

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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Inside: OXFORD CONFERENCE; PORTLAND SYMPOSIUM; BUSES NOW & AFTER

NO CONSCRIPTION!

Successive British Governments have ensured that Britain remained a faithful member of the NATO organisation, which is of course dominated by the military might of the United States. If the Pentagon tells our government that we (WE?) need cruise missiles, then cruise missiles are what we are going to get, just as we got Polaris submarines.

And such is the extent of the brainwashing to which the British people have been subjected that they are actually prepared to vote 'Yes' when - as in recent cases - they have been offered a local referendum in areas where the missiles are going to be based. They are prepared to be target areas if that's what the government wants.

It is true that in the rural areas where the missile bases are situated, the population tends to be more conservative (and Conservative) than in the big cities, but so far there is precious little evidence (beyond a well-staged demo organised by the Labour Party last week-end, with the same old party hacks saying the same as when in opposition before) that there is any real opposition to the build-up of nuclear weapons among the advanced proletariat of the industrial centres either.

The fact is that the industrial proletariat are punch-drunk at the moment with the body-blows they have had to take from the Government's economic policies, and with their eyes on the dwindling value of their pay-packets and jobs vanishing before those very eyes, they haven't a lot of attention to spare for apparent abstractions like nuclear bases in Norfolk - or nuclear energy, for that matter.



And certainly, what with the Derby and the Oaks and the Test matches and Wimbledon, worried workers haven't had a lot of time to spare to worry further about what is going on in America, not even to care about the choice offered their American counterparts

between an aging film star and a seemingly daft peanut farmer running for a second term as president.

But Jimmy Carter is not as daft as he seems. His political capital went up as soon as he started huffing and puffing about Afghanistan and he knows full well that nothing

rallies the American voters so much as waving the flag. To say nothing of pulling the rug from under Reagan's feet by appearing not only more patriotic but actually doing something about it.

Which is our way of building up to saying that we should be paying more attention to what is going on in America—because what happens there today, happens here tomorrow.

Within the next week, comrades, Jimmy Carter will be signing a bill, already passed by the US House of Representatives and the Senate, to take the first step to bring back conscription—for the first time since the Vietnam war, which is not, after all, so long ago.

From next month, Americans of the age of 20 will have to 'register'. The purpose of the register—for which this bill sanctions the money—is to pave the way for the draft, the American word for conscription.

Four million men are expected to register (women, sisters will be pleased to know, are exempt—so far) and as soon as they are in the bag, 19-year olds will be called upon to register.

Once they are registered it will take no time at all, thanks to computerisation, to sort them out and call upon just the ones the army wants. Now across-the-board conscription is a very blunt instrument for calling up a modern army. For one thing, just like modern industry, the army (navy, air force) does not want millions of relatively unskilled squaddies, perhaps, what's more, with unreliable political ideas.

Although it might very well be attractive for the generals to have an army the size of the Soviet Union's, (3.6 million), for a rapid expansion it would be quality the professionals would be looking for—to start with anyway. And, of course, that political reliability.

Now, if we are right in saying that what happens in America today happens here tomorrow, isn't it logical for us to assume that Carter's lapdog is already considering the advantages to her regime of a similar call-up over here?

Having rattled the sabre and followed blindly the President's call for an Olympic boycott (rightly and contemptuously dismissed as a political gimmick by most British Olympic athletes), Mrs Thatcher would certainly not be slow to follow suit if the Americans fell into line with the rest of the NATO countries (except the UK) and started the call-up.

As in the US, British generals don't really like the blanket call-up of simply roping in all young men of the right age group. In spite of the generous increases in soldiers' pay recently (up to £5000 per annum for a private), the present offerings are not up to the calibre the army desires. For intelligent graduates, of the kind necessary to operate the high technology our forces enjoy today, can still find something better to do with their time and intelligence than sell them to the professional killer squads of the state.

But if they were all on record, having been compelled to register, the generals, the admirals and the air marshalls then select the ones they want. And once in the forces, conditioned and trained and subject to the Official Secrets Act and threatened with dire consequences for default—they're in the bag!

And the rest? The hoi-polloi? Well, isn't it obvious that the millions of youngsters for whom there are no jobs would be better off in the army? They are being kept by the state anyway, when on the dole, and they are only making trouble on the street corners or filling the gaols and the borstals, upsetting the do-gooders and the welfare workers and fighting with the police.

Better than the work-camps called for by Manchester's police chief James Anderton last year would be army camps, used not as a punishment but as National Service, in which the inmates can be made proud to be disciplined in the service of their country. And they can still be used as a labour force, building their own concentra— whoops, sorry—National Service camps for a start, then more prisons, rocket sites, gun emplacements, etc, etc, all on the cheap—for conscripts wouldn't get professionals' pay, would they? And the trades unions would be pleased to see the surplus labour taken off the market, wouldn't they? And Maggie would get the credit for bringing down unemployment, wouldn't she?

It would not be the first time that unemployment had been solved by building up an army. That is precisely what Hitler did in the 30's—and everybody in their right minds praised him for it, including Churchill (until 1938!).

The rapidity with which Thatcher's government is bringing about conditions similar in essence to those of Germany in the thirties is frightening. Roaring inflation plus

unemployment plus recession—plus the Red Scare.

What a godsend Afghanistan has been to both Carter and Thatcher!

If our readers think we are painting too scary a picture, just realise, please, that the process is already beginning in America, and the problem is already here: what the hell is the state to do with the surplus and disaffected youth of our cities? The micro-chip is rendering them unnecessary in the workforce, yet they are very visibly there, seething.

There are, as ever, two alternatives: either we, as anarchists and libertarians, come up with a solution, or the authoritarian solution will be forced upon us all. The 1980s will be a very tough decade—don't let it start with the most appalling victory for the most appalling government we have had for years.

Let's make it clear both to Thatcher and whoever might follow her that there can be no use of conscription to solve capitalism's problems. Not again! Not ever! If they can't solve the problems their own system creates—destroy it!



Co-ops fair 1944-2044 July

The first gathering of co-operators from all over the country promised to be an exciting and very enjoyable time. The Co-op Fair will take place at Beechwood College, which is surrounded by seventy acres of farm and woodland, which is in turn surrounded by Roundhay Park, with a heated outdoor swimming pool, boating and fishing lakes and beautiful woodland walks.

Many co-ops will be taking part, stalls are to be set up by co-op bakeries, wholefood wholesalers and retailers, Real Ale collective, building, fishing, farming, garage, printing and publishing collectives.

Communes, computers, windmills, Triumph Meridan, a collective of G.P.s, housing co-ops, the Co-Op Union, the National Women's Aid Federation are just some of the co-ops that'll be there.

Beginning on Friday, with a general meeting in the early evening (during the day time will be taken up with setting up the stalls and stuff like that) followed by a social in the two bars with the Musicians Collective.

The Fair will really get going on Saturday morning with various workshops; Women in Co-ops, Co-ops in trade unions, Co-ops, Federations and Networks; and throughout the day the stalls will be showing their wares, and there will be entertainments for the kids (there'll be creches throughout the fair), music, theatre, discos and booze.

On Saturday night the whole thing should degenerate into generalised enjoyment as the bars will be open and the musicians take out their instruments.

On Sunday morning it's back to the tacking, with the Politics of

Cooperation, The Path to a Co-operative Society, Structures for Democratic Management, finishing up with a general meeting around midday.

However, Interplay Theatre will perform in the afternoon "The End of the World" (don't miss it) and the Ecclesfield Brass Band will provide music. Things should start winding down around 5p.m.

As well as being a nice way to spend a summer weekend, the Co-op Fair will be the first opportunity for co-operators, collectivists, and those interested in these forms

of working and living to meet together on a grand scale (the last attempt was in 1842), to share experience, to form stronger links and to move forward. Why not go along?

Beechwood is on the north side of Leeds. From Leeds coach or rail station walk to Vicar Lane Bus Station. From Bay 2 take a no. 796, 798, or 799 for Roundhay, ask for Elmete Lane.

By car, Beechwood is off the A58 Wetherby road, 3 miles NE from the city centre.

There's plenty of accommodation at Beechwood. Contact Beechwood, Elmete Lane, Leeds 8, Phone Leeds 720205.

Mind your body

The Festival of Mind and Body at Olympia this year provided a reminder of the development of non-official thinking in the regions of the alternative society.

Libertarians are at variance about this area, from the enthusiastic participants to the severest denigrators. One thing that seems clear from a visit is that the friendly, open attitude of nearly everyone present is far from the stereotyped vision of Hitler being provided with the details of astrological charts by hidden persuaders.

The Body side is much easier to cope with. Most of it seems admirable.

The Mind section is clearly the most contentious. One could roughly distinguish three tendencies. The Christian, evangelical, holy types who looked inordinately sad with samples of the Infinite Wisdom or The Esoteric Truth, then the rip off merchants in their best suits and with mainly American accents -

the Aetherius Society, Rama Krishna, Ionisers, Magic cures. Something very uptight about this lot. Finally the fun crowd of the fantastic and dotty. The Atlanteans, Spook Enterprises Ltd., Ley liners and the Illuminati addicts of paranoid bliss.

Scattered generously like seeds in a fertile field were struggles of American Indians, a fall out shelter no one but staff could go in, trinkets galore of varying quality and price.

"Pull the chain hard Parliament is a long way down" said the bog wall. Yes, left behind by the assemblage of people ignoring conventional wisdom and scientific cul de sacs of nuclear weapons, factory farming, barbiturates alcoholic bliss and believing what you are summoned to believe.

Love good vibes, nonsense, truth, rip off, illumination, fun, humour, anger, warmth, madness money, nutrition health, sickness. They were all there. Fuck your science - if we follow that track any more we will all be dead in mind and body.

J. W.

WILDCAT

Proudhon said a half-truth is sometimes necessary to oppose a lie. Can you think of a useful rejoinder to this crap?



Oxford Conference

OXFORD, Ruskin College, Saturday 21 June. 11 a. m. and 150 anarchists mill around waiting for the start of the conference. The organisers (Oxford Anarchists) provided a co-ordinator who, under difficult circumstances, managed to cope with starting the plenum, drawing up lists of workshops and generally getting things to run as smoothly as possible. She was not elected or mandated to this and though some complained about her role, no-one, but no-one took up her immediate offer of the job. The conference started in plenary

session for a debate on Psychiatry and the State and after lunch broke up into workshops: The Left, Nuclear Power, Internal Discussion Bulletin, Students, Psychiatry and Workplace Tactics until the report-back at the evening plenary meeting.

Sunday began with slightly fewer people and the plenary session decided to break up into workshops again to discuss: Anarchafeminism, The Anarchist Press, Propaganda Techniques, Ecology, Ireland, Libertarian Education and Violence/Non-Violence, followed by the final

plenary session.

These are short reports written by the FREEDOM Collective, who were at some of these workshops. We welcome further feedback from comrades who were at the conference. The general feeling at FREEDOM is that, though sitting, listening and talking at conferences is unavoidably somewhat academic, it was a positive action in so far as bringing together a large number of anarchists from around the country to meet, think and talk about anarchism today.

The Left

The discussion was perhaps hamstrung by the lack of time available to study the discussion papers, which had to be read during the morning plenary session or over lunch. The wide mandate given by the title of the workshop was also a problem, for example, what constitutes the Left? political parties? union bureaucracy? even the rank and file?

The workshop was fairly large (about thirty) and dominated by the vocal minority. As a result, debate was too abstract often amounting more to a statement of position than actual argument. However, some broad consensus was reached that anarchists were not part of the left and were ideologically independent of it despite a coincidence of interests at certain times.

The main body of discussion revolved around two opposing views as expressed in two discussion papers on 'Autonomy' (a fashionable term these days) concerning either co-operation or confrontation with the left. Argued mainly within the terms of the workers' movement, the 'class war' anarchists had most to say.

'Purists' argued that any concession led to an apology for reformism and a betrayal of revolutionary principles. On the other hand, the point was made that ideology and tactics should be kept separate and that co-operation within the (reformist?) campaigns of the left could be useful to us as anarchists in terms of greater effectiveness and a wider dissemination of anarchist/libertarian views.

The workshop ended with both these views relatively intact and the protagonists relatively unconvinced of each others views.

Ireland

The large attendance at this workshop reflected the general feeling that anarchists in mainland Britain should be more actively involved in this issue. This was underlined by requests for support from anarchist comrades in Ireland.

Through lack of time, the workshop concentrated on whether we should support the campaign for political status for Republican prisoners or not.

The general impression of the workshop was that we could not give uncritical support to such a campaign for several reasons. First, as one speaker pointed out, "our enemies' enemies are not necessarily our friends", because the war in Northern Ireland is a struggle between an established government (Britain) and an emerging proto-government (the Republican Movement). Second, separate status for 'political prisoners' is divisive with other prisoners (so-called 'criminals'), yet in anarchist terms all prisoners are political prisoners, in that they are in general working class victims of state-capitalist oppression. We should therefore demand 'political status' for all prisoners to underline our analysis of crime, punishment and the state, thus exposing the use of imprisonment for what it really is.

Similarly, it was felt by some regarding the Troops Out! campaign, that we should not only press for the withdrawal (and disbandment) of British troops from Northern Ireland,

but also the withdrawal and disbandment of 'provisional' and national armies world-wide. An anti-recruitment campaign was one useful activity suggested for groups in Britain.

However, many other areas of interest were not covered through lack of time, and, as a result, few concrete proposals were produced as to how we could help our anarchist comrades in Ireland who are working under extremely difficult circumstances, that are hard to grasp from the relative comfort of mainland Britain. The possibility of organising an anarchist conference specifically about Ireland was raised, so that the many facets of this problem could be more fully examined, and how we, as anarchists, relate to it.

Students

This workshop was also well attended - not surprisingly as at least one quarter of those attending the conference were students. Again, lack of time and a somewhat rambling approach meant that many topics did not receive proper consideration (if at all), making it somewhat difficult to summarise this workshop.

There was plenty to discuss. Topics such as the nature of student privilege, student/anarchist attitudes and activities in the NUS, student unions and student newspapers, the relationship of students to the community in general, and various forms of direct action - rent strikes, examination boycotts, mutual aid in the face of financial cuts, work-ins and sit-ins etc - all got a brief mention. In fact there seemed so much more to discuss in greater depth that Keele

Anarchists have offered to host a Conference on Students and Anarchism at Keele University in November or December later this year. Also, FREEDOM are devoting a review section to this subject to coincide with the beginning of the Autumn Term. Contributions gratefully received!

All in all, there seemed to be no lack of ideas or enthusiasm to carry them out. Perhaps the university authorities are in for a hot time next term!

Propaganda

As the advertised workshop was not listed on the programme on the Sunday afternoon, and it was the main reason I'd trekked to Oxford, I asked what had happened to it. It was then added to the schedule and so, when it came around, it was assumed that I knew something about the subject and I was asked to open the discussion. I did this by saying in two or three sentences virtually everything I knew about it. I explained the separate concepts of propaganda, counter-propaganda and anti-propaganda. For instance, propaganda is "Join the Army". Counter-propaganda is an opposing statement, such as "Stop War". Anti-propaganda is that which tends to demystify the original propaganda or its counter, such as "War kills people like you".

We then discussed the relative value of anti- and counter-propaganda in promoting anarchy. We generally agreed that it was essential to keep our own counter-propaganda in the public eye so that people are aware

of our opposition to the system, but that it was of vital importance to aim our efforts at showing people the lies perpetrated by it. One person thought the essential point was to expose 'the truth', but we thought that the concept of 'truth' was dangerous territory. Also it was a danger that, given existing conditions, some people, on being shown the truth about, for instance, war, might be eager to get involved in it.

We also touched on the problems of cultural conditioning and the resulting antipathy of most people to any political statement, and whether there were ways to inspire revolutionary change in people, other than by using anti-propaganda, because even that is a form of propaganda, and people will resist it as such. We finished the discussion looking for ways to overcome general antipathy to thought and ideas, even (or especially) in the form of anti-propaganda, and most of us seemed keen to learn more about what we had been discussing, for the most part in the dark.

Psychiatry

The Psychiatry Workshop was called for by two members of a group for the Promotion of the Rights of Mental Patients in Therapy (PROMPT) which is a member of the Anti-Psychiatry League (APL). There was rather a disappointingly small turn-out for the discussion, considering that psychiatry can be, and is, used by the state as a powerful weapon to control those that it deems to be 'deviant' - especially

in a political sense.

The discussion was wide ranging and touched on subjects such as the ways in which society causes mental illness; how most people can be fitted into one category or another of 'mental illness' and how people rely on the medical profession to deal with such problems rather than look for their own solutions. There was also reference to the way in which doctors treated people with drugs, and even by inducing convulsions with electricity rather than trying to help them find solutions to their problems. Once in a mental hospital a person is faced either with return to the society which made them ill in the first place, or a long stay in a hospital with the inevitable onset of institutionalisation and the loss of the will to independent existence.

There was a discussion about how, if at all, anarchists should deal with people who prove to be disruptive to communal life or who suddenly become violent or suicidal. It was an interesting and informative workshop, but I thought it was rather unfortunate that there was no discussion of the central contention of PROMPT that mental illness does not exist and hence that there is no need for psychiatry or psychiatrists at all.

If anyone would like to get in touch with PROMPT's emergency service telephone 01 693 0011 between 3 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Mon, Wed or Fri.

Lib Ed *LONGER REVIEW TO FOLLOW LATER!*



Of, or against, the Left?

1

Dear FREEDOM

It's a pity this question still has to be asked in a journal like FREEDOM. Anyone who genuinely wants the revolutionary overthrow of modern capitalism - the state, wage-labour, commodity production and hierarchy in social organisation - must be opposed to the Left who are clearly the representatives of STATE CAPITALISM always in practice and nearly always in theory as well. This doesn't mean that we have to disagree with every single thing they say or adopt a personally aggressive attitude to individuals on the Left, but it demands a principled political opposition.

MIKE BALLARD

2

Fellow anarchists,

When faced with two choices always take the third alternative. Anyone who has worked with or lived near Right wingers will of course find Lefties progressive; but, as an anarchist I reject both their ideologies which agree on State co-ercion of the people. The unemployed and young who go to NF and BM marches and so on for the 'thrills' and 'comradeship' are as manipulated as the best intentioned Party paper seller and hack of the Left.

When in opposition the Right is Right and when in opposition the Left is Left. When in power the Right is Fascist and the Left is Stalinist/Trotskyist/Leninist/Marxist despite their previous "organisation around concrete issues and the everyday experiences of oppressed people". The history of their betrayals means for me "don't waste your time with argument, just run 'em out of town". The Labour Party's crocodile tears in opposition are a bad joke (on us), the opportunism of the Left groupuscles and their popular fronts such as RAR/ANL and lately the Anti-nuke Campaign is well known - why not disrupt them and use direct action outside their confines. Crass and

Torress Demolition derby, Persons Unknown Defence, and so on show that specific anarchist activities do not mean 'sectarian irrelevance'. Why did M.S. forget the more recent disruption of the TUC All Out (of ya minds) Day of Inaction meeting at Central Hall. Does he merely want a more progressive Left then Right leadership of the mass-based Parties and TUC or does he want the third alternative: ANARCHY.

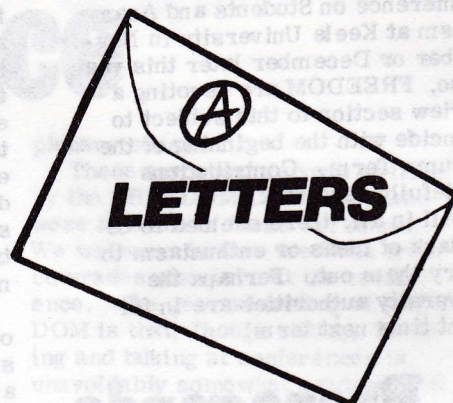
D. Vianti.

3

Dear All,

No doubt Jeff Cloves' abusive diatribe against Martin Spence (FREEDOM vol 41, 12) is all very poetic, but someone needs to tell him it is not anarchism. That the history of anarchism shows not that "anarchism is anarchism and socialism is socialism", but that anarchism (originally called anti-authoritarian collectivism, and called anarchism by its opponents) arose as a form of socialism, combatting the authoritarian implications of another form. That since the beginning there has been a constant influx of new thinkers to anarchism from marxist and other forms of socialism, of people who, starting from different points of objection to some of Marx's central tenets and, like Marx, rejecting such tenets from a standpoint of a predominantly marxist analysis, have reached conclusions more or less compatible with those of Bakunin.

He should be told that history also shows that anarchism has had its greatest support in movements such as the Spanish CNT, the pre-1914 French CGT, the American IWW, the 1911-1918 shop stewards' movement in Britain and the resistance to the two world wars, at times when the demarcations between anarchism and other currents of revolutionary socialism have been blurred. He himself referred to William Morris claiming that modern socialists would be unlikely to give him a warm reception; he does not explain the constant stream of books on



Morris, and he certainly does not note the very decidedly libertarian flavour of Edward Thompson's second biography of Morris - let alone the fact that a number of Edward Thompson's recent writings have reflected the libertarian socialist strain that can be said to descend from Caesar da Paepe, through Morris and the Guild Socialists, Maxton, G.D.H. Cole and others.

No doubt - not just in Jeff Cloves' lifetime, but since the birth of stalinism and "national socialism" - movements masquerading as socialist have become the major enemies of freedom; but there has never been a time when anarchists have been alone in opposing such false socialisms. (and to be honest there have been renegades from our ranks who have prostituted the word anarchism to support stalinism - even in Italy, fascism), so again there has been reason to blur the dividing lines between anarchism and the best of the anti-stalinist left (and it is worth recalling that Martin Spence was talking of the left, which embraces the Alternative Society and others who

would not necessarily use the term socialist any more than us), to see anarchism as currents within a wider whole. No doubt all anarchists, Martin Spence no less than anyone else, believe anarchism is the most logical current of the Left, and once having attained unity in action attempt to convert their associates to the full revolutionary position that only anarchism can provide. Such an approach is how an anarchist behaves; Cloves writes as a vanguardist insisting that others join his sect before they act, and vanguardism is the opposite of anarchism.

Fraternally,
Laurens

Misery

Dear Editor,

The way things are going in Britain suits me fine. The Conservatives are steadily increasing the misery of the people. Unemployment and cuts in local authority's allowance. The public are not to know or understand why. Well the billions of loans given by the International Misery Fund was given on these conditions. Reduce Public Welfare or else no money. The Conservatives are steadily destroying the Welfare State. Yes my friend the veterans of 1939 to 1945 fought for nothing. Lord Beveridge offered you something to fight for. You got it. But 40 years afterwards it was stolen from you. So now you have Tweedle dee in office while Tweedle dum tells them they are wrong. Along come a new bunch of gangsters calling themselves Social Democrats. These are the shysters who failed the German people in the 30s and the Nazis got into power. Then war. I'm laughing at this sorry scheme of things.

Lucifer.

Suck my bum

Dear Comrades,

I am increasingly shocked, outraged and disgusted by the amount of counter-revolutionary shit being thrown about by grotty little oiks like S.E. Parker and EGO who are obviously bloody long-haired intellectuals paid by the Zionist-run CIA to sap the red-blooded virility of the true heterosexual working class whom I had the honour to command in the last war and who are at present kicking the coons up the arse in Afghanistan as per normal. I suggest that those two lumps of congealed cowdung, Parker and EGO, should get a damned good whipping and be put in revolutionary people's democratic army, where they would be made to do an honest day's work for a change. There is nothing wrong with a damn good whipping: in fact when I can't get anyone to whip me, I whip myself - regularly! No further drivelling petty bourgeois deviationism will be tolerated! In fact any comrade who fails to suck my bum with sufficient enthusiasm on this or

any other subject will be shot and deprived of his civil rights.
Your obedient servant,
Lt-Col Lev Bronstein (retired)
'Icepick View', Gulag Gardens,
Stalingrad-on-Sea.

Would those people involved or interested in the Individualism debate please refrain from writing any more letters on the subject because the letters page is getting too cluttered, and quite frankly it's also getting boring. Anyone who feels however that there is something of great import to be said could perhaps write us an article to be considered for the Review.

Eds...

GRAFFITI CURNER

(PLEASE KEEP SENDING
THEM IN)

DON'T VOTE
DON'T STRIKE
DON'T DEMONSTRATE
DON'T LOCKS
GLUE UP



YOU THE
CONSUMER
ARE BEING
CONSUMED....

Sub. Rates

INLAND	£7
OVERSEAS	
- Surface mail	
Canada	C\$18
USA	\$15
- Airmail	
Australasia	£9.50
Canada	C\$22.50
Europe	£8
USA	\$20.



From Carl

Dear Friends,
CONCERNING UTOPIA:

No, we are not perfect and maybe we never will be, but we can always try to be perfect. Ain't nothing wrong with that. In fact the more we try to be perfect the better we will become. If we don't at least try the world will never change....

Have just been returned to the Californian State Prison at San Quentin after two victories around the Washington State Penitentiary. Prisoners including myself won overwhelmingly the Federal Civil Suit around brutality, treatment, and conditions in the penitentiary, and many changes are now in progress there and to come. Also the May 9th, 1979 take-over charges against me were dismissed by the state! I want to thank all of you who supported me and our struggle in Washington. Without you I, especially and others could not have gone on as I, and we did. Guess I am in San Quentin for a good while because Washington State is very angry, smile. Almost all prisoners involved in the Civil Suit have been transferred all over AmeriKKKa, and we are all struggling against it with little hope so far. Doing good and am well here. My address is P.O. Box C-7100, TAMAL, CALIFORNIA 94974, for those who wish to know, and or write. Literature is always appreciated and needed.

Thank you all for everything and I send you all much love from inside the belly of the beast.

Love and Rage,
Carl Harp.

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Darlinghurst, NSW 2010.

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Self-Management Organisation,
P.O. Box 332, North Quay.

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Libertarian Workers for a Self
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Parkville 3052.

South Australia

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Western Australia

Freedom Collective, PO Box 14,
Mount Hawthorn 6016.
Libertarian Resource Centre,
PO Box 203, Fremantle, 6160.

Tasmania

c/o 34 Kennedy Street,
Launceston 7250.

Capital Territory

Research and Resources Centre for
Libertarian Politics and Alternative
Life-Styles, 7/355 Northmore Ave,
Lyneham. ACT. 2602.

NEW ZEALAND

PO Box 2042, Auckland
PO Box 22, 607 Christchurch
Daybreak Bookshop, PO Box 5424
Dunedin.

CANADA

Open Road, Box 6135, Station G,
Vancouver, B.C.

U. S. A.

Arizona

Malicious Hooligans (anti-
nuclear) 1110 W 2nd St.,
Tempe, AZ 85281.

California

Autonomia, PO Box 1751, San
Francisco, CA 94101.
Libertarian Anarchist Coffee-
house, meets last Sunday each
month at Cafe Commons, 3161
Mission St., San Francisco.

Minnesota

Soil of Liberty, Box 7056
Powderhorn Station, Minnea-
polis, Minn. 55407.

URGENT!!!

Sheila Blanchard, please contact
FREEDOM, as we have a letter
for you.

Missouri

Columbia Anarchist League,
PO Box 380, Columbia,
Missouri 65201.

New York

Libertarian Book Club, Box
842, GPO, New York, NY 10012.
SRAE/Freespace Alternative U,
339 Lafayette Street,
New York City, NY 10012.

Texas

Houston SRAE, South Post Oak
Station, PO Box 35253,
Houston, TX 77035.

WESTERN EUROPE

Federal Republic of Germany

Baden: Karin Bauer, Info-
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Berlin: Anarkistisches Bund
(publ. of 'anarkistische
texte'), c/o Gebr. Schmuck,
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153, 1000 Berlin 44.

East Westfalen: (Anarchistische
Föderation Ostwestfalen-Lippe):
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meinschaft Schwarzwurzel,
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4970 Bad Oeyjhausen 2.

'Gewaltfreie Aktion' groups
throughout FRG, assoc. with
WRI. For info. write Karl-
Heinz Sang, Methfesselstr. 69,
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France

Federation anarchiste franç-
aise, 3 rue Ternaux,
75011 Paris. (Groups through-
out France).

Union Anarchiste

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Trapani, via A Tittoni 5,
00153 Roma.

Autogestione, Caselle Postale
17127, I-20100 Milano.

The Netherlands

De Vrije Socialist,
Postbus 411, Utrecht.

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cafe, Mejlsgade 48,
8000 Aarhus.

Copenhagen: Anarkist Syndical-
ist Bogcafe, Studiestræde 18,
1455 Copenhagen.
Rainbow Anarchists of the Free
City of Christiana, c/o Allan
Anarchos, Tinghuset, Fristaden
Christiana, 1407 Copenhagen.

Sweden

Syndikalist Forum, Renstiernas
Gata 51, 11631 Stockholm.

Syndikalistiskt Forum (Anarcho-
Syndicalist bookshop) Husargatans.
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Domesticating Anarchy

FIRST INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ANARCHY (February 18-24, 1980)

These two articles discuss points arising from the Portland Symposium on Anarchism in February this year. A report on this by Caroline Cahm appeared in FREEDOM vol 41 no. 11 (June 7th.). The first piece by Robert d'Attilio an editor of "Black Rose" and first appeared in that magazine. (Spring 1980). The second is a response to that sent to us by David Wieck.

1...

The *First International Symposium on Anarchism* was held the week of February 17-24, 1980 at Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon. During that week, at one time or another, every word in the title was challenged by one person or another. I felt the most telling criticism was delivered by two comrades from Mexico, concerning the use of the word symposium. They said it promised wine, but had delivered only words. Fortunately mutual aid societies sprang up very quickly to meet this need.

At any rate I think it is fair to say that this was the first international symposium on anarchism ever that has been supported so heavily and so openly by the State (in all its guises, federal, regional, local, foreign) and by established institutions. The remarkable list of sponsors, which included among others The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, Clackamas County CETA, Oregon Arts Commission, Northwest Latin American Council for the Arts and Humanities, the French and German embassies, and, of course, Lewis and Clark College, must appear to some old anarchist comrades a sardonic exercise in surrealistic fantasy, but I assure them it was so, though why it was so, I have no idea.

Not only that, but, after accepting aid from its nominal foes, every word—well almost every word—of the Symposium was fearlessly recorded, video-taped, and filmed by somebody or other. The government, if it did not make its own recordings, may buy quite easily a tape of any session—as you may gentle reader—at a reasonable price from the Symposium Committee. Some 75-80 hours of talk. Openness—or was it noise?—with a vengeance. The conspiratorial anarchist did not seem to be in evidence at Portland.

Why did such a symposium take place in the beautiful, but seemingly incongruous city of Portland? It was undoubtedly because the first spark of inspiration was struck by Pietro Ferrua, who teaches at Lewis and Clark. The actual Symposium Committee, who organized/improvised the event (one may choose according to ideological conviction or interpretation of reality), consisted of a mixture of students, symposium staff, faculty (Lewis and Clark), and community (Portland), most of whom, I was told, were not avowed anarchists, though clearly either sympathetic to or interested in anarchism.

The desirability of putting together a symposium on anarchism in a manner consistent with anarchist principles was, I think, generally accepted in theory by the Committee, though when the Symposium began, the rather recalcitrant nature of some anarchists made them point out perhaps too rudely the shortcomings of the Committee's practice.

It did not seem appropriate, whatever aid they might have given, to have flags representing the city, state and federal governments behind the podium during the first day of the Symposium, but this was quickly and discreetly rectified by the use of a convenient curtain. (Though I did not hear any critical comments about flags when, toward the end of the week, the red and black banner was raised several times behind the podium.) And it was certainly indelicate to hold the session on anarchism and feminism in an auditorium which had the names of fifty "great" founders of Western Civilization in large letters on opposite walls—all of them men!—a fact which was quickly noted by the women present. But I think it is fair to note that in these and in other matters where differences and problems developed, the Committee always attempted to deal with them quickly and with great good will, all the more remarkable for the great pressure it was continually under.

The scheduling of the Symposium was clearly overfull; scheduled events ran usually from nine in the morning to ten at night, leaving too little time for socializing, discussion, affinity groups, etc., except at the expense of missing sessions. This overfull schedule in the opinion of some led to a certain lack of "spontaneity," some over-control from the podium and frequently in the beginning, domination of the discussion by the panelists, but by the end of the week freer and often more fruitful dis-

cussions arose from more open procedures.

The contents of the various sessions encompassed theory and practice, contemporary and historical approaches, ideas and art-forms in a fascinating, if not always comprehensible, manner.

The largest audience, an enthusiastic full house of some 4-500, attended a round table on anarchism and literature, undoubtedly attracted by the first lady of science fiction, Ursula Le Guin. She appeared together with playwright Barbara Garson and poet Barbara Drake. Though in my eyes the content of the discussion was rather insubstantial, the readings from their works were quite enjoyable. It was a candidate for the most popular session of the Symposium, and it attracted the most general, least "political" audience of the week.

The next most heavily attended session was the round table on anarchism and feminism. The panelists gave very short and succinct statements of several minutes, all supporting the idea of anarchy-feminism, except for Marianne Enckell, who suggested the phrase may have created more barriers instead of removing them. Stephen Schecter, the only man on the panel, was attempting to rebut Marianne, but was suddenly silenced when it was pointed out to him by a woman that he had spoken longer than all of the female panelists combined. From that somewhat impolite beginning the session then proceeded to become one of the most wide ranging of all sessions and perhaps the first to have the genuine and full participation of all the audience.

The rest of the sessions had generally much smaller audiences, ranging from 20-30 to several hundred, most of whom were people who had come from outside of Portland to specifically attend the conference. I think that outside of some fearful few Portlanders, who were concerned that the Symposium may have been sponsoring seminars in bomb-making, most of the city and the Lewis and Clark campus took the presence of the Symposium and of some 80-100 anarchists within their midst with a great and calm indifference.

There were of course the controversial sessions. To say the least! Perhaps the most passion was released during Arthur Mendel's presentation, a psycho-sexual investigation of Bakunin called "Bakunin's Politics: The Role of Violence and Leninist Organization", when Mendel made some extremely provocative suggestions; e.g., that Leninist vanguardism should be considered more properly descended from Bakunin rather than from Marx (was it more than coincidence that Portland had a shop called Marx Hearing Aids with the motto "Let us help your hearing"?), that Bakunin's calls to revolutionary violence were related more to his sexual impotence than to his political philosophy or analysis. Sam Dolgoff (ed. of *Bakunin on Anarchy*) hurrumped, "It's nonsense," more than once during Mendel's talk, while Arthur Lehning, perhaps the authority on Bakunin, tried to inform Mendel that Bakunin had fathered a child in Siberia. Though Mendel read very extensive selections from the letters of Bakunin to justify his ideas, instructive according to Mendel because of their pre-Freudian innocence in imagery, he was always saying, rather defensively I thought, that he had much more proof in his 700 page manuscript. Since the discussion generated more heat than light, we shall have to wait for the book and see for ourselves.

The session which prompted the most violent response in what was otherwise quite a peaceful week was the one in which the paper of C.R. Kordig, "Future Generations: Some Libertarian Arguments Concerning the Right to Life" was given. In his attempt to present his anti-abortion view, Kordig began by having a bent wire clotheshanger thrown at him (which he in turn threw back), he was continually interrupted, and finally, after he had finished, was told to sit down and let the audience talk; a procedure that would have been welcomed in several sessions, but that was applied, as far as I know, only in this session during the entire week. Kordig's paper was a poor one, poorly reasoned and poorly delivered by the nervous Kordig, but he seems to have had the audience he deserved.

"Anarchism and Religion—Are They Compatible?", a session which I did not attend, also, I understand, generated much heated argument.

Now I have nothing against a certain high spirits, and particularly during symposia, but surely when there are people who do not know each other well and who disagree, it is more appropriate to listen attentively... at least for a little while. It might be noted that the behavior of some anarchists in this respect was not especially praiseworthy. Like many other groups which have had controversial arguments presented to them, anarchists yelled, interrupted, and demonstrated without listening. Though on these occasions there were some who insisted upon the rights of anyone to be heard, they usually had little effect. At times decent behavior seemed as distant as utopia. Without doubt another demonstration that the revolution within will be the hardest to achieve.

More quiet and sober values were also represented in Portland: many well-researched and stimulating papers were given and considered, too many to list and discuss—alas! quiet and sober values usually get short shrift—but I advise interested people that it is well worth their effort to write to the Symposium for their 22 page program of topics and speakers.

The attempt to integrate art, film, theatre, music, dance, and poetry into the program was successful on the whole, both instructive and entertaining.

Here the film program, which had "Anarchists in Film" as its theme, should be singled out for special notice. With the help of a useful pamphlet prepared by Pietro Ferrua, the program presented films daily, a mix of old and new, documentaries and dramatizations, that developed lively discussions, particularly "Rebellion in Patagonia" and "La Cecilia", the first concerning issues involved in direct action and revolution, the second issues involved in setting up a community based upon anarchist principles. The Pacific Street Film Collective also presented the premiere of their film, "The Free Voice of Labor—The Jewish Anarchists", which was one of the most warmly received presentations of the entire Symposium.

And finally the Symposium was quite successful as an occasion to personally exchange ideas and feelings, to begin friendships, and pace! our Mexican friends to drink more than enough wine. (Here in order to give a sense of the geographical scope of the participants at the Symposium I might mention that Latin America, Canada, Western Europe, and the U.S.—mainly the East Coast meeting the West Coast; the Midwest and South did not seem to be on hand in Portland—were the regions that I saw represented.)

Unhappily, a final session evaluating the Symposium and considering the questions that it raised both of content and procedure, which could have been useful if done when impressions were still fresh, (shouldn't an anarchist symposium value the spontaneous as well as the considered?) was not scheduled and, though some suggested it, not arranged. I would imagine this was largely because of lack of time to do so.

Some questions—and this is just a preliminary and very personal list—that might have been discussed are:

How should topics and speakers be chosen for an anarchist conference? (How were they chosen for Portland?)

How should discussions be held, moderated or not? Both?

What is the proper proportion between free and unscheduled time?

Should some of the topics and events have been chosen for the Portland Symposium? (Was ending the Symposium with a Catholic Anarchist Eucharist too ecumenical a concept? an eclecticism too uncritical?)

Was the Portland Symposium too uncritical of anarchism?

As a member of the Symposium Committee said in his closing remarks, words which I felt many were in agreement with, "If there was any message from the past week, it was that a beginning has been made."

It seems to me that putting together an anarchist symposium is a modest but useful way in which the anarchist idea can address itself to contemporary reality. Portland was at least a good beginning, something we should thank the Symposium for, and it now remains for others, if they so wish, to carry on the work they have begun.

—r.d.



Seriousness is

the only refuge

of the shallow.

Wilde

2...

I FIND MYSELF incensed by what I have learned about the 'First International Symposium on Anarchism', Portland, Oregon, February of this year, upon which r.d. reported in the last issue of *Black Rose*; and also by the tone of his report. 'Incensed' is not a state that I enjoy; it tends to be productive of sarcasm, and much good that is. I shall try to work it out, calmly.

My comments will be based upon r.d.'s article, upon materials that he kindly sent me, and conversation with individuals who attended the symposium.

In *Black Rose*, r.d. wrote:

"... I think it is fair to say that this was the first international symposium on anarchism ever that has been supported so heavily and so openly by the State (in all its guises, federal, regional local foreign) and by established institutions. The remarkable list of sponsors, which included among others the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, Clackamas County CETA, Oregon Arts Commission, Northwest Latin American Council for the Arts and Humanities, the French and German embassies, and of course Lewis and Clark College, must appear to some old anarchist comrades a sardonic exercise in surrealistic fantasy, but I assure them it was so though why it was so, I have no idea.

"Not only that, but after accepting aid from its nominal foes, every word - well, almost every word - of the Symposium was fearlessly recorded, vide-taped, and filmed by somebody or other. The government if it did not make its own recordings, may buy quite easily a tape of any session ... Some 75-80 hours of talk ... The conspiratorial anarchist did not seem to be in evidence at Portland."

For an academic event, as we all know, this is routine, perfectly routine: government grants, a 'remarkable' list of sponsors, plenty of tape. But remarkable (also) is the title of r.d.'s report: *Northwest Passages: Notes from an Anarchist Symposium* (emphasis mine); and at the end of his article r.d. engages in meditations on future anarchist conferences and symposia, perhaps on the Portland model, perhaps modified. An anarchist symposium? An anarchist conference? Only as parody. Only as parody.

(1) The situationists provided us with a splendid concept, that of the spectacle, a concept whose validity anarchists recognise immediately - or should. What is indicated by 'spectacle' is the transformation of reality into show - until there is nothing but show, a world of 'experience' about which one can say 'interesting' or 'dull'. Everything is vulnerable to this transformation, anarchism included; one can try to resist it, one can give in to it and cooperate with it. 'Portland', it seems to me, was a show, a carefully planned multi-media event, in which anarchists (and others) played 'themselves'. Slots were provided even for 'affinity groups'. (Once a serious and significant term of French and Spanish anarchists, that term is now, I am afraid, being Americanised as catchphrase). And what is more fitting - more delightfully paradoxical! - than to conclude the week-long event with a 'Catholic Anarchist Eucharist'.

Anarchists at work - on display. I do not mean that merely figuratively. Twenty five thousand dollars of US Government money - National Endowment for the Humanities - money acquired by taxation, was provided for filming the show so that, perchance, an edition of it will one night appear on Public Television. 'Look at the anarchists! See how they play!' No, I do believe that the film makers are good people; they won't say that. But that is what their show will say: this will be the spectacle of a spectacle.

(About the Eucharist, by the way. I do not believe that 'Catholic anarchist' is a contradiction in terms - if it means rejection of churchly government as well as secular government. But identification of anarchism with a religion - or, simply, with religion - is gross falsification).

(2) Who sponsored and who paid? R.d. has told us about that, rather airily. (No, it would not have occurred to me to take his story as 'surrealistic fantasy'. More than a few years ago, some of us found in the title of a book by Henry Miller, about America, *The Air Conditioned Nightmare*, a phrase that stayed with us). But consider what this payment and sponsorship signify. Anarchists have always said that governments are evil and unnecessary, and to prove it Peter Kropotkin wrote a whole book about non-governmental mutual aid. Once upon a time there were proletarian anarchists, "lacking only ninety nine cents to make a dollar", who managed to support their press and to put on their forums; as proletarians, they expected to build their movement with their own hands, how else. Governments, anarchists continue to say, corrupt everything that they touch, even the best causes. Perhaps the words are not to be taken seriously?

(3) Who managed this theatre? Who recruited an international collaboration of anarchists? A person who is available for employment as translator for 'heads of state'. Among the heads he has served, as shown in photographs supplied to a Portland newspaper, are a president of Italy (!), a chief justice of Brazil (!), a king of Belgium (!). I make no comment on Pietro Ferrua's politics or motives - I merely note the irony.

(4) But I am not done with the sponsors, perhaps the sorest point of all. In his haste, r.d. did not say which Germany was sponsor - perhaps because he thought it self-evident. If the reader guessed 'East Germany', the reader was of course wrong. I single out this item because I wonder whether anarchist participants in the symposium - not all were anarchists by any means - would have remained if, instead, the East German government had appeared on the symposium's official programme as sponsor. Or perhaps the Cuban government! (Just one typed line, on the sponsor list, inside front cover of the programme, separates Sam Dolgoff's name from "West Germany (Embassy, Washington, D.C.)", a government notorious for its brutal persecution of anarchists in addition to its even more savage revenge on the Red Army Fraction revolutionists whom it deliberately mislabelled 'an anarchist gang'. No doubt that sponsorship was a mere 'courtesy' relative to some technical or financial assistance; no matter, the symbolism, the message of it, is intolerable, above all because I can imagine the uproar if 'Germany' had been the 'wrong' Germany.

Should a Marxist say to me, "Anarchism shows its true colours!" I would answer "No! Not the colours of anarchism. The colour of the anarchist flag is black - it says No state". But I would blush, or bite my lip.

In one beautiful phrase, I am sure utterly unconscious, r.d. (as quoted above) says it all. The - what shall I call them? - 'helpful' governments - are 'nominal foes' of anarchism. Nominal! - which means, 'in name only', 'not really'. Good grief! What else is this, except the domestication of anarchism? If anarchists, by definition of the term, agree on something it is surely the denial of the validity of any state. I know that the Spanish revolution - where 'anarchists' became government ministers and discovered the charms of it - taught (some) anarchists to choose sides in international wars, quite like old Karl Marx, who was forever choosing nations. But denial by 'anarchists', in practice, of the soundness of anarchist theory of government, even more than the defeat of the revolution, was the demise of an anarchist movement.

(5) Who gained by the Portland symposium? The largest profiteers, I would think, are the American and allied states, part of whose business it is to maintain an exact inventory of their 'foes', nominal or otherwise (and - possibly useful). If some governments are trustworthy and capable of nice distinctions between 'conspiratorial' and 'non-conspiratorial' anarchists, then why worry. But unless anarchists are merely 'philosophical anarchists', for whom anarchism is nothing more than the speculative conception of a human ideal they are proposing something that governments should not like and in fact very much do not like: in one form or another, disaffiliation with the state. (Never mind that the anarchists might be the most non-violent of the non-violent). Friends, those

governments are dangerous - though you are not conspiratorial, they are.

... Only as parody. Not otherwise. And I am sad that various good people - for whatever reasons - got caught up in this affair.

* * *

Obviously, my unhappiness about 'Portland' is that of an 'old' anarchist comrade, of the type that r.d. heads off at the pass. Worse, the present communication is a 'serious' communication. By that I am alluding to the half page of Black Rose, left open at the end of r.d.'s report, which is filled by a quotation from Oscar Wilde: "Seriousness is the only refuge of the shallow". I don't think that Oscar would be happy at this co-optation; about certain things he was serious needed. Read, some time, that fine libertarian tract, *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*; or, by the same author, *Reading Gaol*. Simone de Beauvoir, who did much to popularise the evils of the 'serious person', is one of the most serious people of whom I know, in a good sense of that term. But it's a commonplace, isn't it, that feminists, also, are 'too serious'. Is one embarrassed to be earnest about anarchism, lest someone laugh?

I am particularly unhappy because I think I have perceived, in the dismal swamp of our dying millenium - why not be dramatic about it, the seasons ahead may be terrible indeed - a certain growth of anarchist consciousness, an infinitesimal growth measured against the standard politics and the power of the institutions, but perhaps a point of departure. I am thinking of people who are presently dealing with problems of work, community, school, living, violence, in an essentially anarchist spirit, and are trying to resist 'the system', the state, the economic tyrannies, the degradation of people, the life-destructive corporate and governmental habits, the computer-minds that cannot even compute their follies correctly - I am thinking of people dealing with all this, resisting and building, in an essentially anarchist mode. (Some call themselves anarchists, quite a few. Some don't). It seems to me that there is need for a stronger network of solidarity and cooperation, loose is good, among people of anarchist conviction, a solidarity through which fertile discussion and controversy would occur and from which a serious campaign of anarchist education could grow. For that, anarchism, conscious of what it is, requires plain statement, clear statement.

On the one hand, the Libertarian Party has appropriated a bit of anarchism - the narrow theme of 'liberty', of exemption from governmental infringements of individual liberties, hardly anything of a positive sociality or of concern for the cancelled lives - that stubbornly refuse to die! - in the Lower Depths. This is not an anarchism of mutual aid; it is the resentment of the lesser propertied. On the other hand, some Marxists seek to appropriate the anarchist image of 'free sociality' by softening their traditional authoritarianism, at least verbally. (By 'free sociality' I mean not only 'libertarian communism' but other anarchist concepts of a life of mutual aid). No doubt, the more libertarian the Marxists become, the more one can hope that they will cease to act like 'Marxists' and begin to act like anarchists. One can hope. And then there is something still more serious than such appropriation of anarchist 'themes'. The still worse is that anarchism, as the negation of statism, comes to be used as a small but inexpensive weapon in the arsenal of US imperialism, that statism of the rich, forever the defender of 'freedom'. (By 'US imperialism' I refer of course to the US/Japanese/West German multi-national coalition and its economic empire). This is where the themes of 'nominal enmity', sponsorship and financing, the domestication of anarchism, and government profiteering come together.

Anarchism needs plain statement, to distinguish it from what it is not and to provide a base from which to confront the present hard realities. (How deceptively simple the world seemed, only a century ago!) The archaeology of anarchism - the main emphasis of 'Portland', to judge from the programme - is not entirely useless. It depends on where and how and why you dig, and what you make of it. But anarchism has to be a look into the future, as future presents itself in the present, a looking that cannot be disconnected from doing; or else it is nostalgia, or a topic for 'humanities' scholarship. Plain statement! Conferences and symposia, like people, make statements. I do believe that some fine intentions

were embodied in 'Portland' and that some good things were done. But the statement that 'Portland' conveys to me is a statement about anarchism - not an anarchist statement - and its statement about anarchism is a statement thoroughly out of joint. (*)

* * *

At this point, when I am almost done with my complaints - let me say, done - and not feeling happy about them, the sound of my voice is not pleasing to my ears, I walk downstairs and look out the front door. Directly ahead at eye-level, fifteen feet away, in a low branch of a pine, I notice, for the first time, three nestling robins - or is it four? the nest is crowded - pecking their feathers while waiting for a parent to bring food, which the parent shortly does. To think, that we were considering cutting down the tree! (Is this sentimental? But I did not make it up, it just now happened). That life there is affirming itself, in its way. I could go on for a bit about the well-crafted nest, and the nestlings, soon to outgrow it, who are clambering over one another in unequal rivalry. But I would not want to rob the birds of their reality by making a parable of them, even had I talent for it.

Our affair, I think, as human beings, is to affirm life, by caring for it. If we care for it we try to affirm what is real - creative engagement with the world, and the mutual aid. How shall we call our brothers and sisters, ourselves, to the practice of simple, direct mutual aid? How encourage our friends, and find courage for ourselves? Our mutual aid must consider all the life of the earth; so it is not just human life we need affirm. Yet our actions of affirmation, our speech included, must be simple, and direct, unequivocal, and done in trust that help will come. How much energy is needed, sometimes, to clear for life even a small clearing, energy of which our selves are not the source, that we can only try to release in actions of community, by desisting from opposing our best nature as one breathes by letting oneself breathe. (Anarchy is an image of the proliferation of such clearings, each rich with life). Can we summon that energy, with the help of friends, and use it - earnestly, not joylessly, as friends, not without play and laughter? Will we do so? - freed from our own violence and fascination with power?

(*) I want to say something here about anarchism and Marxism - relative to 'appropriation of themes' - but it is perhaps best confined to a footnote. I believe, and have said and written it on many occasions, that Marxism and anarchism represent philosophically distinct and incompatible alternatives. But I have not found all anarchists to be virtuous or all Marxists scoundrels. Historically, anarchism became a distinct movement in the division, subsequent to the First International, between 'legalists' and 'illegalists', 'political action' and 'direct action', 'gradualism' and 'revolution'. Increasingly, then, anarchists emphasised the themes of decentralism, voluntarism, communalism. (Just what these mean cannot be explored enough; nor questions of means). In the case of Marxism, what Lenin added, it turned out, was a strictly military model of 'revolution', or conquest of power; a model developed further by Mao, and particularly adapted to Third World countries. That military model calls for a nationalistic rather than a class base (thereby abandoning Marx, at least in part); when successful it produces a 'state socialism' that is hardly distinguishable from 'state capitalism', a kind of 'token socialism', that might best be characterised as neo-feudal capitalism. (This model is easily adapted by political persons without any allegiance to classical socialism). This is what we usually think of as Marxism. But many people call themselves Marxists only because, or mainly because, Marx has acquired the name of father of socialism, especially of a 'scientific' socialism; while anarchism has about it an air of failure and incoherence. (The hard work of anarchists in several countries has begun to change that 'image'). Now, I do not know whether there is a transit from Marx to anarchism via Luxemburg or via Gramsci. I do know that the style of Marxist politics is such that the politics is not a school for anarchism, except by negation of it; though it should be added that the style of anarchist politics often leaves a great deal to be desired. The one point of which I feel sure is that in the absence of good, clear, forceful statement of anarchism, Marxism, in its different varieties, will continue to seem to be the ground for encounter, to many fine radical people. And this is too bad. D.W.

Secret Police

"Big Brother or Democracy" edited by Pat Flanagan, for
Dept. of Continuing Education,
Uni. of Adelaide, 1980.

With the 1979 ASIO* legislation now in force (from June, 1980) the argument about Australia's secret service might appear to be over. But for a small group of activists the passage of the Bill through Parliament and into law was inevitable once "the stinking corpse of social democracy" as exemplified by the bulk of the ALP* indicated that its only concern was to improve the 'efficiency' of the 'spooks'. It was, ironically, the same Lionel Murphy who later invaded the sanctity of ASIO files, who cast the decisive vote in 1971 against a motion proposing the ALP make abolition of ASIO part of official policy. One wonders what his view is now.

But surely this slim, new volume from the Department of Continuing Education in Adelaide doesn't rehash the tired old, radical-left arguments about Kerr's dismissal of Whitlam being part of a CIA-engineered plot. Worse, it argues a connection between the overseas secret services with ASIO and the ruling groups in Australia going back to the 1940's, and even draws analogies between the Gestapo, the KGB and our own dear bumblefooted 'trenchcoats'. The editor, Pat Flanagan, goes to the logical extremity of this view suggesting that Hitler's Final Solution for the Jews is a thinkable possibility for the unemployed.

Surely this is preposterous!

Sadly, no. The authors argue convincingly, and now wait for further evidence that we, indeed, live in 'dark times'.

Much of this material has been published before, being texts of radio-broadcasts, or letters and articles, 'running despatches from the front line of the (anti-ASIO) campaign,' (p 2) conducted mainly in Melbourne and Adelaide in 1979. There is some overlapping and repetition and the whole can be read at a sitting. It is nevertheless substantial and may, just may, unsettle you.

In his Introduction, Flanagan surveys the changes which have occurred with respect to the nature of secret political police (SPP) and the character of their operations in the last century or so since Kropotkin wrote:

"..When one thinks of the thousands of villains going about the world in the pay of all governments, and very often well paid for their villainies, of the traps they lay for all sorts of artless people, of the vast sums of money thrown away in the maintenance of that army which is recruited in the lowest strata of society and from the population of the prisons, of the corruption of all sorts which they pour into society at large, nay even into families, one cannot but be appalled at the immensity of the evil which is done.... (quoted p 3)

Flanagan comments that the 'general and specific aims and methods of secret political police throughout the world remain in essence unchanged, namely:

".. the defence of the dominant power relations and institutions of the prevailing social order in general and within that general project, the specific gaining and exercising by SPP organisations of increased, uncontrolled power." (p 3)

With regard to this aim, SPP organisations around the world have achieved vastly increased powers 'vis-a-vis other organs of State and over the general populace.'

Likewise the means to these ends remains essentially unchanged:

*ASIO = Australian Security and Intelligence Organization

*ALP= Australian Labor Party

"the indiscriminate repression of the exercise of critical intelligence by social critics and movements seeking a more rational, just egalitarian and libertarian social order." (p 4)

More specifically, 'torture and imprisonment, job victimisation... mental and physical violence, harassment and intimidation manipulation and control.' (p 4) Developments have occurred however in the increased recruitment of SPP from among the better educated and in the sophistication of the instruments and techniques available to the KGB, BOSS (South Africa) MI5/M16, MOSSAD (Israel), ASIO, ASIS, (etc) and/or SAVAK (Shah's Iran), etc.

Bruce McFarlane sets out how ASIO, under Justice Reed, was established by the 1949 Labour Government and the part played in the establishment by British security. Menzies replaced Reed with the tough, right-winger Colonel Spry and made possible the Petrov defection which split the ALP, destroyed the then party-leader Dr. Evatt, and prevented the almost certain win of Labour in 1954. Whether or not Menzies knew of Petrov before 1954, which he claimed he did not, ASIO certainly did, for some years, and clearly acted as a power unto themselves, in a politically biased way. The details of the post-election Royal Commission into security in Australia with regard to treatment of witnesses and evidence are scandalous, or would be if one was naive enough to expect anything else from a Commission made up of 3 Judges, 2 hand-nicked by Menzies. (p 15) Concluding this section McFarlane suggests 'several hundred' academics, public servants and others were victimised by ASIO in Australia's own McCarthy-style period of media and Government manipulated hysteria following the Petrov defection. Elsewhere in this book (p 148) Joan Coxsedg sets out the details of one such similar case of victimisation, taken from 1979.

In a very grim chapter, appropriately headed 'Dark Times' Flanagan argues for the necessary antagonism of the SPP to 'genuine' democracy, which for him is only comprehensively possible in 'an anarchist, that is a libertarian socialist' society. (p 60) He draws on two 'extreme, fully explicit forms of totalitarianism' Bolshevik Russia and Nazi Germany, to illustrate the centrality of the SPP to both the horrors and the decline of such democratic features as existed previously. In the case of Russia he says:

"I would agree with Victor Serge that the creation by the Bolsheviks in 1918 of the Cheka (forerunner of the GPU and the KGB) was one of the principal causes of the digging of the grave of the Russian Revolution." (p 88) The establishment of the Cheka, despite perilous conditions, Serge argues was unnecessary.

The German secret service, in a symbiotic relationship with the KGB of just a few years later despite alleged ideological differences, 'played a crucial role in the Nazis gaining and consolidating power', but more importantly it has to be noted that this role was only possible because of their (the SPP) already entrenched position (p 67).

And what did Hitler do with his major problem - 'the unwanted Jews, East Europeans' (p 72). He and his colleagues introduced the 'Final Solution' of the gas chambers. In contemporary capitalist terms, who are the 'unwanted,' 'the problem people'. Why, the unemployed their numbers dramatically increased as the contradictions of capitalism reassert themselves.

continued over

".. (Just) as with the Nazi case, given the requirements imperatives of machine production for profits, there can be but one 'honest, decent, loyal' ...' final solution to the problem of the unemployed: the concentration and extermination camp." (p 75)

Recognising that resistance is crucial to the prevention of such a prediction coming about, Flanagan reiterates the job-victimisation and technological harassment and repression arguments emphasising the relevance of the West German (Berufsverbote, for example,) experience and that of Northern Ireland.

Several of the authors (which are those already mentioned and Peter Cochrane and Jim Jose) point out implications of the choice made by Justice Hope's Report recommendations of 1973, which effectively made legal that which he had found to be already going on, illegally. Faced with a similar choice because of Nixon's buggings and break-ins the US political system opted (if only for show) to jail him and his co-conspirators. In Australia, ASIO, ASIS, DSD, ONA, JIO and now the Protective Services Co-ordination Centre (as umbrella for Australia's SAS etc.) (see the 'Bulletin' May 13, 1987) have been given virtual carte-blanche to engage in phone-taps, mail interception and surveillance and harassment of uncharged persons.

How long before the evidence for activities similar to the bribes, blackmail and murder of the US SPP, or to mass extermination of the Chile, KGB, Gestapo, etc., spooks becomes a part of Australia's heritage.

The hypocrisy of media and State reactions to the Hilton (1978) and 1975 election campaigns pseudo-terrorist incidents when compared to their complicity in the violence which 'is the very basis of our society' (p 110) is patent, and underlined, as the authors point out, by the constantly re-occurring events of State-violence:- Hiroshima, Biafra, Korea, Vietnam, the Congo, East Timor, Northern Ireland, etc.. etc., just to take the last 40 years or so.

There is much more of importance and substance to this book of just 160 pages. At \$2 (plus postage, direct from the publishers) you can not afford to be without it.

BOB JAMES



Charlotte

This is a belated review of the Cienfuegos Press New Anarchist Library pamphlet "Three Essays on Anarchism" by Charlotte Wilson (24 pages, 60p) which appeared late last year.

The three essays reproduced in this pamphlet were all written in 1886 when Charlotte Wilson was a leading light in the small Anarchist contingent of the Fabian Society, which at the time included Anarchism as part of Socialist thought in general.

The pamphlet comes in a very attractive purple and gold cover but unfortunately the printing quality inside is not what it should be for 60p and the layout is positively sloppy. A little proofreading would also have helped. However this is a minor gripe and does not detract from the quality of the writing.

There is what seems to be a very well researched introduction to Charlotte Wilson's life and ideas, by Nicolas Walter, followed by the three essays - 'Anarchism' (from 'What Socialism Is' - Fabian Tract IV), 'The Aims and Principles of Anarchists' (from 'The Present Day') and 'Social Democracy and Anarchism' (from 'The Practical Socialist').

As a whole the pamphlet is an excellent introduction to the basic ideas of Anarchism even though some of the language is a bit dated and formal. Its appeal is intellectual rather than physical and those looking for hints on the dialectics of class struggle and urban guerilla techniques will be disappointed, but she does successfully point the finger very simply and directly at the principal social evils. She also elaborates in the same simple and direct manner her vision of an anarchist society. The pamphlet doesn't have a lot to say to committed anarchists but it is very readable and would probably be a good pamphlet for people expressing a passing interest in politics in general or Anarchism in particular. Unfortunately it's not the sort of thing that the average prole is going to want to read, but then it doesn't try to be. Charlotte Wilson was addressing herself mainly to her fellow middle-class intellectuals in the Fabian Society, and it shows.

The first essay gives a brief outline of the nature of Property and Authority and their protection by Law and

states her belief in a free society where "labour becomes pleasure, and its produce a work of art". She also makes a few passing attacks on Collectivism (what we call State Socialism).

The second essay develops the theme slightly and counters the argument that organized authority is essential for efficient production. She also develops her attack on the will to dominate, and property and law as the principal forms of expression of this. She does wander into some dangerous territory about natural law and society's moral codes, but thankfully not for long.

The third essay is a sustained and vicious attack on what were then called Social Democrats but what most Anarchists now call "the left" - from the Labour Party to Trotsky and all stops between. Its accuracy and bite are surprisingly relevant almost 100 years after it was written and virtually predicts the tragedies of Russia, China, Cuba etcetera ad nauseam. The essay then trails off into an unnecessarily lengthy diatribe on morals and law which gives away her intellectual bent and only makes a passing reference to action of any sort. She advocates the use of force to overthrow monopoly but she doesn't seem to know how to translate her words into action - which is because she never did. Her activity was always intellectual. She does, however, qualify convincingly her statement that monopoly can be overthrown by force, by saying that "social re-formation is the work of silent growth."

Perhaps the best recommendation for this pamphlet is just to leave you with a couple of nice excerpts and let you read it for yourself.

"Anarchism is the conscious recognition that the... tendency towards domination... is, and always has been, fatal to real social union, whether the coercion it implies be justified on the plea of superior strength or superior wisdom, of divine right or necessity, of utility or expedience, whether it takes the form of force or fraud, of exacted conformity to an arbitrary legal system or an arbitrary ethical standard, of open robbery or legal appropriation of the universal birthright of land and the fruits of social labour."

"Social democracy (the left) in every land is thus setting out for the new Jerusalem, along the same old muddy political tracks, of which some of us are so weary, and the Holy City to which it aspires, is to be built up of the old bricks and mortar of property and authority: but the bricks are to be set the other way up and refaced so as to look smart from the outside."

Not bad for 1886.

DSH

No Returns To Chickentown

PETER GOOD on driving buses now and after the Revolution.

IN the old days when Harold Wilson was in power and everyone was happy and the pound hovered around \$2.80 and good old George Brown was sorting out the housing crisis we used to have a bus conductor at the Blackburn Depot called QBB (Quick off the Bell Brown).

QBB's speciality was to stand nonchalantly on the platform with his finger poised over the bell. As some last minute passenger made a desperate dive for the bus down would come the finger, the driver's clutch would lurch out and the poor old sod ended up a crumpled heap in the gutter. His other trick was to throw a chain across the staircase and announce to boarding passengers that the upstairs had just been painted and he 'd have them all huddled together downstairs so that he could collect the fares more easily. The fact of it was that no one ever called his bluff. Most folk will accept orders from any idiot in a peaked cap anyway. To do otherwise is to be branded a troublemaker, an outside agitator or whatever the current euphemism is at the time.

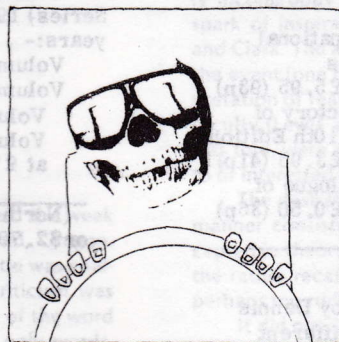
Nowadays of course old QBB's job has been work studied and nearly all buses are run on OMO (One Man Operated) where the driver collects the fares, issues tickets, answers queries, loads the luggage, ignores the drunks and keeps a sharp eye open for inspectors.

In the main no one travels by bus unless they have to. Buses tend to be infrequent, late, smelly and all too often OMO drivers tend to adopt an "I'm-doing-you-a-bleeding-favour-letting-you-on-this-bus" attitude. Subsequently our passengers tend to be the pensioners, shoppers and punk rockers paying half fares to the city centre pubs. Anyway it's so much more 'convenient' by car and at least you can choose who you sit next to.

Traditionally the buses have been run on overtime. Before the days of the Road Traffic Act drivers would often work 18 hour days to make up a pitiful basic

wage. We still have a lousy basic wage and although we are legally restricted in the hours we work we are oh so dependent on our 'grab' to get a decent weekly wage. Sitting behind my wheel, a fag in my mouth and developing a healthy paunch I often ponder on the state of my health. Our depot can be roughly divided into those who have had their first heart attack (or high blood pressure or arse trouble or back complaints) and still young enough not to have encountered them. The younger lads (with kiddies, maybe a mortgage or a car to pay off) clock up all the grab while the over 45s are often on doctor's orders to "take it easier for a while" and do a straight 40 hour week.

CHICKENTOWN



PAY
ON
ENTRY

I'm not all that certain where the strain comes from but strain it is. Most nights I arrive home only to snooze in front of the television barely aware of the lies on 'News at Ten' and in my bed my dreams are of inspectors and irate passengers with half an ear open for the Westiclox ringing me awake at sparrowfart. Basically bus drivers are employed on a status not a little above that of common shit.

Turnover is high and should you drop down dead on the job one is acutely aware that you'll be merely struck off the rosta and forgotten. But you carry on because there's nothing else. Perhaps a true definition of having full working class credentials is when you are in a dead end job and YOU KNOW there is no escape. When will it all end? Surely I can't go on week after week, month after month ending up out for the count in some intensive care unit.

But one is privileged in a way driving a bus. You see it all. From the sad depressing council estates to the golf club car parks choc a bloc with Volvos on a Wednesday morning (are they all on shift work?) And it hits you time after time. Success can be measured by the degree to which you are able to are able to insulate yourself from the rabble. In your early twenties you mortgage your soul for a terraced house and pray that inflation continues to rocket on and if you keep your nose clean you can eventually work yourself up to some detached palace out in the sticks. Out there the town centre comprehensive with their child minder teachers can go to the wall while your kids are OK in the old grammar school "where they make them work". And no more will the drunks ramble past your front door and snotty-nosed kids won't piss on your step and you've made it mate and good luck to you that's what I say ...

But come come, we are getting bitter and twisted aren't we. If driving a bus for a living is that bloody awful how are we going to to run them after the Revolution when everyone will be happy and the sun will always shine ...

Listen mate it will work! Today you breed nothing but failures, you waste our resources, you drive people to incapacity and on to their deaths on the false promises of wealth and security. Most of all you have succeeded in killing off people's minds so that at best they tick over at maybe 10 per cent of their true potentials and they lead lives of stodge tucked up safe on large estates watching television sets.

continued over

NO RETURNS TO CHICKENTOWN (cont.)

I'd do my stint running buses after the Revolution; in fact I'd do a hell of a lot more and there are thousands like me who'd do the same. My conditions are simple, obvious and honest. I want to feel part of my bus. I want to own the fucking thing. I want to lay carpets and put in seats of hard wearing luxury. I want a coffee machine and a magazine rack and why not, I want fine music on the last bus out of town at night. I want to put brass rails and handles and spray the

bodywork in Royal Purple. And I want help from the thousands of neglected souls that make up our subnormality and long stay psychiatric wards. Christ I personally know scores of people who would give their eye teeth to earn a notch in this society, never mind an anarchist one. Why can't each bus stop have its own little porter's lodge with flower beds and someone to help the aged off and collect the mail and wipe the windscreen and advise folk on various routes? It all helps to add up to the richness and variety of an anarchist society and it's all we've got to hope for and we've got to work for it fast.

And it does worry me for we still seem to be head on for yet another war. Christ, we've had about 3,600 wars or major skirmishes since recorded history began and it's been the rabble that has allowed those insulated successes up there to lead us into new areas of economic growth, new areas of national interest and new ways of killing each other off. Everyone believes that come the big bang they'll be on the right side of the crater lip but those up there know differently and if they didn't their millions spent on insulated dungeons wouldn't be shrouded under the Official Secrets Act. Would it?

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