

ANARCHISTS—and Proud of it!

ANARCHIST! The very word conjures up visions of dangerous men in black cloaks with bombs, wild acts of uncontrolled violence, bloody insurrection, rape, looting and the complete breakdown of imposed law and order; causing the mass of the people to shy away as though it were some incurable disease. Yet how wrong is the popular image. It is true that acts of violence have been committed in the name of Anarchism, it is true that wild statements have been issued. Yet who are the greatest perpetrators of crimes against humanity on untold scales? It is governments who drop tons of explosives on defenceless people, it is governments who have been responsible for the massacres of countless millions throughout history. Governments who supposedly represent law and order and all that is supposed to be peace loving in society.

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of anarchists, though certainly not pacifists, are neither inclined to violence, mostly being peace-loving persons who want no more than to live in a truly free society, where men treat men with respect for human dignity. Why does the popular image remain so vivid? Its basic cause lies in the fact that the anarchist movement is dedicated to the overthrow of government in any form, thus promoting the idea that it is a philosophy based on lawlessness. Nothing could

be further from the truth. Anarchism is possibly the most highly organised form of society in that, in such a society, every man would live in mutual harmony with his fellow man in a situation where individuals would live in voluntary co-operation with other individuals. It holds to the self-evident truth that, until man is responsible for and in control of his own life, then society's ills will not be cured. It is the only political movement that has this idea to offer. All other political movements are based on the assumption that a government must exist to organise society, thus anarchists are opposed to any form of political grouping that has the formation of another government as its basic aim. The abolition of the state and all its apparatus is one of the basic and original tenets of Anarchism.

In our present society and that of the communist world, we find that the whole economy is geared to profit-making. Everything that is produced must make a profit whether that item is necessary or not. Thus the quality of life is immediately reduced to the level of sordid materialism. The anarchist wants a society in which production is geared to need and not to profit. A society in which the population itself controls its own means of production. For centuries the working man has been robbed of the reward of his own labour. It is a hard fact

of life that a very small minority control the destiny of the majority purely through economic dominance. Yet the very ones who produce that wealth are the ones who are exploited. Thus the capitalist, whether state or private, joins with the government in a hatred of the anarchist movement.

POPULAR MYTHS

The popular image of the bomb-throwing anarchist is that which is perpetuated by the National Press. Every outrage that cannot be explained is immediately tagged with the label 'Anarchy'. Every breakdown of law and order threatens to produce Anarchy and thus the myth goes on. Yet these very papers which do so much to spread anti-anarchist propaganda are themselves owned by those who have a vested interest in keeping society as it is. Little wonder that they attack and libel Anarchism at every possible moment. To them, the success of such a movement would mean, in real terms, a loss of the privileges which they do so much to retain.

Our democratic society is supposedly based on equality, yet thousands live in conditions which would bring down the wrath of the RSPCA if applied in a zoo. Many are homeless. Yet huge office blocks stand empty for lack of prospective tenants due to high rents; empty blocks whose value increases daily to provide huge profits for land

speculators. Many people actually owning more than one house, government ministers, and often socialist at that, not least amongst them. The anarchist wants an end to this situation, he wants to see all property held in common through such means as Tenants' Associations or perhaps Federated Estates, where all the housing belongs to all those within the Federation and not any individual or council. A society in which everyone is well housed in conditions amenable to human dignity, where people no longer have to squat to find a roof, where exorbitant rents, or indeed any rents are non-existent, where a man can tend his garden and watch his children grow up in health and happiness in conditions fit for all human beings, and not the privileged few.

EDUCATION?

One of the chief propagators of our myth of democracy is the educational system which is founded on class distinctions and prejudice. The whole system is repressive and is used as a cog in the machinery of conformity, where children are moulded through various nefarious methods, into accepting a society of exploitation. An obnoxious examination system creams off those of academic achievement to serve as the management of society, whilst the remainder are left as fodder to serve them. A system controlled by discipline and competition designed to repress the individual into a conforming mass. Obviously an education system which exists for the enlightenment of the individual cannot be allowed to prosper, as any form of government just cannot afford to allow a society of free thinking, enlightened individuals to grow, as such a society would spell doom for that government. Anarchism insists that education, particularly higher education, is a right of all and not a privilege for those

of the monied classes or for those with establishment-backed qualifications. The educational system should be used to propagate the ideals of freedom and self-reliance which in turn would lead to and reinforce a free society. But no government in existence would allow this to happen as it would imply self-extinction because people would soon realise that government was completely unnecessary.

How is it that governments can continue to blithely mislead the people they govern so easily? The governments effectively control all the means of communication and media from newspapers, as already mentioned, to TV and radio. The people are only told what the government wishes them to know. Our so-called free press and communications system is only free in that it must comply within certain insidious boundaries. The only alternative is the free presses of the anarchist movement and the like and their propagation. But prosecution on some pretext or another, will always lie just around the corner if ever these alternative news media become too much of a menace to the established way of things. It is not for nothing that the government exercises a strict monopoly of the radio and TV service.

The government has a strong ally in the support of a large middle-class which aspires to attain a status of sober respectability, where false values are inflated beyond all reason and a philosophy of trying to be somebody is all-important. Anarchism to the vast proportion of these people is complete anathema, creating visions of everything they fear. They are too afraid of losing what little they have, not realising that their small loss is everybody's greater gain, and gaily supporting a corrupt system that gives them little handouts to keep them satisfied.

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THE FIRES OF FARRINGDON

THE TWIN-BELFRY TOWERS of Holy Cross monastery dominate the skyline of the upper reaches of the Ardoyne district of Belfast. A few yards uphill on the opposite side stretches a row of shops and behind these eight long rows of terrace-houses sweep downhill until arrested by an identical row of houses lying at right-angles to them. A long ribbon of concrete roadway bisects the estate and even the many well-tended gardens fail to relieve the barrack-like atmosphere of the place.

It was in 1935, another year of riots in Belfast, that Catholic refugees occupied the half-completed houses, glad to sleep on the bare floorboards and grateful for the help provided by the people of the adjacent Catholic district of Old Ardoyne. Under these conditions what was almost an entirely Catholic ghetto was created. Almost but not quite; because on the site of the new estate there still stood a tramway depot and the few streets of ancient and decaying houses which comprised Ardoyne village, the miserable homes of Protestant mill-workers. When the village was demolished three streets were built where it had once stood: Cranbrook Gardens, Farringdon Gardens and Velsheda Park. They were occupied mainly by Protestants and for over 35 years they and their Catholic neighbours lived together in peace.

August 1969 changed all that. Catholic homes in Old Ardoyne were burned out by Protestant extremists and the Catholics prepared to fight. Women and children were evacuated and buses hijacked to form barricades but all of the guns were on the other side in the hands of the RUC, B-Specials and UVF. Fortunately for the Catholics their makeshift defences were never put to the test as the British Army arrived in the nick of time and an uneasy peace settled over the area. For some months afterwards both sides worked together and Catholic and

Protestant vigilantes patrolled the streets at night in a joint effort to keep the peace but many of the older, more moderate, Protestant families began to leave the estate. Those who took their place were militant Protestants and once their numbers began to increase they began a campaign of intimidation against Catholic residents in the streets. Catholics in Farringdon Gardens began to receive threatening letters signed by the UVF, one Catholic woman awoke to find that the windows of her house had been painted overnight with the letters UVF and by the time of the July 12 Orange celebrations this year, the streets were bedecked with Ulster flags. Tension was in the air and when the violence did break out in early August no one was surprised.

I was walking home along the long roadway that divides the estate into its upper and lower parts one Saturday night in early August when I heard the first shots. One whizzed harmlessly overhead and I ran quickly into the cover of a nearby alleyway. From here I was able to locate their source. They were coming from Farringdon Gardens and its neighbour Cranbrook Gardens; single shots interspersed with short bursts of automatic fire, most of it flying aimlessly overhead and none of it coming my way so I was able to return home and listen in comparative safety until it finally petered out a few hours afterwards. Next night a regular gun-battle took place. Many more weapons were being used and as the bullets whined along the streets and ricocheted off the roads and pavements, people closed their doors and doused their lights leaving the gunmen in command of the dangerous streets. The battle raged all night long yet incredibly not one word about it appeared in the press next morning nor was it mentioned on the BBC. The events of that Monday night were to hit

the headlines of newspapers and magazines throughout the world.

That Monday, August 9, 1971, saw the introduction of interment and as families settled around their TV sets after tea-time the sound of sniper fire, so familiar to the people of Ardoyne, was drowned by a much louder noise. At first it seemed that dozens of machine-guns were firing but the clouds of smoke rising above the rooftops were accompanied by the pop and crackle of burning timber and quickly the news spread. The Protestants were burning their own homes. Many Protestants returning from work were greeted by streams of women and children running away from the scene and lorries laden down with furniture speeding out of the estate. These lorries manned by gangs of youths had appeared in streets offering to carry furniture to safety. Many of the people who trustingly handed over TV sets and other items were never to see them again, as many of the Union Jack waving youths were simply criminals taking mean advantage of a tragic situation, but they were usually able to find new homes in a corporation estate being built at Glencairn. The events of 1935 were in some respects being reversed.

The army were to add a touch of farce to the tragedy. They had ordered the fire brigade not to enter the area and when Catholics tried to put the fires out they too were ordered away but at the same time as this was going on at one end of the street the fire-raisers were allowed to go about their work at the other end. One Protestant woman had returned home to salvage some of her belongings and as she rummaged in a back room a soldier entered the house. He later claimed that he had heard a noise in the rear and fired when there was no response to his challenge. The old lady was shot dead.

Gradually the fire took its grip and

salvage operations became impossible. Rafters collapsed and slates cascaded into front gardens and back yards or fell into the burning shells of houses; window panes exploded and showers of sparks and red-hot embers drifted skywards. The next day revealed the full extent of the damage. 192 homes had been ravaged by fire and it looked like a battle zone. Armed soldiers stood on guard as people searched the debris-strewn streets and peered into the smouldering shells. Some were lucky and recovered a bird-cage, a pram or a child's toy. A breeze lifted some papers and pinned them, fluttering, to the hedge-rows at the bottom of Farringdon Gardens. I looked at them. They were certificates of membership of the Loyal Orange Lodge.

The story of Farringdon and the other streets is not yet finished. It is now firmly established that Protestant ex-

tremists caused the fires because, they claim, they were threatened by the IRA. So they burned the homes in order to prevent Catholics occupying them afterwards. But, finally, when the men of violence have done their work someone, sometime has to think of rebuilding and before winter sets in in earnest a voluntary labour force including a couple of priests has already started to re-roof the houses. As work progresses they will be joined in their task by Protestant workers. In a city where there is already a chronic housing shortage the government bureaucrats have refused the relief committee any financial aid even though they admit that the houses are structurally sound and could be made habitable once again. Self-help, co-operation and mutual aid, virtues that we libertarians have always emphasised, are today being put into practice on the rooftops of Farringdon. B.H.

State Murder!

PINELLI MURDERED . . .

VALPREDA INNOCENT . . .

Demonstration outside Italian Embassy on Sunday, January 16.

March from Speakers' Corner at 2 p.m.

Help needed for Leafletting, Fly-Posting, Stickering.

Contact ORA, 68 Chingford Road, Walthamstow, E.17.

Carry on up the National Health

SOME YEARS BACK when I was a student I had a job as a porter in a general hospital and it all came back to me a month ago when I went to see Pete Nichols' play-entertainment, *The National Health*, at The Old Vic. Now I've a soft spot for the nationalelf, being a child of it as it were—all that lovely milk we used to get and, in an odd way, it wasn't an unenjoyable job at The Hospital. Fortunately I've never been in hospital as a case, only as a worker, but one thing I do know is that most people in hospital are frightened—if not all the time—at least when they first go in. And that fear, from my observations, is rarely acknowledged by nurses and even less by doctors. The most tactful care and help always came from the most despised and unskilled(?) workers when I was there, and I guess it ain't changed much. The Italian domestics and the porters it was who tried to reassure and comfort—who in real terms put out a hand or dried a tear.

Oh we all know the problems of understaffing and you have to harden yourself to get through the day arguments, but I'm not sure. They remind me of my tutor at Teacher Training College who warned me against 'becoming too involved with your students'. As it was, the porters and domestics were overworked too, but somehow they managed to keep their humanity intact.

I suspect that doctors and nurses are so imbued with the idea that it is enough 'to serve' that they forget that healing involves the mind as well as the body. When I first began to work in the casualty ward there were two of us on instead of three—so it was turn and turn about on a 12-hour shift. When a road accident case came in, if a nurse wasn't handy you were called up, and that was that—I assisted in first aid to a man from a mental hospital who sat on the bog one morning and slit his throat with a razor (they stitched him up and sent him back), with a spastic child road casualty (she died), with a baby who swallowed a bottle of aspirin (she lived), and a labourer who put a pick through his foot (he howled), and the only first aid I knew was me 2nd class in the scouts. The only people who bothered or had time to care about the anxious relatives and bereaved parents were the porters, and over and over again I witnessed spontaneous acts of courtesy, tact and near miraculous understanding from those most despised underlings. The 'famous surgeon' in the hospital always referred to anyone not wearing a white coat as 'You' and his ill-mannered boorishness was, I think, a true indication of where his heart lay. As a porter then I was getting about £12 for a 72-hour week, and when I started, I was so squeamish that I had a con-

tinuous battle against fainting every time a bloody case came in.

Oh there were good doctors, good nurses, good administrators right enough, but overall, despite real efficiency, it was kindness that was lacking—lack of spontaneity—ridiculous deference to matrons, doctors and surgeons—and that curious feeling that used to sneak in sometimes, that patients were somehow a nuisance who got in the way of routine.

Still. To the play. All this so well conveyed in Nichols' 'revue' that you can smell the carbolic, dread the heavy step of the matron. It works as a series of set pieces contained within one ward, interwoven into a spoof nurse/doctor romance drama hotted up by having a West Indian nurse and one of them granite-chinned Scottish doctor hero, strong silent man Romeo. Know what I mean? It follows the fortunes of seven male patients suffering variously from ulcers, cancer, heart trouble, drink, despair and the erratic attentions of nurses and doctors. Three of 'em die, one becomes cretinous, and the others struggle on. Jim Dale is magnificent as a randy, treacherous male nurse without a shred of compassion—but who, paradoxically, helps the patients through by his humour and his knavery—whatever else, he is not a regulation-ridden automaton. Nichols has given him some lines so heavily laden with innuendo that they

are often embarrassing and disgusting, but somehow he wins you over. He's like a younger bouncy Frankie Howerd—but ruder. 'Still you have to laugh doncher!' he says—and he's right, you do. Bill Frazer is magnificent as a sort of Doctor Cameron character; all that dreadful old dignity and fumblebluster is irresistible to me; and the confrontation with his son and the West Indian nurse is a joy. David Ryall who plays Ash, a faintly queer failed schoolmaster, creates a real person who, despite his considerable faults, has a real talent and no chance to use it, and Gerald James, who plays the senile old Welsh doctor (a patient) is briefly magnificent.

The National Health lashes out seemingly indiscriminately—with no taste,

JEFF CLOVES.

International Socialism or National Capitalism

AT A SPECIAL CONFERENCE of 'International Socialists' in Birmingham recently it was decided that the merger between IS and a small group called Workers' Fight, which had been consummated in 1968, be dissolved, as it had not been a success. Apparently Workers' Fight had maintained a 'permanent tendency' within IS, yet had argued that the International Socialists were 'centrists'—that is, in Trotskyist jargon, not really revolutionary, internationalist, socialists at all.

I have no time for political sects like Workers' Fight, but at least in this instance they are one hundred per cent right. IS should change their initials to NC—National Capitalists!

It is obvious from their so-called principles ('What We Stand For') that the 'International Socialists' see themselves as an embryonic political party, whose aim is the conquest of State power. Despite their talk of abolishing capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use, this is merely a sop or, at best, an ultimate aim for the dim, distant future. For the present, like their bed-fellows in the Communist Party, IS is concerned only with a reformed capitalism. They are nationalistically-minded reformers who occasionally use pseudo-socialist phraseology.

Here is the evidence from their own 'principles'.

IS envisages a 'socialist state', where the land, banks and major industries have been nationalised; they advocate the reactionary slogan of the 'minimum wage' of 'at least £25 a week', and are in favour of 'all genuine national liberation movements'. What 'national liberation' has got to do with internationalism they do not say. But from a really internationalist viewpoint it can only mean the creation of yet another nation-state, complete with bureaucracy and apparatus of repression. It hardly needs mentioning

little sensibility, and with faint regard for stamina—it ran for three hours when I saw it. It disgusted me, appalled me, and convulsed me by turns—but above all it had the undeniable whiff of reality about it. A friend of mine, an art therapist at a mental hospital, couldn't take it. He booted loudly and stomped out disgusted by what he construed as its easy humour at the expense of pity. I guess many of you will feel the same way if you go, but for myself I found it disturbingly real, and I think valuable. 'This is how it is,' says Nichols, and from my limited experience of it, I agree. If you can stand the awful artificiality of 'the theatre' and the unspeakableness of the Hampstead arty fannies who seem to frequent The Old Vic, scuttle on down there and be entertained and outraged all in one go. It's a pity we are lumbered with theatres—if we had viewing galleries in the wards then something might REALLY happen.

TROTSKYIST SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

ONE OCCASIONALLY GETS the impression that 'Trotskyism' is getting better, or at least that some so-called Trotskyist groups are better than others. Thus it is difficult not to feel that the International Marxist Group is preferable to the Socialist Labour League, or that International Socialism is preferable to either. Every now and then, for example, the paper *International Socialism* contains something really good—usually by Peter Sedgwick, who has written by far the best articles in the left-wing (or any other) press on Victor Serge, George Orwell, and Isaac Deutscher. It was in the latter (No. 31, Winter 1967-68) that one came across a startling footnote referring approvingly to the Solidarity edition of Ida Mett's *The Kronstadt Commune* and briefly but efficiently destroying the Trotskyist myth of Kronstadt. But Peter Sedgwick is not characteristic of International Socialism; far more typical is Chris Harman, and a good example of his style is a review in the current issue of *International Socialism* (No. 49, Autumn 1971) of Maurice Brinton's *The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control* and Paul Avrich's *Kronstadt 1921*.

The title of the review, 'Hue and Cry', aptly echoes a well-known lying article of 1938 by Trotsky himself (the subject of Emma Goldman's pamphlet, *Trotsky Protests Too Much*), and the text is a stereotyped repetition of the old Leninist-Trotskyist story about the necessity for the Bolsheviks to destroy the Russian working-class movement after 1917 and to suppress the Kronstadt rising in 1921 in order to save 'the revolution'—i.e. the Bolsheviks. But there are some remarkable things in it, especially in the discussion of Brinton's book. Harman claims that 'the debate as to how the workers were to control industry' after the Bolshevik revolution 'was to be largely academic'

because 'within a matter of months neither the working class nor the factories were still to exist'; so that, when the Bolsheviks were building up their regime, 'unfortunately, without workers, this could not be based on direct workers' initiative'. This seems a quite extraordinary attempt to argue millions of people out of existence in the process of fitting them into a meaningless class analysis in the worst Marxist tradition—extraordinary even by Trotskyist standards.

Then there is a classic case of the big lie technique—in which you attack someone by making a point which is not just a distortion of the truth but the complete opposite of the truth. Knowing that hundreds of IS members will read Brinton's book but not knowing what to do about the huge mass of hard facts in it, Harman alleges that Brinton not only 'distorts the meanings of discussions' but actually 'conceals facts'; Harman continues:

For example, one small instance which typifies his whole approach: Brinton quotes as a critic of the Bolshevik line on workers' control the anarchist Shatov; however, his account deliberately omits to mention that Shatov later joined the Bolsheviks, accepting their discipline as necessary to defend the revolution.

Yet on the very same page of Brinton's book as the reference to Shatov's criticism there is a biographical footnote which relates that Shatov 'later became member of Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee and an officer of the 10th Red Army. In 1919 played important role in defence of Petrograd against Yudenich. In 1920 became Minister of Transport in the Far Eastern Soviet Republic.' Moreover, Harman's account deliberately omits to mention the final stage of Shatov's career, which

is also given in Brinton's footnote: 'Disappeared during the 1936-38 purges.' Who conceals facts? Incidentally, while Shatov certainly supported the Bolshevik regime, he does not seem to have actually 'joined the Bolsheviks': in 1920 he assured Emma Goldman that 'he had not joined the Communist Party and never would'; Krasnoshechekov, the head of the Far Eastern government, was a very unorthodox Bolshevik; and Victor Serge's story that 'in 1929 or so Shatov became one of the builders of the Turkestan-Siberia railway' suggests that he was soon out of favour.

The discussion of Avrich's book is based on the assumption that Kronstadt was dominated by peasants, that the rising was therefore a peasants' revolt, that it was therefore unpolitical, and that it therefore need not be taken seriously. (Peasants don't count as workers in Marxist class analysis, which makes everything much simpler.) The rest of the review is on the same level of argument. Harman says a great deal about peasant discontent, but nothing about the industrial unrest which actually started the rising. He states that 'the Bolshevik leaders understood only too well the harsh logic of the Kronstadt revolt', but does not mention their consistent campaign to blacken—or rather, Whiten—the rebels as counter-revolutionaries. He claims that 'attempts were made to discuss a peaceful solution' and refers to the single attempt, the proposal of the Petrograd Soviet to send a delegation of its members to Kronstadt which was refused by the rebels, but does not mention that this was the day after Trotsky had issued a 'final' demand for the unconditional surrender of the rebels and Zinoviev had backed this with the threat to shoot them 'like partridges', or that an anarchist proposal to mediate and the rebels' invitation of a genuine non-party delegation were both refused by the Bolsheviks. He states that many of the rebels were 'imprisoned or executed as an example to discourage further mutinies or peasant revolts', but does not mention that thirteen (none of them leaders) were secretly tried and shot, hundreds were just secretly shot, and that, as Avrich puts it, 'none of the captured rebels received a public hearing'.

Finally, Harman alleges that, despite the rebels' talk about the need for real soviet democracy, they 'were unable to produce a programme that could have bridged the gap between the workers and the peasants', but does not seem to have read the fundamental *Petro-pavlovsk* resolution adopted by the rebels on February 28 which called for the emancipation of both workers and peasants and, above all, the abolition of the dictatorship of the Communist Party. But this, of course, is what even the most libertarian Trotskyists find it hard to understand, let alone accept; and if they can't learn from Trotsky's own life they can't learn anything. Needless to say, there is no discussion of his part in the events of 1917-1921 in the entire review.

N.W.

Will Richard Burton save Yugoslavia?

IT IS VERY RARELY that contemporary political leaders find themselves portrayed on the screen. Most Western politicians must wait for death to elevate them to the statesmanship of the silver screen. Omar Sharif played Che Guevara and Jack Palance, Castro, but this was in the main, hostile and *Che* was the posthumous 'hero'. Films were made about Franklin D. Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy's torpedo-boat exploits, but they were not officially sponsored and they died the death before hitting the circuits. The only example that comes to mind is J. V. Stalin, who was seen presiding at the fall of Berlin and planning the Russian revolution, along with V. Lenin, the other well-known screen actor.

Following Stalin's example, his arch-opponent Tito, the ruler of Yugoslavia, has sponsored the making of a film about his war-time partisan exploit, and for his double (Erroll Flynn unfortunately passed on, or out) he has booked none other than that proletarian people's artiste and diamond collector Richard (Villain) Burton. According to *Ink*, the last pro-Tito propaganda film cost plenty


and didn't make its cost.

Why is it necessary for this refurbishing of the Tito image, this revamping of the Tito legend? The resistance movement, like the myth of the cowboy, has almost furnished more screen-time than it occupied in history. If one is to believe Hollywood and other studio productions it is impossible to imagine how the Germans managed to occupy Europe at all with the numbers of patriots in the resistance.

Tito was not in fact given solo billing in the resistance movement to start with. He was Joe Stalin's boy, a Moscow-trained communist. Britain was backing Mihailovich, also operating in the mountains. Fortunately (for Tito) Mihailovich was exposed as a German agent and tried and executed. (One remembers a similar trial for the British-sponsored exile Polish government who were arrested *en bloc* when they answered a summons to Moscow, which had set up its own Polish-Lublin government.) Tito's side, and his sponsors, won and Tito became ruler of Yugoslavia.

Largely because of his quarrel with Stalin (for Stalin, like Tito, could not tolerate resistance movements which were not under his control), Tito became the blue-eyed boy of anti-Stalinism, and blossomed forth as the father of workers'

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**ANARCHIST
FEDERATION
of BRITAIN**

AFBIB—To all Groups.

Next issue of AFBIB will be run off in Birmingham. Send material to Secretary, Peter Le Mare. Also needs offers of help from Groups to bring out further issues.

The Contact Column in 'Freedom' is also available for urgent information. Groups should send latest addresses to Birmingham. New inquirers should write direct to them or to the AFB information office in Birmingham.

AFB REGIONAL GROUPS

There are now anarchist groups in almost every part of the country. To find your nearest group write to:

N.E. England: Mick Renwick, 34 Durham Road, Gateshead, Co. Durham.
Essex & E. Herts.: P. Newell, 'Aegean', Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green, Colchester. (QM, FL.)
Surrey: G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom.
Yorkshire: Martin Watkins, Flat D, 90 Clarendon Road, Leeds. LS2 9L.
Manchester: Mal Cunningham, 9 Briar Hill Avenue, Little Hulton, Worsley, Lancs.
Scotland: Secretary, Mike Malet, 1 Lynnewood Place, Maryfield, Dundee.
Wales: c/o P. L. Mare (address above).
N. Ireland: c/o Freedom Press.
The American Federation of Anarchists: P.O. Box 9885, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440, USA.
S. Ireland: 20 College Lane, Dublin, 2.
University and Student Groups: c/o P. L. Mare.

Anger is not enough

WHATEVER MAY or may not be said about the Angry Brigade, and much has been said already, they probably can qualify for an example of 'propaganda by the deed'. Whoever they are, indeed if they are consistently or even basically the same persons, they give distinctly non-anarchist vibrations, for they have singularly failed to convey an unmistakable impression of their aims, beliefs and philosophy.

It would be hypocrisy and futility to repudiate the anarchist tradition of the violent 'propaganda by the deed'. Nevertheless most anarchist terrorists when put on trial, freely admitted their guilt and explained their motives at their trials. Explanations from the Angry Brigade are lacking.

Firstly: the name 'Brigade' conveys a distinctly non-anarchist connotation, secondly the choice of 'victims' is confined to the lower and, if one may say so, definitely replaceable echelons of government. In its choice of those who follow what may broadly be called a 'Tory' line of political action, responsibility for unemployment, repression, etc., it is a rather limited 'leftist' political approach conveying the impression that if certain personalities were removed or terrorised out of office the situation would be improved. This may be an impression mistakenly conveyed; if so, it is nevertheless a failure of propaganda; if not, it is an incorrect assumption.

One gets the impression that there is definite care taken to ensure that no fatalities result from these *attentats*. If this is the intention, why not say so? Another failure of propaganda? If one believes that by terror one can persuade politicians and authorities to change complete life-styles (at this stage in history), one is completely mistaken. It is true that the Tsar's tyranny could be described as 'despotism tempered by dynamite' and one may indeed feel that modern tyrannies such as those of Franco, in Greece, in South Africa, could, and have been similarly chastened by terror. It is undoubtedly true that in a revolutionary situation such *attentats* have their use, although one may argue that clear judgement is not always present as to what is, or is not a revolutionary situation: as witness Northern Ireland or America for example. But to mistake the present situation in England as

revolutionary even in potential is gross romanticism. To believe also that a man, because he is a political opponent, is lacking in courage and will change his policy because of fear is also a failure of psychology. Courage is in any case only a minor virtue; it can encompass pride, exhibitionism, ignorance, stubbornness and even downright stupidity.

The 'propaganda' seems to have been lacking, and probably misdirected. But is 'the deed' correct? Robert Hunter quotes Peter Kropotkin in *Paroles d'un Révolté*, writing: 'A single deed makes more propaganda in a few days than a thousand pamphlets. The government defends itself, it rages pitilessly; but by this it only causes further deeds to be committed by one or more persons and drives the insurgents to heroism. One deed brings forth another; opponents join the mutiny; the government splits into factions; harshness intensifies the conflict; concessions come too late; the revolution breaks out.' Allowing for the time (1885) and the place (France) Kropotkin's optimism is justifiable.

After two world wars, hundreds of minor wars, earth-shaking revolutions which changed one tyranny for another, anti-colonial revolts which put new ruling classes into power, belief in the liberating power of violence has waned somewhat. It is significant that, apart from Spain, the last recorded anarchist assassination was in the nineteen-twenties of Petlura, a White Russian pogromist, and even this was a 'revenge' killing.

The individual act of assassination was lost in the forest of death from 1914 to the present day. The anarchist propaganda could be confused with the nationalist propaganda assassination which has been the commonplace in recent years.

On re-reading the Kropotkin quote it is equally possible that the 'deed' could be non-violent just as easily as violent. Before 1939 the events that seized public imagination in this country were The General Strike, The Jarrow March and the unemployed demonstrations of 1938-39—all basically non-violent. For many years the highly controversial figure of Mahatma Gandhi personified the propaganda of the non-violent deed. We may well debate his usefulness and echo 'whatever happened to Mahatma Gandhi?'

—but we cannot deny him his place in history and his effect on the British imperialists.

The post-1950 history of CND and the Committee of 100 are too recent to need recounting. The growth of squatting and the work-ins at UCS and Plessey have given further evidence of the value of 'the propaganda of the deed' with the absence of planned violence.

Anger has its uses in impelling to action. But if the action is incorrect it is useless, and counter-productive. Anger leads to impatience and violence is thought of as a short-cut, whereas it is often a detour.

Criticism has been made of the actions of the Angry Brigade as 'bad propaganda, alienating rather than swelling any revolutionary constituency'. This was written by Richard Neville in his *Evening*

Standard article on the Purdie-Prescott trial. We must suppose that the reference to a 'revolutionary constituency' is a minor joke but Richard Neville has referred (in a recent interview in *7 Days*) to the necessity for a new political, revolutionary party so it is not entirely a joke. Such political confusion is common to Neville and his Marxist-anarchist friends (rather like chicken-eating vegetarians). This demand for a new revolutionary party is urged by David Widgery (of *IS*) in *Ink*. He, too, deprecates the violence of the Angry Brigade and states that 'To my mind it [the way out] requires a party, both democratic and revolutionary, capable of spanning the experience and struggle of the shop steward, the claimant, the student, and the housewife'. This too, comes ill from a group which supported the Labour Party at the last election.

The Angry Brigade is bad propaganda, not because it is direct action and alienates support which should be directed into political channels, but because it is the wrong deed at the wrong time.

JACK ROBINSON.

ISRAEL - Draft Resisters

ON AUGUST 2, 1971, three Israeli boys and one girl, about to be conscripted into the army, wrote an open letter to the press stating:

'We were not born free in order to become oppressors.'

'We refuse to inflict upon another people what has been inflicted upon our parents and grandparents.'

Two of the four broke down under the tremendous emotional pressures exerted on them by their friends, parents, teachers. The third, Giyora Neuman, was jailed on November 18. He is about to serve a long prison stretch.

Noam Chomsky, together with others, made the following statement on this issue:

'We, the undersigned, note with profound respect and hope, a growing tendency throughout the world today: The exercise of critical and independent political judgement by citizens of many nation-states, and the determination of personal and political commitments on the basis of individual conscience. Almost invariably these criticisms and commitments relate to the issues of the critics own society. They are directed in the first instance towards the power establishment within which the dissenters live and obviously they are first felt as a threat to the welfare of their fellow citizens. However, this exercise of individual conscience and collective commitment seems essential if injustices are to be rectified and individual and communal dignity are to be respected. It is also essential in encouraging reciprocal

responses elsewhere. From this perspective we, the undersigned, fully support the four Israeli draft resisters in their joint public demonstration of resistance to the Israeli army. Their resistance is motivated, amongst others, by their opposition to the policies pursued by the Zionist establishment in general, and the policies pursued in the occupied territories in particular, e.g. administrative detentions, confiscation of Arab-owned land, demolition of houses, mass expulsions of the Palestinian population, torture, under-subsistence wages in Gaza, and the denial of full and equal political and civil rights to all.

The draft resisters step is courageous and essential to radical and social change and the achievement of full social justice equally for both Israeli Jewish and Palestinian Arab peoples as well as the Middle-East peoples in general.

It is our sincere hope that equally amongst the Israeli Jews and the Palestinian Arabs, and other Arab people as well, all those whose conscience and political awareness prompts them to resist wrong and oppressive policies of their respective governments, will do so, soon.'

Boston CHOMSKY AND OTHERS.
16.8.71

Letters of support can be sent to Giyora Neuman, 219 Bnei-Efraim Street, Tel-Aviv, Israel. If you wish to help in other ways you can contact Dr. M. Machover, 8 Honiton Road, London, N.W.6.

CUBA—Progress by Stalinist Methods

NO ONE WOULD DENY that there have been considerable changes in Cuba since the Castrists attained power in the island.

In 1958, almost three-quarters of a million people were unemployed out of a total population of a little over six million. Except for the sugar industry (controlled by American Big Business), Cuba was largely undeveloped. Havana was a centre of American tourism, with its nightclubs, gaming saloons, prostitution—and beggars. There was considerable poverty, illiteracy and racial discrimination.

Since then, the Castrist régime has instituted agrarian reform, converted unemployment into a labour shortage, expropriated the foreign capitalists and the local bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie, nationalised the land and means of production, made domestic and foreign trade a State monopoly and centralised the planning of the national economy—but all from above. Illiteracy has now largely disappeared; and racism is, at least officially, forbidden. The number of schools, particularly in the remote country areas, have been increased. New hospitals and clinics have been built.

STATE CAPITALISM

The Castrists call all this 'socialism' or 'communism', but Bakunin or Kropotkin or Zapata—or even Marx and Engels—would not recognise such a monolithic, one-Party State as socialist or communist. Surely, bureaucratic State Capitalism is a better description of the kind of society being imposed upon the Cuban masses by Fidel Castro and his henchmen.

In 1958, less than 32 per cent of the total population between the ages of 17 and 55 were engaged, as wage-workers, in production. The proportion is now higher; but according to the Castrists, the immediate task of the Cuban 'revolution' (that is the bureaucratic, State-Capitalist, revolution) is to increase the

number of wage-labourers, and increase production absolutely by increasing the productivity of labour. The main instrument for accomplishing these tasks is the Cuban Confederation of Labour (the CTC).

The CTC has instituted 'emulation' campaigns similar to the Stakhanovite movement in Stalinist Russia, during that country's period of the 'primitive accumulation' of capital. This has been particularly noticeable with regard to the cutting of the sugar crop.

INDISCIPLINE

One of the régime's main problems has been increasing labour indiscipline. The Cuban working-class has increased numerically due to a number of factors. But, according to the government, there are still nearly one million women not employed 'who should and can enter production'. Previously, very few women in Cuba worked as wage-labourers. Now, the régime intends to build canteens and nurseries for these 'lucky' women. They are now to become equal—equal as productive wage-slaves with their menfolk!

Recently, peasants, young people, former petit-bourgeois elements and other self-employed people—who were not used to factory discipline, organisation and fixed hours of work—have become employees. Many of these, say the Castrists, are irresponsible and lack 'revolutionary discipline'. The government and the CTC have, therefore, started a mass 'educational' campaign against vagrancy and absenteeism, and for greater labour discipline.

Materially better off the Cuban masses may be; but they are becoming increasingly shackled by an all-powerful State, which masquerades under the name of 'socialist' or 'communist'. They, like workers the world over, will have to overthrow their (State) masters one day. The sooner the better!

JOSE.

ANARCHISTS

Continued from page 1

THE STATE IS EVIL

Meanwhile the anarchist revolution continues. Each year the movement finds more adherents. Revolution takes place not only on the streets but also in the mind, although it may well be on the streets where the actual revolution is decided. To become a conscious anarchist is in itself a revolution in thought and philosophy, it is a philosophy that once grasped makes nonsense of any other political thought. Anarchism is varied, each anarchist is an individual and they often differ on many aspects of the philosophy, but all are agreed on the important and basic issues, chief amongst them that the state is evil and has to be dismantled. As more people become more individually conscious, it is reasonable that more people will join the movement. The spread of its literature over recent years has brought the movement to more people. Recent events, such as blocking motorways, have brought more people into conflict with the authorities than at previous times. It is true that many of these people are not anarchists, but the actions they have taken are the direct action methods advocated by anarchists, which in itself is a step forward. Once people reject leaders, then leaders will cease to exist. The decline in figures at the polling booths at recent elections seems to indicate that more people have had more

than enough of politicians, a trend which if it increases could have serious connotations for any government.

None of us know what the future anarchist society will be like, we can only point to various aspects of it that we would like to see. There has never been an actual anarchist society to use as a pointer, apart from areas of Spain during the Spanish Civil War where much was achieved in a very short time. One thing is certain. In an anarchist society everyone will be anarchists. Anarchists first and carpenters, builders, poets, etc., second. It will be a society where people do the work they like best and are best fitted for. Work will be pleasure, not a labour of toil for some unspecified reason other than to make a meagre living to continue what one is doing for another week, and to produce profit for some privileged group. Work is the stuff of life, but work of a creative nature, not employment which is what passes for work in our repressive society. It will be a society in which everyone is useful to themselves and others. It will be based on harmony, voluntary co-operation, peace, happiness and freedom of the individual both politically and economically, social sciences which will cease to exist.

GEORGE CAIRNCROSS.



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