

libertarian education

formerly - Libertarian Teacher

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Having finally decided to call the magazine Libertarian Education in future and having proved to ourselves that it is possible to produce it every two months or so we can concentrate more of our attention on problems of what we can most effectively do through the pages of the magazine. To this end we hope that we will be able to announce the setting up of some kind of conference, perhaps in the summer. Meanwhile we would very much like to hear from people who read and/or sell Libertarian Education - please let us know what you think we should be doing and say how you can help.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

One of our functions could usefully be to attack the false value put on academic education as a sensible method of categorising people - fitting them into jobs/college/university. It is not only that such categorisation has itself a pernicious influence on the content of education but that it is hopelessly inefficient even on its own terms. Let's face it - if the acquisition of a job or university place required simply an interest in and an aptitude for that job or field of study, rather than a string of exam certificates - what a transformation of our schools that would produce. And who would object? It goes without saying that the only person who can really say whether he/she is interested in doing anything is that person.

ESKIMOS?

We have included in this issue an anthropological article giving what we feel is an interesting and important account of Eskimo Childhood, whatever its source. It seems to us that the magazine could usefully include more of this kind of material - analysing the way children are treated in various cultures. One function of such articles can be to help counter opposition to our ideas based on erroneous arguments about 'human nature'. Human nature seems, in fact, to be infinitely variable and we are not inevitably stuck with one pattern of behaviour, however dominant it might be in our culture now. It is up to us to decide which aspects of human behaviour we will encourage. We look towards comrades who have worked on or have knowledge of such studies within the fields of Anthropology, Sociology, History, Literature, Biology, etc to write articles for us or tell us where interesting studies are to be found.

TEACHER ORGANISATIONS

Martin Bashforth's letter in this issue reminds us that one point on which we tend to differ from many teacher colleagues who are equally concerned about the effect of schooling on kids is our reluctance to work through teacher organisations, even those as radical as the Rank and File group, a group of 'left-wing teachers within the NUT, who believe that the Union should be an effective factor in forcing change and progress, both in the general educational field and the struggle for better salaries and conditions.'

No doubt Rank and File supporters would accept wholeheartedly most of our criticisms of the authoritarian nature of our schools but they would be suspicious of our anarchism and place considerable emphasis on improving teacher salaries and conditions. Insofar as such struggles are simply examples of the worker/boss, exploiter/exploited conflict, they are to be welcomed and encouraged but they do tend to ignore the ambiguous position of teachers and their function in the oppressive machine which is the State. We are not just 'workers' - we are also an important part of the oppressive machine - and we must be careful not to get identified with those who bleat about the 'profession' and who go on about 'status'.

One argument is, of course, that by involving politically backward teachers in the struggle for improvements in salaries, conditions and the democratisation of schools (even though it might be a tactical necessity to emphasise teacher rather than student democracy!) those teachers will be led to see the class nature of the education system and to work for its conversion to Socialist principles. Perhaps, but militancy does not necessarily have such an effect - we have only to reflect on the activities of the militant NAS whose class analysis of the system is, to say the least, somewhat suspect. There surely is a danger of this kind of activity helping merely to consolidate the privileged position of teachers vis-a-vis their students.

Let us acknowledge that, as anarchists, we have little grounds to cavil at Rank and File activities. We have been appallingly backward in presenting and developing any real analysis of our attitudes, to say nothing of our total failure to define how such analysis could be worked out through 'cultural action'.

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Anarchy & Education

From William Godwin's 'An Account of the Seminary That Will be Opened on Monday the Fourth Day of August at Epsom in Surrey' (1783) to Paul Goodman's 'Compulsory Mis-education' (1964), anarchism has persistently regarded itself as having distinctive and revolutionary implications for education, indeed, no other movement whatever has assigned to educational principles, concepts, experiments, and practices a more significant place in its writings and activities.

— KRIMERMAN & PERRY: 'Patterns of Anarchy' (1966)

Ultimately the social function of education is to perpetuate society: it is **the** socialising function. Society guarantees its future by rearing its children in its own image. In traditional societies the peasant rears his sons to cultivate the soil, the man of power rears his to wield power, and the priest instructs them all in the necessity of a priesthood. In modern governmental society, as Frank MacKinnon puts it in 'The Politics of Education',

"The educational system is the largest instrument in the modern state for telling people what to do. It enrolls five-year-olds and tries to direct their mental, and much of their social, physical and moral development for twelve or more of the most formative years of their lives."

To find a historical parallel to this you would have to go back to ancient Sparta, the principal difference being that the only education we hear of in the ancient world is that of ruling classes. Spartan education was simply training for infantry warfare and for instructing the citizens in the techniques for subduing the slave class, the helots who did the daily work of the state and greatly outnumbered the citizens. In the modern world the helots have to be educated too, and the equivalent of Spartan warfare is the industrial and technical competition between nations, which is sometimes the product of war and sometimes its prelude. The year in which Britain's initial advantage in the world's industrial markets began to wane, was the year in which, after generations of bickering about its religious content, universal compulsory elementary education was introduced, and every significant development since the Act of 1870 had a close relationship to the experience, not merely of commercial rivalry, but of war itself. The English Education Acts of

1902, 1918 and 1944 were all born of war, and every new international conflict, whether in rivalry for markets or in military techniques, has been the signal for a new burst of concern among the rival powers, over the scale and scope of their systems of education.

The notion that primary education should be free, compulsory and universal is very much older than the British legislation of the nineteenth century. Martin Luther appealed "To the Councilmen of all Cities in Germany that they establish and maintain Christian schools", compulsory education was founded in Calvinist Geneva in 1536, and Calvin's Scottish disciple John Knox "planted a school as well as a kirk in every parish". In puritan Massachusetts free compulsory education was introduced in 1647. The common school, Lewis Mumford notes, "contrary to popular belief, is no belated product of nineteenth century democracy: it played a necessary part in the absolutist-mechanical formula . . . centralised authority was now belatedly taking up the work that had been neglected with the wiping out of municipal freedom in the greater part of Europe". In other words, having destroyed local initiative, the state was acting in its own interest. Compulsory education is bound up historically, not only with the printing press, the rise of protestantism and capitalism, but with the growth of the idea of the nation state itself.

All the great rationalist philosophers of the eighteenth century pondered on the problems of popular education, and the two acutest educational thinkers among them ranged themselves on opposite sides on the question of the **organisation** of education: Rousseau for the State, William Godwin against it. Rousseau, whose *Emile* postulates a comple-

tely individual education (human society is ignored, the tutor's entire life is devoted to poor Emile), did nevertheless, in his *Discourse on Political Economy* (1758) argue for public education "under regulations prescribed by the government . . . if children are brought up in common in the bosom of equality; if they are imbued with the laws of the State and the precepts of the General Will . . . we cannot doubt that they will cherish one another mutually as brothers . . . to become in time defenders and fathers of the country of which they will have been for so long the children."

Godwin, in his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) criticises the whole idea of a **national** education. He summarises the arguments in favour, which are those used by Rousseau, adding to them the question, "If the education of our youth be entirely confined to the prudence of their parents, or the accidental benevolence of private individuals, will it not be a necessary consequence that some will be educated to virtue, others to vice, and others again entirely neglected?" Godwin's answer is worth quoting at length because his lone voice from the end of the eighteenth century speaks to us in the accents of the de-schoolers of our own day:

The injuries that result from a system of national education are, in the first place, that all public establishments include in them the idea of permanence . . . public education has always expended its energies in the support of prejudice; it teaches its pupils not the fortitude that shall bring every proposition to the test of examination, but the art of vindicating such tenets as may chance to be previously established . . . Even in the petty institution of Sunday schools, the chief lessons that are taught are a superstitious veneration for the Church of England, and to bow to every man in a handsome coat. . . .

Secondly, the idea of national education is founded in an inattention to the nature of mind. Whatever each man does for himself is done well; whatever his neighbours or his country undertake to do for him is done ill . . . He that learns because he desires to learn will listen to the instructions he receives and apprehend their meaning. He that teaches because he desires to teach will discharge his occupation with enthusiasm and energy. But the moment political institution undertakes to assign to every man his place, the functions of all will be discharged with supineness and indifference. . . .

Thirdly, the project of a national education ought uniformly to be discouraged on account of its ob-

vious alliance with national government. . . . Government will not fail to employ it to strengthen its hand and perpetuate its institutions. Their view as instigator of a system of education will not fail to be analogous to their views in their political capacity. . . .

Contemporary critics of the alliance between national government and national education would agree, and would argue that it is in the **nature** of public authorities to run coercive and hierarchical institutions, whose ultimate function is to perpetuate social inequality and to brainwash the young into the acceptance of their particular slot in the organised system. A hundred years ago, in a book called 'God and the State', Michael Bakunin characterised "the people" as "the eternal minor, the pupil confessedly forever incompetent to pass his examinations, rise to the knowledge of his teachers, and dispense with their discipline."

One day I asked Mazzini what measures would be taken for the emancipation of the people, once his triumphant unitary republic had been definitely established. "The first measure", he answered, "will be the foundation of schools for the people". "And what will the people be taught in these schools?" "The duties of man — sacrifice and devotion."

Bakunin made the same comparison as is made today by Everett Reimer and Ivan Illich between the teaching profession and a priestly caste, and he declared that "Like conditions, like causes, always produce like effects. It will, then, be the same with the professors of the modern school, divinely inspired and licensed by the State. They will necessarily become, some without knowing it, others with full knowledge of the cause, teachers of the doctrine of popular sacrifice to the power of the State and to the profit of the privileged classes". Must we then, he asked, eliminate from society all instruction and abolish all schools? Far from it, he replied, but he demanded schools from which the **principle of authority** will be eliminated:

They will be schools no longer; they will be popular academies, in which neither pupils nor masters will be known, where the people will come freely to get, if they need it, free instruction, and in which, rich in their own expertise, they will teach in their turn many things to the professors who shall bring them knowledge which they lack.

This entirely different conception of the school had already been envisaged by Godwin in 1797, as a plan "calculated entirely to change the face of education. The whole formidable

apparatus which has hitherto attended it, is swept away. Strictly speaking, no such characters are left upon the scene as either preceptor or pupil. The boy, like the man, studies, because he desires it. He proceeds upon a plan of his own invention, or which, by adopting, he has made his own". Perhaps the nearest thing to a school of this kind within the official system was Prestolee School (an elementary school in Lancashire revolutionised after the first world war by its headmaster Edward O'Neil), where "time-tables and programmes play an insignificant part, for the older children come back when school hours are over, and with them, their parents and elder brothers and sisters."

In spite of the talk of "community schools" there are a thousand bureaucratic reasons why O'Neil's version of Bakunin's "popular academy" could not be put into practice today, and remains only a vision of the future transformation of the school. However, Professor Harry Réé told a conference of young teachers that,

I think we are going to see in your lifetime the end of schools as we know them. Instead there will be a community centre with the doors open twelve hours a day, seven days a week, where anybody can wander in and out of the library, workshops, sports centre, self-service store and bar. In a hundred years time the compulsory attendance laws for children to go to school may have gone the same way as the compulsory laws for attendance at church.

Today, as the educational budgets of both rich and poor nations get more and more gigantic, we would add a further criticism of the role of the state as educator throughout the world: the affront to the idea of social justice. An immense effort by well-intentioned reformers has gone into the attempt to manipulate the education system to provide equality of opportunity, but this has simply resulted in a theoretical and illusory equal start in a competition to become more and more unequal. The greater the sums of money that are poured into the education industries of the world, the smaller the benefit to the people at the bottom of the educational, occupational and social hierarchy. The universal education system turns out to be yet another way in which the poor subsidise the rich. Everett Reimer, for instance, remarking that schools are an almost perfectly regressive form of taxation, notes that the children of the poorest one-tenth of the population of the United States cost the public in school-

ing \$2,500 each over a lifetime, while the children of the richest one-tenth cost about \$35,000. "Assuming that one-third of this is private expenditure, the richest one-tenth still gets ten times as much of public funds for education as the poorest one-tenth". In his suppressed Unesco report of 1970, Michael Huberman reached the same conclusion for the majority of countries in the world. In Britain, ignoring completely the university aspect, we spend twice as much on the secondary school life of a grammar-school sixth former as on a secondary modern school leaver, while if we do include university expenditure, we spend as much on an undergraduate in one year as on a normal school-child throughout his life. "While the highest social group benefit **seventeen** times as much as the lowest group from the expenditure on universities, they only contribute five times as much revenue". We may thus conclude that one significant role of the state in the education systems of the world is to perpetuate social and economic injustice.

You can see why one contemporary anarchist educator, Paul Goodman, suggests that it would be simpler, cheaper and fairer, to dismantle the system and give each kid his or her share of the education money. Goodman's programme is devastatingly simple. For the young child provide a "protective and life-nourishing environment" by decentralising the school into small units of 20-50 in available shop-fronts or clubhouses, with class attendance not compulsory. Link the school with economically marginal farms where city kids can go for a couple of months a year. For older children,

Probably an even better model would be the Athenian pedagogue, touring the city with his charges; but for this the streets and working-places of the city must be made safer and more available than is likely. (The prerequisite of city-planning is for the children to be able to use the city, for no city is governable if it does not grow citizens who feel it is theirs.) The goal of elementary pedagogy is a very modest one: it is for a small child, under his own steam, to poke interestingly into whatever goes on and be able, by observation, questions and practical imitation, to get something out of it in his own terms. In our society this happens pretty well at home up to age four, but after that it becomes forbiddingly difficult.

Technical education, he believes, is best undertaken on the job, for, provided that "the young have options and can organise and criticise, on the job education is the quickest

way to workers' management". University education "is for **adults** who already know something."

Goodman has been peddling his ideas of incidental education in and out of season for most of his writing life, but only very recently have people begun to take them seriously. What has changed the climate has been the experience of the students' revolt, and the educational crisis of the American cities — with more and more expenditure providing less and less effective education, and the impact of educational thinkers from the Third World like Ivan Illich and Paolo Freire who have shown how totally inappropriate to real social needs the standard pattern of school and university are. Everywhere experiments are being made to break away from the straight-jacket of Illich's definition of school as the "age-specific, teacher-related process requiring full-time attendance at an obligatory curriculum". What inhibits such experiments is precisely the existence of the official system which pre-empts the options of the citizens who are obliged to finance it, so that alternatives are dependent on the marginal income of potential users. When the Scotland Road Free School in Liverpool asked the education authority for some very modest assistance in the form of equipment, one member of the Education Committee declared that "we are being asked to weaken the fabric of what we ourselves are supposed to be supporting. . . We might finish up with the fact that no children will want to go to our schools".

The anarchist approach to education is grounded, not in a contempt for learning, but in a respect for the learner. Danilo Dolci told me of encountering 'bandits' in Sicily whose one contact with 'education' was learning to read from an anarchist fellow-prisoner in jail. Arturo Barea recalled from his childhood in Madrid two poverty-stricken anarchist pedagogues. One, the Penny Teacher lived in a hut made of petrol cans in the Barrio de las Injurias. A horde of ragged pupils squatted round him in the open to learn the ABC at ten centimos a month. The other, the Saint with the Beard used to hold his classes in exchange for his pupils' collection of cigarette-ends, in the Plaza Mayor. The Penny Teacher was sent to prison as an anarchist and died there. The Saint with the Beard was warned off from his corner and disappeared. But he turned up again eventually and went on

secretly lending tattered books to his pupils, for the love of reading.

The most devastating criticism we can make of the organised system is that its effects are profoundly anti-educational. In Britain at five years old most children cannot wait to get into school. At fifteen, most cannot wait to get out. On the day I am writing, our biggest-selling newspaper devotes its front page to a photograph of a thirteen-year-old truant, with his comment, "The worse part is I thought I only had another two years to sweat out, then they put the leaving age up to sixteen. That's when I thought, sod it". The likeliest lever for change in the organised system will come, not from criticism or example, from outside, but from pressure from below. There has always been a proportion of pupils who attend unwillingly, who resent the authority of the school and its arbitrary regulations, and who put a low value on the processes of education because their own experience tells them that it is an obstacle race in which they are so often the losers that they would be mugs to enter the competition. **This is what** school has taught them, and when this army of also-rans, no longer cowed by threats, no longer amenable to cajolery, no longer to be bludgeoned by physical violence into sullen acquiescence, grows large enough to prevent the school from functioning with even the semblance of relevance or effectiveness, the educational revolution will begin.

At the opposite end of the educational spectrum, the University, the process of renewal through secession has ancient historical precedents. Oxford was started by seceding English students from Paris, Cambridge by scholars who fled from Oxford, London by dissenters who could not accept the religious qualifications required by Oxford and Cambridge. But the most perfect anarchist model for a university comes from Spain. Towards the end of the last century, the Spanish government, dominated then as now, by the Church, dismissed some leading university professors. A few of them started a 'free' school for higher studies, the **Institucion Libre de Ensenanza** and around this arose the so-called "Generation of '98" the small group of intellectuals who, paralleling the growth of the working class movements of that time, sought to diagnose the stifling inertia, hypocrisy and corruption of Spanish life —

power structure by a network of autonomous groups and individuals. What the students experienced was that sense of liberation that comes from taking your own decisions and assuming your own responsibilities. It is an experience that we need to carry far beyond the privileged world of higher education, into the factory, the neighbourhood, the daily lives of people everywhere.

COLIN WARD

This article first appeared in 'The New Era', issue of July/August 1972, on 'Deschooling Alternatives'. We are grateful to the author, and to the board of the magazine, for allowing its use here.

six weeks than in four years of classes", (Dwight Macdonald on a Columbia student): "Everyone is a richer person for the experience and has enriched the community by it", (LSE student); "The last ten days have been the most rewarding of my whole university career", (Peter Townsend of Essex University); "This generation of Hull students has had the opportunity to take part in events which may well be the most valuable part of their university lives", (David Rubinstein on Hull). At Hornsey College of Art one lecturer said, "It's the greatest educational thing I've ever known", and another called it "a surge of creativity unheard of in the annals of higher education."

What a delicious, but predictable irony, that real education, self education, should only come from locking out or ignoring the expensive academic hierarchy. The students' revolt was a microcosm of anarchy, spontaneous, self-directed activity replacing the

Lorca, Dali and Bunuel were fellow students at the **Residencia**; a true community of scholars with a genuine function in the community it served. The only parallel I can think of are the one-time Black Mountain College in the US, and the annual two-day History Workshop at Ruskin College, Oxford (significantly not a part of the university), where at a cost of 50p each a thousand students and teachers gather to present and discuss original research in an atmosphere like that of a pop festival. It is a festival of scholarship, far away from the world of vice-chancellors and academic boards, running a finishing school for the bored aspirants for privileged jobs in the meritocracy.

In the world-wide student revolt of the late 1960s, from one university after another came the comment that the period of revolutionary self-government was the one genuinely educational experience that the students had encountered. "He had learned more in those

the art critic and teacher Manuel Cossio, the philosophers Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset, the economist Joaquin Costa (who summed up his programme for Spain in the phrase **school and larder**) the poet Antonio Machado and the novelist Pío Baroja. The **Institución** had an even more remarkable offspring, the **Residencia de Estudiantes**, or Residential College for Students, founded by Alberto Jiménez in 1910. Gerald Brenan gives us a fascinating glimpse of the **Residencia**:

Here, over a long course of years, Unamuno, Cossio and Ortega taught, walking about the garden or sitting in the shade of the trees in the manner of the ancient philosophers: here Juan Ramon Jiménez wrote and recited his poems, and here too a later generation of poets, among them Garcia Lorca and Alberti, learned their trade, coming under the influence of the school of music and folksong which Eduardo Martinez Torner organised. Never, I think, since the early Middle Ages has an educational establishment produced such astonishing results on the life of a nation, for it was largely by means of the **Institución** and the **Residencia** that Spanish culture was raised suddenly to a level it had not known for three hundred years.

ON PROBATION

My friend "A" went to a College of Education. The principal of the College decided that he had a vested right of controlling A's emotional life. They fell out.

A got a teaching job in a sec. mod. in a provincial city. His head there fell out with him. According to delicious hearsay his head suffers from permanent migraines and has a phobia about locking doors. It is generally agreed by the teachers in this school that his behaviour is entirely regulated by the phases of the moon. One aspect of his behaviour is that he gathers all the kids in school together at the beginning of the day and then scrams at them for talking together: he beats a few.

A lasted a term with this charming man, then quit. The head could not allow teachers to think for themselves, let alone the kids. He was so shocked when he found that A had the temerity to speak for himself that for his last term he took him off the timetable and A was forced to pass the time in an armchair.

A applied for several jobs and of course, no-one would hear of him. Then one day his luck changed. A liberal from the county surrounding the provincial centre where he lived decided that A simply could not be such a bad man as the set of references he had collected, and employed him. He even gave him his probation.

"B" landed in the same school that A first worked in. He chose to stay in the school and argue with the head. He only tried to use logic. For instance he told the kids that if they were not interested in the traditional type maths lesson he was presenting, they could go away; an action which they followed.

As a result he had some interesting conversations with his head who, apparently behaved much as one would expect a person with permanent migraines and obvious phobic tendencies to behave.

Of course this head used the weapons at his disposal to try to crush the upstart who dared to flout his authority. He wrote a succession of lousy reports to fail B his probation.

An intriguing correspondence between B and the EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES resulted. No grounds were even really given for failing B his probationary year. The AUTHORITY decided that since his head did not like him he must fail as a teacher. Of course reports were issued, like this:

"Mr. B has encountered considerable difficulties in maintaining order and in teaching his subject. These have arisen mainly from his unsatisfactory approach to his work.

I recommend that the probationary period of this teacher be extended for a further six months."

B became dangerous: he started making inquiries about corporal punishment. The head became scared and started censoring D.E.S. reports on the subject from the monthly bulletin which, anyway, is sent round to all the schools in that city. Obviously something had to be done to check B.

B likes kids and usually gets on with them. this was held against him. Another report:

"His relationship with his pupils is not satisfactory and the pupils have made little or no progress with their work.

I recommend that the probationary service of this teacher be extended . . . "

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CRAZY SCIENCE LESSONS

2.35 p.m. Tuesday 28th November 1972. I was standing in the corridor outside the science laboratory where I was due to start 2F off on their crazy science lessons. Robin was leading three of his friends on a mountaineering expedition across the cloakroom pegs, Tony was moving up and down the vague indications of a queue, adding to its writhing form by simulating intercourse and kissing with any member who did not violently reject him. I think there were at least two pairs of wrestlers rolling in the dust in the corridor. Among others, Danny and Nick wanted to get into the science lab., so rather than stand quietly they were using the only thing the school really teaches well - that violence pays. By threatening as many individuals as they could with their small closed fists, they were hoping to achieve the order necessary to my opening the door.

As I stood there I wondered again about my relationship with this particular form. Perhaps I wasn't handling them right - perhaps the head was correct when he had asked earlier in the term if there was a personality clash between these lads and myself. Having been in the school for six years now I find I can handle these criticisms very well, and I was rather pleased that that particular comment had by now been well and truly thrown back in the face of its originator, and that he was attempting to organise some remedial help for the form (Why only this class should have such help I don't know - 800 kids are screaming up and down the corridors to be let loose every time the lesson bell rings.) And then the savage truth was brought home to me for the millionth time since I've been in this school.

Another teacher wandered amongst us (his class was making a noise in the lab. next door). I would like to think he came to us for some sanctuary, a place where he felt people could relax and let go a few tensions without anyone coming along and criticising. Certainly nobody ever says to me that my classes are noisy, they think I like them that way.

And he asked Danny about some trouble he had been in earlier in the day. It was probably fighting or bullying but Danny gleefully announced that he had received one stripe across the backside for it. "Only one," said the teacher, "if I had had the stick in my hand you would have got six." This was then accompanied by a great cheer from the form - note, a cheer, not a jeer - and the teacher spent some five minutes of his time laughing and joking with them and it was GOOD. The teacher apologised to me for intruding but I said sincerely said that I liked to see people enjoying themselves in their talking and I didn't mind at all. Anyway this diversion had brought the class together and when the teacher went back to his noisier class I took an easy hold of them. I might add that they didn't get into the science lab. straight away - I started with a routine comment concerning lab. organisation and it bored them so they cut out again. Fortunately for them they had a double lesson so, after I had spent some time with them in a classroom, they were able to get back to the laboratories and do some practical work. It may be interesting to note what they did. About eight of them rattled a spanner at their bicycles for a couple of minutes and then spent the rest of the lesson racing around the empty playground with some of the others watching with me. The only teaching comments I made were for the spectators to stay on the curb to watch and I shouted to the cyclists as they went past to stay on the playground. I felt that these comments were necessary. We were watched by some teachers from the staffroom window - no doubt we gave them something to talk about, and probably complain about, amongst themselves. Need I say that none of them, nor the other science teacher, has lessons quite like mine - and neither do I have lessons quite like theirs.

Meanwhile, back in the lab., Luigi and Chris were sword fencing with old broom handles which they had set alight with the bunsen burners - I was keeping an eye on them through the windows.

Barry Cope



HE'S INVESTIGATING THE PRINCIPLES OF INERTIA - SIR.

SCHOOLS ~

State, Free, None?

There seems to be a growing reaction among left-wing teachers/educationists against the idea of Free Schools. This was brought out clearly at a recent well organised, well attended and useful conference in Leicester which was put on by the Rank and File group.

"Free schoolers" were lumped together with "De-schoolers" and anarchists and attacked from a number of positions. They were exhorted to "work from within" and to "dirty their hands" by working only in the State schools where the real struggle is. Other forms the attack took were:-

- A Socialist teacher has no right to turn his back on the needs of the majority in favour of the needs of the minority.
- Free schools tend to weaken the assault on the State system by providing it with cheap Special schools and a mopping-up ground for truants and troublemakers.
- Teachers who work in free schools are helping to "edge up" the pupil/teacher ratio in state schools by reducing the number of teachers available to the latter (an odd one this - bearing in mind the number of unemployed teachers and the fact that many in free schools are not qualified teachers - thank god!)
- Free schools are not free anyway - because they need money, get some of it from local Authorities and big firms and because they are willing to help prepare kids for exams.
- Free schools are deceiving the kids and not preparing them for the struggle in the competitive, capitalistic world after school

EQUAL REPRESSION FOR ALL?

All heady "More Socialist than Thou" stuff but faintly absurd. The impression some of these attackers would like to give is that they are in the vanguard of a proletarian revolution and that if only we would all work for a socialist education programme we will play an effective part in advancing that revolution, while the "free schoolers" etc. are merely opting out and encouraging potentially revolutionary elements within the system to join them. At least it can be said that those who work in free schools have a much more realistic understanding of their effect than their attackers seem to have.

Much of the left-wing attack on our present system is based on the substantial evidence of continuing, if not growing, inequalities based on the social class of those involved. Unfortunately the conclusion often drawn from the recognition of such inequalities is that everyone must be given the right to take advantage of the opportunities which exist for the few - an attitude which quite ignores the repressive and anti-educational nature of the system. To advocate extending the "benefits" of this system is clearly reactionary and equally clearly impossible. The system is so closely geared to the concept of academic success - to the virtual exclusion of other values and abilities - that only those who are interested in and have the ability to succeed in examinable schooling will be able to "benefit".

The anarchist attitude to all this - and we are not here trying to lumber all advocates of free

schools with this attitude - is to point out that, while all men are equal, they are also all different. It might well be that, even in a free society, not everyone will want any form of schooling. What is quite certain, is that we all learn far more out of school than we could ever learn "within". It has been said many times before but just suppose we had to learn to speak the way most of us learn to read!!

DOWN WITH SCHOOL

It has often been said that the abolition of compulsory schooling is a reactionary demand which will benefit only the middle classes, who will continue to send their kids to school, at the expense of working class kids who will all be sent out to work. Ignoring the question of whether this state of affairs would really inhibit, rather than encourage, a revolutionary atmosphere, can we really be so certain that, if alternative forms of education were freely available and seen to be directly relevant to the individual and communal lives of people, the mass of people would remain uninterested? The alternative forms we are talking about are not intended to produce the same results as the existing system by different, kinder, means.

The real evil of schooling is not that it is only available to a few people but that its total effect is anti-educational and that "success" (= money, status, power) in job/society is made absurdly dependant on "success" in the schooling rat-race. Thus learning and education is prostituted to serve the ends of industry. Unless education creates its own values and serves the needs of those involved in it - which might well have some vocational element - then it is at best valueless, at worst destructive.

Of course free schools are tolerated - and perhaps even encouraged - by some authorities because they don't see them as a real threat; they can use them to take on some of their own problems; they enable the authorities to demonstrate how liberal/democratic/flexible/experimental/trendy they are. And sure - they will crush the schools, if they can, as soon as they do feel threatened. Exactly the same can be said about the "revolutionary" who is tolerated in the state school - and who is accepting their money and contract.

It has not been our intention here to defend free schools, although we do feel that they have an important part to play in the liberation of young people. Of the objections listed above we would give most serious consideration to the second while pointing out that the free schools of which we have any knowledge are very much aware of the danger and refuse to accept "placements" by the authorities of what they consider to be problem kids. What we have tried to suggest is that we must be clear just why we oppose the system so that any suggested "solution" can be realistically assessed and criticised.

Di & Arthur
Humphrey

Authority in the Classroom

It has become a commonplace to suggest that universities perform important functions for the societies in which they exist. The Right generally defends and seeks to strengthen the links between universities and the 'real world' (meaning business) while the Left attacks this relationship by exposing the linkages between the power elites within the various universities and the ruling class in society at large. Traditionally, the Left has also attacked the universities or, more accurately, parts of the universities, for teaching and perpetuating an incorrect ideology and defending that ideology (of the ruling class) as 'value-free' and 'objective'. The university socialises mainly by ideological doctrine.

It is my contention that this argument is at best a half-truth that, while not wrong in its content, it diverts attention from subtler and far more important issues. The crucial socialisation that occurs within educational institutions is around acceptance of certain styles and precepts of authority relations. While it is true that schools and colleges teach us how (and what) to think, they also provide for each of us the social role that seems most appropriate in the light of our class background and performance on class-biased exams. We learn our positions as subordinates and superordinates this way, sometimes questioning the individual role given to us, but only rarely questioning the entire system of superiors and inferiors as a whole. Eventually, we acquiesce both in our own social position and in the necessity for the system in toto.

Why does this matter? Why should we think that changing authority socialisation within schools and universities critically enlarges the potential for revolutionary change in society at large? The answer is that modern society owes its continued existence, not to widescale active support on the part of its citizenry, but on the widespread acquiescence and passivity of those who might otherwise prove troublesome. The fact that most people see politics as having only a peripheral impact on their own lives is a powerful source of system stability. It is sad but true that those most in need of social revolution are often those who are most resigned to accepting their inferior status - they have lost the sense of possibility that transforms discontents into revolutionaries. Because society operates by consent, it is very fragile and vulnerable to disruption; because that consent is so manifestly engineered, society retains the illusion of permanence for most of its members.

Let us be concrete. What is it that we really learn in the classroom, regardless of the subject being taught? Let us look at the classroom for what it is - a society in microcosm, a place where we learn, not subject matter, but social roles. What are the norms that we see and feel operating at every moment in our participation in the educational process? Is not the classroom a faithful replica of the capitalist system, albeit with an authority figure (teacher or professor giving a help to Adam Smith's invisible hand?) Does not the educational system run on the same principles of individualism and competition that we find duplicated in the world outside the classroom? Is not reward given solely on ability and not on need?

Not only do we learn the mythology of capitalism in the classroom, but that of its step-child, technocracy, as well. If the all-important fact of the classroom is the power differential between teacher and student - a power differential so great as to make nonsense of the claim that they are engaged on a common enterprise - then it is important to show

that this power differential is based ideologically on the supposed knowledge differential between teacher and student. The norm that knowledge differentials provide a legitimate basis for dividing groups of people into rulers and ruled in the fundamental principle of the technocracy and is inimical to any kind of participatory socialism. The knowledge differential in the classroom, because of the underlying power relationship, results inevitably in the passivity of those who possess less knowledge and their lack of appreciation that, despite the disparity between their knowledge and that of the technocrats and professors, they have a right to participate in the economic and political decisions that affect their lives. The passivity of the student role is a short-cut to continued ignorance; the passivity of the citizen is a short-cut to continued subjugation.

So, too, technocratic teaching results in the exclusion of basic value questions from the classroom, under the guise of objectivity. What is important is not the professor (and the reigning concepts in social science) are false to their proclaimed ideals of objectivity, but rather that this claim of 'objectivity' provides a convenient rationale for the exclusion of basic value questions, i.e. questions of social justice from the educational process. Technocracy does this because value questions are not susceptible to purely rational solution, and rationality (personified in the technocratic elite) is hostile to all that it cannot control. The position of the 'objective' social scientist is exactly equivalent to that of the consensus politician; both derive their continued existence in power from the exclusion of basic value questions from the educational and political agenda. Small wonder that political apathy, measured in terms of non-participation in elections, is characteristic of advanced industrial societies. Why vote when there is nothing interesting or important to vote about? Why learn when the questions that really bother you are systematically excluded from the classroom?

Coupled with this exclusion of basic questions from the classroom is the suppression of emotion as an unworthy companion to reason. This false dichotomy between reason and emotion is the psychological base of alienation, perhaps a defining characteristic of our role as students, as well as a necessary support for the continued existence of male chauvinism as a vital part of the economic system. The support that male chauvinism gives the technocracy is recognisable by the striking fact that subordinate groups in society - groups that are discriminated against - women, blacks, youth - are perceived as being emotional and thus intellectually irresponsible.

All this is what we learn in the classroom; individualism, competition, the legitimacy of social control based on knowledge, the superiority of reason over emotion, and so forth. All of these beliefs form necessary supports for the continued stability of modern capitalism. Attacking these norms calls into question the capitalistic 'rules of the game' at their weakest link - the capitalist claim that its 'rules' are fair and just, or can, given a little reform, be made to be fair and just. Yet the division of capitalist society into experts and inferiors (or managers and workers) is fundamentally necessary for its preservation. This is why attacking the inequalities inherent in the classroom situation and the educational establishment is

ESKIMO CHILDHOOD



In Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island, 900 Eskimos have in varying degrees begun to carve out careers as townsmen. In this town where a number of Eskimo adults can understand English but balk at speaking it, their children—drawing on what they have learned in school and heard in the movies—break into spontaneous English. Where Eskimo parents have all mastered literacy in Eskimo syllabics but not in the alphabet, some children are well on the way to having a hold on both forms of writing.

Eskimo children come to school from a life sharply different from that of their contemporaries in the south. Childhood in Eskimo society is not wholly unique—taking into account all that anthropologists have discovered about childhood in small-scale societies—but it does possess its own distinctive leniencies and pressures.

An Eskimo youngster starting school at age 5 or 6 does so at a time when his previous, extreme dependence on his parents, particularly on his mother, is ending. In that sense, he is ready for school. In fact, since he was 3, an older sibling or some other, older child living in the household, has not only cared for him by carrying him in an ill-fitting adult's *amawt*, but has drawn him within the borders of the active children's world to which the caretaker belonged. In infancy and during years immediately following, at least until a sibling came into the world, the youngster could hardly escape playful adult attention. Adults made him a cynosure and bent their efforts to stimulate him, to make him notice them, to evoke in him a happy emotional response. Eskimo, who believe that small children urgently need secure affection, cherish a baby carefully. Although extremely tolerant of adoption, they deplore emergencies that require a child to be passed rootlessly from hand to hand. Yet, as devoted as a mother is, she is never so wholly engrossed in her baby that she lacks time for the town's manifold interests. Occasionally her attention becomes so intensely concentrated, say on a movie, or on a bingo game, that the toddler is left unattended and unheeded, to cry alone for several minutes. She ignores him as long as possible, so that she can go on with whatever she is doing. Her behavior foretells the relatively high degree of

independence that the youngster will enjoy in a very few years.

By age 5, the child's independence is real. Though he already visits other homes, it is perhaps a little too soon for him to be roaming around his neighborhood in a peer group; but the age when he will be incorporated in a children's world, the axis of his waking hours, is not far off. The five-year-old is ready for school, in the sense that he has been weaned emotionally from his parents, though they are still important figures in his life. He weaned easily, largely at his own speed, spurred largely by his own impetus to growth, aided by his basic security, and drawn by the attractive activities of other youngsters in camp and in town. Schoolteachers, generally speaking, can't fully utilize the enormous independence that Eskimo adults allow to the children, though some recognize and wish to preserve it. At times, teachers resent the adults' attitude that fosters youthful independence, for example, when Eskimo adults fail sufficiently to coerce youngsters to attend school faithfully.

One thing the school-age child is unprepared for is the discipline enforced in the classroom. The children have grown up with minimal rules, flexible routines, and have been privileged to enjoy considerable emotional spontaneity. We never observed children being trained to inhibit emotion; for example, we never saw one being restrained if he became over-excited. Parents are easily persuaded to give in to a child's wishes, for instance generously buying it candy and soft drinks at a movie even if they believe that "too much" candy is bad for the teeth. Physical punishment occurs rarely, though on occasion it does happen that children are spanked. Scolding happens much more frequently (more so, we judge, than it did at Great Whale River), but it too takes on the distinctive color of the culture, so that it supports rather than interferes with the youngster's increasing independence and resourcefulness. A child never needs to become penitent or submissive before his parents, nor is punishment unrelentingly dragged out to humiliate a child. Only if a youngster moves too near danger does discipline grow sharp and imperative. We have heard mothers shriek and seen them run in urgent alarm

to children from five up, who were playing along a swift stream or clambering on an iceberg that the tide had stranded on the beach. Their alarm didn't prevent the youngsters from going back. Of course, what is dangerous varies from our own to Eskimo culture. We watched nervously as a two-year old toddled to and fro in a tent where a primus stove operated close to floor level; his parents seemingly paid no heed, not even when the girl approached quite close to the flame.

Eskimo life encourages children to maintain toward adults a certain amount of deference, or perhaps a better word is unobtrusiveness, but it also permits the youngster assurance that he will be received in adult company, that he need not fear them, and that he can in certain ways assert himself before them to gain something, like a ride in a canoe or money for a Coca-Cola. Despite adults' teaching role and the mild but nevertheless clear authority possessed by parents, the relationship of adults and children possesses a quality of equality, or symmetry, rather than being characterized by extreme inequality compounded of strong superordination on the one hand and subordination on the other. School-age children obey their parents without fear of punishment or dread of loss of love, but through identification with their parents and respect for parents' injunctions, which after all are not promiscuously uttered. Children face no situation that tempts them to resist or rebel against relentless pressure exerted on them by people older and more powerful than they, pressure that saps their autonomy and threatens their growth. As social pressure (not necessarily from parents) intensifies with the onset of adolescence, social revolt also becomes more conspicuous.

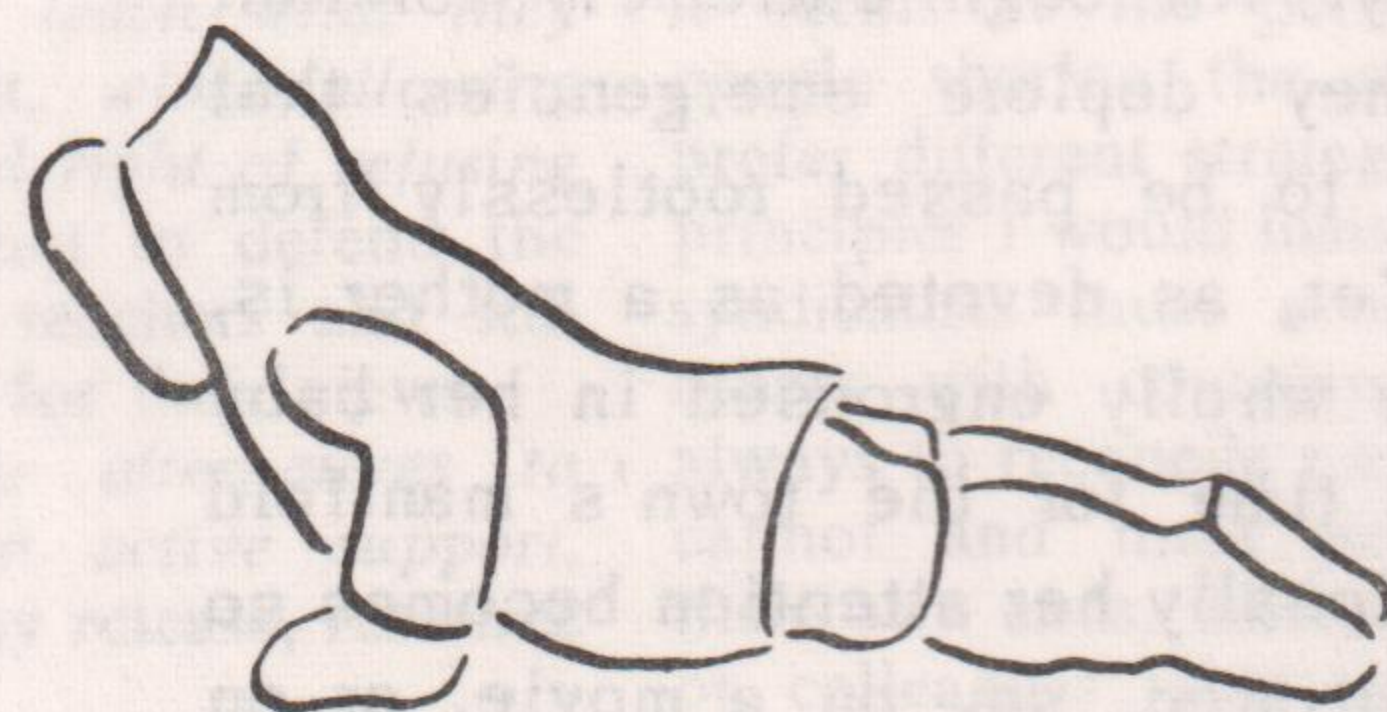
As a matter of fact, Frobisher Bay Eskimo children beyond six or seven have relatively little to do with adults, even in their own families. They contrive to be away from home much of the day, especially in summer. Eskimo child culture is a peer-group culture and Eskimo life continues to keep the growing individual bound closely to his peers throughout adolescence, until late marriage. The peer group provides a rich source of socialization, one

may easily compete with school and even run counter to Eurocanadian authorities in town. But it is too strongly locked away from adult outsiders for us ever to have succeeded in penetrating it. From what we could observe and what we heard, there can be no doubt that children and teen-agers in the peer group live far more animated and emotionally uninhibited lives than they reveal in school. Just one night of watching the 12-13 year old boys hurrying back and forth in the I.O.D.E. dance hall

documents their mysterious, purposeful busyness.

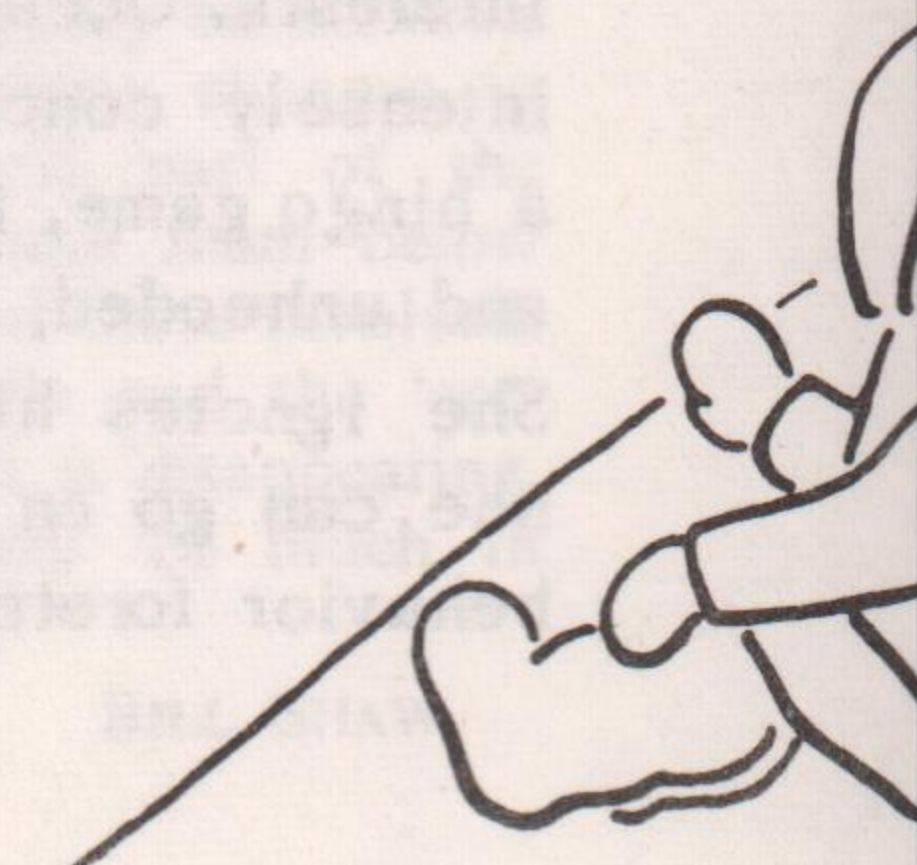
Peer-group life testifies abundantly that the child's diffidence in reciting and his holding back in school, whether they be motivated by shyness or some other factor, don't mirror a barren, uncreative imagination. In play with age-mates, Eskimo youngsters reveal a fecund imagination and an ingenious, creative intelligence. Girls of eight and nine love to dress up in a woman's *amawt*, secrete themselves in play tents, assemble vast hordes of empty cans and bottles diligently to "tend store", and maternally put dolls to sleep in beds. Small boys curl up under ragged blankets, pretend to roar away in recklessly-careening junked cars, armed with sticks for harpoons slay imaginary game, and harness confused pups to toy sleds. Children find pictures in the comics stimulating without finding it necessary to read the captions.

In teen-age years make-believe play more or less ceases. Boys begin to turn their enthusiasm to the real things, like hunting. They also talk darkly about the Sevens and Thirteens, rival gangs with duly appointed leaders and hand-printed membership cards inspired by that highly desirable franchise, the driver's license. Not that children at this age don't have some responsibilities at home. We have spoken of caretakers of small babies; such employment starts when a girl is seven and lasts through her early teen-age years. Both boys and girls are eagerly recruited to serve as evening babysitters. Even if a household contains a girl old enough to help with housework, a boy of 12 may also be asked to wash dishes and to sweep. Such services aren't very burdensome, especially not for boys; they don't keep him away from his peer-group long. Hunting ptarmigan or going with an older relative for larger game allows the teen-age boy (less often girls) to make both a serious economic contribution to his household and to realize a consuming ambition, a goal toward which he has aimed since early childhood.



Seal racing on hands
with body trailing.

tunur
Back
oppor
using



Eskimo parents instruct their children with a minimum of accompanying explanation; they seldom try to explain why some task should be done or a skill mastered. An explanation, presumably, will be found by the child itself in the situation as he learns to understand it through becoming practically rather than theoretically involved in it. Of necessity, the school's curriculum forces teachers largely to ignore this mode of learning-by-doing. Instruction in school is highly rationalized, with children constantly being given reasons for certain rules and expectations.

We have emphasized the cultural hiatus that separates Eskimo childhood, both at home and in the peer group, from school. The school's official aim, to transmit Canadian culture, prevents any closer adaptation to Eskimo life. Other factors also limit educational flexibility. Some teachers fear to compromise their educational standards and the educational goals endorsed by Government policy by deviating too far from educational procedures used in southern Canadian communities. Before coming north, teachers receive a briefing about Arctic life but no language training; hence they cannot teach in Eskimo.

The school's greatest flexibility and boldest attempt at cultural integration occurs with respect to absenteeism for hunting and fishing. In spring, the principal permits children whose families are going to coastal camps to leave school before the end of the academic term in order to accompany their parents. At other times, too, the principal allows boys to enjoy the

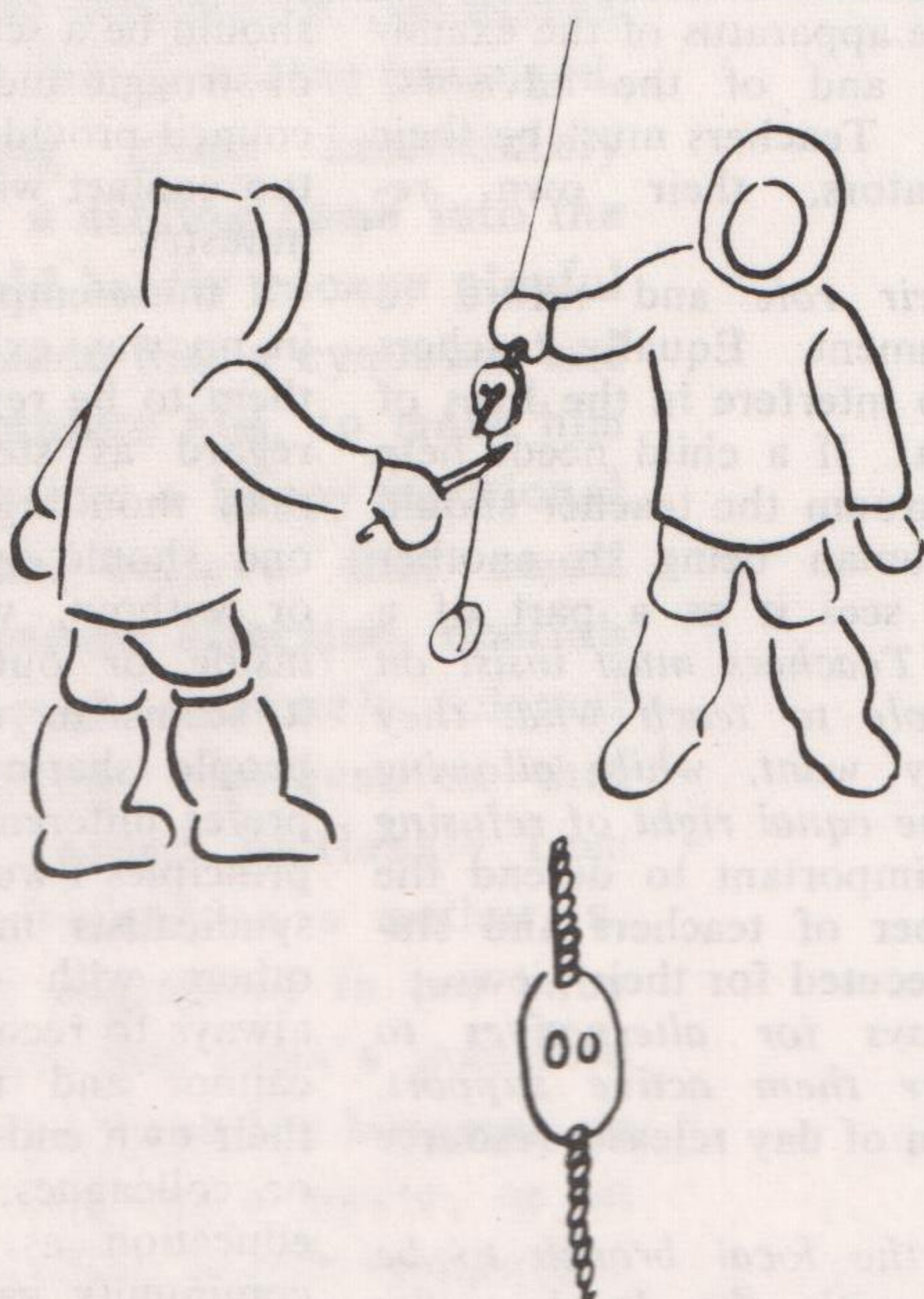
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the educational experience of accompanying a father or other relative on a hunting trip. Some members of the school staff have even suggested shortening the school year to accommodate to the hunters' early departure in spring and their late return in autumn. Existing policy nicely meets boys' prodigious fondness for hunting and Eskimo parents' insistence that traditional skills must not be lost. When he was only five or six his father already treated him differently from his sister, making him aware of game and taking him along hunting. The play of small children, even in town, reflects boys' early orientation to food gathering, just as girls' play revolves around housekeeping routines that are often carried out in small tents rather than in replicas of town dwellings. Since he was 10 a boy has very likely owned his own gun, has accompanied men on sealing and other trips, and has been allowed to shoot at game. On these trips he left his sister and mother behind, thereby quite firmly establishing in his own personality his like-sex identification. The fact that some men work at jobs all day does not deprive their sons of opportunities to hunt. Very likely, a boy will have an uncle or a grandfather willing and free to teach him. There is always summer vacation or a weekend, when his father has time to go on the land.

The fact that school recognizes the educational validity of life on the land for both boys and girls goes only a short way in helping to retain the serious interest of older children in continuing their formal education. By age 12 school becomes an impossible chore for many children, who not only look for excuses to be absent but plead for the chance to withdraw and get a job. But hunting isn't something that a 12 or 13 year old boy can do daily, particularly if he belongs to a working-man's family, and teen-agers can't find steady jobs. The boy especially faces a quandary. In other respects, too, adolescence brings with it several difficult years, especially for town boys who, having identified with job-holding men and with the hunter's role, mostly find themselves without any useful career or meaningful role. Formerly adolescent boys were mature enough to adopt in practically full measure the food-provider's role for which previous half-playful participation had prepared them. Though they still had much to learn, they learned while doing a useful and exciting task. They marked their break with childhood in the amount of time and concentration that their increasing physical capacity allowed them to devote to food-gathering. Today an adolescent boy, when he breaks with the exuberance of childhood and switches to a new style of behavior, still seems to be marshalling himself for something significantly different from childhood. But if his outward personality

ESKIMO GAMES

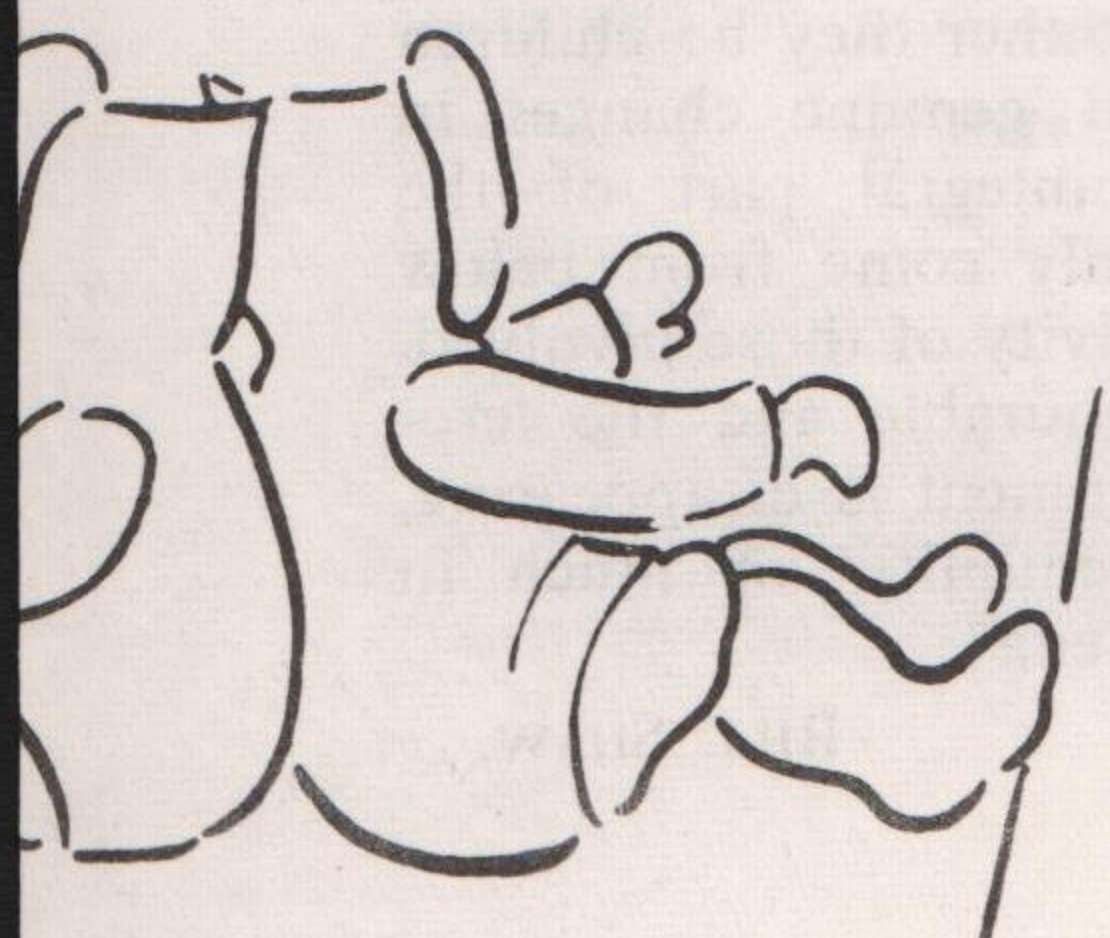
nullatartuq


Put stick into
ivory spindle.



nmijuk

to back, push
ment over line
g hands and feet.



now becomes more compatible with the relatively serious demeanor of adult men, he doesn't join the men at work much more closely, unless he is the son of a full-time hunter. His responsibility remains as undeveloped as in childhood. Adolescent boys' personalities struck us as complex, even conflicted. In one or two youngsters we could watch the tension and conflict accumulate, even in the six months we were there, and observe the easiness of childhood become stifled. Adolescents learn to compensate in overt behavior; they act out their masculinity, even in their deliberately uncultivated dress that contrasts so strikingly with the painstaking dress of girls who belong to the same age group. In the dance hall, boys 15 and 16 watch the dancers, not running busily back and forth the way they did a year or two earlier. They don't dance readily; some don't learn until they are 17 or 18, though they aren't shy or constrained with girls. Hence girls have to find other partners if they are to enjoy dances. Girls impressed us as being more comfortable in their adolescent years than boys, although that generalization hides the several morose girls we knew and also the problems of the promiscuous ones, and those who have been in trouble with the police about drinking. Desultory employment, especially in summer when ships arrive to be unloaded and goods must be quickly warehoused, continues for many young men. A few boys have found their facility with English an avenue to a job, or they belong to the small number for whom vocational traineeships have been created in Frobisher Bay. Their lives are far more purposeful than those of boys who are marking time with little meaningful to do. 

Notes on a Revolutionary Struggle

CONTINUED
From Page 20

This article has been reprinted from the weekly anarchist paper - FREEDOM

3. demand workers' control on school internal matters at least as a means towards the elimination of hierarchies of heads and heads of departments and always as a development towards workers' self-management. Workers' control also requires attempts to dis-

mantle the whole apparatus of the examination industry and of the advisors/experts industry. Teachers must be their own administrators, their own researchers.

4. restrict their role and refuse to dole out punishment. Equally teachers should refuse to interfere in the lives of those they teach. If a child needs help outside the classroom the teacher should help as one human being to another not because he sees it as a part of a teacher's role. Teachers must insist on their rightful role to teach what they want, how they want, while allowing their students the equal right of refusing it. Here it is important to defend the increasing number of teachers and students being persecuted for their views.

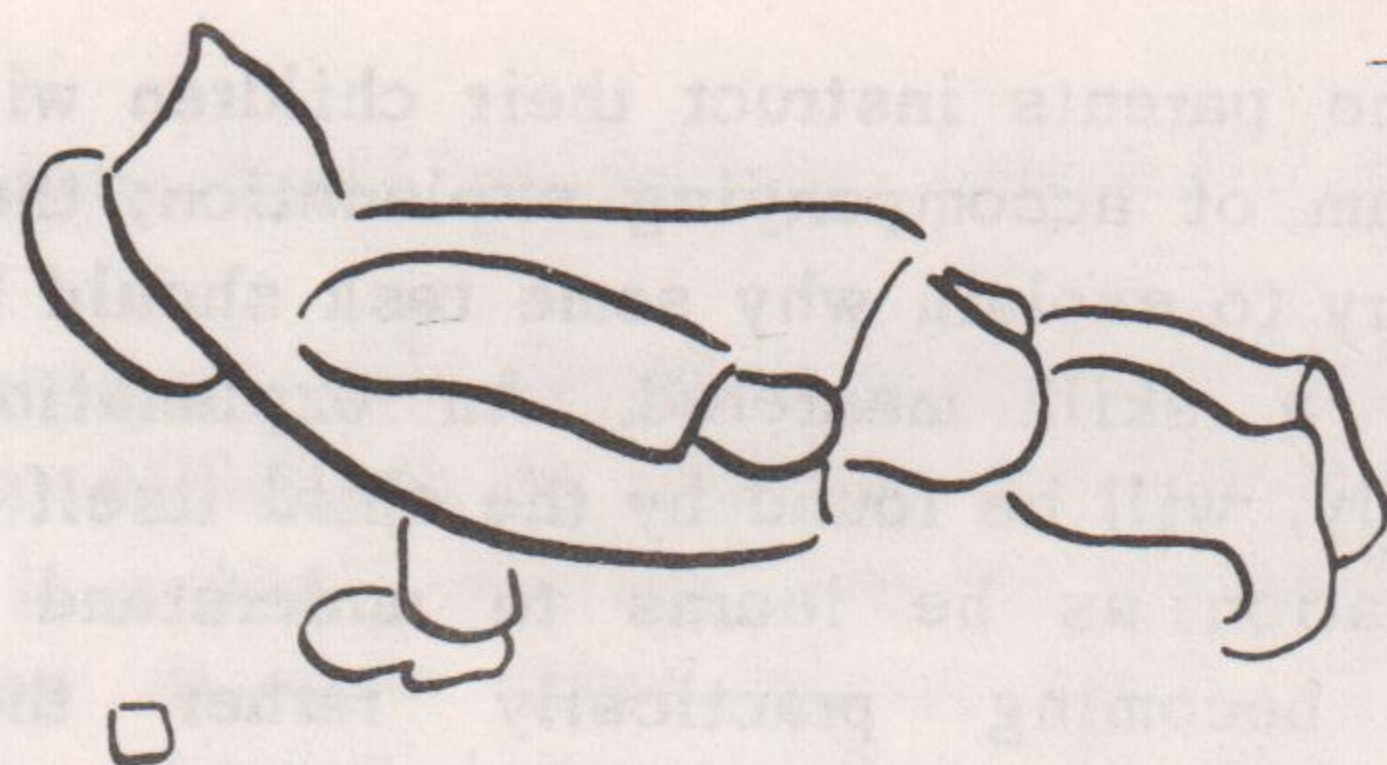
5. argue always for alternatives to school and give them active support, e.g. the extension of day release, resource centres.

6. encourage the local branch to be fully involved with the local trades council to encourage trade union involvement at local level in education, particularly further education, and to share in common struggles, e.g. against the Industrial Relations Act. The local union branch for teachers as for any workers

should be a school for gaining experience of struggle and management... the trades council provides a means of sharing it, so too contact with rank and file groups in industry.

I must emphasise that these notes are in no way exhaustive nor would I wish them to be regarded as a programme. I regard as sterile much of the holier than thou argumentation as to whether one should work in the State system or without, whether one should work inside or outside a trade union, and it seems to me perfectly possible for people sharing the same principles to prefer different strategies. But on those principles I would insist... that anarcho-syndicalists must avoid acting towards others with contempt, i.e. must seek always to reconcile means and ends, they cannot and must not use others for their own ends, whether they be children or colleagues; that genuine changes in education as an integral part of the community can only come from below from the direct activity of those involved. The times are favourable and the 'credibility' of government is disappearing, so too is the 'credibility' of much in the education system.

BILL SHAW.



kiisinasuttuq

Pick up object from one-handed press-up position. Body is turned slightly sideways.

John J. and Irma Honigmann

Dr. John J. Honigmann, Research Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina, and his wife spent some time recently in Frobisher Bay doing field work.

This article has been reprinted from 'north', a bi-monthly publication of the Northern Administration Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

ON PROBATION

CONTINUED
from page 5

All this as if there were a certain SATISFACTORY APPROACH to teaching or to kids.

Without consulting him the AUTHORITY decided to transfer B to another sec. mod. with a bald old crust of a head:

"Following the recommendation to extend the period of his probationary teaching service, Mr. B was transferred to the staff of N.... school in order to give him a further opportunity to complete the extension of his probationary period satisfactorily.

However, there has been no RADICAL (sic) CHANGE in his method or in his approach to the different classes he has been required to take, and, although he has shown that he could be capable of controlling the younger pupils his work generally lacks adequate preparation and detail.

I recommend, therefore etc."

Go on Mr. Authority, what is the right approach? Why should teachers prepare lessons? None of the prescribed information is worth preparing: most kids find it boring. Lesson preparation is not in teachers' contracts anyway.

B layed low for six months: his new head decided to try to keep him quiet for good, and never informed him when he passed his probation. Eventually B had to write to the D.E.S. to find out that he had obtained this worthless recognition.

"C" arrived to start his teaching career at B's second school.

In fact B's second school was a boys' school and extremely violent. This does not mean that the kids were violent. They scrapped occasionally in the playground, but moved around the building like ghosts.

This was because the bald old crust of a head and, even more, his balding fat little deputy would beat them with canes on the fingers if they dared express themselves in school. No one else could cane them so other teachers smacked their heads hard instead, or wrote out "conduct forms" which condemned the kids to be caned by the head or his deputy. In at least one case blood was drawn.

C does not like hitting kids, having them hit, making them perform useless tasks such as writing lines or holding them prisoner after school: so bald old crust wrote a series of reports failing C on his probation for not having "Classroom control".

Actually, what the crust really disliked was that B and C were getting together to help kids in difficulty with adults in the school. One libertarian in the school he could cope with, but two acting together posed a threat.

C even, in his second year at the crust's school, persuaded his classes to keep relatively quiet. However the crust was becoming senile: he began pinching electronic apparatus from B's laboratory so as to blame his libertarian ways. The crust was hardly likely to relent in the case of C.

C became peeved and went to see the chief inspector, education (sic) for the city. "I want this probation thing," he said.

The Chief decided to show himself as a kindly man. He said that times were changing. He said that he had heard of the "valuable contribution" to Educational Theory being made by B and C. Probation was just a piece of paper. Probation did not matter. Pieces of paper did

not matter. He could end C's probation any day. B and C had the clear vision and true way. But appreciate his position. Crust was old. Crust was retiring. He did not wish to offend crust. Everything would be alright in the end. Oh yes, of course the structure of society was wrong.

C returned to the school. Crust retired.

Unfortunately his balding deputy took over. Two weeks later a woman, Miss W, arrived at his school for a "special" interview.

"Mr. C you are moving to another school."

"I am not!"

"WE are only trying to help you, Mr. C."

"I am staying here."

"But Mr. C, you are in your third year on PROBATION."

"The chief said that did not matter."

"There have been INSPECTORS and REPORTS Mr. C."

"I have seen no inspectors' reports."

"There must have been some."

"Perhaps you were not telling the truth?"

"Mr. C you have been on PROBATION for two years. You have FAILED as a teacher!"

"I am a good teacher."

"You are moving to F..... school."

"I will not."

"I will be your INSPECTOR there."

"I will see the chief inspector."

"The CHIEF INSPECTOR sent me."

See went to see this same chief.

"Mr. C you cannot stay where you are."

"You did not say that several weeks ago."

"It is impossible for you to remain."

"But you said . . ."

"I know, I know, the times, of course are changing: but you must move or your contract will cease . . ."

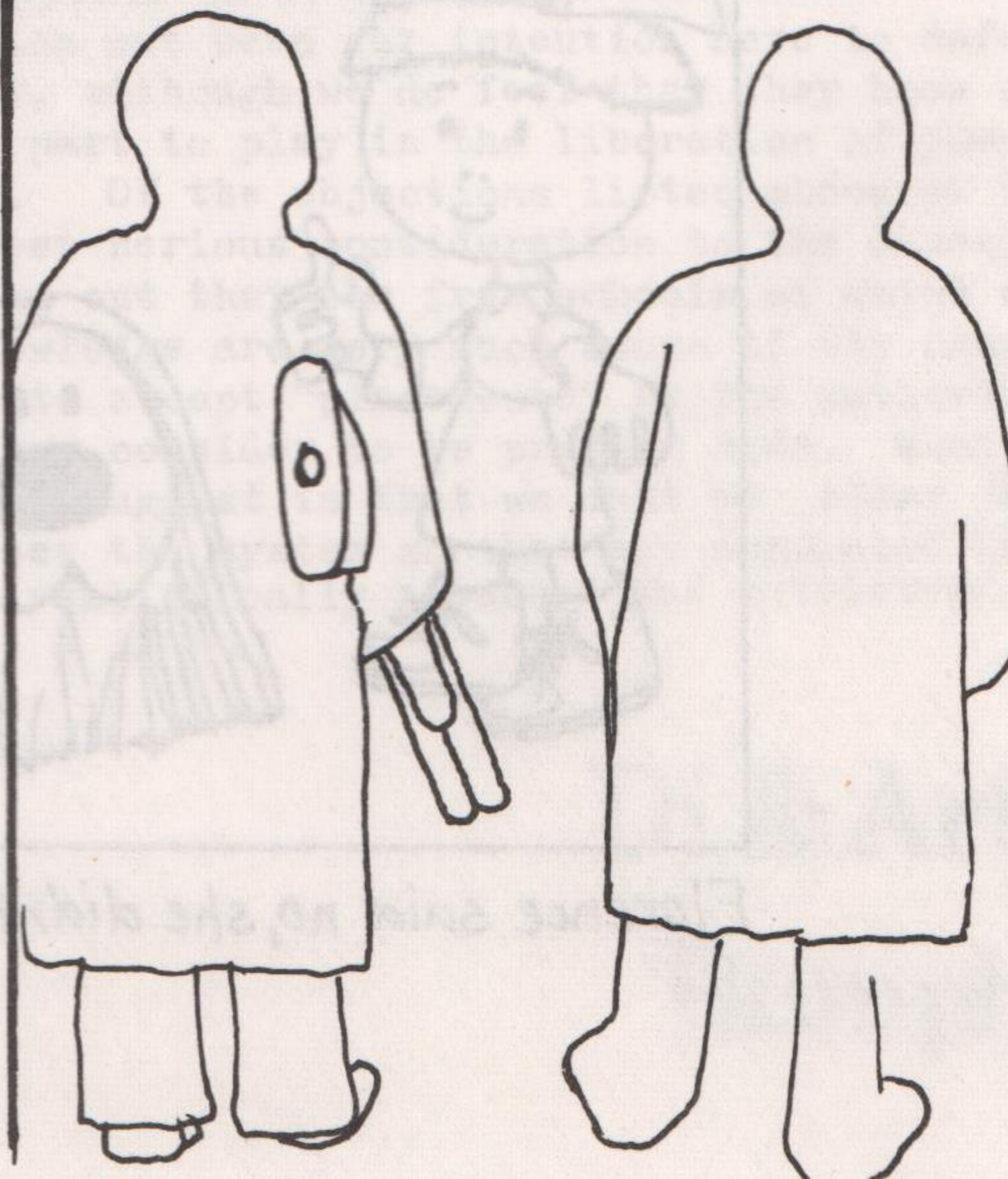
Eventually C moved.

For six months he is looking like a teacher: short hair, quiet classes, suit, measured tread, lines etc. . .

Even so, Miss W unforgiving for having been caught out over reports is trying to finish him off: his new head, Mr. Z a feebly liberal ex-parson who worships Miss W, is already trying to find reasons to extend C's probation. Latest idea being that C is indoctrinating the kids politically.

The AUTHORITY have informed Mr. C that this is the FINAL EXTENSION OF PROBATION.

All this freedom hasn't presented me with any discipline problems.



X

Whose conspiracy

Four of the Stoke Newington 8, Jim Greenfield, Anna Mendleson, John Barker and Hilary Creek have been jailed for ten years for conspiracy to cause explosions - the other four were acquitted on all counts, though Chris Bott now faces cheque fraud charges, as does Ian Purdie, who was acquitted of conspiracy in an earlier 'Angry Brigade' trial. Jake Prescott, who is serving 15 years for conspiracy, was given 5 years concurrent on similar cheque charges.

The search for the 'Angry Brigade' goes on, we are told. Not surprising, since Bond, Habershon and the other pigs on the case have yet to get anyone convicted for actually having caused an explosion. The conspiracy charge, which is widely accepted by even liberal students of the law as vague and woolly, is so much more easy to prove, and the maximum sentence obtainable - 20 years - is, they hope, a good deterrent to other militants.

We believe the Stoke Newington 8 are innocent, planted and framed by Bond and his men. The fact that the jury acquitted Stuart Christie, who was charged with, among other things, possession of detonators and explosives, seems to indicate that the jury too had its doubts about some of the police 'evidence'.

But if we are wrong, if the jailed men and women did indeed conspire to cause explosions then our support for, and solidarity with, them is not lessened. However politically inept we may feel their actions were, we can only support their motives in trying to strike a blow against oppression. Orwell wrote that when he saw a working man up against his natural enemy the policeman, he did not have to ask himself which side he was on. Our support for these militants must be equally uncompromising.

It cost the state £1,000,000 to try the 8. The Defence Group has to rely on donations. Send money and books (which must be new - Prison Regulations) to S.N.8 Defence Fund, c/o Box 359, 240 Camden High St London N.W.1.

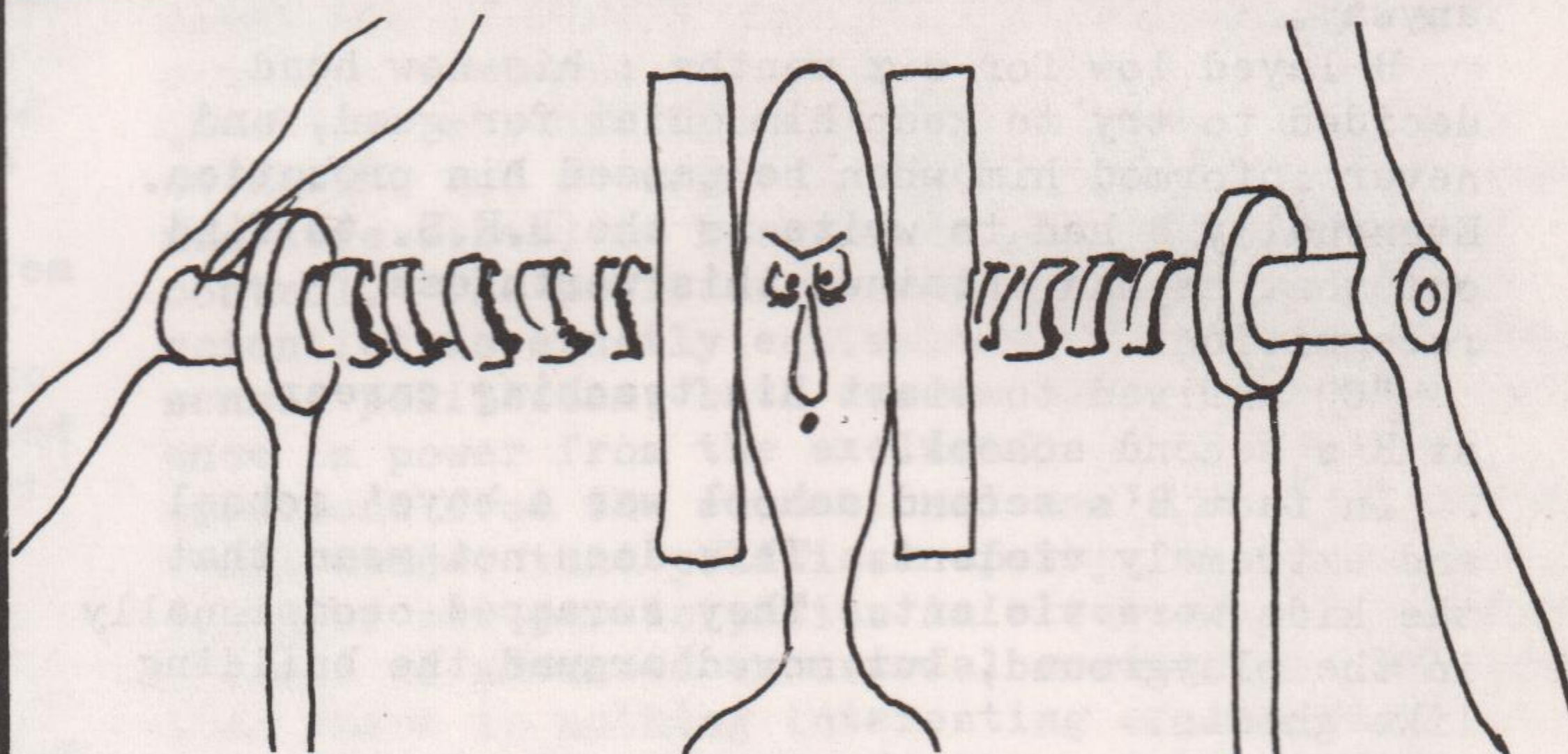
Defence Group publications, including 'If You Want Peace, Prepare For War' (5p), and 'Armed Resistance in West Germany (Baader-Meinhof)' (20p) are available from the Black Flag Bookshop.

Alan Ross

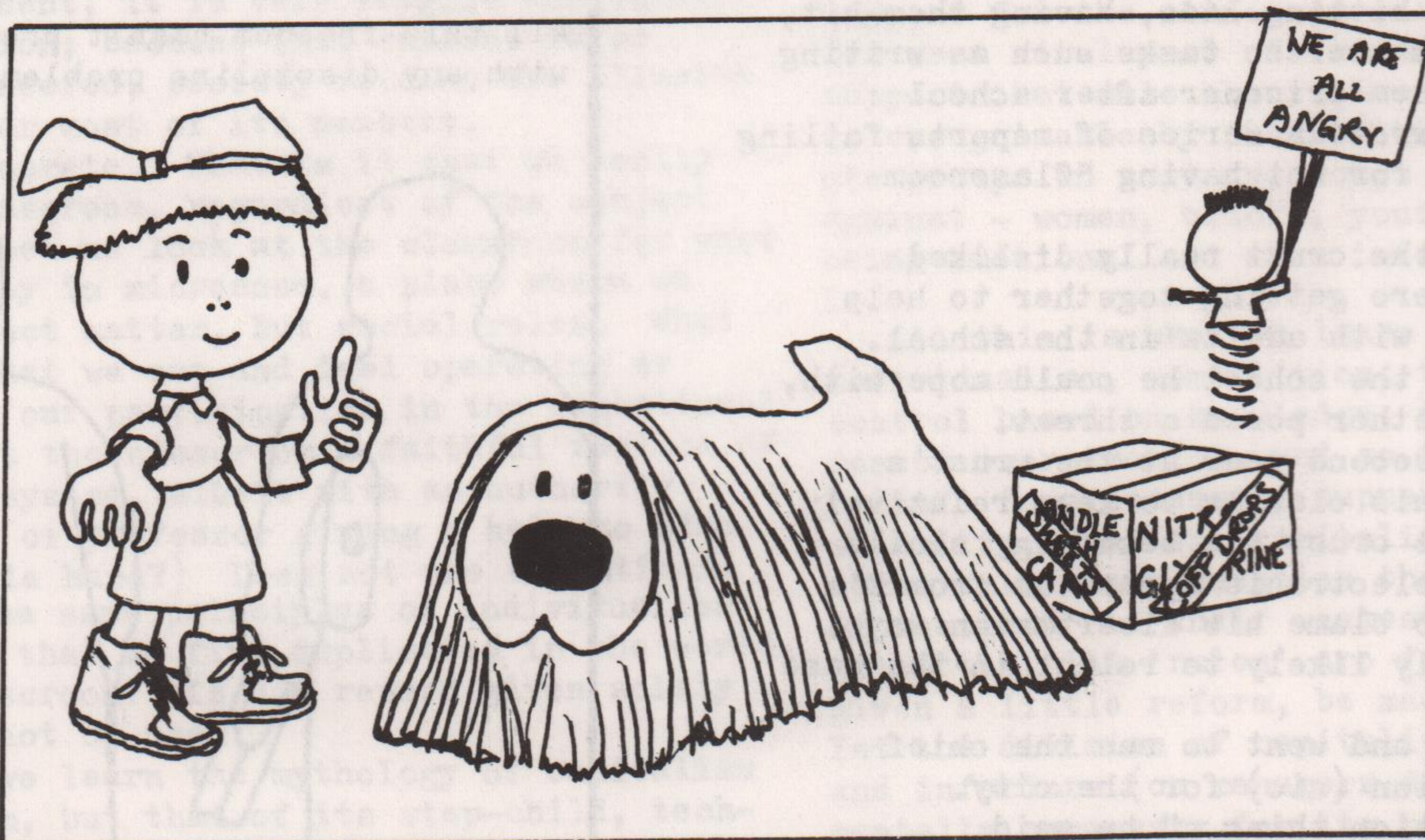
Authority/Classroom CONTINUED From page 8

not reformist (despite the fact that reformers may pursue the same issue with entirely different motivations and purposes), nor is it merely a matter of attaining more privileges for a group already conceded to be privileged students. Students are exploited within the educational establishments in the same manner that workers are exploited in the factories - though the specific form of exploitation is characteristic of the individual institution - and for precisely the same reasons. It may be that the prison that students inhabit is mink-lined; it is a prison nonetheless. This is not to say that students can or should concentrate on their own problems to the exclusion of working for the liberation of other exploited classes; this is only to suggest that the struggle for student liberation is part and parcel of the struggle of all exploited peoples against their oppressors. We all know that the enemies of students and the enemies of workers are the same class; how can there be any doubt that the fight against exploitation that both workers and students must join, each in their own way, is the same fight?

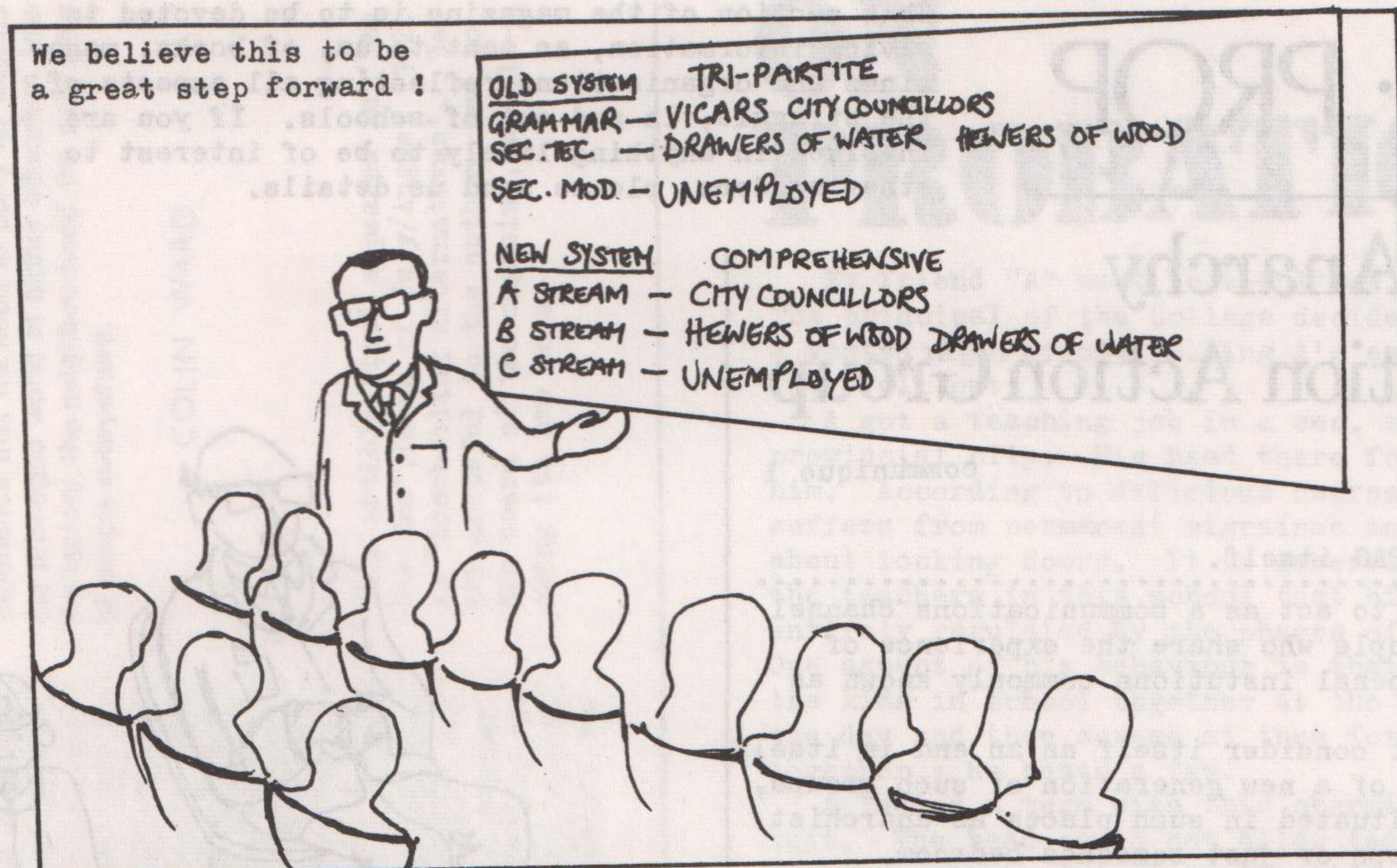
The above article was lifted from AGITATOR - a magazine published at the London School of Economics.



THE WAY I SEE IT - WHAT I LOSE IN FREEDOM I GAIN IN SECURITY.



Florence said no, she didn't think she had any alarm clocks left.



Brain Damage!

Brain Damage is the title of a 'journal of school revolt around Oxford' which is written entirely by people at school and which shows what can be done when those who might otherwise be very isolated in individual schools get together. In this case they have produced something which clearly illustrates that most of the problems and frustrations felt by people in schools are shared by many others. It is from such realisations that people are moved to act together. For more information about the journal contact J. Brent at 36 Temple Street, Oxford.

The following article, entitled "WHAT SCHOOLS DO", is taken from the Spring 1972 issue:-

Schools are virtually prisons because their purpose is to imprison our minds and control our bodies. At school our behaviour, dress and ultimately our thoughts are controlled by the school authorities. Once out of school we have to face the same treatment at home. If you examine the situation at your own school you will come to the same conclusion.

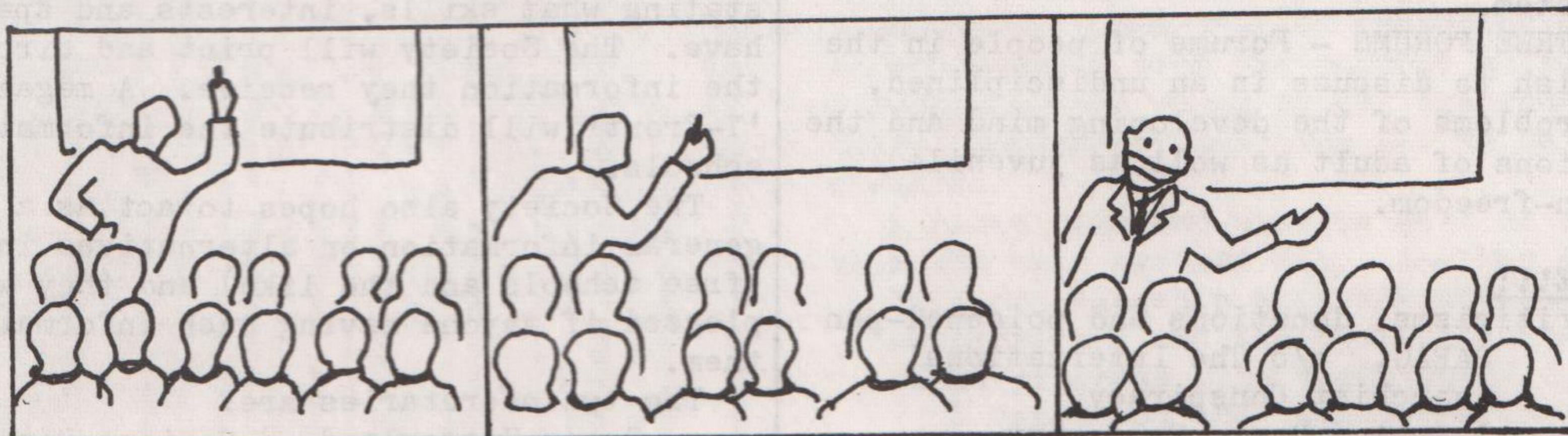
We are forced to attend school every day, and this time spent at school is not even our own. We are taught a series of irrelevant and unrelated facts. The lessons are totally boring because we know inside our heads that it is unimportant but we have to learn all the crap for some exam. We are constantly watched over by the staff, inspected and graded. Here in these so-called institutions of learning the innocent minds of thousands of kids are

distorted and destroyed every day. In the classroom the teacher stands before us as the pinnacle of knowledge and understanding, this being his little kingdom where he can exercise his authority and pass judgement over us. Our natural urges are crushed and our wills are broken. After all this mind-screwing at home and school most of us turn out as well-behaved, hard-working citizens - i.e. unintelligent, unfeeling morons. Everything is pretty comfortable and you can live with the assurance that you are a SUCCESS. That is your reward for obeying those in authority over you and disobeying your own instincts. Of course if you don't play the game you must stand and be judged and accept the consequences. And yet all those learned people are so blind that they cannot see the violence they practise against us. Though we must see that the teachers are merely instruments of a society bent on subduing the creative and exploratory nature of man, in order to use us, the finished product, to further its own ends. Yes, a society that cannot tolerate freedom and equality for all.

The schools, as I've said, don't encourage us to develop our potential but rather tame our natural inclinations causing total apathy in most and rebellion in very few.

If you think carefully about the way in which you are dealt with, like some inferior being who needs guidance (manipulation) and once you see the whole picture in which everything is working against you, then you can do something to change it and in so doing change the world.

anon



AGIT · PROP

Schools Anarchy Propagation Action Group

communiqué 1

Chapter One. SAPAG itself.

- i) SAPAG's aim is to act as a communications channel between young people who share the experience of attending those penal institutions commonly known as schools.
- ii) SAPAG does not consider itself as an end in itself but as the first of a new generation of such groups, which would be situated in such places as anarchist bookshops, headshops or just someones bedroom.
- iii) SAPAG would attempt to spread the idea that education must be a spontaneous thing and that the formal classroom situation must be replaced by a self-education system, i.e., a system whereby a person could educate himself as the fancy takes him.
- iv) SAPAG hopes one day to see a society that, instead of being an autocracy, theocracy, democracy, libertarian socialist state, a structured anarchy, or a "Union of Egoists", will be far more spontaneous and free in character.
- v) SAPAG realises that union action by its very nature is democratic and that true spontaneous anarchy is by its very nature stifled by the shackles of such democracy. So many anarchist groups have failed because of democratic organisation.

SAPAG is against mass action because mass action to SAPAG is to be found on the same road as mob action, which is socialism carried out to its ultimate degree of perfection; virtually "collective behaviour".

PLEA - SAPAG believes that a freer and more spontaneous society can only come about by people liberating themselves from the shackles of past indoctrination.

THE BEST TIME TO LIBERATE ONESELF IS NOW!!!!!!

Chapter Two. Beyond SAPAG is the wider World (suggestions for future activities)

- i) SCHOOLS LIBERATION WORKSHOPS - Mutual education meetings aimed at fostering a mutual liberation of students from the past indoctrination of the "education" system and also at fostering a mutual/self combination attitude to education. SAPAG hopes that the present repressive "education" system will be replaced eventually by a de-schooled society, having education embodied in self education and mutual education workshops. The SLWs will be centred around the particular beliefs, feelings and spontaneous actions of the people within the workshop and not around the formation of a less repressive "education" system.
- ii) EDUCATION FREE FORUMS - Forums of people in the locality who wish to discuss in an undisciplined, free way the problems of the developing mind and the wider implications of adult as well as juvenile freedom, or non-freedom.

POWER TO NO-ONE!!!

Suggestions, criticisms, donations and poisoned-pen letters to:-

SAPAG, c/o The International
Anarchist Conspiracy,
1 Spring Bank, Salesbury,
Blackburn, Lancs, BB1 9EU.

This section of the magazine is to be devoted to giving information, as sent to us, of books, magazines and organisations reflecting all aspects of the struggle, in and out of schools. If you are involved in anything likely to be of interest to other readers, please send us details.



Well, I can't see the need for de-schooling, myself.

The De-schooling Society

The De-schooling society does not aim to provide teachers in the normal sense of the word. Kids who want formal tuition can get it in school or privately. The society aims at broadening the social experience of children by putting them in touch with interesting and interested adults, people who will take them fishing, to the zoo, to a film, a museum, swimming baths, football match or whatever. We also want people who can act as skill models, who can demonstrate, say, typing, dancing, playing a musical instrument, etc. We feel that it is unhealthy for children to associate with, in the main, thirty or forty kids of their own age and maybe only five or six adults. Children today see little of the adult world. Most work goes on behind closed doors. Families are split up in new housing developments. Children in their formative years commonly know only their teacher, parents, a few relatives and neighbours and other children in their class at school.

Children can surely benefit greatly from meeting and participating in the interests of a wide range of adults and other children. People who are interested in this sort of scheme should contact either of the secretaries whose addresses are given below stating what skills, interests and spare time they have. The Society will print and circularise all the information they receive. A magazine called 'Y-Front' will distribute the information in London schools.

The Society also hopes to act as a centre for general information on alternatives in education (free schools and the like) and they would be very pleased if anyone having such information contacted them.

The two secretaries are:

Roger Sutherland, 8 Corinne Road, London, N.19
Bill Bulman, 9 Birchington Road, London, N.8

EDUCATIONAL LIB. NETWORK

WHO'S IT FOR

Those who think school, college, university are shit.
Those who think blackboards should be yellow, pink, green.
Those who will not worship degrees, diplomas, certificates.
Those who think the Education System messed them up.
Those who think it messes everybody up.
Those who think Education lives outside of schools.
Those who think teachers, lecturers and especially professors should work for their living.
Those who will not take notes, put up their hands, ask to be excused.

WHAT'S IT FOR

To smash the Education System.
To give free, unfettered access to all 'education' buildings and materials.
To discredit credits, distinctions, merit marks, assessment, exams.
To take culture to the elite, who are all philistine.
To sabotage all indoctrination in school, on T.V., on hoardings, in books.
To liberate teachers from their hang-ups, their status, their respect.
To liberate the people from Certified Educational Excellence.

The EDUCATIONAL LIBERATION NETWORK is the means by which to write a workers poem across the face of the earth to break the culture of silence to think with the heart to imagine and dare

to make real the imagined.

Cultural Revolution is the beginning and the never-ending of all revolutions.
It opens the doors to the hoards of silent ones yearning to scream their knowledge into the faces of the teachers.

Anarchist Teachers working in the system are the Fifth Column of the Liberation.

- they commit acts of sabotage
- they unlock the gates from the inside
- they spread rumours and fear
- they leak information on what there is and where to get it
- they open the books of the administration
- they disrupt the flow of discipline and order
- they raise the hopes of the oppressed
- they leave a wake of floods and fires
- by one act of desperate rebellion they burst the floodgates
- they are maggots who eat at the heart of the the Beast

OPEN THE GATES OF SCHOOLS, NURSURIES, COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER PRISONS - PRISONS - PRISONS
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Apart from that the Educational Liberation Network does not exist. It is a dream, with an address in Wolverhampton. There was once a thing called the Libertarian Teachers Association, but it died - drowned in its own sloth. Restricted to teachers it could only be a place for pipe dreams about what teachers could do. But we do not want libertarian schools, or libertarian teachers; we are anti-school and anti-teacher. We demand that the whole world is

an Open University, and that Educators can be any body, any thing, any event. We need a strategy for Cultural Revolution, and we need action. The E.L.N. address undertakes to receive and pass on ideas and information and to help forge contacts between those interested.

Educational Liberation Network,
23 Needwood Close, Wolverhampton, WV2 4PP

PUBLICATIONS

MOVEMENT is a new libertarian monthly intended as basically an information exchange point for groups, shops, pamphlets, books etc. Anything sent in will be included. Buy it, its good.
5p per issue-subs £1 pa. or 50p for six months.

MOLE EXPRESS Still going strong, Manchester based but nationally relevant. 10p per issue, £1 for 10.
7 Summer Terrace Rusholme Manchester M14 5WD

INSIDE STORY...a sort of Anarchist Private Eye, an excellent publication (Freedom) 20p per copy, £1.50 for 6 issues, £3.00 for 12, £10 for life.
3 Belmont Road London SW4.

PEACE NEWS for nonviolent revolution. 7p per week. £1.23 - 3 months, £2.47 - 6 months, £4.94 - 1 year.
Trial subs - 7 weeks for 50p.
5 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

UNDERCURRENTS -in Science and Technology. Alternative technologies and power sources etc.etc. Bloody Good. 25p per issue, (quarterly) -34 Cholmley Gardens, Aldred Road, London, N.W.6.

TRIAD (anarchist mag/Glasgow ORA)...Jean Macleod, c/o Whyte, 138 Fergus Drive, Glasgow NW

The GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY. 2nd edition now in print. Keith Paton in excellent form on R.S. PETERS and PAUL GOODMAN. 20p from US, COMPENDIUM, YOUR LOCAL OUTLET, OR from the AUTHOR at 102 Newcastle Street Silverdale, Newcastle on Tyne, Staffs.

Some American Pamphlets available from Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne Street, Leicester.
7p..New Urbanism.....Constant Nieuwenhuys
9p..A Plea for Captain John Brown...Thoreau
8p..Place of Individual in Society..Goldman
6p..Synthesis is our Possibility)..Bob
6p..The Parts are All Around Us) Dickens
12p..Wasteland Culture....C.George Benello
8p..The Machinery of Conformity..A Fleming
15p..Selected Writings.....Malatesta
12p..Felix Greene reports -3 Months With the Enemy
5p..Black Flag of Anarchism..Paul Goodman.
6p..Anarchism.....Peter Kropotkin

please add 2½p for postage

THE EVACUEE by RICHARD POOLEY - A superb piece of autobiographical writing from the man who started PROP. 37p + 5p postage from 1 Wilne Street, Leicester.

FREEDOM - weekly anarchist paper - 5p - annual subscription £3.00. Write for sample copy to: 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 01-247 9249

LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE - new paper about to be published by the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists - 68a Chingford Road, London E.17.

MANCHESTER FREE PRESS - 45 Aspinall St., Manchester 14 061-224 8292

TIME OUT - the weekly events magazine - 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1 01-278 5841

From: Martin Bashforth; 23 Needwood Close,
Wolverhampton, WV2 4PP

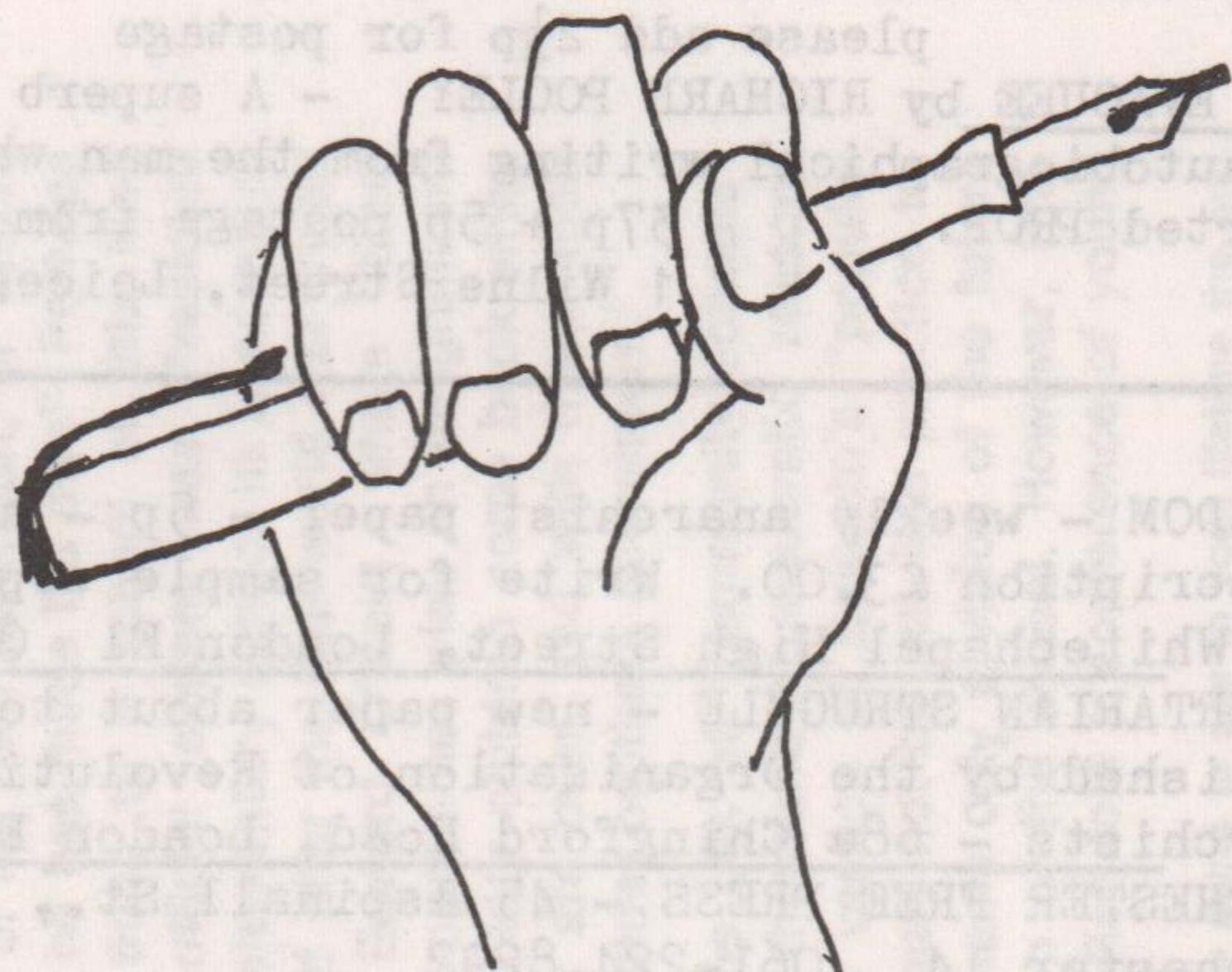
...Broadly speaking I find myself aligned with the 'de-schooling' fraternity, an outlook which makes pure teachers' organisations too narrow a base for operations. In particular I see the Education System as one of a group of law-enforcement institutions, the velvet glove equivalent of the police and the armed forces, plus the Special Branch and the Ministry for Propaganda rolled into one. If anarchists work in it, then they do so only as fifth counsellors whose role is to assist resistance within the system and from without.

I think enough has been said and written on the question of de-schooling to begin some kind of de-schooling practice. Bases for this can be found in the two British publications in this respect, The Great Brain Robbery and Anti-Student, coupled with Paulo Freire's concept of a 'culture of silence' which very clearly operates in the British Working-Class. Those interested in the question of education have, it seems to me, a very special role to play as the front-runners of a 'cultural revolution' attacking the very heart of The Beast. All the work on industrial organisation and anti-State propaganda is meaningless in my opinion without work for a cultural revolution. There is no shortage of jobs to be done, and ideas how to operate, so long as we can break from the esoteric libertarianism of teachers in the past.

From - Alan Ross & Louisa Martin,
24 Thomas Rd., Fulbourn, Camb. CB1 5EA

...We've had amazing success here in getting Lib. Teacher into local bookshops - all four that we tried agreed to take the magazine on 'sale-or-return' and we are about to persuade some newsagents to stock it. The face-to-face contact is important - you can discuss the content with the shop people and it is encouraging to see how impressed they all were with the appearance and the contents. If other readers took bulk orders and passed them on to local shops, we could easily double the circulation.

*please
write*



LETTERS

From: Bryn Purdy, 15 Coach Road, Warton, Carnforth.
Lancs

I Wonder what your readers think about the trend which is to be observed recently in Libertarian Teacher, and whether I am the only one to have misgivings about it.

In Number 9, for example, the editorial refers several times to 'pigs', meaning policemen, and 'the gutter press'. This kind of abuse is, it seems to me, as mindless as that which refers to the kind of people who subscribe to the Libertarian Teacher as 'bearded weirdies' or 'lefties!.

The author of the first article, about the Craig affair, claims to be 'dispassionate', but it does not stop him referring to Charles Carter as 'Carter' and to David Craig as 'David' throughout the article, just so that we are in no doubt as to which is in the right, which is the 'baddie'. This kind of special pleading detracts, to my mind, from the force of the authors case. And what was the point of the unpleasant little drawing which accompanied this article, but which was irrelevant to it, except possibly, in its crassest sense?

And have not the editors some responsibility to protect prospective authors from their own juvenilia? In this particular issue, I refer to the uncomfortable piece of self-messianisation entitled An International School.

I can accept the postulate that authority, as it is at present conceived, may be wrong in principle, but not that people in authority always act wrongly or that libertarians are always right.

Do not libertarians need to have an especially keen sense of responsibility, as their beliefs are already suspect? Is there, infact, a useful distinction to be made between libertarianism and libertinism? Can there be freedom without responsibility?

From - Keith Sowerby
150 Shorrock Lane, Blackburn, Lancs.

Among traditional demands from anarchists are "anarchy in society" and "democracy in schools". Anarchy is alright for sensible adult anarchists, but schoolkids have to make do with democracy. This is only one step away from the more general view "democracy for society" and "autocracy in schools". It is to fill this gap that I formed the Schools Anarchy Propagation Action Group (SAPAG). Yes, I. SAPAG is not an organisation, but an idea to relate to. SAPAG exists where anyone claims it exists. The ideas are antiorganisationalist, for organization represses just as much as government and thus we must reject such organizationalist concepts as society. We must reject taboos and the tyranny of abstract ideas and truly liberate ourselves, for, authority is to be found on a psychological level as well as a social one, for we have been indoctrinated over the years with such absurd ideas as dying for ones "country", contributing to "society", and kindness. I advocate an antiorganisationalist anarchism akin to "enlightened" egoism. Perhaps we should base the word anarchy on the ancient greek "anarchio" rather than "anarchos"-rejection of authority, rather than just government.

contact: SAPAG
c/o 1 Spring Bank
Salesbury
Blackburn
Lancs, BB2 4TT

(see SAPAG communique one, elsewhere in this issue).

JOHN ORD.....

"School is in the process of dissolving. Thank God!" These were the sentiments of John Ord, of the Scotland Road Free School in Liverpool, when he spoke at Countesthorpe College recently. He preferred the title 'free centre' rather than 'free school'. Schools were places that harmed kids, places where they met teachers who wanted no contact with them and whom they had to call 'Sir', outsider teachers who approached the school like missionaries used to approach Africa. These teachers gave the kids no responsibility - only orders. Many were apolitical, which meant that they accepted the status quo and wanted no changes in it.

Social Workers were no better; they only wanted to contain problems, not to get rid of them. This was partly out of self-interest because the problems are their jobs, and to eradicate the former would leave them jobless.

Liberals and liberalism were the greatest threat. Liberals only wanted the changes that the state allows, and would never do anything else. Liberalism had "castrated the kid in a sense", because it had drawn the teeth of proper aggression. And liberals weren't prepared to engage in things that affected their own security. Besides, they had a different set of values from those of the kids; they came from the middle-class suburbs which had no culture, only things like money, good jobs, and a handed-down artistic culture which they were told they ought to like. Scotland Road, on the other hand, had a real living culture, with a genuine sense of belonging and kinship.

The function of the free center was to engage in all the activities that went on in the Scotland Road area. The whole area was the school and not just a building with that label, and the free centre was responsible for the whole area. So wherever the kids were, they were "at the school", whether they were at the pictures or down at the docks. And the free centre was responsible for them wherever they were, and at all times - responsibility didn't stop at 4.00.

Some of the activities of the area might include, for example, helping or taking part in a factory occupation or a rent strike. The school thus became a catalyst for social change, Working with other people to bring about some form of change was what freedom was all about. And yet the free centre did not set out to be a direct challenge to the capitalist system, because the system could easily suppress the centre if it chose. Neither were the people at the centre interested in ideology, nor in a "free school movement", and they did not see themselves as part of the alternative society: to use any kind of labels was bad because labels increased the gulf between people.

John was asked how he viewed state schools such as Countesthorpe - where more kids were. He replied that he didn't believe in changing the educational system, the people in charge wouldn't pay you to break down their system. And you could never really change schools, because that meant changing society. Countesthorpe was just a "pretty picture" - a nice place to work in, but not a major change in the system. Like all schools it lacked any sense

of community, because it sought to avoid crises, and community was created by crisis in the sense of a deeply-felt experience that changed people permanently. At Countesthorpe there was no crisis and therefore no sense of community and no major change. Scotland Road, by contrast, was a series of events or crises that really changed people's outlook on life. The crisis might, for example, take the form of the cook declaring at 11a.m. that there was no food for dinner, and then everyone had to work to solve the problem, or go hungry.

19

Was he frightened of kids "doing nothing"? He had been to start with, but wasn't any more. They naturally rejected academic work - books - at first, because books were symbols of authority. "We created the thing called childhood and then filled it with books". If you removed schools completely, you might still have kids who wanted academic work, and you could provide for it in centres where there would also be go-cart tracks, adventure playgrounds, cinemas etc. No kid would then 'suffer', because no kid would be getting pushed around anymore.

Would working class kids suffer in relation to middle-class kids, because, without compulsion, the latter would still want books? John thought not: that's what we wanted to believe. If you left kids to themselves, they generally found something they wanted to do. "A kid learns like night follows day". You couldn't stop a kid from learning. Schools were inefficient because so little learning took place in them; they hampered learning or actively discouraged it because they were based on compulsion, and it was compulsory education that had to go.

AGITPROP is to close down, in fact will probably have done so by the time that you read this. Here is their condensed version of their final statement on their position.

Agitprop's collective is on the move. Every revolutionary movement demands increased flexibility and a mastering of new skills. While we each feel the need to change in different ways, we feel we must end our own involvement in the projects occurring here and help others in the libertarian movement who want to carry on with political education and information work. We have made this break reluctantly and realistically after about 6 months of discussions.

We feel encouraged by the growth of several non-profit, community shops outside London, as we feel they are concrete examples of efforts to decentralise. We feel it is important for groups and individuals both to supply these bookshops both to supply these bookshops with new and regular publications, and to make an effort to get their books and pamphlets from a regional shop rather than from London.

Once we are clear about the effects of the repression we are facing we will be able to let people know what we are planning to do. Pauline Conroy and Andy are facing a charge on a police set-up for conspiracy to get guns, and the Home Office is unwilling to give Ruth and Harris a visa. This restricts our planning in part. You should be hearing from us soon on this.

For the fortnight from Jan 15th-Jan 28th the shop will be closed, as we prepare for closing down, though we will continue to send out orders that reach us by Feb 5th. After Feb 5th Agitprop is effectively closed.

A last literature list has been prepared and is available with a fuller statement on our changes by sending an s.a.e. to 248 Bethnal Green Road London. Among the new titles included are:-

- 15p...Who is in control?...Study on Securicor.
- 20p...Fact Folder No 2
- 25p...Consolidated Gold Fields, C.I.S. anti-report.
- 15p...Antistudent...anti-elitism in 'students'
- 60p...Body Politic...English women's movement writings.
- 24p...Rat, Myth and Magic...political critique of psychology.
- 25p...Black Liberator...discussion journal of Black revolution
- 30p...Revolution in a Mental Hospital...Rat Study No 1
- 25p...Power of Women & the Subversion of the Community. Selma James and Dalla Costa.

+ + + + +
We, (Black Flag-Leicester) carry some of what you can't now get from Agitprop, as do, (we imagine) the other shops listed elsewhere in this issue.

Notes on a Revolutionary Struggle for Schools.

1. **ONLY IF SCHOOL** is understood as an industry can revolutionary strategy be planned realistically.—Ivan Illich.

2. The education industry in a modern state functions as a monopoly in that through excessive market power it effectively determines the product, education, to satisfy a genuine and existing need, for education. This capacity of giant monopolies to extend their control from the area of production to that of consumption, i.e. to shape and control demand, has been effectively demonstrated by Galbraith. Monopolies seek to grow, to maintain their market position and power, partly through a process of want creation and partly by extending their control over a wider range of activities. (The proliferation of examinations . . . CSE boards are now experimenting with a new examination, the Certificate of Extended Education for less academic sixth formers . . . is an instance of want creation. 'Progressive' attempts to meet the criticism that schools are not life-related, e.g. careers courses, sex education, community work courses, are all too often instances of a school's extension of its area of control. Paul Goodman welcomes programmes 'to open the school to the world' . . . but want them to go the small further step of abolishing the present school establishment instead of aggrandising it.) The education industry, while sharing the characteristics of other monopoly-dominated industries, is also an essential instrument of the modern State's control apparatus, preparing children for their future role within the State and within industries governed by those relations of production approved and protected by the State.

3. Reimer in his excellent *School is Dead* defines the functions of school as:

(a) *social role selection*. The education industry controls the distribution of certificates which largely determine the kind of job/status which a person can obtain.

(b) *indoctrination*. The school is the first highly institutionalised environment to which the child is subjected and it is an environment which reflects the prevalent value system, e.g. in its hierarchic set-up. The school as an institution initiates the child into other institutions.

(c) *education*, defined as the acquisition of skill / knowledge / understanding. Schools have a valuable role to play in this context so long as they are clearly seen to have a limited and in no way exclusive role.

4. If the analyses above are accurate then education seen as the product of the education industry cannot be used

as an instrument of emancipation. On the contrary, as Reimer writes, 'To the masses and their leaders schools have held out unprecedented hope of social justice. To the elite they have been an unparalleled instrument appearing to give what they do not, while convincing all that they get what they deserve'. What Rocker wrote of the State is true of its instrument, education . . . 'The State is capable only of protecting old privileges and creating new ones'. Awareness of the functions of schools is confused by the kind of myth-making which both States and schools go in for . . . the ideology of equality of opportunity, propounded by many who support comprehensive education, disguises the reality of continued and enforced inequality wherein advancement is at the expense of others. Those who attack the social democratic myths and its assumptions must be prepared to be labelled reactionaries by good bourgeois socialists whether labour or communist. This analysis does not mean however that in recognising the present educational system for what it is that the question of education should be postponed until after a political revolution, since such a revolution simply creates a new State which will use the education system to create new privileges. On the contrary it becomes essential that emancipation from and within specialised institutions should be seen as an integral part of any social revolutionary strategy.

5. Approaching education as an industry then one can design and act on strategies for those who are consumers of that industry's products, i.e. parents, children, students. Equally one can design strategies for those who are workers within the industry, i.e. teachers. Obviously there will be many occasions in which teachers would actively support the activities of students and vice versa.

6. The following are only notes for strategies which may beg more questions than provide answers. I should declare that as a teacher in the State system and a syndicalist my primary interest is in strategies for producers.

(a) strategies for consumers

1. *to demand the freedom of children to decide what they wish to learn, when and where within the State system or without. The relationship between teacher and taught should be that of a free contract.* Parents and children should be encouraged to shop around and refuse to accept an inferior product.

2. *to encourage experiments outside the established system such as free schools, resource centres, networks of information sources and volunteer teachers, so to maximise students' choice.*

3. *to insist that the school restrict itself to a pedagogic role.* Parents and children must retrieve the responsibilities which schools have abrogated, e.g. questions of dress, social behaviour, etc.

4. *to demand an effective say in school government.* There is a genuine problem here of defining areas of consumer control/areas of workers control . . . the syndicalist's dilemma. The effecting of these demands can only be done by individuals, groups or organisations acting in concrete ways at local level, while sharing their experience through a magazine such as *Children's Rights* or periodic conferences. Education in this country unlike others is still to some extent decentralised. This does not contradict the fact that education is an instrument of the State but it does mean that locally organised actions can be successful. Networks of information sources and volunteer teachers can be formed around a neighbourhood newspaper or an informal grouping, setting out to educate itself. Organisations like the NUSS and SAU, 'Women's Lib.', shop stewards groups, trade unions, parents groups, can and should involve themselves in the criticism of schools. The provision of alternatives, the use of strikes, boycotts, bargaining for rights, are all tactics which could refashion education and revitalise the very concept.

(b) strategies for producers

I believe that the anarchist/syndicalist teacher should be active both within the school and within his local union branch. (It is equally true that he must be a hard and good worker with and for his students in the classroom.) Teacher unions are to a considerable extent decentralised . . . a great deal of effective bargaining about conditions, school government, the organisation of schools, the provision of educational opportunities for teachers, children and parents, can be done at local level. There are also rank and file groups which one might not always agree with but are doing good work, such as Rank and File and Further Left.

Syndicalist teachers should

1. *be fully involved in the day to day struggles for higher wages and better conditions.* This is essential if teachers are to be fully aware of their real position as workers. They should also argue persistently for a unified wage scale and an end to artificial wage differentials too often based on a hierarchic/academic criterion.

2. *seek to develop democratic procedures within the union, demanding local rank and file power and autonomy, regular branch meetings, full and detailed reports from all delegates, etc.*

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