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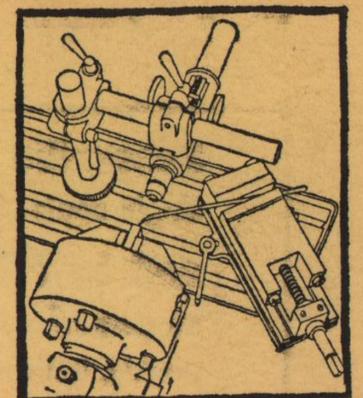
## Action anthropology: applied anarchism?

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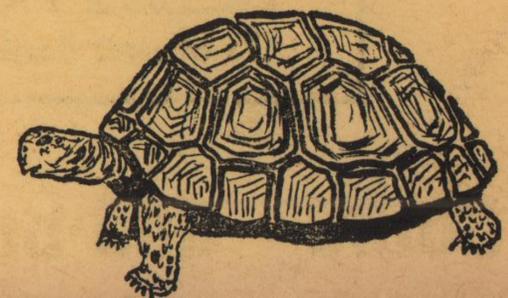
## Erosion inside capitalism

REG WRIGHT



## Fabians and anarchists

AN ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM



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*In other parts of the civilised world the economic problem has been longer and more scientifically discussed, and Socialist opinion has taken shape in two distinct schools, Collectivist and Anarchist. English Socialism is not yet Anarchist or Collectivist, not yet definite enough in point of policy to be classified. There is a mass of Socialistic feeling not yet conscious of itself as Socialism. But when the unconscious Socialists of England discover their position, English Socialism is not yet Anarchist or Collectivist, not yet supporting a strong central administration, and a counterbalancing Anarchist party defending individual initiative against that administration.*  
FABIAN TRACT No. 4, 1886.

## Anarchists and Fabians: an anniversary symposium

### 1. Undifferentiated Socialism

This issue of ANARCHY coincides with the seventy-fifth anniversary of its publishers, Freedom Press. It was in October 1886, that the original Freedom Group, consisting of exiled Russian revolutionaries, Peter Kropotkin and Nicolas Tchaikovsky, a London Italian, Saverio Merlino, and two member of the Fabian Society, Dr. Burns Gibson and Mrs. Charlotte Wilson, issued the first number of FREEDOM as "a Journal of Anarchist Socialism". Annie Besant, who was also at that time a member of the Fabian Executive, lent the hospitality of her Free-thought Publishing Company as an office, and the type was composed at the printing office of the Socialist League, an arrangement made by William Morris.

This close association of anarchists and Fabians, and the existence of anarchist Fabians seems odd today. The explanation is given by the quotation at the head of the page, from the introduction to the fourth Fabian Tract *What Socialism is*, which was followed by an exposition of Collectivism by August Bebel, and of Anarchism, "drawn up by C. M. Wilson, on behalf of the London Anarchists". Socialism, as the introduction suggested, was still undifferentiated in this country, between that school which sought to utilise the power of the state and that which saw the state as an obstacle to the realisation of socialism. This undifferentiated period was at that time coming to an end. The struggle between the adherents of Marx and those of Bakunin in the First International, had taken place in the previous decade; that in the Second International was yet to come, with the ejection of Merlino from its founding congress in Paris in 1889, and the final exclusion of the anar-

chist faction of Malatesta, Landauer, Nieuwenhuis and Cornelissen from the Zurich Congress in 1893, when Bebel's resolution limited membership to groups and parties who accepted political action. In England, H. M. Hyndman had founded the Democratic Federation (later the SDF) in 1881, containing "parliamentary social reformers, revolutionary social democrats, anti-parliamentary social democrats and pronounced anarchists". The SDF split at the end of 1884, William Morris's faction forming the Socialist League, which in turn split again between anarchists and socialists a few years later, the anarchist faction joining with the Freedom Group in 1895. In the following year, speaking at a protest demonstration after the expulsion of the anarchists from the International Labour Congress, Keir Hardie said that, while he was no anarchist, no one could prophesy whether the Socialism of the future would shape itself in the image of the Social Democrats or of the Anarchists.

The Fabian Society had been founded in 1884. Bernard Shaw became a member of its Executive Council in 1885, as did Charlotte Wilson, and in the same year Sidney Webb joined the society. In March 1885 Shaw published in Henry Seymour's paper *The Anarchist*, a defence of anarchism. He had not yet reached the position of his 1893 Fabian Tract *The Impossibilities of Anarchism* (though his article is not a very good statement of the anarchist case, and his tract is not a very good criticism of it). But 1886 turned out to be crucial year in the relations of Fabians and anarchists. According to one of the recent books on the history of the Fabian Society,

The question, as G.B.S. put it, was how many followers had the one ascertained anarchist Fabian, Mrs. Charlotte Wilson, among the silent Fabians? The Fabian executive determined to find out. At a meeting that autumn in Alderton's Hotel, Annie Besant and Hubert Bland moved that seconded a resolution that Socialists should organise themselves into a political party—a suggestion that would bring any cowering or lurking anarchists into the open, as being complete anathema to them. William Morris dotted the i's and crossed the t's by adding a rider to the contrary: "because no Parliamentary party can exist without compromise and concession." The debate was so noisy that the Fabian secretary was subsequently told by the manager of Alderton's Hotel that the society could not be accommodated there for any further meetings. Everybody voted whether Fabian or not, and Besant and Bland carried their resolution by 47 to 19, Morris's rider being rejected by 40 to 27.

And that, from a Fabian point of view, seems to have been the end of the matter, though it is interesting to note that at that time the majority faction had not intention of implementing the resolution.

## 2. The Fabian Package

Geoffrey Ostergaard.

The year 1889 saw the publication of *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, a coherent expression of the new creed which was destined to dominate British socialist thought for the next sixty years and which exercised a major influence on Bernstein's 'revision' of Marxism a decade later. The classic Fabian *modus operandi* was 'permeation'—the tactic of

nobbling anyone, Tory, Liberal or what-have-you, who had any influence in government. This tactic made no appeal to those in the Labour Movement, like Keir Hardie, who were eager to get 'independent' representation in Parliament. The Fabians therefore, played little part in the actual moves which led to the formation of the I.L.P. and its offspring the Labour Party. Nevertheless, they did provide the basic elements in the programmes of these parties. The Labour politicians had essentially only one idea of their own—representation independent of the older bourgeois parties: the rest of their ideas they bought at the Fabian shop.

The principal items in the package of goods were these:

(i) Acceptance of the bourgeois democratic State as a suitable instrument for the achievement and application of socialism. No essential change, the Fabians argued, was necessary in the apparatus of government. To break the State machine would be tantamount to political Luddism. All that was required was for the people to gain control of the machine through the ballot box and to perfect it for their own ends. This notion assumed that the democratic State could be identified with the community and made possible the conclusion that State ownership and control was the same as ownership and control by the community in the interests of 'the community as a whole'.

(ii) Rejection of revolutionary economics. The early British socialists had demonstrated how bourgeois economics with its cornerstone, the labour theory of value, could be turned into a weapon for use against the bourgeoisie. Marx completed the demonstration. In response to this turn of events, bourgeois economists ditched the classical theory and developed a new economics based on the concept of marginal utility. The Fabians followed the new line. They espoused the economics of utility and added to it a large dash of the Ricardian theory of rent. In their hands, economics was used to support the case for socialism, but in the process of presenting that case the guts were cut out of it. The old revolutionary economics was essentially a theory of class exploitation. Fabian economics was simply an attempt to justify State ownership. The class struggle had no place in the Fabian picture of the world: socialism was not a matter of classes; it was rather a question of the 'community as a whole' taking charge of what was rightfully its own. In this connection, the different wording of the broad objective of the Fabians in comparison with that of the other socialists is significant. For revolutionary socialists the aim was 'the emancipation of labour through the abolition of the wage system and the socialisation of the means of production.' For the Fabians the aim, as stated in their Basis, was simply 'the emancipation of land and capital from individual ownership.'

(iii) The notion that socialism would be achieved through a process of gradual evolution. That socialism was the next step in the development of modern society. Sidney Webb, writing in the *Essays on the historical basis of socialism*, argued that socialist principles had been explicit in much of the development of social organisation in the

19th century. Successive regulation and limitation of private ownership in the course of the century had cut 'slice after slice' from the profits of capital and the income of rent and interest. 'Step by step' the political power of the country had been used for industrial ends. The logical end result would be the complete ownership and management of industry by the community, a consummation that would be achieved 'with no more dislocation of the industries carried on by (capitalist shareholders) than is caused by the daily purchase of shares by the stock exchange.' Not for a moment were the Fabians prepared to countenance the idea that State ownership might, in certain circumstances, be in the interests of the capitalist class: socialism *was* State intervention and that's all there was to it.

In the 20th century Fabianism was to be faced with some competition from other brands of socialism, notably syndicalism and guild socialism. But this competition resulted in only a modification of the wrapper. The basic goods remained the same and three-quarters of a century later we are living in a Britain shaped very much in the Fabian mould.

The Fabians succeeded in changing the whole character of socialism. For the 'socialism of the street' they substituted 'the socialism of the bureau'—the socialism of a bureaucrat anxious to enlarge his department. In modern parlance, they were the harbingers of managerialism. They valued above all social efficiency, and idea which, if it has always found expression in socialist literature, had previously been subordinate to the more human values of freedom, mutual aid and social co-operation. The Fabians never tired of emphasising the economic advantages to be gained from a collectivist economy—the replacement of the 'anarchy' of competition by planned production and the elimination of wasteful unemployment and poverty through the establishment of a national minimum standard of living. The total effect of Fabian doctrines was thus to transform socialism from a moral idea of the emancipation of the proletariat to a complicated problem of social engineering, making it a task, once political power had been won, not for the ordinary stupid mortal—Beatrice Webb's 'average sensual man'—but for the administrator armed with facts and figures provided by diligent research. It is small wonder that, nurtured for three generations on such fare, British socialism presents today a spectacle of spiritual exhaustion.

### 3. The Point of Divergence

*John Ellerby.*

In the *Report on Fabian Policy* of 1896, George Bernard Shaw wrote that "The Socialism advocated by the Fabian Society is State Socialism exclusively". It was this glorification of the State which brings us up with a start when we read even the most sympathetic accounts of the leading triumvirate of the Fabian Society, Shaw, and Sidney and Beatrice Webb. It explains their bellicosity at the time of the Boer War, it explains Sidney Webb's remark in the First World

War, when there was a chance of a negotiated peace, "Soldiers' noses must be kept to the grindstone." It explains the admiration which Shaw and the Webbs expressed later in their lives, for Mussolini, and their positively indecent worship of Stalin. It explains why the chosen instrument of public ownership of industry and services in this country has been the public corporation, run on capitalist lines, and indeed indistinguishable from the big capitalist empires. It explains why many of the instruments of social welfare have taken their particular form. (The "welfare state" as such cannot be described as a Fabian achievement: it is the inevitable concomitant of industrialisation and of the extension of *warfare* to civilian populations. Professor Titmuss himself has described how "The aim and content of social policy, both in peace and war, are determined—at least to a substantial extent—by how far the co-operation of the masses is essential to the successful prosecution of war.").

The Fabian period is over, although the society itself still exists. In a sense it was over by the end of the First World War, with the outlines of Fabian policy set in motion as the policy of the Labour Party; in another sense it was over after its period of maximum membership in the late nineteen-forties, when the Labour government enacted its Fabian measures. As the Labour government staggered to its end ten years ago, *The Times*, in an unusually perceptive leading article observed that

At its annual conference in 1919 the Labour Party took a fateful step when, following the lead of Sidney Webb, it committed itself not only to Socialism but to one particular definition of Socialism which happened at that time to have found acceptance with the Fabian Society. By this definition Socialism is identified with the increase (almost unlimited in the economic field) of the State's power and activity. It is a direct consequence of this decision that an important element among those in the Labour Party who doubt the direction which the party has taken consists of those who looked for more power for the workers and for ordinary people and have been given instead the huge, impersonal and management-controlled public corporation. Mr. Bevan, in his indictment of the 'economists', party voices their vague but real resentment against the State managers who, as they see it, have annexed Socialism. There is nothing in the history of Socialist thought to suggest that the State is the natural and inevitable instrument by which Socialism is to be attained. From Proudhon to William Morris to the Guild Socialists, distrust of the State has been a constant element in the development of Socialist ideas. It is the tragedy of the Labour movement that it has been so intent on extending the authority of the State that it has overlooked the purpose of its existence.

The ten years since then have seen an orgy of "rethinking" among socialists of all kinds, but they have neither found a way of dressing up Labour's political programme in a fashion attractive enough to collect the floating votes on which general elections now depend, nor have they explored a non-parliamentary field of socialist activity which does not depend on the conquest of state power. Fabian policies have lost their appeal—we have experienced them from governments of both political complexions, and there is nothing significant to distinguish

political socialism from its opponents in home, colonial or foreign policies.

The most perceptive of socialist thinkers have been groping for a *different kind* of socialism: some of them are quoted in ANARCHY 3, (p. 66). One of them, the philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch, declared that "The Welfare State marks the successful end of the first road along which the Socialist movement in this country has elected to travel. It is now time to go *back to the point of divergence*." For her the alternative road is in the tradition of the Guild Socialists who "were deeply concerned with the destruction of community life, the degradation of work, the division of man from man which the economic relationships of capitalism had produced; and they looked to the transformation of existing communities, the trade unions, the factories themselves, for the restoration of what was lost." For us the point of divergence is not very different. At the actual time of the divergence between anarchists and Fabians, Charlotte Wilson expressed it in Fabian Tract No. 4 in these words:

The first aim of anarchism is to assert and make good the dignity of the individual human being, by his deliverance from every description of arbitrary restraint—economic, political and social; and by doing so, to make apparent in their true force the real social bonds which already knit men together, and, unrecognised, are the actual basis of such common life as we possess. The means of doing this rests with each man's conscience and his opportunities. . . .

Anarchists believe the existing organisation of the State only necessary in the interest of monopoly, and they aim at the simultaneous overthrow of both monopoly and State. They hold the centralised 'administration of processes' a mere reflection of the present middle-class government by representation upon the vague conception of the future. They look rather for voluntary productive and distributive associations utilising a common capital, loosely federated trade and district communities practising eventually free communism in production and consumption. . . .

Anarchism is not a utopia, but a faith based on the scientific observation of social phenomena. In it the individual revolt against authority, handed down to us through radicalism and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, and the Socialist revolt against private ownership of the means of production, which is the foundation of Collectivism, find their common issue.

In spite of the fact that anarchism and Fabianism are at almost diametrically opposed wings of the socialism movement, there are lessons to be learned from the Fabians—and by the Fabians in this context, I mean the "Old Gang" of the Society, the little group which was its mainspring until (and unofficially long beyond) its retirement from the executive in 1911—Bernard Shaw, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Sydney Olivier and Graham Wallas. Some of these lessons are indicated in a recent article in FREEDOM (*Socialism by Pressure Group* 12/8/61) by Geoffrey Ostergaard, who points out how the society's organisational structure placed it "out of the reach of interested minorities chasing paper majorities which have been the bane of most socialist and labour organisations". Others emerge from a study of the "Old Gang" considered as a group, published in the American bulletin *Autonomous Groups* (Spring and Summer 1959) by Charles Kitzen. He shows how

the "Old Gang", with its close ties of sentiment and common interest, its division of labour based on specialisation according to their different talents, and its "external system" by which each member of the "Old Gang" was a liaison between the group and many other organisations and interest groups, achieved an immense amount of work and exercised a very great influence, *by virtue of* its structure and character as a group. It is a paradox that the "Old Gang" of the Fabians, rigorous protagonists of state socialism, should have been in themselves the epitome of a voluntary informal group of autonomous individuals.

The immense service in education and research which this tiny group was able to give to the socialist movement, though its results were from our point of view disastrous, lead me to ask whether, if we are really to "go back to the point of divergence" and successfully propagate a different kind of socialism, we do not need the equivalent of the Fabians to do for anarchist theory and practice what they did for the political wing of the Labour movement? I think we do, and I think we already have its nucleus among our readers (for the FREEDOM readership survey last year revealed that we have among us people with specialised knowledge in every conceivable field of occupation and activity), but what we have not got is the willingness to undertake the necessary work. Let us imagine this anarchist equivalent in existence—we will call it The Nucleus—as a "notional" organisation, that is to say, one without officers and membership lists or the paraphernalia of formal organisations. Its members—let us assume that they are synonymous with the readership of this journal, seek to relate anarchism to their own particular occupation or field of interest, to use it (as the manifesto in the very first issue of FREEDOM seventy-five years ago put it), as "the touchstone" by which they set out to "try the current ideas and modes of action of existing society", and to infuse it into the other occupational and interest groups to which they belong. The Nucleus, in its "external system" acts as an anarchist leaven in other equally "notional" organisations—the unofficial movements in industry, the New Left, CND and the Committee of 100 are examples, while internally (through the medium of this journal, we might hope), it seeks to erect that "house of theory" for want of which Iris Murdoch sees the impetus of the Left withering away, as well as an exposition of what one of our contributors calls "applied anarchism". For it is in the field of partial anarchist applications, examples of which are given in ANARCHY 4 ('de-institutionalisation') and ANARCHY 7 (adventure playgrounds), that we can most readily see the startling relevance in daily life, of anarchist ideas. Far from being a half-forgotten backwater left over from the pre-Fabian days of socialism, they can emerge as a living influence in life and conduct, if only the nucleus of contemporary anarchists will take the trouble to present them in this light.

Last month thousands of people were willing to make an act of token resistance to authority in the "sit-down" demonstrations. The field for modern and constructive anarchist propaganda is all around us.

## Action anthropology or applied anarchism?

KENNETH MADDOCK

ANTHROPOLOGY IS OFTEN CALLED the science of man, and, on the whole, anthropologists have not been reluctant to accept this description. But, by ranking their discipline among the sciences, anthropologists are forced into considering whether their knowledge can be applied in the solution of human problems, and, if so, on what conditions. Some sidestep the issue, holding that anthropologists cannot expect to influence practical decisions and should therefore concentrate on "pure" research. Most, however, are in agreement that their knowledge can be applied, but are in disagreement on *how* it is to be applied.

Traditionally, two conflicting approaches exist among those who accept the practicability of applied anthropology. The right wing hold that their proper role is simply to advise on the solution of problems posed by others, *e.g.* by colonial administrators. Thus, if administrators wish to impose a particular policy, the applied anthropologist would indicate the obstacles likely to be thrown up because of the nature of the culture affected. The left wing are more optimistic. Avoiding the schizophrenic separation of science and values, they hold that the anthropologist knows more about the nature of culture, particularly primitive and non-European culture, than anyone else, and that he should therefore share in the formation of policy. Both these approaches have certain difficulties attendant upon them, which it is not my intention to investigate now.

Quite recently a new approach to applied anthropology has come into prominence, an approach which seems more compatible with anarchism than either of the others and is likely to be attractive to anarchist social scientists. This new approach to an old problem is called action anthropology, and is associated with Professor Sol Tax of the University of Chicago more than with anyone else.

The genesis of action anthropology can be traced back to 1948 when Chicago University established a research centre among the Fox Indians, who live near Tama, Iowa, for the purpose of giving students some field training. There seems initially to have been no intention

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to do other than pure research, but the character of the project quickly changed. The workers became interested in the Fox as people, and in the problems which they face. It was decided to help the Fox, particularly in their relations with the whites. And this is where the problem of applications arose. The Chicago team were not operating in the usual *milieu* of the applied anthropologist, which is the colonial situation, but among people who legally were equal citizens. No one could force a programme on the Fox. The possibility of exercising power less directly by relying on greater knowledge and sophistication seems not to have been considered. Instead, as Sol Tax put it: "We were not doing pure science—we thought we ought not to use the Indian community for purposes that were not their own. But neither were we coming to apply our anthropological skills to develop a plan or programme."<sup>1</sup>

Who are the Fox? They are an Algonquian-speaking people (their name for themselves is Mesquakie; "Fox" is the English translation of "Reynard", the name the French applied to these people) who, at the time of first contact back in the seventeenth century, were living in what is now Wisconsin. Their history is characteristic of that of most primitives in culture contact situations—it is a melancholy story. Wars with the French in the early eighteenth century resulted in near-extirmination. During the English and American periods what were left of the Fox moved south and west into Illinois and Iowa; in the 1840s the American government moved them onto a reservation in Kansas. But the Fox had not lost their will to survive as a people. In the 1850s they bought 80 acres of land in Iowa, and moved to it under the protection of the state government. Since then other purchases have expanded their land to about 3,300 acres. The people themselves now number about 600, of whom about 500 live on the settlement and work for wages in nearby towns. The others, who work further away, return to the settlement only at weekends or for special occasions. On the settlement is a school paid for by the federal government, which also pays the fees of a Tama physician who keeps a morning clinic there. Further, the federal government pays tuition fees at the public high school in Tama. Even these minimal services are a source of tension: the government recognizes no obligation to provide them, and, indeed, threatens termination; the Fox, however, regard these services, and much more, as their due.

Despite the vicissitudes of culture contact, many Fox cultural traits in religion, social organization, and language still persist, not merely vestigially but with real vitality. Thus, for most Indians, English is a language learnt at school. The old kinship patterns survive. So does the old religion, though a few Fox are Christians, and rather more belong to an Indian adjustment cult based on the peyote ritual. Of especial interest to anarchists is the Fox authority system, characterized by an absence of recognition of any vertical authority.<sup>2</sup> Authority roles in the sense of certain individuals having power to make decisions

binding others, are non-existent. Instead, decisions are made only after extended discussion and debate, with no action taken without unanimity. This highly egalitarian cultural pattern has remained constant even though the federal government, acting pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act, has attempted to impose a hierarchical system. In consequence of the Act, the Fox now elect a council which acts for them in relations with the government. The council's chairman is treated by the government as a chief, but, in practice, meetings are still conducted in the traditional way, with leisurely discussion leading to decisions which are made unanimously or not at all.

The question of authority in Fox society is not merely an issue of interest to anarchists and anthropologists; it lies at the root of the Fox problem, and has bedevilled attempts at a solution. Thus, in 1944, the government drafted a ten-year plan for economic improvement. Roads were to be paved, the land area doubled, a retail store established. But unhappily this plan was never implemented. The tribal council voted it down because acceptance would have meant a section of the community binding the community as a whole. In a more regimented and hierarchical society a group in power would not have hesitated, but not so among the Fox.

If there were a rational awareness on the part of both Indian and white of the implications of so highly egalitarian an authority system, there might not be a Fox problem, or, if there was, its dimensions would be modest. White-initiated activities would not have been structured around the tacit assumption that vertical authority roles exist among the Fox—a structuring that makes them unworkable. The Fox would not have developed a failure complex over their inability to succeed in those activities. This is how Fred Gearing,<sup>3</sup> one of the action anthropologists, puts the problem: "On the whole, white-initiated activities have been organized in a hierarchical arrangement of authority and the Fox have failed. Failing repeatedly, and having mixed feelings about what the white man calls progress in the first place, the Fox have settled down to a grand strategy of holding the line. Having set on that course, they tend, through time, to become more of a financial burden."

This was the situation when the action anthropologists became interested in the Fox as people. The concept of the problem as seen by Professor Tax and his associates is in terms of a vicious circle, some of the elements of which I have already referred to. Lying on the periphery of the circle are two sets of factors tending to aggravate its viciousness. First is the Fox authority system with its reflection in their failure complex. Secondly, there are the contrasting personality types and work patterns of Indian and white, a set of factors which is reflected in the white belief that the Fox are lazy. The Fox, according to Fred Gearing, differ in personality from the typical white in that they do not share the latter's compulsive drive to make his real self approximate to his ideal self, or his shame and guilt if he fails. Instead,

the Fox personality ideal is one of harmony with himself and nature. The effect of this on respective work patterns is that the white can engage in sustained effort over a long period, independently of his own group if need be. The Fox cannot. So misunderstandings fester: the white sees the Fox as lazy; the Fox sees the white as aggressive and selfish. Each is probably right in terms of his own values.

Now we can enter the vicious circle. If whites believe the Fox are lazy, then the existence of the government services to which I have referred makes the Indians seem a burden on their thrifty and hard-working neighbours. The whites rationalize the situation, and conclude that the Fox can only be temporary; this rationalization generates action to speed up the "inevitable" assimilation. The Fox quite naturally resist change, their resistance being partly attributable to their failure complex, and so the circle is complete. The Fox seem more of a burden than ever.

One way of breaking down the vicious circle would have been to define concrete goals for the Fox to work towards—that is what the left wing in applied anthropology might have done. Instead, the action anthropologists decided on more open-ended goals, such as to increase the knowledge and awareness of both Indian and white. Through breaking down the mountain of misunderstanding, prejudice, and stereotype built up by the ethnocentric value judgments of both sides, they hope to achieve a release of people's energy and imagination. In short, they are acting as catalysts. An analogy suggests itself at this point: action anthropology is clinical in character. The psychotherapist helps the patient to an awareness of his own condition so that he can see for himself the roots of his condition. And so, too, with action anthropology: "by picking up a series of cues (in the light of general principles, of course) it allows concrete plans for action to emerge progressively from the ongoing processes of social change among the Fox."<sup>4</sup> Thus originally Sol Tax and his associates had debated the pros and cons of assimilation. Then, in Tax's words, "what a marvellous happy moment it was when we realized that this was not a judgment or decision *we* needed to make. It was a decision for the people concerned, not for us. Bluntly, it was none of our business."<sup>5</sup>

In playing their catalyst role, the action anthropologists are engaged in two specific programmes. First, education. On one level the whites are being educated into an awareness that neither the Fox, nor any other Indian group, can be thought of as only temporary. After all, they have survived centuries of culture contact. On another level the Fox themselves are being educated into a perception of the differences in culture and social organization between Indian and white. More particularly, the connection of the Fox authority system, with its positive evaluation of freedom, to past Fox failures in white-initiated activities is being illuminated. Further, a scholarship programme is under way to bring young Indians into the professions and skilled occupations, so

that the white economy can be entered at levels other than unskilled wage work.

Secondly, economic improvement is envisaged. Obviously the success of this is partly tied to the outcome of the various aspects of the educational programme. However, a step already taken is to develop a co-operative industry producing and selling Indian crafts. This venture, which is proving commercially successful, centres on a young Fox, Charles Pushetonequa, whose high artistic ability had opened the prospect of a career in the white world outside, but who preferred to live with his own people doing unskilled work. Now he

The Fox project is the first case history in action anthropology. Obviously a wider application of its methods would be richly justified in terms of human happiness, autonomy, and self-realization; however, there are some caveats which must be entered against action programmes. First, freedom from government control is essential. This rules out most colonial situations, and also, I am afraid, one possible source of funds. Secondly, it is probable that an action programme would be viable only where the culture concerned is intact enough to make community goals meaningful. In some situations native peoples are so highly "detrribalized" that assimilation seems the most realistic, and the most humane, goal. Thirdly, certain aspects of an action programme could be expensive, e.g. the higher education project among the Fox. Not all anthropologists are as adept at raising funds as Sol Tax is said to be. A final point is that in situations where a dramatic conflict of interest between European and non-European exists, e.g. in Kenya or South Africa, an action programme could probably not succeed. A number of North American Indian and Polynesian societies would, however, be promising ground, and, no doubt, there are many others.

The anarchist character of action anthropology is plain to see, though I don't know whether Professor Tax would care to be labelled, or libelled, an anarchist. Whatever his personal reaction, however, it is clear that the open-ended goals towards which action anthropology moves—happiness, autonomy, self-realization—are in harmony with the anarchist tradition. So, too, is its choice of non-authoritarian means to realize those goals. Hence the question I post in my title: *action anthropology or applied anarchism?*

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 Sol Tax in his opening address at the Central States Anthropological Society symposium on the Fox project (5 May, 1955). In addition to the references cited below, readers interested could refer to *Documentary History of the Fox Project*, 1960, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 2 Walter B. Miller in the *American Anthropologist*, April 1955.
- 3 Fred Gearing in his paper, "Strategy of the Fox Project", at the Central State Anthropological Society symposium.
- 4 Ralph Piddington, "Action Anthropology", *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, September 1960.
- 5 Sol Tax, "The Fox Project", *Human Organization*, Spring 1958.

## Erosion inside capitalism

### REG WRIGHT

A. V. ROE, A PIONEER OF FLYING and a founder of the Avro aircraft firm, wrote a book about 25 years ago in which he showed that the aircraft industry in this country could, as it was then, build large aeroplanes to enable the ordinary workman to take his family to North Africa for 2 or 3 weeks of sunshine every winter—relays of them. Rehashing the idea recently to a friend, I was asked "Why wasn't it done?" I retorted: "You preferred a war!" Long argument led to A. V. Roe's suggested economics for the scheme—social credit and all that. Again the question "Why aren't such obviously good schemes in operation?" My reply "Because you prefer 'freedom' to scramble over money." This led us to A. V. Roe's reasoning as a production engineer.

It takes many man-hours to build a large aeroplane, and a vast amount of man-hours is used up in preliminary work, design, tool-making, planning, prototyping. The break-even point requires the sale of 60-80 such machines, and to make a profit commensurate with the skill and enterprise involved requires a sale of hundreds, even thousands. It ought to be in production for ten years or more. The military market is, unfortunately, almost the only mass market for this industry. Roe deplored this, as do we all. "Every bomber could be two airliners—for us."

Military requirements demand secrecy—'security'. This leads to massive propaganda to condition the taxpayer into providing the money. So we find an industry in which the highest manual and technical skills are necessary, prostituted to the art of war.

The actual building of aircraft demands teamwork of the highest order. Design and study groups are assembled, draughtsmen are grouped according to their special knowledge, new men are absorbed, who, in turn, absorb knowledge from the groups. Next come planning groups who break the overall design down into production schemes. Each group consists of a nucleus of older men of wide experience around whom young men and apprentices are gathered. Teams of estimators work out costs, teams of technical and commercial experts order components from outside specialist firms, who in turn have to design, plan and order their work. Highly expensive machines, jigs and tools have to be ordered, sometimes years in advance of production. The co-ordination of such diverse teams calls for human understanding of a very high order. It is rarely autocratic, but there are of course men of acknowledged eminence who make 'sticky' decisions. This is

akin to an orchestra accepting the authority of the conductor. While this vast enterprise is taking shape, drawings are percolating onto the workshop floors. Here the "detail-fitting" group reproduces in metal the most amazing geometrical forms. These men are individualistic pieceworkers but are well aware of the strength of their position and usually combine in maintaining high standards of pay and conditions of work. "Details" now go to "sub-assembly" gangs who combine them into a "structure" which will form with other "structures" a major component of the aeroplane. These are then built into the complete aeroplane by groups of men with long experience. The shop floors continually come across faults and inadequacies in drawings and these are "flagged back" to the design office for amendment, the worker here being the necessary practical corrective to the theoretician.

The main bulk of the work is done, as can be seen, by groups—thousands of technicians and thousands of workers. Liaison is the work of individuals of outstanding ability. Whether a gang system is officially in existence or not, the grouping is the same. Firms who operate the gang system of piecework are almost invariably in the lead in production of aircraft as each gang is a self-sufficing democratic unit, a business within the larger business. But it is also more—it frees men's minds of financial worry and thus enables them to specialise as well as to co-operate. No man works against another because his good is the general good of the gang. Money matters are the concern of everyone because all are equal—the details are taken care of by the ganger and the shop-steward. The "share-out" list is published to the gang weekly. Most men with experience of a modern gang system are reluctant to return to individual piecework or to a fixed wage. On gangwork the initiative is with the men on the shop floor—they have to earn their money—they scheme, devise and invent continuously to speed-up the job, to enhance earnings, to make the job easier and to win shorter working hours. Men on "daywork" (fixed wage) have to be driven by foremen—men on individual piecework drive themselves—gang workers are a team who share equipment and money, and have a common attitude and understanding. All three methods will be found on a large aircraft building plant.

Aircraft building is probably the most complex of all manufactures because it is never static, new inventions and ideas being thrown up continuously. It combines the highest technical knowledge and skill with the most exacting workmanship. Every operation (and there are millions) could, if performed badly, be a cause of disaster, and every man knows it. Men soon come to accept that gang work is normal, that they can forget greed, that it takes all sorts to make a gang, and that individualism and collectivism can work side by side decently.

Team work on the management side is still marred by predatoriness—middle class ambition. The shop floor is kept clean of this by full publication of gang accounts, by all decisions being made by the entire gang or shop, and by collective disapproval of anti-social devia-

tion. An individualist who cannot conform usually ends up on piecework—on his own. The sociological significance of such developments in social engineering is that our industrial society is transforming itself from within. Just as capitalism arose "in the gaps" of the earlier land-owning and farming system so today a new order and method is arising *from the bottom*. It is resisted by some, not written about, ignored by the professional planners and inspirers. These dream up visions of white-coated university-trained experts (themselves!) pressing electronic buttons that will make workers unnecessary or subservient. The reality is different. Automatic machinery and processes are just the end result of a vast apparatus of creative work along the lines I have described. A self-operating plant, marvellous as it may be, has merely put the real work further back, out of sight. It was organised in work, by hand, skill, and brains.

Unskilled labour is fast being abolished. Even on building and civil engineering jobs the first thing done is to elevate 'labourers' into machine drivers and material handlers—with enhanced pay. Gang work, in its modern sense, is increasing used, to the benefit of both sides. A new road is wanted—quickly. "Mad Michael" and his gang arrive. They are tough, hand-picked Irishmen. Machines are there, the earth is torn up, levelled, drained, concreted and finished in record time. "Mad Michael" moves on, and along the road the regular house-builders follow. These men are self-selected—in pubs. They earn big money—and spend it! The nucleus of such a gang is permanent. Such gangs are to be found all over the world.

I once had office control of such a job. The plasterers' gang comprised 20 plasterers and 10 labourers. They had been a gang for years, run by *their own* foreman. They 'carried' an old plasterer who should have been retired, but 'couldn't afford it'. These men plastered miners' houses at great speed, and the old man followed up cleaning up defects. One day the 'agent' in a fit of spleen, sacked the old fellow. Instantly the foreman came to me and demanded the cards of the entire gang—his own as well. I knew the firm could not replace them and phoned head office. The old man was re-instated after a hell of a battle. The foreman told me, "That old chap is one of the finest plasterers alive. Some of the best ornamental plaster work in London was done by him. He taught me my trade. Anyone touching him touches *me*—and my lads. And if by any chance I should be as badly off as he is at that age I should expect the lads to carry me—and I know they would."

I admired these men.

This is an example of a common phenomenon: that at the back of almost every strike there is someone who thinks he alone knows. Strikes often appear to outside people to be about trivialities. Middle-class people conclude that the monetary gains that the men may get from a strike are also trivial, or that they have lost on the deal. Nothing of the sort. The men *know* that there is hostility somewhere above, and when breaking point has been reached, that someone has to be taught

a lesson. It may be one man, or it may be the general feeling among managers who want what they call a 'showdown' It can be political. Sometimes it is an obsession with a new system that is intended to *make* men conform. Whatever it is, the men know that *they* must give the lesson, for themselves, *now*, for other workers elsewhere, and also for the future. This is of course a negative attitude, but 'educating the gaffers' has been the continuous method by which the workers have raised themselves right from the earliest days of industrial degradation. Unless they continue thus, they would be pushed back, bit by bit, and they know it. The trade unions and the internal system in industry are but the frame in which men work. Their real feelings only break through occasionally—but they are always there ready. Their creative life at work is different, is slowly gaining, eroding old-fashioned capitalism. In fact employers and managers sometimes complain to me "There seems to be no end to the things these men want. Where will it end? They will soon be demanding the lot!" Sometimes I reply "Yes—the lot." The process is not usually thought of in the terms in which I have stated it, but it goes on, continuously.

In the Coventry car factories there has been an uphill battle from 1914 war days onwards, to build shop-floor organisation, and *method*. Shop stewards were in wartime, practically illegal and were persecuted for years afterwards. Great industrial battles were fought in the 1920s but men soon realised that something more than rebelliousness was required. So the battle was transferred to the shop floor. We fought while we worked and were getting paid, for strikes, unless imperative, were a dead loss. Our method was non-co-operation with any foreman, charge-hand, or rate-fixer who was a swine. Some whole firms were swinish. Our means were always subtle and drove supervisors mad. It was a desperate period for many men as we had been severely beaten in a three-month lockout in 1922—but, personally, I enjoyed the fight.

But there were *other* firms. In these, production engineering was being systematically applied. Coventry was peculiarly successful owing to the bicycle boom of 1880 to 1900, when line-production of precision-made parts had been highly developed. This skill and method easily progressed from bicycles to motor-cars. It was inevitable that someone would eventually, gather together enough resources to satisfy the ambitions of designers, production engineers, workers, and customers. By 1922 Morris Motors in Coventry had installed a hand transfer machine, in 1923 a fully automatic one—the first in the world. Continuous production by specialised machines, tools and methods attracted men away from the "swinish" firms—wages went up and hours went down. Other progressive firms, unable to afford such vast and expensive plants, achieved similar results by enlisting worker co-operation with high piecework earnings—"flogging the plant". It was soon found that piecework was advantageous, that a "line" was a team, and that the gang system kept men together, and happy. There were battles, and from all this a new outlook developed. The dictatorial gaffer was told to go to hell and increasingly men ran the job themselves.

Immense improvements in working conditions were brought about by erosion, by wearing down outmoded thought. And all this was achieved in a period when the car trade was seasonal—overtime all the winter stocking-up parts, short time and unemployment in the summer. Ideal for those who valued their health!

Before 1939 there were at the Standard works 68 rates of pay. In wartime this was reduced to 8. The pre-war gangs of 8 or 9 men were now increased to many hundreds. After the war the management asked the men to establish the minimum wage on which a man and his family could live in Coventry. The figure later became *the* minimum, a datum line. Above that, piecework, by gangs, gave the highest pay in the industry. A vast amount of argument and negotiation stabilised 15 gangs for the entire car works. Skilled toolmakers were classed A, craftsmen B, skilled production workers C, semi-skilled D, right down to tea-makers and cleaners. Inside each gang and category all were equal *as people* and in pay.

The workers increasingly ran the job themselves, made mistakes, and learned. From time to time however the autocratic mind tried to re-assert itself and strikes resulted. These were settled in hours with all cards on the table. Sometimes workers demanded impossible things—impossible within the structure of capitalism that it. These episodes were used as Conservative anti-worker propaganda, and it was common to hear Captain Black, the then head of Standard, denounced as "pink, if not red!"

The initiative in both car and tractor plants came from the shop floor—all else was "a service to production". So successful was the scheme that there was quite serious discussion on the Trade Unions themselves running the entire production. This idea was abandoned—maybe from fear of the political mind—of all kinds. The Standard Company had preserved its freedom to carry out this social experiment by withdrawing from the Engineering Employers Association. The gang idea was carried further towards workers' control that anyone else had done to date. It paid, on both sides. As Standard forged ahead and set the standard of pay for Coventry, so other firms were obliged to follow. Morris Motors had already, before the war, established similar methods, but there was, and still is, more individual piecework. Similarly with Rootes and Jaguars. Mixtures of gang-work and ordinary piecework are quite common in other works, but which ever system is used the initiative is usually from the bottom. Some men fail to cohere and never succeed as a gang. Many firms now prefer gang-work as it simplifies administration and reduces overhead costs.

But success goes to people's heads, and capitalism is still capitalism. Markets became bigger, output soared, and as greater demands were made on the plant it became obvious that more automatic methods would have to come. This time the managers really got bigheaded and their "show-down" came when the Ferguson tractor was changed over to a new design and a new methodology. Other firms, wisely, changed over discreetly and managed to "carry" their men, but Standard, under

their new chief Alick Dick, shed their men—hence the so-called “automation” strike. The affront to the men consisted in withholding information and dismissing with indifference all ideas from below. This delighted Conservatives everywhere, but was in fact a stupid reversion to an outmoded attitude, an attempt to break a social process that had developed for a generation or more. Workers who were still busy on cars that were selling well struck work. This was a shock, completely unexpected, Lesson 1 for Alick Dick.

In a few months the tractor plant started up again, and full co-operation from the men was expected. It was not forthcoming until Alick Dick put all his cards on the table: Lesson 2. Later he tried another “show-down” and sacked 117 men from the Triumph-Herald body line. The entire press of this country rejoiced: at *last* managers were asserting authority. This was short-lived. The men *had* to be taken back and were *paid* for the 3 days they were sacked. They did not make the headlines, it was a *workers’* victory. But it was Lesson 3, and further lessons are proceeding\*

All this is a leading part of a historical process, the growth from below of new ideas and methods, assisted of course by first-rate production engineering. At the moment it looks as though the car trade may again become seasonal, with the off-period in the winter instead of the summer.

Coventry’s gang system has been peculiarly successful and pays the highest district-average wage in the country—*earned*. Volkswagen, re-started under British auspices after the war, had developed the gang system in the same way. In Yugoslavia it is developing with distinct success, probably learned from Coventry as that country is one of Ferguson’s best customers for tractors, and has sent many study teams to this country to pick up methods.

Some people may think that the Coventry workers’ achievements will be defeated as new techniques advance, but I doubt it because men’s experience of the gang system goes with them, and they fell affronted by the methods of an “old-fashioned shop”. They at once become propagandists for a measure of workers’ control. New techniques will demand ever-increasing skill which can only develop in an atmosphere fromm from frustration and niggling over money. Cheap, poor, degraded labour is fast being replaced by automatic processes—machines can do all the drudgery well, without tiring. Our next move in the advanced industry must be for shorter hours. Decent ways of spending leisure must be provided for. (The motor car itself is now a nuisance. Years ago some of my more wealthy friends were motoring enthusiasts and delighted to tell me of the beautiful houses and gardens they visited. I always retorted “Why not have a beautiful house and garden of your own?” It sunk in eventually, and it will with our present motor maniacs).

\*See note at end of article.—Ed).

Many workers ape the falsities of the middle class, and others are poor creatures. I know, I live among them. But workers *do* practice loyalty. The *gang* idea is their idea and it cuts across ideologies and ignores drivel. To a large extent it ignores money, or at any rate the continuous niggling over money. In car factories they don’t bother to count parts—these are just shunted into the system and come out counted in complete cars. A few get pinched, but that would happen anyway. The same in some large stores—millions of pounds are saved by not counting the paperwork is abolished as silly.

People who decry the technical world do not realise that advanced techniques are basic necessities for a life for everyone. But we allow ourselves to be bogged down by a stupid monetary system that wastes resources. Capital profits and take-overs and similar fiddles continually turn capital into spending money which creates markets for every form of parasitic production. The bomb and the tools of war are parasitic, so are the insurance companies, landlordism, advertising, the press and the paper-scraping “work” of the city. We in production *know* that a major part of our effort is literally thrown away. We develop production as a social process only to find an ever-growing anti-social parasitic population against us. The extension of higher education now being planned and organised is expected to take care of the vast increases in production that will be required, but it remains to be seen whether these new young men will be satisfied to be technical cows subservient to parasitic authority or whether they will come round to our view.

Because large fortunes are now being made out of new drugs and chemical processes, new gadgets, inflated land and share values and so on, it is assumed that such affluence will continue. But such things are in the long run self-defeating—*looting*. A small proportion of the population *can* loot continuously but when the scale becomes immense it calls for a day of reckoning. The looters will have looted their own system to death. Some of them realise this, which is why they buy gold, diamonds, land and art treasures—all nest-eggs, just in case.

And yet we have such immense potential resources that our own country could be made fit for *all* its inhabitants to live in. And we could have the surplus energy to help the backward countries. Economics, the science and liturgy of scarcity could be abolished. We could like production engineers, work out the man-hours available and arrange for people themselves to put them to their own good use. Already we have gangs, groups, teams, whatever they may be called. There are voluntary bodies in every possible sphere, from sport to art. The professions run their own show and set their own standards. People everywhere, every day, help each other without question. Capitalism is parasitic on all this. It has already been eroded—in bits. When are we going to start putting the bits together?

### Editor's Note:

SINCE REG WRIGHT'S ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN, some interesting things have happened at Standards in Coventry. Mr. Alick Dick who, after he took over from Sir John Black as chairman of the firm declared "We are happy that we have re-established the most fundamental principle—management's right to manage", has been "resigned", together with six other directors, by the new controllers of the firm, the Leyland Motor Company, who made a successful £20,000,000 take-over bid for Standards earlier this year.

It was reported in the *Evening Standard* (22/8/61) that Mr. Dick was expected to receive a "golden handshake" of around £30,000 (rather different from the £15 severance money paid to 3,500 Standard workers discharged in 1956 when the tractor factory, subsequently sold to Massey-Ferguson, was closed for re-tooling).

In the following week Leylands dismissed a large number of "executives and staff in the £40-£60 a week bracket". One of the executives said to the *Daily Mirror's* correspondent (30/8/61) "If one man on the shop floor was fired there would be a strike because they are organised. About 200 of us will go and nothing will happen." One is tempted to comment "Well, whose fault is that?" because the essence of the management side, as Reg Wright notes, is middle-class ambition, while that of the workers' side is working-class solidarity. Confirmation of his opinion comes from the book about Standards, *Decision-Making and Productivity* (Blackwell 1958) by Professor Seymour Melman, who notes that

Within the management hierarchy the relationships among the subsidiary functionaries are characterised primarily by predatory competition.

This means that position is gauged in relative terms and the effort to advance the position of one person must be a relative advance. Hence, one person's gain necessarily implies the relative loss of position by others. Within the workers' decision system the most characteristic feature of the decision-formulating process is that of mutuality in decision-making with final authority residing in the hands of the grouped workers themselves.

The "resignations" of directors and the dismissal of staff are seen as the prelude to further dismissals of Standard workers. Leylands, the new owners, are of course makers of heavy commercial vehicles, and when they took over control of Standards it was with the avowed intention of forming a group capable of producing every kind of motor vehicle, though, as *The Economist* commented, "When you remove all but one of the directors who have any experience of the car business from the board of a motor company, the obvious inference would be that you intend, sooner or later, to stop making cars."

In the light of Reg Wright's views the coming struggles at Standard are of the greatest interest. Leyland, a Lancashire firm, competes for labour with the declining low-wage cotton industry. Standards have been paying the highest wage rate in Britain, and *The Economist* observes that

The power of the unions in Standard-Triumph International, another characteristic of the motor industry and one that was encouraged by Sir

John Black, must also come as a shock to a Lancashire employer whose paternalism is still authoritative; and again those who have grown up to live with unions in this way must view the chances of changing it rather differently from people who are shocked by the whole idea.

There is yet another aspect worth thinking about. Melman's study noted that the existence of two inter-related decision-making systems at Standards—those of the workers and those of the management had very important consequences. He observed that (and this is important in considering Reg Wright's remarks above about "looting" as well as the alleged reasons for this country's current crisis over productivity) "in England during the last decades the manpower cost of managing manufacturing firms has been rising *more rapidly* than the growth of productivity". But at Standards in unique contrast to the rest of the motor car industry the "administrative overhead" declined over the period 1939 to 1950, while that of every other firm in the industry and for manufacturing as a whole, increased. The reasons for this are given in Reg Wright's earlier article *The Gang System in Coventry* in ANARCHY 2. Standard's advertising expenditure per car sold is said to be "modest" in relation to that of other manufacturers.

Yet Standard's overhead budget is described as having shocked Leylands. *The Economist* again comments:

The methods used to sell and to produce cars are utterly different from those of a firm like Leyland making and selling the heaviest and most expensive types of commercial vehicle. This may have provided further grounds for disagreement: the amount spent by a car manufacturer on advertising and selling its products may seem exorbitant to anyone used to building to order for industrial concerns, instead of turning out cars *en masse* and then persuading the public to buy them. Selling organisation and advertising might seem to the lorry maker a logical point at which to start cutting overheads, but the car maker would regard such a policy as disastrous.

From this point of view Leylands are a more "rational" firm than Standard who in turn are more rational than their larger competitors. But in capitalist industry, rationality and production-orientedness are not the guarantees of success.

## Correction

In ANARCHY 5, in the article "Notes in the Margin" there is a sentence which alludes to "the late Henrik Infield". My wife and I were friends and neighbours of Dr. Infield when he lived in the United States, and we were very shocked to read this statement and hope it is untrue. I wonder if you could inform me concerning the basis of your statement.

University of California,  
Berkeley, Cal.

LEWIS S. FEUER.

(Our statement was incorrect. We apologise most sincerely to Professor Feuer—and to Dr. Infield, for any distress caused by this regrettable error.—ED.).

# George Orwell

## an accident in society

NICOLAS WALTER

GEORGE ORWELL'S REAL NAME was Eric Blair, and he was born in 1903 and died before he was 47. He was one of the most remarkable Englishmen who lived in the first half of this unhappy century. He was a child of the Raj (the British régime in India), like Thackeray, Kipling and Saki; his father had been a customs official in Bengal, and he himself served as a policeman in Burma for five years after leaving school. He was also a child of what he called "the lower-upper-middle-class"—the shabby-genteel "poor whites" of the English class-system—and his education was a parody of what his background demanded. First he was sent to a beastly prep-school in Eastbourne (St. Cyprian's—described as Crossgates in his bitter essay *Such, Such were the Joys* and as St. Wulfric's in the last part of Cyril Connolly's mellower *Enemies of Promise*); then, being clever enough to win scholarships, he went to Eton. In later life he claimed he wasted his time there and said it had no influence on him, but he might have been a very different person if he had gone to a conventional public school (such as Wellington, where he won another scholarship); Eton is one of the few really good schools where a scholarship boy can get away with doing nothing, and its influence is no weaker for being subtle.

By the time he went to Burma in 1922 he had assembled a fine collection of chips on his shoulder. He had been sent away from home for most of his childhood, like so many other children of so-called civilised middle-class parents (this extraordinary habit could be the subject of a fascinating piece of sociological analysis); he had been taken by St. Cyprian's at a reduced fee in the hope that he would win credit for the school with a good scholarship (which he did), and he wasn't allowed to forget the favour; he was sickly, and thought he was also ugly and unpopular (which he wasn't); then for some reason he didn't go up to Cambridge, where he might have done very well, but went out to Burma instead; and of course he was that unhappy animal, a bourgeois intellectual doing uncongenial work.

When he was 24 he threw up his post in Burma, after acquiring on one hand the material for a novel and some of his finest essays, and

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NICOLAS WALTER wrote an account of The 'New Wave' in Britain in ANARCHY 1, and discussed Raymond Williams' The Long Revolution in ANARCHY 3.

on the other "an immense weight of guilt that I had got to expiate". It would be fair to say that he spent the second half of his life trying to do just that. First he spent some time as a dish-washer in Paris and a tramp in England, acquiring the material for his first published book—*Down & Out in Paris & London* (1933)—and writing occasional book reviews. Then he became less extreme in his deliberate bohemianism and settled down for a bit, working at a school near London and a bookshop in Hampstead (acquiring material for later books, as usual), writing more reviews and other articles, and publishing two novels—*Burmese Days* (1934) and *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935).

It was at this time that Compton Mackenzie put him among the best realistic writers of the early Thirties, praising his "directness, vigour, courage and vitality"; that he became more or less able to live by writing; that he finally dropped his own name in favour of the pseudonym by which he is generally known; and that he married Eileen O'Shaughnessy. After the publication of his best realistic novel—*Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936)—he became increasingly a public and representative figure, though underneath he always remained his own private individual self.

First his publisher, Victor Gollancz, sent him to the North to gather material for a book about poverty and unemployment. The result was *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), in which he declared his commitment to socialism; it was perhaps his worst book, but at the same time his most revealing, and it remains one of the few Left Book Club titles still worth reading. Then he went to Spain to write about the Civil War but immediately joined the POUM militia, fighting on the Aragón front and witnessing the Barcelona "May Days" before he was seriously wounded in the throat and returned to England (narrowly escaping first death and then the Communist purge of the POUM). This time the result was *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), one of his best books and also one of the best contemporary accounts of the Spanish Civil War. He now definitely parted from the fellow-travelling socialists of the Popular Front, hating Fascism as much as them but hating Communism nearly as much (he has never been forgiven for being ten years ahead of them). As the Second World War approached, he took up the characteristic ideological position he was to maintain for the last decade of his life. His fourth novel—*Coming up for Air* (1939)—was his farewell to conventional fiction.

His attitude to the War was what Marxists in 1914 had called "Social Patriotism": he was a left-wing revolutionary and an English nationalist at the same time. This was an intergral part of his whole ambivalent and contradictory attitude to social and political problems—he loved England and hated Fascism (though he was never crudely anti-German), so he wanted to win the War; but he loved "justice and liberty" and hated poverty and oppression too, so he also wanted to see a socialist revolution in this country. On the one hand he supported the War effort, trying to get into the Army and joining the Home Guard instead, working for the Indian Service of the BBC, attacking

Socialists and Communists and Pacifists and Anarchists incessantly and indiscriminately (and sometimes downright intolerantly) for being "objectively pro-Fascist"; but on the other hand he threw himself into the effort for his own brand of socialism, trying to turn the Home Guard into a People's Army and watching the manoeuvres of the Churchill Government with undisguised suspicion, broadcasting left wing ideas to the few Indians who listened to the BBC, writing *The Lion & the Unicorn* and dozens of other similar forgotten appeals for "the English revolution".

Then at the end of the War came *Animal Farm* (1945), his most perfect and popular book, which deservedly brought him fame and some fortune, and made him a successful writer at last. But his wife died in tragic circumstances, and soon he too became ill; he had always suffered from lung trouble, and now he contracted tuberculosis. He went with his adopted son to the Scottish island of Jura (which was about the most unsuitable place he could have picked), and while he was dying there and in sanatoriums he finished his last and most deeply pessimistic book—*Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949)—rather like Lawrence fighting against time to finish *Lady Chatterley's Lover* twenty years before. He married again and prepared to go to Switzerland, where he might have recovered, but he died suddenly in January 1950.

George Orwell's reputation with the general public rests on his last two books, the extraordinarily dissimilar political fantasies. It has been suggested that they won't survive and were simply ingenious tracts for their times. I can't believe this. *Animal Farm*—the only book he "really sweated over"—is a beautifully written fairy-tale; our grandchildren may not read it as socialists, but they will surely do so as human beings. And *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, despite all its acknowledged shortcomings (he said himself, "It wouldn't have been so gloomy if I hadn't been so ill"), has a magnificent grandeur seldom found in English literature; of course it belongs to the age of Stalinism and Austerity, but is it just a symptom of disease and despair? I don't think so.

His reputation with his admirers rest also on his three works of reportage—*Down & Out in Paris & London*, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, and *Homage to Catalonia*—which are uneven but fine examples of their kind and have all lasted very well; and though me wasn't a natural novelist his four straight novels are by no means negligible. But people who find that George Orwell speaks directly to them, when so many of the other writers of his generation are as if they had never been born, are constantly re-reading his essays. The three collections of these—*Critical Essays* (1946), *Shooting an Elephant* (1950), and *England Your England* (1953)—have until now been among the priceless possessions of all true Orwellians. But now his publishers have brought out what at first looks like the omnibus edition we have been waiting for, a nice fat book of over 400 pages and 160,000 words, packed with some of the best things he wrote.\*

\**Collected Essays* by George Orwell (Secker & Warburg, 30s.; paperback edition—Mercury Books, 12s. 6d.).

I wish I could recommend this book without any reservations, but that's out of the question. There's a 'Publisher's Note' on p. 7 which is both inappropriate, since it was clearly designed to be a publicity blurb, and inaccurate. It claims that "This volume collects all George Orwell's essays (except the short pieces contributed to *Tribune* under the title 'I Write as I Please') contained in *Critical Essays*, *Shooting an Elephant* and *England Your England*". This isn't true. In fact five other essays in those three books have been omitted:—

1 & 2—the two extracts from *The Road to Wigan Pier* in *England Your England*. This is reasonable, since they can be found where they came from, the book having been re-issued in 1959 (though it has unfortunately lost its 32 photographs and Victor Gollancz's interesting Foreword).

3—the extract from *The Lion & the Unicorn* which was the title essay in *England Your England*. This is reasonable only if the whole book is going to be reissued shortly, as it certainly ought to be.

4 & 5—the essay on Kipling from *Horizon* in *Critical Essays*, and that on Gandhi from *Partisan Review* in *Shooting an Elephant*. This is quite inexcusable, and can only be due to a most unfortunate editorial mistake—the publishers can't possibly have left out such excellent and characteristic things on purpose without telling anyone, and they should put them back in as soon as possible.

There are errors as well as omissions. The blurb says the essays are printed "in order of first publication". Again this isn't true. In fact the scheme seems to have been to allocate them to the years of their first publication and then put the years in order—thus the 1946 essays are all anyhow. The trouble is that some of the years are wrong. *Boys' Weeklies* appeared in *Horizon* in March 1940, not in 1939; *The Art of Donald McGill* appeared in *Horizon* in September 1941, not in 1942 (this is right in the text but wrong in the list of contents); and *Arthur Koestler* appeared in *Focus* in 1946, not 1944. Someone hasn't done enough homework.

Anyway it is quite unsatisfactory to make the year of first publication the only bibliographical information in a book of this kind. We need the names of the periodicals as well, not for the sake of mere pedantry but because it is relevant to know whether an article was written for *Adelphi*, *New Writing* or *Horizon*, say, or for *Gangrel*, *Polemic* or *Now*. A good writer like George Orwell adapts himself to his medium and his public, just as a good conversationalist adapts himself to his audience, and it is impossible to wrench his work out of its original context without distorting its emphasis and flattening its point. Thus *Anti-Semitism in Britain* takes on a new meaning when we know it was written for the *American Contemporary Jewish Record*, and it is worth being reminded that the essay on Salvador Dali—*Benefit of Clergy*—was written for the *Saturday Book* but later excised because it was considered objectionable! The right way to do this sort of thing

may be seen in the Penguin edition of Lawrence's *Selected Essays*.

It is regrettable that these matters haven't been cleared up in time for the paperback edition, but there should certainly be a properly corrected second edition as soon as the stocks of this one are sold out. (Incidentally, while we are on the touchy subject of publishers' carelessness, it's about time Secker & Warburg learnt that the *Tribune* title Orwell used was 'As I Please', not 'I Write as I Please', and that the nine *Tribune* pieces in *Shooting an Elephant* actually appeared under their own names—between November 1945 and November 1946—and not under the general title at all.) To sum up, I advise anyone who can bear not to own a book of George Orwell's essays for a time to wait until there is a less imperfect one available.

Like *Oliver Twist* I am now going to ask for more. Even if this book *did* contain all the essays in the three earlier collections, perfectly arranged and annotated, it wouldn't be enough. Orwell wrote many more than thirty essays that are worth re-reading; he wrote that many for *Adelphi* alone during the decade before the War. His novels and books of reportage have all been re-issued now, though he was by no means just a novelist or reporter. I think it is time many more of his essays were re-issued too—especially the more personal pieces, like his introduction to the Ukrainian edition of *Animal Farm*, some of the extracts from his wartime diaries published in *World Review* just after he died, and—above all—*Such, Such were the Joys*, which appeared posthumously in America and still hasn't been published over here because of libel fears.

Apart from these, the essays I should like to see rescued from oblivion seem to fall into two classes, and might well be printed in two separate books.

Firstly, there are the whole of *The Lion & the Unicorn* (1941) the two chapters from Gollancz's *The Betrayal of the Left* (1941), the Fabian lecture from *Victory or Vested Interests* (1942), the *Adelphi* articles called *Political Reflections on the Crisis* (December 1938) and *Not Counting Niggers* (July 1939), the *New Writing* article called *My Country Right or Left* (August 1940), the *Commonwealth Review* article called *Catastrophic Gradualism* (November 1945), the *Tribune* article called *Through a Glass Rosily* (November 1945), the *Partisan Review* article called *Toward European Unity* (July/August 1947), and several other pieces of this kind, culminating in the short book *The English People* (1947). These could all go together in a book called *England, Socialism and the War*, or something like that, and would make remarkable and surprising reading.

Secondly, there are his introductions to Jack London's *Love of Life* (1946) and to Volume I of *British Pamphleteers* (1948), and his broadcast talk printed in *Talking to India* (1943)—there must be several others as good buried somewhere in the cellars of the BBC. With these are dozens of short articles and reviews like the *Tribune* pieces in *Shooting an Elephant* which would go well in a book. There are the

two on Ruth Pitter (*Adelphi*), the two on Jack Hilton (*Adelphi*), the two on Henry Miller (*Tribune*), the two on George Gissing (*Tribune* and the *London Magazine*), the prison ones on Macartney and Phelan (*Adelphi*), the ones on Havelock Ellis and Osbert Sitwell (*Adelphi*), on T. S. Eliot (*Poetry*), Herbert Read (*Poetry Quarterly*), Oscar Wilde (*Observer*), on Hardy, Smollet, Goldsmith, Thackeray, Lawrence, Zamyatin and Mark Twain (*Tribune*), and other miscellaneous *Tribune* items—*Literature & the Left*, *You & the Atom Bomb*, *Revenge is Sour*, *Freedom of the Park*, and odd remarks on things like pleasure-spots and pith-helmets. Anyone who has read all these will have more respect and liking for Orwell than one who has just read *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and I'm sure there are plenty I've forgotten or never heard of. But I don't suppose there's a chance of seeing them reprinted.

Certainly it would be a better tribute to his memory and a better service to his readers to publish more of his own work than to bring out yet another book about his books; but this is what his publishers have done.\* Since he died there have been five books of this kind, which is rather absurd. There's a little British Council pamphlet by Tom Hopkinson (Longmans, 2/6d.) and a full-length study by John Atkins (Calder, 18s.), and one or other of these is really all anyone needs. Each of the other three could easily have been compressed into an essay based on the more interesting parts, which are the personal anecdotes—Laurence Brander on Orwell at the BBC, Christopher Hollis on Orwell at Eton, and now Richard Rees on Orwell at the beginning and end of his literary career. To put it briefly and brutally, there's nothing wrong with Rees' book except that it's expensive and unnecessary, though it does contain some good material.

Once more I want to ask for a new book, this time either a proper biography of George Orwell, or—if his own objections are still to be respected—a sort of symposium collecting memories of him before all his friends and relatives have died and it is too late. Such a book would contain the relevant parts of those by Brander, Hollis and Rees, and of others like Cyril Connolly's *Enemies of Promise* and Rayner Heppenstall's rather disgraceful *Four Absentees*; it would also include the many recollections written or broadcast during the dozen years since he died, and the many more that may never be recorded if something isn't done pretty soon (though there is said to be a project on these lines at University College, London). The point is that it is far more interesting to read about the life of Eric Blair than about the work of George Orwell; after all, if you want to know about his books, the best thing to do is to read them.

In fact the new volume of essays does make that easier, despite its defects. We now have in one place twenty-five of his essays, first published in a dozen magazines between 1931 and 1948, at an average price of 1/3d. each (only 6d. in the paperback edition). And what

\*George Orwell by Richard Rees (Secker & Warburg, 18s.).

remarkable essays they are! Few English writers have been able to put so much so well in such a small space. Begin with that minor masterpiece, *A Hanging*, which was one of the earliest things he ever published and packs into 2,000 words more than most people could get into 20,000, and its sequel, *Shooting an Elephant*, whose 3,000 words contain a classic of British imperialism, a miniature companion for *A Passage to India*. Go on to the scraps of work which people like Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and Colin MacInnes have been doing after him—the famous studies of boys' comics and funny post-cards. Then there are nine apparently literary essays which turn out to be so much more than merely literary—Dickens, Yeats, Wodehouse, Swift, Dali, Koestler, Henry Miller, Raffles and Miss Blandish, and Tolstoy and Shakespeare all acquire much more interest when Orwell has dug up cultural, social and political implications from their work and added his personal feelings to pure criticism. There are recollections of the Spanish Civil War, a smack of Wells, impressions of Marrakesh and a Paris hospital, and finally the eight important essays on politics and literature and politics-and-literature.

I suggest that no socially conscious person can afford to ignore a great deal of this book. In particular *Politics & the English Language* and *Notes on Nationalism* should be read at least once a year. But reading these essays should not be only a duty—they are written so well that it is hard not to enjoy them over and over again. And even if you haven't got time to plough through them all, your case isn't hopeless, for Orwell was a highly quotable writer, and many of his best remarks will echo in your mind long after you have skipped over them. He dates, but he doesn't fade at all; once read, never forgotten.

What is it that gives him such a hold over people (like myself) who have only read his books since he died? Why does he speak to me as a contemporary when Arthur Koestler, Victor Gollancz, Cyril Connolly, Stephen Spender and all the rest always sound like voices from the past? These and many others have had their say about him and tried to pin him down with a phrase, labelling him with a technical name like a butterfly. Koestler sees him as a sort of auto-masochistic Swift in modern dress. Connolly remembers him as "one of those boys who seem born old", who stood out as "an intellectual and not a parrot, for he thought for himself", and sums him up: "I was a stage-rebel, Orwell a true one" (even at prep-school). Later he called him "a revolutionary who is in love with 1910", whose "most valid emotion" was "political sentimentality". Spender described him as "an Innocent, a kind of English Candide of the twentieth century" (which applies more aptly to Spender himself). Gollancz noted the "conflict of two compulsions" in his socialism—"He is at one and the same time an extreme intellectual and a violent anti-intellectual, a frightful snob . . . and a genuine hater of every form of snobbery"—and paid tribute to "the desperate struggle through which a man must go before, in our present society, his mind can really become free". Rees compares him to Lawrence: "A man with a mind of his own, with something in his

mind, and speaking his mind . . . and independent individual who saw with his own eyes and knew what he thought and how to say it". John Beavan called him "a Lollard of social democracy, a preacher of the true faith at war with the corruption and hypocrisy of the Church". All these things are true, but none of them is the whole truth. The first thing to remember about George Orwell is that he was a very complicated man.

It is possible to detect two main driving-forces in his career—a sense of compassion and guilt, and a determination to be tested and not to be found wanting. He remarked when he became a socialist, "For five years I had been part of an oppressive system, and it had left me with a bad conscience"; and at the end of his life he spoke of the existence among people like him of "an awareness of the enormous injustice and misery of the world, and a guilt-stricken feeling that we ought to be doing something about it". To purge his guilt, he became a sort of idiosyncratic mixture of Hemingway and Camus—throwing himself from the Burma police among the down-and-outs of Paris and London, then among the unemployed working people of Wigan and the POUM militiamen of Catalonia, on into the double effort "to defend one's country and to make it a place worth living in"—always putting himself to the test, forcing himself to endure hardship and discomfort, swallowing disgust and pain, going without proper food during the War and proper medical care after it, wearing down his health and his talent, fighting the evils of the world and the weakness of his body to the day of his death, always striving, striving to tell the truth about what he saw and what he felt.

He had his faults. He often spoke out without verifying his facts—"Socialism in its developed form is a theory confined entirely to the middle class" and so on—and often he was grossly unfair. No one will forget his swipes at "every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, 'Nature Cure' quack, pacifist and feminist in England" and at "all that dreary tribe of high-minded women and sandal-wearers and bearded fruit-juice drinkers who come flocking towards the smell of 'progress' like blue-bottles to a dead cat", and there were plenty more like them. Hardly any literary or political group escaped his bitter criticism. But he should be seen not just as an angry middle-aged man but as an extreme example of the English middle-class dissenter who, having rebelled against his own group, must always rebel against any group, even a group of conscious rebels; clearly he felt what Graham Greene has called the "artist's duty of disloyalty to his group". So he was a Puritan, like D. H. Lawrence and Colin MacInnes and John Osborne, whose nostalgic puritanism took strange forms; he was a patriot, like Aneurin Bevan and (again) Colin MacInnes and John Osborne, whose passionate love of his country exaggerated his loathing for what is wrong with it; he was a socialist who once, according to Richard Rees, threatened to punch the head of a Communist who was belabouring the bourgeoisie; a bohemian who always looked, says T. R. Fyvel, like "a somewhat down-at-heel Sahib"

and who detested bohemianism. He was a man full of logical contradictions and emotional ambivalences, but the point is that this made him better, not worse. He was always able not only to see but to *feel* both sides to every argument, to realise the imperfections of every position including his own, and his honesty about the difficulties this raised was one of his most valuable characteristics. He was a heretic obliged to betray his own heresy, a protestant protesting against his own faith, a political quaker reduced to trusting only the light shining in his soul.

It is highly misleading to imagine that he was once a conventional socialist who later became disillusioned and then turned against socialism, which is what many conventional socialists tend to do. He said of his attitude at prep-school: "I was not a rebel, except by force of circumstances . . . yet from a very early age I was aware of the impossibility of any *subjective* conformity. Always at the centre of my heart the inner self seemed to be awake . . . I never did rebel intellectually, only emotionally." In Burma he knew that "as a matter of course one's sympathy was with the blacks", and he "worked out an anarchistic theory that all government is evil, that the punishment does more harm than the crime and that people can be trusted to behave decently if only you will let them alone". Later he called this theory "sentimental nonsense", but it remained with him all the same. It could be said that he was not a socialist except by force of circumstances too, because his inner self remained awake, and knew emotionally that the enormous injustice and misery of the world were wrong and that he should be doing something about it; in the 1930's, nonconformists were forced into socialism, and Orwell went in with them.

In the face of Fascism and unemployment he wanted state action, war and nationalisation, but he always distrusted it and quoted with approval the famous misquoted passage from Acton: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority." When he was calling for the state to cure unemployment or to fight Fascism, he knew he was in the unpleasant but all too common position of having to "defend the bad against the worse", and he always seemed to feel a bit guilty about it; this was why his voice often rose to a shriek during and after the War, when people with simpler and more certain ideas goaded him beyond politeness.

But it would also be highly misleading to imagine that he became a complete misanthropist. In his last book he wrote two important pieces of approval—almost the only ones in the whole story. First, the proles. "They were not loyal to a party or a country or an idea, they were loyal to one another . . . The proles had stayed human. They had not become hardened inside." This was why Winston Smith said they were the only hope. The other piece of approval goes to Winston's dead mother: "She had possessed a kind of nobility, a kind of purity, simply because the standards that she obeyed were private ones. Her feelings were her own, and could not be altered from outside." George

Orwell's personal autonomy and sense of human loyalty forced him to reject group values and group loyalty and the whole apparatus of authoritarian and totalitarian politics, and also forced him to express praise for people like Jack Hilton, Ruth Pitter, Osbert Sitwell and Henry Miller, although he disagreed strongly with their ideas, because they had made up their minds for themselves and preserved their integrity and expressed their beliefs without pose.

It is essential to understand that he was a very emotional man. He was, as Rees points out, both rebel and authoritarian (a "Tory anarchist" in early life), both rationalist and romantic, both progressive and conservative. He was primarily a humanist, not a dogmatist: "I became a socialist more out of disgust with the oppressed and neglected life of the poorer section of the industrial workers than out of any theoretical understanding of a planned society." To understand his brand of socialism—and indeed his attitude to politics and society in general—it is necessary to compare him to the Oscar Wilde of *The Soul of Man under Socialism* and the D. H. Lawrence of *Democracy*, and not to go hunting in the labyrinths of Marxist dialectics.

Richard Rees makes use of a remark of Simone Weil about the balance of society: "One must do what one can to add weight to the lighter of the two scales . . . One must always be ready to change sides, like Justice, that 'fugitive from the camp of victory'." This certainly helps us to see why Orwell was always on the losing side, taking up unpopular causes for the sake of unpopularity, secretly sympathising with the Burmese, leaving his respectable background to go among tramps, changing his name, perversely attacking socialists in a Left Book Club volume or the Establishment on the BBC, advocating social revolution in the middle of our Finest Hour, accusing pacifists of cowardice and afterwards reflecting that "it seems doubtful whether civilisation can stand another major war, and it is at least thinkable that the way out lies through non-violence".

Would he have marched to Aldermaston and sat down in Whitehall? It seems unlikely, but no one can tell. He was as unpredictable as he was inexplicable. He was the "Man-of-Letters Hero" described by Carlyle more than a hundred years ago: "Whence he came, whither he is bound, by what ways he arrived, by what he might be furthered on his course, no one asks. He is an accident in society. He walks like a wild Ishmaelite, in a world of which he is as the spiritual light, either the guidance or the misguidance." And Carlyle, who was a great misguidance, added: "This same Man-of-Letters Hero must be regarded as our most important modern person. He, such as he may be, is the soul of all." Orwell would have rejected such pretentious stuff with scorn, but there is some truth about him in it. We can dig up all the facts about him but he remains a mystery, an accident in society; he was certainly one of our most important modern persons, one of the few real heroes our age has seen. But after a time there is nothing to be said. If you have read this far you have already read too much *about* him: read *him*.

# Observations on Anarchy 6 & 7

## Anarchy and Cinema

For someone like myself who is interested in both film and anarchy, your latest issue was indeed a treat. Congratulations on it.

London, EC4

ANTHONY WIGENS,  
Editor *Cine Camera*.

Having been a reader of FREEDOM on and off for several years, and a film fan for many more, I should like to congratulate you on ANARCHY 6, on the subject of Anarchy and Cinema. I enjoyed reading the excellent selection of articles, especially those on Buñuel.

London, E5

RAY WILLS,  
Editor *Screen Education*.

There was a rare freshness and enthusiasm about the cinema number of ANARCHY, even though the theme that ran through most of the articles was the heartbreaking difficulty in financing non-commercial films. You should have mentioned the two non-profit production companies in this country, Data Films, a documentary unit which is a co-operative co-partnership, and A.C.T. Films Ltd., a feature production company launched ten years ago by the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians—the only film company in the world owned and controlled by a trade union—which made *The Last Man to Hang*, *The Man Upstairs*, and, most recently, *The Kitchen*.

Ruislip.

JACK FOX.

(We recently learned that Data are going out of the film business. Readers interested in the work of A.C.T. Films, will find an article on it by Ralph Bond in the Summer 1961 issue of Trade Union Affairs, with the title "A Break-through to Resolution 42"—ED.).

## Adventure Playground

Will you kindly send three more copies of ANARCHY 7 (Adventure Playground)? I think this number is the most important yet, and its value is priceless. I have in mind someone on the Town Council, and another in the editor of the local provincial newspaper, to offer these booklets with their enormously interesting information.

In fact I have rarely read anything so gripping and absorbing. And I haven't finished reading yet

Preston, Lancs

W. ARTHUR LEMIN.

Marie Louise Berneri

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"As an old student of utopias, I have a special regard for Marie Louise Berneri's *Journey Through Utopia*; for it is the most comprehensive and the most perceptive study of that ideal land that I have come across in any language. As a work of scholarship, it is superior, both to my own study and that of Hertzler; but what gives it even more special merit is the fact that it is such a book as only a brave intelligence and an ardent spirit can produce: one who was an enemy to the forces that would degrade man into a servile automaton, and a friend to all that fosters freedom and creative expression. Utopia itself has almost as many circles as the Hell and Heaven that Dante visited under Virgil's tutelage; and Marie Louise Berneri is the best of guides to this super-world: not afraid to let its inhabitants speak for themselves or to let the reader draw his own conclusions. Altogether an admirable book on a subject too important to be neglected because of the contempt expressed by the dogmatic right wing (Macaulay) or the authoritarian "Left" (Marx and Engels). Those who retain a healthy hope for the future will find sustenance for their faith in this book."

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