

ONE OF THE sickest jokes of the British political game must surely be the mythical turn to the 'left' by the Labour Party when removed from power. The Labour Party Conference at Blackpool was, at least in this respect, consistent.

If we did not know them for the cynical hacks which they almost invariably are, we might be inclined to feel sympathy for the journalists forced to sit through the proceedings. No doubt they are wise enough to take refuge in an alcoholic haze and thus feel obliged to justify their grossly inflated expenses at the Grand Hotel bar by providing some sensational copy. Consequently, it is easy to imagine that readers of the *Daily Telegraph* are at this moment frantically tearing up their plastic gnomes to erect barricades

## PARTY GAMES

to defend 'our democratic way of life' from the revolutionary hordes advancing from Transport House! Alas, it is not necessary. Any hint of radicalism is snuffed out by the party leaders.

A motion calling for the next Labour government to ensure that 'in all enterprises democratically elected workers' committees will be set up to control the management' was dismissed as 'a wasteful, needless and impracticable exercise' by Bill Simpson who is to be the party's

next chairman. The motion was consequently 'remitted' to the National Executive which means that it will be lost without trace.

However, it was in the debate on the Fair Rents Act that the futility of this impotent and irrelevant gathering was underlined. A motion calling for—amongst other things—the next Labour government to indemnify any Labour councillors who suffer financial loss through refusing to implement the rent rises was carried—after 'left-winger'

Frank Allaun had stated for the National Executive that they would not do that whatever the Conference said. Apparently this doctrine was not in the least objectionable to Chairman Benn, recently returned from a tour of the constituencies where he had been proclaiming the absolute right of the Party Conference to determine policy!

Of course, the booby prize must go to Wedgwood Benn, who tried every trick in the book in throwing down his claim for Wilson's crown.

The sight of Benn—who in the Wilson Government symbolized the ruthless technocrat throwing men out of work in the interests of capitalist profitability—posing as the miners' comrade and the apostle of 'workers' control' was too much for anyone with a sensitive stomach. His campaign for a referendum on the Common Market issue obviously convinced him that his new-found 'populism' was a winner. It is not surprising that when politicians claim to be speaking 'for the people'—whether Benn on the Common Market, or Powell on immigration—they are engaged in a desperate bid for personal power. It is perhaps significant that both have failed to achieve their objectives in this direction?

Populism, without inverted commas and reflecting a sincere desire for 'power to the people', seems to me to be fraught with dangers which some of our comrades fall foul of for the best of reasons. However, we cannot afford to be blinded by naive romanticism; in a situation where anarchist and even vaguely libertarian ideas are not accepted by the majority of people anarchists cannot be populists for we have a primary responsibility to our ideals of freedom and brotherhood. The view of the majority is a consideration which must be left to the opportunism of the 'populist' politician or the 'revolutionary' leader. However, the familiar argument that a free society is impracticable precisely because of the present reactionary views of so many people ignores an obvious fact: a free society can only be created by people demanding their freedom, and they simply do not do that until they have the sense of individual responsibility and the self-confidence to live in such a society. It is the role of anarchists to try and create this responsibility and self-confidence which contain the seeds of destruction for all authority and exploitation.

JACK ROBINSON.

TERRY PHILLIPS.

## MORE EXTREMISTS CONFER AT BLACKPOOL

ON THE EVE of the other Conservative Conference at Blackpool their leader has put pen to paper (in a foreword to a pamphlet 'For All The People') denouncing 'extremists'. He says repression is not the answer. In a free society there are bound to be bullies, but the aim should be to 'make sure that when such people look round they will find no one following them'. Welcome to the anarchists, Mr. Heath!

There is a defence of extremists and extremism from a very respectable conservative quarter, Barry Goldwater, ex-US presidential candidate, who said, 'Extremism, in the defence of liberty, is no vice.' On the other hand, Garrison defended extremism too in his rejoinder that nobody gradually extricates a child from the fire. However since no politician appears to write his own speeches any more (Mr. Wilson was reported to be baffled by one of his own historical references), it is quite possible that Goldwater's ringing phrase was coined by the speech-writer who defected to the American Libertarians (or capitalist-anarchists).

It is highly probable that Edward Heath will have trouble with his extremists this week at Blackpool, but even Nora Beloff will not be able to claim as she does in the *Observer* (8.10.72) that anarchists have infiltrated the Conservative Party. She writes of Jack Jones 'trying to help Labour work out an alternative prices and incomes policy that will be more credible to the electorate than the Tory one' and goes on later

'... there are Communists and anarchists inside the Labour Party who are uninterested in election results and want to break the system'. Although we too may have our capitalist-anarchists, nobody on the left dreams of infiltrating the Conservative Party in order to capture that power which they need so much, for other people's benefit! The power to implement their programme. What the far right (notably the National Front) does is another matter.

Nora Beloff has probably got a little confused with the 'anarchist' pretensions of Trotskyist, Maoist and International Socialist supporters who, true to enterist tactics, and a love-hate relationship with the Labour Party, have become card-carrying members in the pious hope of 'making the left fight'.

There is a perfectly reasonable case for such 'anarchists' in search of power infiltrating the Conservative Party, in fact, judging by the Labour Party's performances when in office, the Conservatives (not only for their contributions to the theory of increasing misery) could be more worthy of enteritis. They, at least, never betray their true principles.

The Conservatives have long had a tradition of anti-Governmental interference, except when such interference was beneficial to business. They are all against subsidies, unless they aid the expansion of business by providing capital; underwrite property-owning democrats by tax-reliefs on mortgages; or aid the renovation of twilight areas by injecting a healthy infusion of improvement grants. (The latter, alas! a grossly Socialist measure imposed by Mr. Greenwood.) Rugged individualism, whilst not worshipped so excessively as in American politics, is given due honour by such as Peter Simple and Peregrine Worsthorne—the terrible *Telegraph* twins.

Opposition to the Common Market within Tory ranks join with its Labour counterpart in a veneration for British democratic traditions and a British way of life which will be besmirched, lost, stolen or sent astray by 'going into Europe'. Like their Labour counterparts they cannot accept the fact that 'going into Europe' is the only way to preserve the capitalist system. Mr. Heath recognises that it must change to remain the same.

Mr. Enoch Powell, that gross extremist whose extremity consists in taking every idea to its logical conclusion (which in politics is quite illogical), denounced Mr. Heath's shadow of an idea on a voluntary wage and price freeze as inciting the lower-paid workers to line up for their practically-compulsory £2 a week increase. This, Mr. Powell alleges, will cause prices of sweated labour goods (not his description) to rise and price themselves out of the market. Mr. Heath will doubtless deny this.

To his honour and confusion Mr. Heath has redeemed his pledge to the Uganda Asians. It is true that we have studiously ignored the Kenyan Asians, some of whom may be still shuttling between Nairobi and Heathrow, but not for the first (or last) time in our rough island story has patriotic feeling got us, or the country, or the Conservative Party, or Ted Heath in a slight mess. After all—the Uganda Asians are quite decent chaps, most of them middle-class businessmen. Even those who denounce their coming do it with regret and in the name of the Social Welfare of the rest of the population.

The same patriotic blackmail racket has landed Mr. Heath into another fine mess in Northern Ireland. But signs that Ulster's claims upon our exchequer bear heavier with us than her claims upon our patriotic heart are not lacking. We are unlikely to hear from Mr. Heath's lips fulsome praise of the late Government of Ulster.

Such anarcho-capitalists as exist would presumably find a temporary home in the Conservative Party hoping 'to make its right fight'. But with the Tories there is not the support for conscription. Indeed much Libertarian growth in the US is due to opposition to the draft. There is not, in the Tories, the same

State worship which excessive disciples of Socialism slip into.

Compromisers and time-servers such as Nixon have cheerfully jettisoned capitalist principles by a wage and price freeze with its attendant bureaucracy. The difference between a voluntary and a compulsory system is slight, in a 'voluntary' system you don't have to bother working out ways of avoiding the system, and you get more patriotic kudos and prestige that way. By the way, we hear that journalists are putting in for a wage rise before October 18. They've discovered that a wage freeze is likely to be announced when Parliament assembles.

Tempted as one is by such fascinating prospects of ventures into what is deemed practical politics, one must resist and affirm once more the wild impracticalities of what has been labelled 'purist egotism', by rejecting all enterism, libertarian shilly-shallying, curious hyphenates such as anarcho-capitalism and sticking to anarcho-communist-individualism with a dash of Luddite-syndicalism.

Such impracticalities include the conviction that crime will only be abolished by the abolition of property, that inflation can only be cured by the abolition of money, and that the working class is not revolutionary, and if it does exist it should be abolished.

## Railway Wreckers

NEEDLESS TO SAY our masters are falling over themselves to deny any importance to the confidential Blue Book that has been for some time circulating among officials of the Ministry of Transport. But it seems very likely that, unless the public are prepared to take some measures of active resistance, these plans will be put into operation, sooner or later, even if not quite so drastically as the Blue Book suggests.

Since Beeching it has been the policy of all British governments, whatever their theoretical beliefs, to cut down on services which do not make a profit. This is due to ideology. According to capitalist theory that which does not make a clear, substantial profit should not exist. The fact that the value of some things cannot be expressed in money terms means nothing. The railways lose money, therefore, although socially useful, they must be destroyed.

The Blue Book says, 'There is no reason to assume that viability cannot be achieved. The search for a commercial solution should be continued.' If 'viability' cannot be achieved, in spite of everything, according to this ideology, the railways should be done away with, regardless of consequences. We are accustomed in the West to thinking of Communism as an intolerant ideology, which is imposed on everybody, no matter what the result, in defiance of logic and common sense. But Capitalism can be an ideology of the same kind.

This is an example.

'In some situations,' the Blue Book says, 'local environmental disadvantages could be quite severe.' It advocates transferring 62 million tons of British Rail's 196 million tons of freight to the roads, as well as a good slice of passenger traffic, and admits that road accidents and unemployment would go up slightly, but this is quite acceptable.

'Finding an acceptable solution along commercial lines will not be easy, but the alternative appears to be to accept that, for social, economic, environmental or political reasons, major changes in the present railway system are unthinkable. This would mean that large and ever-increasing revenue subsidies to the railways would be inevitable. We do not see how the acceptance of this position could be justified.'

PARTY TO MURDER

It is, on the contrary, difficult to see how it could not be. Anarchists have for a long time advocated that the railways should be run as a public service. To us it seems completely mad, at this time, to throw yet more heavy goods traffic on the roads. What is even more disturbing is that the men who drew up this document can cheerfully accept an increase in the number of road accidents, some of which would of course be fatal. They are equally ready to accept environmental pollution and yet more unemployment. So in fact they are ready to

commit murder, and to play the part of vandals, as well as depriving people of their livelihood.

The present writer has already pointed out in FREEDOM's columns that it is ceasing to be true to say, as it used to be, that modern society is increasingly humane in peace, increasingly destructive in war. The mentality that the Americans are creating in Vietnam is now percolating through the whole of Western society, and the same brutalities are taking place in peace as in war. It is encouraging that this monstrous document has aroused protests, but will these protests lead to effective resistance? What form of action would the readers of FREEDOM suggest to save the railways?

JOHN BRENT.

## Fascist Tories

THE OBVIOUS collaboration between 'respectable' Conservative members of the Monday Club and the blatant fascists of the National Front was revealed at the recent anti-immigration rally in London. However, it is now clear that this kind of collaboration is taking place on an international scale.

Three young members of the Monday Club recently attended a youth meeting of the neo-fascist MSI (Italian Social Movement) at Montelivano with their air fares and all expenses paid by the MSI. One of the visitors, Neil Hamilton, was until recently vice-chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students. MSI representatives visited the Monday Club in London a few months ago and invited the members to the youth conference.

Who says it couldn't happen here?

T.P.

IT'S ALL A PLOT  
TOYBEE HALL  
LECTURE ROOM  
— 7.45 p.m. —  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5  
A Documentary Reading  
presented by  
Friends of Freedom  
Admission 25p  
Tickets from Freedom Press  
Proceeds shared between  
FREEDOM PRESS FUND  
and  
STOKE NEWINGTON  
EIGHT FUND





