

Freedom

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ELECTIONS IN GERMANY

ON SUNDAY, September 28, Germany goes to the polls. For people outside Germany this may not appear to be a very important event. Since 1945 Germany has achieved economic miracles, admittedly with the assistance of American capital. She is presented as the showpiece of Europe's Western-styled capitalism as compared to that of the East.

So much faith has been placed in the new Germany that the Western powers consented to her rearmament, Krupps, Flicks, I. G. Farben, and Thyssens were back to 'business as usual'. At Potsdam the Allies agreed that the concentration of power in the hands of these industrialists should be ended, but early in the 1950's such an agreement was forgotten. Western capital invested in Germany needed to show financial returns.

For millions of people 1945 meant the end of Nazism; never again would fascism rise in Germany. The central body of a cancer can be killed but tentacles can not only survive, but grow, which in fact appears to be the case in Germany today. The National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) is a case in point. At this moment of time it is a minority party, but if one traces its progress since its inception in November 1964, it can be seen that it is gathering support at a realistic rate, slowly, not as a 'flash in the pan' affair collecting support on a current controversial issue.

The NPD is a merger of three ultra-right-wing groups who joined together for the purpose of obtaining the 5 per cent minimum of total votes cast needed in an election in order to be represented in the Federal Parliament. Prior to 1966 the 5 per cent had never been achieved, although isolated ex-Nazi strongholds returned as much as 7 to 15 per cent of the vote for the area. Since 1966 the NPD has had election successes. In 1967 it gained 8.8 per cent

of the poll in the Bremen provincial election, thus securing representation in the Bavarian Landtag.

The policy of the NPD is one of intense nationalism, 'Germany for the Germans', with the reunification of Germany and the return of lost territories beyond the Oder-Neisse line and the Sudetenland. One can imagine the NPD programme taken from a tape made in the 1930's. The emotional appeal is again present calling upon the middle classes, shopkeepers, and refugees from Eastern Germany for support. If the NPD secures 5 per cent of the total vote cast, neo-Nazi Deputies will be in the Bonn Parliament.

The whole German election campaign appears to be one of who can smear their opponent the most successfully. All parties are in favour of law and order, control over students and trade unionists. The NPD is in favour of controlling the unions and says so, the other political parties are also in favour, although they do not necessarily say so but will do so if necessary.

The surprise happening during the campaign period is the spread of wild-cat strikes. Over the last few years German workers have been cited by British politicians as an example for British workers to follow, hard-working, non-striking paragons of industrial virtue. But something has gone wrong, the rank and file have really shaken their leadership. The steel workers came out first, followed by the coal miners and metal workers. Pay demands are spreading from industry to industry, in an endeavour to combat the rising cost of living.

As Sunday, September 28, draws closer, the mud-slinging will grow thicker, but in reality the politics will close ranks, a government will be elected, and the charade of parliamentarianism will continue for another term of office.

BILL CHRISTOPHER.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

THE STRIKE of ambulance workers has proved that the industrial slaves do not possess the elementary right to form or join a union of their own choice. Of course the biggest example of this was the fight by the blue union to recruit the Mersey dockers. Listen now to the arrogance of the dirty bastards who lead NUPE, one of the unions that is fighting the ambulance men tooth and nail.

'We have tolerated this nonsense long enough. Tomorrow teams of officials are going to explain our side and get a resumption of work.'

What a goddamned cheek! Of course to building trade workers this kind of official scabbing is nothing new. During the Shell-Mex strike the then union officials declared the site open to all union labour, except the two thousand sacked by MacAlpine.

In their scabbery they have the absolute support of the employers. Indeed a lady ambulance worker was victimised by the GLC at the direct instigation of one of the 'official unions'. The employers gave their support because they know that at all costs the sheep must be kept penned up in the official field, because any attempt to graze outside might give the poor beasts false ideas of their own importance.

In their scabbery the official unions

have Government support. Mr. Wilson at the TUC demands that unions tackle all those who lead unofficial strikes. Mr. Wilson certainly does not want the sheep roaming around, unattended by the trade union sheep herders.

Mutual Aid, of which I am very proud to be a member, stands for the fundamental right of all workers to join what they damn well please. More, we want to help all those who, in trying to break out of jail, are injured in the escape bid. But is this enough? Isn't it time that the members of the official unions realised that three or four unions in an industry, far from splitting the workers, strengthens their bargaining power, not least with their officials. In Dublin, when the bus-workers formed an independent union the other unions couldn't get off their fat arses quick enough to start fighting for demands twenty years old.

The ambulance men will need money. Can FREEDOM and Mutual Aid and anybody else open a fund now? I will contribute when I pick up my wages on Thursday. Can't we do even more? Can't we launch a campaign that has as its aim the establishment of the right of any man or woman to be in an organisation of their choice?

BRIAN BEHAN.

Total Freedom Demands Total Revolution

THE PREDICAMENT of the people of Northern Ireland is not radically different from that of oppressed people everywhere. And people ARE oppressed everywhere, in varying degrees and through varying methods.

What makes the situation unbearable in Ulster is that as well as the modern refinements of capitalist exploitation the people have to suffer the medieval intolerances of religious bigots. Battles which have sunk in the mire of history in more enlightened communities still inflame the passions in Derry; old sores are carefully kept open by the sick probing of witch doctors for whom a healthy body is anathema; with very little bread and no circuses, the Roman dictum of divide and rule is operated by throwing the Christians at each other. All this, and CS too, is too much.

In view of which, we find the demands of the day are pathetically modest. 'Work and Homes' can hardly be described as a revolutionary slogan and yet so devalued is the standard of life in this highly moralistic backwater of the British Empire that it appears to be just that. If the Northern Irish are going to be content with somebody organising work and homes for them, we have no doubt this can be arranged without giving them one iota more freedom, more control over their own lives, more hope for the future or indeed anything other than a slave society. In prison you are provided with work and a home—of sorts.

In this situation therefore the revolutionary may well be in despair. The possibility of the Christians of Belfast practising a little brotherly love is remote indeed—and those groupings which are not (or pretend they are not) motivated by religious factors are divided by nationalistic and political factors. There appears to be no common cause which unites the Northern Irish—in spite of common suffering in poor conditions under venal politicians and ambitious priests who exploit the situation most cynically, and carve the people up between them for the better continuance of their power.

To try to find a rational way out of this mess is a daunting task. Our more extrovert comrades no doubt will find the present conflict an ex-

citing way to practice their barricade drill—always a worthwhile occupation, in preparation for the real thing. There are little enough opportunities in Britain to master the techniques of street warfare and perfect the production of petrol-bombs, so that the enraged citizen moved to action is always at a disadvantage faced with the professionals of the State.

But in view of the fact that the possibility of extracting a revolutionary solution out of the Ulster bog is more than remote, this kind of activity remains—practice. What is the real work for the anarchist in Northern Ireland today?

First and foremost his responsibility is to survive. The authoritarian solution that will emerge at the end of the present jockeying for positions can only be tougher for libertarians. If in fact the bigots sense the danger to their power in the present unrest—if it goes any deeper than begging for work and homes—then they will forget their sectarian differences and join forces against the common enemy. The anarchists, after all, are the common enemy for all bigots and all people in power. A top level alliance between Protestants and Catholics will bring out the worst in both sides and Christ will not be able to help anybody. And just as ruling classes everywhere are to date more international-minded than workers anywhere, so the Paisleyites and the Top Brass Catholics, for all their present snarling, will join hands against any truly revolutionary emergence which, after all, must be anti-clerical (if not atheistic) in the Irish scene.

Even if this does not happen, a dangerous situation is emerging for the revolutionary. If it is true that a fascist-type armed force is being created behind the scenes by a group of ultra-reactionaries, then anarchists are likely to be Number One target for such thugs, for no government and no power group on either side will bewail their passing and the deterrent effect on others will cool it for the power-seekers.

The situation then is much more potentially reactionary than revolutionary. With a working class so divided that they spend more energy fighting each other than fighting the ruling class, where the Catholics who traditionally have support from

Eire feel their best friends to be the British Army(!), where the B Specials are being stood down, but the Ulster Volunteers are said to be arming, where the IRA are doing nothing and the Sinn Fein mouthing nationalistic platitudes, where there is no revolutionary tradition or knowledge and no body of libertarian opinion, then, oh then, the task of the responsible revolutionary becomes very clear, but is clearly a very long haul indeed.

The only advantage to the anarchist movement which may emerge from the Ulster events is that a handful of the people who have received the anarchist message will take up the true revolutionary struggle—with experience in action and in a population similarly experienced.

The responsibility of the revolutionary in Ulster has been clarified and the task made easier only inasmuch as the reactionaries have shown their hands—and will perhaps show them even more. Given his ability to survive, the long task of agitation and education, of building an anarchist movement, begins—an enormous task against ignorance and depression wherein the enlightened and free individual becomes hated and feared the more successful he is.

But although one tends to speak of Ulster almost as though it is isolated from the rest of the world, this is not so. The revolt of the young which is raising the banners of freedom round the world is not going to be kept out of Ulster either by the Black International or by the Green or Orange backwoodsmen.

The young people of today are going to demand escape from the repressions of the Catholic Church and better economic conditions against the semi-feudal capitalism of the Unionists. Total freedom will call for the total revolution of the anarchists.

Ulster does present special problems for the anarchist movement—but this is a challenge which we must take up. We must extend solidarity to our comrades there right up to the demands of the situation. If the situation for our comrades becomes extreme then we must give warning to any who threaten them that our solidarity will become extreme as well.

JUSTIN.

Piccadilly Embattles

THE LONDON STREET COMMUNE now holds two buildings in London. They have abandoned the premises in Crown Court because 'if there is going to be a fight, we might as well make a stand where it's worthwhile'. The two new buildings (an old school in Endell Street and an enormous building on the corner of Park Lane and Piccadilly) are certainly worth fighting for, and possibly easier to defend.

144 Piccadilly is certainly a desirable residence. The rooms are huge with coloured marble fireplaces, enormous windows and balconies giving an excellent view of Green Park, Hyde Park Gate with its police station, St. George's Hospital and Wellington Museum, not to mention the constant swirl and snarl of traffic below.

There is no furniture in the building, but huge mirrors in one room suggest that it may have been a ballet school once. Another large room was definitely used as a cinema.

The method of room allocation is very straightforward. People just paint on the door: Occupied by Peter, Jack or Mary, and that's that. Inside such a room was the slogan 'Permanent Revolution' and a book in French on the tribal young.

They have both electricity and water and the lift is also working. In all the rooms people were clearing up and they have organised all aspects of their operations with more skill and sense than it is expected from those who are generally regarded as a load of layabouts and loafers.

The only jarring note was the presence of the New Police, the Hell's Angels, who have installed themselves on the top floor and were physically preventing people entering their quarters. They claimed they were essential for the defence of the place and also to make sure that 'food was properly distributed'. The happy-go-lucky atmosphere in the rest of the building took no notice of this ominous presence above. Down below

they were talking of the new society, but the Hell's Angels only copy the old. The usual help is wanted: skilled men. They could also use a van to collect furniture.

LITTLE SWELL.

Attention all groups and individuals

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'IT'S ALRIGHT MA I'M ONLY BLEEDING'

EASY RIDER, 'the movie that tells it like it is', says the publicity machine. . . . *Easy Rider*, prize winner at a film festival somewhere or other, much-vaunted creation of Peter Fonda (son of famous film liberal dad) and ageing hippie Dennis Hopper (who was a juvenile lead in *Giant*—the James Dean epic), is being given the full hard-sell treatment. This alone is enough to put me right off, but the timely arrival of a well-publicised movie about motorbikes/drugs/hard travelling/rock and revolution seems awfully like rich Hollywood kids jumping on an already overcrowded bandwagon and raises all my worst suspicions.

However, the film is much better than that. It's no masterpiece, it's not great art, but it does raise some pertinent questions about what is going on now, i.e. what many are likely to call 'the revolution'. The film concerns the adventures of 'Captain America' and 'Billy', who, having made a killing selling cocaine, stash the take in the petrol tanks of their Harley Davidsons and set off across America to visit the Mardi Gras in New Orleans. The beginning of the film is terribly slow and taxed my patience to the limit. . . . Captain America is established as the thinker, i.e. he broods and sets his jaw, gazes into the distance a bit. Billy, played by Hopper, looks like a latter-day Buffalo Bill and is amiable and dense. They both smoke . . . you know, 'smoke', throughout the film. In fact they both seem a bit thick and I'm really not sure whether this is the intention of the film or a limitation of their imagination and acting ability.

Anyway, after many lengthy shots of sunsets and the thinking Fonda the film begins to warm up. The riders stay at the ranch of a happy farmer with hundreds of kids. The boys repair a bike while the farmer shoes a horse, they dine with the family (out of doors), grace is said, Billy forgets to take off his hat, a ponderous point is made about the value of the simple life. The farmer appears to have achieved the American Dream, but we know nothing of the peons who work the farm.

The film continually points up the effect of the appearance of our heroes on other people (Fonda wears black leathers and stars and stripes on his back, helmet and petrol tank) and they are refused admittance at a roadhouse and take to sleeping outdoors. Soon they pick up a hitchhiker, a silent bloke who looks like Clint Walker, and he leads them to a drop-out community and the film begins to get interesting. Our heroes (city boys?) were edgy at the farm but in the commune, Billy, in particular, is completely out of place. Curiously, although the drop-outs and Billy wear the same gear, their ethic is entirely different. At this point I began to get an inkling that the film had something to say about 'style' and length of hair, etc., being not enough . . . it's not appearance that changes things, it's ideas and the will to carry them out. The glimpse of commune life is interesting. Their life is agricultural and seemingly polygamous, their style is Christian simplicity/American pio-

MARK FOILS SQUATTING ATTEMPT

AT 6.30 P.M. last Friday night, members of the Harrogate and Leeds Groups approached the empty house laden with sleeping bags, posters, leaflets, etc., ready to squat in it. We were confronted by an extraordinary sight.

The house was swarming with council workmen hastily rendering it uninhabitable by removing the roof, smashing walls and eventually firing it. The fuzz sat in a van nearby and got out as we approached.

We discovered on Saturday that we were thwarted by the efforts of a certain female Liberal councillor who had attended our meeting on the Thursday night and was told about the squat in the hope that she would support us. (The local gutter press follow her activities keenly but hate mentioning any of ours.)

Despite this setback, some leafletting was done in Harrogate on the Saturday and we are already looking for a suitable family as we have discovered another privately-owned empty house in Harrogate.

THE HARROGATE GROUP.

neer and they sow wheat by hand and pray for a good harvest. They are entertained by their own mime troupe. I felt it wouldn't be long before the whole set-up became puritan and authoritarian and they were running off strangers for looking at their women. I suspect that this sequence may have been filmed on an actual commune and it had a fierce reality about it.

Night in the Nick

When Billy and Captain America leave the commune they head south and are arrested for 'taking part in a carnival cavalcade without a licence' and they spend a night in the nick. There they meet George, memorably played by Jack Nicholson, who is a civil rights lawyer and plain old-fashioned drunk. George pulls a few strings and gets our heroes and himself out and decides to go to New Orleans with them . . . he digs out



his old football helmet and a sleeping bag and they hit the road again. George wears a crumpled linen suit and a parting and keeps a whisky bottle in his pocket but, unlike our hip heroes, George knows what's going on. In a very funny sequence he smokes with Billy and Cap'n A. and launches on a garrulous but accurate dissertation about the nature of freedom and we get to the real core of the film at last. The script is credited to Hopper/Fonda and Terry Southern but whether this part was written or ad-libbed by the actor, this is the first part of the film (with the exception of the music) that is worth listening to . . . the rest of the script is invariably monosyllabic and frequently inaudible.

Before George disappears there is a nasty scene in a roadside bar where the easy riders are treated to the observations of the local southern sheriff and his self-appointed posse. In an atmosphere of barely suppressed violence, it becomes apparent that they are not going to be served and that they'll be beaten up if they stay any longer. The teenage girls in the bar obviously fancy the Captain and Billy BECAUSE of their appearance and George's prophetic remarks about even different clothes being a threat to the 'freedom' of straight American society begin to sound ominous.

From here on I found the film rather implausible and flat without George. Our heroes reach New Orleans but miss out on the Mardi Gras by going to a baroque brothel and tripping out with a couple of the girls instead. The LSD trip isn't badly done, it's just that the whole idea is a bit tired . . . there seems to be a muddled Christian message somewhere at the core of this one, but maybe an oblique point is made about drugs getting in the way of things you want to do. Certainly Captain America, in a burst of garrulity, observes, 'We blew it, Billy.' . . . Billy doesn't understand what he's talking about. The boys set off, rather sadly, on the return journey to the inevitable violent, but not overstated climax, and George's prophecy is fulfilled.

SOLIDARITY

We hope it is not too late to point out that Solidarity (like the AFB) consists of several groups, each of which is entirely independent—therefore A. Meltzer's criticism of individuals ('Freedom', 23.8.69) must not be taken to apply to the movement as a whole.—Editors.

Superb Music

The film is beautifully served by its music and, as in *The Graduate*, they've chosen good existing recordings rather than having music specially written. There was a credit list of the bands at the end but I can't remember most of them. Hendrix was instantly recognisable with a drug song—one of several drug songs in the film—and the Byrds were outstanding. Most of the music had a country/rock feel and sometimes images of the riders, American landscape and rock music were superb. The faults of the film, I thought, were its slow pace, over-indulgent and narcissistic close-ups on the riders and a general lack of tightness. But, paradoxically, these are also the things which interested me most . . . because, quite unintentionally, I suspect, the film reveals that that's how it is.

Our heroes are no rebels, they are just businessmen who have a lucky break. They are passive, uncritical and they are beguiled by the American Dream of the good life. Their route is via selling drugs, and beyond wanting to be left alone, there is no commitment—merely a bland acceptance. George's argument that even looking different puts one at risk in America is interesting but while the machine makes huge profits from fashion and music, and the most outspoken advocates of revolution and drug culture still find record companies, still go on world tours, still make huge profits and demand fat fees, we must ask 'What risk? What revolution?' The outward appearances of things change but underneath nothing changes. War is the health of the state—now, as ever. . . . I heard a member of a British rock band blandly tell a BBC interviewer that their music was 'to cause a revolution'. What a load of old rhubarb that is!

It's precisely because they are such an empty threat that the new revolutionaries are allowed so much freedom to get on with it . . . or as they would say 'do their thing'. What are the Beatles if not old-fashioned capitalists? . . . they wear the clothes of the new revolution but they are still managers and employers of other people, bosses we call them. And Lennon complained the other week that he

was down to his 'last £30,000 or so'. While every newspaper in the country reported that Dylan was to receive £38,000 for his IOW gig, he tells a reporter in the *Sketch* . . . 'It's not the money I'm interested in, I just want to play music'.

Of course I can see that even the mild non-conformity of Billy and Captain America does arouse hostility and even violence in the south but, to put the matter in perspective, they wouldn't raise a second glance on the west coast. And anyway, just looking different isn't going to bring about any significant change in society, let alone a revolution. It's very difficult to judge how much Fonda/Hopper associate their views with the views of America/Billy . . . certainly the Captain's remark about 'just grooving along and doing our thing' may well be their philosophy too. I can't help feeling that Hopper/Fonda are aligned very much with the emerging underground which seems to be dissipating its energies in promoting Rock as the saviour of the world, muttering 'just grooving man' to each other and making movies about free rock concerts and each other.

Deadening Passivity

I wonder how many films will be made about the IOW festival which will later be produced as evidence of the growing 'revolution'. What worried me about our heroes in *Easy Rider* was their complete incomprehension of the forces at work in America, their indifference to the fate of George, their deadening passivity. And the same thing worries me about pop festivals. Every newspaper and all TV and radio coverage pointed out how well-behaved, how polite, how friendly people were on the IOW. Some interviews I heard, on Radio 4, with fans of Dylan, seemed to bear this out . . . of course, it may be mis-reporting, I don't know, I wasn't there, but I suspect it's accurate enough. My response was how BLOODY PASSIVE they are! If the total effect of rock and pop is to produce this army of lotus eaters we shall soon have state-promoted pop festivals and pot on the NH. One reporter likened the spirit of the festival to the Aldermaston March . . . that's not how I remember it. In its heyday the march was anything but

THE RED ENSIGN OR THE CROSS OF ST. PIRAN

WE LIVE in an age of revolutions, not unlike the years preceding and following 1848, 'the year of revolutions'. The struggle for freedom for the individual is linked now, as it was then, with the struggle of small nationalities for independence. The economic and social pressures which are created by technical change produce this situation. The revolt spreads from one part of the world to another, and is continually springing up in the most unexpected, and sometimes most remote, places, Anguilla and Sark, and now Cornwall.

Up till now Cornish nationalism has been pretty quiet. Now a typically silly piece of bureaucratic interference has sparked off a small explosion. A boatman in Falmouth harbour had chosen to fly the Cornish national flag, the Cross of St. Piran (a white St. George's Cross on a black background) on the stern of his boat. Pleasure boats and fishing boats all have to be registered, unlike private pleasure craft, which brings them under the jurisdiction of Government inspectors, and sure enough a Board of Trade surveyor insisted that the flag, which he called 'a load of rubbish' should be taken down.

Presumably he is technically within his rights to demand this. Great importance is attached to the carrying of the correct flags by ships. It is all part of this passion for classification and identification which afflicts the human race. Every ocean-going ship is obliged to carry the flag of her nationality. One would have thought that a little inshore pleasure craft or fishing boat would have been exempted from this, but not, apparently, so.

The intense emotion which human beings attach to flags and other tribal symbols is shown by the Board of Trade man's use of the abusive expression 'load

of rubbish'. But the Cornishmen have also strong feelings about the matter, and they have planned a campaign of open defiance. They are going to sail in procession out of the harbour on Thursday, with all 37 of the pleasure boats of Falmouth flying St. Piran's Cross.

Members of Cornwall's two nationalist movements, Mebyon Kernow and the Cornwall Nationalist Party, are supporting the demonstration. One is overjoyed at this prompt resistance to this spiteful action on the part of a petty jack-in-office, while at the same time not necessarily sharing the enthusiasm of the demonstrators for a particular symbol.

One of the oddities of the modern age is that, while a person can leave their house in Cyprus (let us say) at 6 a.m. and be met by their relations in London at 9 a.m., while the morning is still young, and the journey from West Africa to Paris need take only five hours, ever tinier and tinier countries are demanding the right of self-determination. It is a protest against centralisation, and from that point of view anarchists are likely to be all for it. At the same time it contains seeds of intolerance and racial exclusiveness. It would hardly be a 'progressive' step for there to be a frontier with barbed wire and customs posts and guard towers and machine-guns along the borders of England and Scotland, Wales and Cornwall. It would retrograde.

The anarchist ideal is for there to be autonomy for convenient geographical units, according as is most convenient for the inhabitants. There would be boundaries but no frontiers, and a person would be free to travel from China to Brittany without having to give any more account of himself than he has to do now when he travels from Norfolk to Wales. What we believe is that the world is one country, and the human race one

passive and was thick with angry people who had ideas and energy, it was certainly not dreamy and introverted . . . obsessed with a mad desire to disappear up its own musical arsehole.

The *Melody Maker*, in an otherwise good coverage of the IOW, came up with the following gem . . . the organisers 'should be congratulated for their enterprise and success in proving that music and youth is the most hopeful combination in Britain. Fans that tolerated three days of unavoidable discomfort, had come for something identifiably honest and real in a world of doubts, distortion and prejudice'. The conartist who wrote that was probably convinced himself. Music and youth, the most hopeful combination! Where's the evidence? In booming profits in the record industry; in fantastically rich singers and bands who write songs about revolution, but are notoriously absent when anything happens and whose most revolutionary act is to be seen in the right macro-biotic restaurant or be caught in possession of cannabis; in a vast audience whose creative energy has been entirely diverted to increasing record sales?

I love Dylan's songs, I still think 'Sergeant Pepper' is a small masterpiece. *Easy Rider* is an honest, even a good film, but I can't pin any hopes of saving the world on Dylan and the Beatles and their fans, any more than I believe that dropping out to form alternative societies will work the trick. If there is to be a revolution then somehow we must take everyone along with it, the hip and the square. The complacent and enjoyable game of being a revolutionary only in terms of dress and music is, in Britain, at least, dead safe and merely exaggerates the widening gap between the young and the middle-aged, which is one of the great tragedies of Western society. In the last sequence of *Easy Rider* someone sings Dylan's words from, I think, 'The Ballad of The Thin Man' . . . 'something's happening but you don't know what it is do you Mr. Jones'. This is a magnificent song, but I'm not sure that Dylan knows either, I'm certain Fonda/Hopper don't and I know I don't. Not knowing makes it exciting, possibly, but it doesn't necessarily herald 'something identifiably honest and real'.

JEFF CLOVES.

race. Anyone should be free to settle anywhere, live with whom he wishes. Small units are best, everyone can meet everyone else in the square of their town, and all can have a say in the running of their community. Those who dislike the way things are being done, and cannot persuade enough of their fellows to their point of view to make it workable, can leave and settle elsewhere. The big cities themselves could be broken down into a series of city communities, perhaps only the size of a few streets, where a face-to-face direct relationship between everybody would be possible.

This does not involve flags and national traditions. These can be fun and they can be a curse. No nation is too small to be a threat to somebody. Even if it is too tiny to be able to invade anyone else it can become puritanical and restrictive internally. This sometimes takes the form of preserving, or reviving, what is believed to be 'national tradition', the 'virtues of our forefathers', etc. Ireland and India have both tended to go this way since achieving independence. One can imagine an independent Wales, Scotland or Cornwall going the same way. Indeed in St. Ives the hippy community has suffered a good deal of persecution. An independent Cornwall might not let them in at all.

The trouble is that people are moved by emotional things, which they have been taught to feel strongly about in early childhood. Nowadays books for boys with titles like 'Fights for the Flag', 'True to the Old Flag' are no longer published, but the individual is still encouraged from an early age to identify with 'his' nation. What is learned in childhood is never forgotten.

We always assume that 'man is naturally aggressive', and we see the nation-state as a protective unit which naturally aggressive men and women form in order to protect themselves against other naturally aggressive men and women. We forget that the books are generally written by the élite groups in society, or those employed by them, and it is in the interests of the élites that people should believe this theory. It keeps them from uniting together for their mutual benefit.

A.W.U.

Who Can Tell the Difference?

Comrades,
In his criticism of Laurens Otter's article on Fascism and Stalinism, your correspondent, A. Meltzer, argues ('There Is A Difference') that 'The "State Capitalism position" is not an anarchist analysis but the alibi of the Marxist beyond Trotsky for the degeneration of State Communism. He wishes to disguise, and understandably so, the fact that State Communism itself went wrong, and therefore called it first "Stalinism", then "State Capitalism"—anything but Marxism'.

(1) It doesn't really matter one iota whether the use of the phrase 'State Capitalism', used to describe the socio-economic system in the USSR, is an anarchist analysis or not, or whether it was first coined by anarchists or Marxist opponents of Lenin or even by Lenin himself. All that matters in 1969 is whether State Capitalism is an accurate description of the society that has evolved in the Soviet Union. In my view it is, as it describes a system based upon the exploitation of wage-labour, where, to use Marx's own phrase 'wealth presents itself as an immense accumulation of commodities', where production is for profit and not human need and where the means of production are owned and controlled by an all-powerful State. They are all the hallmarks of State Capitalism.

(2) Stalinism can be described as the political expression of the building of State Capitalism in the USSR. It is not the 'degeneration of State Communism', as suggested by Meltzer. Like the

'Marxists' and certain schools of Trotskyism, Comrade Meltzer seems to think that Soviet society has 'degenerated' from Socialism or Communism which has, in fact, never existed there. As for 'State Communism', surely our comrade must appreciate that such a phrase is a contradiction in terms. Communism (the common possession of the means of life and free access) cannot exist other than, say, as a small community or commune, within a State system. As a free social system, Communism necessitates the abolition of the State.

(3) Both Marxists and Anarchists have used the phrase 'State Capitalism' to describe the regime and society being built up in the Soviet Union. A few Anarchists, like Voline, have also used the phrase 'State Socialism' and, of course, 'orthodox' Stalinists have always described Soviet Russia as Socialist. In Britain, the now almost defunct Socialist Party of GB has always claimed from around 1919 that Russia could only develop on a State Capitalist basis. However, the Russian and Ukrainian Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists were certainly the first critics of the Bolshevik regime to coin the phrase 'State Capitalism', although a few did make the mistake of calling the set-up in Russia 'State Communism'. According to Paul Avrich, Russian Anarchist journals were accusing the Bolsheviks of introducing, and consolidating, State Capitalism in that country as early as August, 1918—before such Marxists as Martov or Dan, or the

Continued on page 4

where he resides, to inform him that a letter had appeared in a Belfast daily newspaper, bearing the name and address 'John Castles, Lurgan'. He immediately took steps to deny that he was in any way connected with the authorship of the letter which stated:

'Sir,—The Shankill Defence Association has announced that the Protestants will refuse to even touch so-called Irish Republican banknotes. As a gesture of solidarity with these true Orange sentiments I hereby give notice that I intend motoring up the Shankill Road tomorrow evening at 7.30 p.m. scattering £1,000 worth of Republican pound notes from my car as I drive along. I know that the loyalty of all good Protestant people to the head of our own gracious Queen on our own undervalued British currency is so strong that Belfast Corporation Cleaning Department will have to work overtime the following day to clear up the filthy Republican litter from the gutters of loyal Orange Shankill.—Yours, etc.

JOHN CASTLES.

Lurgan'

Mr. Castles explained to me that there are, so far as he knows, only two people resident in Lurgan bearing the name 'John Castles'—himself, and his father, the latter, incidentally, being known as 'Jack'. Mr. John Castles, who is the proprietor of the travel agency in Bridge Street, Portadown, said somewhat exasperatingly that if he had £1,000 to throw about he would not do so in the fashion suggested in the letter! One of the approaches made to him, following the publication of the letter, came from a well-known TV commentator from London, now temporarily based in Belfast. He telephoned Mr. Castles' home in Lurgan on Tuesday morning inquiring if Mr. Castles would be prepared to cooperate in their televising his scattering the £1,000 on the Shankill Road. Naturally Mr. Castles, by that time, was in a most unco-operative mood for any idea of the kind! And there the matter rests in the meantime, but Mr. Castles asks me to join with his many other friends of the Press in making clear that he had no part in the compilation of the letter or its issue to any newspaper. A thousand pounds to scatter up the Shankill—or any street in Ulster, Too fantastic for words!

Black Comedy

BY THE WATERS OF WHITECHAPEL by Bernard Kops. Bodley Head, 30/-.

THE JEWISH MOTHER is a stock figure of fun among Jews, with her extreme maternal protectiveness, which can turn into simple domination. In so far as this image is true to life, it represents the consequence of persecution, the forcing of the Jews into ghettos, where the family becomes even more important as a refuge than it normally is.

Bernard Kops' hero is a middle-aged man, supposedly in his thirties (but he must be at least ten years older, since his father died in the Russian Civil War), who has become trapped in a little sweet shop and tobacconist's, which is run by his mother, who looks as if she is going to live forever. One cannot be sure whether this has happened because he is mentally retarded, or because his mother has emasculated him. She may be genuinely protecting him against a world with which he would not be able to cope.

The ghetto of Whitechapel has almost ceased to exist. Its former population, or their children, have moved out to Golders Green, Hendon and Kenton, and

the area is now occupied by the Pakistanis. Aubrey Field (really Feld), the hero of the story, yearns to move north-westwards too, but his mother and his aunt are determined to remain where they are.

Aubrey tries to escape, gets off with a beautiful Jewish girl, poses as a barrister and joins an organisation of progressive Jews, which is about to elect him as its president when his mother and a private detective catch up with him. I found all this a little difficult to accept on the realistic level. Would a man who had been dominated so long by his mother (or anybody else for that matter) suddenly become so masterful and self-assured? Perhaps the story is to be understood as an allegory. The ending in particular suggests this. The young (?) man finally solves his problem in a way that must be the ultimate in anti-heroism, not only returning to the womb, but going, one might almost say, beyond it. The ending is bizarre and macabre beyond belief.

It is a humorous story, but the humour is grim. There is no real hope for anybody. The spirit of death and decay reign supreme. A.W.U.

Dastardly Trick Played on Businessmen!

Comrades,
The Orange Tories who run N. Ireland are determined to rid themselves of the blame for the current rebellion of one section of the working class in N. Ireland. The easiest way for them to discredit the Civil Rights Movement, and in particular the Peoples Democracy, is to claim that they are front organizations for the illegal IRA who are secretly being supported by the Republican Government. In other words, the Orange Tories of the North try to foster the idea that if there was no Southern Republic, there would be no trouble in the North.

In both N. Ireland and the Southern Republic, Republican banknotes and English banknotes circulate freely and are acceptable as legal financial tender. However recently in Belfast the 'Shankill Defence Association', an extreme right wing organization, has encouraged Protestant shopkeepers—'gombeen men'—to refuse to treat Republican money as

legal tender.
A businessman called Mr. J. Castles in Portadown, a town about 30 miles south of Belfast, was reputed to be favourably inclined towards the ideas of the 'Shankill Defence Association'. He became the victim of a wicked hoax. The undermentioned extract from the Portadown News dated the 5th September reveals the dastardly trick practised on this man and comrades are requested to send flowers and messages of sympathy to Mr. Castles' business address quoted in the extract.

Belfast D. H. FIRKIN.

A PORTADOWN businessman, Mr. John Castles, who opened a travel agency in Bridge Street earlier this year, has been the innocent victim of a hoax which has caused him, he tells me, a considerable amount of embarrassment and trouble. On Tuesday morning he received a telephone call from Lurgan,

Anarchist Federation of Britain

ANARCHIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN 1969 CONFERENCE
September 26, 27 & 28 — LONDON

Friday & Saturday in Conway Hall Sunday in Freedom Meeting Hall
Agenda to be sent to groups. Any not listed please write. All motions and written papers submit to LFA in good time for study by the various groups. Papers to be duplicated where necessary.

LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS. All correspondence to LFA, c/o Freedom Press. BLACK KNIGHT GROUP, 5 Nelson Road, N.8. Meeting Wednesdays.
LAVENDER HILL. Contact C. Broad, 116 Tyneham Road, S.W.11 (228 4086).
LEWISHAM. Jon Raimes, 12 Oakcroft Road, S.E.13 (852 0951).
PORTOBELLO ROAD ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.
FINCH'S ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings. Contact P.P., 271 Portobello Road, W.11.
BEXLEY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT. Steve Leman, 28 New Road, Abbey Wood, S.E.2. Tel: ET 35377. Meetings every Friday, 8 p.m., Lord Bexley, Bexleyheath Broadway.
S.W. LONDON ANARCHISTS. Meeting alternate Wednesdays. Correspondence c/o Freedom Press.
NOTTING HILL S.P.S.H., 18 Powis Square, W.11.

EAST LONDON LIBERTARIAN FEDERATION
Support wanted for numerous activities in area. Secretary: Anthony Matthews, 35 Mayville Road, London, E.11. Meetings fortnightly on Sundays at Ron Bailey's, 128 Hainault Road, E.11. Ten minutes from Leytonstone Underground.
Active groups in: LEYTONSTONE, STEPNEY, NEWHAM, ILFORD, DAGENHAM, WOODFORD and LIMEHOUSE.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON DISCUSSION MEETINGS
Every Wednesday at Jack Robinson's and Mary Canipa's, 21 Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS
BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary, Peter Le Mare, 22 Hallowell Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 16. Meetings every Sunday, 8 p.m., in the smoke room of St. Martin pub, corner of St. Martin's Lane and Jamaica Row.
BLACKBURN. 'Global Tapestry', c/o BB Books, 11 Clematis Street, Blackburn, BB2 6JP.
BOURNEMOUTH AREA. Local anarchists can be contacted through Nigel Holt, Rossmore, Harvey Road, Canford, Wimborne, Dorset. (Wimborne 2991).
CORNWALL ANARCHISTS. Contact Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. Meetings on the second Friday of each month at 42 Pendarves Street, Beacon, Carnarvon, 7.30 p.m. Visiting comrades very welcome.

CROYDON LIBERTARIANS. Meetings every 2nd Friday of each month. Laurens and Celia Otter, 35 Natal Road, Thornton Heath, CR4 8QH (653 7546) or contact Keith McCain, 1 Langmead Street, West Norwood, S.E.27. Phone 670 7297.
EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex.
FARNBOROUGH. 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey. Tel.: Farnborough 43811.
HERTS. Contact Val and John Funnell, 10 Fry Road, Chells, Stevenage.
LANCASTER. John King, 4 The Grove, Lancaster.
LIVERPOOL ANARCHISTS & SITUATIONISTS. Contact Gerry Bree, 16 Faulkner Square, Liverpool.
LEICESTER PROJECT. Peace/Libertarian action and debate. Every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at 1 The Crescent, King Street, Leicester.
MUTUAL AID GROUP. c/o Borrowdale, Carriage Drive, Frodsham, Cheshire.
NORTH EAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Peter Ridley, 4 Rockcliffe Gardens, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. Phone 25759.
NORTH SOMERSET ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Roy Emery, 3 Abbey Street, Bath, or Geoffrey Barfoot, 71 St. Thomas Street, Wells.
ORPINGTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks at Greenways, Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson.
READING. 26 Balmer's Road. Tel.: Reading 65645. Meetings every Thursday.
WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings and activities contact Mr. T. Plant, 10 Thackeray Road, East Ham, E.6. Tel.: 552 4162.

ESSEX & EAST HERTS FEDERATION
Three-monthly meetings. Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Peter Newell (see N.E. Essex Group).
Group Addresses:—
BASILDON & WICKFORD. Steve Grant, 'Piccola Casa', London Road, Wickford, Essex.
NORTH EAST ESSEX. Peter Newell, 91 Brook Road, Teddeshunt Knights, Tiptree, Essex. Regular meetings.
BISHOPS STORTFORD. Vic Mount, 'Eastview', Castle Street, Bishops Stortford, Herts.
CHELMSFORD. (Mrs.) Eva Archer, Mill House, Purleigh, Chelmsford, Essex.
EPPING. John Barrick, 14 Centre Avenue, Epping, Essex.
HARLOW. Ian Dallas, 18 Brookline Field, Harlow and Annette Gunning, 37 Longbanks, Harlow.
LOUGHTON. Group c/o Students' Union, Loughton College of Further Education, Borders Lane, Loughton, Essex.

NORTH-WEST FEDERATION

Secretary: Phil, 8 Stonecroft Road, Leyland, PR5 3AE.
BLACKPOOL. Contact Christine and Graham, Top flat, 4 Ruskin Avenue, South Shore, Blackpool.
BOLTON. Contact John Hayes, 51 Rydal Road, Bolton.
CHORLEY. Contact Kevin Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley.
LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE. Contact Les Smith, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Meetings Monday at 8 p.m., Phil Woodhead's, 30 Dunkeld Street, Lancaster. Regular literature sales.
MANCHESTER ANARCHIST GROUP. 'The Secretary', Felix Phillips, 6 Draycott Street, Manchester, 10. Regular weekly meetings. Contact Secretary for venue.
MERSEYSIDE ANARCHISTS. Contact Roly Pollock, 6 Jermyn Street, Liverpool 8. Meetings Tuesdays, 8 p.m.
PRESTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Rob Wilkinson, 73 Trafford Street, Preston. Meetings: 'The Wellington Hotel', Glovers Court, Preston. Wednesdays, 8 p.m.
STOCKPORT. Dave Crowther, 1 Castle Street, Edgeley, Stockport.

SURREY FEDERATION

EPSOM. G. Wright, 47 College Road, Epsom. Tel. Epsom 23806.
KINGSTON. Michael Squirrel, 4 Woodgate Ave., Hook, Chessington.
GUILDFORD. Peter Cartwright, 33 Denzil Road, Guildford.
MERTON. Elliot Burns, 13 Amity Grove, London, S.W.19. Tel. 01-946 1444.

SUSSEX FEDERATION

Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Eddie Poole, 5 Tilsbury, Findon Road, Whitehawk, Brighton.
BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton.
CRAWLEY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Richard Ashwell, 87 Buckswood Drive, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sussex.
SUSSEX UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP (see details under Student Groups).

YORKSHIRE FEDERATION

Secretary: Contact Leeds Group.
HARRGATE. Contact David Howes, 16 Park Parade, Harrogate.
HULL: Jim Young, 3 Fredericks Crescent, Hawthorn Avenue, Hull.
KEIGHLEY: Steve Wood, 26B Cavendish Street, Keighley.
LEDS. Direct Action Society. Contact Martin Watkins, 6 Eberstone Terrace, Leeds, 6.
SHEFFIELD: Dave Jeffries, c/o Students Union, Western Bank, Sheffield, 10.
YORK. Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

WELSH FEDERATION

ABERYSTWYTH ANARCHISTS. Contact Steve Mills, 4 St. Michael's Place, Aberystwyth, Cardif

ganshire, Wales. Aug-Sept. correspondence only.
CARDIFF ANARCHIST GROUP. All correspondence to:—Pete Raymond, 18 Marion Street, Splott, Cardiff.
SWANSEA ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Ian Bone, 18 Windsor Street, Uplands, Swansea. Meetings at the above address every Sunday at 7 p.m.
LLANELLI. Contact Dai Walker, 6 Llanywenny Road, Llanelli, Carm. Tel: Llanelli 2543.

SCOTTISH FEDERATION

All correspondence to Bobby Lynn, Secretary, 12 Ross Street, Glasgow, S.E.
ABERDEEN ANARCHISTS & SYNDICALISTS. Contact Ian & Peggy Sutherland, 8 Eslemont Avenue, Aberdeen. Regular 'Freedom' Sale, leafletting, etc. Visiting comrades welcome.
GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Lynn, 12 Ross Street, S.E.
EDINBURGH. Tony Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh 11.
HAMILTON AND DISTRICT ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Linton, 7a Station Road, New Stevenston, Motherwell.
FIFE. Bob and Una Turnbull, 39 Stratheden Park, Stratheden Hospital, By Cupar.
MONTROSE. Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden, Montrose, Angus.
ROSS-SHIRE. Contact David Rodgers, Broomfield, Evanton, Ross-shire, Scotland.

NORTHERN IRELAND BELFAST ANARCHIST GROUP.

No address available. Letters c/o Freedom Press.

SOUTHERN IRELAND

ALLIANCE OF LIBERTARIAN AND ANARCHIST GROUPS IN IRELAND. c/o Freedom Press.

ABROAD

AUSTRALIA. Federation of Australian Anarchists, P.O. Box A 389, Sydney South, NSW 2000. Phone No 69-8095. Open discussion and literature sale in the Domain—Sunday, 2 p.m. Call at 59 Eveleigh Street, Redfern, NSW 2015 for personal discourse, tea and overnight accommodation.
BELGIUM. Groupe du journal Le Libertaire, 220 rue Vivignis, Liège.
CANADA. C/O R. O. N. O. LIBERTARIAN - ANARCHIST GROUP. 217 Torryor Drive, Weston, Ontario, Canada. Weekly meetings. Read the 'Libertarian'.

PROPOSED GROUPS

MONTREAL, QUEBEC. Anyone interested in forming a Montreal area Anarchist group please contact Ron Sigler. Tel. 489-6432.
VANCOUVER I.W.W. and Libertarian group. Box 512, Postal St. A, Vancouver 1, B.C., Canada. Read 'The Rebel'—please send donation for postage.
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE. All those interested in forming a group contact Terry Phillips, 40 Grosvenor Way, Kettering, Northants.
NOTTINGHAM and area. Contact Dave Smalley, ton flat, 43 Burns Street, Nottingham, or through folk club at the Central Tavern, Monday nights.
NORTH EAST ANARCHIST GROUP. Mick Renwick, 122 Mowbray Street, Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 6.
MID-SUSSEX area. Contact Adrian Howe, 10 Silverdale, Keymer, Hassocks, Tel. Hassocks 3458.

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