

LOGOS

Bulletin of the London Anarchist Christians

- Koinonia

meetings c/o:-

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page one
September issue
August 16 started

Secretary:-

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August meeting: 22nd

September: 12th

meetings are held at the above address at 8.00 P.M., preceded by short services in the Church adjoining. LOGOS is sent to anyone on demand or who has said things of interest to Christian anarchists which might make them interested in having it. Anyone receiving it but not wanting it please notify.

Tony Fleming has replied to Anne Vogel (and my) replies to his earlier attack - from an anarchist-secularist viewpoint on Christianity. Anne is typing this and our replies, which ¹ will put in in a later LOGOS, but as this issue will have to be run off in a hurry it will have to be held over to an Autumn issue.

Incidentally I am leaving London - I hope at Christmas - and so (as I shall be a long way away) I shall not be able to carry on with LOGOS; - I hope someone else will. Two reports follow, one from Valerie Bickers, one from the Drug Dependents' Unit.

Christian Peace Conference

July 25.

Congrence: date: 7 - 8 November; Townbee Hall S.
Commercial St.,

(as "English for Pakistanis" is held there on Saturday evenings we are unable too book the hall for a social gathering.)

time: 10.00 A.M. (aprox) on Saturday; 1.-6.00 P.M. Sunday.

Groups: 1) The Middle East Conflict;

because of the nature of this group the following points were made

- A) a Chairman (neutral) should be appointed. (In addition it was thought that a vice-Chairman should also be appointed to give the Chairman support should the occasion arise.
- B) The audience should be limited to people with invitation cards - as certain groups might wish to cash-in on this to their own advantage; Jim Taylor is in touch with various peace organizations connected with the Middle East.

2) ~~2)~~ The failure of the Welfare State; - speaker already booked Frank Field from Child Poverty Action Group; David suggested as second speaker the Anglican Bishop of Norwich, who apparently is an expert on conscripted 'voluntary' service for young people (Valerie's terminology).

Leonard Brinkman (as V interpreted it) seemed in favour of this conscript on for young pepple of school age but not for adults. Valerie objected that ~~it was~~ ^{she} like many voluntary social workers feel that conscripts into community work do more harm than good; she also added that she thought it unlikely the Bishop would be free to come.

3) The Christian and Industry: booked speaker: Rev. R. Wisse, Industrial chaplain to Bishop of London, who will present the Christian attitude to industry as it is; as a second speaker t present the case for the Christian attitude to industry as it should be there were two suggestions: Fr John Rowe (who for those who don't know is a worker-priest and an Hungary generation ex-Communist) - a representative from the Scott-Bad.

Valerie left early so this report is not complete, elaboration of the
Miami West group and accommodation were left to be discussed.

I do not know how a pacifist meeting can restrict entry. It seems to
me that the arrangements have tried too hard to be responsible with the
result that they are inviting establishment speakers who will not attract
radicals and pacifists and then only radicals as an after thought. How
one can have a Christian attitude to industry as it is distinct from the
Christian attitude of what industry should be I cannot think. Is there
a Christian attitude to concentration camps and gas chambers other than
opposition, if not why one for capitalist industry?

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Bob Yates - no 082561 - Pentonville Prison would welcome visits, as would
Irene Everett of Dahlia Ward, Springfield Hospital, Beechcroft Road, Upper
Tooting, both contacts of the Drug Dependants Care Group. (The latter
responds to art and music therapy). The rest of the report has gone in
piecemeal in earlier LOGOI.

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Dave Mansford wrote on behalf of the YLs announcing that before our meeting
on September the 12th there is to be..... @ the Africa Centre, @ 2.30
P.M. (until 6.30) a meeting on the "Kenya Asians", whom the YLs rightly
refer to as British Asians. That is once again on September 12.

It is to be a fairly broad front meeting to launch a campaign on the issue, &
the YLs stress it is not just their pigeon.

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Steve Hayes in Pink Press - a duplicated sheet connected with IKON (there is
also a Green Press, published by the atal editors, Pink Press is a
community paper published in South West Africa) that there is evidence
in South Africa of sportsmen opposing apartheid as a result of the Test
tour cancellation, and that white opinion has not hardened.

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I give a quotation from De Leon, which though inaccurate on Christianity is useful

on socialism; an American Marxist thinker with the unusual ability to translating good ideas into easily understood English. He is forgotten because Lenin having said he was the greatest Marxist since Marx, people assume his views were mere precursors of Lenin's; and also because his party the SLP had degenerated ~~ix~~ into a dogmatic sect. Various dissident groups have recently emerged putting De Leon's ideas in a new framework and ready to examine the ideas of their own teacher, when necessary, and this quote - which I had forgotten - is in the May issue of the De Leonist.

Sorry September-October 69 issue.

The affair was gotten up on a large scale, - a charity fair - so large a scale that a new building had to be hastily improvised for the bazaar and ball. In the midst of the festivities the flimsy structure took fire. The pitch with which the joints of the roof had been fastened, melted and rained down a scalding shower upon the heads of the celebrants.--(not the religious sense, L.O.) - What with that and the flames that leaped up and across from all directions, a panic broke out; men trampled upon women, women upon children, all upon each, each upon all. A large crowd comporting itself a moment before in a civilized and considerate manner were turned into hyenas. Which was an exhibition of human nature? When each individual in that crowd vied with each other individual in politeness and consideration? Or when all became like wild beasts? The Boston "Sunday Herald" and the lay clerical elements ~~ix~~ whose opinions it utters answer the "latter"; socialism answers both.

The posture of those who declare that human nature would have to be revolutionized before socialism is established, and consequently, socialism is impossible, amounts to holding that buildings in which large crowds are congregated should be built in the most inflammable material, because human beings will anyway act as wild beasts; and that "human nature" cannot be revolutionized; The posture of socialism amounts to holding that buildings should be constructed of fireproof material only, and should be designed according to all the inventions and discoveries of science, because human nature being good or bad, angelic or fiendish, kind or brutish, according to the material exigencies of its surroundings, it is the duty of the civilized architect to provide the surroundings that will not promote the bad, the fiendish, the brutish, but will promote the good, the angelic, the kind, manifestations of human nature.

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The Secretary of the Greek National Tourist Board commented on tourist trade boycott attempts: "People don't concern themselves with the political situation as long as it doesn't affect them; - one doesn't care whether the owner beats his wife as long as the coffee is good."

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Meeting of the C/A group - August 22 - present: Ian Lewis, Fr Gresham, Jo
 Phillips, Barbara Dempsey, Laurence Otter,
 apologies: Fr Andrew, Anne Vogel, Valerie
 Bickers, Ian Annett.

We decided that we were too few and that of us too few had been to the earlier discussions of Nicholas Walter's pamphlet to start a discussion of the rest of the pamphlet. Incidentally we decided at this point that the meeting in September should discuss a summation of our past discussions on this to be prepared by Gresham, with the aim of producing from this a viable pamphlet.

Title: God - neither master nor corpse. (August 22 decided for September 12.)

Barbara had a report on the East London Anarchists, and I read Michael Baber's on the Garden House - contained in here elsewhere.

Gresham brought up an essay of Dom Gregory Dix's and one which argued that christian socialists are apt to lay an almost fundamentalist emphasis on the Koinonia in the Acts, and that things were not as cut and dried then, though Gresham accepted that Conrad Noel had demonstrated convincingly that many early fathers - even ones who did not practice communism - did insist that community sharing was an essential element of the Christian wider community.

The first essay argued that Rome would - without the impact of Christianity - have either fossilized into a tyranny or disrupted into chaos, that it was the Christian influence which allowed a new civilization to emerge. This is in obvious contradistinction to Gibbon's argument that Christianity led to the overthrow of the fineness of classic civilization; Dix arguing that Rome had - starting from a synthesis of earlier cultures - created a closed system incapable of development. Gresham thought that our present circumstances were not unlike those of Rome, and only an anarchist reassertion of Christianity could preserve civilization.

In interjected with a distinction between the Rome of the East and that of the West and the discussion turned to the conversion of Constantine. Gresham was of course still of the view that the usual Christian Socialist view that Constantine's conversion marked the degeneration of Christendom from the perfect to the corrupt was an oversimplification; and noone was disposed to argue for this.

September

All agreed that it was illogical to believe that a perfect body could ever be created, and all accepted Gresham's other point that when the pagans & the Judaeo-Christians had earlier affected the Church, Christianity had lost its essential ingredient and understanding of its own faith. I did however take issue with the full deductions Gresham was making from this.

The Joannine statement had put it that "the Bride of Christ - the church - entered soon after its inception into an adulterous and bigamous relationship with the state. It would seem to me that the conversion of Constantine was the solemnization of this, if not the start of the affair. Gresham argued that because Constantine was converted only on his deathbed it was not relevant to say that the church would not have admitted a notorious profligate and therefore thought profligacy more serious a sin than being a notorious ruler of men; - Ian interposed that Constantine's son was also baptized, and I that Constantine had attended ~~and~~ and presided at an Oecumenical Council, where everyone else was a delegate from a local church and even the bishops represented the views of their sees not just themselves and did not sit merely because they were bishops; Constantine was not even then a Christian. True at the Council St Basil told him that though there might be a time when a Christian might morally take up arms, they would not include any war Constantine might wage, ~~and~~ yet might include struggle for justice against him, which hardly spells a subservient church; but... Ian referred to the so-called Testament of Constantine, the origin of the Concordat, but was prepared to accept that this was a Tenth Century forgery.

Before Diocletian - in certain Roman provinces where the Christians were numerous & where tradesmen found it expedient to profess Christianity - some Roman officials early professed adherence to the Church, and their relatives rose within the priesthood - indeed were largely responsible for the introduction of prelacy, when ministers ceased to be servants of the congregation and priests servi servorum only in name. These frequently, when Rome appointed a new Governor, who disapproved of compromise with the Church, were ready to apostasize, sacrificing to Caesar, burning sacred writ - in valuable manuscript which could not easily be replaced - in ways that in the very early days of the Church was looked on as the one sin which in a priest - and still more a bishop - could not be forgiven and which nullified the right to fulfill priestly functions. (But as more and more powerful began to do it became respectable and the critics were forced out of the church as schismatics and accused of heresy - of the Donatists,) - which introduced a class struggle into the community of Christendom.)

Gresham argued that the situation was not as bad as that and that anyway the Conversion of Constantine did not regulate this; and Ian said that if I held this was the case then surely the Church was incurably corrupt & could not be defended. I said that no secular radical movement ever through up radicals long after it had made its peace with the establishment and that the very corruption of the Church coupled with the fact that it can still produce an Helda Camara, an Archbishop Roberts (to say nothing of people who receive this) was proof of the operation of the Holy Ghost.

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September 12: Gresham - "God - neither master nor corpse".

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The Observer and Guardian have expressed surprise that Niarchos, a staunch as well as powerful supporter of the Greek regime, is being publicly accused of wife murder. I have not yet seen any mention of Jacque Onassis in this (formerly Kennedy), but it is a precedent she would hardly like if rich Greek shipowners can get away with murdering their wives. Her knowledge of Judo would suggest that she has an healthy regard for her own skin and self-preservation, and she is powerful enough in her own right to make a stink if the precedent goes unchallenged.

Not only the knowledge of judo shows that she does not intend to die before her time. Witness her suppleness before the FBI investigation and Warren Commission after her first husband's death. To suit those attempting to incriminate Oswald as a scape goat she changed her testimony as to the way Kennedy fell until it was realized that had he fallen the new way, she could not have cradled him as she was shewn by photo's to do, so she changed her testimony back and agreed with a time schedule which allowed the shots to have been fired when the car was moving in the opposite direction. It would no doubt have been dangerous for the president's widow to have been over picky as to the truth at that time, when the FBI was so cock-a-hoop at having removed her husband from public affairs.

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1 Baber's report on the Garden House follows, Tony Fleming's answer to Anne and I and this is being held over until later

fraternally

Laurens

Michael Baber sent the following in reply to the August LOGOS appeal for a report on the Garden House demonstration and arrests. It takes the form of a report and an article of more generalized theoretical import, which since the latter is a matter for debate and the former not, I divide a little more definitely than he did - in the original there is only a cross-heading division. He enclosed with this a copy of the Sunday Times "insight" article on the matter which he praised as being good liberalism, and he adds to it from a revolutionary point of view. I am not going to reproduce the ST article - in fact I had it in front of me when I wrote in the August issue that I would like a report - as it is ~~x~~ too long, but it is surely well worth reading. I would add that as a Guardian Copytaker (one of six people in the department) I have taken two reports - one as a letter, ~~x~~ from a demonstrator, and one as a tip to desk from what I assume was an hotel worker, anyway someone inside the hotel, - both reporting have seen a balding elderly man pick up a chair and thru t it through the windows- two windows - at demonstrators, and press photographs show the glass from broken windows outside the hotel.

I do not know which issue of LOGOS this will go in, though I am typing this on August 19 before the August meeting, I shall have a very short peñior in which to bring out the September issue, and will probably have to hold it over.

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1. Who wanted a riot?

Not, I believe, the organizers of the demo - 1/- Paper, Socialist Society, C.P., I.S., and the like. One Soc. Soc. worthy asked if he wanted to get into the Garden House (via a secretly opened window) firmly refused.

Paradoxically the Garden House itself stood to gain most from a riot. The Manager (?) of the Garden House was reported, days before the demo, as saying that he did not mind what happened as long as it was reported as happening at the Garden House, & not just 'a Cambridge hotel'. On the night the side gate of the hotel was left open (had it been closed & a few policemen placed there behind it, no demonstrators could have got into the back, where the so-called riot took place,) ((tactic the RAF used at the first Pickenham, L.O.)) demonstrators were thus free to go round the back - and to be confronted by barbed wire, a hosepipe, turned on them from above by the manager, and gluttonous bourgeoisie in the dining room at the rear. When one considers that the £2,000 worth of damage was a small price to pay for the vast free publicity which resulted, it might well be asked just who

was inciting to riot?

2. Selective arrest on the night.

I have pretty reliable evidence that one of the Garden House staff attacked a plain clothes policeman (thinking him to be a student) with a proverbial "blunnt instrument", he was not arrested.

At the hearing it was revealed that a policeman had been attacked by a diner, whilst trying to guard a student, the diner was not arrested.

It was also revealed at the hearing that a diner hurled a chair at a window from the inside, in an attempt to get at the demonstrators, whilst I know that another diner removed and crushed another student's glasses - the student was arrested for wilfull damage to a window & a couple of sherry glasses while his besuited co-criminal went free.

3. Editorial response.

One valid point to emerge at the hearing was the extent to which the diners responded emotionally - the men angrily (& in some cases violently), the women fearfully (some in tears, others fleeing the dining room, to lock themselves away), the panic in particular was not appreciated by the demonstrators, many of whom were frankly incredulous, when the evidence was produced at the Hearing. The fear amongst certain female guests was, nonetheless, very real, & was to my mind, one of the more unfortunate aspects of the whole affair.

The standard left-wing excuse for this violent alienation of the diners & local populace was the supposedly valuable morale boost given to the Greek Resistance by news of the demo. However the argument that violence was necessary for media coverage was surely not applicable in a situation where dissemination of the news in Greece would be by sympathizers rather than via officially approved channels - such sympathizers could have disseminated news of a non-violent demo, as readily as one of a violent demo.

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((Pickenham because it was non-violent, the leaving the back of the base unfenced, backfired; which in a sense endorses Michael's point; but one must make the distinction between non-violence and mere lack of violence; a non-violent demonstration demanding as it does that the demonstrators accept violence on themselves and arrests and imprisonment may well - in fact usually does, since there is a greater likelihood of arrest if you foreswear the chance of running away - demand more from demonstrators than does a violent one.))

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Demonstrations.

1. Demonstrations are constitutionally acceptable, because they are merely another form of bringing pressure to bear on the powers-that-be. To demonstrate is to accept the right of the powers-that-be to take decisions in the first place. The demonstrators seek not to end authority but merely to persuade it to give different orders. To the anarchist, then, demonstrations are philosophically repugnant. To use them as a means of 'raising the consciousness of the masses' by gaining involvement on particular issues & perhaps revealing authority's more brutal side is understandable tactically, but opens the way very easily to a manipulative - 'the end justifies the means' - approach to others. Looking at anarchists who have accepted already rejected frameworks on tactical grounds, from Spanish republican Ministers to Strasbourg Situationists, is hardly inspiring - judged even by the material standards of success which apparently motivated such compromises.
2. Unlike direct action a demonstration in itself cannot remedy, of itself, a situation. The problems of manipulation, misinterpretation, diversion, etc., are at least as great^{as} for direct action, but immediate success is farther away, - i.e. both Grosvenor Square and the Hornsey Commune came under attack in the media, but the latter was changing things at the same time, while the demo came and went leaving things largely as they were before. Thus on purely tactical grounds, demonstrations are inefficient.
3. Demonstrations so often appear a trendy excuse, the appearance of action masking the reality of real action. Thus Cambridge demos deal with Vietnam, South Africa, Greece, L.S.E., etc., - almost anywhere but Cambridge, and the power structure^{es} which inhibits the demonstrators in their everyday lives - demonstrations about domestic matters might adversely affect one's career, after all - note the lack of enthusiasm for anti-assessment campaigns among the so-called revolutionaries (their jobs in the Universities, the BBC or whatever might be jeopardized) - one wonders how many demonstrators would dare to demonstrate if this were really Greece, South Africa, etc., - demonstrations thus appear emotionally hollow and contrived - emotion grows the further removed the issue is from one's own life, and is also neatly packaged and arranged, so as to manifest itself only at a particular place, at a particular time and to a particular degree.

4. Demonstrations encourage a sheep-like conformity, the leaders make the usual exhortations and cliché-ridden speeches, the cheer leaders shout the latest revolutionary nursery rhymes, and the sheep march in orderly ranks. The organizers meanwhile although requiring certain degrees of emotion from their supporters (to signify commitment, concern, etc., in the public eye) are careful to ensure that individuals do not escape the containment necessary if the demonstration is to remain the organizers' own property.
5. It is argued that demonstrations are social occasions - "meet your friends & have fun" - like my friend who told me she was going to the Garden House demo that night rather than to two parties; the demo would be more exciting. Apart from raising the question of how real the purported concern for the public aims of the demo, in fact is, (the demo as a spectacle, like going to a football match,) the straight-jacket, which the need for respectability in the eyes of the media and the organizers imposes, cuts out most of the fun, unless you enjoy unsponsored route marches & public abuse (20th Century sackcloth and ashes) that is. Demos can be launching pads for spectacular ego-trips, - like the Situationist who went to the Garden House with suit, tie, and forged press card, - got in, opened a back door, to let comrades in, held up a table to stop incriminating press 'photos' of friends, shrugged off police with pressman role-play, and wandered around the hotel, left a free man, then later led sheep demonstrators from demo organizers to another part of the city on a fictitious issue, where he left them bewildered, though this is only to invite denunciation from more orthodox comrades, (the Situationists thus denounced by Soc. Soc. as left-wing adventurers, objectively the enemies of the revolution) and arrest from the authorities, (as wreckers, nihilists, etc.)

But what revolution and what property is being wrecked? And aren't our personal relations in a mess if we have to go on demos to feel together & meet our friends? A do we honestly feel for the Greeks or whoever? & even when we are on our own little ego-trips (as if we cared about an issue) doesn't this merely point to the poverty of our everyday existence; the demo as the castle on the sand of one's everyday life? & if we are not ego-tripping then we are probably sheep. & if we were anarchists we wouldn't be there, precisely because it was a demo, or unless we had accepted power politic concepts of means and ends - the Good Shepherd is still a shepherd,

& the road to you know where is paved with good intentions.

So much for demonstrations; - the end that is of a particular polemic on the subject.

I don't suppose this attack will go long unavenged. It will probably be asked how, if I really believe this, I came to be at the Garden House affair at all. I can only point out that the case against me was dropped when it was discovered that there was no evidence I had ever been at the demonstration - a conclusion I have no wish to dispute. Or perhaps the Garden House provided merely the last nail in the coffin. Either way the views expressed are the ones I happen to hold just now, whether despite or as a result of the Garden House affair.

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I assume that many people will want to answer this, I will limit myself to pointing out that non-violent direct action, which is not direct action in the sense that a strike or a squat is, is nevertheless aimed to convert workers, with the hope that they will use direct action - that is at second remove where one is in no position to act directly, and that therefore it ought to have been dealt with as a separate issue.

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Michael, as perhaps people might have guessed from the above, asks that LOGOS should consider and discuss: Dada, Situationists (Vareigen) et al); Nihilism, Hippies, Yippies, Existentialism, the King Mob, the Underground generally. While we will welcome articles on these I for one am not competent to write on these, and as I don't like what I know of some of them, and think that others lead people away from revolution, would not be able to write sympathetically; nevertheless after all Trotsky asked Andre Breton to write an art manifesto, so even the orthodox left that he mentions could hardly claim they were irrelevant. There are several anarchistic papers concerned with these but as Michael mentions they do not tackle them from a Christian anarchist standpoint.

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separate copies
of this
supplement
available

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