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The Anarchist 4

Editorial,

Having just performed the chore of producing this issue, we feel that one important item for discussion at the forthcoming conference in Bristol should be the function of this bulletin. The decision to launch 'The Anarchist' was taken at the 1963 Summer School arising out of criticism of Freedom (a) for what it left out and (b) for what it put in. It was thought that this could be solved by 'the movement' having its own bulletin for which the principle was that everything submitted must go in. The Editorship (which really only means the work of production) was decided to be on a rotating basis, taken in turn by those volunteering to do the work. This in itself is an effective safeguard against the emergence of censorship, in that no one group can control this influential organ for more than one issue (unless no one else volunteers to take it on). It seems to us therefore that the principle of 'Everything must be published' can now be discarded. One can see the libertarian intent behind it, but it does, in fact, make nonsense of the concept of 'Workers' Control' and individual responsibility, which are to our minds, more important principles for anarchists. It would also mean that this bulletin could be produced with less waste of valuable materials and time. The check against censorship exists, in that with a rotating editorship, if a contribution is turned down by one group, it can be submitted for publication to the next group doing the bulletin, and if necessary to the next and the next. One of the groups will probably be more tolerant, have lower standards, or be just hard up for copy. And if no group accepts it, perhaps it isn't worth publishing anyway!

Another point that we find disturbing is that there are, on the mailing list of 'The Anarchist' a number of addresses outside Britain in such places as Scandinavia, the USA and Canada. We feel that there is no justification at all for comrades, no matter how interested in the movement in this country, to expect to be supplied with an internal bulletin. Surely they can read Freedom or keep in touch somehow to find out for example the decisions taken at the conference. What point is there in them knowing the agenda beforehand. With respect, what is it to do with them? And if we distribute some of the rubbish that has appeared in the ~~xxx~~ pages of this bulletin in this manner, (perhaps it would be better to have a censorship of some kind!) what has been achieved but a waste of time of those who produce the paper, those who read it, and those who write good, sound material for it.

Finally, we must apologise for the poor quality of this issue, due to the fact that we were supplied with a duplicator which had been chucked out (for perfectly good reasons) by some other organisation and which had never been used by us before. We were therefore unaware of its hideous idiosyncrasies. We hope that it will be unnecessary for this duplicator to have to be used by the anarchist movement again. Yes, another item for the agenda at that conference. FUNDS.

Frances Sokolov and Philip Sansom
(Editors of Anarchist No 4)

PROPOSED NATIONAL FEDERATION

National Conference called by Bristol Federation

At a meeting of the Bristol Federation of Anarchists on Friday January 24th, it was decided that as the proposal to set up a National Federation had not been acted upon by any other group, a Conference to that end should be called in Bristol on April 10th.

This is a Friday. It is planned that the Conference should take place on the Saturday and Sunday in the Arnolfini Galleries on the Triangle.

We hope to be able to provide accommodation for anyone who needs it. Observers will be invited from interested groups, eg: those advertising in Freedom, Committee of 100, Peace News, etc.

We shall be using the Agendaproposed by the Bristol Federation but we are inviting other groups to send proposals for motions to be discussed and will not give precedence to our own.

We think it important that a National Conference should be held to clarify the matter of co-ordination. We hope we can rely on full support in publicising the Conference in order to ensure maximum participation.

Michael Bray
A Margaret Robinson
A Squires
Ron Shuttle
(Bristol Federation)

Editor's Note:

All correspondence with regard to the Conference should go to the above at 9 Cornwallis Crescent, Bristol 8.

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STATEMENT BY THE DUNDEE ANARCHIST GROUP
on the proposed Federation and National Conference.

I. Attitude to proposed National Conference.

We are in favour of co-ordination on a national and international scale and will do all possible to further this. We will take part in any Anarchist Conference. Since we don't believe in centralisation, we do not consider it essential that it be held in London.

II. Tentatively Proposed Agenda

1. Unanimous selection of Chairman.
2. Reports by provisional National and International Co-Ordinating Secretaries.
3. Declaration of Aims and Principles.
4. Organisational Basis:
 - (a) National Secretary
 - (b) International Secretary
 - (c) Conferences
 - (d) Finances.
5. Reports by Groups.
6. Future Activities:
 - (a) Anti-Parliamentary Campaign
 - (b) Demonstrations
 - (c) External Propaganda
 - (d) Internal Education
7. Reports by all those producing Anarchist periodicals.
8. Relations with 'Allies'.
9. Unanimous selection of 'Officials'.
10. Any other business.

III. Motions

1. We move that the proposed Federation be open to all Anarchists and only to Anarchists.
2. We move that the Federation be known as the British Federation of Anarchists. (British here to mean inhabitants of the geographical area known as the 'British Isles'.
3. We move that 'Officials' be appointed from one Conference to the next and that no person may hold more than one post nor hold one post for consecutive terms.
4. We move that a Conference be held when no less than five groups agree it is necessary.

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Editors' Note:

At the time of preparing this issue, the above contributions from Bristol and Dundee are all that have come our way in connection with the proposed Federation and Conference. We assume that contact is being made direct with Bristol for the drawing up of an Agenda in advance as well as for the matter of accommodation. We hope there will be time for all participating groups to be notified of the final agenda to enable group attitudes to be clarified.

CORRESPONDANCE

Dear Editors,

A few comments on issue No. 3.

Firstly, I asked for examples of the ways (if any) in which libertarian principles can be applied to large and complicated industries and Brian Leslie answers by saying that they can, Brilliant ! Brian's description of libertarian organisation is very good, however, and I will quote part. He says

'voting and majority decisions are inappropriate. (i.e. when making mass decisions). Mutual agreement after discussion is required and failing this either shelving the problem or splitting into co-existent dissident groups, each applying their own solutions'.

Now Brian, if we are deciding whether to grow tomatoes or rhubarb, or whether to teach children history or carpentry and we cannot agree then we can split up into groups and apply our own solutions. But if we are deciding the route of the M 199 motorway, or when, if ever, noisy jet planes should use London Airport, or what to produce in machine shop No. 6 or any decision involving large numbers of people, and capable of a variety of solutions, only one of which can be adopted, then I think you will realise that libertarian solutions just wont work. We cannot 'split into dissident groups and apply our own solutions' when such complicated problems have to be solved. As libertarianism is incompatible with industrial and technological development then we must dump the latter. And this does not mean going back to the Stone Age. Even in simple questions such as the tomatoes and the carpentry mentioned above I believe that there will be, almost inevitably, many different solutions proposed which will not simply be resolved by a little rational discussion. When 60 individuals will each propose a different solution to a problem then they will just have to agree to differ and then each can apply his own INDIVIDUALIST solution to his own INDIVIDUALIST cabbage patch or fireside. And it is because I cannot imagine anything else working effectively and not because I worship my ego that I am an individualist.

I have done a two year course in industrial production methods and related subjects and, believe me, industry is as complicated as hell. It is a pity that the Editor of Anarchy in his issue on Community Workshops (No. 30) did not discuss community locomotive shops, or oil refineries, or automated vehicle production units, or nuclear power stations. Everyone realises that community general workshops with a range of general purpose machines such as were discussed in the Anarchy article are possible. When I was 15 we had something like it for bicycle and motor cycle maintenance and repairs. But heavy industry - how is that to be run? It simply cannot be done unless you have total automation, saints, supermen, or authoritarianism.

Brian seems to hold views about the desirability of science which among most intelligent people faded away about 1914. The old 19th century optimistic viewpoint, the leading proponent of which was H.G.Wells, that because science was a rational thing it would be therefore used for rational ends. Brian seems to believe, in spite of all the evidence, that scientists are going to create a lovely material world and that all your problems will be solved by half an hour on the psychiatrists couch or by swallowing a couple of pills. Don't get me wrong however, I do NOT yearn for the Stone Age and I realise that to peasants scratching a living in India and Egypt, tractors, fertilizers etc. are essential. But in countries such as Britain and the U.S.A scientific development has gone far enough. I realise however that millions of people look forwards to more. Why do they want more? To get a cheap patriotic thrill when another ten million dollars worth of ironmongery is shot into space, to live second hand through their tellies (Huxley's feelies are on the way), to get a vicarious thrill from the 3D nudies at the Odium, to go nowhere at a hundred miles an hour in the latest model ego-cars and to set up material status symbols. I know I am generalising but the above is the trend.

Still, I suppose that technological and scientific progress will continue, whatever I like, and that one must make the best of a bad job. But why any thinking and feeling person should welcome it is hard to understand, while to believe that it leads, or will lead, in a libertarian direction, when the briefest glance shows the exact opposite is happening, is almost beyond human comprehension.

Secondly. There were some interesting points in Peter Neville's letter, but there was one big boob at the end. In answer to the question 'how can you fight nuclear weapons, jet planes, napalm, germ bombs etc. and still win' Peter says that EOKA, Mau Mau, the FLN, and the IRA all did and all won. Now none of these movements fought against these weapons with the possible exception of jets in the case of Mau Mau. To say as Peter does, that people have and can triumph against enemies using such weapons is codswallop. Also three of the rebel movements he mentions were fighting the British. While I hold no illusions about the British they rarely descend to the level of the Nazis or the Communists. They never destroyed Nicosia in the way the Nazis destroyed Warsaw. They never cold-bloodedly annihilated Sinn Fein the way the Communists did the Kulaks. And the people of Warsaw and the Kulaks both lost.

Thirdly. The contribution from I Kaliszewski gave me the best laugh I have had for a long time. I particularly liked the bit about the Freedom Press editors being 'frustrated, frightened fossils - - - with sick private worlds which exist to foment unrest among the comrades'. Strange that one has to examine the stones to learn which particular glasshouse I. Kaliszewski inhabits. Stranger still his complaint that Freedom Press editors turn down his

contributions. For if, as he maintains they are really trying to 'sabotage the English anarchist movement' there can be no surer way than to print the contributions of I. Kaliszewski if his letter to Anarchist No. 3 is any criterion.

On that sour but necessary note I will close,
Jeff Robinson.

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Dear Editors,

What a splendid idea it was to make the third issue of 'The Anarchist' completely satirical. By far the funniest piece was the hilarious manifesto from the Glasgow anarchists, especially with its bloodcurdling misquotation from the dear old Communist Manifesto (Let the privileged classes...tremble at an Anarchist revolution.) We realise of course, that while comrades in Glasgow write funny pieces there are still a few strange people around who write this sort of thing in all seriousness. In fairness to your contributors, you should have added a note to make it quite clear that they were only joking.

The whole manifesto is a much needed ridicule of those people (including some anarchists) who still imagine that all the world's evils are brought down on us by the boss-class, and that without the capitalists the workers would behave like saints.

Good luck with future issues, and keep up the satire.

Yours fraternally,

Robin Adair. Carol Morse. Eric Morse. Jim Rose.

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Dear Comrades,

Ian Kaliszewski's letter seems to be a little intemperate in tone. It is a pity that people cannot criticise without going off the deep end. A friend of mine, on seeing the current issue of 'The Anarchist' for the first time, exclaimed, "This is an instrument for breaking up the anarchist movement!" Or words to that effect. It was humourously intended, but if this style of writing is persisted in it could become true.

Surely if we are anarchists, we believe that any little group that wants to is free to start its own paper. The Freedom Press Group have a perfect right to produce 'Freedom' how they like. Yes, it is their property. In any form of society, however communistic, some form of personal possession will have to survive. One could hardly share tooth-brushes or clothing. A person will surely have the right to privacy within his own dwelling in a free society, and if he keeps a type-writer there, a duplicator or a printing press, he will be free to turn out whatever he likes on it, won't he? Or will we be back

in the world of censorship, exercised this time by 'society' or the 'community', rather than by the state? This sort of personal possession gives no power to the individual over the community. Unless the community voluntarily submits to him, Nobody has to read his paper, after all.

'Freedom' possesses no power. Ian Kaliszewski need never open it. If it will not publish his writings he can always go elsewhere for publication. No one surely ought to be able to compel someone else to publish his writings. The person, or group, who runs the paper should have the right to publish or refuse to publish what they wish. Otherwise their freedom is being restricted.

Why does not Ian Kaliszewski get together with other like-minded people and produce his own paper? I think another printed paper in the anarchist movement, in addition to 'Freedom' and 'Direct Action', might well be a good idea. In any case, the more papers there are the less excuse people outside the movement will have for thinking that one of them is the mouthpiece of the movement as a whole. Such a mouthpiece can never exist in a movement as diverse as the anarchist one.

The main principle is workers' control. The people who produce the paper, and work for it, should control it, not an amorphous body such as the anarchist movement. I think that 'Freedom' is open to criticism to some extent, in that it is possible for a person to find himself working for the paper without being given any say in the editing of it. But this is the fault of the person who allows himself to get into this position, to some degree at least.

I write for 'Freedom' when I feel like it, and sell it when I can do so without greatly inconveniencing myself. I enjoy reading some of it. However I have no concern in its production, no responsibility for it, and do not regard it as speaking for me, necessarily, any more than I do 'Peace News'. I think it gives a fair coverage to all the different viewpoints on anarchism, from syndicalism to permanent protest, including all the shades of violence and non-violence. It could be improved in some ways. But anyone who regards it as some kind of authority is really displaying a need for an authority. It possesses none, unless anarchists are foolish enough to give it some.

Yours fraternally,

Arthur W. Uloth.

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Comrades,

Am I to accept Jack Stevenson, that intelligent workers, having struggled to obtain better conditions, are going to allow bastards to take away what people have achieved? Surely the fact that they have achieved anything is exactly because no one has been allowed

to do just that.

Yes, a cry for tolerance is in place, especially as you in London are about to launch another FLA; it just so happens that some non-anarchist syndicalists also, don't kick their dogs or their boyfriends, whereas some professed anarchists, in their efforts not to express themselves physically, give themselves so many neuroses that their personalities suffer, as do their value to the movement,

If Stevenson is serious when he says that he agrees with V.R., yet bemoans the fact that London is always expected to lead, he is, in my opinion, (i) overlooking the historical contents of the periods analysed by V.R. in his book, and (ii) implying that London anarchists can be influenced from outside.

Jack Stevenson, in his readiness to criticise socialistic organisations of the past, such as the IWW, does not realise that the contributions of people involved in these organisations, and their sufferings, have not in any way left the world a worse place; also that the suppressions by capitalism of their movements has at no time allowed us to see their programme successfully concluded, as is true of the Anarchists principles.

Fraternally,

E.K.

Eds.

(The above letter from E.K. is answered below by Jack Stevenson)

1. I should say that the anarchist collectives in Spain during the civil war had been obtained by the struggle of intelligent workers. They were crushed because bastards had superior strength weren't they?
2. I'm not sure that I understand the second one. What I can understand I find myself in agreement with, but one does not have to use violence to hurt somebody. There are other ways which hurt just as much, perhaps even more.
3. Of course London Anarchists are influenced by what happens elsewhere. Anybody who is not influenced by things around him must be daft or dead. Those people who talk the old nonsense about anarchists being whole beings who must stand on their own and take no notice of what goes on around them are just people who don't care. I have always thought that anarchists are people who do care.
4. Jack Stevenson was not ready to criticise the Industrial Workers of the World. He gave a lecture on this organisation only a few weeks ago at Tunbridge Wells. It was titled 'The Only Union'. Jack Stevenson has no fault to find with the people of this organisation. His criticism was of people who insist on thinking that workers are revolutionary. Jack Stevenson is a worker and he knows different.
5. Vernon Richards criticism of syndicalist organisation has nothing to do with history, other than what he learned from it.

And lastly I don't like being called Stevenson, lady. My name is Jack. It is 'lady,' isn't it?

Fraternally, Jack.

INSANITY FAIR

The Record of a Dialogue with a Superman

I met him on the Haymarket of a Northwestern industrial township. I had been diligently spreading the gospel of mutual aid by a certain Russian 'migre Kropotkin, whose able pen fascinated me at that period of my life. My enthusiasm and, I am wont to assume, my ability in presenting my case had evidently aroused his interest in me. Briefly I glimpsed a young man of 17 or so in age, conventionally dressed, before he delivered the oracle that was to cause me so much embarrassment and not a little soul searching.

'You seek the aid of these fellows?' he prompted. 'And to what purpose? That you would, by a multiplication of your obvious inferiority usurp the rightful bounty of those most fitted to rule.'

It was not so much what he said but the ring of self-assurance in how he said it. I was taken aback with the wind gone out of my sails and as I looked desperately around for support saw only the shifty look of uncertainty, of men resentful, yet accustomed to obey, of men in whom authority was implanted, physically and spiritually.

Lamely I countered 'They are unemployed; they seek social justice'.

'Social justice!'. Derisively he spat the words at me. '

'Social justice is a myth invented by the weakling. He who is strong is his own judge and executor'.

Something akin to poetry in his forthright expressions touched the hidden chords of memory. Long, long ago someone had loaned me a book by the 'mad' philosopher - whether 'mad' by virtue of nature or in imagining the rather impossible or improbable setting of the book I did not at that period rightly know. Ah! Thus Spake Zarathustra! That was its name.

With interest kindled I regarded my first live Nietzschean.

'You are an individualist, are you not?' I ventured.

'I am master of my fate' was his proud retort. 'I seek men that they amuse me. I create as my self wills it.' And he was perfectly straight-faced as he said it.

Like St Paul of old I was almost persuaded and only the lateness of the hour saved yet another convert to the cult of Superman. We parted friendly and surprisingly he shook my hand. I confess I was somewhat overawed in shaking hands with a God-man. Was this theory of mutual aid not just another basinful of 'tosh'? Was it not more feasible that men such as my recent acquaintance, with courage and assurance could lift themselves out of the rut of wage slavery?

These and other disturbing thoughts ran riot, wrecking the

sleep nature intended for me. I was looking forward to meeting this friend again. Perhaps he had a good job. Yes, surely at least a boss's job. Maybe he would relent and do something for me - poor me, whom he despised. . . . We were to meet sooner than I had anticipated. On the next Monday, being out of work of course, I decided try the 'Stand' in a famous shipyard well known for its grand ships and meagre wages. After all, was I not born to be a wage slave? These reveries slowed my footsteps so that at quite a good distance from the gate the whistle sounded. Not at all worried (there was always tomorrow) I ambled on when suddenly a wild-eyed fellow dashed by me, almost capsizing me in the violence of his effort. Mildly I looked up at him and then the great yard gates swung to. With an exclamation of disgust the man turned to me. 'Another bl--dy quarter out!' And Hey Presto! the spell was broken! It was my Superman of yesterday.

D.E.Pude

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SUGGESTION FOR SOME HIGHLY SATISFYING WICKEDNESS

I have just heard the verdict on 'Fanny Hill'. It prompted me to pass on the following idea which I myself have thought of but probably would never get round to, and I am not much of an artist. I mean that the props & items of this idea would need expert editing, perhaps photography, etc. Here is the idea:

It is a commonplace that 'beastly', 'foul', 'sexy', 'filth' is blatantly exposed day after day in adverts in the tubes, dailies, magazines, so forth. It is the most revolting & hate-inspiring titivation of sex gai gain & no end or satisfaction. You know as well or better than me.

I nearly forgot some drink adverts - one of a girl 'waiting for it' I was looking at in a pub the other day. Also bra ads! The idea is to gather all these types of thing from all sources for a time, then to edit them suitably into 'dirty' photographs so that they can be hawked around the West End simultaneously at some prearranged date. Some of these dirty phot hawkers will be denounced and arrested, I think . . . I hope.

The thing could and would require to be so cleverly done so that the dirty photos or booklets would still have to match with their originals, so that when the 'conspiracy' had gone far enough the evidence of where all the 'filth' had been lifted from would be inescapable.

Dick Stubbs