

THE MAN ON HORSEBACK

JACK LONDON, the American socialist novelist, in his pessimistic autobiographical novel, Martin Eden, makes his hero (who eventually commits suicide like London) say, "I am a reactionary - so complete a reactionary that my position is incomprehensible to you who live in a veiled life of social organization...I am the only individualist in this room. I look to the State for nothing. I look only to the strong man, the man on horseback, to save the State from its own rotten futility. Nietzsche was right... The world belongs to the strong - to the strong who are noble as well and who do not wallow in the swine-trough of trade and exchange." The conversation finishes with a Judge saying, "We'll make a good Republican out of you yet." "The man on horseback will arrive before that time."

The events in Chile have recalled this passage to mind. The expression 'the man on horseback'

probably finds echoes in Spengler and Nietzsche and it is debatable whether it was Jack London's own belief. The phrase was first used about General Boulanger.

Suffice it that Allende of Chile has fallen victim to 'the man on horseback' who is always there in the background of events, particularly in South America, to seize power and to 'reform' what he considers to be a corrupt administration. It is too early yet to see Chile as another Spain. We should hesitate before dismissing the Chilean workers as defeated but we should not hesitate to underline the criticisms made in these columns of Allende and his government, criticisms which spring from our anarchist - and syndicalist - position.

Allende was no anarchist, he could not, by the nature of his position, have been. In spite of the ravings of the Daily Telegraph and the Junta he was no communist. He claimed to be a Marxian Socialist. In fact, making allowances for his position, he was very little different from Attlee, Gaitskell and Wilson, and about as revolutionary.

Like other Labour leaders he had the same trust of the military and distrust of the working class which, as in Spain, led to the insurrection which killed him and overthrew what democracy there was.



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THE BLOODY PRICE OF GOLD

THE KILLING of eleven African miners at Western Deep Levels Goldmine, Johannesburg, by the South African police is yet another reminder of the power of the State and especially its brutal nature when it comes to crushing protest by black workers. Another 27 men were injured. The official statements say the miners "became more aggressive and took up a threatening attitude, and began to throw stones, causing considerable damage to property" and that the police only opened fire after a sergeant had his nose broken. However although the police baton-charged and used tear gas they at no time fired over the heads of the miners, but instead they used a selection of weapons from sten guns, shotguns, automatic rifles and revolvers.

The miners were protesting about their wage differentials which had been narrowed when African drivers, loader drivers and loco drivers had got an increase in August without any subsequent increase for machine operators. As such this was a normal wage claim. However,

trade unions are not allowed for the black population and any industrial disputes are illegal. Under those circumstances, and given the below-poverty wages Africans endure while whites live in the lap of luxury, demonstrations like those at Western Deep Levels are not unexpected. Such actions are a part of the rising expectancy of Africans and follow some very impressive strikes earlier in the year. In Durban; for instance, 61,500 came out on strike affecting 120 companies. The situation in South Africa and the increasing militancy being shown by black workers is being compared with the period of Sharpeville in 1960.

It is hardly surprising that the mine workers would soon become involved in protest since, after farming, they are the lowest paid black workers. As if this wasn't enough, the differential between black and white wage levels are at their widest. Add to this the poor working conditions and the terrible safety records that the miners have and it is soon clear why men are ready to protest even though the

police are so heavily armed.

Obviously the easy and most commonsense way to prevent such violent clashes is to allow trade unions to represent black workers and bargain the rate for the job. But this just isn't on at the moment because the vast majority of white workers in unions enjoy such a high standard of living and privileges which would be cut, or reach in any other country unless it was based on the slavery of a large section of the population. Companies also attract vast investments from this and other countries who see never-ending profits from the cheap labour of the African. To justify this slavery they look upon the African as someone who is inferior, who does not need a decent home and the same sort of meals and clothes as they do. The government aims at separate development for the African but on the poorest land which whites do not want. Families are forcibly separated, as are most of the miners, and live in crude camps

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IN BRIEF

An operating theatre technician who put on a white coat and tended victims of a Dorking rail crash was mistaken for a doctor and was asked for his resignation by the hospital who employed him. He said he followed ambulances as a hobby.

Two shop stewards claimed that the management of an American firm, Cincimati Milacron Ltd. of Tamworth, offered them cash and a world cruise in order to get them out of the way when the stewards were negotiating bonus rates for 300 workers.

Pat Arrowsmith was cleared by magistrates at Colchester of a charge of abusive behaviour. She had run into the main arena at Colchester military tattoo shouting 'Get the troops out of Northern Ireland. Stop the blood bloodshed.' However, no order was made as to costs.

Canadian Anarchists have issued a new journal, News from Nowhere at 25c (Canadian), \$3.00 12 issues from P.O. Box 2827, Sta.A, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

A one-day strike was staged by the Movement of Arab Workers in Paris as a protest against racial discrimination.

The British Association of Social Workers have protested that a court decision to imprison for twelve months a social worker who allowed his flat to be used by cannabis smokers, will seriously hamper their work. In order, they say, to work amongst young people it is likely that pot-smoking takes place during counselling sessions.

The Italian Post Office suspended a woman postal clerk, Signora Tiffi Sciascia 'whose conduct is not in keeping with the dignity of her office'. She posed bare-breasted for a news photographer in front of a papal palace. The signora said she did it to get publicity for her newly-founded Italian League for the Protection of Prostitutes. The personnel director of the Rome Post Office, Signor d'Amore, says that the regulation under which she was suspended can also be applied to drunks and gamblers.

Squatters in Colchester have been ordered by the County Court to leave 11 police-council houses. The Essex County Standard concludes a long editorial: "What the squatters have started, let every decent citizen of Colchester now give his mind to".

Squatters in Stepney lost in the High Court when Epracent Properties was granted possession orders. Sancho Panza

History on Trial

The Sacco and Vanzetti case stands—in the opinion of some—as a landmark in U.S. legal history, showing just how far justice can go off the track. According to that view, the two Italian anarchists were convicted and executed for a 1920 holdup-murder on conflicting and circumstantial evidence. The National Park Service seems to agree. In a recent letter to the Norfolk, Mass., county commission, the service suggested that the granite Greek-revival courthouse in which the case was tried should be made into a national landmark. Displaying a touch of radical chic, the Park Service argued that the Sacco and Vanzetti trial had "crystallized the tensions of the 1920s," revealing, among other things, "hostility to radicals, antipathy to foreigners and a jealous protection of the status quo."

As Park Service officials quickly discovered, the status quo is alive and well in Massachusetts. State Superior Court Chief Justice Walter H. McLaughlin called the service's proposal "a smear upon the administration of justice in this Commonwealth." Norfolk County Commissioner James J. Collins cringed at the thought of comparing landmarks like Mount Vernon and Bunker Hill with the Sacco and Vanzetti courthouse, and argued that in their case "justice had been served as well as it could have been with a jury trial." The proposal has yet to be rejected outright, but the odds are that Sacco and Vanzetti have lost again.

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near the mines. Most come from other areas or from bordering countries and are looked upon and treated as sub-humans.

It is ironic that this violence should occur at Western Deep Levels which is one of Mr. Oppenheimer's interests. He claims to be opposed to apartheid and supports the opposition party in South Africa. He has tried to introduce a system of labour where workers would live permanently with their families. The government stopped this by passing legislation.

If the government does not make the necessary reforms allowing Africans trade union organisations and political rights then obviously more violence will occur and on a much wider scale. At the same time such rights would alter the whole South African society and would be resisted by the vast majority of the white population. Africans will probably seek a political solution and form and organise with leaders and parties. While this has brought political freedom to many countries their economies are still controlled from Europe. Only the masters have changed but to the black miner such a change must seem very attractive compared with his present slavery.

To help Africans win their freedom from apartheid slavery we can all boycott South African goods. Those Outspan oranges might be very inviting but a massive boycott would affect the economy and assist the African workers in their struggle against apartheid.

P.T.



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The evidence seems to indicate that he died, machine-gun in hand, fighting against enormous odds. He was a brave man, an outstandingly brave man as politicians go - which is not generally by that route - but much of the opposition he had to face and the allies he lost were of his own making and losing.

Some will say, and it has been said (see Letters this issue) that this is 'purism'. Of course it is! If one is propounding anarchist ideas, to which FREEDOM is supposedly dedicated, one does not wholeheartedly back up ideas which are far removed from anarchism although one may have preferences for certain aspects of thought and political expression which are not totally hostile.

In Chile, as in Spain, the position of the anarchists is, to quote V. Richards, Lessons..., to "declare that the only revolution or insurrection which will meet with their support is the one that will usher in the libertarian society, they must face the situation created by these uprisings [in Spain], the objectives of which represent only a step towards the desired society and declare what their position in such struggles will be. Generally speaking, their position has always been clear; that every manifestation of the people for their emancipation should be supported by anarchists as anarchists. That is to say ready at all times to make concessions to the common cause but without in so doing, losing their identity. We believe that such a position requires that anarchists should fearlessly expose what they believe to be the mistakes of a revolution, and at the same time by retaining their freedom of action, be prepared to withdraw their co-operation once they believe that the objectives of the struggle have been sacrificed to expediency."

The historical parallel and an analogy with Spain is, like all such, probably overstrained, but anarchist principles remain the same.

In Chile there was no revolution, only reform and counter-revolution. Nevertheless such anarchists as there are in Chile will doubtless fight against the insurrection hoping (as in Spain) to turn reforms into real revolution.

Allende trusted the military, he invited them into his cabinet. He played politics. He resisted land- and factory occupations and did not arm the workers, relying on the loyalty of the military.

'The man on horseback' is always ready to seize power and

governments, democratic, communist and Marxian Socialist alike, are always ready to equip him with the means to defeat and overthrow them.

If one wishes to defend a workers' state one obviously has to arm the workers but Allende did not do this - the workers did it for themselves. If one has a state in danger of attack and militarism is the chosen means, the obvious thing is a militia with the militiaman keeping his rifle at home.

And who manufactured and supplied the weapons with which the working class of Chile is now being butchered? Nobody else but the working class. What sacrifices of social improvement were made so that 'the man on horseback' should have the best of weapons, the best of equipment? Ask the shanty town dwellers and factory workers who are withstanding the onslaughts.

But it is early days in Chile. We cannot tell what will happen. Already the left have seized on facile explanations of American intervention (which may be true or not) which excuse any deep thought on Allende's mistakes and shortcomings. The Communist Party (now illegal like all other parties) have yet to play their cards. The Christian Democrats, once Allende's coalition partner, are reserving their judgement.

Long live the people of Chile!

In brief

The Evening Standard published a letter from the Association of Insurance Brokers protesting against Jak's cartoon showing Batman and Robin walking away rebuffed from a 'Mortgage and Insurance Broker'. Batman is saying, 'Well, you can't win them all'. The A.I.B. secretary says he's appalled and that the cartoon is offensive and in bad taste. He wishes (besides getting an apology) the Standard to "Advise me as to precisely what your cartoonist is trying to convey, and what you anticipate your readers will infer".

Paul Duckman, the son of the factory manager, is one of six steel workers whose strike action (for union recognition) has brought production to a halt at Reinforcements Ltd. of Whittlesey Cambs. The factory manager said, "When the men told me what action they planned to take, my first reaction was to sack the lot including Paul. They are good workers, but you cannot allow sentiment to influence you in this day and age."

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What Shall We Do With David ?

THE MOON A BALLOON by David Niven (Hamish Hamilton £2.50)

BESSIE by Chris Albertson (Barrie & Jenkins £2.95)

THE APPEAL OF FASCISM by Alastair Hamilton (Anthony Blond £3.00)

THIS IS OUR LAND by Steward Harris (Australian University Press)

WHEN THE Good Society comes into being there will be no place within it for us for we are the political and social malcontents forever seeking, and finding, the evils and the bureaucratic evasions that flower counterpoint to the rose in the new Edens for we are too individualistic to conform and too egotistical to play traitor to our reasoned and emotionally confirmed beliefs. It is a way of life that we so desire and it can only be justified if our divine discontent is ready to act out its role in conjunction with an earthy humanity in relation to the broad mass of mankind who appear to have little interest in our maniac desire to save them from the evils of the Church and the State. It is a way of living that in the main many of us enjoy and come the Good Society it is back to the drawing board.

For all its manifest and manifold evils the capitalist and laissez faire society has a place for the clown, and as long as he can amuse there is a place at some table for him and for his bread he will offer no more than the pleasure of his company and it is a gift not to be idly tossed aside for I would rather spend a season in hell with good drinking companions than an eternity in heaven with a company of po-faced puritans. David Niven has for many years graced our cinema screens and his shy smile, his apologetic humour, his gentle approach to the minor problems of the plot were always performed with the charm and grace of one who fears to intrude into the harsh realities of life. Niven's reminiscences 'the moon's a balloon' is now going into its 14th edition and one finds that Niven's life is no more than the mirror of his actor's roles. He has drifted through life seeking only an epicurean existence, offering in payment his courage, the pleasure of his friendship and the desire and the ability to amuse. A product of a middle class society, he drifted through minor public schools and unfashionable regiments in the manner born and the end would have been a brave death in some minor military battle or minor poverty as a salesman of worth-

less articles but Niven broke away and drifted to America on a promise of free handouts from fashionable friends of his Highland Light Infantry period. And this should have been Niven's tragedy in that he found that there is no call for a clown strictly from hunger, for the handsome dancing officer or the gay companion in the tailored evening dress is welcomed but not the bum with the happy smile for the rich want what they pay for and they are short on charity, and Niven allows himself a brief display of bitterness. Niven has succeeded and the tragedy is all those Wodehouse characters such as Niven for whom there is no place within any society. Too proud to dribble in their soup at a bleeding heart handout, unable to come to profitable terms with a society of hardfaced entrepreneurs, they suffer for a crime beyond their understanding. Niven has escaped from his ordained fate and his well-written and very readable book explains not why but how. Like all who drift along in an hedonistic existence Niven believes that he has no political leanings beyond a sympathy for those in obvious physical need but like all Wodehouse characters he appears to believe that society is too complex for him to become involved in any form of solution.

Appeal of Fascism

In a class confrontation one would believe that Niven would be reluctantly drawn into the military forces of the Right as Alastair Hamilton in his Appeal of Fascism shows. Not for ideological reasons but simply because patriotism is associated with the status quo. Niven ends his book on a dirge of despair when his goddaughter introduces him to a friend of hers. "He sported an Afro hair-do, a grave error for a red-headed Caucasian. He, too, was festooned with love beads and his heliotrope bell-bottoms were kept up by a broad leather belt, the buckle of which was fashioned in the shape of a penis. Dirty, horned toenails jabbed out beligerently from between the thongs of his questionable sandals. 'You wanna blow some grass, man?' he demanded, his flat Lancashire voice winning easily over a phoney American accent." And though David Niven was now speaking with the voice of the now accepted, wealthy, conservative establishment it was simply the old and successful clown confronting the rising star, and come the revolution all three of us will be looking for a pad.

Not so Bessie Smith who died in October 1947. Bessie is one of the great myths and legends of the Blues age and she belted her way to glory vocally and physically for she loved the bottle, the punch up and the stage. Chris Albertson has written a hagiology of this great Blues singer that despite himself brings into being a figure of Shakespearean depth. Bessie was as tough as they come and her guiding principle was number one first, and time and again she walked out on her company of players to leave them stranded. In a tough world she was tough and she survived only because she was a great artist. The great and unrecorded Blues singers were, without exception, itinerant rootless negro men of the southern states of America. The slow harsh rhythm of the guitar and the apparently unrelated vocal drifting in and out of the guitar rhythm was used as a vehicle to amuse and to protest. There is the apocryphal story of the ancient stage hand who claimed he knew all the greats of the English music hall. Florrie Ford, Elan, Robey, Little Tich, the Houston Sisters, Max Miller, Gertie Gitana, Nellie Wallace, and Marie. "And what were they like?" breathe the worshipping young interviewer. And the old man grunted that "they were shitbags every one of them" and there is a strata of truth in this for the English music hall of that period had much in common with the world of Bessie Smith in that the public entertainers turned the social miseries of the age into a joke. The early and unrecorded Blues singers were drifting negro men who daily shared the common misery but when the Blues became a form of commercial public entertainment with the Theatre Owners Booking Association booking acts and running the circuit then women Blues singers were used as a front for the bands and with record recording coming into its own Billie Holiday, Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith began to enter the field of identifiable legend. There is always the danger of associating the speaker with the message, and a glut of films seems intent on turning the women Blues singers into martyrs for the cause. Albertson destroys one legend that Bessie was smashed up in a car accident and deliberately refused hospital help because she was black, for Willie Miller, a negro ambulance driver, states that Bessie was driven straight to the G. T. Thomas Hospital, a black hospital, and she was dead on arrival. Somewhere there is a truth but we shall never know it now.

Unfashionable minority

While it is fashionable and right to sing the Blues for the oppressed minorities one should remember that the Australian aboriginals have always got a poor press for, unlike the American Indians, Negroes, Eskimos, the Gypsies or the Maoris, the Australian aboriginals have always been an unfashionable minority in that no small child or dreaming adult has visualised himself in their role, and it is for that reason that Steward Harris's book This Is Our Land is most welcomed. He pleads their case which is the universal one of every minority wishing to manage its own affairs and have a full access to the wealth of its society, and Harris backs up his plea with facts and figures that always in these matters shock the conscience. That of the 150,000 Australian aboriginals 2,000 are known leprosy cases. That 80% of the women prisoners in Western Australia are aboriginals is a matter of public concern and it will be argued that in a sea of human sorrow they are but one small pool of sadness, but apart from knowing of the brave efforts of Bobbi Sykes and a handful of Australian militants and watching a TV entertainer attempt to play the didgeridoo we seem complacently ill-informed of the plight of this nation within a nation. They have no phoney religious philosophy to offer the west, no mind blowing culture for an Arts Council exhibition, no dramatic poses for a Hollywood epic, no great hack temples, no jargon-ridden writings for the paperback industry, only a nation reduced to serfdom, a valid cause seeking a saviour...Jane Fonda if you were living at this hour.

Arthur Moyse.

The two books mentioned in Arthur Moyse's art review last week are: THE LONDON DORE SAW, edited by Eric de Mare (Allan Lane £8.00) ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND by Arvid Bengtsson (Crosby Lockwood £3.75)

The average earnings, including special benefits, for regular American servicemen are about £600 a year higher than those of civilians, according to the Library of Congress. A Democratic member of Congress said, "We have been talking about giving the military comparability and it now turns out that not only is military pay comparable to civilian pay. It is actually greater."

Sancho Panza

STILL THE MOST PROSTITUTED

ANEURIN BEVAN, whose flashes of wit in oratory made him one of the most quotable politicians, once said that 'the British had the most prostituted press in the world'. Despite all the changes in Britain's fortunes we can still claim that title. Its hiring for sexual intercourse (albeit vicarious) is commonplace but its ability to supply the cheap thrill of an orgasm of civic righteousness is becoming more marked as the circulation war becomes more vicious.

The 'crusade' about mugging and football hooliganism are perpetual. The Express achieved virtue by calling attention to the fact that Myra Hindley (convicted of murder) was going for walks with the prison governor - the fact that the governor was a woman did not stifle the Express which had the walks stopped.

Now the Daily Mail, reputedly on its deathbed, has sunk as low as has yet been reached. Last Thursday (Sept. 13) an early edition of the Mail carried a routine headline story of Carr's speech about the menace of cannabis..

Late on the night of the 12th a bomb exploded in Chelsea at 'the headquarters' says the Mail, 'of several Service benevolent associations'. The Mail gave this story headlines in its later editions coupled with an entirely new story by Gill Martin headlined (on the front page) 'Angry Brigade Girl is Out of Prison'; this was obviously put in (and held back) for maximum effect. That Hilary Creek had been in the hospital for more than a month and that the reporter gained access by posing as a medical student is soft-pedalled by the Mail.

Abbie Hoffman, ex-Yippie leader has been charged with drug-peddling. He has been remanded on £80,000 bail, ten times the usual. The alleged drug was sold to an under-cover narcotics agent.

Nuns protested about a film "Sex Life in a Convent" showing in Whitehaven. It was withdrawn and replaced by "Blue Sextet" and "So Much Naked Tenderness".

On Friday the Mail followed up its crusading scoop with a headline 'Fury at Bomb Girl's Freedom'. Whose fury? "Yesterday police officers who arrested her, the prison officers who detained her, and Mr. Harold Soref the M.P. demanding the enquiry described the situation as scandalous." Police officers and prison officers are supposed to be detached and calm about such things; prison officers are not, theoretically, supposed to know what offence a prisoner is in for. As for Harold Soref M.P., he is a well-known reactionary and once lost a libel case (and his book was withdrawn) brought by the anti-apartheid movement.

To give him credit, or to give the Mail a debit (for what influence has it got?) the Home Secretary, Mr. Robert Carr, made a firm statement that Hilary Creek was in hospital until her dangerous illness of anorexia nervosa responded to intensive treatment which could not be given in prison. "She will have to return to Holloway to complete her sentence as soon as she is well enough to do so."

Not content with their wallow, on Saturday, no doubt chagrined by the Home Secretary's rebuff, they reached the ultimate (with newspapers you never know) depth. They published a cartoon by 'Mac', of Hilary Creek in hospital bed being asked by a doctor ushering in what is presumably the Mail's idea of an I.R.A. terrorist: "Do you mind sharing your room Miss Creek. This poor chap's given himself an awful headache dropping bombs."

Compared to the Daily Mail's way of soliciting our three-pences, Norma Levy and Christine Keeler are benefactors of mankind.

J.R.

INSIDE STORY No. 11 spills the beans on a British army 'deserter' who found his way to Sweden via information he got from WRI and PPU etc., but in reality propelled all the way by a Daily Mirror reporter. Also a report of the black-listing of Glasgow printer Walter Morrison, book reviews, an instalment of Meltzer/Walter 'Floodgates' saga, etc. This issue is duplicated for economy and price reduced to 15p. They need subscriptions: £1.50 six issues, £3 for 12 from 3 Belmont Road, London, SW4.

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WHAT DO THE BOMBS SAY?

Dear Comrades,

1) Am I suggesting that communication by the means of using explosives is likely to change the direction of events? I was suggesting this could be the view of those who used the explosives and that it is part of an approach that seeks to understand these events to give feasible answers to the posed query of what the bombs were saying.

2) Am I suggesting that no other form of propaganda is capable of changing the direction of events?

No. What gave you that idea?

I still maintain M.C. did not clearly establish the difference between terrorism and violent action aimed at property but confused the two as the first and second sentences of "What do the bombs say?" demonstrate with "an officers club" becoming "officers". There is the crucial difference. One is property, the other people.

In seeking to clarify that I suppose I have to express my abhorrence of terrorism, otherwise I might be asked if I am advocating terror tactics akin to the State's means of operating. As regards anarchism and Irish (or any other) nationalism I can only say they seem ideologically at opposite poles but when a nationalist movement is occupied with fighting tyranny certain short term tactical objectives of anarchism and nationalism might arguably be seen to coincide for a limited period; this could be when one or other view abandons, in the name of flexibility, its ideological stand or when both do, to achieve aims both have in common, e.g. the destruction of a tyranny. In such a situation the anarchist reaction may be an attempt to convince the nationalist of the need to destroy all tyrannies, including his own.

J.W.

PROGRESSIVE ANARCHISM

Dear Comrades,

J.W. (FREEDOM 8 Sept. 73) makes an important contribution when he draws our attention to the Freedom Readership Survey of 1960 (See Anarchy 12 - Feb. 1962). I feel however he makes the wrong conclusion when he suggest that "Freedom (was then demonstrating) the lack of young working class readers". The cult of Youth again? FREEDOM was demonstrating that the readership (and this means the anarchist movement, or a large part of it, at the time) was largely composed of people

whose views were radically different to those he wishes to attract into the movement. Individualist numbered 149, Philosophic anarchists 112, with Anarcho-syndicalists 68 and Anarcho-communists 81. The Pacifist-anarchists numbered 91, and to my knowledge at the time, most of the latter viewpoint did not read FREEDOM at all, which indicates that the so-called Revolutionary-anarchists, to use modern terminology, were then, as now, well down the scale in numbers.

The whole of this survey implies (despite, I suggest, Albert Meltzer's attempt to re-write the meaning of the term 'Individualist' - see AFBIB article 'Factionalism and Individualism' in reply to my 'Structure of Appearances) that the anarchist movement was, and probably still is, largely composed of people who value freedom much more than the strict adherence to a specific ideology or 'party line'. Cliche-concepts masquerading as scientific models such as 'Class Struggle', 'Proletariat', 'Working Class', 'liberal-anarchist', 'Revolutionary anarchist', 'dustheap of history' and other verbal nonsense, have more relevance to Marxism than Anarchism. One could even say, more relevance to post-Marx than Marx.

I personally consider those people who now call themselves 'Revolutionary Anarchists' are not anarchist at all, though I am perfectly aware that to say so is to use the favourite counter-attack of the anarchist-ideologue --if I cannot beat you honestly then it is obvious, you are not playing the game by the rules, to use an analogy. But, their very intolerance and bloody-mindedness, see their attacks on Nicolas Walter, and their persistent demand that we subordinate ourselves to their half-baked ideas is the very negation of freedom, the corner stone of anarchist ideas.

What we should seek is to abolish class, not perpetuate it. We should demystify society, not re-stratify it. Anarchists, from whatever class of origin should seek to become classless, liberal in outlook, open-minded, undogmatic, progressive in action and have a high sense of personal honour and observable integrity. Perhaps anarchists should initiate more things and react less to others' actions (cf. Peter E. Newell). It is this that will attract people to become anarchists, having the right kind of value-system, not being a member of the rightest kind (or most

fashionable kind) of libertarian club and mutual admiration society.

If we have, to coin a phrase, to describe ourselves, to distinguish us from others, let us drop labels like individualist, pacifist, philosophic, syndicalist or communist and call ourselves merely Progressive Anarchists.

Anarchism may be achieved, not when the anarchist party comes to power either in Parliament, in the workshop, in the trade union branch or in the student union. When individual people stop playing, and having to play, little games with one another and start acting honestly, both in relation to others and, more important, themselves, we may begin to see the beginnings of the anarchist world.

Of course, living in the twentieth century in a highly technological Western society, it may be difficult to live anarchistically. However, who ever said being an anarchist was a soft option?

Peter Neville.

Dear Comrades,

S. E. Parker, in his absurdist argument (FREEDOM vol. 34 no. 27 7-7-73) does great justice to those authoritarian elements which uphold the anarchist as the spectacle of idiocy. For on S. E. Parker's terms the anarchist is so abstracted from the ecological whole that, begawd, anarchism is in the context of the spiritual.

Listen, Parker, it took mother's milk to feed you, it took collective work to print your conceited thoughts, it takes the long evolved process of history to avail you of the tools of communication to get your profane gibberish in readable form. Although I note that you don't suggest that you are the anarchist-abstract which you idealize, it would intrigue me to observe your daily mode of life. For instance, I presume you synthesize your own nutrition, brew your own beverages, make your own apparel, write your own references, convey your body wherever you propose to go!

The individualist attitude is one of 'last resort' but certainly it is the ultimate in alienation and to be regretted.

Fraternal solidarity
Col Pollard

LETTERS

CHILE (I)

Dear All,

I would like to take issue with Jack Robinson's comments on Chile. These seem disgustingly oversimplified of the sort that gives weight to marxist attacks on anarchists for pure emotionalism and seeing everything in black and white with no theoretical perspective.

History of course gives us parallels and some are most instructive when looking at Allende. But Stalin worked in a completely different situation. When Lenin and the Bolsheviks took power there were soviets throughout Russia, and in many spheres the workers had taken direct power; Lenin - to a large extent because he was trusted as a sincere and courageous revolutionary - was able to dismantle some of that power, to coopt some more of it and one way and another build up a new state apparatus capable of destroying a revolutionary force, and wresting control of the economy and state back from the workers. He was able to do this in large part because he personally did not wish to go to the logical end of his own policies, he did not wish to abolish the gains of the soviets, though he did wish to direct them into what he thought would be more rational paths; and because he could be seen to be sincere in his belief in the revolution he was trusted while he built the apparatus which Stalin used to destroy it. (Note that in some ways Zapata played a similar role.)

But Allende is not - as were Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin - at the helm of a state which had been created on the back of a social revolution. Allende was elected like Attlee, Wilson, Ramsay MacDonald, Zamora, Azana, Blum and the Weimar Social Democrats and others of their ilk. In each case they were elected to political office without having control of the economy, the armed forces or the civil service and in each case they then proved prisoners of these institutions. The parallel with Spain or the parallel with Kerenski, with the Weimar Republic, with U Nu's Burma, all spring to mind and all may suggest possible developments. But to compare Allende who is half-heartedly fighting a militant and intransigent right wing opposition with Lenin and Stalin who emasculated and then destroyed a previously successful socialist revolution is to confuse the issues.

Moreover it plays into the hands of Stalinists, Trots and

similar authoritarians, for they are able to say: "Look one of the editors of the only anarchist weekly in Britain agrees that the aims of the Kronstadt commune were the same as those which now motivate, quasi-fascists, nationalists and the right wing of South American catholicism in Chile." Since for years they have been trying to allege that the Kronstadt seamen were consciously or unconsciously the allies of the White Russian reactionaries this would be ideal ammunition for them. Let them tell their own lies, let's not have Freedom do it for them.

faithfully,

Laurens Otter.

[Note: This letter was received before the military coup but L.O. agreed it should go in as it stands. What J.R. said was that there was the irresistible temptation to make sinister parallels with the early days of the Russian Revolution. As it happened it is even now possible that Allende is a dead Kerensky; but Allende's repression of a more libertarian left was in evidence. True, there were right-wing elements about (Allende by his actions drove possible allies further to the right) - but one doesn't suppress embarrassing facts about Allende just because of what Stalinists, Trots and all other authoritarians said about Kronstadt! Even if there weren't any White Guardists they'd invent them!--J.R.]

CHILE (II)

Dear Sirs,

So Allende is dead and the last few militants are being either rounded up or shot down in ones and twos. I expect that as you stand in the four ale bar discussing the revolutionary struggle, with your precious principles still intact, you must feel well fucking satisfied.

Jack Stevenson.

A.F.B. DEAD OR ALIVE ?

Dear Comrades,

Recent months have seen the anarchist press give much of its space and anarchist comrades expend much of their vituperative talent in expounding the proposition that the A.F.B. is dead. The items in question customarily proceed to the suggestion that the A.F.B. was never really alive in the first place, seemingly unaware that the validity of their primary assertion has been logically destroyed by this attempt to support it. But the idea has been determinedly intruding into our minds recently that, given the present condition of the an-

archist movement in this country, a revived A.F.B. may find a useful function.

For all the faults of the AFB it did enable the anarchist movement, such as it was, or indeed is, to get together once a year and renew personal friendships and continue or revive arguments, both of which, in our view, are better done than not done.

In fairness we would also point out that such A.F.B. conferences as we attended we always greatly enjoyed. So we propose to hold an A.F.B. conference in Leicester toward the end of November. Would any comrades who would be interested in coming to this conference write to Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne Street, Leicester. If sufficient interest is shown a date and venue will be announced within the next few weeks.

Jean M. Miller Peter Miller
John Booth Arthur Humphrey
Diana Humphrey

DESPAIR !

I despair! What is happening to anarchists? A couple of examples from last week's 'Freedom'.

I do not know the history of the Toynbee Hall Rudolf Rocker meeting, but such ecumenicism will be the undoing of anarchists. Who allowed the Lord Mayor to be present, let alone to appear in full regalia in the front row? Remember Malatesta - "(Anarchists) should combat all that which tends to...good relationship with masters."

Why has the anarchist movement 'no sectional interests aside from the working class'? (Harry Bickerstaff's letter.) Forget about "classes" - anarchists are not necessarily Marxists and we should give up the sociological jargon, individual people, and groups of people are our interest, and ruling groups of whatever nature are our target.

What are anarchists doing? Now? Isn't it time we had a lengthy discussion about what is being done consciously, rather than about what was advised to be worth doing some 50 or 100 years ago? In what kind of standing is anarchist literature and thought today? Pretty poor, judging from a year's subscription to 'Freedom' - it is all pub talk and undergraduate philosophy.

Anarchists? Don't fool yourselves. All you've done is read books, and all you are doing is arguing amongst yourselves.

Mary-Rose Bannon

(The Rocker meeting in fact was not organized by (or even for) anarchists. Sam Dreen (formerly of the Freie Arbeiter Stimme invited him and W. J. Fishman organized it.--Eds.)

FESTIVAL OF PEACE, 1973

6th - 13th October

The Peace Pledge Union's festival week will be celebrated in many areas throughout the country. Already announced:-

London: poetry and folk music recital at Haverstock Arms, Hampstead; the Barrow Poets at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East; Joan Baez's film "Carry It On" at the Notting Hill Classic; and to end the week a lorry cavalcade around London.

Oxford has a film show of the best cartoons and short films on 'peace and war'.

Richmond will also put on film shows.

Erith (Kent) will stage a pop festival,

Truro (Cornwall) will have a Peace Rally, afternoon exhibition and public meeting, and at night a free folk concert.

The PPU says "the purpose behind all the events is the same, to show that pacifism is a positive and realistic alternative to the present methods of war and violence used all over the world. The peace movement is trying to build these alternatives right here, right now."

There is an attractive advertising poster (copies in Freedom Bookshop) 25p post 5p with the slogan "Be realistic -- demand the impossible".

If you want more information contact the Peace Pledge Union, 6 Endsleigh Street, London, WC1H 0DX (tel. 01-387-5501).

BIT THREATENED BY TAKE-OVER?

Just in case, and before it happens, we, the BIT collective, announce to the world that BIT may be threatened by a forcible take-over:

The situation is that BIT's been going for over 5 years now and is run by a collective of about 10 regular workers at present. We try to provide a 24-hour 7-day-a-week free, information & help service (mostly financed by the sale of travel guides), with the aim of supporting and encouraging other collective and alternative structures.

We'd like (1) to apologise to anyone who wasn't getting satisfactory information from us during August, but we'll be getting more efficient again gradually - As long as, that is, the following turns out to be paranoia on our part:

(2) A couple of the more dissatisfied ex-BIT workers are apparently saying that they will try to close BIT down. Added to this, there have been dark hints that certain "members of the community" are talking in terms of "occupying and taking over the BIT building". And finally, a large number of cheques and postal orders were stolen from the BIT building on August 21st. So we've got our problems.

Apparently some of the reasons why BIT should be closed down, according to one politico, an ex-BIT worker who left BIT in August after about 5 months of working here, include that he thinks that the Alternative Press and the alternative society generally are dying, and that BIT has outlived its usefulness, now that there are more specialised services like Claimants Unions, which make a general information service unnecessary; and that too many people are using BIT for trivial information or for information that they could have found out for themselves elsewhere, and so on.

No organisation lasts for ever, but we, the BIT collective, are certain that BIT still has a very useful role to play, and, whatever pressures may be put on us, we intend to continue providing a 24-hour telephone information & referral service, and to continue publishing the best information that flows through the office, and to keep developing our links with other alternative structures and information & help services throughout Britain and Europe.

We insist that BIT should be controlled by the committed people who actually work here - the BIT collective - and not by outsiders, but we would welcome help from anyone prepared to commit themselves to regular, hard and often boring work at BIT (free accommodation, a present average of about £1 a week 'wages' - BIT workers do part-time jobs for extra money - and a one-week mutual probationary period).

We will resist any forcible moves to close BIT down - let those who can't be reconciled start their own services - but we will willingly respond to any constructive and positive suggestions for developing BIT - drop by any day between 10 and 10, or if you want a long and thorough discussion when it's less busy here, or if you have a particular project that BIT could help initiate, come along sometime during a 'BIT Think-In Weekend', September 29th and 30th of this year, & discuss possible future BIT projects & activities.

with love from most of the BIT collective (Bill, Nicholas, Hannah, Rickie, Heather, Tom, Steve, Mole - minus Vicki who's ill and would probably disagree with putting this out anyway but plus Nick at the crash-pad .

BIT, 146 Great Western Road, London W.11, (tel 01-229-8219)

Contact

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LEEDS FREE SCHOOL needs equipment, money and voluntary labour. Accommodation provided for helpers. Contact c/o 23 Hartley Ave., Leeds 6

THE COMMUNE MOVEMENT for people and groups who want to build a federal society of communities. To join send £1 for journal sub plus 20p and seven SAE 9" x 4" to Richard Secombe, 3 Longfellow Avenue, Bath, Somerset, BA2 4SJ

HISTORY WORKSHOP in London, on Family, Work, Home at Old Theatre, L.S.E. Sat. Oct 20 & Sun Oct 21. Papers include Catherine Hall: History of the Housewife; Anna Davis: Shop Girls in later 19thC London; &c, &c, plus videotape & discussion of Half Moon's play on schoolchildren's strike 1911. Tickets £1 from Sarah and Sid Wills, 49 Elder Ave., London N.8

PROPOSED AFB CONFERENCE in Leicester end of November. Write Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne St., Leicester. (See Letter page)

CORBY ANARCHISTS. Discussion meeting first Friday every month 7 Cresswell Walk, 7.30 p.m.

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

LONDON ASA for details of meetings 'phone 226-0817. Black & Red Outlook by post 5p + 4p from 3 Grange House, Highbury Grange, N.5

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