that Miller really knows a lot about the Russian background, and if only he had stuck to a book on Kropotkin and Russia he might have produced something worthwhile.

So for three guineas you can have a score of items from Kropotkin's vast output, if you don't mind some poor editing (it should be added that both books are beautifully produced). But until a more satisfactory collection appears, to study Kropotkin properly it is still necessary to read him in the original publications—not only his books,

but also and especially his many articles and pamphlets, which he himself said were 'far more expressive of my anarchist ideas' (which is why these two selections are welcome despite all their defects). Over the years I have found more than two hundred important items which have never been published in book form, and there must be as many more. What kind of figure emerges from such a study, a century after his political career began and half a century after it ended, and how does it differ from the one we are used to?

There is no need for a fundamental revision of the known facts of Kropotkin's life—which are given in his own *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (1899) and in the biography by George Woodcock

Did They Take the Day Off?

MEETINGS, rallies, assemblies, burnings of 'Mogollón' effigies and symbolic burials of the crime of loafing dominated the national scene on March 17 as thousands of workers took to the street to express their enthusiastic support for the newly issued law on loafing, following a series of assemblies in which 3,250,000 Cubans approved the draft law under discussion.

At noon, as the factories blew their whistles and the ships in the harbour honked their fog horns, the workers gathered at different points in the capital to express their support for the law and read the statement of the National Bureau of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions.

The demonstrations of popular joy in the streets included the participation of sound trucks and other vehicles which honked their horns in huge and noisy demonstrations.

While traffic was temporarily halted, the people applauded the burning of Mogollón—the comic-strip character that has come to represent loafing.

Granma: Official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, 23.3.71.

and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Anarchist Prince* (1950)—though there is room for the correction of many details. What is needed is a reinterpretation of the thrust of his work. It is easy to be led astray by mere surface factors—as Woodcock and Avakumovic were in their title, ignoring Kropotkin's repudiation of his rank from the age of eleven—and the familiar picture of the funny old man with the bald head, fan beard, and benevolent eyes peering through rimless spectacles effectively obscures the real Kropotkin.

The conventional Kropotkin is the one described in Oscar Wilde's crazy phrase about 'a man with the soul of that beautiful white Christ that seems coming out of Russia', or more soberly in Herbert Read's introduction to his anthology, *Kropotkin: Selections from his Writings* (1942): 'Kropotkin, gentle and gracious, infinitely kind and nobly wise, but not a terrifying man: he was a seer, a prophet, but above all a scholar.' In fact, if Kropotkin had anything to do with Christ, it was only in bringing not peace but a sword; and, though his private life may have been beyond reproach, as a political thinker he was indeed a rather terrifying man.

Kropotkin certainly saw himself as 'above all a scholar'. He first made his reputation as a brilliant young geographer, carrying out pioneering expeditions in East Asia and putting forward striking hypotheses about the orography and glaciation of the continent. He continued his original work after joining the populist movement in 1872, and even after his arrest in 1874, but not after his escape to the West in 1876. During his forty years' exile his distinctive contribution to social and political thought was the attempt to establish a scientific basis for anarchism. Apart from making a living as a scientific journalist, he produced many political books with an explicit scientific framework. *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (1899) argued that advanced agricultural techniques could rationalise and humanise the economies of industrial countries; *Mutual Aid* (1902) argued that co-operation, which was at least as important as competition in biological evolution, could assist the social evolution of mankind; the unfinished *Ethics* (1922) argued that human morality should be considered on the same biological lines; and *Modern Science and Anarchism* (1901) argued that the whole movement of nineteenth-century science was in the direction of anarchism.

By science Kropotkin meant natural science—especially biology—and not

philosophy or economics. He rejected both religion and metaphysics at an early age, and followed the empiricist rather than the rationalist tradition in European thought. His writing was always descriptive rather than speculative, concrete rather than abstract. His immediate intellectual background was the Russian 'enlightenment' (*prosvetitelstvo*) of the 1860s, which was firmly rooted in current scientific advances. But he often lapsed from science into scientism: the fallacy that scientific methodology can be extended into all fields of investigation without loss of precision. Similarly, when he ventured into history—notably in his pamphlet *The State: Its Historic Role* (1897) and his frequent studies of the French Revolution and the Paris Commune—he often lapsed into historicism: the analogous fallacy that historical methodology can not only trace the pattern of the past but also predict the pattern of the future. He attacked the facile positivism of Huxley and Spencer, but fell into the same trap himself, and his mechanistic arguments for anarchism have dated badly.

Such lapses derived from Kropotkin's own personality which, contrary to general opinion, was rather narrow and exclusive. Three of his closest political friends—Stepniak early in his career, and Nettelau and Malatesta after his death—pointed out that he was rigid in his views and dogmatic in his expression of them. As the leading figure in the anarchist movement, moreover, what he said was scarcely challenged until his attitude to the First World War went too far for all but his most faithful followers. This is indeed an illuminating case, since Kropotkin's support for the Allies in 1914 actually followed a strand in his thought going back over forty years—from seeing the communes of the Slav and Latin peoples as the nucleus of a libertarian order and Wilhelmine-cum-Marxist Germany as the support of the authoritarian order, to seeing a war between France and Germany as a revolutionary rather than national struggle—which most anarchists preferred to ignore until it forced itself on their attention.

This bears on Kropotkin's attitude to violence in general which, again contrary to general opinion, was one of approval. From beginning to end he insisted on the necessity for a violent insurrection to destroy the existing system. Though he opposed gratuitous assassination and indiscriminate terrorism, he favoured individual propaganda by deed, with the proviso that it must be supported by mass direct action; and he found the best hope for such action in the organised labour movement, especially the revolutionary syndicalism at the turn of the century which tried to bring insurrection through the general strike.

Thus the soft image of Kropotkin, which was projected by himself as well as by his respectable admirers, is soon dispelled by a closer look at his writings, and particularly the shorter writings in which he laid greater emphasis on such traditional anarchist topics as mutual struggle rather than mutual aid, social revolution rather than social evolution. More significant than the better-known books already mentioned are the earlier collections of agitational articles—*La Conquête du Pain* (1892), which was translated some time later as *The Conquest of Bread* (1906), and *Paroles d'un Révolté* (1885), which has still not been fully translated—and the many later uncollected articles of the same kind. It is in this frankly propagandist work that Kropotkin's most characteristic doctrines are expounded: above all those of anarchist communism as the end—that the whole of society should be organised on the basis of common ownership and popular control at grass roots—and of revolutionary expropriation as the means—that this must be accomplished by the forcible seizure by the mass of the people of all capital and property. His political doctrines may be summed up in the phrase used for the Russian edition of *La Conquête du Pain*, and also for the group formed by his Russian followers and the paper they published—a phrase still heard in the Communist world: 'Bread and Liberty'.

But if Kropotkin is to be taken seriously, his work must be made properly available. Shall we have to wait for another half-century to be able to read him in full and in context?

Direct Action Keeps Sport Colourful

DON'T PLAY WITH APARTHEID by Peter Hain (Allen & Unwin, £2.25).

THIS IS A USEFUL, interesting book by an admirable young man.

Peter Hain, more than anyone else, stopped the South African cricket tour last year—it was an achievement and the repercussions are still being felt in international sporting life. The way it was done owes much to the direct action tactics adopted by the Stop the Seventy Tour campaign.

Don't Play With Apartheid is divided into four parts. Part I examines 'Apartheid and Apartheid Sport'—a good, general introduction to the subject. Dr. Verwoerd puts his case: 'Reduced to its simplest form the problem is nothing else than this: We want to keep South Africa white. . . . Keeping it white' can only mean one thing, namely white domination, not 'leadership', not 'guidance', but 'control', 'supremacy'. Naturally this leads to the South African Minister of Interior stating that: 'The participation in international or world sports tournaments or competitions by mixed teams representing South Africa as a whole can in no circumstances be approved.'

Now, to explain away this lunacy must come madcap views from the supporters of apartheid. Thus a white

South African Olympics official asked to explain why Africans were excluded from swimming teams replied: 'Some sports the African is not suited for. In swimming the water closes their pores and they cannot get rid of carbon dioxide, so they tire quickly.' It leads to another gem for those who specialise in collecting the very best of humour. When D'Olivera was eventually chosen for the MCC team to tour South Africa, Vorster exclaimed: 'It's not the MCC team. It's the team of the anti-apartheid movement. It is a team of political opponents of South Africa. It is a team of people who don't care about sports relations at all.' Small boys rolling on the grass at Lord's viewed Colin Cowdrey with very different eyes after that!

Part II brings us to the 'International Scene'. Many countries are affected by the barmy twits in South Africa's Government due to its sports policies. People who just don't want to talk about politics and sport and only know the shape of a rugger ball find it harder and harder to ignore the apartheid illogic. But it has taken pressure to bring home to people that apartheid is about social life and sport is part of this life. It has taken noise to arouse people to the ridiculous idea that the colour of a person's skin could affect his selection for a sports team.

Part III of *Don't Play* describes the emergence of this real pressure in Britain with the Springbok rugby tour of the 1969/70 winter. We begin to see the

fantastic publicity this pressure attained in the media. The reaction to the direct action strategy of the demonstrators on rugby grounds was best evidenced at Swansea. As Hain writes, 'At matches prior to Swansea it could be argued that the police had tried to maintain some degree of impartiality. At Swansea, all pretence at this was forgotten as the police were in open collusion with rugby supporters and self-styled "vigilantes" who openly attacked demonstrators.' Over 200 statements were collected from demonstrators protesting about police behaviour but an internal police enquiry gave the usual whitewash to the men in blue.

The rugby tour struggled through to its conclusion but it had provided a great impetus to those set on stopping the cricket tour. The slow, inexorable grind of sporting and political action pushed unremittingly through by the radical activists to a cancellation of the 'cricket tour'. The process is an education in political action in this country. Only the radicals emerge with any credit, the others are the froth of opportunism and vapidty.

To anarchists of particular interest is the account of the Stop the Seventy Tour movement. 'It was not,' Hain writes, 'a formal organization with the traditional office in the centre of London. Press reporters who came to do a background story on STST would go away called, because they could not find the organization. One South African journal-

ist refused to believe that the movement nationally had no massive pool of typists, phones and office equipment—and thought that we were hiding the real thing from him.' Someone else said the movement seemed 'astonishingly disparate and apparently disorganized' yet the enthusiasm was tremendous. They never kept minutes yet things were done efficiently without fuss.

Hain continues: 'The movement developed in this way partly by accident and because of the circumstances in which it emerged. But it was also in part due to the new atmosphere developing in protest politics: the rejection of institutionalized organizations and traditional methods.' It also gave vent to the undoubted loathing many young people in Britain today have for racialism. It was the one positive stand against the politics of our time—the politics of Powell. It was the emergence of the strand in British life that really wants to keep Britain colourful.

Part IV of the book tries to put the campaign in some sort of perspective. Its success was helpful both in South Africa and Britain, but it was a limited success. British financial and business interests in South Africa remain untouched. It is time the campaign to boycott the underwriters of apartheid—Barclays Bank—took on the same force and tactics. Let us make this the next target of the 'new atmosphere'. There's one in every High Street!

Reflections on the Anarchist Revival

THE BEST BIRTHDAY greetings that could be extended to the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* on its 80th Anniversary is the world-wide revival of interest in Anarchism. Here, in this country, long out-of-print writings by Kropotkin, Bakunin, Proudhon, Tucker, Emma Goldman and Berkman are being republished by commercial publishers. Anarchism is also being widely discussed in books and numerous articles by such writers as Paul Goodman, Professors of History Paul Avrich and Richard Drinnon, Professor of Linguistics Noam Chomsky, Law Professor Charles Reich, Robert Wolf of Columbia University, Professor Kingsly Widmer, Professor Irving Lewis Horowitz, the eminent British historian James Joll, the English-Canadian writer and biographer, George Woodcock and dozens of others. Considering the different attitudes of so many writers, a good deal of confusion is to be expected—so much so, that Widmer's article in *The Nation* (November 16, 1970) is appropriately entitled: 'Anarchism Revived—Right, Left, And All Around'.

MEDIOCRE STUFF

Aside from some of the ideas of Goodman and Avrich the discussions are generally mediocre and superficial, to say nothing of contradictions and factual errors. For example, Reich's book *The Greening of America* has provoked intense discussion, whole sections have been reprinted in the *New Yorker* magazine (28.9.70) and numerous articles about the book in the editorial section of the *New York Times*. Its most valuable passages are the denunciation of the corporate State, a devastating critique of modern society and a restatement of the importance of the individual. But nowhere does Reich call for the abolition of the State or the fundamental institutions that he attacks, nor does he even mention any of the Anarchist thinkers. His main proposal is the reform of the system by adopting the life-style of the young 'hipsters' and similar groups. The following little quotation illustrates his attitude: 'Even the business men once liberated [by following the example of the "hippies"—S.W.] would like to roll in the grass and lie in the sun. There is no need to fight any group in America . . . there is no need to fight the machine.' ('Machine' refers to the Corporate State and all the other repressive and brain-washing institutions oppressing society—S.W.)

IDEAS IGNORED

Herbert Marcuse, the ideological hero of the 'New Left' (a term coined by another hero of the 'New Left', the deceased sociologist C. Wright Mills), combines his hatred of the State and totalitarianism with a thinly disguised glorification of Cuba, China and other 'socialist democracies'. Noam Chomsky is a good deal more perceptive, but he too tries to weld Anarchism to Marxism. Widmer, going to the other extreme, practically denies the connection between Anarchism and Socialism. He makes no distinction between Anarchist FREE Socialism and AUTHORITARIAN Marxian State Socialism, and ignores the ideas of Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin. Widmer correctly points out that: 'Anarchism's contemporary revival comes mostly from the dissident middle class, intellectuals, students and other marginal groups who base themselves on individualist, utopian, and other non-working class aspects of Anarchism. . . . This is the kind of Anarchism that Widmer and most of the modern writers seem to prefer. But they do not realize that to ignore the workers and peasant masses and depend upon an upper class minority can only lead away from Anarchism

FOR NEW READERS

Newer or younger readers may not know of 'Freie Arbeiter Stimme' (Free Voice of Labour), the Yiddish language newspaper founded originally in Germany, where Rudolf Rocker took over the editorship (learning Yiddish in order to do so). The paper thrived in London at the beginning of this century, when Rocker was a foremost figure in the very successful organisation of the militant working population of East London—clothing workers and bakers principally. This movement gained great strength from anarchists and left revolutionary refugees from the pogroms of Czarist Russia.

Many of these refugees returned to the Soviet Union just after the revolution—although great numbers returned, disillusioned, to this country, France and the United States. The paper continues to be published from New York.

to a dangerous type of élitist dictatorship. This, as the classical Anarchist thinkers have repeatedly pointed out, is precisely what is wrong with what is now falsely labelled 'New Anarchism'. It is not my intention to belittle the many fine things that these scholars do say; but my point is that they stress the negative aspects of Anarchism and ignore or misinterpret its CONSTRUCTIVE principles.

A notable exception is the French sociological historian Daniel Guérin, whose excellent little book, *Anarchism*, has just been translated into English by the Monthly Review Press. While not without its faults (he underestimates the importance of Kropotkin's ideas), it is nevertheless the best short introduction to Anarchism, because Guérin concentrates on the constructive nature of Anarchism. The English Anarchist, Nicolas Walter (*Anarchy* 94, December, 1968), sums up Guérin's conclusions: 'Guérin rightly attacks such recent historians of Anarchism as Jean Maitron, George Woodcock and James Joll for saying that the Anarchist movement, however excellent it may have been in the past, is now dead and belongs to the past.'

THE CENTRAL MYTH OF MARXISM

AS A RENEGADE MARXIST I must admit that there are certain attractions about Marxism. When one accepts it, just as when one accepts Roman Catholicism, the world becomes a less uncertain place. 'A lot of doubts and puzzles are resolved and even if one is suffering at the moment, there is always pie in the sky tomorrow. Then there is the excellent analysis of nineteenth century capitalism to be found in *Das Kapital* and of course the proposition that it is necessary to replace capitalism. It is when we come to methods that the attraction begins to wear a bit thin.

'It is a central tenet of Marxism that the victory of the working class over the ruling class is a necessary precondition for the abolition of classes and the withering away of the state.'

Well, yes, maybe it is. As a central tenet though it is highly ambiguous. Just what does 'victory of the working class' imply? Marx himself was a little more explicit. Here are some of the things he said would follow a working class victory:

Centralisation of credit in the hands of the state.

Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the state.

Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state.

Equal obligation of all to work.

Establishment of industrial armies.*

Of course the state is an abstract concept. In terms of actual human beings this must mean that some people will be giving orders and others will be taking them. In other words, the victory of the working class implies the substitution of one ruling class for another.

He will have none of this.' (Walter then quotes Guérin: ' . . . Constructive Anarchism which found its most accomplished expression in the writings of Bakunin [Why not Kropotkin?—S.W.], relies on organization, self-discipline, integration, a centralization that is not coercive but federal. It depends on large-scale modern industry, on modern technology, on the modern proletariat, on internationalism on a world scale.'

YOUNG REBELS

The 'Students for a Democratic Society' (SDS) and other 'New Left' youth movements reflected all shades of opinion, but was nevertheless strongly animated by an anarchist spirit. The fundamental document of the SDS proclaimed: ' . . . two central aims: that the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life; that society be organized to encourage independence in men and provide the media for their common participation.' The SDS aimed to establish indigenous decentralized movements stimulated by grassroots rebels. These aims were praiseworthy not only for their content, but above all that the youth arrived at these conclusions without outside help. Every Anarchist, every forward looking person, must be proud of the magnificent spirit of these young rebels and their valiant struggle against war, racism and the false standards of our corrupt institutions. Nor will we fail to appreciate that it was this rebellious youth who aroused the spirit of dissent and revived the dormant radical movement.

MOVEMENT POISONED

But the youth movement has its sombre side. Unfortunately the movement has been poisoned by the infiltration of totalitarian 'communist' elements like the Trotskyite 'Young Socialist Alliance', the 'Du Bois' clubs, the 'Progressive Labour Party', the 'Youth Against War and Fascism', the Maoists and the Castroites, the black nationalist

movements like the 'Black Panthers' and other such factions. Bale F. Johnson, active in the SDS from its inception and later a teacher at the University of California, Riverside, inadvertently explains why the movement is not living up to its potential and why its strength is being sapped: 'The Campus rebels, though often united on specific issues, are divided over basic questions, hesitant, with no permanent goals or direction . . . the impact of the Cuban Revolution was the most important influence of all . . . to a remarkable extent there are ideological similarities between the campus and Cuban revolutions . . . the link which binds the various tendencies within the student movement is the firm belief in the value and necessity of active dissent.' (Studies on the Left, Vol. II, Number 1, 1961.)

Events since 1961 when Johnson wrote this article have again demonstrated that dissent is not enough and that no movement can be based only on negations. A movement must have a firm theoretical base, a coherent constructive programme. Lacking this solid foundation, the conflicting factions could no longer coexist and the movement collapsed with each faction 'doing its own thing', as the saying goes. Despite these shortcomings, we repeat, the movement succeeded in arousing the student masses. The collapse of the FORMAL movement does not necessarily mean the end of youth radicalism. The strength and dynamism of the youth movement rests upon the thousands and perhaps hundreds of thousands of unaffiliated young rebels who far outnumber the membership of the handful of groups. Whether this REAL movement will reorganize itself and learn from the mistakes of the past, remains to be seen.

There is a strong Anarchist current within the youth movement. On almost every campus there are spontaneously organized groups who identify themselves as anarchists. Many of them reject the 'old' Anarchism of Bakunin, Kropotkin,

Malatesta and Proudhon. They are asocial nihilistic Bohemians exclusively concerned with their own life-styles, rejecting any form of organization and self-discipline. Others are obsessed with the cult of violence and ruthlessness in the amoral tradition of Nechayev (whose *Revolutionary Catechism*, falsely attributed to Bakunin has been widely distributed by the 'Black Panthers'). There are however, a growing number of student and faculty members who are intensely interested in the ideas of classical Anarchism, which they are trying to adapt to modern life. It is this element which can best promote the revival of Anarchism.

IN ITALY, TOO

That this problem is not confined to America becomes evident from an interview with Pietro Carlo Masini, one of the foremost historians of Italian Anarchism, who was questioned by a reporter for the Florence newspaper *La Nazione*. We extract the relevant passages from the translation that our comrade Hugo Roland sent us. Masini, who attended the 1968 International Anarchist Congress in Carrara, Italy, condemns the brand of 'Anarchism' represented by one of the leaders of the French student revolt in 1968, 'Danny the Red' Cohn-Bendit:

'This youthful Neo-Anarchist loves action for the sake of action, forgetting that action must follow thought and not be an alibi for not thinking. To them "spontaneity" is the panacea that will automatically solve all problems. No thinking, no planning, no theoretical or practical preparation is necessary. In the "Revolution" which is "Just around the corner", the fundamental differences between Anarchists, Marxists and Leninists will miraculously disappear.'

'Paradoxically enough, the really modern Anarchists were not the followers of Cohn-Bendit who repeated old-fashioned ideas which the Anarchist movement had long since outgrown and rejected. The really modern Anarchists are those with white hair, those guided by the teachings of Bakunin and Malatesta, who in Italy and Spain [as well as Russia—S.W.] had learned from bitter personal experience how serious a matter a revolution can be.'

'New, irresponsible, confused individuals, with all sorts of dubious political backgrounds, many with psychological troubles, infiltrated the Anarchist movement. But Anarchism—the old Anarchists know it—requires self-discipline. Anarchism presupposes culture, respect between individuals, and a sense of solidarity.'

'This is not a new problem. It is sufficient to recall the influx of asocial elements, who at the end of the century entered our movement because they were romantically attracted to "Ravacholism" (attentats and terrorism) against which Malatesta and Merlino fought. . . .'

A HOPEFUL SIGN

I learn from my conversations with many young rebels that they are beginning to realize that while it is necessary to adapt our ideas to changing circumstances we must not in so doing, discard the valuable lessons learned since the beginning of the Anarchist movement more than a century ago. For this reason the re-examination and circulation of the Anarchist classics, together with modern works is a hopeful sign. There is still a great deal to be learned from the experiences of the last hundred years, and the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* has in the past eighty years contributed much to this understanding. May it continue to help spread our ideas, which are just as relevant today as they have been in the past, for the fundamental principles of Anarchism are based on the eternal aspirations for freedom and peace.

at root on a proposition that cannot be proved or disproved, revealed, one must suppose, in a flash of divine inspiration. In this case the proposition is historical inevitability, that is the notion that things could not have been other than they are. This must either be accepted or rejected. To those who accept a given truth, a dogma, all actions are justified which conform to the dogma. If those who reject it suffer in the process, they suffer because they oppose the truth. It is hardly necessary for me to give examples of the misery that has been caused for human beings by the clash of dogmata.

Of course in opposition a dogmatic system can seem persuasive. It is only necessary to present it as a series of vague generalisations. When the theory has to be put into practice however and the consequences are not all that one has been led to expect, the movement tends to fragment and form sects, each of which is in possession of the real truth (e.g. Maoists, Stalinists, Trotskyists, etc.).

The attraction of anarchism for me, on the other hand, is that it tends to be undogmatic, open ended. Anarchists tend to be people who are opposed, not only to the authority of governments, but also to the authority of dogmatic concepts. Of course it does not provide the certainty of Marxism, it offers no blueprint for tomorrow. If people are free to organise themselves as they wish, we cannot forecast the exact form such organisations will take. It has this great strength, however, which is what turned me from a Marxist into an anarchist: if it succeeds, society will be organised in accordance with the needs and desires of the people who live in it.

THE BOMBS OF JANUARY

THE GUERRILLA is today becoming a figure of popular mythology, taking the place of the gangster, the cowboy or the outlaw in the greenwood. The process is part of the increasing strain and stress of capitalist society. Everything is getting bigger, more difficult, more complicated and more confusing, and the tendency, on Right and Left alike, is to try to cut through the tangle with a single slash, to resort to violence.

This is world-wide. For the first time in history (perhaps 1848 was a sort of smaller-scale trial run, limited to Europe only, and lasting no more than a couple of years) we are witnessing a world civil war. In every country in the 'civilised' world there are guerrillas operating; whether it's Ceylon or the Middle East, Ulster or Africa or the Americas, something of the sort is happening everywhere. The ferocity of the Right is also developing fast. Repression in Mexico, in the USA, in Bangla Desh, no matter where it is, though it varies in degree it is the same in principle.

There used to be a saying in the United States and in this country also, 'It can't happen here'. Sinclair Lewis even wrote a novel with this title to show how easily Fascism could come to the US. His prophecy has nearly come true. The same isolationist mentality prevails in Britain. But it is happening here. Terrorism and repression are both coming to be a part of normal life.

The hippy paper *The International Times* during the course of the past year or so mentioned that bomb attacks were being made on various establishment institutions, but were being hushed up by the press. The authorities did not want publicity. In January however things evidently went too far, with the attack on the home of the Employment Minister, Mr. Carr. From then on the bombings have been fully publicised, with screaming headlines about 'anarchists' to begin with, although this good old scapegoat was soon discarded, and the Angry Brigade, with its laconic communiqués, stepped onto the stage,

and has now become a household word.

Two young men, Jack Prescott and Ian Purdie, have been arrested, but the case against them seems to be flimsy in the extreme, and based upon what so-and-so is supposed to have said to so-and-so. Meanwhile the bombings go steadily on. Even a boutique is attacked. Indeed it is a part of capitalism, but I suppose one could argue this with regard to almost any kind of business. To escape all implication with capitalism one would have to go and live in some wild mountain range by hunting and food-gathering. In fairness to the Angry Brigade they have not killed anyone yet, and have taken care that no one shall be killed. Their attacks have been against property only.

TOWARDS CIVIL WAR?

The trouble is that the logic of these bombings is inescapable. It can hardly be expected that the Industrial Relations Bill will be stopped in its course because the kitchen of the Employment Minister is reduced to a shambles. People won't stop opening boutiques because one has been blown up. Even if several were, the business community would merely turn to other means of exploiting their fellows, and would probably hire Securicor-type guards. The increase of these private armies is one of the most frightening features of life in modern Britain.

These bomb attacks can only lead to increasing repression on the part of the establishment, which will in turn lead to increasing violence on the part of the resistance, so that bombs are placed with the intention of killing. From this it is only a step to a fully armed conflict. Whichever side wins will set up a dictatorship. This has happened so many times in modern history that it would be a waste of time to quote examples. In America civilisation, from what one reads and hears, seems to be disintegrating. Possibly the situation there is such that if the blacks, students, hippies and the rest of them don't arm them-

selves and fight back they will be enslaved or exterminated. In Britain, bad though things are getting, the situation is much less extreme.

All one can suppose is that the purpose of these attacks is to make the situation worse, to arouse people on both Left and Right, the idea being that capitalism can only be overthrown by force. Suppose the Right should win? It did in Spain. I suppose this is a risk that has to be taken in the view of those who organise these bombings. What they are doing, whether that is their intention or not, is to bring about a civil war. This might just possibly lead to the overthrow of capitalism, as organised at present in Britain. If so the alternative form of society that will appear is unlikely to be anarchist. More likely some new Cromwell or British Castro will take over.

VIOLENCE FOR THE FUN OF IT

A common saying in recent years, well, since the end of the Second World War, is 'Of course nobody wants war, but...'. It is usually used against pacifists. In fact it is quite untrue. If nobody wanted war there would never be any. Some people get quite a kick out of fighting, out of plotting, out of submitting themselves to discipline, out of tormenting their fellows and above all out of issuing orders, commanding, moulding the course of events, achieving fame in the records of history, and all the rest of it. Whether it is innate or the result of education few males are uninterested in weapons. Most enjoy the excitement of a cause, even if actual physical combat is not involved. When there is nothing to fight for there is always football.

Among the young militants of today there are a number who talk of the need for violence, and even carry toy weapons around with them. In so doing they make themselves more vulnerable to the police. So when something serious, like a bomb explosion, happens, all the police have to do is to descend, or 'swoop' as the newspapers say, on some place where

young revolutionaries gather, and seize some likely-looking character, already known to them through informers as a firebrand. Whether he is technically guilty or innocent is irrelevant. He looks the part, and probably something can be pinned on him.

Playing at violence can be highly dangerous. The authorities are not concerned with 'guilt' or 'innocence'. In their eyes no one is innocent who does not conform completely. Probably no real conspirators are going to be caught in this way. They know how to cover their tracks. The sort of people who are likely to fall into the net are the kind of people who think they are playing a great game.

Anarchists differ so much in their attitude to violence that no one person can take it upon himself to present the point of view of the movement as a whole. But in the days when anarchists did resort to bombs they did it as 'propaganda of the deed'. To play at violence is bad propaganda because it creates the impression that the revolutionaries are irresponsible and frivolous. No one is likely to be convinced that they have a case.

With regard to the Angry Brigade itself, whose seriousness is not in doubt, I feel I can only speak for myself, but probably quite a lot of anarchists would agree with me. Although I cannot suppress a feeling of joy at the thought of some wretched politician coming home to a wrecked house, I think it is a bad way of resisting authority and its demands. I still believe that non-violent methods and rational discussion have a future. The hippies talk about 'the alternative society', and I believe that it is still possible to begin building up communities and so forth, here and now. And indeed it is being done. This seems to me far more hopeful than bombs.

A.W.U.



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Is there a 'Libertarian Left?'

EVERYWHERE we see the signs of growing repression and persecution of minorities (harassment of immigrants, libertarian educationalists, homosexuals; the proposed legislation against trade union militants and the trend towards denial of free expression) as the power of the State machine is used to prop up ailing capitalism and an authoritarian social structure.

We must strike back against the ever more menacing State and the very concept of authority. Certain courageous free spirits have turned to violent protest in despair, but this is no substitute for a mass movement to turn the dream into reality. We must pose to our fellow workers the alternative of a free society based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation instead of exploitation and authority, and the practical means by which it can be achieved.

It has been proposed that a meeting be held at Trafalgar Square in London on Sunday, October 17, 1971 (preceded by a march from say Newham in East London) with speakers representing the tendencies and groups participating. There is no need to lose our individual identities—let every group proclaim its own 'line' as loudly as it wishes—but why should any differences prevent us from marching together against capitalism, the State and the growing repression? After all, we've all marched with (or behind!) some very strange bed-fellows on demos in the past!

I propose that an initial meeting of interested persons be held at Freedom Press Hall, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E.1, on Sunday, July 18 at 3 p.m. (Tube station: Aldgate East. Freedom Press is down the alley at side of Wimpy Bar.)

If you are interested in supporting the idea please write to the address below as soon as possible. (Even if you can't make it to the original meeting please let us know that you're interested in the actual demo.)

70 Blenheim Walk, Terry Phillips, Corby, Northants.

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Another 4-page leaflet. Two articles from **FREEDOM: The relevance of Anarchism today and Anarchism and Nationalism.** Available from Freedom Bookshop for 30p a hundred including postage.

NF's Young Storm-Troopers

FOR THE LAST FORTNIGHT, skin-head gangs from surrounding areas have been pouring into Blackburn every evening, to help local groups beat up Asian workers. Indian, Pakistani, Anglo-Asian and Council tenants' associations have formed a defensive patrol to guard the streets at night. Also to disrupt National Front meetings and other public Fascist promotion events. Immigrant groups from Glasgow and Bradford may eventually be called in as reinforcements if existing patrols prove inadequate. Pakistani teenagers are touring the town centre in large groups, as are skinheads and known fascist youth. The patrols and their white supporters are everywhere. Cops and dogs on every corner.

Over the last two years, long-isolated racists and super-patriots in the Blackburn area have come together to forge an effective agitator machine, which has recently spearheaded a National Front infiltration. The red-necked local Thomson news-media promotes consistent front-page coverage of extreme political Right activities and orientates its correspondence columns towards authoritarian indoctrination. '... as I see it, a communist would not merely sell his grandmother he would laugh as his paymaster trampled on her, whereas what is called a fascist, would not betray his people or country but would contest any issue regardless of self for either.' (Edward Adamson.) Conversely, known libertarian activists have to resort to various proxy tactics to gain rare print space.

Blackburn's existing coloured ghettos are mainly redevelopment areas and many Asian families are being forced out of their communities to seek accommodation in predominantly white areas. Local fascists keep a keen eye on the property market and once a house comes up for sale, they move into the area. Their methods are crude but productive. Using prevailing racial stereotypes and racist mythology to activate emotional prejudices; initiating fear and distrust. Petitions are signed. Pressure is brought upon the owners of vacant property. As soon as the neon flashes of publicity exploit and distort the situation, engendering further destructive feedback, our racist brothers vanish under the stones they crawl up out of. Occasionally the Race Relations Board intervene or such an idea enters the tangled fantasy webs of street rumour and media report. Then the gullible or brainwashed victims soil their knickers (it is usually the men who roar over pints and their wives who march and petition) and back down. Communities are by then damaged far beyond the racial scene. Neighbours are divided in bitter hostility. A disunity which embitters their social environment for long periods.

Young people didn't join the recent police/clerical backlash march. Nor are they accepting the National Front crap. With the exception of those sad flowerings of deprivation (emotional poverty and physical rejection), hard-core skin-head gangs, who are easily encouraged by adult apologetics for their racial scapegoating and unthinking terrorisation

of minority groupings. Last month, the National Front moved into a suburban terraced complex, in which middle-class Indians, and some Pakistani workers and landlords, are starting to live. An embryonic youth commune in the district added 'Black is beautiful' to the gigantic peace sign on the side of their house. Outside stormtroopers only won support from middle-aged *Telegraph* and *Express* types. Black organisations have left the local Community Relations Council in disgust and are presently considering re-forming into a practical co-operative. The CRS being a largely passive front, which does little beyond promoting middle-class coffee mornings and polite garden parties.

Outside of all this are a few white niggers, pink spades, whom nobody wants to know. That is the few anarchic dissenters from mainstream orthodox positions on race and integration. Disliked by racists (black and white) and feared by moderate black leaders. The snag is, that unlike the National Front, we are still isolated and have not developed sophisticated communication techniques. We do, however, get to the intelligent young through our magazines, music, theatre and poetry. Nevertheless, once turned-on they tend to drift to the cities or take to the hills. We're losing ground to the National Front in this part of the North-West. The situation is not explosive but there's a long fuse burning rapidly away.

DAVE CUNLIFFE.

Mill Militants Brought to Court

WHEN THE POLICE began prosecuting Brian Bamford, a mill labourer, for allegedly having assaulted a policeman during a sit-in strike which took place at Arrow Mill, Rochdale, in May, they brought in two managers as witnesses for the prosecution.

Bamford has denied the charges, and his workmates, all Pakistanis, have organised a Defence Fund, to pay his legal costs and other expenses. He had been

refused legal aid.

In court, a large number of his workmates came forward as witnesses for the defence. The magistrates' hearing, which started on June 7, went on for two days, even though the defence didn't call all its witnesses. Some of the witnesses claimed the police had struck Bamford at least once, while they were dragging him out of the mill.

The two magistrates found they could not agree on a verdict, and the case must now be heard again on July 15, at Rochdale Town Hall.

Though the case and the industrial dispute, which preceded it, has not been much reported in the English papers, it has been quite well covered in the Urdu press.

M.W.

THIS WEEK IN IRELAND

SO JAMES CHICHESTER CLARK becomes a noble Lord with ermine and all the trappings. Just how sick making can governments get? Stormont was warned and warned about last week in Dungiven and did ban it, BUT the Orange bigots went ahead, and Martin Smythe, the Grand Master, after encouraging 'every Orange man in Ireland' to attend, pretended to try to control them when they went berserk and crashed the police and soldier lines.

Ian Paisley's henchman, William McCrea, was arrested but let go. I remember how Frank McManus, MP, took part in a non-sectarian Civil Rights march at Enniskillen—not objected to by any of the local people—and HE went to prison for six months, but William McCrea, who fought and yelled and charged soldiers and police (I have photo of him doing just this) goes scot free, and yet Faulkner STILL tries to convince us reforms have been carried through in the six counties, that justice is the same for ALL regardless of religion. In fact one judge—whose name I disremember—actually said, 'Judges are far too busy to enquire about the

religion of those who come before them.' Well, if a man is named William Taylor I just guess he is a Protestant, while if he is Liam O'Rourke I just surmise he is a Catholic. Furthermore addresses are given in Court and even I who live in Dublin know a very large number of the respective ghettos by name now.

There is to be another march by Orangemen in Belfast, going down the Springfield Road on this coming Saturday. So far a little re-routing has been ordered, but keeping in the Springfield Road and so far Faulkner has not banned it or the Coalisland one for July 1. Last year both these parades led to serious rioting and deaths. Faulkner tries most desperately to run with the extremist hare and hunt a little with the opposition hounds, he is falling between two stools miserably and a complete showdown MUST come soon.

By the way, en passant, I referred to the IRA telling when they had committed deeds, I meant of course the REAL IRA not the 'Provos', who are as dishonest as the UVF. I forgot English readers might not be able to distinguish.

Yesterday the soi-disant 'Forcible Entry Bill' reached the second stage of the committee and was passed. Great plans lie ahead. IT MUST be made unworkable as it is pure fascism.

More and more of Dublin falls to the foreign speculator, and as these sharks advertise in our dailies it is very hard to get anything printed against them, and soon the whole city will be a concrete jungle of offices. The Weston family continue to take over Dunlaoghaire and we continue to FIGHT.

All kinds of little beastly things happen everywhere all the time. Irish are as nasty as possible to other Irish in every possible way. Women's Lib seems to me to be just a stupid farce of soured spinsters who want to draw attention to themselves and do not understand at all what real Liberation means, but I admit this may be just my local very bourgeois branch, who can talk of absolutely NOTHING but contraception, not seeing it is absolutely impossible for a woman with nine children all living in one room to practise it, and even if she can get 'the pill' there are a very great number

of women whom the pill makes ill, and who also have not the mentality to remember regular taking. I know one underprivileged woman who has had three children since she was put on it by her doctor. 'I couldn't find the bottle', 'I clean forgot', 'I was out of them and it was pouring rain from the Heavens I could not go to the dispensary', etc. One must house and educate first. Incidentally the four-year-old son of this woman ate about 4 or 5 of her pills. So far nothing has happened, BUT. . . .

Oh, the sorrows man has brought on the world! Vietnam, Pakistan and India, Ireland, the Middle East, everywhere. It is so hard not to give up and go to one of our offshore tiny islands and forget it all.

Oh, one of our darling Government's ideas for money making is we invite packs of English otter hounds over here to hunt OUR otters. You see you have to all intents and purposes wiped out your otter population, so we must have your help and money to help exterminate ours. It is nearly as cruel as enclosed hare coursing, also a great Christian Sport in Ireland much attended by priests. As one wrote recently, 'Animals are not creatures. They are only things.' I sincerely hoped there WAS a Hell when I read that and that he would go to it.

Contact

Contact Column is for making contact! Use is free, but donations towards typesetting costs are welcome

Urgent. Help fold and dispatch FREEDOM every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.

North East London Poly (Barking) Anarchist Group, c/o Students Union, Longbridge Road, Dagenham.

Sebastian Scragg will be receiving his friends in order to say farewell prior to his transportation for life to the Colony in NSW at the Freedom Press Meeting Hall on Wednesday, July 7, 1971, from 8 p.m. onwards. His address in the Antipodes: Box 4788, GPO, Sydney 2001, Australia.

West Cornwall Claimants Union. Colin Flower, Old Mill, St. Johns, Helston. Tel.: Helston 2854 or Dennis Gould, c/o Books & Things, 6 Penryn Street, Redruth.

American couple touring England and Europe June-July would like modest accommodation London part of the time. Write Ron Pearl, c/o Freedom Press.

Debate on 'Problem of Libertarian Organisation', June 28, 7.30 p.m., between the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists and the Socialist Current Group. Chairman: John Downey, Editor of 'Socialist Leader'. At Post Box Public House, corner of Mount Pleasant and Laystall Street (off Gray's Inn Road and Theobalds Road).

Anarchist Leicester. Will anyone who has any information about the Anarchist movement in Leicester before 1965 contact Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne Street, Leicester.

ORA No. 1: 'Towards a History and Critique of the anarchist movement in recent times'. 5p + 2p postage. Obtainable from Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

Burrell House. Squatters need Plumbing and Electrical Materials. Contact Mike, Flat 16, Burrell House, The Highway, Stepney, E.14.

Axis Bookshop, 6a Hunters Lane, off Yorkshire Street, Rochdale. Call if in town.

N.E.L.P. (Barking). Anarchist Bookstall, Friday lunchtimes, 'C' floor.

Proposed Group—Exeter Area. John and Jill Driver, 21 Dukes Orchard, Bradninch, Exeter, EX5 4RA.

Leeds Direct Action Pamphlets: 'The Japanese Anarchists', 1p; 'Who are the Brain Police', 1p (Breakdown of the Power Structure of yer Leeds University—stripping away of liberal bullshit, etc.). Coming soon: 'Listen Marxist', 5p. All these available from the Anarchist Bookshop, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.

Anyone interested in forming a Cambridge Anarchist Group contact John Jenkins, 75 York Street, Cambridge.

Kropotkin Lighthouse Publications. 'The Revolutionary Catechism', Necheyev, 5p + 2½p post. 'Song to the Men of England', Shelley; 'Poster Poem' with Walter Crane's 'Workers' Maypole', 10p + 2½p post. 'Poems', Jim Huggon, 5p + 2½p post. Discount available on bulk orders. Jim Huggon, c/o Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Spanish lessons given in London. Rates on request. Write, in first instance, to Box 02/71, Freedom Press.

Meetings at Freedom: Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. For details see 'This World' column.

amongst the people lined up and searched, was an MP. Surely 'H', as an Anarchist you don't regard MPs as sacrosanct? It's about time you woke up and realised we aren't living in the Victorian era. An MP is just an average human being and is in no way aloof from the wrath of the Highland Fusiliers.

Lastly, 'H's' claim that the troops are taught to shoot ONLY to kill. 'H' displays his hopelessly outdated knowledge of military teaching. 'Shoot to kill' applies in all-out war, yes. In all-out war it's usually safer and cheaper to shoot and kill your enemy with one bullet. But this order most definitely does NOT apply in peace-keeping situations. Anarchists may resent the military, but the British Army isn't the Waffen SS!

Fraternally,
Breon MALCOLM MORRIS.

THE YEARS OF BELIEF

Dear Comrades,

One of the disturbing things about the anarchist movement, or at least some long-serving elder statesmen in its ranks, is that they seem to accept that the ideas which they conceive of as being anarchist are irrefutable. Anyone who questions their theories is indulging in unanarchist conduct and can safely be ignored.

This anti-intellectualism is, in reality, an appalling conceit. It is very injurious to anarchism and the anarchist movement, not only because it stems from an untrue view of reality but because it also leads many intelligent anarchists to break with the movement because they begin to feel a sense of intellectual claustrophobia which is restrictive of their basic ideas of intellectual freedom and destructive of their future intellectual progress.

We see an example of this in FREEDOM of June 12 in two letters from long-standing older comrades Jack Robinson and Dave Coull.

Jack Robinson, in reply to Ken Knudson's letter on Employment replies: 'Laws of economics are not laws of nature'. What an appallingly naive reply from an anarchist.

Dave Coull's reply to Colin Wilson's article justifying Wilson's leaving the old London Anarchist Group and fifties anarchist movement and his present claim to be an anarchist, quoting Wilson's 'development depends on judging exactly how much freedom each one needs and can take' Coull replies 'His statement . . . clearly implies an elite who are to do the judging'. This is hair-splitting of the 'how many angels can balance on the point of a needle?' kind.

What are laws of nature? What are economic laws? Clearly they are the same though Jack Robinson will not have this. Robinson implies a law of nature is an irrefutable fact whilst an economic law is merely someone's suggested idea of what reality is. This is a fair assumption except we must remember that as soon as it is made, the term 'law of nature' becomes, not an irrefutable fact, but a moral law, in effect an opinion. For surely both a law of nature and an economic law are only man's idea of reality—his interpretation in terms he can understand be they language or formulae. The law is not the reality, it is merely the perceiver's view of reality. Taking it this way both laws of nature and economic laws are the same, in fact one could even say, prior to other categorisation, that a law of nature is a type of economic law (i.e. Kropotkin's ideas on mutual aid), or conversely an economic law is part of natural phenomenon (Kropotkin again). As soon as one person sets up one law as having more value towards reality than another, without bringing forward evidence to support his claim, he has simply made a value judgement and his use of the term, i.e. natural law, is not in the sense of a superior reality but in a personal evaluative sense, in other words a moral law.

What Jack Robinson is saying is that moral laws take precedence over real facts, a very silly and completely untenable intellectual position. In effect he is acting rather like a medieval theologian. He is standing up and saying 'the word of anarchism is a sacred truth and it is more important than real facts'. What is anarchism then, a new religion? The whole essence of any theory in

scientific method is that it is subject to refutation if new evidence is presented which refutes it. If anarchist theory is not subject to refutation but is a natural law then anarchism is not scientific but simply a moral theory. Anarchism becomes simply a moral view of society. In other words its chances of success in the real world are limited to whether men believe in it and whether they believe it is working and whether the workings of anarchism are testable by actual evidence. This is certainly not why I am an anarchist, and if I thought anarchism was not a working hypothesis I would very quickly reject it.

Letters

Dave Coull attacks Colin Wilson not for what he says but because what he says is contrary to the gospel word of anarchism. We are almost all theorists on anarchism. Anarchism is our private world. In modern society we have little chance of living as anarchists, or at least non-individualists haven't much chance. All we can say is that we put forward ideas and hope that others will try them out, as we sometimes try them out ourselves. Wilson suggests that we look quite seriously at freedom and what it really means and how much freedom we can take. I think this is important because freedom is the basis of anarchist propaganda. We cannot all take freedom, it is too awe-inspiring. It is because of this that many socialists reject anarchism and talk of collectivism. They are afraid of total freedom. They frequently pay lip-service to ideas of freedom and then reject it for all they are worth. Freedom implies too many decisions to be made. Many people would prefer a party or a state simply because of this fear of freedom. It is important for anarchism's future that this is understood and discussed. For Coull to imply that limitations to freedom implies an elite (and this means that Wilson is not an anarchist) is simply to take three steps back into anarchist theology instead of seriously thinking about what the man said. It does not matter whether Colin Wilson is an anarchist. What does matter is that ideas are expressed and discussed.

Coull, like Robinson, is dangerously anti-intellectual. They are conformist in the extreme and are more likely to put people off anarchism than provoke serious discussion. No political or social theory should imply absolute certainty. If it does it implies a moral loading and not a universal truth. What is needed in the anarchist movement is a little more doubt, uncertainty and humility in discussion and a little less conceited conformity as though speaking the word of the prophet. Theories are set up to be examined, challenged, and, with plenty of evidence as to why, refuted, they are not the word of God.

Meanwhile if Messrs. Robinson and Coull are interested in dogmatic belief the Catholic Truth Society has. . . .

Fraternally,

PETER NEVILLE.

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

Dear Editors,

Jack Robinson states (FREEDOM, 12.6.71) that 'it has been said by individualist anarchists that the death of Indian peasants from starvation is no concern of theirs'. He gives two reasons for this: (1) 'We are all politically impotent to remedy the situation' and (2) 'the Stirnerite thesis that charitable contributions . . . are more for the benefit of the donor than the recipient'.

It is quite true that some individualists have denied that they have any obligation to feel concerned about the death of Indian peasants (or anyone else) from starvation. But this is not to say that they will not feel concern. What is denied is the validity of the proposition that they ought to feel concern, that this is a necessary consequence of being an anarchist.

This denial, however, has nothing to do with their political potency or impotence. Because it may be in my power to do something about starvation in India it by no means follows that it is my 'duty' to do so. 'Duty' is a species of authority over the individual—the moral equivalent of political government. If it is in my interest to concern myself with starvation then I will concern myself. But I am the judge of what is in my interest—not others, including Jack Robinson.

I am at a loss to understand the relevance of what Jack Robinson writes about 'the Stirnerite thesis' of 'charitable

contributions'. If a donation to an Indian peasant benefits the donor more than the recipient, then how does that constitute a case against the 'Stirnerite' concerning himself with the peasant?

As for dear old Donne and his islands, one can only ask: So what? His phrase has been invoked in support of one collectivist mystique or another so many times that no country parson is unaware of it. If one accepts his premise as valid and accepts that it leads to 'concern for all mankind', then Jack Robinson's invocation may be impressive. If, like me, one does not accept its validity then it remains a piece of meaningless poetical rhetoric on the level of that other much-quoted mystification: 'While there is a soul in prison I am not free.' Jack Robinson is in the grip of the Solidarist Myth—the belief that individual interests are, or should be, in harmony. This is a belief appropriate to Communists and Christians, but what has it got to do with anarchism?

Parting shot: Could Jack Robinson enlighten me on how 'a concern for all mankind is even at its lowest (why "lowest"?) point enlightened self-interest'? Suppose I deny that this is in my self-interest—on what grounds would he refute me?

Yours sincerely,
S. E. PARKER.

London
Reply: Comrade Sid Parker might catch cholera.—J.R.

REFERENDA

Dear Editors,

L.O. has already been answered in today's (June 7) issues of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Mail*. Both come out with a 'No' to referendums.

The *Mail* says, 'This country has twice gone to war, agreed to drop the atom bomb and called up men into the army whenever it felt like it. . . . Exactly! What better way of stating the case for referendums?'

The *Telegraph* poses the question: 'Is it right that those with a superior intelligence and knowledge should have a right to be listened to? The simple answer is yes.'

The *Spectator* some time ago ran a piece which ended up with Mr. Shinwell saying 'we'll have none of it—we elect a decent set of chaps and hope they will do their best for us'.

In *Mail*, *Telegraph* and *Spectator*, the real fear is not a referendum on the Common Market but the spectre of people, as the *Mail* says, 'having one referendum after another'.

Of course referendums are not the magic solution to our problems, and we look at Wedgwood Benn's advisory referendums as a contradiction in terms.

ULSTER

Dear Friends,

It was with mixed feelings of extreme annoyance and acute amusement that I read the article by 'H' about current events in Ulster in last week's edition of FREEDOM (11.6.71).

'H' complains of the brutalities meted out by the Royal Highland Fusiliers to the citizenry of Belfast. I should have thought it merely to be a natural human reaction when taking into consideration

that these lads had three of their Battalion murdered by the IRA. After all, when these thugs in the IRA refuse to wear uniform for their clandestine activities, then the British Army is forced to regard all Catholics in Belfast with a certain amount of suspicion. So, if a pub was smashed up and a few Ulstermen manhandled, blame the 'brave' boys in the Irish Republican Army.

He further goes on to state that