

VOTING CHANGES NOTHING

ALL POLITICAL PARTIES -- TORY, LIBERAL, LABOUR, COMMUNIST AND EVERYTHING ELSE -- ARE ONLY INTERESTED IN POWER AT OUR EXPENSE. OCCASIONALLY THEY ASK US TO PUT A X ON A PIECE OF PAPER -- AND THAT'S THE ONLY TIME THEY EVER CONSULT US! THIS PHONEY "DEMOCRACY" MERELY MEANS THAT WE ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY OF CHOOSING WHICH SET OF GANGSTERS AND CON-MEN RULE OUR LIVES. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HAVING THE FREEDOM TO CONTROL OUR OWN LIVES.

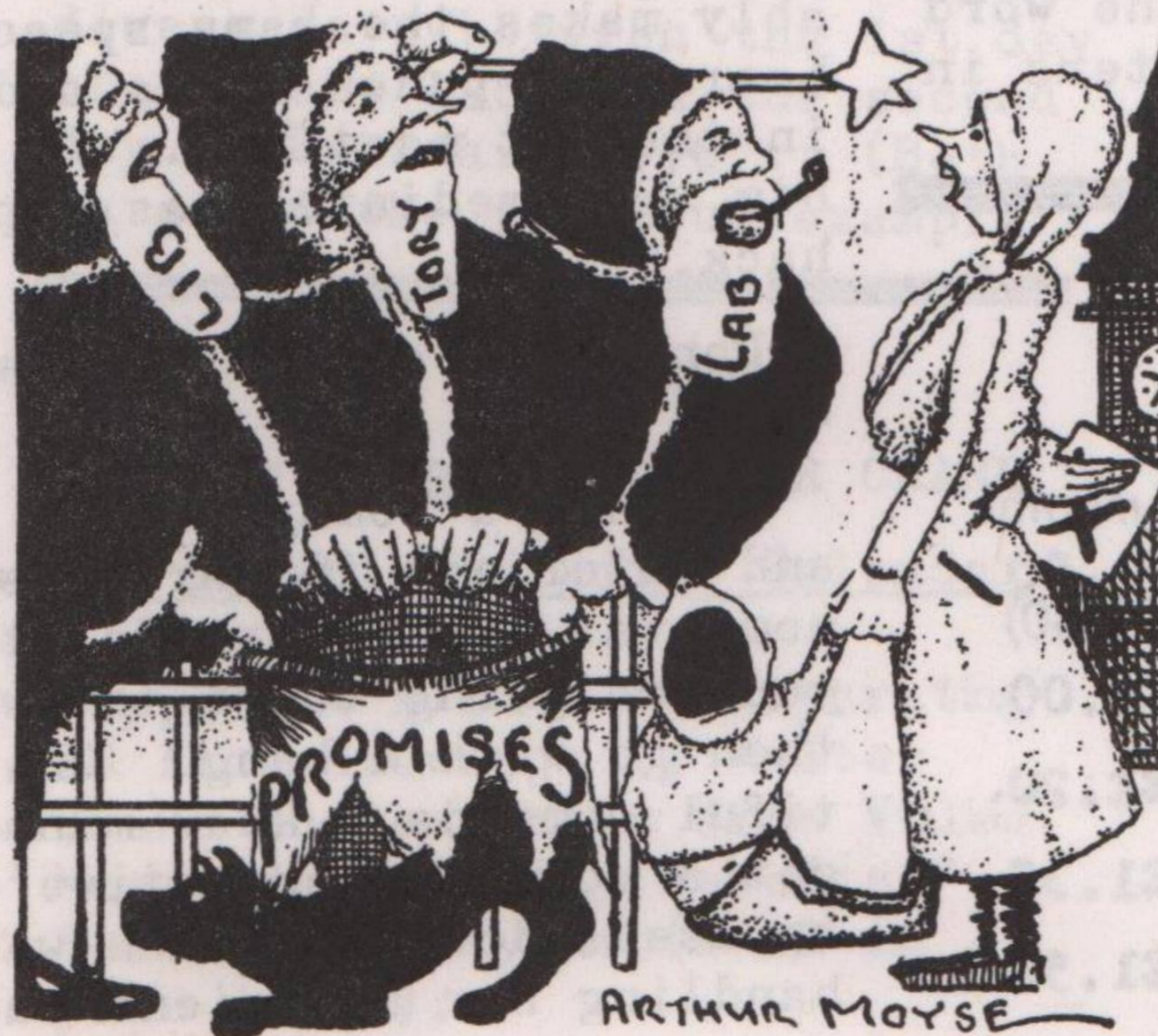
SIMPLE CAUSE OF INFLATION

In the Election campaign all the politicians are screaming about "inflation" and their brilliant schemes to "solve the problem". Of course, they all have one thing in common: we will have to tighten our belts so that the politicians' wealthy friends can get richer and richer.

In fact, the cause of "inflation" and the cure are quite simple. Price rises aren't caused by workers demanding a living wage for their families. They are caused by the greed of the rich demanding greater and greater profits. The only real solution is to kick out the politicians and the bosses and to take control ourselves of the industry which rightly belongs to all of us.

NO MORE HARD LABOUR

We all know that a Labour Government will freeze wages, put up rents and do all the things they condemn the Tories for doing. However, they now try to give the impression that they



"GOOD HEAVENS, CHRISTMAS IS EARLY THIS YEAR."

are on our side by making vague promises that they will "nationalise" a few large firms. This merely means that the workers involved will have a State boss instead of a private boss. The boss will still be the boss -- and he'll still be pushing the workers around. In fact, nothing will really change at all.

WORKERS CAN TAKE OVER

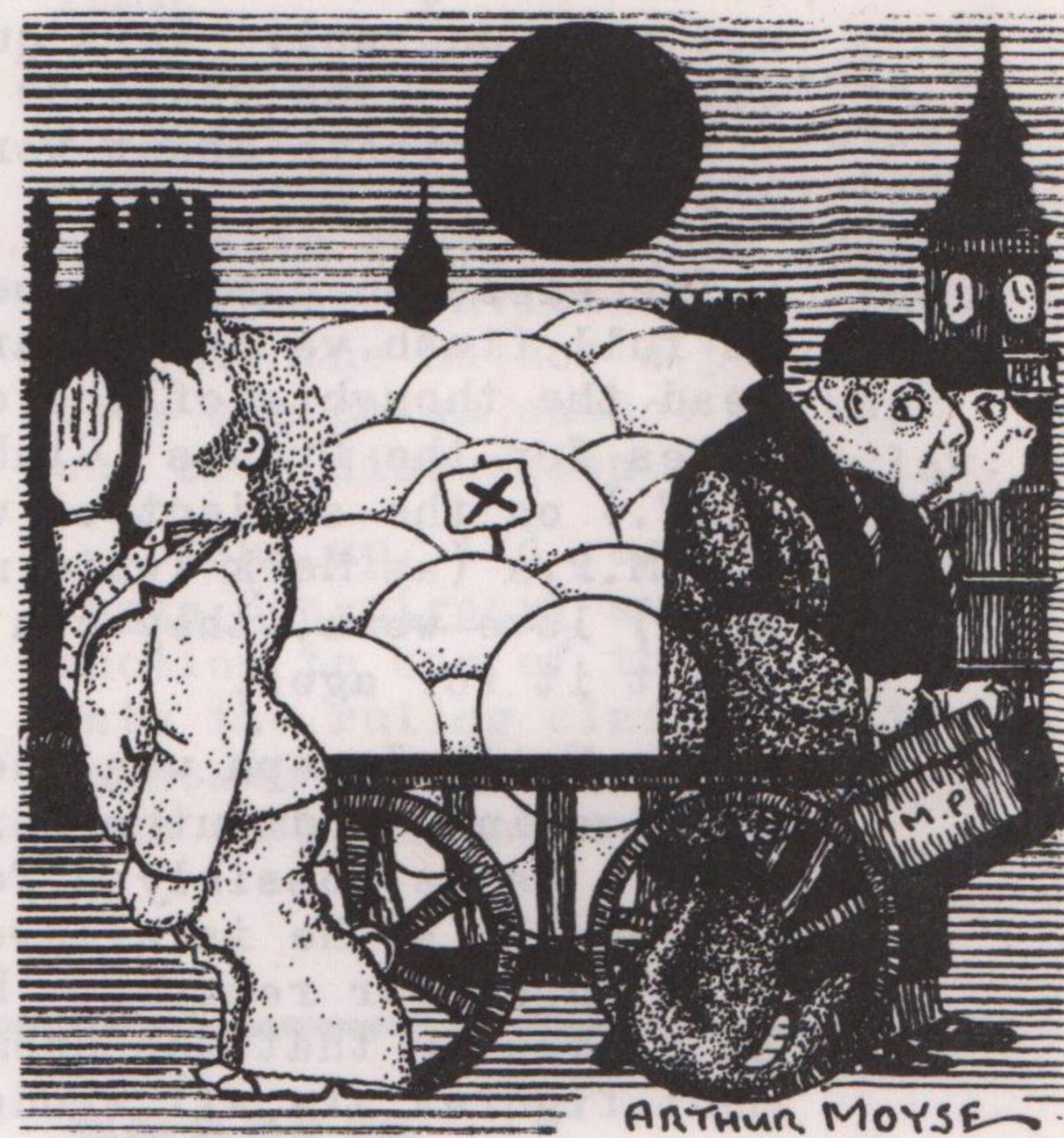
We don't need any political parties or "leaders" to set themselves up as dictators over us. We have the strength, if we stand together, to occupy and take control of our work-places -- factories, shops, offices or whatever -- and use them for the good of the whole community.

We can form workers' councils to run our work-places with everyone playing his or her part as an equal in the work and the decision-making. Each independent council can then link up with others and freely co-operate to organise society. When that day comes the bosses and the politicians will be redundant. We can then stop and think about the work we do. Obviously we won't go on doing boring, useless jobs. We will do work that is both socially useful and satisfying to us.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

We should all be involved in the decision-making not just at our work-places but in the community as a whole. We can organise community councils on our housing estates to take control

MR. FERRANTI, of Ferranti Industries, has appealed to the government for financial help. Some few weeks ago he was the spokesman on the radio for capitalism and the profit motive. Many years ago his firm had to repay four million pounds they had overcharged the government on contracts.



"GET YOUR CRYSTAL BALLS"

so that everyone can help decide about house-building, what services we need and how they should be organised, etc. It's time we stopped being used to satisfy their lust for power...and their bloated expenses claims.

WHO ARE THE ANARCHISTS?

Every other day some politician or some newspaper attacks "the anarchists". What they usually mean is that ordinary people like us have had enough of being pushed around by the politicians and the bosses and have decided to fight back.

Well, we are the anarchists and we think you might be, too, although you might not have used that word to describe yourself before. We are not a political party seeking power, but a group of people actively working to create a truly free society in which everyone is involved in the work and the decision making as an equal.

T. P.

[Also published as a leaflet by Corby Anarchists.]

I N S I D E this week***

VOTE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT
ANTI-ELECTION TACTICS
SIT-DOWN IN WANDSWORTH PRISON
CONSPIRACY

...reviews, letters, news &c.

VOTE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT having voted themselves redundancy pay are now lining up (along with would-be M.P.s) for a short working week and a short working day with no actual compulsion (unless one is conscientious) to attend the job at all, and irregularity is the usual practice; with 'moonlighting' in another job at the same time not very unusual. This qualifies M.P.s - and would-be M.P.s - to pontificate about work and unemployment.

The election campaign being in full flush we have heard and read the thoughts of the candidates for the Drones' Club (H. of P.) on the subject of work. The M.P.s (as Mark Twain nearly said) love work, they can talk about it for ages.

Sir Keith Joseph was one of the leading loudmouths this week. He is possibly a Tory expendable so he is allowed to make unpopular remarks. He has said firstly that the unemployment figures are all wrong and there are a lot of slackers and parasites on the unemployment benefits anyhow. He puts forward the argument that unemployment is caused by lack of 'liquidity' due to taxation and limitation of profits. This means that with inflation it was impossible to replace machinery and develop business, hence unemployment under Labour.

This is a perceptible advance upon the original Tory idea (not completely dropped) that there is an acceptable level of unemployment, that in fact a certain amount of unemployment is a necessary spur to incentive and hard work. The Labour Party's aim is almost-full-employment but their idea of the level of permissible unemployment varies.

The Liberal spokesman (on Treasury affairs) Mr. John Pardoe said last week the term 'unemployed' would have to be redefined. "The figures should include only those who are act-

ively seeking work or are re-training and only these people should receive unemployment pay as a right. Generally speaking State help for the rest of the so-called unemployed should be made much more difficult to obtain and should be granted only on strict conditions." For example, "such people," said Mr. Pardoe, "would be made available to their local council for social duties." The new liberalism!

All parties (including the Communists) seem to favour increasing the Gross National Product; encouraging 'growth' and in short creating unemployment and bringing on ecological ruin. It is obvious that over-production will in itself inevitably produce unemployment; production of 'illth' will not increase national or even individual well-being.

Unemployment in itself, is not a bad thing, one cannot join the clamour for 'the right to work', one also has, in Lafargue's phrase, 'the right to be lazy'. It is largely the lack of income which is the sad

thing about unemployment.

Such is the horrible nature of the work many of us do and the alienation induced by the useless productivity that the politicians' enthusiasm for the work ethic rings very false.

As it is many of us do at work what we must, in our leisure what we like. Our creative instincts cannot be satisfied in present-day society so many of us turn in leisure to destructive or mechanical pursuits.

It is basically untrue that the number of workshy people is great enough to wreck society. (In fact, according to P.E.P. the middle class are the greatest misusers of social security.) In present-day society it is because people cannot find satisfaction and fulfilment in the work they do that they appear to dislike work as such.

Given an anarchist society, which will be a more rational and free society, unemployment (possibly created by the machine) will hold no terrors. It will enable release for the work of society which needs doing and the creative and re-creative use of leisure.

Voting will not end this.

Jack Robinson.

Anti-Election Tactics

ALONE AMONG Britain's political pundits, I predicted Wilson would go to the country on Dec. 24th. Alas, I was wrong and we now find ourselves in the midst of the battle.

One supposes that the difference between anarchists and other left groups becomes clearly illuminated at election times. We alone stand up and urge people to ignore the farce of electing our shepherds.

So use these last days in the run-up as best you can.

POSTERS Peace News (8 Elm Ave. Nottingham) sell "Don't Vote - it only encourages them" at 5p each, £1.50 for 100. Alternatively daub the word **WHY** on all vote-for-me posters in your area.

STREET THEATRE Join in the carnival! Last February saw our group parading our non-M.P. through the streets. We introduced him to everyone: shop assistants in "Woolies", alarmed bank clerks, bus queues, school kids... Be spontaneous, be outrageous in your dress.

Use local radio. Already Burnley anarchists have had a five-minute spot on Radio Blackburn. Just ring them up and sound assertive.

HECKLING If you believe in barrage heckling then we part company. There are more powerful weapons. An M.P. doing his constituency rounds inevitably makes the same speech. Learn his punch lines and join in them at meetings. It shows him up immediately as a party hack.

Don't all sit at the back. Split up.

Culture a Tommy Cooper laugh and interject it during serious moments. Don't overdo it. If you are going to be thrown out then go with a bang. One beautiful comrade I knew managed to get a young conservative's trousers down while he was manhandling her boyfriend out!

Ideas are limitless and anarchists need new ones desperately. Show people imagination can defeat power.

Peter Good.

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TURN OF THE SCREW

IT IS REPORTED by People's News Service (and others) that guards at Wandsworth prison, London, injured seven prisoners whilst breaking up a sit down demonstration in a workshop on September 11th.

One demonstrator-prisoner had his nose broken, another had both eyes blacked, multiple bruises and several ribs broken.

The protest was against an increase in the number of stitches required in mailbags (at one time it was four to the inch). Mailbags are piece-work and any alteration in the nature of the work is an alteration in the already low (with inflation) 'earnings'.

When the new quota was announced the prisoners stopped work and sat down. At five p.m. the officer announced that they had five minutes in which to move, otherwise the guards would come in and throw them out. Frankie Fraser, the prisoners' spokesman, made a speech in which he emphasized

that the protest was peaceful. Shortly afterwards about fifty officers attacked the thirty-seven prisoners. Most of the guards were armed with batons.

Injuries were sustained as detailed and Frankie Fraser (who was a marked man for his involvement in other prison troubles) was 'awarded' (as they say) by the visiting committee a loss of remission of 300 days and also 'sentenced' to 400 days in solitary confinement. Despite reported injuries he is not in the hospital wing. Although there was a moderation of the charge from that of 'inciting mutiny' to 'inciting resistance' this is a vicious 'sentence' passed without supposed benefits of the judiciary.

There will be a Picket outside Wandsworth Prison on Saturday, Sept. 28th at one o'clock.

J.R. (from People's News Service, etc.)

Anarchist "Festa"

August, 1974

On arriving in Graguana on Saturday afternoon, we could hear loud singing all through the village from the chestnut orchard where the festa took place. The village was in an excited mood, thousands of visitors swirling around, black flags, beautifully embroidered, on the houses, and the everlasting hot sun of Italy above it all. Following the signs and the singing, we entered the orchard, where anarchists from all over Italy, all classes, all ages, were gathering together. There was a small stage with a microphone, around which a group of youths stood and sang revolutionary songs. In the background we could see a monster bar with all kinds of drinks, mainly the fantastic vino nostrali of the country, an open grill where chickens were carefully treated with oil and herbs, and a legion of older women who made coffee and frittale - some kind of fried fish omelette. Still further back there were large tables with groups sitting around them, some of them singing, discussing, drinking wine and laughing. On the hill there were hundreds of tents, one under each tree, and we went to choose a nice place for ourselves. We were very impressed by the easy and merry mood of this crowd and sometimes sat there for hours just watching the crowd, the kids playing

hide and seek, the old, grey-haired, stout anarchists discussing with their comrades, and the spontaneous singing. In fact they kept singing all through the meeting. They never seemed to get tired of it (and neither did we).

With the evening the mood became even merrier, now and then some drunks already. None of us speaking Italian very well, we found it difficult to engage in discussions until we happened to meet some comrades from the Rivista Anarchica (Milan) who not only spoke French, but also English and German. We had some good talk with them, helping to clear up old misunderstandings and generally establishing friendly relationships. It was very interesting to learn about the everyday life of an Italian anarchist: the way they live and work, about their groups and their movement.

By Sunday evening half of the people present were definitely drunk, including some of our own company, but this was only the proper way to end this happy, beautiful meeting. When we had to leave on Monday evening, after another refreshing sleep under our chestnut tree and the stars above, we felt we'd certainly come back next year.

--From Swiss correspondent M.B.

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BOOK REVIEW

FIELDS, FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS TOMORROW, a new edition of the anarchist classic of Peter Kropotkin, edited and introduced by Colin Ward. George Allen & Unwin (cloth £ 3.95 ; paper £ 1.95)

PRIOR TO the first world war my mother was taken to anarchist 'smoking parties' at which Kropotkin was often the speaker during the periods of exile. As a young socialist in the Thirties I began to become interested in anarchist thought and found Fields Factories, Workshops and Mutual Aid the most convincing literature I read. The catechism of the four-square Left was too similar to religious catechism to be convincing, and too rigid for my political and social inclinations.

Today is the most opportune moment for Colin Ward to reintroduce Kropotkin's Fields, Factories and Workshops with able and thoughtful comments relating the book to modern circumstances.

The relevance of this work, written in the last few years of the 19th century, to social and economic conditions today is astonishing, particularly in comparison with the irrelevant rubbish that will assail the ears and eyes in the next few weeks. It is a pity that the resources of the anarchist movement are too slender to be able to put this book in every door, as an antidote, in these next few weeks.

What is remarkable about Kropotkin is the breadth of his comprehension, the compassion of his approach and the soundness of his knowledge. This is the essence and the uniqueness of the anarchist point of view, and where the leaden concepts of marxist ideology have influenced the anarchist movement away from this path the result has been a sterility and decline in vigour.

The consequences of the neglect of balanced agriculture in favour of industry are fast becoming apparent. The tendency for economic maxims, unsupported by real knowledge and facts, to lead people to think that it is quite impossible for a measure of basic self-sufficiency to be achieved, is one of the biggest obstacles to radical

Contact . . . (prisoners) **from P.8**

DUBLIN ANARCHISTS, Bob Cullen (7 yrs), Des Keane (5 yrs), Columba Longmore (4 yrs). Address for letters & papers Military Detention Centre, Curragh Camp Co, Kildare, Eire.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE SOLIDARITY Committee, 54 Harcombe Rd., N.15. Needs donations to supply study books for these long-term prisoners.

7 held re kidnapping of Spanish banker: postcards to Octavio Alberola Sunilach, Georges Riviere, Lucio Urtubia Gimenez and Arnaud Chastel at Prison de Fresnes, 1 Av. de la Division Leclerc, 94261 FRESNES, France; and to Ariane Gransac-Sadori, Jane Helen Weir and Chantal Chastel at Prison de Femmes, Fleury Merogis, 9 av. des Peupliers, 91700 ST. GENEVIEVE DES BOIS, France

rethinking. Unlike many of those with social, political and economic theories, Kropotkin travelled extensively wherever he went and looked with a knowledgeable eye at all aspects, human, physical and social, of what he saw.

During his travels he mentions glasshouses of Cheshunt and Broxbourne on the outskirts of London. The fact that there was intensive horticultural activity on the south coast at Worthing is also mentioned. As evidence of the soundness of his observation, he states that at Upper Edmonton (where I was born) was a place where there was specialisation in ferns and flowers; my grandfather had a greenhouse in his back-garden which boasted a wide variety of ferns, no doubt culled from the commercial glasshouses in the area.

Kropotkin's contention that highly productive soil is largely man-made, and that intensive cultivation is the way to achieve

KROPOTKIN'S Relevance Today

this, is borne out by the facts. Kropotkin was saddened by the derelict state of British farming, the result of cheap imported food from the colonies and the west.

Since World War II British farming has altered in one respect. It has become highly specialised, farmers are putting their eggs in one basket with disastrous results for some. Whereas livestock was largely fed from fodder produced on the same farm, now there is reliance on vast quantities of purchased feeding stuffs which are becoming ever more expensive. This has side effects in that the waste products are no longer returned to the soil from which they came. This policy, dictated by capital-intensive farming, is bringing its usual results of wasted resources and unpredictable market variations.

In Kropotkin's time the pressure produced grassing-down, which of course in the long run did conserve fertility, but the present response has the tendency to consume resources.

If one was unaware of the date of this book one would think it was written by a latter-day ecologist. He speaks of "Bonanza farms worked by militarily organised labour battalions". In Bonanza farms human labour is certainly reduced, but the crops taken from the soil are far

Remaindered titles from Freedom Bookshop:

Elisee Reclus: Evolution and Revolution 10p (3 p)
Peter Kropotkin: An Appeal to the Young 10p (3 p)
Leo Tolstoy: The Slavery of Our Times 25p (5p)
Roel Van Duyn: The Message of a Wise Kabouter (on Peter Kropotkin) 15p (7p)

too small, and the whole system is robbery culture, taking no heed of the exhaustion of the soil." (Page 104.)

He makes the point that if the land is to perform its function it has to be as "a common inheritance".

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In Kropotkin's homeland subsequent to the Revolution, ideologically-based Bonanza farming was a disaster, an industrial revolution in which millions perished of famine and forced labour. That granary of Europe has still not recovered from the agricultural mismanagement.

As Colin Ward rightly points out, when the exigency of wars ousted the market as the determining factor in agriculture it became much more successful in its purpose of feeding people in the United Kingdom.

In the chapter on industry Kropotkin

points out that in spite of the pressures towards large units, industry in his time was still dominated by small units. Even today this still applies. However, there certainly has been a tendency recently towards larger and larger financial units. The performance of these units in efficiency as far as the consumer is concerned leaves much to be desired. It has been pointed out that most amalgamations are made in the interests of market demand.

The separation of the industrial workers from their agricultural origins and industry as a partner to agriculture is probably the biggest factor in the lack of appreciation of the real economic facts of life.

The chapter on "Brain and Manual Work" especially deserves consideration. I am rather surprised that Colin Ward has not mentioned the work of Ivan Illich in this connection, for I think that Kropotkin would have followed this line of reasoning.

In Deschooling Society, Illich is at one with Kropotkin in deploring the separation of brain from hand, and he points out that

compulsory education is no real alternative to freely available learning associated with necessary and real activities; the over-specialisation of modern society in which people are dominated by "self-certifying professional elites" in fields that people themselves should know and take an active part in deciding.

As Illich rightly points out, "Tools can rule men sooner than they expect. The plow makes man lord of a garden but also the refugee from a dust bowl".

Which returns us to Kropotkin's essential contention that agriculture and industry must be human activities for human purposes, and joyful human activities.

Alan Albon.

TOLSTOY SPEAKS

THE SNARE OF THE STATE

MEN LIVE in a certain social organisation, and this organisation (like everything else in this world) continually changes with the development of consciousness in man.

But people, especially those for whom the existing order is more advantageous than for others (and there are always such), regard the existing order as conducive to the welfare of all. Therefore, for the sake of this welfare they not only deem it allowable to act unlovingly towards certain people, but also believe it to be just and good to commit the grossest iniquities so that the existing order may be maintained.

Men have instituted the right of property, and some possess land and the means of production while others have neither. This unjust possession of land and the means of production by those who do not work is regarded as the order which must be maintained, and in its interest it is believed to be just and good to imprison and execute those who infringe this order. So also, lest a neighbouring nation or sovereign should attack or subdue our nation and abolish or change the established order, it is thought just and good, not only to co-operate in the organisation of the army, but to be oneself prepared to murder men of another nationality and actually to go and slay them.

This snare is peculiar in that, whereas in the name of the first four snares* men transgress the demands of their consciences and individually commit evil deeds, in the name of the State snare are committed most awful collective iniquities, such as executions and wars; and most cruel crimes against the masses, such as slavery in the past, and the withholding of the land from the labourers in the present. Men would be unable to commit these iniquities had they not invented certain combinations by means of which the responsibility is so distributed that no one feels its weight.

This distribution of responsibility is accomplished by the acknowledgment of the necessity for an authority to ordain these crimes for the benefit of those under its rule; so that for the sake of the common welfare, its subjects must obey the injunctions of authority.

Those in authority say, "I much regret being obliged to order the

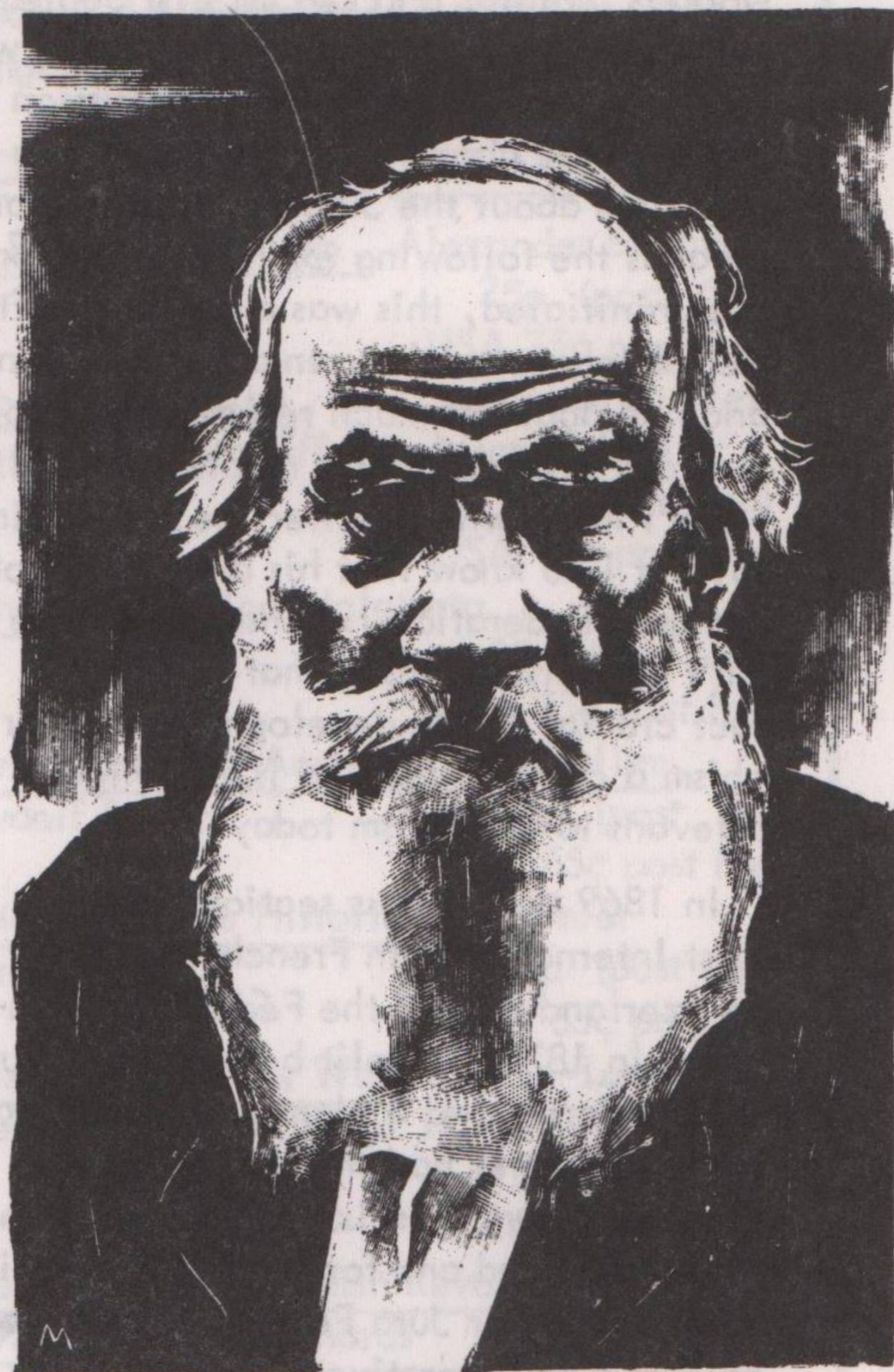
appropriation of the products of labour, to commit men to prison, exile, penal servitude, to exact the penalty of death, to wage wars, but it is my duty to act thus, for it is demanded of me by those who have endued me with power." Those in a subordinate position say, "If I rob men of their property, tear them away from their families, imprison, exile, execute them; if I ruin or kill men of another nation, bombard towns containing women and children, I do all this, not upon my own responsibility, but in fulfilment of the will of the higher power, which, for the general welfare, I have promised to obey." This constitutes the snare of the State, or of the general welfare.

LIBERATION FROM THE STATE SNARE

This cruellest of snares is, like false religion, transmitted to men by two modes of deception -- inculcation of falsehood into children, and influence exerted on the feelings of men by external solemnities. On awakening to consciousness, almost every man who lives in a state, finds himself already entangled in state snares, and living under the persuasion that his is a superior, special people, state, country, for the welfare and advancement of which he should blindly obey the existing Government, and at its bidding torture, wound and slay his fellows.

The deception of this snare consists in the assumption that, for the sake of the welfare of his nation, man may disregard the requirements of conscience, and sacrifice his moral freedom.

The evil of this snare is that as soon as we admit the possibility of ascertaining and understanding what constitutes the welfare of a number of people, there is no limit to conjecture as to the resultant welfare from any act whatever; so that any act may be justified the moment a man assumes that the welfare or life of one man may be sacrificed for the sake of the future welfare of many. There is no limit to the evil that can be done in the name of such reasoning. The first assumption -- that we can know what will promote the future welfare of many -- has been responsible in former times for torture, the inquisition, and slavery, and in our time, for courts of law, prisons, and lan-



TOLSTOY

ded property. Acting on the second assumption -- that of Caiaphas -- Christ was slain in the past, and at the present time millions perish by executions and war.

In order to avoid falling into this snare, man must understand and remember that before belonging to any state or nation he belongs to God, being a member of a universal kingdom, and that so far from being able to transfer to anyone the responsibility for his actions, he must himself alone always be answerable for them.

Therefore man must, under no circumstances, prefer men of his own nation or state to those of another; no consideration as to the future welfare of many must ever induce him to do harm to his neighbours; and he must not think that he ought to obey anyone whatever in preference to his own conscience.

*The personal snare, or snare of preparation; the family snare, or snare of the continuation of the race; the snare of activity, or utility; and the snare of fellowship, or fidelity.

--From The Christian Teaching, transl. by Vladimir Tchertkoff, published in 1898.

Although the book from which the above quotations are taken is a very personal and individual exposition of religious belief, the unequivocal anarchism of Tolstoy's

In his letter about worker's control and workers' control (FREEDOM 21st September), Peter Neville suggests that "most writers", in avoiding a "serious discussion of what we are about", like to "drop in a few hints about the Jura Federation"; and he adds the following explanation: "For the uninitiated, this was a guild of craftsmen shopkeepers that ran a co-op union and had about as much resemblance to present day anarchism as a medieval guild." I don't know which writers he is referring to, but I do know that his description of the Jura Federation is nonsense; I hope it isn't pedantic to insist that this was in fact crucial in the development of anarchism a century ago and is still highly relevant to anarchism today.

In 1869 the various sections of the First International in French-speaking Switzerland formed the Fédération Romande; in 1870 this split between a Bakuninist majority and a Marxist minority, and since the latter had the support of the General Council in London, in 1871 the former seceded and formed the Fédération Jurassienne, or Jura Federation. This was neither a co-operative nor a union - though it encouraged both co-operatives and unions - but a political party which included libertarian socialists from all over French-speaking Switzerland, and which provided the mass base for Bakunin's struggle against Marx in the International and for the emergence of the independent anarchist tendency in the labour movement. It was largely drawn from the well-known watchmakers of the Jura region (who were craftsmen, though not shopkeepers), but it involved all kinds of workers, unskilled labourers as well as skilled artisans, and also committed intellectuals.

The Jura Federation made the first call for a federalist reformation of the International in 1871, took the lead in the formation of a separate federalist International in 1872, and remained the nucleus of libertarian internationalism during the 1870s. Because of its position in

Tolstoy Speaks (from P.5)

philosophy is, I should think, one with which all anarchists would agree. Of course, to take quotations out of context is to be selective, but the chapters relevant to anarchism are reproduced here, in full, and without omission.

The copy I have of The Christian Teaching is dated 1898 - the year of publication; but knowing Tolstoy's popularity, in the field of fiction anyway, I have no idea how many copies were sold in the first edition, and consequently how rare or not this work is. If any reader of FREEDOM can tell me, or if anyone would like to borrow the book, please drop me a line.

Brian P. Boreham,
9a Seymour Road,
Hampton Hill, Midx.

French-speaking Switzerland, it attracted many anarchist exiles from other countries, the best-known being Bakunin and Kropotkin. It was in the sections and congresses, in the papers and pamphlets of the Jura Federation that libertarian theory was developed from anti-authoritarian collectivism towards anarchist communism and anarcho-syndicalism. In this process its members discussed worker's and workers' control in terms which are just as relevant to the 1970s as they were to the 1870s - see, for example, James Guillaume's Idées sur l'organisation sociale (1876) and Adhémar Schwitzguébel's Programme socialiste (1880), both reprinted in Daniel Guérin's Ni Dieu Ni Maître and the former translated in Sam Dolgoff's Bakunin on Anarchy - and which are indeed more relevant to the needs of today than Peter Neville's letter.

N.W.

THE CRIME OF BEING YOUNG

Dear Freedom,

P.T.'s article on soccer hooliganism (7th Sept.) is an example of "anarchist schmalz", that sentimental disease which is brought on by any suggestion of imperfections in the working class. Just reading the title I could picture the righteous tears welling up in P.T.'s eyes at the thought that anyone should want to interfere with the simple delights that this section of the working class young derives from beating each other senseless. The rest of the article is partly an exercise in the use of the more grotesque kind of anarchist platitude (the kind you feel could be produced just by kicking P.T. in the right place) and partly just plain wrong.

I should have thought that for any anarchist, the sight of individuals, whether soccer hooligans or ragging students, being so eager to sink their own personalities in a mindless mob would have been a cause for massive despondency.

And I find it even more depressing to see that the orthodoxies of anarchism can be just as enslaving as any others.

London SE 10

L. Riches

Portugal (from P.8)

in behind our banner until it became the most heterogeneous. A band of gypsies joined us as well...

The entrance into the stadium was unforgettable. Our numbers were such that we believed that no more anarchists would join us - but we were wrong; all the time more black flags would appear through the crowds and placards bearing the words Federacion Iberica and anarchist slogans...

We have formed a support com-

PAGE 6

Dear All,

Donald Room (14 Sept.) talks cavalierly of Kropotkin's examples of mutual aid in animals as being pure inventions. It happens that I have just re-read Mutual Aid, in which the story of the ants also figured, and noticed that throughout it is heavily documented from the observations of naturalists - including of course Kropotkin himself, who was a recognised authority whose work is still part of many normal academic curricula. That observation may have been inaccurate, but it was hardly invention.

The particular story of the ants was not Kropotkin's own observation (I forget who was quoted). Moreover, I recall many years ago in school (in a textbook written by a man who certainly showed no evidence of being a leftist, the textbook being used in a public school unlikely to have chosen textbooks for socialistic arguments) coming across the same story. Whether this was culled from the same authority as Kropotkin got it, I know not; but either two observers reached the same conclusion or one observer - sufficiently highly regarded to be quoted by authors at least fifty years apart and of widely differing views - reached it.

It may well be that the story was wrong. It may be that Donald Room can quote an whole string of counter-observers to refute the story. It certainly is true that no scientists ever motivated by nothing but that totally unbiased quest for truth, so beloved of the myths, ever discovered anything; and so one can assume that Kropotkin's other beliefs tended to colour both his observations and his assessment of those of other people; nevertheless before dismissing his views as pure invention, individualists might well name the contrary evidence, and at least concede that they too are motivated by bias.

The nearest Room comes is to mention Desmond Morris and Lorenz, neither of whom is noted for studies of ants, and one would refer Room to the collection Man and Aggression (edited by Ashley Montagu) before he assumes the total objectivity of these authorities outside their own fields.

Salop.

Fraternally,

Laurens Otter.

mittee to assist the Portuguese comrades because, although their situation is favourable it is also critical. The other parties have sufficient funds and means to carry out their propaganda whereas our comrades' resources are limited. We must assist them in this historic moment of the development of the libertarian movement in Portugal. They need books, pamphlets, leaflets and money so try to get as many comrades and groups to support them. We shall send you addresses where you can send parcels.*

--reprinted from Industrial Union Newsletter, Toronto, Canada

*see Contact Column --Editors.

REVIEW

WHOSE CONSPIRACY? by Geoff Robertson. 53pp. (NCCL) 50p.

WHOSE CONSPIRACY? is the title of a pamphlet, recently issued by the National Council for Civil Liberties, which deals with Britain's conspiracy laws. It is of considerable interest to us, as a quotation used early on in the pamphlet shows: "The crime of conspiracy affords support for any who advance the proposition that the criminal law is an instrument of government." According to the pamphlet this quotation comes from "a leading textbook on English Criminal Law". Whether this is true or not I can't say but one of the examples used in the pamphlet shows that the quotation is true.

Dennis Warren was one of the 'Shrewsbury 24', people arrested in connection with the flying pickets of the 1972 building workers' strike. He was convicted of "conspiring to intimidate" Lump workers and given 3 years. If he had been convicted of actually intimidating anyone the maximum sentence would have been THREE MONTHS. Clearly the conspiracy laws came in very handy for a Tory government out to smash this new (and effective) form of protest. There is no limit to the sentence that may be imposed for a conspiracy conviction so, in theory, Warren could have got life.

Besides the length of sentence, there are a lot of other advantages to conspiracy charges. The prosecution can use evidence that would otherwise be inadmissible, for example on the grounds that it was only hearsay. (If the defendant is also charged with committing a real offence as well as conspiring, then "inadmissible" evidence may be used!) The other conspirators don't have to be named, which is rather useful if they don't exist. The date of the conspiracy can be as vague as "on divers days between the 1st day of January 1969 and the second day of February 1970". (Both this and the previous example

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come from the prosecution of Peter Hain over the disruption of the Springboks' tour.) It is a criminal offence to conspire to do something that is not a criminal offence (e.g. in certain circumstances to commit trespass, which is only a civil offence). It is even a criminal offence to conspire to do something that is neither a criminal nor a civil offence (e.g. conspiring to subvert public morality. Please remember that the people who decide whether something does or does not subvert public morality are judges.) Talking of judges it's also interesting to note that "a nod or a wink may amount to conspiracy" (the judge in the Stoke Newington 8 trial) and "it can be a conspiracy when they never met and never knew each other" (the judge in the Shrewsbury 24 trial).

Getting back to the pamphlet it is regrettable (but inevitable, seeing that the NCCL is a supporter of government) that the answer to the conspiracy laws is seen not as the abolition of laws but as a reform passed by Parliament.

In a similar vein the pamphlet points out that judges are not good representatives of the public since they are older than most and come mainly from the upper middle class. If they were true representatives of the public (assuming such exist) then presumably they would have the right firstly to decide whether a given action was or was not in the interests of public morality and secondly to impose prison sentences if the action turned out not to be. This is obvious authoritarianism.

At least the pamphlet ends on an optimistic and anarchistic note -- if the conspiracy laws remain as they are then judges might stop convicting. In fact, despite the author's political bias anarchism cannot be kept out of a discussion on the law.

To sum up, I'd recommend Whose Conspiracy? as an introduction to one of the instruments the ruling class uses to maintain its position -- one that is being used today.

MO.

A STATE OF MIND

NOT THE LEAST of my reasons for accepting the beliefs of Anarchism is because of the impossibility of accepting an all-embracing comprehensive view of society, and the self-defeating attempts to impose a social order, based upon such a view.

Henry Miller, in defence of his non-involvement during the last war, wrote that even if Hitler had succeeded in conquering the whole world, "the poor fellow would have died of brain fever within a week". Trying to comprehend the infinite totality of factors within any large society leads either to the realisation of the impossibility of such a task, or the refuge of simplistic make-believe in the politics of a grand design and the erroneous assumption that manufactured law is the solution to social disorder.

It is primarily the Hobbesian view of the "natural" state of society that convinces men that, but for the state, life would be "nasty, brutish and short". Unfortunately, of course, as history demonstrates, the need for order becomes the desire for order - not any attainable order, but an unrealistic projection of subjective fear and desire that finds its most absurd expression in the totalitarian state, where the norms of one man or the ruling elite become the norms for everybody else.

Fascism is only the most obvious example of private fear and desire raised to the level of principles. The liberal democratic state, its policies not determined by one man or an elite, but many competing individuals and groups, demonstrates the again impossible task of social control and the enforced unification of men by power, that does not, and cannot, exist.

Totalitarian thinking is not the prerogative of dictatorships of the classic type: its philosophical base is essentially the same as

any ideology accepting the prerequisite of power, with an imaginary comprehension of society. Such thinking thus compounds the natural (quantitative) complexity of social relationships by the imposition of mistaken assumptions, not only about other men and their beliefs, but also the possibilities for (qualitative) change.

The state, and - more important - the state of mind that supports it, refuses to acknowledge the delusional utopianism of order through law. It fails to recognise that the exercise of power inevitably becomes an end in itself, instead of a means. It cannot, because it will not, see the problems it has itself created, of necessity, to justify its continued existence.

The fundamental argument of the anarchist, as distinct from all other brands of reformist or "revolutionary", is his unequivocal rejection of power through authority, as an evil in itself. The only hope for real change lies in the changing of opinion, from without the institutions of control, that sustain authority. As William Godwin wrote, 180 years ago: "All government is founded in opinion... Destroy this opinion and the fabric which is built upon it falls to the ground".

B.P.B.

PRESS FUND

12th-18th September

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£873.46

(The following is an extract from a letter written by Spanish comrades visiting Portugal following the April coup.)

YESTERDAY we arrived from Lisbon after passing what was a historic and unforgettable day for us. After forty-eight years of oppression it was so impressive and at the same time very difficult to explain what was happening there. An entire people were in the streets - shouting, singing, dancing, embracing one another. Tears of happiness flowed down their faces -- they were free!

Although we could not join in the march with them because of the numerous T.V. cameras, photographers and the Brigada Poli-

In Brief

PAT ARROWSMITH has to serve an extra 28 days of her 18-months' sentence, losing that amount of remission, for absconding from an open prison. She protested that the prison adjudication was conducted without any time for her to prepare a defence, and that she had given no undertaking not to escape; in fact she had announced that she would do so in order to call attention to the injustices of her case.

A DEMONSTRATOR at Red Lion Square in June claimed at the enquiry that he was beaten with truncheons, necessitating ten stitches, after taking the number of a police officer who, he alleged, had called on other police to trample on a fallen marcher. The

Judge in charge of the enquiry said that the witness was not entitled to absolute privilege (in spite of promises to witnesses that they would not be prosecuted on charges arising out of evidence given). The Judge said, "You must be very careful about your answers. I cannot protect you against the civil law" (e.g. for slander).

SIR MORTIMER WHEELER, the archeologist, speaking on television recalled that in 1938 he was surprisingly offered a doctorate at Bristol University, bestowed by Winston Churchill who was then Chancellor of the university. As a quid pro quo, it was revealed that Churchill wanted help with his History of the English-Speaking Peoples (not published, for obvious reasons, till 1954). Churchill wanted to know who was the first Englishman. On the then available evidence, Wheeler said, "Oh, the Piltdown Man" - subsequently revealed as a hoax and a forgery. When the book was finally published (in 1954) Wheeler had access to the proof texts and was able to expunge all references to the Piltdown Man

Sancho Panza.

PORTUGAL

tico Social from Spain who were undoubtedly present, we remained close by the flag which was ours and was carried by our comrades.

Our own happiness overflowed in tears when, as a major demonstration was about to get underway, we saw a red and black banner raised and begin to flutter in the breeze. Time had left its mark on this banner - it had not seen the light of day for over half a century. On it was the inscription A.I.T. and the date 8.5.1919. We could hardly believe our eyes! Behind the banner was a group of twelve or so elderly men and as they filed past we could not find words to articulate our feelings -- it was them, it could not have been

anyone else. We turned and shouted to them, "We are comrades from Madrid!" They turned to us, equally surprised and we embraced with unimaginable feelings of joy. The Portuguese comrades had not expected to meet other comrades, least of all Spanish comrades and young ones at that. . .

We discussed many subjects at length. Some spoke about their old comrades in the F.A.I. Some had fought in the war, Q...spoke about the founding of the F.A.I., others of the Saragossa Congress, B...of his life, J...of his forty years in prison and, as he put it, "Here I am." Everyone spoke of the Confederaçao. . .

Before long many more people had swelled the numbers behind the anarchist flag. The metalworkers joined us in force as did the printers -- all the time more and more people were falling

(Cont. P. 6)

CONTACT

HELP fold and despatch FREEDOM on Thursdays from 2 p.m. at Freedom Press, followed by get together with refreshments.

EVERY SATURDAY, Mental Patients Union 2 pm at 37 Mayola Rd., Clapton E.5 (tel. 01-985 5251). Information on activities elsewhere from same address.

COMRADE seeks flat Belsize Park. Can pay up to £ 8 a week rent. Replies to Box No. 68, Freedom.

COMRADE here from Tokyo until December needs accommodation low rent (& job suggestions). Mikio Wakayama, c/o Freedom.

LONDON. Emotion & understanding in Music; People and Politics; London's Environment: three of the nine subjects of Workers' Education Assn. (Central London) 1974/5 session. Sidney Billson, 33 Compton Rd., N.1. will send all details of classes on request.

NEW YORK. LIBERTARIAN BOOK CLUB Fall Lectures, Thurs. evenings 7.30 at Workmen's Circle Center, 369 8th Ave., (SW corner 29 St.). Admission free.

Oct. 10: Merrill Moss, Anarchism, Syndicalism & the Counterculture; Oct. 24 Samuel H. Friedmann, The Middle East Problem - can it be solved? Nov. 14: Irving Levitas, Anarchism in New England; Dec. 12: Dan Georgakas and Leonard Rubenstein, Art and Anarchy.

ALTERNATE SUNDAYS Hyde Park Anarchist Forum, Speakers' Corner 1 p.m. Speakers, listeners and hecklers welcome.

ANARCHIST WOMEN's group meets Mondays. Tel. 01-883-2457.

BLACKBURN ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Keith Sowerby, 150 Shorrock Lane, Blackburn BB2 5TT. (Tel. 28380).

CORBY ANARCHISTS. For meetings and activities write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants.

INTERNATIONAL LIBERTARIAN CENTRE /CENTRO IBERICO. Sats. & Suns. from 7.30. Disco &c. 83A Haverstock Hill, London NW3 (entrance in Steele's Rd., 2nd door). Tube Chalk Fm or Belsize Pk.

PLAYERS wanted for London based Anarchist Football team(s). Contact Jim at Freedom Press.

Some London Anarchists meet socially at Finch's The One Tun, Goodge St. W.1. Sundays 7.30. (Don't ask at bar.)

PORTUGUESE Libertarian Movement needs books, pamphlets, free copies of anarchist publications, money & ideological support Movimiento Libertario Portugues, Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2^o-E. LISBOA I.

CLASS WAR COMIX No. 1 New Times 25p (post 7p) Epic Publications, 76 Peckham Rd. S.E.5. (or Freedom Bookshop).

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Published by Freedom Press, London, E. 1. Printed by Vineyard Press, Colchester.