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# INSURRECTION

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“Man is born free, but is everywhere in Chains” - ROUSSEAU

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Peter E Newell, 91 Brook Road, Tiptree, Essex.

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C o m m e n t :   T H E   M E A N I N G   O F   A N A R C H I S M

THROUGHOUT the world, the vast majority of people have no control whatsoever over the decisions that most deeply and directly affect their lives. They sell their labour-power while others who own or control the means of production accumulate wealth, make laws and use the whole machinery of the State to perpetuate and reinforce their privileged positions.

During the past century the living standards of working people have improved. But neither these improved living standards, nor the nationalization of the means of production, nor the coming to power of parties claiming to represent the working classes have basically altered the status of a worker as a worker. Neither have they given the bulk of mankind much freedom outside of production. East and West, capitalism remains an inhuman type of society, where the vast majority are bossed at work and manipulated in consumption and leisure. Propaganda and policemen, prisons and schools, traditional values and traditional morality all serve to reinforce the power of the few, and to convince or coerce the many into acceptance of the brutal, degrading and irrational system of today. The "communist" world is not communist, and the "free" world is not free.

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THE Trade Unions and the traditional parties of the left started in business to change all this. But they have come to terms with the existing patterns of exploitation. In fact, they have become essential to it; the Unions act as middlemen in the labour market and the political parties use the struggles and aspirations of the working class for their own ends. The degeneration of working class organizations, itself the failure of the revolutionary movement, has been a major factor in creating working class apathy, which in turn has led to their further degeneration.

The Trade Unions and political parties cannot be reformed, "captured", or converted into any instruments of working class emancipation. We do not call, however, for the proclamation of new Unions, which in the conditions of today would suffer a similar fate to the old ones. Nor do we call for militants to tear up their Union cards. Our aims are simply that workers themselves should decide on the objectives of their struggles and that the control and organization of these struggles should remain firmly in their own hands. The forms which this self-activity may take will vary con-

siderably from country to country and from industry to industry. Its basic content will not.

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ANARCHISM is not just the common ownership and control of the means of production and distribution. It means equality, real freedom, reciprocal recognition and a radical transformation of all human relations. It is Man's positive self-consciousness. It is Man's understanding of his environment and of himself, his domination over his work and over such institutions as he may need to create. These are not secondary aspects which will automatically follow the expropriation of the old ruling class. On the contrary, they are essential parts of the whole process of social transformation, for without them no genuine social transformation will have taken place.

An anarchist society can, therefore, only be built from below. Decisions concerning production and work will be taken by workers' councils composed of elected and revocable delegates. Decisions in other places will be taken on the basis of the widest possible discussion and consultation among the people as a whole.

Meaningful action for revolutionaries is whatever increases the confidence, the autonomy, the initiative, the participation, the solidarity, the egalitarianism and the activity of the people. Manipulation by "representatives" or "vanguards" can only be sterile, alienating and inducive of apathy and passivity.

\* \* \* \*

NO ruling class in history has ever relinquished its power without a struggle, and our present rulers are unlikely to be an exception. Power will only be taken from them through the conscious, autonomous action of people taking over the administration of the institutions they find themselves in. Such action requires mass understanding and participation. By their rigid hierarchical structure and their activities, both Social Democratic (i.e. Labour Party) and Bolshevik (i.e. both Stalinist and Trotskyist) types of organization discourage this kind of participation and understanding. The idea that a free society can be achieved by an elite (however revolutionary) is both absurd and reactionary.

We see our purpose, therefore, as to help all those who are in conflict with the present authoritarian social structure, both in industry and in society at large, to generalise their experiences, to make a total critique of their condition and its causes, and to develop the consciousness necessary if society is to be totally transformed.

\* \* \* \*

Nigel Wilson and Keith Edwards-Nathan.

Editor's note: The above has been issued as an introductory leaflet by the York University Anarchist Group. Nigel is at Derwent and Keith at Vanbrugh.

Important!!!

THIS COULD BE THE LAST INSURRECTION.....

Like most "small mags" INSURRECTION is written by, stencilled by, printed by, collated by, despatched by and paid for by a few individuals. We don't mind. In fact, we like doing the work. But unless we get more financial support, this could be our last issue. Each copy costs about 6d to produce. This is not much really; but, in order to further the ideas and ideals of anarchism in Essex and E.Herts, quite a considerable number are given away free. We would like to give all of them away, but this is not possible. However, with this our sixth issue - and maybe our last! - we are, for the first time, asking for money. If you are interested sufficiently in the continued publication of INSURRECTION, please send any amount (unused 4d stamps would be very welcome) to: Peter E Newell, 91 Brook Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Tiptree, Essex.

Articles, letters-to-the-editor, suggestions (however rude!) and news-cuttings would also be welcome.

The Editor.

## H A N D S

My hands, once straight and strong  
 Raised girder upon girder, brick upon brick,  
 These now awkward trembling hands  
 Anchored cables under river, over mountain,  
 Laid rail and wire that circle the land.  
 My hands welded, molded  
 Seeded and plowed,  
 Picked cotton and corn.  
 My hands tore from the earth  
 Coal, copper, iron and gold.  
 Faster, faster, my hands were driven  
 They were good hands,  
 Wanted at the market of hands....  
 Small hands, big hands,  
 Fine hands, calloused hands,  
 White hands, black hands,  
 All powerful hands,  
 All hands for sale.  
 Now my mutilated hands are refused hands,  
 No more market for my hands!

H.P.

Letter To The Editor:

391, Newport Road,  
Middlesbrough,  
Tees-side.

Dear Pete,

I guess you're wondering what has happened to me all this while. Well, as you see from the address, I'm now living in the North Country, which is certainly different from Colchester.

I feel very out-of-touch with East Anglia. I came up here for ten days the end of July to work with the Voluntary Work Team, but had an accident and dislocated my arm, so that my stay was lengthened to five weeks! Barnaby Martin and I then decided to stay behind and try to establish a permanent Centre, and we were kindly given a house for a nominal rent of £5 per year. We run an Adventure Playground, though only at weekends and in the evenings after school. But we are working on other projects such as painting and decorating old people's houses, running a Playgroup and organising Coffee Afternoons for the mums in the district.

The area, called Newport, is one of the poorest districts in Middlesbrough, badly polluted by smoke and muck belching out of I.C.I. on the opposite side of the river. It is mainly row upon row of terrace houses, two rooms up, two down, containing families of eight and more! The result of the large number of kids per family is a general neglect of the poor things, and most of them are disturbed in one way or another. Our main problem in the Playground is the reigning destruction that goes on - seems impossible to get the kids to be creative, as all their efforts are knocked down and spoiled by the older ones.

Still, we make some progress, however slow it may be. In the evenings we invite the local lads in - the "roughs and toughs" of the area. They are barred from all the Youth Clubs and other organizations due to their violence, vandalism and scruffy appearance. They are not, however, a bad lot; in fact, some of them have become good friends now.

Foodwise, we do very well. The local people donate us groceries of all kinds, and we do occasional street collections for cash gifts. We get bread and meat supplied free; also fish-and-chips, cakes, fruit and vegetables.

The house we have is vast. It used to be a doctor's surgery. The ground floor is the surgery, waiting room, morning room and kitchen. Above that, is a huge living room where my looms are, and a bathroom - also vast. The top floor has three bedrooms, which is just as well as our numbers have increased to six! The other Work Team, whom we split from, are now in Wells, but are coming up North this month, only to Pontefract this time. They also seem to be managing well.

Best wishes,

from

Jill MaGuire.

Herbert Marcuse on.... R E V O L U T I O N S

"...recurrent rebellion and revolutions have been followed by counter-revolutions and restorations. From the slave revolts in the ancient world to the 'socialist' revolution, the struggle of the oppressed has ended in establishing a new 'better' system of domination; progress has taken place through an improving chain of control. Each revolution has been the conscious effort to replace one ruling group by another; but each revolution has also released forces that have 'overshot the goal', that have striven for the abolition of domination and exploitation. The ease with which they have been defeated demands explanations. Neither the prevailing constellation of power, nor immaturity of the productive forces, nor absence of class consciousness provides the answer. In every revolution, there seems to have been a historical moment when the struggle against domination might have been victorious - but the moment passed. An element of self-defeat seems to be involved in this dynamic ...." ("Eros and Civilization").

Editor's Note: Marcuse omits one important factor - in no previous revolution has there ever been a majority who understood, even in a very general way, the mechanics of their domineering and repressive society, or fully understood and desired a free, non-exploitive, non-authoritarian one that should take its place. Such people (as recent events in France have demonstrated) have, hitherto, always been in a minority. The emancipation of the vast majority must be the conscious aim of the vast majority itself. Then there will be no element of self-defeat!

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and Paddy Fields on.... M E A N S A N D E N D S

In the struggle for the creation of Anarchy, too much thought is given to the question of whether or not the kind of society an anarchist may have in mind is a practical one or not. Obviously some consideration has to be given to this question, but there is a danger that a libertarian revolutionary may sacrifice too much - may compromise his ideals to such an extent - in order to make his ideas appeal to the over-practical minds around him; that his Anarchy will become undermined, tainted with some of the evils associated with "democracy" or "socialism" or even totalitarianism.

To me, therefore, aims are twofold: the millennium of which one has a hazy, beautiful view, whether it can ever come to be or not; a vision that is constantly changing, and the present - the resistance to Power and Authority in every sphere of human experience; the struggle which is the life-blood of a revolutionary, and without which he would stagnate.

I would struggle for a revolution even in an anarchist society because Struggle is Life and acceptance of a Utopia is Death.

There comes a point, therefore, where means are ends; and, on one level, the struggle that the anarchist wages every day to the utmost of his individual courage and commitment against a hostile

society is sufficient, an objective in itself. Tomorrow will be another struggle and every day the minds of men may be that much more free; or perhaps the forces of repression and reaction will be that much greater. One cannot tell.

Anarchists sometime become so bogged down in the practicalities and mechanics of some future society that they are apt to forget about the present. Anarchism to me is a Way of Life.

The Communist Party and PARLIAMENT - a few quotations.

"The enemies of communism accuse the Communist Party of aiming to introduce Soviet Power in Britain and abolish Parliament. This is a slanderous misrepresentation of our policy....The path for the British people will be to establish a People's Government on the basis of a parliament truly representative of the people.... What is important to emphasise is that we see the possibility of utilising and transforming the existing parliamentary and other machinery of Government." ("The British Road To Socialism").

"Far from wanting to abolish Parliament, we want to transform Parliament into a body which really reflects the will of the great majority of the people. Parliament can and will be this when, as a result of the united struggle of the working class and its allies, a majority of members - Communist and Labour MPs - have been elected on a policy of radical social and political transformation of Britain." ("Communism", by Emil Burns).

"The Communist Party enters Parliamentary institutions, not for constructive purposes, but in order to direct the masses to destroy - from within - the whole bourgeois state and Parliament itself." (2nd Congress of the Comintern).

"....British Communists should participate in Parliament....We would take part in the election campaign...where we have no candidates urge the electors to vote for the Labour candidate ...." ("Left-Wing Communism", by Lenin).

Communist attitudes have always been an unholy mixture of unprincipled "tactics" and "double-think", particularly towards Parliament and the State. Anarchists, however, have never considered Parliament, political parties (including Communist parties) or the State as instruments of social, class or individual liberation and emancipation. Rightly or wrongly, at least we have always been consistent and principled. One cannot say the same for the Communists - of any of the 57 varieties!

Do you read FREEDOM?

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or

ANARCHY?

Price 2/- monthly



Coming a little nearer to our own times, a number of writers spring to mind. For a general history of anarchism and the world anarchist movement, George Woodcock's "Anarchism" (Pelican) is still a standard work, although it badly needs bringing up to date. It does, however contain a useful exposition of anarchist aims and ideals.

Besides such folk heroes as Che Guevara and Regis Debray, two names have cropped up time and time again within the so-called libertarian left. They are Eric Fromm and Herbert Marcuse. Fromm may be described as a kind of Anarcho-Marxist-Freudian-Revisionist; all of which sounds a mouthful. But don't let that put you off. His writings add up to an interesting analysis of contemporary society. And this comes out most clearly in "Fear of Freedom", written almost thirty years ago but still relevant. All thinking (and unthinking) people should read it - and then read it a couple of times again! Most of Fromm's works are worth reading if one has the time. "The Art of Loving" is extremely good, and is obtainable as a cheap paperback; "The Sane Society" is'nt as good as the other two (in my opinion), but has some interesting passages on alienation. Other books by Fromm worth reading are "Dogma of Christ", "Man for Himself" and "Socialist Humanism", which is a collection of essays by various "socialist" writers, edited by Eric Fromm.

Marcuse, of course, has been on thousands of lips during the last year or so; but my guess is that probably less than a couple of thousand people throughout the world have bothered to read even his major writings - which is'nt surprising as they are all very heavy going! His "Reason and Revolution" deals mainly with Hegel's ideas, as interpreted by Marcuse. I recommend it only to masochists and logical positivists! "One Dimensional Man" is, perhaps, more useful to anarchists and libertarian socialists, but it is also rather wordy. The only book by Marcuse that I wholly recommend is "Eros and Civilization" - assuming the reader is fairly familiar with Freudian terminology and the basic ideas of Marx.

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More down-to-earth and less theoretical, are the works of Vance Packard. During the last ten years or so, he has churned out book after book analysing contemporary society; all are worth reading. I particularly recommend: "The Waste Makers", "The Status Seekers", "The Hidden Persuaders" and the "Naked Society". All, including a new one on sex, are obtainable, most in the Pelican series. Also worth reading in the same series is "Elites and Society" by Bottomore.

And this leaves me with a small number of books dealing with two specific countries, both of interest to anarchists - Russia and Spain. Most books on Russia are not worth reading. But "Ten Days That Shook The World", an eye-witness account of the Bolschevik coup d'etat by John Reed, should be on every library shelf, as should Voline's two volumes on the same period. "Stalin's Russia" by S.Labin is about the only work on the Stalinist period that I think is worth reading. Definitely avoid the Webb's "Soviet Communism: A New Civilization"! Of the Spanish Civil War, the only two books that I have enjoyed were "Lessons of the Spanish Revolution" by Vernon Richards (published by Freedom Press), and George Orwell's "Homage To Catalonia".

.....and so to sleep!!!

F O R U M :

A C O N T R I B U T I O N T O  
L I B E R T A R I A N D I S C U S S I O N

by Mike Malet

1) Introduction: This short account of Anarchist aims and principles is intended as a contribution to discussion among libertarians. We hope it will lead to more effective practical cooperation and to more theoretical cohesion. We see two points as basic: (a) a fundamental re-examination of all socialist ideas and ideals; (b) a commitment to total revolution, from which the people will never again allow any sort of State to arise. We hope those trained in the marxist tradition will not find it too vague.

2) The Re-examination of Socialism: For us, this means anarchism and the libertarian wing of marxism. Anarchism has suffered from an ideological and practical eclipse over the last fifty years, only re-emerging as large numbers of people, especially in the older countries, have become disillusioned with the authoritarian communist road to a free society. Marxists such as Kollontai, Korsch and Pannekoek have, however, made valuable contributions to libertarian thought, which is being heard again amidst the disintegration of the Stalinist world movement, which disintegration we welcome.

The present ideological confusion among libertarians is also in part due to their varied political origins, and the fact that the British libertarian movement has been, and still largely is, an intellectual movement without a mass following. This is why rethinking is necessary. Much has changed in the 120 years since Marx quarelled with Proudhon, but class society still exists, with the State playing an increasingly authoritarian role in the West, as it already does in the East and parts of the Third World. This analysis, we feel, is largely common ground to libertarians, and could be the starting point for further discussion among them. In the meantime, practical cooperation should be pushed forward as much as possible, in the belief of the close unity of theory and practice.

3) The Commitment to Total Revolution: This is the social, cultural, economic and political emancipation of the vast masses; the outcome of a class struggle between exploiters and exploited. This is the real theoretical basis for libertarians, along with the firm belief that all States of whatever kind are an almost totally unmitigated evil, and the resulting wish that they should never rise again, however temporarily. This clears away a lot of the mystification that surrounds the idea of "workers' states" and the like. It is, we think, the dividing line between libertarians on the one hand, and authoritarians of all types, including Communist parties, on the other; the unity of ends and means, as opposed to the use of authoritarian means to achieve a libertarian society.

As States will resist, their total overthrow can only come through revolutionary action. This means some violence is almost inevitable, but we strongly believe that violence should not be advocated for its own sake. Final power comes from the gun - the State's gun! This must be destroyed for ever. Violence for its own sake can only lead to civil war, and then totalitarianism.

Freedom: the desire of the exploited for total, individual freedom is the only basis for a libertarian revolution; the more society loses its bourgeois-democratic facade, the more revolutionary a demand freedom is.

The only true freedom is individual freedom, the freedom for one person to decide how to run his life, with others, as we believe most will choose, or by himself. Total freedom can only be a reality on a world-wide scale.

4) The Present Situation in Britain: We welcome the recent opening of the libertarian left, but this will not be important till it is seen to be effective in action. Here are a few suggestions: (a) common action of libertarians whether calling themselves Anarchists or not, in specific efforts of the exploited to control some part, large or small, of their destiny; (b) consequent support of student 'power', workers' power or control, black power, summed up as "All Power to the People" (forseen as being realised in bodies analogous to Soviets and Workers' Councils of the past); helping in whatever ways those concerned feel we can be of use, but bewareing of "taking over" such struggles; (c) regular meetings of libertarians and their groups to encourage cooperation at this level, even if nothing comes from the ideological discussions for some time; (d) our propaganda should aim largely in two directions - to give a libertarian basis to the apolitical thinking of large sections of youth, and widespread propaganda for workers' control among older people, to show that they also are thoroughly exploited. The reason for this is the belief that it will be the youth, young workers and students, who will start the revolution, but that will not succeed unless older people understand what the young are talking about and trying to do, and the old are prepared to help.

5) The Future Society: To survive, any modern society needs organization. To ensure freedom and equality, this organization must be based on control from the bottom up. We believe there can be organization without Government, because we believe that men are basically social, and do not need a State to tell them what is right and wrong. Voluntary association, the abolition of private property beyond the few personal goods available to all, workers' and consumers' control, with representatives at the direct recall of all concerned, the non-coercive bearing and rearing of children without brain-washing of a State-inspired "education", and an end to war, we would regard as the concomitants of this type of society. We do not want this society to consist of Anarchists only - that would make it dull, stagnant and decaying. There is nothing sacred about dogmas. Only individuals are sacred!

## THE OCTOBER 27th. DEMONSTRATION

The Liverpool Conference of the Anarchist Federation of Britain was divided as to whether members should participate in a demonstration organised by pro-NLF groups. Something like a 1000 Anarchists did however march on October 27th behind the head-banner of the "United Libertarian Groups" or as individuals with other contingents. Very many black and red, and black flags and banners could be seen on the march, including the flags of Harlow, North East Essex and the Essex Anarchist Federation itself. Individual anarchists from other Essex groups were also present, some acting as first-aiders.

Of course the Press made the usual accusations about "anarchist violence". The "Guardian" said that we used our "poles as spears" and that "the anarchists twice lost their nerve". This writer was with the main Anarchist contingent all the time - and saw no "anarchist violence" or lost nerves! He did see quite a lot of Anarchist banners condemning both the American "presence" in Vietnam and the Russian "presence" in Czechoslovakia. The Press didn't seem to notice them - only "violence"!

## M U S T       M O N E Y       G O ?

There have been different social systems before the present one. There is no reason why the present one should not be replaced by another and better one.

A new world system has not only become a necessity, but also a practical possibility. Industry has developed to a stage at which, if it were unhindered, the whole of the people's needs could be fully satisfied with only a fraction of the work put in nowadays.

The change is practical now.

The whole system of money and exchange, buying and selling, profit-making and wage-earning, should be entirely abolished and that instead, the community as a whole should organise and administer the production of goods for use only, and the free distribution of these goods to all the members of the community according to each person's need.

All the world's means of production such as land, factories, mines, machines, etc., would then belong to the whole of the people of the world.

There could be no division of the people into rich and poor.

There would no longer be the exploitation of man by man, of the toiling millions by the few. The profit motive would be eliminated.

Poverty and want together with over-work and unemployment would be things of the past.

National and racial prejudice and war would at last become impossible.

These broad effects would result from such a change and from such a change only.

They arise out of the nature, out of the very basis, of such a system.

If we want to get out of the mess that we're now in, we've got to make the greatest change that humanity has ever carried out.

It is a job for the whole, or at least, the great majority of the people to carry out for themselves, because in the world Commonwealth each person would take a conscious and responsible part in running it.

A system that's going to be run by the people will have to be got by the people.

Before they get it they'll have to want it, and before they want it, they'll have to understand it.

And before they understand it, they will need to have it explained and described to them, in such a way that they can see easily the great benefits to be derived from the change.

This should not be difficult in view of the wretched prospect in life that the present social system offers.

The new social system must be world-wide. The world must be regarded as one country, and humanity as one people.

Nothing would be forced on people in the world Commonwealth. Freedom is its very essence - Real Freedom. There would be no authorities compelling anyone to do anything. Yes - there would be biological compulsion - the compulsion of nature - of "human nature" - to seek food, clothing and shelter. And those who preferred to fend for themselves would be free to do so.

I have little doubt they would soon appreciate the great benefits of cooperation with their fellows.

The people of the world Commonwealth will not be angels - they will be human - and humane.

We can have this earth - our common heritage.

We can use it for our common purpose.

But first - Money Must Go!

EAST HERTS & ESSEX FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS: secretary, Peter Newell, 91 Brook Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Tiptree, Essex.

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UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX: libertarians contact Rafe Culpin, Crouch End Court Hotel, Colchester, Essex.

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INSURRECTION (December-January): from Peter Newell (address as above), price 6d, plus 4d postage. Also a limited number of FREEDOM - WHY NOT? leaflets still available.

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FREEDOM (6d weekly) and ANARCHY (2/- monthly): from Jonathan Keely, 91 Ladyshot, Harlow, Essex.

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INTERNATIONAL TIMES and OZ: from Vic Mount, "Eastview", Castle St., Bishops Stortford, Herts.

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ORWELL BOOKS: Freedom Press publications, including ANARCHY and FREEDOM, and other libertarian literature, from Orwell Bookshop, Upper Orwell Street, Ipswich.

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FEAR OF FREEDOM, THE SANE SOCIETY and THE ART OF LOVING all by Erich Fromm: from Freedom Press, Angel Alley, 84a Whitechapel High St., London, E.1.

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## E Q U A L I T Y P

In contemporary capitalist society the meaning of equality has been transformed. By equality one refers to the equality of automatons; of men who have lost their individuality. Equality today means 'sameness', rather than 'oneness'. It is the sameness of abstractions, of men who work in the same jobs, who have the same amusements, who read the same newspapers, who have the same feelings and the same ideas.....The polarity of the sexes is disappearing, and with it erotic love, which is based on this polarity. Men and women become the same, not equals as opposite poles. Contemporary society preaches this ideal of unindividualized equality because it needs human atoms, each one the same, to make them function in a mass aggregation, smoothly, without friction; all obeying the same commands, yet everybody convinced that he is following his own desires. Just as modern mass production requires the standardization of commodities, so the social process requires the standardization of man, and this standardization is called 'equality'.

"The Art Of Loving", by Erich Fromm.

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LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS' FEDERATION: secretary, Keith Edwards-Nathan, 138 Pennymead, Harlow, Essex

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FOR THE RECORD: Mr Victor Norris, a private inquiry agent of 27 Maldon Road, Colchester, is a leading member of an extreme Right Wing semi-military organisation whose aim is to achieve power through violence and bloody revolution ("Essex County Standard": 18.11.68). He sees "Left-inspired demonstrations leading to Anarchy, on which the 5,000 Group (his organisation: ed. INSURRECTION) would swoop to take power to restore law and order to the clamouring working class."