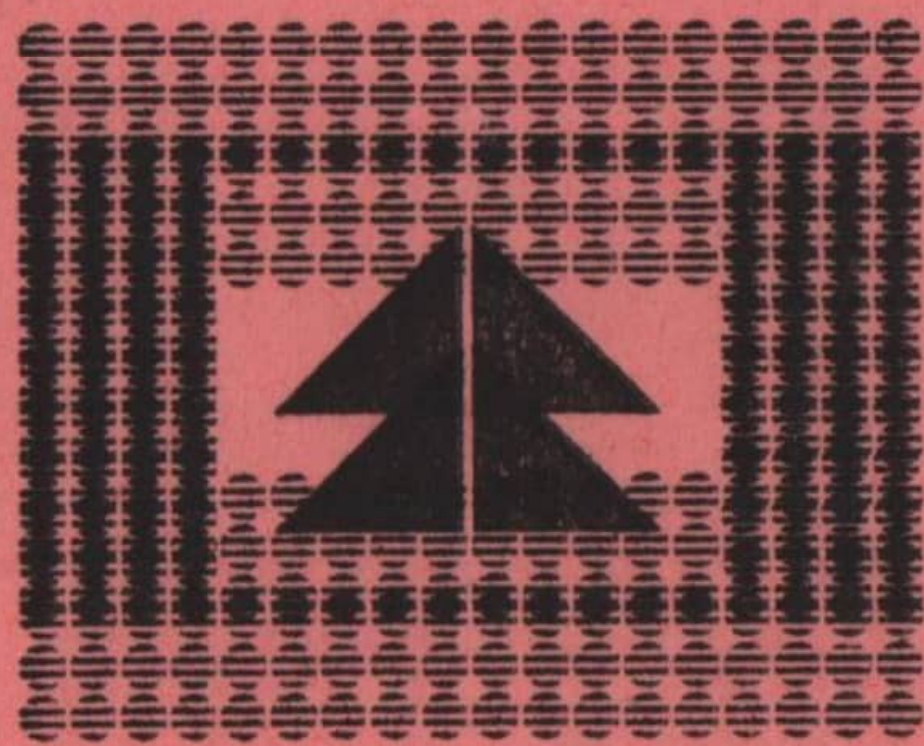




# THE ANARCHIST

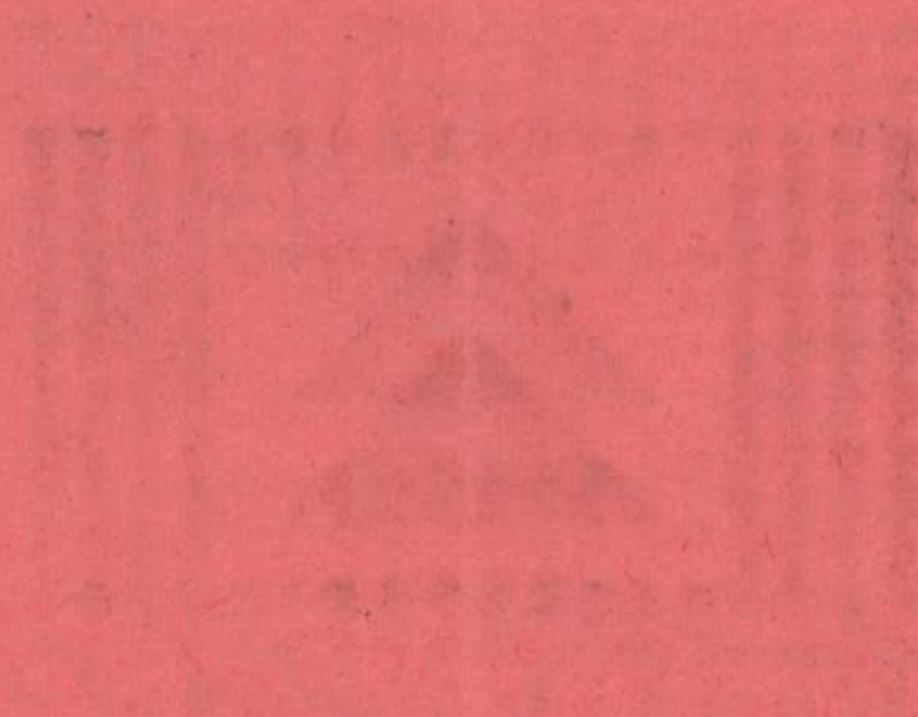


NINEPENCE  
SIXPENCE

VOL.1, NO.3



# THE ANARCHIST





THE ANARCHIST was launched to provide an opportunity for discussion of theoretical subjects and to act as an open forum for people's views on co-ordinating the activities of the various groups. In this number theoretical subjects seem to have had a lesser appeal for contributors than organizational matters, which are concerning the movement to a greater extent at the moment. By the time this issue appears a meeting will have been held to discuss the future form of the London Federation, and it is hoped to include a brief report in our Stop Press column! At the moment we have no definite news of the prospect of a British and/or Irish Federation. However, our Scottish (or Scots) comrades open our present number with some proposals for the Federation, and have appended their Federation's Manifesto. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking our Manx comrade for help in producing this number and our comrade Alf Thomas for supplying the attractive covers; also the cosmopolitan gang who manned the duplicator.

Jack Robinson

---

I would like to propose some ideas for the proposed British Federation from the Glasgow group:-

We propose a program of clear-cut ideas for the economic basis of a possible future society in order to clarify the difference from anarchists who hold to the principle of individual ownership or the market gardening type of anarchist at the same time preserving a loose link with those anarchists.

We move that the proposed anarchist federation should examine the aims and principles of the S.W.F. to see if they are acceptable in their entirety or in part.

We propose that the Conference should be held in London.

You asked me how the Glasgow group was getting on - the answer is difficult to provide. We are making plenty of converts but what little organization we have has almost disintegrated: no one attends our meetings at all. In a fortnight's time we are holding a meeting with another libertarian group with the view to setting up a Libertarian Socialist Federation so we will see how we



how we get on.

I enclose some manifestoes which we brought out recently.

Yours sincerely,  
RON ALEXANDER.

### M A N I F E S T O

THE FEDERATION OF GLASGOW ANARCHISTS is seeking to establish a free society, which will render impossible the growth of a privileged class and the exploitation of man by man. In such a society the wage system, finance and money shall be abolished, and goods shall be produced and distributed not for profit, but according to human needs.

Anarchists believe that the State in all its forms is the embodiment of authority and privilege: that it is the means by which one class oppresses another. Therefore they seek the destruction of the State, in order that the working class may take control of all means of production and distribution, that the economic conditions of freedom and equality may be realised.

The interests of the working class and those of the privileged classes are directly opposed. Only by unremitting struggle, and, ultimately, by revolution, can the working class succeed.

Let the privileged classes and all reactionary elements in society tremble at an Anarchist revolution.

THE FEDERATION OF GLASGOW ANARCHISTS has as its immediate objects (1) shorter working hours, (2) improved working conditions, (3) wage increases. It seeks (4) working class solidarity, and recommends (5) Direct Action as the only effective means to achieve these objects, and to combat such evils as unemployment, war and militarism, racial discrimination, and the poverty of old people.

N.B. The most effective form of Direct Action is the general strike.

THE FEDERATION OF GLASGOW ANARCHISTS recommends that the working class organise itself, not in craft and general trade unions, but in syndicalist industrial unions, which, in the event of revolution, will constitute the basis on which a free society can be built.



Dear Editor,

In his editorial to No. 2 our dear comrade Jeff Robinson is getting on his moralistic high horse.

I have often heard Philip Sansom declare, in answer to doubters, that anarchism is right for mankind, not so much because everyone is so clear-headed and well adjusted that they need not be ruled, as because no-one is so wise and morally sound as to be trusted to rule anyone else. Jeff has a fair measure of truth, I believe, in what he says - initiative, effort and responsibility are required of anarchists, as they are also, but in limited fields, of authoritarians. But the success of an anarchist society would depend not on people's willingness for effort, etc., but simply on their unwillingness to take orders. Only the material standard of living would depend on their willingness to work hard and co-operate -- and to make intelligent use of tools, science and technology.

Maybe some provincial - and London - comrades are unwilling to put into anarchist (propagandist) group activities the amount of effort Jeff considers desirable. Are they therefore wrong? Or do some, perhaps, find their own personal activities and needs more pressing?

On the specific subject of the editorial: how many, in fact, are convinced of the need for a conference now? At the Summer School the more vocal were in favour of a conference, but I have the impression that in fact a majority - though no count was made - thought that an established, active Federation should come first.

Should those who hold this view then proceed to organise the conference? And how representative of the views of the local groups were those members who spoke at the Summer School? What is the general feeling about the need for a conference? Apparently: not very pressing!

The proposed agenda submitted by Bristol sounds more like one for a Communist or Conservative Party conference. What business has an anarchist organisation to be electing officers, limiting their terms of office and functions, etc. I much prefer Bristol's own 'rules of association' I heard quoted as concocted to satisfy a bank where they opened an account -- ending, I believe, 'These rules may be varied at any time by decision of any meeting of the group'.

Voting, majority decision, etc. are inappropriate to any anarchist organisation. Mutual agreement



after discussion is required, and failing this, either shelving of the problem, or a split into co-existent dissentient groups, each applying their own solution.

This, I think, is part of the answer to Jeff's problems posed in "Freedom" (Jan. 3). Large groups of workers can co-operate as readily as small groups, if they are working in a generally agreed manner, toward a clearly defined and accepted end. Failing that, they not only would but should split into smaller groups. There is no need for everyone to seek the same goal. In an anarchist society its institutions and groupings would be far less static than in any authoritarian one. Rigidity is the hallmark of the authoritarian, fluidity and flexibility that of the libertarian. No clearly defined organization, for the moment you define it, you freeze it. The structure would be complex and variable, adaptable to changing circumstances, needs, aspirations, growing as a living organism.

Cybernetics, I believe, may have much to teach us, if only by analogy, about how to organise ourselves into an anarchist society, efficient in meeting the true, and varied, needs of mankind, and Grey Walter's article in Anarchy 25, and John McEwan's in Anarchy 31 - in which Jeff's own article appears in contrast (and I think he grossly underestimates the possible rate of scientific and technological development) - are worth careful study.

Yours,  
BRIAN LESLIE.

---

#### Organizations

Most organizations exist,  
not for the benefit of the organized,  
but for the benefit of the organizers.  
When organizers try to organize the  
unorganized  
they do not organize themselves.  
If everybody organized himself,  
everybody would be organized.  
There is no better way to be  
than to be  
What we want the other fellow to be.

Peter Maurin



Discussion on Syndicalism and Anarchism

OPEN LETTER TO JACK STEVENSON

Dear Jack,

Whilst accepting that your short analysis submitted in your article ANARCHISM AND SYNDICALISM in Freedom (14/12/63) is sincere criticism I'm afraid I must opine that it is not quite valid, and in some parts somewhat contradictory.

True as you say syndicalism is only "a" tool to be used in the struggle to achieve an anarchist society. It is untrue to say as you do, Quote:- In other words you must be an anarchist first and a syndicalist a very poor second -: Unquote.

I claim to be an anarchist, Jack, but I do not accept that everyone must essentially be an anarchist before a stateless, classless society can be achieved.

Nor do I believe that the majority must be anarchists in the philosophical term before the free society can be reached. Marxists in the days of Marx could not accept the probability of a free society in an industrially backward country, but in our own technological age some who accept Marx's interpretation of history basically, can now visualise the feasibility of a stateless society in our own time. They may not be anarchists philosophically in so far as they would reject the idea that anarchism could be practical in any given economic epoch, nevertheless in as much as they may accept that our achievements industrially and scientifically now allow for such a stateless society and are prepared to work for such, then I say that their efforts can be contributory towards an anarchist society.

A person may believe in "God" and therefore cannot be an anarchist since an anarchist rejects all authority whether human or divine, but that person may find a place in the ranks of syndicalism prepared to struggle against exploitation and militarism. In that case that person would be my comrade, belief in God or not.

Whilst I say that I am an anarchist, I am not so dogmatic to say that only anarchists can achieve the free society.

You say Jack, Quote:- "that we must tolerate other opinions" and yet you say that "dissident marxists are the last people we want in our movement" -: Unquote. This seems a little contradictory. Don't you think so yourself when you recap?



Syndicalists are continually studying tactics and not flogging the same old horse as you say unless this may apply to libertarians in general: being anti authoritarian, anti parliamentary, advocates of federation and decentralisation.

Syndicalists have recognised the importance of social struggle as well as industrial and have reported it in their literature.

In "Syndicalism The Workers' Next Step" by Philip Sansom the author refers to the importance of the commune as well as the industrial syndicate. In the same pamphlet and in "Trade Unionism Or Syndicalism" by Tom Brown both authors point to the achievement of the health syndicates, the theatrical syndicates and the educational as well as the industrial during the Spanish Revolution. If syndicalism has tended to become somewhat narrow in our own time in its literary expression that may be the fault of the anarchist movement in general.

It is not entirely true to say as you do Jack that usually people join the movement that suits them psychologically. If this were so more people would be avowed fascists since we are miseducated in authoritarian structure.

Most of us are at loggerheads with our psychological makeup. Many people who can accept free love intellectually are incapable of accepting it psychologically, anarchists included.

I believe that most people who link themselves in an active way with a libertarian movement do so intellectually in the main and only partly psychologically.

Although we all have emotions the anarchist continues to battle with psyche, for the intellect must remain supreme if we are to succeed in tolerance.

It is at last the intellect through our observation and experience whether we have belonged to political parties or not which leads us to accept the validity of anarchism.

In "Lessons of the Spanish Revolution" by Vernon Richards he writes somewhere near the end of the book (I quote from memory not having the book at hand for over three years): "The difference between my anarchism and theirs (the anarcho-syndicalists) is not one of fundamentals, it is merely a difference of appreciation". "When there are enough anarchists they will create their own organisation spontaneously when the need arises. The



syndicalist creates the organisation first and then looks for the revolutionaries to join it. Trade unions are reactionary because the workers think the way they do, not because the leadership hoodwinks the workers. When the workers start thinking along revolutionary lines the revolution will be nearer."

The above paragraph is what Vernon Richards said in essence (if I remember correctly).

Whilst appreciating this viewpoint fully I as a syndicalist believe that if industrial cells are created which will encourage direct and unofficial action militants may gravitate towards these cells just as militants have gravitated towards the Committee of 100 in the social field and finally accept anarchism. The danger of a syndicalist or industrial union becoming bureaucratic is much lessened the more anarchists participate in it. The more strikes and disputes are won by direct action the more the workers will be attracted to the idea of industrial syndicates.

Since one of the major objections to anarchism is, anarchists don't believe in organisation it would be favourable to anarchism if we could point to cells which could be the embryo of the organisation of a future form of society. This does not mean attempting to lay down a blueprint or any rigid plan for the future. It merely suggests a probable form of administration when the state and capital have been uprooted. No doubt a future society will develop and change its form according to its needs. No worker, no matter how distasteful his slum dwelling may be, would wish to see it destroyed without having something to put in its place.

In view of this I favour a clear cut program of anarchism, where anarchism can be portrayed in a more simplified manner to the uninitiated.

I would like to see an anarchist Federation of Britain re-emerging drafting aims and principles advocating free communism in economics and individual liberty on the social field.

I do not however ignore the wishes of individualist anarchists who may desire an economy based on small scale production and individual ownership of tools and exchange of products based on labour as units of value.

I believe that in practice different types of economy may exist side by side, but also accept that most people will finally accept communistic principles in production and distribution (not in spite of their individualism but because of it).



8

I myself claim to be an egoist and it's because of my egoism that I accept syndicalism and free communism. I believe that communal ownership of wealth would afford greater wellbeing and leisure and give greater opportunity for individual development.

Finally I may say that there may be individual anarchists in economics but I think it's a misrepresentation to think of communal anarchists as being anti-individualistic.

All anarchists in my view are in favour of individual liberty.

I see no reason why the economic individualists could not form groups which could have a loose link up with an anarchist communist federation which may strengthen our movement and at the same time may help to clarify our ideas to the uninitiated.

Fraternally yours,  
BOBBY LYNN.

\* \* \* \* \*

Reply

Dear Bobby,

I will endeavour to answer your letter point by point. Though as you put your case very well it will take a little time.

I still say that "You must be an anarchist first and a syndicalist a very poor second". Incidentally I should have thought that no anarchist-syndicalist would have disagreed with this statement.

The reason is that syndicalism is only a tool TO ANARCHISTS it is not a complete philosophy. Based as it is on the class war, without any anarchism, it will lead the workers to hate. Hate is a bad thing because one never knows where it will stop. I admit that I hate sometimes but I'm lucky I find it too much like hard work, but some thrive on it, most it seems.

I still think that MOST people must be anarchists before a free society can be achieved. So many anyway that those who are not are in a small minority and powerless. I do not believe that bastards should have the power to take away what people have achieved should they ever achieve it.

I don't really want to go into the question of the trots too much, not because I feel you have proved me wrong, but because I feel I have a different approach.



Let's say for example that I if I'm getting to know an anarchist it's the little thing I watch. How he treats his girl for example or girls for that matter. If he treats them badly he's not an anarchist. I hope you understand now. Anybody can talk, it's actions that count.

I suppose it may seem contradictory but what I actually meant was simply a cry for tolerance in this movement at this moment.

I should say that syndicalists tend on the whole to be less interested in things outside the industrial struggle than other anarchists. This is from personal observation. I'm not in Glasgow though, am I?

It may not entirely be true that people join the political organisation that suits them Bobby but I think they usually do. Trots seem to me to be always talking in the same way about splits and factions and using rather bad tactics (from an anarchist point of view) against each other and other groups that are not trots. The packing of meetings and so on.

I agree with the fact that most people who link themselves up with the libertarian movement are not what I would call anarchists. There are degrees running from very authoritarian right through to the other side. It is the intellect that leads us to anarchism but the emotions do too. I would think the two together.

I would agree with V. Richards but my main reason would be practical. That the organisation of anarchists at this moment would take up too much time. That at this moment the groups could if they want to, organise themselves into a Federation. But they don't want to. They want London to do it and this just isn't good enough. I believe in organising for the revolution but not for the sake of organising. There are too few hands at the pumps down here as it is.

The I.W.W. gave an example of showing the organisation before they built it. This is the case I put forward in a lecture down here some time ago. They showed the workers almost exactly how they would build a new society. Flooded the country with thousands upon thousands of leaflets telling how. They fell on deaf ears.

I would like to see a Federation of Britain too. Not on syndicalist lines though. Loose so that we could all move without restricting each other. Seeing how it went for a short time. Then perhaps more organisation and build it up slowly from experience. But people



outside London must pull their weight. Those in London too. The movement has grown but it's the same people grafting as before with a few exceptions. No one is going to do it for you. This is the message of anarchism isn't it?

Thanks for the letter Bobby.  
Lots of luck up there,  
Jack.

---

More correspondence

Dear Comrades,

To judge from recent events and statements it would appear that we in Bristol have caused something of a minor riot in anarchist circles. Many things have been said which require reply, but until now I have not felt that any adequate rejoinder could be made. I wish to make it quite clear that I am not writing for the B.F.A. now, but to express my personal views. When what I have to say is not in keeping with what I feel to be the main trend in the Bristol Federation I will say so, but at no stage do I commit any other comrades to my views.

It has become apparent from recent letters and reports which have filtered through to Bristol that in some quarters considerable bitterness has been engendered by what have been taken to be our views. The details of these I will deal with in a moment, but I should like to say quite clearly now that this has at no time been my own intention, and if any statement of mine has given offence to any comrade or comrades I sincerely apologise. We already have enough trouble arguing with the non-anarchist majority without allowing our own disagreements to provoke ill-feeling. It is perhaps the greatest internal danger in the anarchist movement, stemming I imagine from the inevitable clash of strong personalities which such a movement must bring together. My own knowledge of anarchist history is as yet very limited, but I think that it is fairly safe to say that it has always, and in all places, been a considerable problem. There is probably no way of simply overcoming it, but perhaps if we all make a resolution to try and make allowances for the hasty and careless formulation of arguments from which none of us are entirely free, then we may be more able to keep our disagreements on a friendly basis. Unless anyone thinks that all this is irrelevant, let him look at the letters in Freedom 3/1/64. It really is incredible how easily we anarchists allow our statements to become intemperate or sarcastic. All this happens when we allow ourselves to be provoked to replying in kind to what we see as someone else's rash statement. It is because I had not until now felt able to write a calm and considered reply, that some criticisms of the B.F.A. in print and letter had not received a prior



answer. Whether the B.F.A. as a whole will see fit to make any further statements I don't know, but I hope that this will suffice to satisfy those people who have been attributing things to me.

First of all, the matter of the Anarchist Conference. Bristol delegates returned from the Summer School to tell the B.F.A. that it was definitely to go ahead, and that they had pledged support from the Bristol comrades. Then came a series of notices in Freedom and elsewhere that its future was in jeopardy because no-one was writing in to express support. As far as we were concerned it had already been given, but eventually we decided it was necessary to do something more, and so we got up an agenda at a meeting of the B.F.A. It was strictly provisional, and was merely intended to provoke debate and action. The resolution re Freedom Press was initiated by myself, again largely so that a discussion of the relation of the British Federation to Freedom Press should be brought up. I was not responsible for the exact wording of it as it appeared in The Anarchist No. 2., but it was accepted by the majority of the B.F.A. at the meeting. I would like to say now that in view of the trouble it has caused I would rather it had not been passed. I certainly think that the last sentence: "The personal control of the only anarchist weekly paper by capitalist means can hardly be justified" was unfair and un-necessarily aggressive. Jack Stevenson's spirited defence of the Press has made me aware of the unwiseness of the whole resolution.

Now, if I may, I will express the sort of thoughts which prompted that rather extreme statement, and the suggestion that the British Federation should exert control or ownership over Freedom Press. From Jack's letter in Freedom, his editorial comment in The Anarchist, and other recent remarks I have heard or seen expressed in Freedom, I feel that many people are unable to see that criticism can be directed towards a paper without one wishing to "take it over and do better". It would be impractical at present for Bristol to produce a paper, and even the occasional editing of The Anarchist will pose many problems, but surely that doesn't prevent one from making criticism which is intended to make a paper better to read, and therefore a better advert. for the anarchist movement. I will state categorically that I have the greatest admiration for the Press and its helpers, who certainly did so much to keep anarchism alive in Britain in the most difficult circumstances, and I agree that newcomers to the scene such as most of us in Bristol have no right to dictate new policies to the Press. Inasmuch as my resolution ignored these points I apologise sincerely. But now, instead of vague condemnations, may I perhaps mention several ways in which I think the great potential and actual value of the Press could be made of even more value to the movement?



First, Bristol has criticised the editorials. In recent weeks these have been much better, I think that shorter editorials, and less tendency to enter into interminable internal debates in them, are of great benefit, especially as now these can be adequately catered for by The Anarchist. Similarly, I hope that topics such as non-violence will be kept by their writers for the same paper if there is to be much controversy, and that other letter writers will avoid slanging matches as much as possible. I also think that the layout of Freedom (in marked contrast to Anarchy) is capable of much improvement. If possible I think that a smaller size and more pages would improve sales, although keeping the total content the same. There is little appearance of unity about the page layouts, so that articles tend to sprawl in a way that they never do in Peace News for example. Also it would be a great help to the uninitiated like myself if writers could give names instead of initials where possible, including the editorials. I fully take the point that the contents of the paper are determined by contributors. Any impression I may have given that the Press operates a censorship I fully withdraw.

Finally, the point about control. If some of the suggestions mentioned above were taken up I would be a lot less concerned about who owns the Press. I agree that the people who do most of the work should have most of the control, but as to the general policy of the paper, would it not be both feasible and desirable that those federations which sell it should have at least some voice, even if only an advisory one? I am thinking along the lines of "readers' meetings" to be held say once every two or three months, to which federations could send delegates to report on selling progress, ideas for improvement, commissioning of articles and so on. This would suffice to satisfy those of us who know little of the organisational background of the Press, and tend to regard it as "them up in Fulham". As the only anarchist weekly existing or yet feasible I think that Freedom bears a rather special responsibility to the movement, and therefore I hope that these critical suggestions, which are made in a spirit of reconciliation and an attempt to be constructive, will be taken in this spirit without meeting the "could you do better?" quip.

I hope by now to have cleared up most of the misunderstandings resulting from some rather hasty remarks and decisions that Bristol has made. In retracting my criticisms of Freedom Press I may not speak for everyone in the B.F.A., but I hope that the majority will concur with what I have written. I would also like to make one further point. I strongly deplore the trend, summed up succinctly by Jeff Robinson in The Anarchist No. 2, for everyone to



sit around doing nothing and hope that anarchism will take care of itself. Organisation, very highly geared, is what we must have if we are to have no appointed leaders, and this involves close co-operation -- most especially reliability, a sense of urgency when something needs to be done, and co-ordination of effort. These are the very factors at present lacking in the B.F.A., and apparently most other federations as well. It will make me unpopular amongst some Bristol comrades, but I feel obliged to apologise to our sundry creditors for our present lethargy and inefficiency. For some time now Mike Walsh has been carrying on all the Federation work virtually single handed due to prevailing apathy and lack of assistance. The check-book has also been lost; and we are only just trying to get things sorted out again since one member went off to Scotland with the master list of supporters. In short it's about time everyone in Bristol woke up and did something

1964 should see a great improvement in anarchist strength in Britain, but this is only possible if we do two things; one is to stop leaving it to the next man and hoping for the best; and the other is if we stop flinging mud at each other, settle our differences amicably, and all pull together. It's a hard enough struggle as it is, let's get down to the real work.

Yours sincerely,

IAN VINE

Comrades:

I believe that Freedom Press has the policy of "after me, the deluge". By this, I imply that Freedom Press is in the hands of one, two, perhaps three individuals who exercise complete control over it, not for the sake of the anarchist movement, but for their own sakes. Therefore, because it is for their own sakes, to satisfy the image they have of themselves of being "heros", "saviours" and "perpetuators" of English anarchism, or anarchism in this country, they exert a careful censorship whenever confronted with evidence which might destroy the image they have made for themselves, a censorship which is carried out to the extreme of replacing "uncomfortable" contributions with mediocre ones. To that can be added the habit of fishwife gossip resembling a poor parody of court intrigues, which they foment constantly by word of mouth against individuals or groups of individuals, causing in some bewilderment, in others like myself, disgust, for, if we are anarchists it is because we are prepared to act in solidarity with any comrade no matter what his trend is in the anarchist ideology: philosophical or syndicalist, if trends be insisted upon.

I am not interested in the petty hates of



individuals who resort to bitchiness. I can understand and pity those individuals as frustrated frightened fossils who allow their petty hates to dominate them into bitchiness. But as an anarchist I cannot be concerned with sick private worlds, if those sick private worlds exist to foment unrest among comrades who are only concerned in acting to foment unrest in authority until it is destroyed.

I accuse the owners of Freedom Press of deliberately doing sabotage to the English anarchist movement in the manner of clumsy, small time politicians. They stand wielding power, or think they have power, to do and undo. And I make the accusation not because of what I have heard of the "owners" of Freedom Press, but because of what I have analyzed and read between lines in the pages of Freedom and because I myself have been a victim of their censorship.

Therefore, if a real London Federation of Anarchists is to be formed, let it be formed by individuals who declare themselves anarchists and not by groups such as Freedom Press, for if Freedom Press enters into the Federation as a group, it will only give the "owners" the opportunity to continue with their work of sabotage. And, if the London Federation of Anarchists is formed only by individuals, even if those individuals dislike or hate each other personally, let the London Federation of Anarchists demand as a body that Freedom Press reveal and make public their true standing of discriminating private enterprise that cannot under any circumstances, represent or proclaim itself the spirit of English anarchism. Otherwise, let Freedom Press come into the open like a real anarchist paper, holding the pages of Freedom openly until it becomes an anarchist tribune for discussions and not the dreary monologue it is at the moment with the care it takes to choose the same weekly weak mediocrities, without alleging lack of space or any other pretext to favour censorship.

If Freedom Press, before the LFA'S demand, adopts the attitude of "we do what we bloody well please, you bastards", it will only be because it is their private property and the members of the LFA as a body, cannot be concerned with destroying such revolutionary property. Whether or not Freedom becomes a real anarchist paper in the future may remain in the mysterious regions of testicles-grafting and it is again of no concern to the LFA as a body. But it is of utmost importance to unmask saboteurs and phonies and that the LFA as a body can do. Simply for the sake of English anarchism.

IAN KALISZEWSKI



## Comments on No. 2 from Peter Neville

Whether there is a conference or not congratulations to all who have produced "The Anarchist". I really think it's an excellent paper and serves a useful purpose. Can I now join the argument with a few, I hope, constructive comments on what has been said and try and put a few of my own views down at the same time. I shall try and split these into sections relevant to the particular letter or viewpoint.

Firstly, could I make a plea for the correct use of language. I am not saying that language consists in absolutes, as I agree that meanings change from generation to generation, event to event, and place to place; yet I do feel that if people were a little more careful in their use of certain political and philosophical (to say nothing of economic) terminology there would be less metaphysical argument and more constructive thinking. Often words are used so often, for so many different meanings, that they become worked to death, examples are freedom, liberty, the working class, the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, the people, the class struggle, non-violence, direct action, capitalism etc., etc., all of which have many meanings dependent largely upon usage (i.e., in relation to something specific, something thought to be understood, and I feel that if terms like this are used the writer should begin by saying just what he means by the terms he uses, rather than breaking out into a kind of rash of abstractions, rather like a gossip columnist talking about a new film, or General De Gaulle talking about France, otherwise apart from a possibly false emotional impact an article or letter is otherwise meaningless and a waste of time in anyone bothering to read it.

\* \* \* \*

I liked Jeff Robinson's bit about responsibility. One of the chief reasons why I am an anarchist is because I feel that I wish to be responsible for myself, as much as I can, and that I refuse to accept other's demands to subordinate myself to their wishes, unless they too are willing to come to terms with me. This is probably why I consider myself an anarchist-individualist rather than an anarchist-communist, though I do also feel that syndicalism is on the right lines, though it is, at present, a bit mixed up over 19th-century "-isms", on occasions. Do not misunderstand me, I am not suggesting one must live outside society. Quite frankly I think that anyone who suggests this is being a little unrealistic. But, I find that, and this might well be a symptom of my age, one's ideas are constantly being affected by contact with both people and things, in society, and our comprehension of these, and so if one did attempt to disregard society one would really be disregarding oneself. What I am suggesting is that one must try and fully develop oneself (i.e. all one's potentialities) as a human being, and to do this one must refuse to accept the dictates, the conditions, imposed by any other individual or group which appears to limit one's individual evolution; and one must, as I have said, become responsible for oneself, and to oneself, before



one can have the effrontery to impose oneself upon any other person in any group activity; i.e., the group is, to my mind, not the reason for one's existence, but the logical outcome of the acceptance of individual responsibility. It is in fact a second stage in the evolution of individual awareness; the awareness that one can proceed a step further by sharing; it is not a substitute, in any way, for the need to accept individual responsibility.

Let me extend this. Freedom (i.e. political freedom or liberty -- "freedom to" etc.) is only gained and held on to by effort, and it implies that one is willing to assert one's right to it, one's need to possess the potentialities it gives, and extend and use these potentialities by activity (i.e. political freedom unexpressed and inexpressible is meaningless). Its acceptance imposes a responsibility - almost a duty - to accede the right to others to assert their desire, their need, their will, and their action, to secure this end, and, within reason, the duty to fight, shoulder to shoulder, for this.

However, it does not impose any responsibility upon the individual to blindly commit oneself to participate in abstract causes or to coerce and morally blackmail others, to give help to those whose acts of irresponsibility and bloody-mindedness have a flavour of, but no honest substance in regard to, a challenge to unjust authority. Further, I see no reason to support riotous assemblies and vicious anti-social groups merely because they challenge and demonstrate against the institutions one too dislikes. This is not the expression of responsibility; it is the expression of complete irresponsibility; and is moreover self-defeating, as it makes ridiculous the anarchist case.

Let me give a few examples of what I mean. If someone is unjustly evicted from their dwelling and lands up at Newington Lodge, etc., I feel sympathetic, but if someone objects to a rent increase because costs have risen, or because the council has to employ a gardener to cut the council-house tenant's grass, he is too idle to cut himself, I feel this is quite unreasonable, i.e., managing housing property is a job the same as anything else -- why should it be justifiable for a trade unionist to get a cost of living increase and not a landlord? You think property is theft? Okay, but this isn't an answer to the question, is it, it's avoiding answering it. Recently "Anarchy" published an article about some 'poor bloke' who couldn't get a job. So he sat down and lived off the National Assistance until the State brought him work. Apart from the usual crack - more usually made about me - "but this isn't Anarchist" etc. - just what was one supposed to do? All my friends - anarchist or "interested in anarchism" come to the same conclusion as me -- If there's no work in the North East then leave it and go somewhere else - I did when I left school and so did millions like me - one would have liked to stay at



home, and one was initially pretty miserable away from home, I was living on £3/0/0 a week for a year but so what, one had a job. It said in the article that he said he was fired "for sciving". Tell me all my syndicalist comrades: what exactly would you do if you found one of your mates was a persistent sciver? Lastly, he said his educational qualifications weren't any good, okay, I've lived in the North East too - on Teeside - there's plenty of chance for Further Education - if you are willing to make the effort - and if he's been out for two years then it's about time he made up his mind to do something about his position himself -- I left school with three G.C.E "O" levels -- at present I'm working for a degree -- admittedly I've been bloody lucky recently but to be lucky you have to be willing to stick your neck out and keep sticking it out until you get what you want -- you'll never get it through the NAB either.

\* \* \* \*

To the motion of M. J. Walsh (Digger?)\* Are there any Irish Anarchist Groups? Further, if there are, have they asked to join the British Federation?

With reference to the proposals of the East Kent Federation (incidentally which groups does this Federation represent?), as I presume the idea behind the British Federation was a sensible one, could we clarify some of these points before the meeting -- I find some of the expressions so ambiguous to be almost meaningless?

Take (b). What exactly is meant by the words: "...use scientific methods in their campaigns, especially this applies to the design of leaflets etc." -- does it? Perhaps the words 'scientific methods' are just a little ambiguous? I'm not trying to back the E.K.F. on this but it does presuppose that they have some definite ideas, which they call 'scientific methods', and I would very much like to know what these are, because at the moment it's a bit meaningless.

We don't like (c), apart from the fact it's telling us what to do, hasn't it occurred to some people that all anarchists are not in favour of demonstrations. It might well please the exhibitionist extrovert amongst us, but if you look at it quite rationally very few demos do a ha'porth of good. If they mean, let us restrict our demos to times when a demo appears to be likely to be effective then well and good, I'm all in favour. But I'm not really in favour of the idea apparent amongst some anarchists (and many non-anarchists) that the demonstration is a 'way of life' or form of psycho-therapy for getting rid of your - whatever it is you've got a fixation about - Mum, Dad., etc., etc.



Perish the thought that anarchist groups should be organised like CND! I can just see the statements from the Anarchist Central Office: "I'm afraid we'll have to censor the back page of 'Freedom' - too many dirty words - it might hurt the public image".

Before the conference starts it's already dictating to constituent groups -- odd, I thought the Federation was intended to liaise not to run the groups?

But it is the last bit I just don't understand -- "Weekend schools on Social Psychology". I as part of my studies have to read an academic subject called 'Social Psychology' for three years, is this what they mean, because it seems to me that unless they explain what they mean any liaison secretary is going to have the devil of a time trying to put these motions into practice. If they do mean the above, which I doubt anyway, could I ask them whether they have tried the facilities offered by London University Extra-Mural Department, the Workers' Educational Association, Ruskin College, Correspondence Courses or the local public library. In the last analysis I'm prepared to send them a book list myself -- culled from mine own.

Lastly, as far as E.K.F. go they suggest "Surveys of Youth and the people in working class estates..." -- this is also very loose, what does it mean; does it mean they wish to cooperate in conjunction with a University or a Sociological Survey or what? Incidentally there have been a large number of these in recent years anyway. See the works of Willmott and Young and Townsend (Bethnal Green, Greenleigh, Dagenham and Woodford), Spinley (Paddington), Dennis, etc., (S. Yorks), Firth (S. London), Mays and Kenn (Liverpool), Jennings (Bristol), Kuper (Coventry) and several others -- extended list provided on request.

\* \* \* \* \*

In reference to 'Individualists'. "My sort of Individualist" (incidentally, if writers aren't prepared to put their own name to articles should they be allowed to publish in "The Anarchist", as after all this was I presume an attempt to iron out pre-conference stuff, and one presumes 'Individualist', if he came to the conference would come as himself, not as a masked "Lone Ranger" so why the nom de plume?). The assumption that people make about simple societies being 'simple' in the everyday sense is a little far fetched in reality. As far as anthropological evidence goes, far from simple they are, in the main, very complicated: ritualistic and with a strong kinship sense. What keeps them going, is not a relatively uncomplicated setup 'governed' simply by mutual aid and dominated by a power group, but a very strong sense of tradition and very fixed values which have a habit of being unshakeable by the



mere decapitation of the head of the tribe. The Nuer one perhaps to some extent an exception to this, but certainly not the Trobrianders. The Andalusians and Eskimos - Perhaps?

Next he goes on to say: "In Industrial countries there are no established patterns of life" -- would he quote his sources and give details of surveys done, because I have got the impression both from experience and reading, that this is just not the case. This is one of the main reasons put forward by sociologists for the re-development of the "depressed" (Sorry!) "development areas". This is one of the main objections to the Reading Plan, that you are closing a main artery to certain locations which will disrupt the traditional pattern of life in those areas which depend upon it. Lastly he says that only "some all-embracing, ruthless world authority", (I can understand why he refuses to give his name -- the man's a heretic), will prevent a population explosion -- hasn't he heard of contraceptives?

\* \* \* \*

It was nice of Jack Stevenson to tell us his little story, I often wondered what was the difference between the L.F.A. and the L.A.G. - I always thought that they were exactly the same - and everyone else seemed to think so too - I do wish people would tell us provincials about all these structural changes - please?

\* \* \* \*

I liked the "Eight Questions". I do hope M.E. doesn't mind but I had them duplicated for discussion at Birmingham College of Commerce Anarchist Society but unfortunately they were stolen from the Union Office before I could get at them -- shame. Of course number 2 could be answered by the question, 'What use is a sit-down in front of a tank? Violence and Non-Violence are merely descriptions of methods not ideologies -- incidentally how can pushing be non-violent? In reference to the question: 'How can you fight nuclear weapons, jet planes, napalm, germ bombs and still win -- Eoka did and won, Mau Mau did and won, the IRA did and won, the FLN did and won, and the Nagas are not doing too badly at the moment. Of course no one accomplishes everything, but governments do fall not because they can be beaten in the field but because they cannot beat their opponents and sooner or later all governments know someone's going to hit them on the home front so they just give up -- it happens like that.

---

The first three issues of THE ANARCHIST have been published in London. Offers from provincial groups to produce future issues will be welcomed. These may be sent to the F.L.A., provisional address c/o 17a Maxwell Road, London, S. W. 6.



## NEW FEDERATION IN LONDON

A meeting was held on Friday, January 31st 1964 to put the London Federation of Anarchists on a more organized footing.

Bill Christopher was in the chair and the meeting was conducted without any votes being taken, decisions being made by acclaim.

There was a dissident minority from Ealing, Acton and "The Oaks" who were opposed to the formation of a Federation but they adjourned to the bar from time to time to refresh their individualist stand.

A journalist, who was not an anarchist, was present for part of the meeting. When his presence was disclosed, he courteously was asked to leave and courteously did so. His subsequent report (Guardian, Feb. 1st) was amusingly flippant but not offensively so, as those of other journalists have been on other occasions.

It was decided that the London Federation of Anarchists would be a federation of active groups and individuals. 'Active groups' would exclude off-centre groups which are at the moment discussion groups. Individuals who were active in the movement would be allowed to attend Federation meetings for a while by invitation but be expected to join or found other groups in due course. Groups would be represented by two delegates nominated by the group. Groups are autonomous and can make any arrangements they wish for membership or activities but they would be expected to finance the Federation by approximately sixpence per member (or attender) per month.

An acting secretary was appointed for the moment but his appointment is subject to unanimous confirmation by the newly-constituted Federation.

The groups deemed to be members of the Federation are the Central London Anarchist Group, the Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth (in exile), the Nottingham Hill Anarchist Group, the Woolwich Anarchist Group, and the Enfield Anarchist Group; decision was postponed until the first new Federation meeting as to the admission of the Syndicalist Workers' Federation London Group and the Freedom Press Group (admission of the latter being subject also to their own decision to apply.)

JACK ROBINSON