

WORKER CONTROL WASHES WHITER!

THE LABOUR PARTY, like the packaging firm, is trying to make its policies for the next election as attractive as possible. But like the current mania for making products look good, like soap powder, the actual content does not come up to expectation. Labour's new national capital sharing scheme which will give workers shares in the company they work for with a possible eventual controlling interest, has been called both 'revolutionary' and a step towards 'workers' control'. It is neither.

The plan has been prepared by a group chaired by Mr. Bradley, a former parliamentary private secretary to Mr. Roy Jenkins. It is seen according to the Guardian's correspondent as 'an effective counter to the Left's nationalisation campaign'. Certainly this whole business makes the political positions of 'left' and 'right' absurd. Workers' Control means that people within their place of work decide by discussion and consultation with those who want the goods, on what to produce, how best to do the job, and on generally organising its production. Capital sharing is a con trick to give the impression that a worker has a real stake in the company. At one time we were told that we were all workers: the bosses with their brains and money and the workers with their brawn and practical skills. Now it looks as though we are all to become capitalists.

The fact is that this new scheme gives no more control than the nationalisation of a company or industry. Workers in control of a company under the present capitalist system might have economic advantage but the competition and profit motive would remain. People would still be thrown out of work if a firm could not sell its goods. Management could still lock-out workers, like in the present dispute at Perkins in Peterborough, simply because workers have banned overtime. Whether workers had shares or not, they would remain wage slaves to the profit motive system. Labour's scheme is essentially to hide this fact. Like the Tories they are scared stiff of the potential that exists in the working class to change society. Industrial action asserts independence and both an unconscious and a conscious desire for a basic change. This expresses itself in monetary terms as at Perkins and against management accusation about 'shoddy work' at Chrysler's at Ryton. The capitalist system does not think in terms of people but only in cash and profit. If boredom and frustration of working on a car production line is relieved by strikes which affect profits, then changes will be made to bring what is called 'job satisfaction'. But as Tolstoy wrote, they will do anything for us but get off our backs.

As anarchists, we want to dump the bosses, governments, and all the institutions which make up the State off our backs. P.T.

Camden High Street Residents Association issued the following press statement:

FOR YEARS property developers have had it their own way. But has the tide now turned?

On Saturday, 16th June, a property, 220 Camden High Street, was taken over by a group of people who live, work and shop in Camden to demonstrate the opposition

which developers now face.

Susan Johns and John Rety had been evicted from their shop and home the previous Monday because they could not afford the rent rise to £60 per week, from the £15 that they had been paying before 220 was taken over by Cromdale Holdings.

Cromdale Holdings has close connections with Joe Levy's 'Stock

AMNESTY NOW

ANARCHISTS care nothing whether an individual is an illegal resident in a country; the lines drawn by States and their rules of immigration are merely one of the means whereby artificial division is maintained between mankind. In this context we are more than disgusted by the obscenity committed by members of the Lords, headed ironically by a creature called Wilberforce, of deciding that the 1971 Immigration Act was retrospective as regards illegal immigrants. Prior to the Act illegal immigrants were safe if they were undetected for six months, but now any immigrant who illegally entered Britain after 1968, and even before the 1971 Act became law is subject to deportation.

The Law Lords find that the debate on the 1971 Immigration Bill made it obvious that the section concerned with illegal immigrants was retrospective, despite the assurance given that people who had settled in Britain would not be affected by the legislation. The minions of the State now pitifully claim that the reference to people who settled does not mean those who had settled after illegal entry. What we have seen is a vicious and shocking attack by the State on vulnerable individuals: the strong persecuting the weak. It is obvious that the State is concerned with the advances of the fascists in recent by-elections and wished to emphasise to the racist electorate that there is no need to turn to the fascists as the Tories know the score on the racial issue.

That individuals are now subject to blackmail and harassment, after settling in Britain, because the threat of deportation hangs over them is reason enough for an amnesty to be granted to all illegal immigrants in Britain. Anarchists, therefore, add their support to the campaign for an amnesty for all those immigrants who entered Britain before the 1971 Immigration Act became enforceable, but append the proviso that all illegal immigrants should be left alone as from now.

On wider issues raised by the deportation cases New Society (June 14th) argues: "If laws are to be obeyed, it is essential that they are drawn up and administered with humanity. Britain's conduct of immigration policy is straying from what is fair and just, and it is time it was changed." Yet laws which can deprive a person of his liberty are never human, rules as regards immigration are never fair or just. We do not live in a fair, just or human society and perhaps the only worthwhile sidelight of the Law Lords' decision is that it plainly unmasks the villainy of the State. The only way to change our society into a life centred (as opposed to a death centred) one is to build a milieu in which there is no hierarchy - for any hierarchy in maintaining its structure requires laws and law enforcement with the injustice of keeping the have nots unfairly "in their place". J.W.

CUBA LIBRE???

"There is a revolution because there is tyranny. There is a revolution because there is injustice. There is and will be revolution as long as a single shadow threatens our rights and our freedom."

Fidel de Castro
(Radio Rebelde -
Serra Maestra 18/8/58)

"The protests of our prisoners in Castro's jails is every day more courageous and full of dignity, echoing above insensitive heads in order to reach the hearts that love freedom and respect human dignity. Those who are silencing these protests are accomplices of the most shameful injustice committed in the American continent..."

"We left Cuba not because we were short of food, medicines or shoes. We left Cuba because we could not find FREEDOM."

Movimiento Libertario Cubano
en el Exilio, April 1973

CAMDEN HALTS THE VANDALS

Conversion Ltd' which recently made £20 million from the still not fully occupied Euston Tower, two miles down the road. The protest squat in Camden High Street also seeks to persuade Camden Council not to sign the proposed Tolmer Square Development deal with Stock Conversion which will result in further enormous profits for Joe Levy.

Camden Council have already promised to compulsorily purchase 220 Camden High Street. The wide range of support which the protest squat has gained from local residents, shoppers and shop-keepers will be channelled in supporting Camden Council in their attempts to keep speculators out of the borough, and in persuading the Government that property is too important a commodity to be left in the hands of private developers. (By the time of our going to press) more than 2,500 signatures had been collected for a petition calling on Camden Council to compulsorily purchase the whole High Street, and support had been expressed from councillors, a local MP and the Camden Federation of Tenants and Residents Association.

The protesters believe that private developers are the only people who really gain from the higher rents, more expensive mortgages, and increased shop-prices which result from high property values.

Postscript from John Rety (a former editor of FREEDOM): Some help is sought from anarchist groups all over the country. Perhaps the Anarchist Movement can also add its bit to the struggle. Please note that we are still here.

Eds.: Comrades who can help Sue and John are welcome at 220 Camden High Street.



PROTESTERS GATHERED OUTSIDE THE SUSAN JOHNS ANTIQUE SHOP BEFORE THE THREATENED EVICTION

Riff-Raff

THERE IS NOW a Squatters Friendly Association in Cornwall. Formed because several families were forced into squatting and because several others were scandalized by the sight of empty houses which have been abandoned or forgotten for longer than two or three years. Of course there is also the summer-let cottages which are a scandal in themselves; used often less than six weeks in each year. But the property we are interested in is the long-empty. Already two families are squatting with help; and many more without any help. The situation can only get better for squatting; although I see legally that a High Court judge has declared that owners can retake their property by force (according to a recent decision). Already we have a list of some twenty-five dwellings suitable for squatters families... and we haven't started to make a land-register of the many places in every community which have been empty for more than two years! (Contact: Dave Fowkes, 32 St Clements Close, Truro, Cornwall.)

Should you have turned to poems for support and sanity you might like to know that Dylan Thomas blasted the critics and destroyers of poetry in his reply to a stupid question:

'God help us, what is my definition of poetry? I myself do not read poetry for anything but pleasure. I read only the poems I like. This means of course that I have to read a lot of poems I don't like before I find the ones I do; but when I do find the ones I do, then all I can say is, Here they are, and read them to myself for pleasure. Read the poems you like reading. Don't bother whether they're "important" or if they'll live. What does it matter what poetry is, after all. If you want a definition of poetry say:

WOMEN AND ORGANISATION

The Tyranny of Structurelessness by Jo Freeman, published by Leeds Women (ORA) 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6, (5p + 2tp)

THIS pamphlet was first published by the American Women's Liberation Movement in 1970. It was reprinted, during the same year, in the Berkeley Journal of Sociology; in 1972 it was reissued in Britain by Agitprop. Now, it has been reprinted again, this time by an ORA group.

It is quite a short (12 pages) and fairly lightweight pamphlet, which concerns itself almost entirely with organisational structuring of Women's Liberation groups and activities. It does not concern itself with theoretical arguments. The pamphlet does, however, very much have a "slant" or bias with regard to the way Women's Liberation movements should be organised. As an anarchist male, who has for some considerable time now been concerned about the structureless nature of the so-called British anarchist movement, I find much of the arguments worth consideration, not just for women libertarians and anarchists, but for the movement as a whole.

The writer discusses informal and "structureless" groups, and the inevitable emergence of élites and elitism within such groups. She shows how the structureless groups create the "star" system; and how such "stars" and individuals are selected, often by the mass media, to "represent" the movement; and how the movement loses control over such people. She has Women's Lib. in mind; one knows what has happened in the anarchist movement, in this and other countries! She also demonstrates the inevitable impotence which develops within an informal, structureless, movement. It becomes a talking-shop. Jo Freeman writes:-

"The more unstructured a movement is, the less control over the direction in which it engages. This does not mean that its ideas do not spread. Given a certain amount of interest by the media

Poetry is what makes me laugh or cry or yawn, what makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me want to do this or that or nothing; and let it go at that. All that matters about poetry is the enjoyment of it, however tragic it might be. All that matters is the eternal movement behind it, the vast undercurrent of human grief, folly, pretension, exaltation or ignorance, however unlofty the intention of the poem.'

This can be found in Constantine Fitzgibbon's biography published by Dents. If Dylan Thomas has now given way to Bob Dylan it's interesting to read how the Welsh poet was gradually destroyed by the London Mob of rich artist-fanciers.

Libertarian Education continues to get better and better. It should be ordered by the dozen copies to sell in your locality; in your university or college; in your community. Obtainable from 180 Melbourne Road, Leicester. 12½p per copy.

How To Set Up A Free School is published by Alison Truefitt of the Islington Free School. 25p a copy and absolutely invaluable: 57 White Lion Street, London N1. If you are one of the isolated, uninformed, you might like to order that elderly gentleman's bible Summerhill (Penguin 45p). A.S. Neill's autobiography has just come out; but there is also another Penguin Neill & Summerhill which is good and visual. Of course you should know that Compulsory Miseducation and DeSchooling Society by Paul Goodman and Ivan Illich are now part of that incredible Penguin Education library.

If your wages or your unemployment/social security wage-packet is low, check with Claimants Union or via paperbacks like Supplementary Benefits recently put out as Penguin Special; as also has Ron Bailey's The Squatters. Both I recommend whatever their faults; they speak from vast experience, and speak for families with children in particular. Put them on your bedside table along with Civil Liberty: NCCL Guide they give a good guide to law and rights. You are not alone.

Dennis Gould

and the appropriateness of social conditions, the ideas will be diffused widely. But the diffusion of ideas does not mean they are implemented".

The writer does not, however, suggest that the Women's Liberation Movement should go to the opposite extreme in organisation, and blindly imitate the traditional forms of organisation. But neither should they blindly reject them all; they should not be anti-organisation. In conclusion, Jo Freeman suggests a number of forms of organisation. She advocates what she calls "delegation of authority", or what anarchists would term "delegation of function"; distributing of authority (function) to prevent a monopoly of power; rotation of tasks (a method of organising certain tasks which has been popular within ASA and ORA in the British anarchist movement), diffusion of information and "equal access of resources" needed by a group.

When such principles are applied, says the writer, the movement will ensure that it will be controlled by, and be responsible to, the movement and the groups as a whole. Jo Freeman is not an anarchist; she still appears to accept some kind of "authority". All the same, her views are well-worth considering - by Women's Liberation in particular, and by libertarians in general.

P.E.N.

WHO ARE THE TUPAMAROS?

The Tupamaros by Maria Esther Gilio. Secker & Warburg. £2.75.

THE ROMANTIC exploits of the Tupamaros (or the National Liberation Movement) in Uruguay seem to have convinced some anarchists that the movement is, in essence, libertarian. This is understandable since the actions undertaken by the Tupamaros - kidnapping of politicians to bargain for the release of political prisoners, bank robberies, etc. - are the methods which many anarchists would consider appropriate in resisting a repressive regime where open agitation is impossible.

The Tupamaros by Maria Esther Gilio is an informative guide to the origins, organisational methods and ideology of the National Liberation Move-

BOOK REVIEWS . . .

ECONOMIST AND THEOLOGIAN

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL, A Study of Economics as if People Mattered, by E.F. Schumacher, Blond and Briggs, £3.25.

A GOOD BUT in some ways an irritating book. Dr. Schumacher, for twenty years the Economic Adviser of the National Coal Board, is a believer in the small-scale enterprise, in decentralisation. Articles by him used to appear in John Papworth's magazine Resurgence. There is a lot of good sense in the views that used to be put forward in this periodical (I have not seen it for some time), but its approach was liberal, not revolutionary.

The trouble with this book is the same. Dr. Schumacher believes that our present religion (it is nothing else) of 'economic growth unlimited' is going to destroy civilisation if nothing is done to stop it, for the simple reason that the world's supply of raw materials is finite. In particular the world is destined to run out of power. The oil supplies will be used up eventually, nuclear power is too dangerous to be of much practical use, and even if we go back to using coal, at the moment coal mines are being closed down as 'uneconomic', it will not last forever either.

As long as he sticks to facts and figures I am entirely with him. When he philosophises about the causes of the present rush to disaster I feel inclined to carp at times. Dr. Schumacher is an innovator in economics, but in other respects he is a conservative, and a religious conservative at that. I do not believe that one has to believe in God if one wants to save the world from pollution. Dr. Schumacher really believes that it is essential. He ties up 'materialism' in the sense of greed for material possessions, with 'materialism' in the sense of denying the existence of 'Higher Powers', and implies that they are the same thing, or the one kind of materialism leads to the other. I do not believe it. Just as Christian, Buddhist, Moslem and atheist alike could see the menace of nuclear weapons, and unite in protesting against them, so they can against world pollution.

To me this attitude of Dr. Schumacher's is to be regretted. It spoils the book. One wants to argue with the author about it, and it is not the main problem at all. I am a sceptic myself. One of the 'humbly proud' agnostics he sneers at.

In politics he is a liberal. His ideal is not workers' control, but a Bader-type 'partnership', in which, given time, the workers may well come to own the industry. My indignation however is tempered by the knowledge that many workers are just as enthusiastic for 'growth' as their masters.

Although Dr. Schumacher allows himself a cautious optimism about the future, he believes that more and more people are turning away from technological progress as an end in itself, I cannot follow him here either, though I wish I could. I think the whole process has gathered to itself over the last two or three centuries such a momentum that it cannot now be stopped, and will go on until there is a disaster of some kind. Our grandchildren, who will not be numerous, will probably live in feudalism, a bow-and-arrow, horse-and-cart sort of world. Such a prospect worries me less than it did. Human vitality is a great thing. People will learn to cope with such a society. A sort of civilisation will survive probably, and things will gradually be built up again.

ment which should shatter a few illusions. In a series of interviews with captured guerrillas Miss Gilio records the undoubted courage of the Tupamaros and the brutal torture inflicted by the régime.

The political line is clearly Guevarist and much is made of the Cuban Revolution. Although necessity requires that the movement is organised in small cells with members only acquainted with the few members in their own group, there is a powerful central leadership. The recruits for the movement spring from all strata of society and the mode of operation differs from orthodox Guevarism in that there is no full-time guerrilla force, but rather an underground movement of people who return

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Possibly one of Dr. Schumacher's best ideas is that of Intermediate Technology. He points out that to set up elaborate factories in Third World few of the well-to-do local people benefit, but the economy of the region is harmed, and the poor are reduced to greater hopelessness than before.

What Dr. Schumacher wants is more or less what Gandhi wanted, a simple, but not absolutely primitive, technology, which would enable Third World people to make things for themselves, and be independent of big business. This was the whole point of the Gandhian spinning wheel. Simple but good tools for farming, wells not complicated irrigation schemes, bicycles, pocket torches and similar things, which we in our prosperity regard as of little account, can make all the difference to a peasant economy, improving it not wrecking it. Small factories may be all right, if they are really no more than community workshops, where craftsmen can come together to make basic necessities, tools, clothes, pots and so on. From this they can go on in time to television sets and more modern devices, if they really want to, but they will not be plunged straight into our complex technological jungle, an experience which has proved fatal to so many peoples.

John Brent

IS WORK A CURSE? ISRAEL: a Nazi State?

IT HAS BEEN reported that Trevor Jones, a worker at British Leyland, was put on probation for a year for lobbing a piece of metal into and jamming a £2,000,000 machine. "He had," says The Observer, "been drilling holes in flywheels, 74 an hour for eight hours a day for 10 years, he got deafened by the work, picked up a skin disorder, but above all was bored, monumentally bored. So he jammed the machine."

The Business Observer writer, David Wilson, goes on to report sabotage at Liverpool 'Triumph' factory and at Ford's Halewood factory. Numerous instances of sabotage are reported from Chrysler's factory but since Chrysler's are now involved in a strike such stories must be treated with caution.

Her Majesty's Stationery Office have just produced a booklet On the Quality of Working Life which is full of high-minded thoughts about 'job satisfaction' and states that the Government has plans "to stimulate interest in the field of job satisfaction and the quality of working life". As if this wasn't enough, the ever-brooding Penguins have produced a book called Working for Ford (Huw Benyon. 90p) which goes into the psychological and sociological problems of working at Fords.

It might seem that all this was new, dynamic thinking about a newly arrived problem and that trendy sociologists, bandwagon-climbing politicians of all parties and fatherly governments (not to mention benevolent factory-owners) were acting swiftly to end this curse.

One of the best thinkers on this subject wrote: "Our epoch has invented machines which would have appeared wild dreams to the men of past ages, and of those machines we have as yet made no use. They are called 'labour-saving' machines - that phrase commonly used implies what we expect of them; but we do not get what we expect. What they really do is to reduce the skilled labourer to the ranks of the unskilled, to increase the number of the 'reserve army of labour' - that is to increase the precariousness of life among the workers and to intensify the labour of those who serve the machines." This was written in 1884 by William Morris. It was not until 1911 that P. W. Taylor introduced The Principles of Scientific Management which introduced the concept of rationalization which, unwittingly, paved the way for the speed-up and the breakdown of labour into the simple monotonous task. Henry Ford's introduction of the assembly-line (based, as some writers claim, on the Chicago slaughter-houses' 'disassembly-line' for slaughtered pigs) came even later.

One of the most-biting social comments on the industrial scene was shown in a few cinemas recently. The hero, victimized by the speed-up in an industrial plant suffers, momentarily, from twitching, jerking movements and is under strain to keep up with the pace of the conveyor belt which is constantly speeded up, under instructions from the management. He seeks momentary relief in the toilet for a quiet draw but a television screen reveals his slacking and he is ordered back to work. His twitching increases and after a delirious sequence he suffers a nervous breakdown and is sent into hospital. Upon discharge he finds that unemployment and industrial unrest have increased and, by chance, he gets involved with a demonstration, is arrested as

ringleader and sent to prison. Upon reluctant discharge he obtains work again at a factory and is helping an old man to service the machinery, the old man gets trapped in a machine - fortunately with no injury. His job, alas, does not last since they are called out on strike. This film is fittingly titled Modern Times and was made in 1936 by Charles Chaplin.

It has been said that by the time the authorities come to accept a particular truth it is time to pass on to another problem. It would seem that our authorities are not able to accept the fact, for diplomatic and political reasons, that wages are one of the main reasons for (to use the jargon) job dissatisfaction. So now it is as if they were discovering a virgin truth; the pundits, the sociologists, the politicians, the government - and the factory owners - have eagerly seized upon a new sickness: 'job dissatisfaction'.

There is very little new that can be said about the boredom of the mass-production, conveyor-belt rationalized system. It is debatable whether the system of mass-production, certainly not as we know it, can be taken over into the free society. It is dismally significant that many syndicalist publications, for example Tom Brown's What's wrong with the Unions, do not discuss this subject except in the elementary terms of the machine reducing the hours of labour and thus paving the way for the leisure-society. Tom Brown, for example, characteristically welcomes the abolition of craft unions but seems to throw out the baby of craft with the bathwater of craft unions. Short of the workers controlling the industries there seems little in the purely syndicalist point of view to give any hope.

A personnel officer at Ford's is quoted in the Benyon Penguin as saying, "Anyone who puts an intelligent man on the sort of job we've got here is asking for trouble. . . Intelligent blokes are bound to get militant if you stick them on the trim line". Such is the nature of mass-production that it demands a special type of intelligence (as foreshadowed by F. W. Taylor) that will not break under the strain of the monotony. A rather uninspired Fabian pamphlet, The Meaning of Work by Lisl Klein opens with a revealing anecdote. "A research worker was one day watching a girl whose job it was to put the little bits of cork into the tops of toothpaste tubes. In her turn she asked the girl, 'Don't you get bored, doing that all day?' and the girl looked up in complete surprise and said, 'Oh no! They come up different every time!' So the first thing is to look at this question [of boredom] without preconceptions, and to be careful in the judgements one makes." The writer of this pamphlet (1963) is a research worker in industrial sociology and goes on to say, "There is a great deal of pleasure to be got out of factory life. This shows, presumably, the great capacity of people to adapt themselves and get something out of any environment. It might be objected that they are rationalizing a situation which would otherwise be intolerable." Precisely! and if it is the function of Fabian industrial sociology research workers to make us tolerate the intolerable, let us have nothing to do with it and demand the "impossible" with William Morris, Kropotkin and Eric Gill or fling our sabots into the machine like Trevor Jones.

Jack Robinson

To celebrate its 25th anniversary, the newspaper 'MA'ARIV' invited seven former Israeli Army Chiefs - Generals Ygal IADIN, Mordechai MAKLEF, Moshe DAYAN, Tsvi TSUR, Chaim LASKOF, Yitzhak RABIN and Chaim BAR-LEV - to take part in a symposium, which was reported in full by the Israeli press on the 16th February this year. Knowing the 'ability' that generals and the like have to solve national or international problems, it is interesting to examine a cross-section of these generals' opinions on various subjects.

The Palestinians

General Y. Rabin, for instance, has advocated a solution to the Palestinian 'problem', which is perfectly simple. This consists of driving the Palestinians from Palestine altogether, while yet, of course, maintaining an avowed intention to recognise their right to 'self-determination' (!)

This general suggests that 'conditions should be brought about now, which, in future years, would, quite naturally (!) cause a drift of population towards the eastern bank of the Jordan river', the first to move being, of course, the Palestinian refugees. He nevertheless insists that this process should take place 'without resorting to force'.

(In the words of Dr. Shakak's own personal commentary, as president of the Israeli League of Human Rights, this cynical suggestion, although disguised, places General RABIN quite categorically in line with the political practices of the Nazi regime vis-a-vis the Jews during the period 1933-38 in Germany. The Nazis too were full of assurances that they were only 'creating conditions which would lead the Jews to leave Germany'.)

General M. DAYAN has himself an opinion to raise on the subject of the Palestinians - again very straightforward: 'We have settled,' he says, 'in this region essentially to create a Jewish State, and we will not simply allow the Arabs to control its frontiers. Had we wished to show any respect for the supremacy of the Arabs and their own desires when they had occupied the country so extensively and for so long a period, it would have been impossible to create a Jewish State. They (the Arabs) no doubt believe themselves to be in the right, but if our aim is to fashion our own State, I do not see how we can avoid stepping on their toes. It is certain that Jews will come and establish themselves in the very areas which were formerly inhabited by the Arabs. The moment we accept a principle that we must ask permission of the Arabs in order to settle in regions where they themselves live, then we can say goodbye to our notion of a Jewish State.'

According to General DAYAN, this process of colonisation must of necessity continue for a long time yet. General YADIN believes it will be certainly 'one

LETTER

PRISONS OF THE MIND*

Dear Editors,

Jack Robinson's discovery that treating "crime" as a "sickness" is not necessarily any improvement on treating the "criminal" to free lodgings in jail was foreshadowed by Max Stirner in The Ego and His Own when he wrote:

Curative means or healing is only the reverse side of punishment, the theory of cure runs parallel with the theory of punishment; if the latter sees in an action a sin against right, the former takes it for a sin of the man against himself, as a decadence from his health. . . 'Crime' or 'disease' are not either of them an egoistic view of the matter, i.e. a judgement starting from me, but starting from another - to wit, whether it injures right, general right, or the health, partly of the individual (the sick one), partly of the generality (society). 'Crime' is treated inexorably, 'disease' with 'loving gentleness, compassion' and the like.

These words refer to the ideas of the utopian communist Wilhelm Weitling in 1844. How relevant to today!

Sincerely,
S. E. Parker

or two generations', 'so that all the Jews of the world can congregate here'(!)

The 'Traitors of the Interior'

General DAYAN has followed up his intervention with an unprecedented attack against 'PI-HA'ATON' (the student paper of Jerusalem's Hebrew University) and against other publications produced by young people, such as 'NIMROD'. He accuses them of 'injecting poison into society', calls them 'traitors in disguise', 'public corruptors', 'ideal deserters' and other jibes in the same vein. General YADIN added to this a revealing comparison: for him these 'traitors' are like a species of insect, capable of felling a massive oak-tree by gnawing away at it from the inside, and he professes great horror at the thought that some of the country's youth can devote itself to just such a task.

An interesting document concerning the activities of these 'insects' in the Israeli army itself appeared, quite by chance, the same day as the symposium in the periodical 'YEDIOTH'. A certain writer - Yehoshua BAR-YOSEPH, whose fascist tendencies are well-known - published a letter from a soldier serving in a Nahal unit, at present stationed in a kibbutz. This soldier reveals that among 52 members of his Unit, he is the only one who, after five months of active service, still believes in 'the legitimate and historical right of Israel to occupy this country', and he confesses that his own conviction is beginning to be shaken. . . . He asserts that many of the soldiers are members of MATZPEN or SLAH (the new Israeli left) - movements which are well informed on the subject of Zionism and Jewish history, which enables them to dominate all discussions and transform the soldiers - as BAR-YOSEPH would have it - 'into enemies of the people'. In order to remedy this afflicting situation, BAR-YOSEPH wishes to introduce segregation into the Army to avoid the possibility that 'the younger, naive boys will be led to reject Zionism during this vital period of military service'. This is necessary, he thinks, because the 'innocent town boys' cannot 'hold their own' in discussions on Zionism.

Front Libertaire

No. 28 May '73

Translated by R. A.

Tupamaros . . . contd. from p.2

to the factory or the office after an exploit. The objective of the NLM is the creation of a revolutionary party intent on the seizure of political power. Instead of the objective of inspiring the spread of spontaneous and autonomous acts of resistance to the regime, the NLM approaches known militants and recruits those who accept its ideology and discipline. Most of the founders of the movement appear to have been previously active in the Socialist Party and there is hostility towards the Communist Party for failing to support the tactics of the movement. There also appears a certain distrust of trade union militants because they are not prepared to subordinate their activities to the armed struggle - but it is rationalised by stating that the union militants will not transcend a purely economic view. (From an anarchist viewpoint there is no reason to believe that the NLM has transcended a purely economic view itself, in the sense that the long-term objective is merely some vaguely defined 'socialism'.)

At the Election at the end of 1971 the NLM called a truce and gave its support to the Broad Front (a coalition including Communists, Socialists, left-wing Christian Democrats and others) presumably in the naive hope of securing the release of political prisoners. (The leader of the Broad Front, General Liber Seregni, had previously been a member of the Government until a disagreement with General Pacheco!) In the event the Broad Front was unsuccessful, the repression grew and the futility of political wheeling and dealing was revealed - but perhaps not very clearly to the NLM or Miss Gilio.

If Miss Gilio's enthusiastic testimony is to be believed her interviews with middle-aged workers, schoolchildren and priests show widespread support for the activities of the Tupamaros. All of which shows the potential for a guerrilla movement intent on inspiring popular resistance (violent and non-violent) to a tyrannical regime rather than gaining political power by a military campaign.

Terry Phillips

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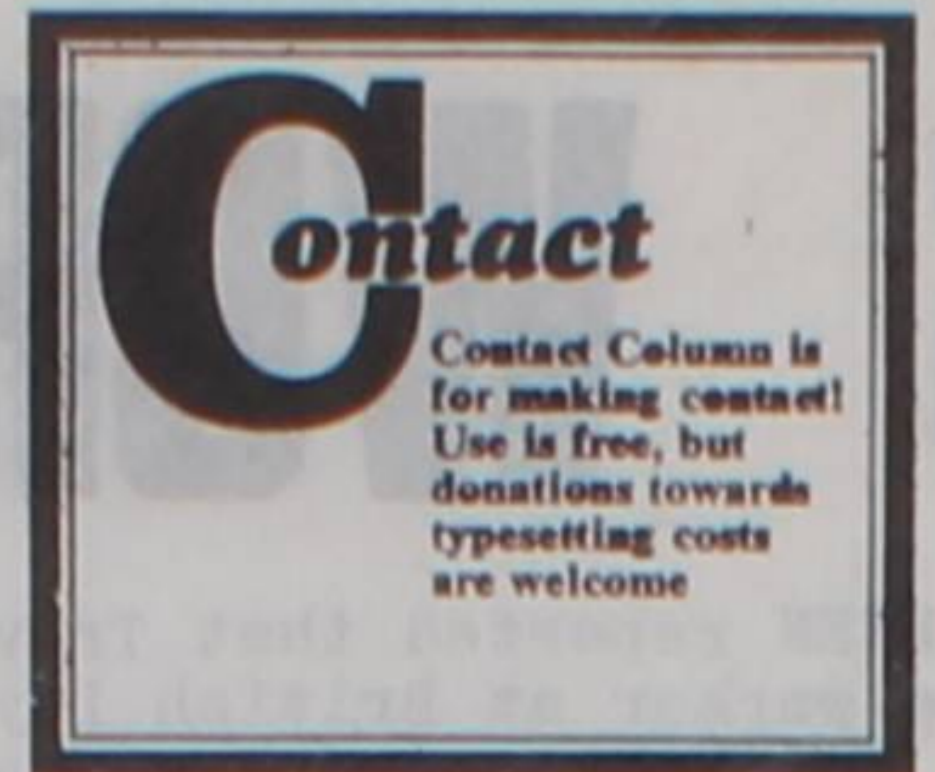
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VIEWPOINT ON ORGANIZATIONS



THE LAST TIME I wrote any letter of length to FREEDOM it was greeted by howls of protest from syndicalists and communists. It was, I remember, rather long. It also contained things they did not like to hear. I was accused of bitchiness and name calling. No doubt these will be consistent and attack Peter Newell about the length of his contributions. He is, of course, an anarchist-communist. But they will be consistent...Yes?

Peter Newell is quite right. One should wait till the end of a series before opening up the discussion. But they went on for weeks and were so monotonous and said nothing that had not been said before and rather better. Additionally I feel his suggestion is rather cheeky in that I was asking whether he had anything definite to say, anything new, unique, or of use. Remember he was justifying, or attempting to justify, the recent commotion in the movement wherein the syndicalists and communists have formed their own groups nationally and in the process done their darnedest to smash the Anarchist Federation of Britain, even to the extent of falsifying history.

Perhaps I can add a perspective to your thinking by using an anecdote based on personal experience which will both explain to comrades what has happened and at the same time re-inforce what I was saying, including my scepticism, about Newell's articles and the like.

Whilst in Birmingham I was active, not only with the movement but also with the Birmingham Council for Peace in Vietnam (which, Marxologists please note, was not affiliated to the British Council for Peace in Vietnam). People taking part in this were drawn from the Left, Centre, and sometimes Right, politically. They included Peace Movement, Trade Unionists, Churches, and so on, and, of course, many of the younger people had no political leanings.

There was some move to make the body more left, firstly by affiliating to the communist-dominated British Council for Peace in Vietnam; and this was resisted. There was a stronger move to align with the NLF. Again this was resisted. The body was against the war and against partisan ship, containing a diversity of people and a general line.

Those who were so pro-NLF and so anti-American that they would not work through the Birmingham CPV eventually formed their own groupings (though I believe one did exist before the Birmingham CPV started). These were never very great in number, drawn from various factions (IS, Maoists &c.) and subject to frequent splits, you can tell why. These were sometimes affiliated to National bodies (meaning London groups) and had names like Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front, and Ad-Hoc Vietnam Committees and Solidarity Committees, etc., and they all sounded frightfully militant, or perhaps frightfully frightfully would be a better expression. They kept rabbiting on about class struggle, the workers, the working class, what Marx said, what Lenin said, what Mao said (this usually caused the split) and so on, the usual stuff.

The trouble was they did keep trying to gate-crash the Birmingham CPV meetings. Here there was a difficulty because frequently they appeared at the BCPV meetings as somebody else's representative and it was difficult to know in which guise they were acting at any one time. This, incidentally, is why the Anarchist Group and Committee of 100 did not affiliate. Our members participated, as individuals, but we never sent delegates and made it quite clear we were there as individuals. We were not prepared to play games.

Eventually the pro-NLF factionalists got so unpleasant that we had to have them thrown off when they appeared with factional banners on a demonstration. They had gone to the pre-demo meeting, the night before, and agreed they would abide by unanimous decisions. Eventually their activities tended to bring the whole of the campaign into disrepute and many people dropped out of the movement. Trade Union

branches could support a political issue but not a Trotskyite-dominated campaign. Church groups took a moral line, but where politics writ large appeared, they disappeared.

You can be cynical about all of this, but the point I am making is that the campaign flourished, numbers were built up and dialogue resulted. Bookshops selling general, peace and political literature was set up at meetings and in church halls and a cross-fertilisation of ideas resulted. In other words contact was being made on a personal level with individuals, themselves often crucially placed opinion leaders, which could have led to a general resurgence in moral and political development. The pro-NLF factionalists completely destroyed the one thing which is essential in a political campaign - trust. When I left Birmingham the Birmingham CPV was still continuing and a little revival had taken place - Northern Ireland had happened - the factionalists had another interest. The need however to get their own line across had made a complete shambles of years of work.

What They are Not

Factionalists, or to give them their own name, revolutionaries, are more interested in getting their own line across than in the success of a general campaign. If you do not understand what I mean read Peter Newell's series of articles through. He is not saying what the objectives of ORA really are. He does, to be fair, say something of what they are not - they are not those of the Red Army faction etc. He does not however give any inkling of what particular unique activity his so-called revolutionaries will perform which has not already been done before the creation of ORA (and of course ASA).

What Newell is doing is merely describing at length, and brother what a length, that he is now facing one way (as are all of ORA one presupposes) and to have it writ large is somehow good. He is enunciating a moral view; but in terms of action he is saying absolutely nothing. One therefore wonders whether all this factional reorganisation was worth it.

A point I would like to make is. There has been nothing to prevent the supporters of one or another viewpoint from getting together and forming a group at any time. What I would like to ask is why it was necessary to dismember the AFB in the process, because this is what has happened? Also, why has it been necessary to falsify the recent history of the movement?

AFB Organisation

From my own recollections of the anarchist movement, the AFB was organised like this. A number of groups would exist in different parts of the country and one person would put his name forward to act as group secretary or contact man. National conferences would be organised about once a year, partly to iron out difficulties and partly as a social get-together. Eventually, in order to maintain contact an internal bulletin (AFBIB) was brought into being to maintain contact.

I have met several new members of ORA in recent months. They say that prior to ORA the anarchist movement was a shambles (all 60-odd groups?). There was no means of keeping in touch with one another and until the ORA Newsletter started no internal bulletin. Lastly, there was no social contact. They also made some attacks on FREEDOM, which I won't go into here, except to say, exactly the same criticisms can be levelled at ORA's new paper, e.g. no listed editorial group, unsigned articles, etc.

The process or 'revolutionalisation' of the AFB went something like this. Offers were made by York Group (or was it York University Group - or just Keith Nathan?) to help with the production of

AFBIB. One of the earlier criticisms of AFBIB was that it was usually done in Birmingham and other groups seldom participated or sent delegates to meetings. This became an essential part of the production set-up. At the same time Nathan started ORA. See the tie-up? ORA was gouged out

of the AFB. 'Well-produced' copies of ORA Newsletter went to group secretaries and other individuals. These were encouraged to send group reports to York which appeared in the Newsletter, but they did not also send copy to AFBIB; neither did ORA. Therefore AFBIB became less frequent. Eventually Oxford produced an edition of AFBIB covered with swastikas and saying "AFBIB is an anarchist wank". Odd for a group producing something for a national movement? If they felt like that why did they offer to do it?

For some months there was silence. Nothing appeared. Other groups and individuals, including myself, offered to produce editions. Oxford kept insisting AFBIB was coming out and ORA Newsletter continued, taking over where AFBIB left off. Eventually a special AFBIB came from Birmingham and Peter Le Mare's letter to FREEDOM from Birmingham. AFBIB more or less packed up and the AFB had too. The anarchist-communists had effectively taken over the movement in the guise of ORA (the syndicalists, too, through the Anarcho-Syndicalist Alliance had been doing their own thing, rather more openly, for some time).

Looking at the anarchist movement in Britain one now finds it much diminished, as a movement. Anarchists in many parts of the country feel isolated and alone, especially if they are neither syndicalists nor communist-revolutionaries (sic). The close friendship and good fellowship that coloured the anarchist movement of the sixties is disappearing. This is not because those who were active then are no longer in contact with each other, but because they are simply friends now, often interested in their own lives and not movement action. On the other hand many very libertarian people who think of themselves as anarchists have no knowledge that a movement exists. When they do become aware of it they ask, what does it do? Quite.

My Personal View

This leaves me personally with the thought that the thing that matters is the individual. Personal freedom (including the right to speak blasphemy or politics or heretical views on race) is essential. The need to work outside organised political groups rejecting the pompous shibboleths and clichés of the mob, for what one believes is right is important, irrespective of the results to others who should be looking out for themselves anyway. The right to do as one pleases so long as one does not harm another who is not harming oneself. Lastly, all this talk about class, class struggle and revolution. ORA wouldn't know what a working class bloke was if he spat in their eye. They keep talking about a stereotyped reality so much they believe it now. Such a pity, so much waste.

I miss the friendship and camaraderie of the movement, but like the instrumentalist sanity of those outside it - they don't keep telling me what to believe all the time, they judge by results. Oh yes, and I spend more time looking after my career. I enjoyed the anarchist movement, I got a lot out of it and I think I put a lot into it. My views on anarchism have altered little in the last fifteen years. I have however come to the sad decision, that with a very few exceptions, any chance of achieving an anarchist society, and by that I mean a free society, with the assistance of the ideologues of the present British anarchist movement is so remote it is hardly worth bothering with. You will achieve far more by supporting groups like the National Council for Civil Liberties. If we had the contact of the mid-sixties we might do something, but in the face of the present factionalism we may as well simply each do our own thing and ignore them. They may have killed the movement but they have not killed the individual human spirit.

Peter Neville.

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LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION NETWORK: as of June 30 no longer has a permanent central address, but still exists. Contact via a member, or possibly Libertarian Education magazine, c/o 180 Melbourne Road, Leicester.

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ANARCHO-FEMINISM: any women interested in forming a group in London area please ring Jan at 229 0784

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LIVERPOOL ASA contact May Stone, C.32 Summerfield, Tower Hill, Kirkby, near Liverpool.

LONDON ASA meetings - for details 'phone 226-0817. Black & Red Outlook always available; by post 5p + 2p from 3 Grange House, Highbury Grange, London, N.5.

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MICHAEL TOBIN DEFENCE COMMITTEE, 265 Dale Street, Chatham, Kent. (Freedom Bookshop stocks pamphlets etc. by Michael Tobin published by the Defence Committee)

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BLACK RAT, paper of Norwich Anarchist Group, by post 2p + 2p from Rupert Williams, 141 Earlham Road, Norwich, Norfolk. Details of regular meetings from same address.

BLACK & RED OUTLOOK, monthly paper of the ASA, No. 13 current issue produced by Sheffield Group. Available (pay what you like) from 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield 10.

INSIDE STORY no. 9 May/June. What the papers didn't say about Vietnam, more about Spies for Peace, etc. 20p + 3p post from 3 Belmont Road, SW4 (or Freedom Bookshop)

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