

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

1 MARCH 1980
Vol 41 No 4

25p

Inside: IRAN, C.N.T., WORKING IN THE HERE AND NOW

A REAL MOTION OF CENSURE

ON Thursday, 28 February the first motion of censure against the Thatcher government is being brought by HM Opposition with the support of the centrist Liberals.

It comes at a time when the ranks of government have themselves begun to air their differences in public, even to the extent of reminding one another what Conservatism is supposed to mean. The point at issue is the same, fundamentally, as that on which the censure motion will be based, even if the narrower topics (inflation, record mortgage and interest rates, unemployment, picketing law, import controls or the absence thereof, the present state of Wales, etc) will tend to obscure it. Should the state continue to 'roll back its frontiers' - back to the good old days of Adam Smith, or should it resume (and increase) its all-embracing, protective, paternalistic role as Labour suggests?

In Cambridge earlier this month Sir Ian Gilmour, the Lord Privy Seal, caused something of a flutter by his speech on 'Conservatism'. He told his audience that Conservatives had always been the party of state, but that whatever else they had done they had never advocated the 'nightwatchman state' of classic liberalism. On the contrary, Conservatives had traditionally supported the welfare state and state interference in the economy. Otherwise there would have been civil war long ago. The interventionist and welfare states were not going to go away, and this the monetarist ideologues had to realise.

Implicit in his speech, therefore, was a rebuke of Margaret Thatcher and the Joseph school for not being Conservatives at all but (pace Spencer) liberals of the old school.

Meanwhile, however, in his current series of BBC programmes the American monetarist Milton Friedmann, to whose ideas Tory economic thinking is attributed - and who was due to give a private tutorial at no. 10 on Tuesday - has been careful to deflect criticism from interventionists by telling them, 'I'm not an anarchist. I believe that government has a great role to play ...'

Well, of course, we all know that the Tories' very first measures when assuming office were to reinforce those two main pillars of the state, the police and army, and to ensure that military expenditure in general was increased. Along with this, proportionately greater reductions in the income tax of the wealthy, coupled with drastic cuts in public spending, have had the obvious effect of widening the gap between rich and poor still further.

This is class politics with a vengeance. It has nothing whatsoever to do with 'rolling back the frontiers of the state'. It has to do with using the forces of the state to strengthen that part of the economy, the big private corporations and big industrial farmers, to which the Tories are most allied. At the same time it has to do with so demoralising the mass of workers that it will seem at last as if



*'WHAT SHALL WE DO?
WHAT SHALL WE DO?'*

trade unions had never existed to protect them from that same 'immutable law' of supply and demand of which Friedmann speaks.

Yet what comfort can be drawn from the censure motion on Thursday when, bloodied by, and weary of, internal strife the Labour opposition turns its head towards the Tory front bench for the first time?

Those so-called libertarians who voted Labour at the last election would do well to remember that

the party which now takes upon itself the grievances of the working class, is also an advocate of major public spending cuts. Or it was, until losing power. Their hypocritical strictures of Tory policy can be dismissed out of hand. The censure debate will do sweet f.a. So will the screaming from the sidelines of the extra-parliamentary Left.

In fact the only movement that could offer a coherent political framework for real alternatives is the small anarchist movement. But only if anarchists stop wasting their adrenalin on hate-Thatcher campaigns and get together to see what action of censure of their own they can take.

Such action doesn't have to be based on a complete agreement about The Future Society: we have our sects and for the moment we are stuck with them. But what we can do, and we can do it right now, is draw up a series of immediate objectives for a national campaign.

We have made one or two suggestions elsewhere in the paper, but there would be no harm in repeating them at slightly greater length:

1. Introduction of a three-day week for all workers: a reformist measure, perhaps, but more constructive, and less rhetorical, than the mere cry of 'Smash the State!' And it could be a step towards it.

This would be aimed at reducing unemployment and creating more leisure time for other activities - creative work, political work or whatever. The three day week need not reduce productivity (part time workers today often produce as much or more than their full-time counterparts in the same industry), and thus need not, and must not, mean a reduction in wages.

2. Equalisation of income in all sectors. Why should 'job responsibility' be the only criterion for higher pay, and what does it mean anyway? We should demand the abolition of differentials all the way down the line. After all there are plenty of other criteria: usefulness, danger, unpleasantness, sheer boredom!

3. Concentration on factory or workshop councils as the nucleus of a self-managing economy. The example of the Turin factory council movement of the early 20s in which many anarchists were involved is worth examining, but it's not, of course, the only example.

4. Sweeping public spending cuts - yes, but directed at the Ministry of Defence and all their works, at Whitehall and at the bosses in general.

5. Far more extensive research into the ways in which production can be switched towards socially useful goods. Immediate target

areas, apart from armaments, would be those industries which are finding it hard to withstand overseas competition and which are faced with factory closure. Are import controls the only answer? The Green Bans and Lucas Aerospace had other ideas.

6. Dismantling of the plutonium economy, both on the military and industrial level. Plenty of experts already admit the uselessness of devising ever more drastic forms of overkill, yet thousands of millions are spent to exactly this end. Industrially, the money must be concentrated on alternative energy programmes, which only seem unviable now because so little is allocated by government to their development. And they could be more labour intensive than the nuclear power industry, as could all kinds of conservation and ecology programmes.

These are only a very few of the objectives in the economic field which anarchists could campaign for. It would be foolish, of course, to suppose that they would be seized upon at once by most people. But their formulation and adoption by the anarchist movement as a series of objectives would provide more fertile ground for debate than the floor of the House of Commons. They would also give people something concrete to associate with anarchism in this country.

IRAN STIFFENING

IN IRAN the central government is continuing its attempts to consolidate its power. There is still widespread opposition. Workers in many industries retain a lot of influence. Managers have to consult them before decisions are made. Commercial interests constantly complain about the 'inefficiency' this causes. There is still a regrettable tendency to defer to Khomeini but individual mullahs still meet scorn and abuse. (There's a story of one in Tehran who commandeered a place in a taxi, a privilege inherited from army officers. The driver kept up a running demand for an estimate of the number of trees along the main boulevard.

When the worthy divine finally hazarded a guess, the questioning switched to the number of mullahs in the city). More dramatically there is still militancy amongst ethnic groups in outlying regions. There's a fair amount of sniping at police stations, sabotage of trains and the like. The response of the new revolutionary government bears a striking resemblance to that of the old repressive one. At least 20 people were killed in Kurdistan last week.

Internal politics are surfacing within the governing classes. For a time, during the Revolution, things were wide open as different groups cooperated to oust the mon-

archy and then Bakhtiar. Then, after his return from exile, Khomeini's prestige and influence with the masses meant that he was effectively untouchable. However,



even then there was dissent, even within the mosque. Religious politics have always been tortuous and Qom can easily equal the Vatican. We shall probably never know the full story of the various plots, conspiracies and internal coups. They don't really matter anyway. The only main ones to surface have been glossed over, though the people still remember. One rival ayatollah, Taleghani, who had vaguely 'progressive' views, died

suddenly. The other, Shariat-Madari, who has a lot of support in the Turkish north west, has been disinclined to openly cross Khomeini. This fits with his record. He survived, in relative freedom, throughout the Shah's regime.

In the meantime ambitious politicians are working to establish their own power bases. This involves a lot of lip service to Khomeini, but seemingly, less and less actual obedience. The presidential elections were interesting. A few weeks ago it was still uncertain whether Khomeini would stand (and inevitably win). Not only did he not do so, but he sat back with not a word while his Islamic Republican People's Party candidate was disqualified. Just before Christmas Bani Sadr was in the shadows. He lost his job as acting foreign minister. A week before the elections it was said that, in the absence of an IRP runner, he would probably win, but not get the necessary 50 per cent of the vote. Half way through the counting he was said to have reached this vital figure. By the evening he was reported to have 60 per cent, the next morning 2/3 and a day later it was announced that he had swept the board with 75 per cent of the vote. So now he has a 'mandate', though nominally under the guidance of Khomeini. The elections of the Majlis (parliament) will be on 7 March. Theoretically things are fluid until the complexion of this is settled. However, Bani Sadr has felt able to make pronouncements about the triviality of the hostage crisis, threaten the militants in the embassy, denounce the USSR and make conciliatory noises to the USA.

And all the time Khomeini stays quietly in hospital, interrupted only by the swearing in of Iran's first ever president. All of this would have been inconceivable a month ago.

So who is this Bani Sadr? He got involved in the Nationalist movement during his teens in the 50s. After the collapse of Mussadeq he went abroad, working in the exiled Islamic movement. He has a religious family background and he met Khomeini, who was then living in Iraq. When the ayatollah was exiled from there it was Bani Sadr who set up the house near Paris and acted as aide and secretary. His politics, as published, are a mixture of a planned economy with an Islamically tinged code of laws. This last is essential at the moment. His pronouncements have sweeping statements about independence from the super powers and support for liberation movements (especially Palestinian), reconciliation with ethnic minorities, economic reconstruction and more freedom. In this last he specifically mentions the left, saying that it is irrelevant anyway, so there is no need for paranoia.

As you can see, none of the above is startling; it's just the sort of thing you'd expect from a bright opportunist politician - a lot of platitudes with a token bow to Islam, and the Imam. More significantly, he has shown that he intends to be tough. He is definitely in favour of strong central planning (steel and petrochemicals have been specifically mentioned) while advocating a vague 'back to the land' -ism with all the usual suggestions of land reform.

Since the return of Khomeini's entourage, a year ago now, it has been commonly held in Tehran that Bani Sadr and others such as Yazdi and Qotbjadeh are US agents. This looks increasingly feasible.

Whatever the truth of this, and Iranis love to get involved in conspiratorial speculation, the government is trying to settle the country closer to the west than seemed likely a while ago. A glance across the border towards Kabul would no doubt have contributed

here. The militants in the embassy still insist that the hostages will not be freed until the former Shah is returned. They do say that the Americans would be released if Khomeini directly ordered it. He has signally failed to do so, contenting himself with a couple of cryptic remarks which the western media immediately hailed as an indication that he was going to condemn the visit by the UN commission. If he had wanted to do that he could have done so long ago, completely and unequivocally. His hospital visit for 'tests' now involves at least two months further rest, with no more than 15 minutes' work a day. As usual the western press has personalised matters so far that they have blinded themselves. They still report Khomeini subtly manipulating the strings of his ornate conspiracy. In fact he is a narrow, rather stupid old man who was adopted as figurehead by a powerful strain in the revolutionary ferment. The influence that this gave him is being eroded. And the people who are doing it are the politicians - Bani Sadr, Qotbjadeh, Yazdi etc. Does all this sound familiar?

Meanwhile the foreign connections are being re-established. The USA is about to unfreeze Iran's assets, British arms sales are ready to resume as soon as the face saver over the hostages is settled. If you remember, these were extensive. For example, the shah's army were being provided with a greatly improved version of the Chieftain tank, known as the 'Shir'. This has several features, such as its armour, which the British cannot afford for themselves. Well, 900 Chieftain tanks have been supplied and 300 of the new type were being built when the revolution broke out. All the development costs were being paid for by the shah's regime, i.e. by the Irani people. So, what has happened to these 300 shiny vehicles? They've been sold to

cont. on p.7



A.L.F. strikes again

FIVE animal rights campaigners who rescued hens from battery farms have been ordered to pay nearly £2,500 by Solihull magistrates. The five, Derek Carroll, Viv Bates, Anthony Bayson, Sue Forester and Christine Smith, were involved in various raids on battery units in the west Midlands. Between them they took over 500 hens from their cramped cages and found them good homes in free range conditions. Three of the five also rescued 18 dogs from an establishment where the animals were to be killed and then sold for processing into agricultural fertiliser. As well as being ordered to pay well over £1,000 Derek was given a 12 month suspended sentence, which means that he stands a strong chance of being sent to prison if he continues his animal liberation activities.

A fund has been set up to raise money to help the five pay the severe financial penalties imposed on them. The organisers of the fund are appealing to all those opposed to cruelty to animals in general and the battery system in particular to donate money and to support the various fund raising events which are being organised throughout the country.

One of these is a benefit dance on Saturday, 8 March at Hampstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill (NW3) after the rally against the Canadian seal slaughter in Trafalgar Square during the afternoon. Advance tickets at £1 plus s.a.e. are available from DEFEND THE SOLIHULL 5 (Tickets), 108C Marlborough Road, London N22 4NN.

Donations can be sent to: Solihull 5 Defence Fund, 91 Home Close, Hockwell Ring, Luton, Bedfordshire.

A DIFFERENT SENSE OF IRELAND

THERE is much favourable media coverage of the 'Sense of Ireland' extravaganza in London. It usually takes the form of 'Despite the dubious politics, there are a few entertaining events' or 'Doesn't Paddy tell a good joke'.

Our own group even thought that Action Space's 'State of Emergency' section on Northern Ireland would have helped to explain to British people that the source of sectarian violence and the reason for guerrilla resistance here is none other than the British government itself. To that end we offered videotapes of interviews with an ex-H Block blanket man, an ex-Armagh prison protester, and others to get across information the state and commercial media either repress or distort.

But we discovered that the West London Media Workshop is organising an alternative to the Sense of Ireland at Hammersmith Town Hall starting 5 March. It is generally felt that Action Space,

far from being a pressure group within the Sense of Ireland is now incapable of presenting a radical alternative because overshadowed by the main event, along with the obstacles caused by the organiser (eg refusal to allow the film 'Patriot Game' to be advertised on the official poster). At the worst it could give political credibility to an increasingly obvious state fair.

Many of the events billed for Action Space have now been switched to Hammersmith, eg. People of no Property, Women on Ireland Group (theatre). There will also be Christy Moore, the Patriot Game, a speaker on the PTA, videos on repression, The Irishman, a BBC-commissioned but never shown film about Irish navvies, an exhibition of Images of Irish people in the British media' and many more.

For a full programme and more information write to: West London Media Workshop, St. Thomas Church Hall, Eastrow, London W.10 (tel: 969-1020).

Finally a comment on those rock bands who were lured to London to perform at Action Space. This is mainly due to the oppressive conditions in the North where their music is allowed hardly any local airtime (unless they are turned into commercial properties by major record companies). And there are little or no venues as few places are sympathetic to their music or young people.

They went over in a bid to play in LONDON and be noticed. Young people have tried to create their own culture to escape from the stifling reactionary elements from within their own communities, and against the alienation of bourgeois culture.

Always there is the hypocritical talk of helping young people, but at every turn they face a brick wall, the only exit being the road to conformity.

E. McNAB
For 'Just Books'

TORNESS

ANTI-nuclear groups all round the country are preparing, through the Torness Alliance, to reoccupy the reactor construction site at Torness in south east Scotland on 3 May. They are calling for as many people as possible to take part.

The Story So Far In May 1978, after it became clear that a lethal new reactor was planned at Torness, 4000 people marched the six miles from Dunbar to the proposed site for an anti-nuclear festival. The Torness Alliance, a network of anti-nuclear groups and individuals, was formed to stop the power station being built. In May 1979 10,000 people took part in another festival and following this 1500 entered the fenced-in site a mile away. They proceeded to disrupt surveying, re-landscape earthworks, design huge anti-nuclear slogans and damage equipment. 400 got inside the central machinery compound.

Various actions on a small scale have occurred since, and a recent poll showed that 90 per cent of the local population are against Torness. Despite this, work has continued. With this in mind, February's Torness Alliance meeting endorsed the call for direct action this May.

Torness (cont)

Why Direct Action? The anti-nuclear movement is attempting to stop all nuclear development - power stations, mining, transport and waste burial etc. Marches and other forms of symbolic activity can have an educational effect, but do not in themselves change the situation. They can become routine and demoralising unless leading to direct action to slow down and eventually halt nuclear power. The two most effective forms of direct action are blacking of all nuclear work and occupations and blockades, whether to prevent mining, building, transport or dumping. The 3 May occupation aims a) to undo as much work as possible that has been done on the site; b) to publicise the movement's continuing determination to oppose Torness.

What It Involves The main possibilities to prepare for will be things like cutting and pulling down the fence, disrupting work done, occupying buildings, damaging equipment and obstructing any work attempted for as long as possible - with people doing what they prefer and get the chance to do.

We have to recognise the possibility of arrests and harassment, and so support networks and legal advice will be needed, as will information-sharing at the site. All this has to be prepared for straight away, locally, regionally and nationally.

How To Prepare The Torness Alliance is a network of autonomous affinity and local anti-nuclear groups as opposed to an organisation with leaders and bureaucratic structures. It's up to the preparation and imagination of every group. It's important to be as self-sufficient as possible in food, transport, water, shelter, first aid and any tools and equipment needed, although of course people can share! At the same time it's vital that we all link up in each town and region for mutual aid and further planning.

3 May will be an exciting event, a necessary continuation of the opposition to Torness at a time when millions all over the world are joining in the struggle. Everyone horrified by the construction of yet another nuclear power station is urged to take part.

A Torness Action Planning Meeting is being held in London on 30 March at 2 p.m., Pax Christi, Southampton Rd, NW5 (Chalk Farm tube). This will help prepare for

the occupation and help people form affinity groups. Contact your local anti-nuclear group, organise regional Alliance meetings. Next national Torness Alliance meeting is 8 March, in Nottingham (tel: 0602/ 53587).

A TORNESS AFFINITY GROUP

Harrisburg 13

March Scare Publications announce the production of this "Harrisburg Roadsign" poster, to remind people throughout Britain just how close to home the threat of nuclear disaster is. We'd like people to find appropriate sites--and to fill in the distances to their nearest nuclear menace (from the kit of numbers provided) before displaying the posters. Harrisburg Day--the anniversary of the accident that only narrowly missed wiping Pennsylvania off the map--is on March 29. (The posters are extra large (34"x 14"). 30p. per pair, £1.50 for 20 or special bulk price of 100 signs for £6.00. Cheques and PO's with orders to March Scare Publications, Box U235, Rising Free, 182 Upper St. London N1.

..badges

ON 14 May eight people will appear in court to face charges of breach of the peace following their arrest during a (non-violent) direct action at the site of the Torness nuclear power station in October 1979. The October Action Defence Fund is now selling badges with this design (1 1/2" diameter black and white on a red background). They cost 25p + p & p. There is a 25 per cent discount for bookshops with free postage and packing.

Available from: The October Action Defence Fund, 18 Bishop Rd, Bristol 7.



CNT Congress: Reading the Entrails

'TTS a criticism of anarchism" said the man. But this was not the exhibition hall at the Casa del Campo, it was the Museo del Prado and the guide was 'interpreting' Goya's 'Witches' Sabbath for the tourists.

How I marvelled at those pint-sized pundits of the art world and was struck by their resemblance to the political pundits with whom I had spent the last week trying to interpret the CNT Fifth Congress at Casa del Campo. Indeed much of social science and history is rendered by people adept at such story telling.

By now of course the entrails will have been read, and the CNT Congress dissected and analysed in up to ten different languages.

Syndicalism vs. Globalism

The most controversial issue at the Congress last December was the outcome of point 5. on the

agenda: the point about 'Principles, Tactics and Ends'.

On this point depended the future of the CNT as an organisation.

The debate over this point was probably the most heated. It was resolved by the ratification of the original anarcho-syndicalist programme of principles and tactics adopted at Zaragoza in 1936.

Suggestions for a radical modification of the classical anarcho-syndicalist position came from delegates from some of the less traditional regions like the Basque country and the Canaries, and also from Zaragoza. Pepe Buendia, the new secretary general of the CNT, told me that the opposition was a bit of a mixture but the main stands were for a kind of global movement approach and the council communism of Anton Pannekoek was the position of the Zaragoza delegates.

CNT(cont.)

The idea of a global movement rather than an organisation of syndicates, is that the CNT should link itself closely to various other radical movements in Spanish society. In other words it should merge with organisations like the women's movement, the gay movement and the ecological movement.

If their approach had been adopted by the CNT as we know it it would have ceased to exist. The CNT, it seems to me, would have become part of a movement of ad hoc bodies.

But the globalist case carries some weight and has an influence among some of the younger delegates. It has roots in recent developments in Italy, and reflects the influence of the events in France in 1968.

Globalism, it was argued, would allow the CNT and the anarchist movement to generate a libertarian influence among the radical youth and the civil rights elements in Spanish society. In this way the CNT and the Spanish libertarians could mobilise opinion and present a major force with an alternative strategy and social critique of post-Franco Spain. At the same time it would have roots in the organisations of a big cross-section of socially dissident tendencies.

To many anarchists this approach is attractive because it is a deeply moral one based on social welfare

and rights. It is a moral critique of society rather than an analysis derived from practical class interests and prudential concerns.

A more practical approach was advocated at the Congress by some of the Valencian delegates under the label of 'revolutionary syndicalism'. This is really the reverse of 'globalism'. It stresses the labour question and practical shopfloor issues, at the expense of social matters.

The globalists want a kind of pluralism with the labour movement relating on equal terms with alternative groupings and minority causes. They want social rights and moral issues to dominate.

The 'revolutionary syndicalist' stance reflects the practical self-interests of ordinary workers and underplays the wider social questions.

A big snag with the globalists is that because of their emphasis on moral issues they run the risk of self-righteous attitudes Orwell so despised in some anarchists. They could develop an intolerance which would isolate them from many ordinary people. A number of delegates of this tendency left the Congress when their programme was rejected.

But perhaps their major flaw for most delegates was the knowledge that despite the presentation of an ultra revolutionary perspective some supporters of this school have recently gone in for conventional politics and stood at elections.

Yet if globalism is too exotic a

tendency for most people, for the most part 'revolutionary syndicalism', in relegating social issues and sacrificing values to the pursuit of class interests, is surely wrong, in that it is a limited concept which risks degeneration into industrial gangsterism. The lack of a social conscience has long been a basic fault of British trade unionism.

Classical anarcho-syndicalism however attempts to address itself to the dilemma of values and interests in a way which both Marxism and anarchism has so far failed to do. It tries to reconcile the moral and the prudential, to bridge the gulf between the romanticism of the more humanistic, younger Marx and the materialistic determinism of the later Marx.

In sticking with anarcho-syndicalism I think the CNT got it right.

None of this prevents the CNT involving itself with the alternative movements and participating in the social struggle for civil rights, women's rights, gay rights and so on. But it does allow the organisation enough independence to avoid being dragged into conventional politics, and exotic adventures. At the same time it can give sufficient emphasis to the economic issues which are the daily concern of most of its members.

B. B.

In Part II: The CNT and the practical problems.

PROPERTY

Allotments were compensation for the common land that was taken from the people under the Enclosure Acts. Poor Law commissioners in 1834, by no means a generous body recommended 10 rods (300 sq. yards) as sufficient compensation.

There is now a government bill being stealthily slid through to withdraw even this meagre compensation. This is with a package designed to get rid of the 1974 Control of Pollution Act and to get rid of plans to reduce pollution in rivers and canals. The clean air committee is to be disbanded and restrictions on the felling of trees to be eased.

The government has refused to give figures of those on allotment waiting lists but it is thought to be at least 200,000.

The Schedule 5 of the new bill will remove controls on councils laid

down in the 1908 Allotments Act and leave councils free to do as they please with these assets. Some councils have already increased the rent to £20 and reduced the size of the plot. Many of Britain's allotments disappeared with a large portion of British Railways under Beeching and his myopic political masters. Friends of the Earth estimate that there are one hundred thousand derelict acres that could be used.

The Parish Relief System that was embodied in the Poor Law Acts at the time of this expropriation of public land could only be compared with the pass law system that operates against the coloured population of South Africa. It delivered people who had been driven off the land into the hands of the avaricious industrialists of the towns, at the time when their political representatives had engineered the agricultural depression. The allotment was the compensation and no doubt was taken into consideration when the poor wages were paid. The allotment was the barrier

between many a family and starvation.

With inflation and the increasing commercial pollution of our food supplies the cultivation of small areas of land could bring a measure of independence from the food chains that are dominating urban supplies. However, this is the sort of enterprise that no political party is eager to promote. County Councils are already under pressure to sell off land earmarked for small holdings. This in spite of the fact that in terms of productivity (that sacred word) allotments produce more food per acre than any other form of cultivation and with a minimal use of scarce oil supplies.

Had the agricultural workers of 1834 realised their own strength they would not have permitted the excesses of their time. Their descendants in the crowded cities of today still do not recognise their strength, otherwise they would demand the return of all the common land not just a retention of the meagre compensation.

Alan Albon

IRAN cont. from p. 3

Jordan. 'A new deal is being negotiated'.

In Tehran the British government is viewed with considerable respect. The USA is seen as obnoxious, loud and clumsy, while behind the scenes, hovering here, stirring a little there, never directly implicated, are the British.

So, there we have it at the moment. The people remember that they fought a revolution, the mosque still has considerable influence, outlying regions are unlikely to be easily fobbed off, foreign interests are manoeuvring. And in the centre, 'techno-bureaucracy' stiffens.

REZA PAHLAVI

greece

We have received information about our Greek comrades, Phillipe and Sophis Kyritsis. In late November Phillipe went on hunger strike at being refused contact with Sophia. She also protested and, as a result was threatened with being transferred to a mental hospital. In addition, neither of them was allowed contact with their lawyers or their parents after their appeal failed on December 10th.

Following this there was a wave of demonstrations in support of the couple. (Incidentally, the Greek CP saw fit to attack some of these, as they were not directly controlling them. This move backfired on them as they came out worse in the fighting.)

In response to these the Greek government seems to have had a change of heart, and Phillipe and Sophia now have three visits per month.

The Athens Anarcho-Syndicalist group, who supplied this information also mention some other Greek anarchist prisoners: Vassilades (2½ years), Mizas (5 years) and Taponkis (3 years)

MEETING

On Tuesday 4th March, the London Workers Group are organising a public meeting to deal with the issue 'Are demonstrations any use?' - a particularly relevant issue. The meeting will be held at the Metropolitan Tavern, 95 Farringdon Road, EC1 beginning at 8 pm. Admission is free and all readers are welcome.

academic anarchism

Friends

A number of us were amused by the inclusion in your 22 December issue of Michael Scrivener's piece on 'An Anarchist Aesthetic'. He is one of a growing number of Professors here in the US who are finding anarchism a profitable academic speciality. Many university controlled journals too are coming out with similar articles, and a number of colleges are beginning to hold 'conferences' etc on anarchism - all run, of course, on the managerial mentality of the academic bureaucrats. Very respectable, very scholarly. All we can do is remind you of what we found to be the case here not too long ago: the phrase 'radical professor' is a contradiction in terms.

Regards

DAVID SONENSCHIN
Austin, Texas.

prisons and courts

Dear Editors

If you are in a pit then a weak dangling rope is clearly an attraction, even though it could well break when it is used and those dangling it will gain credibility from the rope's existence. So it is with juries - it would be tempting to give the rope/jury a defiant snarl and invite one's enemies to do their worst. But I doubt if many of us would wish to experience the results.

This is very different to putting 'our weight behind the jury system'. Can't the wealthy lawyers preening their consciences and Lords of a supposedly liberal hue do that? They can gain the applause of The Guardian in the process, but do we crave for plaudits from such a quarter?

You give as an example of a reform providing 'a more favourable climate for revolution' as the abolition of the death penalty. Those Conservatives supporting the abolition of hanging, of course, see that measure as preventing a favourable climate for revolution. And who are you kidding. The State can re-introduce the death penalty whenever it wishes.

Lulling comrades into a false sense of security that we are guarded by laws against hanging (and I believe treason - not à la Smith - is still subject to the death penalty) is a recipe for inactivity.

You quote Malatesta: 'The revolution cannot be made just when one likes. Should we remain inactive, waiting for the situation to mature with time?' No, we should be active, assisting the time for revolution to mature, avoiding action hindering such a development. Judging by your quotes from Malatesta, both you and he are/were playing with semantics around the word 'reform'.

I would point out that RAP's submission to the May Inquiry into the Prison System was not produced with any belief that it would change the State's penal policies (and it hasn't) - but to gain publicity for the alternative libertarian approach to crime (which it has). Your disparaging remarks about people's courts are characteristic of those in elites who fail to understand that, in a post-revolutionary situation, the lack of any effective means for the people of dealing with action popularly deemed to be anti-social can lead to the worst abuses such as lynchings and castration. Because people's courts have, indeed, been used to implement authoritarian policies is not sufficient reason for ignoring this entire approach. Nor do I say that such experiments in people's justice should fall outside accountability to the overall community.

I have had bitter personal experience of 'kangaroo courts' and I recognise that any replacement for the present system needs to improve radically on the 'due process of law' protections to be of any value. But I also know that 'kangaroo courts' are not always certain of verdicts 'known in advance'. When I was being threatened with dismissal by the Newham Community Relations Council for naming an organisation responsible for fire bomb attacks on black and brown households in the area, a member actually advised the press I had been sacked before the meeting in question took place and was subsequently proved incorrect!

Also, I did not say people's courts alone would be required in a future of social justice, but mentioned dealing with problems 'by recognising collective responsibilities' - thus emphasizing social, rather than individual, causation of anti-social behaviour, such as rape and murder.

Yours J.W.

FREEDOM CONTACTS

Groups

ABERDEEN libertarian group, c/o 163 King Street, Aberdeen.
ABERYSTWYTH David Fletcher, 59 Cambrian St., Aberystwyth.
BELFAST anarchist collective, Just Books, 7 Winetavern St., Belfast 1.
BIRMINGHAM anarchists/anarcha-feminists meet Sundays. Contact Alison at Peace Centre, 18 Moore St., Ringway, B'ham 4 (tel. 021 643 0996).
BRIGHTON. Libertarian Socialist group, c/o Students Union, Falmer House, Univ. of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton.
BRISTOL. City: 4 British Road, Bristol BS3 3BW.
Students: Libertarian Society, Students Union, Queen's Road, Bristol.
CAMBRIDGE anarchists, Box A, 41 Fitzroy St., Cambridge.
CANTERBURY Alternative Research Group, Wally Barnes, Eliot College, University of Kent, Canterbury.
CARDIFF write c/o One-O-Eight Bookshop, 108 Salisbury Road.
COVENTRY: John England, Students Union, Univ. of Warwick, Coventry.
DERBY. Contact Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Avenue, Derby SE3 3BY (tel. 368678).
DUBLIN. A.B.C. Collective, 7 Ballsbridge Ave., Dublin, Eire.
EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians, Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.
EDINBURGH anarchists meet 8 pm Mondays at First of May bookshop, 45 Niddry St., Edinburgh.
EXETER anarchist collective c/o Community Assn., Devonshire House, Stocker Rd., Exeter.
GLASGOW anarchist group: John Cooper, 34 Raithburn Avenue, Castlemilk, Glasgow G45.
HASTINGS anarchist group c/o Solstice, 127 Bohemia Rd., St. Leonards on Sea, Sussex (tel. 0424 429537).
HULL Libertarian Collective, 23 Auckland Ave., Hull, West Humberside.
LEAMINGTON & Warwick c/o 42 Bath St., Leamington Spa.
LEEDS. Dave Brown, 30 Park Row, Knaresborough (near Harrogate), N. Yorks.
LEICESTER Anarchist Group: Lyn Hurst, 41 Briarfield Drive (tel. 0533 21250 (day) 0533 414060 (night)). Bookshop: Blackthorn, 71 Highcross St. (tel 0533 21896) Libertarian Education, 6 Beaconsfield Road (tel 0533 552085)
LONDON
Anarchy Collective, 37a Grosvenor Av., (tel. 359 4794 before 7 pm).

Freedom Collective, 84B Whitechapel High St., E.1 (247 9249)
Hackney anarchists: Contact Dave on 249 7042).
Kingston anarchists, 13 Denmark Rd., Kingston-upon-Thames (549 2564).
London Workers' Group, Box W., 182 Upper St., N.1. (249 7042) meetings Tuesdays 8pm at Metropolitan pub, 75 Farringdon Rd.
Love V. Power, Box 779, Peace News London Office, 5 Caledonian Road, N.1.
West London anarchists, 7 Penward Road, W.12.
MALVERN & Worcester area, Jock Spence, Birchwood Hall, Storrage, Malvern, Worcs.
MID-SUSSEX & South Coast anarchists, c/o Resources Centre, North Rd., Brighton, E. Sussex.
NEWCASTLE upon Tyne. Black Jake, c/o 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle NE1 4AG.
NORWICH anarchists, c/o Free-wheel Community Books, 56 St. Benedicts St., Norwich.
NOTTINGHAM c/o Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St. (tel. 582506) or 15 Scotholme Av., Hyson Green (tel. 708302).
OLDHAM. Nigel Broadbent, 14 Westminster Rd., Failsworth, Manchester.
OXFORD anarchist group c/o Danny Simpson, Exeter College.
Anarchist Workers Group ditto.
Anarcho-Feminists c/o Teresa Thornhill, 34 Divinity Rd.
Solidarity c/o 34 Cowley Rd.
PAISLEY (College) anarchist group, c/o Students Union, Hunter St. Paisley, Renfrewshire
READING anarchists c/o Ms. Shevek, Clubs Office, Student Union, Whiteknights, Reading.
Rhonda & Midglamorgan. Henning Andersen, 'Smiths Arms'. Treherbert, Midglamorgan, Wales.
SHEFFIELD anarchists: c/o 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield S10 2FQ.
SHEFFIELD Libertarian Society: P.O. Box 168, Sheffield S11 8SE
SWANSEA: Don Williams, 24 Derlwyn, Dunvant, Swansea.
SWINDON area: Mike, Grundswell Farm, Upper Stratton, Swindon.
WESTON-super-Mare: Martyn Redman, Flat 5, 23 Milton Road.

MANCHESTER DAM Group, Box 20 '61/10' Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch Manchester, M4 3BN

MIDLANDS Federation: groups include Birmingham, Coventry, Derby, Leamington/Warwick, Leicester, Nottingham, Sheffield.

NORTH EAST Anarchist Federation. Secretariat: HLC, 23 Auckland Avenue, Hull.

THAMES VALLEY anarchist federation - contact Oxford or Reading group.

DIRECT ACTION Movement, 28 Lucknow Drive, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts. Groups in various places incl. London, Manchester, Leeds.

SOLIDARITY libertarian communist organisation (publ. 'Solidarity for Social Revolution') c/o 123 Lathom Road, London E6. Groups & members in many towns.

ANARCHIST COMMUNIST Association of class struggle anarchists (publ. 'Bread and Roses'), Box 2, 136 Kingsland High St., London E8.

Meetings

MANCHESTER. Friday, 7 March, Star & Garter pub, Fairfield St, (near suburban line exit of Piccadilly train station): 'The Early Socialist Movement in England'. A talk by Anne Cunningham & Bob Dent, organised jointly by Manchester Solidarity & Manchester Direct Action Movement.

MANCHESTER. Friday, 14 March
Ronan Bennett on the recent Persons Unknown trial. Public meeting organised by Manchester Direct Action Movement. 8 p.m. Star & Garter pub (see above).

LONDON. For Torness Alliance activities, see inside pages (Reports).

LONDON. Saturday, 8 March
Benefit for Solihull 5 (see inside pages (Reports)), following rally at Trafalgar Square during afternoon to protest at the Canadian Seal Slaughter.

Picnic

Spring is in the air (well, nearly!) and the time has come round again to organise the Anarchist's Picnic for 1st May. This year, the organisation of the picnic is being co-ordinated by the London Workers' Group who would like as many individuals and representatives of anarchist groups in and around London to attend a planning meeting at the Metropolitan Tavern, 95 Farringdon Road, EC1 (nearest tube: Farringdon) on Tuesday, 11 March.

Freedom Press

IN ANGEL ALLEY
84b WHITECHAPEL HIGH ST.
LONDON E.1

printed by Magic Ink, Margate



"In Accordance with Government Policy, the Council is unable to grant you a Wage Increase, Mrs. Wellbeloved, but after Long and Involved Negotiations between ourselves, the Council has agreed on a First and Final Offer to you of 7.3942% Pay Increase but it must be completely Self Financing on your part by Increased Productivity"

Working in the here and now

Paid Jobs....

I HAVE long thought that the vast majority of anarchists would agree on the sort of society they would wish to see. The disagreements tend to come in discussing the right way to achieve that society - how to relate anarchism to day to day living in an authoritarian world, how to spread anarchist ideas through your work, how to reconcile reformist actions and struggles with the struggle for anarchism. I've consistently failed to answer these sort of questions to my own satisfaction, much less anyone else's who may be sympathetic to anarchism, but joins some other group because s/he thinks that anarchism is impractical. This failure seems even worse now at a time when many people are turning away from traditional politics; unemployment and poverty are increasing; working class action is increasing, at least measured in terms of the number of days lost in strikes; we've got one of the most repressive governments for years, not to mention Northern Ireland, which most people don't. So where are the anarchists, what are we doing? - and more important, is what we're doing the right way to achieve our aims?

This train of thought, which I'm sure many readers must have gone through, led me to think of the different sort of paid jobs anarchists have, and how, if at all, they justify them in anarchist terms; and the sort of groups or work anarchists get involved in separate from their paid work, though I accept that you can't always make that distinction (eg. a community worker who might see work with political pressure groups as part of their job, or the job as part of the work with pressure groups). To distinguish it for this article, I'll call the latter 'voluntary' work.

A. PAID JOBS

1. State funded 'care' work, eg. community work, social work, teaching, welfare rights advice, free schools (possibly) resource centres etc. A lot of anarchists work in these sort of jobs. They are almost invariably state funded, or at least funded by trusts such as Carnegie (ex-steel) which are usually established by capitalist firms, and are certainly not anti-state. This is the first category because it's where I work - I'm coordinator of a tribunal representation unit, a welfare rights project, funded by a mixture of state money and trusts. It's doing valuable work, in its own terms, in common with most of the other workers mentioned above. Nevertheless, however hard I try, it's not possible to justify all this work on any anarchist grounds at all. The major, over-riding fault with all these sorts of job is that the money puts very great constraints on what you do. In terms of getting money from trusts, if you are too political, i.e. anarchist, you won't get the support of all these respectable figures you need to get trust money. So if you want money, you trim your political sails. In teaching, social work etc. the problems are slightly different - to avoid being sacked you don't work as an anarchist would, you accept, however reluctantly, an authoritarian role. Many people justify this by saying that you can best change things from the inside, but if you really believe that you want your head examined.

So right from the start in this sort of work you are having to compromise, to become reformist rather than revolutionary. Teachers rarely openly advocate schoolkids' strikes. My place doesn't tell claimants to burn the files at the DHSS if they're accused of cohabitation. Neither of us would have a job long if we did.

But there are still other ways of justifying this work - they probably boil down to three basic points.

a) There is a need that we are meeting, even if it is only a short term need. When someone comes in who has just lost their giro so they've no money for the weekend, you can't tell them to go away, "no-one will need giros after the revolution". You phone the DHSS, argue with them, and finally get an emergency payment to last the weekend. This work has got

to be done, and anarchism has nothing to offer these people in the short term - and in the long term they'll die of old age - or hypothermia anyway.

Well, it's a powerful and emotive argument, and the answer seems harsh, though it's right. The answer is that the welfare rights worker, the teacher, the social worker is simply helping the state allocate more effectively the few resources it cares to divert towards the poorer classes. Teachers can't teach properly because classes are too large, facilities are far too few (apart from the authoritarian aspects of why they can't teach properly). So they knock themselves out working within the constraints and getting nowhere. And it's almost a truism nowadays that if everyone claimed all the social security benefits to which they were entitled the state would go broke. It wouldn't, all that would happen is that the state would reduce legal entitlement to benefits (which is what it's doing anyway). So if welfare rights workers really started to help large numbers of people, the rules would be changed, and they'd be back where they started. It's like the law - too many acquittals, so bring in jury vetting, or abolish juries altogether like in Northern Ireland. It's impossible to win when the state makes all the rules.

b) The second argument is a bit more sophisticated, and one I've used often enough. People don't become anarchists overnight. They don't read an issue of FREEDOM (or Black Flag) and suddenly the anarchist millennium has arrived. They come to believe in anarchism through constant discussions, struggle at all levels, from fighting for a zebra crossing to being framed by the police. Anarchists need to be involved in these struggles so that they can be put into their proper context, and related to the evils of the state rather than to the evils of the Tories (or of Labour if they're in power). We've seen grassroot struggles diverted into reformist political pathways where they promptly disappear with no real lessons learnt.

It's a good argument and I'm almost convinced. Except that it rarely works in practice, except maybe for one or two people. And it's far too easy to start to see the struggle as an end in itself (in practice anyway). You get so involved with tactics and strategy that you may stop fighting in an anarchist way, eg. by making deals with councillors, trading off your demands, compromising etc. Then you've lost, and even if you do win the battle for the zebra crossing, you've lost the battle for their minds. In addition to which the struggle for even the most reformist demands is so difficult and time-consuming that it takes all your energy and time. To have to say to your comrades, 'well, we've got the zebra, but this is just the start. What we should be doing now is trying to ban cars and fight for a rational public transport system, with cheap or free buses, stop motorway building, re-employ the thousands of workers who will then lose their jobs on some more socially usefully work...' - it's a bit difficult to say the least. The implications of anarchism are so incredibly wide it's easy for people to think that they aren't achieved. So you stick at the reformist demand, which becomes an end in itself.

c) The last argument in favour of 'care' work is quite Machiavellian - and that's bad for a start! It says that anything which helps destabilise the state is good. All this work raises people's awareness and expectations, makes them less satisfied with life, increases the demands for the state to provide, beyond the point which it can provide, and therefore destabilises it, brings reaction, repression etc., increasing opposition, leading eventually to its destruction. (All this from someone losing a girl!) At least people become aware of their own collective power, they learn valuable lessons of organisation, which one day will come in useful.

Fine, except that the political leap from self-interest to collective interest isn't made; and anyway paid workers positively discourage such action because of their vested interest in encouraging conformity (relating to sources of funding). Apart from that, it's very easy to co-opt into the state structure any groups which are set up to exploit this increasing pressure. A large number of state funded welfare rights workers today learnt their trade in the politically much more revolutionary Claimants Union.

In conclusion, paid 'care' work cannot be justified except in selfish personal terms. I need the money, it's a job, and I

enjoy it. It's hard work, but it's safe in that you don't come into conflict with the state. It takes up a lot of time, and may even be a substitute for personal relationships with non-anarchists.

I've spent a comparatively long time on this section because in many ways it's the most insidious - a lot of anarchists do this sort of work, and either don't realise the futility, or worse, realise it but reconcile themselves to it. But there are other sorts of work and I'll go through them now. (But first, a moral tale. I was representing an Asian who had been sacked while off sick, at an industrial tribunal. I had details of his job - a welder - but didn't know what he was making. I asked him just before the hearing, as much to reduce nervousness as anything else. He made the tracks on Chieftain tanks! Should I have represented him?)

2. Non state sided, community type work which is self-supporting eg. community press, left wing bookshop, commune, free schools (possibly if they are fee paying). Not really many of these since most community activities don't generate sufficient money to pay adequate wages without reliance on social security, state or trust funding. And it could also be argued that those which do exist, exist indirectly on state money eg. the press which prints the local students union paper. In fact, all these groups would compromise in some way, and act within the law, but at least they would have more freedom of action than those in the first group above. It does however require dedication, low wages, and long hours - something which often isn't easy to accept in a materialist and expensive world, even for an anarchist. Still, you can always claim child benefit, family income supplement, free school meals etc - did I say not state aided? The main problem I suppose is the question of their effectiveness. I feel that if these ventures ever became really effective they would be suppressed, eg. if DAM (Direct Action Movement) ever turned to armed struggle - something which isn't inconsistent with its aims - Freedom Press which printed its millions of leaflets * would soon be closed down by the police. It's the old contradiction in Britain - you are free till you become effective. Then you are suppressed. Think how long a commune would last which decided not to pay off the rent on the self sufficient farm where they live. They'd soon be evicted, and all they would be doing is refusing to pay rent to the estate agent retained by the merchant bank owners of the farm, who also happen to finance an arms firm.

3. Non state aided co-operative businesses Not rip off merchants, but self sufficient non exploitative collectives paying adequate wages, eg. builders' co-ops.

OK, let's forget about the sort of work they do, except to point out that a car mechanics cooperative would be helping to preserve a polluting expensive inequitable murderous transport system. Forgetting that, it's better to be self sufficient



than reliant on the state for a job (even if indirectly you are reliant because of business contractions/expansions, new regulations etc. created by the state and affecting your business. Complicated isn't it). The 'petty bourgeois' element in me really hankers after this. It has advantages. If it makes a surplus over wages this could, and should, go to support the sort of people and projects outlined in the previous section, particularly the ones which couldn't finance themselves, eg. a community transport van which does commercial jobs should use the profits (after wages) to do free jobs for the local community paper. Or something like that. So the profit making collective and the non profit making but essential community group would work together and be integral parts of one unit. Better than relying on the state for wages. It would need a high degree of cooperation but that's what anarchism is all about.

Of course there are all sorts of problems, not least of which is what comes first in bad times, wages or community work. And it could still be suppressed for political reasons.

4. The last sort of paid work is industry - including work in the non-productive, administrative sector, eg. the civil service. These organisations are either profit making for an elite, or exist to preserve and extend the state - or maybe both. Most of their work is unnecessary, or worse, positively evil - but there's no need to go on about pollution etc. The bits that are necessary, eg. fire brigades, could be better done in an anarchist society (I hope). So there's no anarchist justification for working in this sector as an end in itself. The only possible reason for wanting to work here is to get involved with, and become an anarchist influence in, the trade unions. The question of anarchists and trade unions is worth another article - which has already been written by Peter Good (FREEDOM, before Christmas). But briefly the disadvantages are i) working in an authoritarian power-oriented structure; ii) difficulties of reconciling short term aims, like wage increases, with the long term revolutionary aims; iii) dangers of your work being co-opted; iv) expensive in terms of energy and resources for a dubious return; v) who the hell wants to work in industry anyway.

In many ways trade union work is like welfare rights work, with the big difference that here you are in fact dealing with groups who are much more powerful than claimants (who can easily be ignored) and who do have the potential to revolutionise society. I can see why the working classes are so crucial, but I don't think working with existing union structures is the way to use their power. Maybe the Wobblies were right.

Voluntary Work

I've just described the way most working people spend their lives, and hope I've shown what I think are some of the difficulties for an anarchist in working like this. But there are other ways in which people can work for an anarchist society, outside their paid work (if they have a job at all).

1. Work with single issue community groups, eg. Right to Fuel campaigns, tenants' associations, squatting campaigns. Again many anarchists are involved in these. But these groups are almost certainly not explicitly anarchist, invariably reformist, and may not even claim to be political - many people would deny that a TA is political, though anything to do with the re-allocation of resources must be. There is in fact very little difference between this unpaid 'community care' work and that described in one above. The arguments against are the same, except that the one about funding won't apply; but in order to get popular support you'll have to avoid being explicitly anarchist anyway.

2. Working with single issue political groups, e.g. Troops Out, BWNIC (British Withdrawal from Ireland Campaign), ANL (Anti Nazi League) etc. - not all members of which are anarchists, though all are political. I would also include personal liberation groups here.

The best thing about these is that they can provide a good recruiting ground for the unscrupulous anarchist, being ideal

for showing up the contradictions in society, and being composed of people who are at least certain there's something wrong, even if they aren't sure what it is! On the other hand that works both ways - how many anarchists have joined the SWP because 'at least they are doing something' - even if it's the wrong thing.

Again it's tempting to work with these groups. And who can deny the importance of any of them, from the need to defeat the Corrie bill to the need to throw the troops out of Ireland. But if we work with them, it must still be in the knowledge that these too are short term, and certainly provide no answer as to the right way to achieve an anarchist society - not least because they are usually defensive groups, set up to fight a development of some kind, or defend the status quo in some way. And they can divert energies in the wrong direction, attacking symptoms not the disease.

3. Better, though, is anarchist propaganda - speakers, papers, working with groups like DAM and ACA (Anarchist Communist Association). Good self disciplining stuff, something many anarchists seem to be a little short on. Putting an explicit anarchist line all the way. It's fine, and I like reading the anarchist press, putting on speakers etc. Lots of fun, and even gets a few converts - but it consistently fails to reach the mass of the people. And why - it's not because of our aims. I'm sure that the vast majority of people would agree with these, so long as we didn't mention the infamous hate word, 'anarchist'. But then they will accuse you of being idealists, and say that they've got to survive in the real world, which is hard and nasty - so they've got to be hard and nasty too. They have to be, to survive. And this is where we lose out, and is the whole point of this article. If we could offer a realistic course of action which could show people that anarchism isn't an unrealisable ideal, that it's a living vital force which is attainable in the near future, then we would be a lot stronger than we are. But we can't. And every time we fall down on the question, What can I do now for anarchism?

But I'm running a little ahead of my conclusion. For there is one further aspect which I haven't yet considered - the role of violence in furthering the cause.

Forget all the moral arguments for and against violence. I'm starting off from the assumption that no-one would condemn violence against property (such as embassies, police stations, computer installations, anything which furthers the operation of the state). I realise that sooner or later violence against property will bring you into conflict with the people who insist on protecting objects with their bodies, like night watchmen, but that's another article too. Consider violence against property. I've shown, I think, that other forms of activity are questionable in their effectiveness. So all that's left is the ultimate form of direct action. Why aren't we all guerrillas?

a) Primarily because the pre-conditions for success are wrong. Physical revolutions aren't made in isolation from the rest of society. There has to be something seriously wrong - in that the state can no longer provide the basic needs of the people - before there are enough of us to start a revolution. This just isn't the case in Britain. People aren't poor enough, they haven't suffered enough. They still think they have more to lose than to gain from such a course. The guerrilla would be, like the Angry Brigade, a fish on the beach. Full of spectacular action, but no imitators, no-one to form a support network, and not a chance in hell of actually ousting the state from its territory. It may happen one day - but not yet. To take up arms now would be suicidal - it may inspire future generations, but how many amongst us are martyrs?

b) But even if we did take up arms, there is still the problem of reaction. Suppose anarchists in Britain had the same proportional support as the Provos. We'd have a guerrilla army 50,000 strong, more than enough to defeat the Brits, already stretched in Ireland. We'd easily win. Or would we? For if we can get support so would the fascists. Maybe they would get more. It would be a bloody battle, and who's to say we would win?

c) But even if it looked like we would win, at what cost would it be? Violence finds its own momentum, and dictates authoritarian structures in order to win the war. Secrecy and unquestioning obedience are the ways wars are won - not through collective decisions before each battle. If we won it would be at the cost of our anarchist principles - and we would end up with the same authoritarian society after the war.

That's more or less it really. I'm not as pessimistic as I sound; I think we are in for an exciting time, with a lot of chances opening up which we should take. But I'm searching

for the right thing to do, the right answers to give people who are interested in anarchism but who don't think it can happen. Maybe anarchism needs some sort of pre-conditions in society before the time is ripe for it - but surely we should be doing something to prepare for that time other than sitting in the pub talking about the CNT. If anarchism is ever to prevail it must have relevance now! It must be able to put forward a realisable programme of aims, and a way of achieving those aims. And all the exclamation marks in the world won't substitute for that.

GEOFF MINSHULL

Gaitskell & Co.

Hugh Gaitskell: A Political Biography, Philip Williams, Cape, £15. The Final Term: The Labour Government 1974-76, Harold Wilson, Weidenfeld/Michael Joseph, £8.95.

HUGH GAITSKELL owed his leadership of the Labour Party to a combination of circumstances. In 1955 when Atlee resigned the leadership, Aneurin Bevan was in the middle of one of those fits of outrage and political hooliganism to which Labour MPs in opposition seem to be addicted, and had thus alienated much of the support he could have expected five years earlier. And Clement Atlee had hung onto the leadership to the very verge of senility just to make sure that - Herbert Morrison, who was the colleague he liked least - politician's jargon for hated most - would be seen to be too old to succeed him.

So Gaitskell came into the leadership with massive parliamentary support, and proceeded through ineptness more than design, to set a different section of the party against him almost every time he pronounced on an issue. This remarkable lack of political grasp has been seized upon by his admirers as strength of principle. He upset the trade union leaders and union-sponsored MPs through his attempt to delete clause 4 from the party constitution. He upset the left, the activists and the young by his hysterical opposition to CND, and he upset many MPs who would have given him close support by his choice of friends and his aloofness. His biographer seeks to excuse this aloofness by the claim that it was also a fault of Atlee and Wilson. But I believe the crucial factor was that he had never been prime minister, and never dispensed patronage. The view of MPs was that he behaved like a prime minister without ever having been one.

This attitude also recalls a jibe of Harold MacMillan's, that even in opposition Gaitskell missed all the fun of politics by behaving in as ponderous and considered a manner as he would have done in office. This enormous earnestness, this ability to take himself so very seriously is certainly one of the reasons for the biographer's conclusion that Gaitskell "might have been the great peacetime leader that twentieth century Britain has badly needed, and sadly failed to find". A few others of whom this may be said by earnest biographers are Iain MacLeod, Alf Robens, Enoch Powell, Nye Bevan, Rab Butler and even George Brown. Those of whom it cannot be said are Harold Wilson, Anthony Eden, James Callaghan and Harold MacMillan. I offer biographers suffering from an excess of earnestness the thought that the thing that is certain to stop any politician from actually being a great peacetime leader is the achievement of prime ministerial office in peacetime.

Of which truth an excellent example is Harold Wilson, whose account of the Labour government which he led from 1974 to 1976 is interesting if discreet, and full of the grandiose assumption that the author's every decision was prompted exclusively by long term wisdom and vision, rather than the short term manoeuvres of political expediency which most commentators would more readily associate him with. And while one cannot expect a book of political history written by the prime minister who held office during the period described to be a main source of fact and detail for historians,



from FREEDOM 8/4/1961

Gaitskell and Macmillan, on the attempted infiltration of CND by the Communists.

I do believe that a book of this length cannot avoid giving the attentive reader (and which of us is not?) some unintended glimpses of the author. For instance, though he carefully refrains from any other than pleasant and praising remarks about any of his cabinet colleagues, it is obvious that there were those among them whom he did not love. But he only refers to two colleagues differently on successive pages. Tony Wedgwood Penn becomes Tony Penn over page, and elsewhere James Callaghan becomes Jim. So anybody who didn't know anyway could have guessed that these were the two comrades in his cabinet he liked least (see Atlee on Morrison above). One of the greatest mysteries of Wilson's leadership is why he didn't bother to block the chance of the succession of the detested Callaghan. I believe that it is at least a possibility that the reason Wilson didn't bother to block Callaghan was that he realised how utterly peripheral the power of prime minister truly is.

Of all the events and decisions in the book I think that two of the apparently most trivial are really of quite profound significance. For the 1975 Commonwealth conference Wilson insisted that he should represent Britain instead of the United Kingdom, regardless of all the protocol problems involved. We did this so that he would not have to sit next to Idi Amin of Uganda, who would be next to UK in the alphabetical order of the meeting, if he turned up, which he didn't. And on returning to office in 1974 he overruled Foreign Office objections, which had stopped him doing so in the 1960s, and awarded honours to Charles Chaplin and P.G. Wodehouse. Perhaps these two decisions encapsulate the true extent of a prime minister's power, that with determination he can alter his seat at a conference and after a ten year delay can give baubles to distinguished exiles.

PETER MILLER

THE FIGHT AGAINST

Unemployment

IF the UK used the same accounting figure system as the rest of Northern Europe and the USA, the figure of UK unemployed would now be about 2 million and not the ridiculous figure of 1,400,000 admitted to by the Government. However, by slick book-keeping and a strong desire not to alarm the voters, the Establishment have managed to hide the full enormity of the true situation. Various statistics regarding married women and other workers, building workers on the 'lump' for instance, have been ignored. As far back as 1971 the General Household Survey showed that 7½ per cent of the men and 54 per cent of the women looking for work had not 'signed on'. On this basis only about 77 per cent of the unemployed were counted.

TODAY

Now the scene is getting worse; by 1985 the number out of work is expected, in some quarters, to be over 5,000,000. Even now the Government is instrumental in the sacking of over 145,000 workers from various government offices and nationalised industries, i.e. over 60,000 civil servants, 50,000 shipbuilders, 25,000 British Leyland workers and 10,000 more from British Shipbuilding. These are the major figures; from this total we can expect spin-offs, i.e. in Wales, where the cuts in steel are expected to bring 10,000 redundancies, another 10,000 are feared in allied industries such as mining and transport.

We should remember that all this is from the 'state sector' of industry. What will the resulting loss of jobs be in the private field?

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

Chiefly because capital is undergoing one of its periodic crises, and Britain is feeling the initial pangs of this. The UK is not alone. In Europe there are over 20 million out of work, with the prospect of more to come. Even the Eastern bloc is feeling the effects and state capitalism is reeling under the strain. What will be the results of the recession no one knows, but forecasts have been made that the slump will equal at least its predecessor of 1926 in the resulting miseries.

BRITISH CAPITAL

However, it would be wrong to lay the blame for the high unemployment in this country simply on outside or natural forces. Inevitable though the collapse of the UK industry might be, the situation has been aggravated by the policies, political and economic, pursued by capital in this country.

One of the major contributors to the UK's decline has been the reluctance of British capital to invest in the UK, yet never to have ceased to milk the industries for profit. The most obvious case has been the motor industry, "R/L and all that". But Alfred Herbert's "Europe's (one time) largest machine tool company" is another. This was described as a text book rape of a company by over extraction of profits, under-investment and mismanagement" (CIS Report). In 10 years 20 million pounds were extracted by way of profits, and nothing reinvested. By 1975 the losses over the previous four years stood at £14 million with the overdraft of £15 million and interest repayments at 2 million annually. In 1975 Herberts were unable to find \$6 million for redevelopment and new plant. Eventually the Labour government had to step in to the tune of £25 million to enable the company to survive at all, though only with the loss of thousands of jobs.

DE-INDUSTRIALISATION

Capital over the last decade has pursued a policy that has led not just to the neglect of industry, but to the de-industrialisation of large parts of the UK. This is no accident; it is the result of a deliberate policy. Merseyside and the north east of England are being punished as a warning to the rest of us. At the same time British capital is being invested abroad to the tune of £19,000 million, making the UK the biggest overseas investor. Now while it is usual for capital to seek the cheaper labour force, British capital is America's largest foreign investor. Which kills the myth of 'cheap labour'.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

We must realise that what is happening - unemployment, cuts, the flow of capital and industry, is not just a series of unconnected events. It is the result of a planned attack on the working class - that it comes at the same time as a world slump is coincidental. The fact that the state has pushed forward the retraining of the police and the armed forces in riot control, and other aspects of internal security bodes ill for us. Though the state exists, as does capital, by more or less permanent coercion of the working class, and though the need for this is accentuated by the oncoming world slump, even if world stability were assured the state in Britain is on a collision course with labour. When asked for his views on the government's reason for lifting controls on the flow of money one Cambridge Economist gave his view that the Thatcher government was 'taking on' the working class. Why? Simple. Over the last ten years working class militancy has grown. The actions of the miners and engineers against Heath frightened the middle class. A government had been brought down by means other than parliamentary farce. When the substitute team, Labour, also suffered defeat at the hands of striking workers, it merely proved the already obvious point that Britain was becoming ungovernable. Do not forget - in the middle seventies according to most of the British press, discussions had already taken place regarding a coup by 'junior officers' to safeguard their investments. It didn't come off because the man chosen as leader thought the Labour government could do the job just as well.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

We can dismiss any hope of help from the Labour party or the trade unions. Over the last years they have shown themselves to be more than a tool of the state, they are an integral part of the oppression. The left in British politics are more concerned with achieving power, with taking over the state than with looking for answers. So any solution put forward must be based on the working class themselves.

To fight unemployment we must see that we fight the system. It is not sufficient to talk about 'greedy capitalists'; basically it is the whole system that we have to fight, and to this end we should, as anarchists, be seeking a re-alignment of working class organisation. Workers councils built on a non-trade basis but resting securely on the shop floor, where the working class power lies. Thus we should preserve unity at the point of production while at the same time ridding ourselves of the curse of the union 'managers' and freeing the decks for action. Tied as it is to the coat tails of the Labour party the TUC will be a positive drawback to the coming struggle that should be aimed at bringing down the government. Not just so that a Labour/CP/SWF or whatever type is brought in to gull us. Any struggle we engage in should have the ultimate object of the introduction of workers' control and workers' councils, with no room for political organisations such as Parliament. To fight unemployment we should work for works councils, amalgamated or federated in councils of action, leading to a general strike and culminating (hopefully) in the abolition of the state and parliament and the introduction of workers' councils and workers' control.

JIM

N.B. We should like to add a point to Jim's advocacy of works councils, namely the attitude such councils should have towards unemployment and 'de-industrialisation'. Need these be such a bad thing in every case? What anarchist would, for example, advocate the continuance of a state bureaucracy or the manufacture (and export) of nuclear technology? Three issues that need urgent discussion are, we suggest: the idea of a three-day week to alleviate unemployment and to promote leisure; the manufacture of products that are more in keeping with social needs, as advocated by the Lucas Aerospace shop stewards; and how best micro-chip technology could be used to the advantage of the community.

We hope we can enter into these areas in greater detail.

EDS.

WHERE WEALTH ACCUMULATES

THIS IS the first in an occasional series of extracts from non-anarchist literature which we feel would be of interest to anarchists, because they express ideas which are relevant to, or cast a new light on, anarchism.

It is taken from 'The Grapes of Wrath', John Steinbeck's great novel about the enforced migration of small farmers - and share croppers from the Mid-West of America to California during the depression of the Thirties.

We would be very grateful if any reader who comes across anything we could use in this series would let us know about it. Send the reference to Veronica at Freedom and she will do the rest! (But of course, if you feel like typing it out yourself. . .)

From The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck (Chapter 14):

THE WESTERN land, nervous under the beginning change. The Western States, nervous as horses before a thunder-storm. The great owners, nervous, sensing a change; knowing nothing of the nature of the change. The great owners, striking at the immediate thing, the widening government, the growing labor unity; striking at new taxes, at plans; not knowing these things are results, not causes. Results, not causes. The causes lie deep and simply - the causes are hunger in a stomach, multiplied a million times; a hunger in a single soul, hunger for joy and some security, multiplied a million times; muscles and minds aching to grow, to work, to create, multiplied a million times. The last clear definite function of man-muscles aching to work, minds aching to create beyond the single need - this is man. To build a wall, to build a house, a dam, and in the wall and house and dam to put something of Manself, and to Manself take back something of the wall, the house, the dam; to take hard muscles from the lifting, to take the clear lines and form from conceiving. For man, unlike anything organic or inorganic in the universe, grows beyond his work, walks up the stairs of his concepts, emerges ahead of his accomplishments. This you may say of man, -when theories change and crash, when schools, philosophies, when narrow dark alleys of thought, national, religious, economic, grow and disintegrate, man reaches, stumbles forward, painfully, mistakenly sometimes. Having stepped forward, he may slip back, but only half a step, never the full step back. This you may say and know it and know it. This you may know when the bombs plummet out of the black planes on the market place, when prisoners are stuck like pigs, when the crushed bodies drain filthily in the dust. You may know it in this way. If the step were not being taken, if the stumbling forward ache were not alive, the bombs would not fall, the throats would not be cut. Fear the time when the bombs stop falling while the bombers live - for every bomb is proof that the spirit has not died. And fear the time when the strikes stop while the great owners live - for every little beaten strike is proof that the step is being taken. And this you can know - fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept, for this one quality is the foundation of Manself, and this one quality is man, distinctive in the universe.

The Western States, nervous under the beginning change. Texas and Oklahoma, Kansas and Arizona, California. A single family moved from the land. Pa borrowed money from the bank, and now the bank wants the land. The land company - that's the bank when it has land - wants tractors, not families on the land. Is a tractor bad Is this power that turns the long furrows wrong. If this tractor were ours it would be good - not mine, but ours. If our tractor turned the long furrows of our land, it would be good. Not my land, but ours.

We could love that tractor then as we have loved this land when it was ours. But this tractor does two things - it turns the land and turns us off the land. There is little difference between this tractor and a tank. The people are driven, intimidated, hurt by both. We must think about this.

One man, one family driven from the land; this rusty car creaking along the highway to the west. I lost my land, a single tractor took my land. I am alone and I am bewildered. And in the night one family camps in a ditch and another family pulls in and the tents come out. The two men squat on their hams and the women and children listen. Here is the node, you who hate change and fear revolution. Keep these two squatting men apart; make them hate, fear and suspect each other. Here is the anlage of the thing you fear. This is the zygote. For here 'I lost my land' is changed; a cell is split and from the splitting grows the thing you hate - 'We lost our land.' The danger is here, for two men are not as lonely and perplexed as one. And from this first 'we' there grows a still more dangerous thing: I have a little food plus 'I have none'. If from this problem the sum is 'We have a little food,' the thing is on its way, the movement has direction. Only a little multiplication now, and this land, this tractor are ours. The two men squatting in a ditch, the little fire, the side meat stewing in a single pot, the silent, stone-eyed women; behind, the children listening with their souls to words their minds do not understand. The night draws down. The baby has a cold. Here, take this blanket, it's wool. It was my mother's blanket - take it for the baby. This is the thing to bomb. This is the beginning - from 'I' to 'we'.

If you who own the things people must have could understand this, you might preserve yourself. If you could separate causes from results, if you could know that Paine, Marx, Jefferson, Lenin were results, not causes, you might survive. But that you cannot know. For the quality of owning freezes you for ever into 'I', and cuts you off for ever from the 'we'.

The Western States are nervous under the beginning change. Need is the stimulus to concept, concept to action. A half-million people moving over the country, a million more restive, ready to move; ten million more feeling the first nervousness.

And tractors turning the multiple furrows in the vacant land.

From The Grapes of Wrath, Chapter 14, to which we couldn't help adding, from Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*:

Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

AND THE LAND But, in this country, the people seem to have forgotten the land of their fore-fathers; the vast Common Lands of England, held by them from time immemorial, and completely enclosed by Act of Parliament, and only in the last century we have lost our Commons but keep the House of Commons, which played this trick and still give our votes to the supplicants who periodically come begging for a seat in the best club in London . . .

Augustus John - from an extract from his autobiography 'Chiaroscuro' (Cape, 1952) reprinted in *Anarchy* 10 December 1961.

Anarchy & Violence

IN the epilogue to *Anarchism. A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements*, George Woodcock draws a distinction between the anarchist movement started by Bakunin and company in the nineteenth century, and the anarchist idea from which that movement grew. It is my contention that the use of violent acts to attain an anarchist ideal, acts apologised for and even advocated by Bakunin and Kropotkin and others in the anarchist movement, is contrary to the anarchist idea or impulse from which the movement drew inspiration and momentum. Indeed, the justifications for violence and its use to attain anarchist ends may even detract from and deflect the original impulse.

Bakunin makes a case for the opposite point of view - that violence comes from a spontaneous reaction of the oppressed in society against their exploiters. He goes on to warn of the impossibility of killing off an entire political party or class and of the inevitable backlash that would result from such mistaken slaughter (1). And when you get down to it, this is the basic anarchist justification for violence - that violence is natural and inevitable and must be used and channelled properly. Bakunin feels that when the time is ripe for revolution, the violence that will result is totally justifiable, though regrettable in excess, and is an expression of the revolutionary urge.

I would submit that, to the contrary, the original anarchist idea or impulse, while including hatred for all authority and a desire for a way of life free from outside coercion and interference, did not include a belief in the necessity of a violent overthrow of the existing order. Whether one begins with the religious dissidents at the end of the Western medieval period as the starting point of the anarchist idea, or much earlier, as Kropotkin advocates, with the mutual aid in tribal and village communities, or with the pre-Classical philosophers of Greece and China (2), violence never played an intrinsic part. Not until the development in the nineteenth century of a conscious anarchist movement attempting to draw on the anarchist idea in order to accomplish a revolution, did the advocacy of violence appear. A case could just as easily be made that there is a natural abhorrence of violence rather than a natural urge - that people want no part of a violent upheaval and instinctively know that violence will only serve to make things worse. Indeed, the very abhorrence of some anarchist thinkers such as Godwin and Tolstoy, and of the general public today for that matter, with the term 'anarchy', lies not in an instinctive opposition to decentralisation and libertarian ideas, but to the vague connotations of violence - which the word 'anarchy' implies. As for the so-called 'popular' rebellions in history, none could be said to have an anarchist goal, and most were led by one part of the ruling elite against another (e.g. the gentry against the central bureaucracy in the fourth century A.D. rebellion of Sun En in China, 3).

Kropotkin advances a second justification for violence as a revolutionary method, by advocating 'moral' acts of violence to inspire people to revolt. His idea, expressed in *The Spirit of Revolt*, is that when the time is ripe for revolution, one act alone, as long as it is done for greater morality and not just for personal gain, can inspire people to revolt. A series of such actions by a party thus embodying the thought it represents would then give it the leadership of the revolution by popular demand (4). But it must be emphasised that this is to be done only when the government is no longer respected - when it is recognised that the government exists by the use of force alone. The standard to determine the morality of each individual act, expressed in 'Anarchist Morality', is none other than the Golden Rule. "Treat others as you would like them to treat you under similar circumstances" (5). By this standard, Kropotkin would wish himself killed if he ever became a tyrant or led an invasion (6).

This of course poses all kinds of problems. Suppose that I believe that I am just and right and should not be assassinated, even if people disagree with my opinion of myself. By the Golden Rule I should not wish to kill any tyrant who believes him or herself to be just, even if I disagree with him or her. If Kropotkin would have answered, "No, kill the tyrant no matter what he or she thinks if you know you are right and the time is ripe", then he contradicts himself three ways. First, he would then be advocating that his standards of morality exist as an objective truth for all to follow - of course - setting up an outside authority over the masses in contradiction to his libertarian ideal. Second, he would be allowing the principle of order not by justice but by preponderant force. Third, Kropotkin would surely agree with Bakunin that the freedom of one depends on his/her acknowledging the freedom and humanity of others (7). Therefore the selfishness of valuing one's own opinion of justice above the humanity of another would be to deny the freedom of both assassin and victim and would thus be immoral. The opposition to arbitrary authority of the original anarchist idea is thus lost by advocating violent, albeit 'morally violent' acts.

The third basic argument for violence as a means toward anarchist ends is that it is necessary and the only way to effectively smash the state. But as all anarchists admit, violence cannot possibly work when the time is not yet ripe - when people still believe in the myths of the necessity for the state. When the state stands naked and exposed as an instrument of monopolised force for a privileged elite, as Godwin asserts, it will not long survive (8). Likewise, it would seem, if all the people have the will and ability to overturn a government - when the revolutionary moment is ripe - violence would then be unnecessary. As in Iran and South Vietnam before their respective revolutions, it was not violence (which, when used later, actually betrayed their revolutions), but the refusal of the masses to believe in and cooperate with the lying fascist rulers which caused the mightily armed regimes to melt away. It was when the fascist leaders realised that they would have to kill virtually all of their subjects or put all of them in jail, and thus realised that they must inevitably lose, that the revolutions succeeded. The use of violence only ensured that the new repressive regimes would take over.

Bakunin and Kropotkin both denounce violence at the wrong time (i.e. when the government has the support of the people) and support violence at the right time (i.e. when the government no longer has popular support). Both see acts of violence done at the right time as tending to spur on the revolution. But who is to judge when the right time has arrived? Through hindsight we see that the anarchists' acts of violence in the late nineteenth century were totally ineffective and only turned people away from the hoped-for type of revolution, to this day poisoning the name of anarchy. Obviously, the time was not ripe, but who was to judge? Revolutionaries, associating with their own kind and with oppressed classes, are often blind to the total picture, which is often far from revolutionary. Certainly the oppressors themselves cannot be the judges. That leaves the masses. But how do they tell us their judgement? Obviously, they tell us by supporting or rejecting individual acts of violence. But by this method, it is necessary to have virtually constant tests. That is, we can only know that the time is not ripe if some brave soul commits an act of violence that is found to be inopportune and thus immoral. Thus immoral acts are necessary to help us determine if the time is right or not for revolution.

Far from being effective, violence has been shown to be self-defeating, at least for the anarchist revolution, as the public has turned away from anarchism in revulsion to immoral acts of violence. Thus immoral acts prevent the chance

for moral acts to occur, assuming that there are any such thing as moral acts of violence.

But if the very state we are fighting is thought to be nothing but monopolised force for the benefit of a privileged few who have concocted myths of the justice, necessity, and popular mandate of their system, then how is that different from a few revolutionaries who have concocted a system of justice, supposedly founded on popular will, yet still to be implemented by force. Are we to say that one system of coercion is superior to the other by judging who is more sincere? If the proposed method for effecting each system is the same, then are we to determine which system is myth and which reality solely on the criterion of sincerity? I doubt if even Hitler was insincere - he probably genuinely thought that what he was doing was good and of the popular will. Again, it is only by allowing violence, the highest form of coercion, as a method of attaining anarchy that the original impulse is slowed down and brought into question.

I would argue that Bakunin's belief that the first flush of violence, though perhaps excessive, would die out after the first success of the revolution and the setting up of the communes, is just as much a myth as the Marxist tenet of the withering away of the state. Once force is justified as a means for setting up a revolutionary society, again through hindsight, we can see that it is the party or group of people having the most systematic, scientific, organised-use of force who will prevail over the spontaneous bomb-throwers and assassins. This winning party, needless to say, is never the one to give up its organised force. Clearly, anarchists are destined to lose the leadership of the revolution to more committed perpetrators of violence, if we continue to rely on violent methods.

The nature of the state lies not in its administrative organs and departments in themselves, but in their monopolising, involuntary nature. Thus a group attaining power by the use of force has been historically shown to refuse to give up that monopoly on force, thereby recreating the state.

In my opinion true anarchism lies completely in the anarchist idea. No plans for takeover, no blueprints or systems of communes, no 'ideal' anarchy should be specified. For to reconstruct the idea, even if 'scientifically' done, is to separate oneself and the audience from that idea. Similarly, the use of violence separates two people from the idea - saying to both victim and executioner that the idea is just and right not by its own soundness, but by force alone. If one really believes in forcing something on people for their own good, even if on a small majority of people, then one might as well construct the most scientific, systematic, rationalised order that is possible and have a government to keep it ordered. Only by identifying closely with the anarchist impulse in society and by rejecting violence will anarchism prevail over

more tightly organised parties expert at using force.

An idea does not exist by itself. It comes from life - gets its momentum from life and from people's instinctive need for the idea. Violence says that the idea is not natural but imposed. Thus it isn't so much that violence corrupts people (though of course it does) but that the decision to use violence denies the ideal even before actual violence commences.

To retain its power, the idea cannot be recreated. The anarchists of the 'anarchist movement' of the nineteenth century tapped the power of the idea and continue to inspire us when they intuitively communicated to us the opposition to authority of all kinds, not only the authority of government, but also the authority of religion and science. (In his writings Bakunin expertly attacks the authority of science as 'infinitely inferior to art' and 'the perpetual immolation of life... on the altar of abstractions'). The anarchists lost the power of the idea when they constructed strained rationales for violence and petty acts of concentrated force. The idea cannot be recreated; it must be lived. The true anarchist is one who puts total trust in the idea - not in its authority, but in the liberation it produces. When we identify with the idea, not acquiesce to it, anarchy is achieved.

Is this pacifist anarchism impractical and naive? I say it is much more practical than violence, given the historical failure of violent anarchism, and is a practical necessity if anarchism is to survive and take over the lead of the revolutionary movement once again.

JOHN A. RAPP

Notes

(1) Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings, Arthur Lehning, ed. London: Jonathan Cape, 1973, pp. 168-169.

(2) In China, the ancient Taoists were far more anarchistic than any studies to date have indicated. In fact, they go a long way to corroborate Kropotkin's theory of primitive communism. See my MA thesis, Taoism and Anarchy: An Analysis of the Political Critique of Philosophical Taoism and Its Comparison with the Western Philosophy of Anarchism, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, 1978.

(3) William Eichorn, 'Description of the Rebellion of Sun En and Earlier Taoist Rebellions', Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin - Institut fuer Orientforschung, Mitteilungen, 1954.

(4) Peter Kropotkin, Revolutionary Pamphlets, Roger Baldwin, ed; New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968, 'The Spirit of Revolt', pp. 39-43.

(5) Ibid, 'Anarchist Morality', p. 97.

(6) Ibid, p. 100

(7) Bakunin, op cit. p. 110.

BOOKSHOP NOTES

TO COMMENCE on a personal note--for the whole of February, I am taking a month off to travel around the world - mainly to New Zealand but stopping off in the Far East and Los Angeles.

So I won't be manning the bookshop for that month. Instead, Stephanie will be holding the fort, but as the bookshop is in some ways a rather complicated job, especially for someone coming at it totally new, there may be some delays in processing your orders during that time. But the bookshop will be open as usual, i.e.

MONDAY: CLOSED
TUESDAY: 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY: 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY: 3 p.m. - 8 p.m.
FRIDAY: CLOSED
SATURDAY: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

*provided BR Eastern Region running normally; if not, we open at 6 p.m.

However, I beg your forbearance and patience, and hopefully things will be back to 'normal' (whatever that is) on my return.

J.H.

MEANWHILE, one or two possible items for your shopping list:

LOUIS JOUGHIN & EDWARD M. MORGAN

*The Legacy of Sacco & Vanzetti, 596pp., paper, £4.50 (60p)

PAUL ELTZBACHER

*Anarchism: Seven Exponents of the Anarchist Philosophy, 272pp., cloth, £6.00 (60p)

LEN FULTON & ELLEN FERBER (eds)
*The International Directory

of Little Mags and Small Presses.

481pp., paper, £5.95 (76p)

LAURENCE VEYSEY

*The Communal Experience: Anarchist & Mystical communities in twentieth century America, paper, £6.75 (60p)

PAUL AVRICH

*The Russian Anarchists, 303pp., paper, £3.50 (29p)

CHARLOTTE WILSON

Three Essays on Anarchism, 24pp., paper, £0.60 (11p)

EDWARD AVELING & ELEANOR MARX AVELING

Shelley's Socialism, plus PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY: Popular Songs: 'Wholly Political, and destined to awaken and direct the Imagination of the Reformers', 64pp., paper, £1.50 (14p)