

Scottish Libertarian Federation

The S.L.F. is an organisation of individual members who can agree with at least the following three principles.

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1. We stand for the creation of a classless society, the abolition of wage labour and an end to oppression on the grounds of sex or race.
2. When and if decisions need to be taken which involve more people than can meet face to face, then these decisions will be taken by elected delegates. Delegates should be subject to immediate recall by the groups they represent. They should have no special privileges. Their sole function would be to communicate the views of the people who elect them. No one should make a career out of being a delegate.
3. We stand for the abolition, not the seizure of state power. The transformation of society which we want cannot be brought about by any group assuming power on behalf of the working class. It can only be achieved by the mass of the people wanting it and understanding how they are to bring it about.

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This 'manifesto' was accepted at a conference of the Scottish Libertarian Federation on 14th November 1976. It can be altered at any future conference.

You can join the S.L.F. if you are a libertarian living in Scotland. The annual subscription is £1, which should be sent to the National Secretary.

Membership entitles you to receive "Scottish Libertarian" and to be notified about any conferences or other meetings. We have conferences at roughly 6-monthly intervals. The next one is due pretty soon - see p. 8.

Articles and letters for "Scottish Libertarian" are welcome from everybody. (members of the S.L.F. have the right to have articles included)
If possible, articles should be typed onto duplicating stencils with at least a one-inch margin at each side and half an inch at the top and bottom. (Page size is A4 (21cm x 29.7cm, or 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ "))

The deadline for publication is theoretically 15th May, but this may be altered by our having a conference before that.

S.L.F. CONTACT ADDRESSES

National Secretary :

Aberdeen:

Dundee:

Edinburgh:

Glasgow:

Port Glasgow:

Stirling:

Individual contacts in the
National Secretary. (For

Production Collective
and working group :

same as the Dundee address or phone Mike Malet, 452063.

ANARCHIST MUSIC
(or THE STATE AND "REVOLUTION")

Whether we like it or not, Anarchists have been recently been dragged into the world of Music by the claims of the Sex Pistols to be Anarchists (or rather, in the best traditions of the music business, the claims of their manager). The cover of the Scottish Punk-Rock Fanzine "Ripped and Torn" (25p and expensive at half the price) features a newspaper cutting on the release of Carballo Blanco. Inside the paper they display confusion over what Anarchism is when they credit IRA bombs to Anarchists.

It's not my intention, however to talk here about Punk Rock, which is merely the latest spectacle to satisfy jaded palates, and as we shall hopefully see later is not fundamentally different from other Rock music, but to do some pseudo-academic theorising ~~and~~ about the only music which could in my opinion be considered Anarchist, that is, Free Music.

Firstly it is necessary to attempt to define music, a very difficult thing to do in non-musical terms. My definition would be that music is one of the means open to every one of us to communicate emotion.

Over the years rules and conventions have been imposed on music, something which has had two main effects (at least that is all I can think of at the moment); these being:-

1. Playing of music has become the preserve of an elite who have devoted years to learning by rote these rules and conventions, and who consequently are unable to express emotion (I "learned" in this way myself). I remember having a conversation with an orchestral musician who held up her hands in horror at my suggestion that, when playing say Beethoven, she had the right, if she thought a note other than that chosen by Beethoven sounded better, to play that note instead.
2. It is nigh on impossible to express emotion within the rules of music. Thus music loses its main function. (This is a highly contentious point; the subject of a discussion with another Glasgow cde. This however is my theory until proven wrong)

Thus we have the previously mentioned "Composer as God" attitude, one particularly prevalent in so-called 'Classical' music (and recognised as such: "The present day composer refuses to die!" - Varese.) The faults of this Graveyard Ethic was recognised by William Godwin, when he wrote: "All formal repetition of other men's ideas seems to be a scheme for imprisoning, for so long a time, the operations of our own minds."

Attempts have been made, until recently only implicitly, to break down the walls which prevent the expression of emotion. Possibly Jazz was originally an attempt to do this but rapidly built its own walls. Each new phase of Jazz arose with the same intention and went the same way, until the advent of Free Jazz with the Sun Ra Arkestra in the mid-fifties, which rapidly became a rejection of the concept of Rules as such.

Rock music too began with an onrush of emotion soon diverted into the dams of convention. I'm concentrating on Rock for examples of the form being transcended, since it is the form of music about which I am the most knowledgeable.

Syd Barrett, the founder of the Pink Floyd, several times transcended the Rock form, mainly due to his being a catatonic schizophrenic. This condition unfortunately also seems to lead to imbalance too far over the edge, and much of his music is only psychadelic rambling. For every song transcending the genre there are several others consisting only of meandering hippy imagery.

A long academic thesis (and probably a very boring one) could be written on the subject of "Captain Beefheart, Aldous Huxley, and Anarchism" but in the short space available here it is sufficient to say that Captain Beefheart's music with it's indifference to conventional rhythm, timing and melodic conventions (not rejection, since he never seems to have known these rules) is closely related to his peculiar lifestyle (rejection of schooling due to it's tyranny, virtual illiteracy, etc.), and is consequently in my opinion the most potent example of somebody transcending the field in which he has been classified in order to create a seemingly irrational, eccentric, but very personal music.

My contention therefore is that 'great' music is never created within the conventions of a given form, only in it's supersession. British music, for want of a better term, in Rock, Jazz and 'Classical' has shown a careful regard for the rules and the result is stolid and bloody boring (see Ian Carr's Nucleus for the perfect example).

Free music then is a music which rejects previously defined structures in favour of that which is spontaneously created in the course of the performance, pays attention for the first time to the surrounding environment and to the interrelations between the performers; it is the music capable of shattering the dominant form, where the audience suspends its consciousness to watch but not participate in the musical process.

It is a music rich in possibilities, those of the investigation of the possibilities and limitations of each instrument; a music constantly walking the tightrope between form and chaos and consequently creating a tension even in the audience, (It has been recorded that there is rarely coughing in the audience at a concert of Free Music)

Some of us in Glasgow are attempting to set up a Musician's Co-op, which would initially at least stress Free Music (the only music to really be outside, despite Ian Carr's opinion to the contrary), but would hopefully come to encompass other types of music.

We are intending to start off by organising a concert to try to create some interest (although the size of this interest is doubtful in the light of previous similar concerts). The music could turn out to either be good or bad, we don't know, but it would at least be our own music. We have organised similar concerts in the past, but the main difference here will be that they will not be 'one-offs' but an attempt to create an ongoing situation based on musicians self-activity, rather than sitting around waiting for Platform or some similar organisation to give us a concert.

ALASTAIR DICKSON

(For more detailed information on Free Music you should see Musics, a monthly (almost) magazine based in London, and available from the Glasgow and Edinburgh groups. It's a good mag., if a trifle academic at times.)

A.D. (Paisley) is amongst other things involved with the Libertarian students network, of which he has a number of significant reservations. These will probably be pieced together as a Critique for SL 3, by which the LSN will have had another couple of conferences & newsletters.

He had formulated a report of the 2nd LSN conference in Feb, Manchester but has scrapped it.

CONTAINMENT or LIBERATION?

reprint
Tom
Woolley.

This article, written in 1974 & reprinted slightly abridged in S.L.F. Newsletter no.1, March 1975 is the text of a talk by Tom Woolley to a community action conference & included in an issue of 'Radical Bulletin', a community politics radical liberal newsheet. Actually for me the sharp anti-revolutionary response to this article by many so-called radical (g)Liberals helped convince me personally that libertarian socialism went far beyond the radical rhetoric & recuperative games of Hains Young Liberals. The author, was active in community action in areas of Glasgow & like at least one other member of Glasgow 'Solidarity' at that time employed in the business of (subverting) town planning. He now stays in London according to the Port Glasgow comrades.

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(1) Social & political analysis of the current situation:-

Most people are exploited at home or at work. We sell our labour or ourselves in a production process making goods or providing services.

The Institutions which make the decisions about this process - what is to be produced - are not accountable to the mass of people in any meaningful way. In industry the production of wealth - the resources on which we live - is still by and large controlled by 'private' Organisations not subject to democratic control. The objectives of these Organisations are to increase wealth - their wealth - and the wealth is being controlled by fewer & fewer people while the poor get relatively poorer. Increased profitability is the yardstick of capitalism. Things are developed because they can be sold, not on a just analysis of need. Growth is the essential dynamic - the spin-off being wastage, thoughtless consumption of natural resources, pollution, 3rd world starvation & meaningless drudgery for the industrially better off. Investment is to maximise profits, not to protect the good of the future of all.

In Britain we have 3 forms of opposition to this process:-

- £ - Collective action at the point of production is the most threatening to capitalism. Halting the production process weakens the system the most, but present forms of action ensure benefits only to selected groups of workers. The traditional 'work ethic' means that to be a worker is to be privileged over others - the "right to work" also means the "right" to be exploited.
- * - Political Parties of the Left attempt to control or balance the power of private capital. The 'socialist' illusion has been that it is possible to spread the 'benefits' of growth to the less powerful through taxation welfare, subsidies etc.. But this kind of Assistance is equally matched by assistance from the State to capitalism, subsidies to industry, public spending contracts as big sources for profit. Such State mechanisms have been happily embraced by a party of apologists for capitalism - the Tories. Through the elitism and corruption of society the outlook & ideology of 'industrialists' is shared by politicians & State officials. The State, while claiming to represent the people, is in alliance with capitalism & its main function is to maintain the present 'stability' of society and force people to accept it.

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@ - 'community action', a loose term covering organisation by people around issues of consumption. That is, HOW the resources of society are distributed and used, to create the conditions in which we live. 'Community action' is an unsatisfactory term because it is used by those who have mystical notions about the idea of 'community' & they argue incessantly about what is the 'ideal' size for a community etc.. Essentially there are 3 main types of action:-

1. Neighbourhood action, eg. tenants groups, residents groups.
2. Consumers action, eg. squatters, claimants, shoppers.
3. National pressure groups, with local membership groups.

The nature of society inevitably throws up thousands of such groups as people discover that only through COLLECTIVE organisation (rather than personal solutions, religion, suicide etc) can they change anything, but there is very little political theory of how they will go about it.

We all perpetuate this system by our acceptance of it, no one can 'drop-out' completely, yet for many it involves intolerable conditions. When we work to change it and replace it with something better it mustn't simply be a question of replacing one set of rulers by another. The way we organise challenges both the private manipulation of Capital and the State control of people but has to avoid tinkering with reforms which only serve to CONTAIN our discontent & are a means of deflecting energy into the channels of INCORPORATION which the system provides. Underlying everyday existence is this vital tussle between the forces of CONTAINMENT OR LIBERATION which should be the central debating point in relation to our actions.

(2) CONTAINMENT :-

The State has a capacity to absorb protest & discontent through 'PARTICIPATION'. The absorption of the Trade Unionists through participation in Whitley councils, boards & tribunals has been one of the most effective ways of emasculating the threat of the trade unions. Channelling people into talking shops or making small concessions can prevent people talking about the BASIC issues, and mobilising any threat to the present power structure. Containment means control by EXPERTS, not peoples control of experts, it means cooperation with capitalism, not opposition to it, it means subservience of the masses to control by the few, instead of conscious political expression. In practice, 'community action' has fallen into the trap of containment and is failing to raise peoples consciousness of their own power. The ideologists of 'community action' are, in the main, liberals and reformists who wish to contain action in bounds acceptable to the system, they support a whole range of Governmental & other measures which threaten the AUTONOMY of groups eg:-

1. The spending of Government finance on community work & 'development'.
 2. The recruitment of intellectual and 'Professional experts' into community organising who see themselves as 'non-political' or
 3. The revival of interest in 'grass roots' / 'objective'.
- support for political Parties as active support has fallen away.
4. the weakness of community action as a force for LIBERATION can also be seen in 'Left' groups attitudes to non 'worker' action as peripheral.

Containment has many varying Ideologies. It can always be identified where EUPHEMISMS are used to describe social conditions. It doesn't want to acknowledge the existence of class society, with a history of political understanding. Instead 'offensive' language of class struggle is replaced with a new jargon :- "DEPRIVATION" for poverty; "DISADVANTAGED" for powerless; "DISFUNCTIONING OF THE BUREAUCRACY" for corruption & incompetence & so on. Often these realities of capitalist society are described..

..as though they have suddenly been discovered or suddenly worsened -eg. "the mounting crisis of the inner city" etc., while in fact they have always been present. The basis of political action is not to build up class solidarity but to divide and complexify the situation through notions of Pluralism.

While society appears to be made up of a lot of groups competing for resources, it is wrong to think that social justice can be achieved by 'redressing the Balance' (another EUPHEMISM) between groups. Distributing welfare handouts to the poor, or giving professional help to others does not give the 'Disadvantaged' more power. Yet many advocates of community action base their ideas on such a Pluralist illusion. Britain, probably more than any other country, sustains the existing social order through a massive network of charitable & 'helping' groups which isolate and institutionalise the problems of inequality. Community action is in greater danger of becoming enmeshed in this stifling network of agencies which have never questioned the injustices of society & serve to provide a conscience saving outlet for thousands of middle class people. So often these do-gooders, perhaps even from working class backgrounds themselves, encourage the more respectable and articulate of local people to form an organisation which leaves untouched the apparently apathetic & cynical mass. Similarly, groups like tenants assoc. can become enmeshed in 'building' links with such agencies or lobbying political parties and Councillors, instead of building really strong participating support within their neighbourhood - eg. supporting the Labour Party's sham opposition to the Tory Rent Act has destroyed the credibility of many tenants assoc. for a long time.

(3) LIBERATION:-

What therefore is the correct political practice to avoid containment?

1. THE QUESTION OF 'LEADERSHIP' & working with people: The system depends on passivity - the willingness to leave things to others, to experts & Leaders who become contained, isolated & compromised. He who takes the initiative carries the can, thus every activist has a responsibility to encourage people to play a part, to ROTATE jobs & responsibilities. If it is always the same people who do things - an eternal problem in community action, then they might as well not be done. It is no use moaning about the apathy of others. The 'natural' process at present is to leave it to The Committee. There must be constant involvement of everyone, not just the odd mass meeting as is the case with industrial strikes controlled from Above. At present many tenants assoc. think that they are on Rent Strike simply because a few Committee members have gone round with a piece of paper which tenants have signed

2. INTERVENTION: There is nothing wrong with 'outsiders' stimulating or helping community action groups, BUT IN PRACTICE this is often done in a manipulative way. The main danger is that where 'professionals' help, they reinforce people's deference to expertise and their dependence on others to do things for them, thus CONTAINING the potential of any action. Liberation involves demystifying experience ie. - educating people that certain kinds of training doesn't entitle certain people to greater status, & that professional systems like Law are basically repressive & anti-working class. Many experts of course like to project their ROLE as neutral & objective.

3. POLITICAL ANALYSIS: Too much community action is issue orientated. Inevitably action groups spring up around single issues or problems. The CAUSES of such problems, however, are to be found in the TOTALITY of society, & therefore must be fought at that level. An obvious example is Rents. Everyone can explain that high rents are caused by high interest rates, but few bother to relate this to any broader political perspective. They fail to point out that to challenge

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this is page 8 for all purposes except the announcement on the inside front cover - if you're looking for page 8 for that - try the middle of page 17.

Page 8 would have left blank - in a silent dedication of the co-ordinational abilities of the revolutionary self-managed production collective - Paul Gordon, Peter Silcock, Sandy Blake, Keith Millar, Niall Robertson and John Cowan (me).

HOWEVER, since everybody else has gone home I have EXPROPRIATED this page in order to make a few announcements.

1. Thanks to the other 5 comrades for turning up to produce this issue. I enjoyed having you here for the weekend.
2. Thanks to Nina Woodcock (who lives here sometimes) for providing food and (mostly) tolerating everybody. (It's all right really she is in fact a bona fide feminist and is not a member of the Scottish Libertarian Fed.)
3. Congratulations to Keith Millar for writing his first article in English!
4. Congratulations, too, to those comrade typists who have achieved marginal consciousness. (If it wasn't for our worker-controlled cock-up the margins would even be on the right side of the pages.)
5. Will anybody start a fighting fund to buy Paul a new typewriter? (pp12/13)
6. Does anybody manufacture special thin stencils to combat those anarchist typists who refuse to be constrained to type within margins? (pp 10/11 etc)
7. What can be done to persuade people to write a draft of their articles which can be revised & corrected before they are typed instead of people just bashing them straight onto a stencil like I am doing now?

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While I'm in the flow, some notes on SEXISM, LIBERTARIANISM and the WLM

I think that Sharon Hayden's article in "SL" 1 was about the best thing in it. If I had got around to writing an article to continue the discussion it would have contained some of the following ideas:

- + this working group was all male, and many women libertarians go to WL conferences but not to SLF or other libertarian conferences
- + because the WLM is so much absorbing women's energies, many activities that always used to be male-dominated remain so simply because the women are not there.
- + almost all libertarian women are also feminists - therefore there is probably some intrinsic connexion - not just a 'token' support by male libertarians.
- + non-libertarian groups have not been affected to the same extent as us, since they have retained many women in traditional roles: these groups remain viable.
- + a male-only or male-dominated libertarian movement is not viable: new women will seldom join a group which does not already contain women; anti-sexism is now a main plank of libertarian politics - it cannot be developed in a vacuum; rejection of co-operation by women will increasingly cause feelings of unresolved guilt, paralysis, apathy, finally reaction in men.
- + it is therefore essential for men & women who see this problem to do everything possible to include women in the libertarian movement: I agree with all of Sharon's suggestions (educational meetings, rotating chairperson, sharing skills, rotating responsibilities for organisation, even avoiding meeting in pubs - we could still rendez-vous in a pub & then go along to the meeting proper).
- + libertarians can support Womens Aid groups by helping with taking out the kids from the refuges - don't wait for you local Womens' Aid Group to approach you! (I've been doing this in Dundee for a year and Niall expects to get involved)
- + let's start talking seriously about how we relate to the WLM - I suggest a session at the next SLF conference on sexism: I believe that libertarian men can give the WLM real support only if they give it critical support....

interest rates is to challenge one of the corner-stones of capitalist society, namely a lucrative source of 'safe' investment, profit & an acceptance of the 'rights' of private property. Ultimately the only way to challenge the system of interest rates is for everyone to stop paying rents (& mortgage interest), thus withdrawing the capitalists revenue. But instead, tenants are herded off into supporting opportunist politicians or into easily defeated partial rent strikes which only prolong the agony. Clearly everybody isn't going to stop paying rent tomorrow, but unless that objective is posed, few will work towards it. A political analysis means understanding the links between economic, social and political factors which create problems, in this way community action can educate. However, people learn more readily through STRUGGLE than print.

4. CLASS SOLIDARITY & COLLECTIVES: It is too often assumed that neighbourhood and other action groups will be concerned with their own 'selfish' interests. This idea is encouraged by social scientists & other commentators who adhere to a Pluralist perspective. However, making LINKS between issues must inevitably lead to making LINKS between groups. Therefore, tenants are much stronger if they can get workers to support them, the same applies in reverse. The real strength lies in organisation at local BASE level, because this is where the system is weakest. At a national level, communication is controlled & manipulated to CONTAIN. At a city or neighbourhood level, however, people can communicate by meeting & running local papers etc in a way which SUBVERTS centralist and State domination.

A panacea trotted out for the 'weakness' of community action is the idea of a National Organisation. This predictably comes from Political Party people. The suggestion is that as decisions are made at a national level, they must be fought at a national level. This may sound logical BUT IN PRACTICE this mirroring of Organisation leads to the degeneration of action into bureaucracy & opportunism for 'leaders'. Groups are not yet strong enough to FEDERATE nationally. Where for instance, tenants assoc set up a national Organisation with a 'National' paper, party manipulation behind the scenes itself & the containment trap triumphs again. Groups must protect their local AUTONOMY, national link-ups are best restricted to an informal kind with organisation based on local collectives.

It is easy to dismiss this as lacking political strategy. How, people ask, can issues often generated on a global scale, be tackled by local groups? The answer is simple, the global domination takes place because we accept it. Control by the Authorities can be SUBVERTED by working towards taking power at a local level - all institutions, industry, housing, transport, services etc, & THEN forming a federal structure of delegates to communicate and sort out wider functions or relative needs and exchanges between areas. The intrusion of political parties has to be resisted as have any attempts to contain working class solidarity & mobilisation. In fighting issues we must try & develop ALTERNATIVE forms and methods of organising and living together.

Often the problems faced by community groups are in reality non-problems. There is no housing shortage, it's just that thousands of huge empty buildings, second homes or poorly used mansions maintain the status & investments of the wealthy. Tenants have to campaign for community facilities when they may be surrounded by hundreds of empty houses or shops which the Council is unable to let, but is unwilling to hand over to tenants. 'Experts' mutter about free transport but trade unionists join forces with conservationists to protect an old church from a motorway. Yet the real answer is for people to just stop paying fares and for conductors to stop collecting them. The working class in Italy have organised mass squatting & refusals to pay fares. The traditions of containment have less of an everyday existence. In Britain we worry too much about the intricate legalities of whether the system will allow us to do things, participating in THEIR System, instead of making society OURS.

The following leaflet has been distributed by Aberdeen Group at two anti-Cuts demos: the first three sections originally appeared in ABERDEEN PEOPLES PRESS.

TRANSFORMING THE ECONOMY

When considering alternatives to the government's policies it is essential to take account of why the government has adopted its present course. As the policy of cutting back expenditure on welfare services is not an isolated act which the government have thought up out of the blue, it is completely inadequate to react to the situation as if the government had just through mistaken thinking adopted a "wrong" policy.

On the contrary the government's policy on public expenditure is an integral part of their general economic strategy to create a more profitable British industry in which those with capital will be willing to invest. And given the fact that the Labour government is committed to running the present profit-based economy, this is basically the only strategy they can adopt. You can't run a profit-based economy without giving first priority to profit-making.

Thus any policy for social services which is to be a real alternative must involve a complete transformation in the nature of the economy. The driving force of the accumulation of capital by corporations must be replaced by the goal of the direct satisfaction of people's needs. Such an economy would enable the adequate resources which do undoubtedly exist to be channelled into health, education, housing, etc in sufficient quantity.

Some people are advocating that instead of their present policy the government should keep up or increase the rate of public expenditure, allow wages to rise significantly, act determinedly to reduce unemployment. Such measures would in the immediate sense benefit working people. However they would so adversely affect the prospects for a profitable British industry that the government, unreservedly committed to administering capitalism, will never adopt such a policy. Attempting by talk or reason to "persuade" the government to reflate the economy will have no effect whatsoever on their actions.

BUT WHAT NOW?—This is not to say that we think nothing can be done until the entire economy is transformed. Although the extent to which we can stop the cuts and defend our standard of living is limited as long as the economy is based on profit-making, the effort is still worth making. The important thing is not just to talk but to ACT against unemployment, wage-restrictions & the cuts. To the threat of redundancies we can counterpose the alternative of a shorter working week for all at the same pay. To back up our demands we must be prepared to occupy work-places threatened with closure or mass redundancy. Similarly, words will not break the government's wage restrictions. Only determined industrial action with unity between different groups of workers, will stop real wages falling. A massive campaign uniting the working class in industry and the community taking action in opposition to the cuts could force the government to drop some of their cutbacks. Later we outline more specifically actions the cuts campaign could take.

If a campaign did result in significantly less fewer cuts, in addition to being of immediate benefit to working people, this would also deepen the crisis. Without a "profitable climate" investors would not invest in British industry and private capital would be reluctant to continue lending the government money.

In such a situation of economic and political crisis the campaign would probably falter and die away unless it was inspired by a vision of an alternative way of running the public services//ro// and the whole economy. If the campaign did have this positive alternative goal, it could well gain in strength from its initial success and go on to the offensive.

HOW IT COULD BE DONE:

For the successful creation of an alternative economy based on human need, the movement for an alternative form of public services would have to be united with similar movements in all areas of social life. The movements and organisations that already exist aiming at, for example, workers' control of industry, women's liberation, tenants'/community control of housing, full rights for school students, would have to grow greatly in strength and vision and realise their common identity and goals. Power would have to be seized from the corporation executives, the government and the state bureaucrats who control industry, education, health and all the areas of social life and vested in the community as a whole. This can't be done by the coming to power of a "revolutionary party" who would only become a new elite. Decision-making must cease to be in the separate world of 'politics' inhabited only by a few specialists. A system of mass assemblies and workers' & community councils of recallable delegates could enable us for the first time to control our own lives. Clearly, such a process will require a great transformation in peoples' deepest beliefs and attitudes, and very way of living and relating to people. Not least it will require a tremendous effort to overcome the submissive attitude to authority which is deeply embedded in every one of us, and which is apparent in the labour movement, as in openly capitalist institutions.

With the gearing of production to human needs, not profits, much of the production carried on today will become redundant. Banking, insurance, advertising, the armed forces and arms production; private car production, all the various forms of money collecting, plus many more could be run down and, in most cases, eventually eliminated.

today...

end of planned obsolescence and deliberately shoddy production will also make work done unnecessary. Unlike today, this rundown of certain industries and activities will not result in unemployment and poverty. Rather than some people working many hours a week while others are unemployed with lots of free time but a very low income, work will be shared, all will benefit from a shorter working week without any fall in standards of living. People who are at jobs no longer required will retrain. A great quantity of resources, in terms of both people and materials, will be freed from socially useless work and available to work in areas where there are real needs to be met; health, education, housing and social services will undoubtedly be major beneficiaries of this transfer of resources.

But having adequate resources channelled into the service is not itself enough. At present where resources are available they are frequently mis-used on the wrong priorities, the services are bureaucratically run outside the control of most of the workers in the services and of the recipients of the services, and the whole way in which the services operate robs people of their initiative and turns them into passive consumers, dependent on specialists. All this must change. Priorities must be decided by all the workers involved and all those who use the service—there must be a conscious effort to regain control of whole areas of our lives which we have surrendered to 'the experts'.

FIGHTING THE CUTS IN ABERDEEN : The cuts can only be opposed successfully by trade unionists, students and people in the community fighting together. Thus the coming together of the Aberdeen Trades Council Committee on Public Service Cutbacks, Aberdeen Area National Union of Students and Aberdeen Campaign Against the Cuts (a body involving city trade unionists and community groups) to produce a joint crisis/cuts bulletin is a big step forward. It's important that this leads on to unity in action against the cuts. Spreading information and argument about the cuts is important. But it will need pickets, strikes, occupations and other forms of action to force local and central government to give way.

There are plenty of examples of cuts in Aberdeen that need to be fought with united action. The Bridge of Don a new, purpose-built nursery is lying empty. It is one of four nurseries in the Grampian Region that the Regional Council have decided not to staff. This is one of the worst cutbacks which, in our society where childcare and domestic work are unfairly regarded as 'women's work', will hit women particularly badly. Mothers in the Bridge of Don have formed an Action Group to fight for the opening of the nursery. It's important that nursery nurses and their trade union branch, NALGO Local Government, and also trainee nurses link up with local residents in the campaign. The Trades Council, Aberdeen Area NUS and other community groups could give valuable support to any actions, such as picketing the Regional Council or occupying the nursery, that the campaign might take. At the University and the colleges in Aberdeen, joint action against the cuts by students and workers could have a great impact.

In the schools the teachers' unions need to link together with parents and school students if the vicious staffing cuts are to be stopped. The teachers' case is an outstanding example of verbal protest not being enough. Hardly a day goes by without a statement from an EIS or SSA leader decrying the cuts. But nothing has changed. And nothing will change until action is taken. NALGO's decision to go for a one-day strike against the cuts showed the way—as a start.

Organisational forms are not everything. However, the existence of a single cuts campaign co-ordinating body, involving TUs, community groups and student bodies would help the development of a united cuts campaign. At present the Trades Council Cuts Committee, AAC and the Aberdeen Area NUS are working together while still being independent bodies. It's important that this co-operation should continue and that it should lead in time to the formation of a genuine joint TU-community groups-students campaign co-ordinating body with equal status accorded to participants from each section.

There needs to be unity in the cuts campaign. The other great need is for the campaign to be based on the actions of rank and file working people, not on the words of councillors, MPs or TU leaders. Labour councillors in opposition on the Grampian Regional Council have recently been talking against the cuts. Meanwhile their colleagues in power in Parliament—and on the Aberdeen District Council—have been acting MAKING CUTS!! We shouldn't be fooled. If we're going to stop the craziness of a system that chops social services to boost private profits we are going to have to organise together and do it ourselves.

NOW AVAILABLE NOW AVAILABLE NOW AVAILABLE NOW AVAILABLE
PORTUGAL the impossible revolution?

BY Phil Mailer

"Interviews, arguments, leaflets, discussion. Laughter and tears, longing and frustration"

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ONE MORE TIME ON THE ANARCHIST ROUNDABOUT - or
- THEY SHOOT HORSES? DON'T THEY?

'Here we go again/round and round the floor/..it's making
no sense/but we'll stay here till the end.....

Notes toward a definition of anarchy - smashing the state
and enjoying it, fun for all the affinity group...

1. Move back one space for every day that the magazine or
journal is late.
 2. Go forward ten spaces if members/subscribers actually receive
copies of the journal.
 3. Promised articles don't arrive. Stay put until they do or
until you throw a twelve - there is only one dice...
 4. Five page stencil arrives - miss five throws.
 5. Production collective has hangover - miss nine throws.
 6. Duplicator has hangover, no one thinks of using another,
miss four throws.
 7. Twenty page article, single space, on 'The need for limiting
the length of contributions' arrives - miss twenty throws...
- Etc, etc, etc, etc,
Remember you're on a roundabout, the quickest way of going
anywhere may be to stand still.

Seriously though, comrades, the late appearance of the first
SLF journal doesn't matter a damn. The revolution hasn't been
postponed because of it but some questions do need to be asked
and answered.

Why was the title 'Scottish Libertarian' when the SLF confer-
ence specifically said it should not contain the words 'anarchist
/libertarian'?

Why was only one person allowed to be ultimately responsible
for the magazine's production?

Why was the copy deadline ignored?

Why didn't all those who insisted on submitting vast essays
at least turn up to help print them?

Why can't we have a limit on the length of articles?

Why do we have to accept every article submitted? It's a funny
kind of 'freedom' which opposes rejecting or cutting articles
but leaves production in the control of one person.

Why can't we get it together to produce a worthwhile magazine
on time?

Why am I so worked up about something which doesn't really
matter?

Because it doesn't matter in itself; it's the disorganisation,
the incoherence, the lack of any real purpose that such things
reflect which is the disturbing point. So it's back to good
old organisation again and rather than me rambling on ad naus-
eam, some points to ponder from a recent 'Solidarity' text on
the subject

"...the growth and decline of anarchist and other libertarian
groups was not random. It was clearly related to the level of
turbulence and self-activity of the working class. When the
working class was bellicose and self-confident the libertarian
groups were numerous and active. When the working class was
passive the libertarian groups were small in number and often
engaged in bitter infighting....The implications of this are
rather worrying; libertarian groups are revealed as very much
the objects rather than the subjects of history. It doesn't

matter what internal reformatations are carried out, a wide sense of worth and relevance can only come from the response from the outside.

If one takes away the pretensions to being the board of directors for the revolutionary enterprise the only things a revolutionary group has got are ideas and information. It hardly needs to be said that most groups have precious little of either to offer. Unless a revolutionary group is a source of information and ideas it is useless. It has no point.

But organisation for what? What is the purpose of these individuals banded together for greater effectiveness? Since they are libertarians they have presumably no wish to capture positions in the workers' movement, exert an iron discipline over all and sundry etc. To put it the most mundane way, people come together to talk about politics from a roughly common set of ideas and the desire to develop more systematically than they can in their 'normal' day to day life. To paraphrase Cardan the three first tasks of a revolutionary organisation are to bring about the expression of experience of the members, to help the members develop consciousness from the consciousness which they already possess; for members to develop a conception of the totality of the problems of modern society, and in particular of the problem of socialism; and thirdly to defend their immediate interests and conditions. And no matter what various libertarian groups say they are doing they seldom get as far as completing task number one. (I would urge a certain modest introspection by all readers at this point....)"

(John Quail in Astounding Stories Of
Our Epoch)

That lengthy quote says it quite neatly and if any of us still see any point in the continuance of the SLF and/or the journal perhaps we could think over those points before the next conf.

Paul Gordon - Anarchopoly after an idea by John Cowan

. ABERDEEN..GROUP.REPORT.

Members of the group have been involved in a wide range of activities, mostly on an individual basis but meeting regularly enables us to keep in close touch.

One member is involved (through Aberdeen Peoples' Press and the WEA) in Health & Safety courses for shop stewards. Apart from the intrinsic value of this, it is a way of getting in touch with people in specific regions (e.g. workers at Nigg site). Several of us have taken a personal interest and two have been actively involved in investigating dangerous work practices involving carcinogenic materials within Aberdeen University: we believe Health & Safety to be an important for libertarians to help in since it immediately brings into question the profit basis and authoritarian character of this society - where people are often ordered to endanger their health/safety for their employer's profit. Leaflets were put out at Peace People and 2 Cuts demos.

Another member is involved in Aberdeen SMG: SMG and other gay groups appear to be thriving - discos, theatre groups, etc. Co-operation with University Anarchist Group ceased abruptly when 2 of them stood up and said we were all in favour of disaffiliation from NUS - a part from that their arguments were terrible - especially the one about people fighting the cuts individually (!) At Niall's suggestion we are going to try contacting them again. At present we are laying out SOCIAL REVOLUTION 7, which should be available soon. We are also distributing a pamphlet on Ireland by Adam Buick; SR's new pamphlet on China and the "Introduction To SR". A bookstall in the Univ. should be re-starting soon, and will be an outlet for Scottish Libertarian 2 and other material. (Sandy, Aberdeen)

****University Anarchist Group:

****Aberdeen SR Group, Box 23, c

There is understandable concern amongst some SLF members that the group is no more than a talking shop packed with verbal wankers, and they propose more action (all sorts). This response is inadequate because:

a) the frustration with talking is a result of talking about the wrong things (often things which don't exist) at an unpractical level. In part this is due to a false attempt to remove the inconsistencies and complexities of the real world, to simplify things by resorting to jargon and ideological display - which in fact leads us into new difficulties.

B) we relate primarily to the actions of political groupings. My feeling is that while pressure (demands, campaigns) for social change comes from such groupings, the actual process of social change is brought about by transitory groupings who often don't give a fuck for politics (all sorts) - such as strike committees, people getting together in the pub, street gangs, etc.)

c) to look to political organizations as the enabling force behind action reveals a lack of creativity and imagination, compared with the everyday reality of class struggle, in which people are bursting with ideas and concrete proposals for fighting back and for taking control.

d) we still labour with the illusion that only political groups can develop correct general ideas about what happens in society and environs. The criticisms of management techniques and union manipulations put forward most recently by Leyland tool-makers show that is is not so.

e) a lot of people are still mystified about the role of libertarian groups in relation to the class struggle. To base action on these illusions is sterile, because we end by duplicating authoritarian tendencies and relationships.

f) some people respond with fatigue and frustration to examining their own attitudes, make unrealistic claims to a premature liberation - based on their ability to parrot the right phrases at the right time, but exposed by their behaviour in situations where they do not feel accountable for their actions, in everyday life.

g) we still talk in absolutes. But every situation demands a specific approach, and may require its own form of organization. The umbrella approach of the trad. left (ONE "revolutionary" organization) doesn't stop people getting wet, and contributes to setting back people's autonomy and initiative.

h) it makes no sense to try and invent things for the SLF to do, until we have talked about how actual defensive struggles can develop into an attack on the state, capital, etc. We have no choice but to recognize the futility of trying to initiate activity at some vague level detached from the base, when there are people all around us doing practical things all the time - however inadequate these might appear when falsely measured against our imagined sophistication.

Peter Silcock

[illegible]

CLYDESDIDE REPORT :

Before SL 1 came out, we collectively decided to 'abolish' (in true anarchist tradition) the Glasgow Anarchist Group & go for a new Dual structure based around alternate SLF(Glasgow) Public forums & local group "Offensive" mtgs. This has not worked out in practice & this reflects in part on me(Keith) for not foreseeing the pitfalls that we have made for ourselves when I proposed the new 'structure'.

The "Offensives" idea hasnt simply 'caught on' & only Daly who is now community Organiser in Govan under the the (Silly)Job(s) Creation & Keith who has produced a 4page local "Offensives" for Maryhill seem to be keeping the Idea going. The other side of the coin, the SLF Public forums haven't exactly progressed too well either. The 1st one on NATIONALISM with around 15 anarchists was quite a good standard with Charlie, Jean, Dave etc all contributing lengthy but consistant & well expressed opinions. The 2nd one was

a farce literally but this was largely due to the appearance of a certain AWA member in Port Glasgow who is an SWP stooge -e. Both the 2nd&3rd ones were very badly advertised & this shows the main weakness in Glasgow at the moment - COORDINATION (perhaps GAG mk2 needs to be re-born?).

Anyway, the 3rd forum had Dave on the Fight to Live but the mtg moved over to more concrete matters relating to the PARTICK ACTION group to save the bus Garage when PGAG people came along - Dave, Ian & Stuart have produced a Fair Fares special paper which should appear soon, although many good ideas on the Fares campaign are not becoming concrete for various bad reasons.

The 4th forum was put off for a week to allow for extensive advertising. Stuart spoke on Free Schools & the idea of one in Govan is being shuffled around although this needs a lot of thought as indicated by Stuarts experiences at Barrowfield.

S.L.F. - ANY

FUTURE ?

Keith,
Glasgow.

As many of you will have probably noted, during the 2 years of the S.L.F.s existence as an expression of affinity between libertarians in Scotland I have written probably more than anybody else (David, Glasgow is the only contender) & much of this has been directed at the seeming problem of WHAT IS THE S.L.F. SUPPOSED TO ACHIEVE?

This article is intended to be in terms of practical suggestions. If comrades want to view this in theoretical perspective then I refer them to "ANARCHISM AS METHOD" on pages 25-26 of SCOTTISH LIBERTARIAN 1.

While much of our frustration has wider sources & in my opinion partly stems from widespread confusion as to the use of a "revolutionary organ-isation", there is no reason for this frustration & confusion to be maximised as it is at present.

At the last conference we defined the S.L.F. as a membership affinity association on an individual basis in relation to a brief "manifesto".

As David (Glasgow) noted at the time this in itself is scarcely sufficient. However, I still disagree with him over his advocacy of the S.L.F. being re-constituted along the lines of the Anarchist Workers Association with their perspective of formal organisational structure such as bi-monthly Delegate Conferences & policy-making National conferences.

The practical reason for the change from the way the Magazine is collated/produced/sent out is the failure of those involved in bringing SL 1 to materialisation (although at least Glasgow together contributed some 20 pages of text). However, this has given us the incentive to over-turn our "structurelessness" & give life to the concept of the S.L.F..

So.....while the production etc of SL 2 has taken place in Dundee, the change is more than simply a change in venue.

The idea behind this organisational change comes from looking at how 'Solidarity' organises on a National basis. Like SL their magazine comes out every 2 months & is distributed at their bi-monthly conferences. Like SL, although for different technical reasons, the production process stays in the same place. Exactly in-between these conferences the working group meets to collate *****
claims, Fares, student etc aspects

& layout the forthcoming mag.. Any coordination matters arising can also be dealt with & aired in the internal news-sheet. However, since 'Solidarity' is more or less a national revolutionary collective formed upwards by autonomous groups & does not on a national level see itself collectively in terms of direct action, there is no direct comparison with the S.L.F.

Therefore, a "working group" structure is now in being within the S.L.F. All members are welcome to participate. If groups wish to "delegate" an individual they are free to do so providing this doesn't in practice serve to restrict the possible attendance of other comrades at the "working group".

The WORKING GROUP(SLF):-

1/ Collates-produces-distributes the Magazine. Contents & agit-prop pages etc can be typed out at the last moment as can short reports & info..

2/ Decides & prints in Mag the date/venue of the next working group or alternatively, as is the case now, notifies SLF members and interested others that the National Secretary will be sending out details about the conference in late-April or early May as soon as the liason is completed with the host group. A news-sheet including a possible agenda is sent out within the next month.

3/ Provides time for discussion around possible areas for the coordination of activity:-

speaker & film tours; SLF leaflets; local bookshops (eg. Edinburgh) & the distribution of literature; translation & contact with international texts/groups; lit..

SLF-PLATFORM FOR ACTION?

Action-we need more, everybody agrees. Both Conferences I've been to, somebody's stood up & spoken of the need for coordinated SLF activity, but not a great deal's come of it. There are a few reasons (a) The most active groups (e.g. Aberdeen, Glasgow) have put much energy into community-based struggles which don't really need national co-ordination, & are often inappropriate to other areas (e.g. Glasgow's Fair Fares)

b) Other action (e.g. defence committees, Health & Safety, Womens' Liberation, etc.), while not locally based, involve a great many other political groupings & individuals. Since we don't believe in 'taking over' such struggles, or setting up 'anarchist fronts', we can't direct them, but the SLF could take an important part in spreading & encouraging such self-activity.

c) Bad communications: the co-ordination & communication that has taken place in the past has been mainly on the Glasgow-Stirling-Edinburgh axis - places which are comparatively close together. It has hardly existed further north. This is particularly felt by isolated members: many of us have found it difficult to join the 'new' SLF, because we didn't have the necessary info - which we could only get if we were members.

Conclusions: the present bimonthly working groups could prove very useful in getting co-ordination going, but two months is a long time, so I'd suggest an 'activist network' of people with the time & inclination to keep in touch by phone & letter on a regular week-to-week (or day-to-day, if necessary) basis. They could report activity, compare notes, suggest further action, & keep spirits up. This plan would require dedication, but would only need one person in each area, & would keep the snotty noses out of our business if it becomes dodgy. (of the Special Branch)

Also, we should allocate a session next conference to thrash out the best ideas for co-ordinating action & (if necessary) farm them out to further 'working groups'. Then we can spend the rest of the conference waffling & arguing to our hearts' content without feeling guilty.

Suggestions for action (a) the production of a pamphlet on Scottish Nationalism: this has been mooted by Aberdeen SR as a possibility for SR/AWA/Solidarity collaboration, but would probably be more appropriate as an SLF production. I have a draft outline in the pipeline.

b) The revival of the 'roadshow', of speakers touring Scotland and cutting down expenses. This plan foundered before, but is definitely worth another bash.

These suggestions should be taken in the spirit in which they're written: it doesn't matter if they're discarded as long as they keep discussion rolling. Perhaps the worst thing we can do is to take ourselves too seriously. For instance, there have been hours of agonising over how we're ever going to achieve anything but I reckon we have achieved something: keeping a non-sectarian forum for libertarian discussion alive in Scotland for two years, despite hard times & overwhelming waves of apathy. Considering the state of the 'movement' in the rest of the English-speaking world, that IS something. Smile, folks.

Niall (Dundee, SR)

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!!!!! ITEMS FOR AGENDA & DISCUSSION DOCUMENTS FOR NEXT SLF CONFERENCE MUST BE HANDED INT NATIONAL SEC. BY APRIL 23rd. 1977 repeat to Nat, Sec. by April 23rd. Ignore at your peril. To the barricades, etc, etc. (ZZZZZZZZZZ.....)

AUBREY/BERRY/CAMPBELL DEFENCE.

On February 18th, three men, Duncan Campbell, Crispin Aubrey (freelance journalists) & John Berry (ex-soldier) were arrested under section two of the official secrets act, were kept incommunicado for two days before being charged, & were detained a further period before being allowed bail. Duncan Campbell is an ex-Dundonian & old friend of SLF members. He works as a freelance journalist specialising in communications technology, & as such collaborated with Mark Hosenball on a famous but little seen article in 'Time Out'. Here they theorised that the Provisional IRA had the technology to trigger bombs by radio signal. The British forces could then use their superior technology to detect the IRA frequency, & set bombs off prematurely.

This touched a sensitive nerve with Merlyn Rees, who decided to chuck Hosenball out of the country, & when Campbell announced on TV that he'd written most of the article, the special branch must have decided to nab him too. He & Aubrey are charged with receiving classified info from Berry - even though he left the army in 1970. The Labour Party has also 'promised' to repeal the section of the act under which charges were brought. Campbell's flat has been ransacked, & since being bailed out, the 3 have been constantly followed by police. The work they've been doing (along with Agee & Hosenball) to expose the State's repressive apparatus is too important to be stopped this way. We're enclosing a copy of the Defence Committee's petition for the dropping of charges & change in the law, & we encourage all to support the campaign. They need financial help in particular.