

## Unemployment as a Way of Life

ONE OF MR. HEATH'S election promises, thrown in to gratify the greedy, petty-minded Tories for whom money is everything, was that a good hard look would be taken at 'abuses' of the welfare services. Someone, somewhere, was convinced that a contributory factor in our inability to meet our 'balance of payments' and to keep the gnomes of Zurich in the manner to which they had become accustomed, was the fact that a 'number' of families in Britain were living on welfare to which they were not entitled.

Anybody who has ever had anything to do with claiming benefits knows how difficult it is to get payment of what you are entitled to, let alone any more! Anybody who manages to get more than that pittance deserves, not public condemnation but a medal. Behind the counters of the 'social security' (Oh! 1984!) sit hard-faced and resentful bureaucrats who see themselves as models of moral rectitude defending the interests of the working community against the army of scroungers who would batten like locusts upon 'the nation' if not discouraged in every way.

As if to provide the Tories with ammunition, findings have just been published of an investigation carried out in Glasgow (and 'there is no reason to believe similar circumstances do not prevail elsewhere', thunders the Press) which relates welfare services to 'unwillingness' to work. The investigation was carried out among families of which the breadwinner had not been working for several years—in some cases for ten years. The findings claim to show that in some cases an unwillingness to work existed before the family went on the welfare, but the majority indicated that at first unemployment was unwanted, but as the idle years passed, unwillingness to go back to work grew and eventually the worker (ex-worker) became virtually unemployable although doctors and social workers might disagree. A contributory factor in this demoralising process was the scale of payment of welfare benefit, whereby, in a large proportion of the cases, a man with several children received more in benefit than he would have earned in his normal employment, or, if not more, then the difference was offset by the cost of travel to work, insurance payments, union dues, etc. It simply did not pay to go to work!

A great chorus of tut-tutting went up about this, the inference clearly being that something must be done to bring down the level of welfare payments so that it would pay

the man to go to work.

Two points went unanswered: firstly, since the state's welfare benefits (a lovely word, 'benefit') are based on a subsistence level, and a pretty low subsistence level at that, how can they be lowered without the man's family starving?

And secondly, what sort of wage structure is it that offers a man payment for his work which is lower than the subsistence level of the state's hand-outs?

### ARE BOSSES NEEDED?

Ironically, these findings from Glasgow came out just a week before official unemployment figures were announced which admitted that there are more workers unemployed in Britain today than in any August since 1940 and is in fact, at more than 600,000, at the highest level since the war. More, the TUC uttered a serious warning that unemployment will climb to around 750,000 during the winter.

Compared with this massive total of people out of work through no fault of their own, in fact through the direct fault of the economic policies of Wilson-Heath, the few families who are 'abusing' the welfare services can be seen in perspective!

Let it never be forgotten that capitalism needs a certain number of workers to be out of work all the time. A pool of unemployed makes it that much easier for bosses to control their workers, who are expected to be grateful for the privilege of working for an employer.

Unhappily the trades unions and most of the working class itself go along with this, and bitter are the struggles mounted simply to defend the job—a working class struggle which delights the bosses who want nothing more (well, nothing more than millions of pounds profits!) than to be loved.

After all, bosses are human, too, and they want to be needed, like anybody else. One of the most demoralising effects of unemployment comes from precisely the feeling that you are not needed—not wanted. In a worker, this feeling undermines his whole dignity as a contributor to society—and believe it or not, it is this which gives social significance to a man's work.

Work, however, is different from employment. No form of society can survive without work on somebody's part. What is lousy about capitalism, either free enterprise or state, is that the majority are organised from above to

work for the benefit of the few who either own or control the means of life—of production and distribution. This is slavery, hidden by money payment so that the slave can keep himself more or less fit to work from week to week, and softened by welfare so that the slaves don't get too down-trodden. Welfare, incidentally, is not something which is given us by a generous state, for no state has anything to give except that which it has already stolen from the people. It hands us back a small proportion of what it has extorted from us in order to keep us quiet.

So the majority of us are organised in employment for the benefit of our employers and the state, which exists to defend them. This is employment. Work should be what we do for our own satisfaction and for the fulfilment of our responsibility to society—what makes the world a good place to live in—and the realisation of our potentials.

Employment sours the whole concept of work; corrupts the relationships between workers; destroys the dignity of labour; forces us to exist on other people's terms, makes even retirement and leisure something to be feared. Who wants that?

### ABOLISH EMPLOYMENT!

What is necessary now is for the realisation to spread that employment in the ordinary sense must be abolished!

Work cannot be abolished, since it is necessary just to grow our food and build our houses (what houses?). The means are now available to feed, clothe and house the whole world—if the free and natural and true economy of applying work to the raw materials of the earth for the common good were applied. What stands in the way? Employment!

Let us then inscribe on our revolutionary banners: THE ABOLITION OF EMPLOYMENT! Let us tell the boss the sad news that, as a boss, he is no longer wanted. As a father, as a lover, he may be loved and wanted by the few involved, but as an employer of labour he is no longer needed. We are going to take over the means of life and work them for ourselves! We are going to abolish the apparatus of exploitation; we are going to build a better world based on freedom, not slavery; we are going to satisfy peoples' needs, not make profits for the few.

We will work—but we will not be employed!

JUSTIN.

### ANOTHER BANK HOLIDAY.

Another festival.

And maybe for some, another Isle of Wight.

Too much rubbish has been talked and written about the young, their old, the generation gap and the permissive society. To add to it now would be superfluous and boring, and to tell that we are all a fine bunch, in whom Britain, yea the world even, should be proud, would be a drain, gurgling on behalf of those who want your political support, your money, or both.

The sham that this whole artificial festival is, has been created by people who want money, yours and mine. The only youth power that they recognise is purchasing power. Why else would this festival be tolerated? The whole hip scene has long been a commercial racket complete with plastic tributes and sweet false beards for the weekend drop-out. Haight-Ashbury was forced by the ugliness of the circumstances to put up shutters when the commercial hustlers moved in.

In music the city take-overs of groups and their assets turns sounds into gold,

## FESTIVAL FOR PHONIES

and the quest for gold turns it eventually into the same old shit.

D.J.'s for Free Radio solicit our newly-acquired votes for their freedom to exploit our purchasing power. What is this freedom? That given by a State that still binds us with its quaint and dangerous morality, or that freedom to sell and sell nothing but crap for our consumption. Like the choice between arsenic and prussic acid, it's no choice at all.

Is this gathering a knock against the establishment that strangles us in trying to enforce their greyness? Never! Watch the vultures as they hover, birds of prey from Fleet Street and Auntie Beeb, waiting to snatch at some sensational gobble to hand up to their avid readers with the Sunday roast and two veg, fights, drugs, maybe even the odd naked leg (heaven forbid, my dear, see what

them hippies are up to now. Back in my days . . .). It's all good for pumping up the adrenalin. Don't talk to them and don't be a camera hog. If the correct stories don't turn up, worry not, they'll be invented, or staged. You can always trust feeders to the media to twist it. Yes, they'll say they're on our side, and sell us down the river to some grubby sub-editor for circulation.

As for fierce Fiery Creations, who've staged the whole thing already; and the talent they've lined up, they'll all make their pile whether we get value or not. Paid your £3 already? No, they're not in it for your beautiful blue eyes and flowing locks.

We understand from Fiery that the church will be represented. Pretty good that. They've fingers in every pie; Stock Exchange for prayers, blessing gunboats and bombers, all in the name of some

nut who in the glory of the Welfare State would probably end up in a mental hospital under sedation, with some chaplain visiting him to push his hard drug. Another pusher to avoid!

And how about the police? Certainly not a pig amongst them. The police have never been as sociable as any pig is, and though some flesh-eaters amongst us may exploit them, to use their name is to add insult to injury, and that's too much. No, police is evil enough word for them, and they'll be about, both in their regalia, funny-shaped heads and all, and the quiet ones who prefer not to wear the uniform. All trying to prove that they are necessary, and even if we of the festival prove that they're not, they'll probably try damn hard to prove to the Isle of Wight and the world that they are. Ever heard of anyone being planted, and not just with drugs but with

'dangerous weapons'? A young school teacher was once in possession of a fine array of these 'dangerous weapons', in the form of sufficient silver coins to form in the police mind a knuckleduster. Charges were, of course, dropped when they found he wasn't just young, but a teacher to boot. Marvellous what an education does, isn't it!

But at least one of the performers isn't a complete sham. Joan Baez, if she makes it here, may be a complete liberal, but she's been jailed for her part in the opposition to the United States government's excursions into curtailing other people's liberty, and her husband's still inside. She manages out of her earnings to finance a school for non-violent resistance, and one could only hope that others might do similar things to try and change the systems that oppress.

Despite Press, Parsons, Promoters, and Police, the festival can be a peaceful success—because we can enjoy ourselves with those who we find to be with us as brothers and sisters, even if only vaguely working toward a better world, one without Press, Parsons, Promoters or Police!  
M.H.

## REPRESSION AT VERCELLI

THE VERCELLESE JOURNAL *Sesia* of June 5, 1970, informs us of the arrest of comrade GAVIGLIO DANIELE and of three sympathisers.

BRUNO GIORDANO, MAURIZIO SAMAGNA and TIZIANO BARBONE, were participants in a series of acts of 'vandalism' of extreme gravity. They confiscated some electoral manifestos (this was a legitimate reaction because the fascists had confiscated our manifestos). They continued their work by setting up a road block, slashed tyres and broke the windows of a police-station in via San Cristoforo.

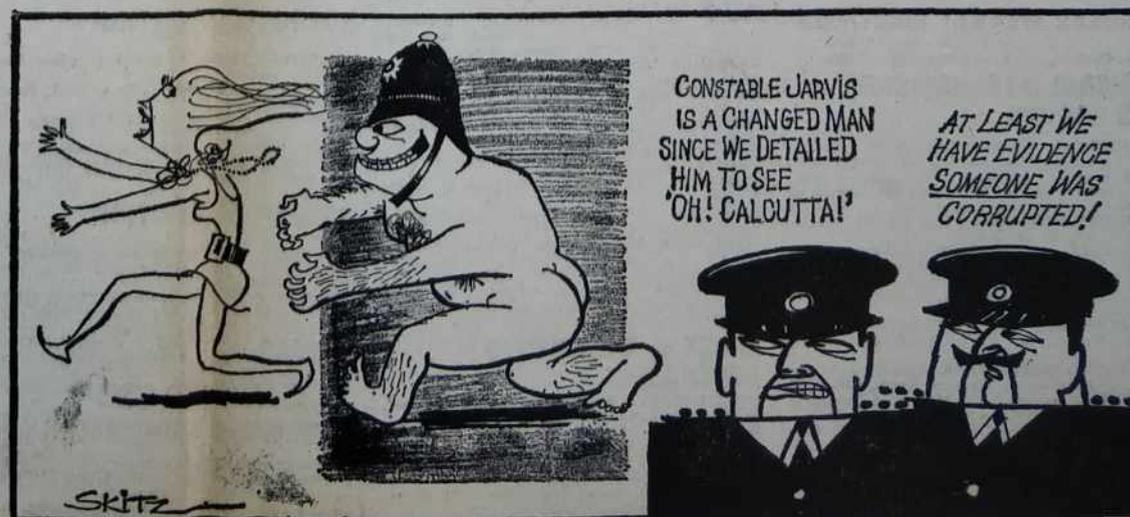
The good Vercellese, very indignant against these vandals, have read with satisfaction of their arrest. It does not

appear to us that they are indignant also against those who have marked with fascist slogans the walls of Vercelli and Gattinara.

A few days after their arrest many youths went to the neighbourhood of the jail calling for the liberation of the four. For 'security reasons' Comrade Gaviglio was then transferred to the jail at Biella. His brother (13) has been held for questioning and his copies of *L'Internazionale* and *Umanita Nuova* confiscated.

The comrades of Black Cross are providing an advocate.

—From *L'Internazionale*, 15.7.70.  
(Trans. S.M.)



CRITICAL WRITINGS OF OSCAR WILDE, edited by Richard Ellman. W. H. Allen, London. £2 10s.

NORA THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LADY DOCKER. W. H. Allen, London. £2 2s.

THE NAKED CIVIL SERVANT, by Quentin Crisp. Cape, London. £1 5s.

THE BODYGUARD, by Adrian Mitchell. Cape, London. £1 5s.

OSCAR WILDE'S TRAGEDY was that he talked himself to his death for while the Town loves a witicism they hate the wit who, in a few brief words, using his listener as a foil, mocks the solemnity of public attitudes and for café society the public destruction of the author of their enjoyment becomes the high point of the joke for the tortured screams of the dying clown is a justification of those puritans who hold that laughter by its very nature is immoral.

If we had been left with nothing but the Collected Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde we should now be honouring him as a man of humane intelligence and a needed antidote to the bleak anti-humanism of Shaw's interpretation of socialism, but Wilde would insist on parading his private humour on the public stage and for that he was destroyed. It is doubtful if these corporate writings of Wilde will have any impact on Wilde's play-spotting public, but 440 pages that contain *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*, *The Decay of Lying* and *Mr. Whistler's Ten O'Clock*, among so much other good light reading, is a worthy gift for any youthful prig explaining the facts of life to his indifferent elders.

Within this book, Wilde writes that 'every great man nowadays has his disciples, and it is usually Judas who writes his biography' but I would suggest that it is also Judas that guides the mind that pens those sadly revealing autobiographies. In that understandable desire to set the record straight and to justify oneself, the authors create an image of themselves more pathetic and more grotesque than any enemy would dare to do.

Lady Docker, Nora to her enemies, has written what must surely be one of the great autobiographies of our age, and I mean this most sincerely. The vulgar, humourless woman has given us one of the key books of the twentieth century and will have done more to explain our economic and social sewer to an age a thousand years from now than all the garbage that ever flowed from the typewriters of our hired historians. Her three ghastly husbands whom she married for their money, her attempts to buy herself into the closed society of the low-browed high-born, and the occasions when she and her husband of the hour were turfed out of the royal presence, is given in all its squalid (love that word) detail.

But Lady Docker had her problems that Mum bravely shared with her, and they ranged from the days of poverty when the head waiter lifted the day's takings from the till, her abortion, her trouble with worthless friends, to being accused—wrongfully—of trying to mur-

# HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES

der her husband (No. 2) and the final nuisance of finding the night nurse tucked up in bed with her dying husband and the indignities of trying to get the State Registered Bedwarmer out of bed and out of the house to the cries of 'You don't love him—I do'. But the nurse went the way of all flesh and the till-dipping head waiter for, as Lady Docker writes of husband No. 2, 'Yes he left me his fortune, but with it a broken heart!'

No. 3 husband was that comedian of our industrial system, Sir Bernard Docker, clown among men, and if any historian wishes to understand the inanities of our economic system, then let them read this autobiography of Lady Docker for she condemns our age more surely than all the pious leaders of the left-wing press could ever hope to do. The vulgar, stupid philistine people are a cancer that grows within a social economy that lurches from one disaster to the next and even the living of their lives fails to justify their existence and Lady Docker gives these pathetic *nouveaux riches* a needed third dimension in her banal cliché-ridden prose. Every day our right-wing press highlight some strike for the condemnation of its middle-class readers but too rarely are we given this opportunity to examine the drear creatures who are the end product of all our labours and for that we must thank Lady Docker.

If Lady Docker recites the black

comedy of our times then Quentin Crisp gives us the blue comedy. His autobiography is so very sad and so very honest for to know Quentin is to respect and admire him. There are those comrades, next week the revolution, who found Quentin's public company embarrassing for Quentin was a man over-given to the use of the blue rinse and too much face-paint and within the anarchist movement there are so many good comrades with a nasty streak of bourgeois decency in their private attitudes that one felt they should have shed when they tore up their CP cards. Despite them Quentin's gentle humour and kindness made those long conversations in the Old Compton Street, French Coffee House and the middle-class-betrayed Partisan Coffee House matters of pleasant memories.

Quentin, and I hope that I can use his christian name as a friend, was the painted moneyless homosexual of the pre-permissive society. Sharing the same shaming era as Lady Docker, he was the gay gallant who, because of lack of loot and being out of harmony with the age, suffered all the indignities of that bleak period that Lady Docker hobbles to the press to praise. A flowered eccentric in a world of mass unemployment. A proclaiming, practising homosexual in Hitler's world of the 1930's demanded courage, and Quentin has never lacked that luxury. The misery of his world is surely epitomised

in an account he gives of standing in a 1930 Labour Exchange queue waiting to draw his weekly 15s. 3d. Unemployment Insurance Payment with both hands trying to fend off the fore and aft fumbling hands of his fellow unemployed until 'it was a mercy that I was able to press my genital organs against the counter' to sign the unemployment register.

Never quote the thesis of the university hacks when you seek to understand our age, but read the confessionals of Lady Docker and Quentin Crisp and then you will understand the cause and the effect or so much of the misery of those years that we inherit and pass on.

And now comes Adrian Mitchell as our poet of protest with his latest novel *The Bodyguard*. Again a most gentle and likeable man whose company is always a pleasure. Always in the forefront of the demonstration of protest and a willing victim of the poetry festivals he shares, as the old-time American gangs did, the Town with Cobbing and Horowitz as our resident and unrecognised poet laureates.

But for Adrian's book *The Bodyguard* a sad thumbs down. Set in the 1980's, it is the tape recorded reminiscences of bullet-plugged Len Rossman's struggle to become the best bodyguard in the world. In a Europe rent by revolutionary factions, Rossman belongs to that elite corps of strong-arm men, over and above the official police, created to protect the

current leaders. What I find disappointing about this book is Adrian's flat prose style and his inability to transmit his imagination into the future that he has chosen as his own scene.

His conception of the strong-arm corps is a curious blend of American riot police and Hitler's Brownshirts complete with nightsticks and street punch-ups while I would doubt that in 1980 'De Gaulle's gorillas' would be a topical synonym and riot control in the 1980's will surely be more sophisticated than a Grosvenor Square bash-up. The authorities are learning each day in their Vietnam school and one feels that in 1980 there will not be any personal contact between rioters and police for gas and low-flying helicopters will solve that problem for them.

It is in the prose picture of Rossman's father that one feels that Adrian is writing from his own past for Rossman (as I read the book) was a child at the time of the first moon-walk yet Adrian writes of Rossman's father as a red-necked policeman digging huge clumps of clay in his garden, kicking the coal fire into life (clean air act?) and drinking from a tea mug. This I feel is 1930 writing of the W. W. Jacobs school and I feel that Adrian Mitchell is remembering his own past but without tranquillity. Len Deighton would have given us a novel full of minute official inter-office memoranda, Ian Fleming a supercilious but acceptable picture of an enjoyable corrupt society, while Dashiell Hammett would have involved us in a society whose agony is beyond redemption, but Adrian has allowed himself to drift along in the present tense when writing of the imagined future for always the voice of his main character talks of the past as Deighton, Fleming and Hammett write of the drifting present, but they do this with the acceptance that neither they nor the readers nor their characters know what will happen on the next page.

It is an easy matter to be tested for one has only to describe an incident that happened an hour ago to find that one cannot talk in the present tense, but for all that it is a book worth your reading for this most gentle of the Town's poets warns us of the evil already within the gate.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

## ROUND AND ROUND THE GALLERIES

Dear Sir,

Whilst we appreciate the space given to Hans Bellmer in such an unlikely newspaper as FREEDOM, we feel very strongly that certain remarks discriminating against our show in favour of the meagre selection of prints on offer in Ewan Phillips glorified jewellery shop require clarification.

Firstly, our exhibition was given greater publicity in the art press and elsewhere because it contained watercolours, paintings, rare early etchings, photographic works, and a great deal of important documentation drawn together from all over Europe.

Mr. Phillips merely visited France and bought a series of unimportant prints from a leading French Bellmer dealer. He intended to show these works in the autumn, but moved his exhibition date forward in order to cash in on the publicity which he knew would be provoked by our show.

Under the circumstances, it is a little pathetic and quite erroneous to put Mr. Phillips up as a hard-done-by martyr, outdone by the efficiency of our publicity machine.

We would be grateful if you could

advise Arthur Moyses to get his facts right in future. He writes well, but that is scant consolation under the circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

August 12 ROBERT SELF.

REPLY:

I have no wish to quarrel with the imperial 'we' of the Robert Self Gallery for this small gallery is a welcome addition to the Town scene, but they should really let the magazine *Art and Artists* fight its own battles. In the beginning, the Ewan Phillips Gallery exhibition of Hans Bellmer's erotic work is not a 'meagre selection of prints' for Phillips has 27 Bellmer prints on public (adults only) exhibition and included among them are a complete set of 14 engravings of 'Le Petit Traite de Morale' from an edition of 12 and five trial prints from this same set and this, I would hold, compares favourably with the Self Gallery exhibition.

Again... one small gallery should not try to dismiss another small gallery as a 'glorified jewellery shop' when in floor space they are roughly the same area. That the Robert Self

Gallery should have spent so much money on advertising in the art press only to find that Ewan Phillips beat them on exhibition dates is sad, but simply shows bad timing on the Robert Self Gallery's part and that is not my problem.

My attack, if that is what it was, was against the magazine *Art and Artists* in the care they give to their advertisers in that when they went on public sale they gave a good and gratuitous plug (good luck, little comrade) to the Robert Self Gallery's exhibition of Bellmer's erotic work when it had not even appeared on the gallery's walls, while the Ewan Phillips Gallery exhibition of Bellmer's work, though mentioned in the national press, was ignored by the magazine.

Let *Art and Artists* fight their own battles or demand a refund from their advertising department or, more sensibly, arrange, as the Ewan Phillips Gallery did, to open your exhibitions on the day that your paid advertisements appear on public sale in the mass circulation art magazine.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

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LAVENDER HILL. Contact C. Broad, 116 Tyneham Road, S.W.11 (228 4086).  
NOTTING HILL. Sebastian Scragg, 10 Bassett Road, W.10.  
LIBERTARIAN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION. Peter Ford, 36 Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, N.W.7.

REGULAR WEEKLY MEETINGS  
Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Freedom Hall, 84B Whitechapel High Street, E.1 (Aldgate East Station).

### REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

BIRMINGHAM ANARCHIST GROUP. Secretary, Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham, 16. Meetings every Sunday, 8 p.m., in the smoke room of St. Martin pub, corner of St. Martin's Lane and Jamaica Row.  
BOURNEMOUTH AREA. Bob Fry, 30 Douglas Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset.  
CORNWALL ANARCHISTS. Contact Arthur Jacobs, 13 Ledrah Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. Brian & Hazel McGee, Hillcrest Farm, Hicks Mill, Bissoe, Truro, Cornwall. Visiting comrades welcome.  
PEACE ACTION. Rory Weightman, P.C.T. Peace Action Group, St. Pauls Road, Portsmouth, Hants.  
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EDGWARE PEACE ACTION GROUP. Contact Melvyn Estrin, 84 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Midds.  
FARNBOROUGH. 81 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey. Tel.: Farnborough 43811.  
HERTS. Contact Val and John Funnell, 19 Fry

Road, Chells, Stevenage.  
LEICESTER. Contact Di and A. Humphrey, 74 High Street, Leicester (Leicester 22046).  
LOUGHBOROUGH. Peter Davies, 67 Friffin Close, Shepsted, Leics.  
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PORTSMOUTH. Ken Bowbrick, 26 Plasbledon House, Landport, Portsmouth, Hants.  
READING. 26 Bulmershe Road. Tel.: Reading 65645. Meetings every Thursday.  
SOUTHALL. Dave Smith, 102 Abbots Road, Southall.  
TAUNTON. c/o Dave Poulson, 473 Bramley Road, Taunton, Somerset.  
WEST HAM ANARCHISTS. Regular meetings and activities contact Mr. T. Plant, 10 Thackeray Road, East Ham, E.6. Tel.: 552 4162.  
MERSEYSIDE. c/o John Cowan, 172a Lodge Lane, Liverpool 8. Meetings first Sunday in each month, 8 p.m.

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Secretary: Phil, 7 Trinity Square, Preston.  
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CHORLEY. Contact Kevin Lynch, 6 Garfield Terrace, Chorley.  
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MANCHESTER ANARCHISTS AND SYNDICALISTS. Contact Rachel Golditch, 34 Waterpark Road, Salford, Lancs. (740 2516).  
PRESTON ANARCHIST GROUP. Rob Wilkinson, 73 Trafford Street, Preston. Meetings: 'The Wellington Hotel', Glovers Court, Preston. Wednesdays, 8 p.m.

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MERTON. Elliot Butts, 13 Amity Grove, London, S.W.19. Tel. 01-846 1444.

### SUSSEX FEDERATION

Groups and individuals invited to associate: c/o Eddie Poole, 5 Tilshary, Findon Road, Whitehawk, Brighton.  
BRIGHTON & HOVE ANARCHIST GROUP TOWN & UNIVERSITY. Contact Nick Heath, Flat 3, 26 Clifton Road, Brighton.  
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### SCOTTISH FEDERATION

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ABERDEEN & PETERHEAD ANARCHISTS. Contact both groups via Neil Munro, 203 Cornhill Drive, Aberdeen. For 'Freedom' Sales: Ian & Peggy Sutherland, 8 Eslemont Avenue, Aberdeen. Also for contacts in Inverness.  
GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP. Robert Lynn, 12 Ross Street, S.E.  
EDINBURGH. Tony Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh 11.  
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MONTROSE. Dave Coull, 3 Eskview Terrace, Ferryden, Montrose, Angus.  
ROSS-SHIRE. Contact David Rodgers, Broomfield, Evanton, Ross-shire, Scotland.

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BELFAST ANARCHIST GROUP. No address available. Letters c/o Freedom Press.

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KEELE UNIVERSITY ANARCHIST GROUP. Contact Pete Hannah, c/o Students Union, University of Keele, Staffs.  
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NOVA SCOTIA. P. Ridley, c/o Newport Post Office, Newport, Nova Scotia, Canada.  
OXFORD ANARCHISTS. Dave Archard, Corpus Christi College, or John Humphries, Balliol.  
VANCOUVER I.W.W. and Libertarian group. Box 512, Postal St. 'A', Vancouver 1, B.C., Canada. Read 'The Rebel'—please send donation for postage.  
BATH. Alex Bird, 23 Rosewell Court, Kings Mead, Bath.

Please notify us if entries in these columns need amending.

# PSYCHOANALYSIS & THE WORKER

IN READING EITHER Freud or Jung you realise that the psychological knowledge uncovered is of immense social significance. At the same time you realise that this knowledge can hardly be new. All Freud's basic discoveries had already been harvested by the Greeks and absorbed in myth and legend. Thomas Mann could point out with truth that a wider acquaintance with world literature would have saved Freud much time and trouble in his early investigations into the workings of the unconscious. Later Jung was to show that the basic psychological truths embodied in myth and legend were no monopoly of the Greeks but were in fact universal and all ancient cultures and peoples had their share of them.

It was Freud's self-imposed task, however, to give science a stake in what had hitherto been the province solely of poets and story-tellers; to capture in the rigid prose of the laboratory truths which before had found expression only through poetic intuition.

Only when psychic processes were fully understood and classified in all their complexity, and the nature of their relationship with physiological processes established, could therapeutic calculations be made with any degree of certainty.

Nobody had a more scientific temperament than Freud. He always eschewed empty speculation and liked to be working on a firm basis of established scientific facts. But as he soon found out the psyche would not accommodate itself to the traditional scientific approach.

## 'TALKING CURE'

In his daily work with patients, he abandoned, in sheer disgust, the old interfering methods: hydrotherapy, massage, electrical stimulation and hypnosis. Left empty-handed, he did the only thing he could do: he just sat and listened to what his patients had to tell him. And the miracle was, that simply by being allowed to talk freely about themselves and their troubles, his patients seemed to improve.

It was a mentally disturbed patient herself who brought it to Freud's notice. She called it the 'talking cure'.

And at this point, the point at which he had done most good, Freud's passivity

was almost identical to the poet's approach to all existence: making no attempt to interfere but simply recording and pointing out connections and likenesses. Freud had in fact, whether he knew it or not, found his way out of the laboratory where the mind could not be stained and inspected under the microscope like a brain or a heart. At this point the traditional scientific approach had to be forgotten, and something akin to the poet's intuition let loose in its place.

The social significance of this 'talking cure' was far-reaching.

In the first place, to a great extent it was responsible for freeing the mentally disturbed patient from the thralldom of physically applied remedies. Before this time it had been commonly held that mental illness was of organic origin: hence the medical assault on the body, particularly the brain or the nerves, and, in the case of hysterical women, the womb.

Also of major importance was the fact that this 'talking cure' put the patient back on his own resources. He had to get to know himself. He had to get to grips with his own past and discover who and what he was and what his individual needs were. And in this way it became more and more obvious that in nine cases out of ten the fault was to be found, not so much with the patient's psyche, as with the social environment against which the psyche was trying to defend itself. Patients began to realise that their illness was a sort of refuge.

## 'SAUSAGE MACHINE'

Both Freud and Jung found this to be true. But it was the individual and not society with which they had to deal. In this respect perhaps Jung displayed more courage than Freud. In one essay he makes a powerful attack on the educational 'sausage machine' which produces stereotyped personalities. But throughout the works of both men you'll find at least oblique criticisms of the social set-up and the moral codes under which we live.

Yet if Freud and Jung did not feel called upon to change society, they certainly made no attempt to bend or straighten the individual to suit society's requirements. They set themselves the

task of encouraging the patient to meet his own requirements or the requirements of his own psyche. (And this is probably the root cause underlying the embarrassment of authoritarian institutions like the Catholic Church and the Communist Party when confronted with psychoanalysis.)

## CENTURIES-OLD BARRICADE

Pre-Freudian psychology got nowhere because it was encompassed by strict medical theory. Freud and to a greater extent Jung broke out of the centuries-old barricade, and dynamic psychology was born—a separate science, free of all purely physiological emphases.

In our own day, however, we have witnessed what many thought to be the surrender of medicine and 'common sense' to the new dynamic psychology. But when it re-established its links with medicine, psychology ceased to be dynamic. Strict medical theory engulfed it. Something respectable called Psychological Medicine emerged.

It is by this mongrel Psychological Medicine that working people are treated when they enter a mental hospital.

The importance of the individual and the 'talking cure' is no longer thought to be practicable in the treatment of psychoneurosis. A long course of analysis is out of the question. Society is of prime importance and the patient must be adjusted to fit into society with the shortest possible delay.

This adjustment has become the sole criterion for measuring the extent of a 'fering' methods have been reintroduced 'cure'.

The old what Freud called 'inter- in modern guise. Electrical therapy is the mainstay of all mental hospitals. Hypnosis is induced by dosing the patient with paraldehyde. Brain surgery in the form of the pre-frontal leucotomy has only very recently, and very reluctantly, been shelved.

It could be argued that, as far as the ordinary working man is concerned, the upsurge of new psychological thinking has done more harm than good. In the bad old days the insane came in for some rough handling. They were kept in chains and subjected to every kind of indignity. But it was only the extreme forms of madness that any

heed was paid to.

Since the dawn of the dynamic psychology of Freud and Jung, and its corruption in the hands of lesser men, it is only necessary to be that little bit different from the ruck of mankind to be seriously considered as a candidate for the mental hospital. The individual who strays beyond the beaten paths clearly marked for him to travel will find himself in trouble. Severe pressure will be brought to bear on him from every side, and unless he is endowed with great courage and strength of character, he will almost certainly end up in the hands of the state-paid psychiatrists.

## IN SEARCH OF FULFILMENT

It might be a good idea for everyone to see a psychiatrist if seeing a psychiatrist meant what it should mean: learning to recognise one's own individuality and one's own individual needs, first as a human being in search of fulfilment and happiness, and after that as a responsible member of society: learning how best to set the personality free and express the limitless potential each individual is heir to.

But more often than not, seeing a psychiatrist means the exact reverse. Too often it means clamping down on the free play of the personality; stamping out all essentially individual traits; putting society before self; and making up for the poverty to which one's own personality is reduced by learning to worship the personality of others—starting with the nearest analyst, going on to screen idols, soccer stars and political heroes. Too often the psychiatrist is like a tailor who, unable to find a suit of clothes big enough to fit you, tries to shorten you to fit the clothes.

Jung somewhere says that what ultimately destroys the individual is not the psychic disturbance but the lack of faith the individual has in his own power to put it right: the feeling that nothing of any real value can come from within himself: the sense of helplessness and the need always to look for the answer, the solution, in somebody else.

This craving to look outside oneself for everything is inculcated from birth. Today the State, and the medical psychologists who serve the State, make use of this weakness in the individual,

do all they can to foster and extend it—this weakness which in every case is the basic cause of the neurosis—in order to twist and contort the patient into the servile doll the psyche was trying to save him from becoming.

Today the individual seeking to bring harmony to his own mind, rejecting the proffered aid of those who, whatever their intentions, can only destroy him, treading his own path steadfastly despite authority's threats—this is the modern revolutionary. Each time authority is rejected and the problem referred to the self—whether in neurosis or education, religion, philosophy or politics—a sure step is taken in the direction of freedom.

Glasgow, N.I. FARQUHAR MCLAY.

# MARCUSE

MARCUSE by Alasdair MacIntyre. Fontana Modern Masters, 5/-.

IT'S ABOUT TIME somebody 'did' Marcuse, and MacIntyre's ninety pages are a fair beginning.

He examines all of the new prophet's basic premises in considerable detail, and finds invariably they are without logical justification. Of especial interest are the chapters dealing with the crisis in contemporary 'Marxism' and the 'new left' ideologies, and the inconsistencies of those who try to disassociate Marx from present day 'Marxism'.

... it will not do to treat Marxism as a theory that can be evaluated apart from its historical fate. To do so would in any case be completely contrary to Marxism.

Or again:

'If the claim of historical materialism that every theory is marked by features which belong to it because it was generated in some particular type of economic and social order is true, then historical materialism itself must be marked by such features' (pp. 59/60).

All this is fair comment, and is a dilemma for Marxian ideologists from which there is no escape. Yet earlier, in dealing with 'Eros and Civilisation', MacIntyre objects to Marcuse's relativism of values!

'Marcuse argues that the contrasts between freedom and happiness and between sex and civilisation are the outcome of specific institutions which belong to particular stages of human development and are not the outcome of human nature as such' (p. 45).

In other words Freud's 'Oedipus Complex' is the product of 19th century 'society'. MacIntyre seems to be seeking an 'eternal' truth, but his arguments are less convincing than the passages he quotes in order to oppose.

## MARCUSE'S PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR

It is when he examines *One Dimensional Man* in search of Marcuse's programme for action, that I find myself differing most pointedly with both points of view.

Firstly, Marcuse is criticised for equating the Nazi state with, say, the British state. But no attempt is made to show any fundamental difference between the various capitalist states. That there are superficial differences nobody would deny.

Secondly, he is attacked for accepting the ability of the ruling classes to use social welfare as a means of controlling the masses. MacIntyre's argument is rather pathetic—namely the constant struggle of the workers to maintain their standards 'proves' the opposition of the ruling class. It is inconceivable to MacIntyre that the more intelligent representatives of capitalism can realise (as Bismarck did a century ago) that social benefits can be an extremely effective weapon for maintaining the status quo.

Thirdly, MacIntyre underlines Marcuse's self-confessed hopelessness before contemporary society. On this point, and on the conclusions that flow therefrom, I agree wholeheartedly with MacIntyre.

Marcuse's self-confessed frail hopes for social revolution rest with:

... the substratum of outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colours, the unemployed and the unemployable ... their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system.

'Nothing indicates that it will be a good end. The economic and technical capabilities of the established societies are sufficiently vast to allow for adjustments and concessions to the underdog, and their armed forces sufficiently trained and equipped to take care of emergency situations. ... But the chance is that, in this period, the historical extremes may meet again: the most advanced consciousness of humanity, and its most exploited force. It is nothing but a chance.'

—(One Dimensional Man, last page)

GEORGE LARFOOT.

Continued on page 4

# Anarchy and Mental Illness

ACQUAINTANCES OF MINE have at times, in triumphant refutation of the concept of a free society, asked the question, 'What are you going to do about lunatics?'

First of all I point out to them that they are somewhat behind the times. Even a Tory Government conceded that the concept of a lunatic was based mainly in superstition. The Mental Health Act 1959 recognised that what used to be called lunacy should be considered as an illness in the same category as, say, tuberculosis or diabetes, and that sufferers from mental illness should be treated in a parallel fashion. The certification of lunatics was therefore abolished. Now I don't suppose anybody imagines that it is the intention of anarchists to do away with general hospitals. Mental hospitals (or psychiatric wards in general hospitals) will similarly exist for those who need mental treatment. It may be of course that the number of people seeking mental treatment will be greatly reduced in a libertarian society. At present 47% of hospital beds are occupied by the mentally sick (although only 11% of the colossal NHS expenditure of £1,358,000,000 annually is spent on them). This represents about 120,000 in hospital at any one time. If society were more tolerant of abnormal behaviour and economic strains were removed, far fewer might feel in need of mental treatment. However, in the present state of our knowledge of mental illness, or indeed of mental function, it is not possible to say precisely what part social conditions play. While it might be true that the difference between keeping a patient in or out of hospital often depends on his social circumstances, it is begging the question to say that these circumstances are the cause of his illness. It seems likely therefore that an anarchist society will have to provide for mental patients, even though on a reduced scale. This can be done in the same way as provision for physical illness, except in one respect, and it is in this respect that presents a special problem for anarchists.

## COMPULSORY TREATMENT UNDER THE 1959 ACT

The 1959 Act, while abolishing certifi-

cation and providing for the treatment of the mentally sick as patients in hospital, still retains an element of compulsion. Certain sections of the Act provide for the forcible retention of patients in hospital in certain circumstances.

First there are those patients referred to hospital by the courts as being in need of psychiatric treatment. These patients are sent to mental hospital as an alternative to being sent to prison and the choice between the two often seems to be quite arbitrary. I don't think it is necessary to discuss this section here, as the arguments against it are the same as those against prisons.

Other sections of the Act provide for the retention of patients if they are considered to be a danger, either to themselves or to other people or, of course, both. They may be retained if a form is signed by two doctors. The period of retention is limited according to the various sections, but it may be renewed. There is also a right of appeal by a patient to a tribunal. What the Act doesn't say, of course, is precisely what constitutes a danger. This is open to interpretation, and what you and I would consider comparatively harmless behaviour might land somebody in mental hospital against their will. It should be emphasised however that the number of patients forcibly retained is comparatively small. I don't have any national statistics and, no doubt, because the Act is open to a variety of interpretations, practice varies in different parts of the country. In a hospital with which I am familiar there are perhaps fifty patients out of eight hundred detained under sections of the Act. The number of patients who can reasonably be considered dangerous will be even smaller in a free society, since such a society will necessarily be more tolerant than an authoritarian one. But I think it must be accepted that there will still be some.

## TREATMENT IN A FREE SOCIETY

The larger category is of those who can be considered a danger to themselves. This means principally (though not entirely) would-be suicides. It is tempting to say that a man's life is his own and

he should be allowed to dispose of it as he wishes. This may sometimes be correct, but I don't think the problem is always so simple, for the operative word is 'wishes'. Consider the following case. A man has a tumour on the brain. The removal of this tumour will save his life, but the tumour is also affecting his behaviour so that he is continually attempting suicide. It is surely right to prevent his suicide until the tumour is removed, for the source of his suicide attempts will also be removed. Numbers of actual and attempted suicides are caused by organic defects of the brain. If these are curable, it seems to be in the same category to try to prevent the suicides as to try to prevent a patient dying of cancer.

A smaller category is of those who can be considered a danger to others. Again I don't have any statistics, but it is my guess that the numbers involved would be very small indeed in any tolerant libertarian assessment. I suppose they could be divided into three types—the post epileptic furore, that is the case in which a man 'runs amok' killing or wounding anybody in his way (a rare occurrence), the severe manic depressive who kills himself and his family because he feels life is too terrible to be supported, and the dangerous psychopath who kills for pleasure. I must stress again that these types are rare, but they do exist and will be likely to exist, even in a libertarian society.

In our present society a large bureaucratic industry has been set up to deal with the social aspects of mental illness. It involves mental welfare officers, psychiatric social workers, educational psychologists, magistrates, police, local authorities and God knows who else. Like all bureaucratic institutions it is interested in multiplication, not in the reduction of the problem. Anarchists will hardly want to follow this example, but what is to be done, given that, although reduced to its essentials, a problem still remains?

## RESEARCH THE FIRST NECESSITY

The first difficulty that presents itself is—what in fact do we know of the problem? Unlike research into arma-

ments or into ways of increasing profitability, research into mental illness has very little money spent on it. As far as abnormal behaviour in the categories we have considered is concerned, it is, in the words of another writer, 'still embryonic'. The first essential then seems to be that we should devote a great deal more time and resource to research. There is a sort of rough guide to epilepsy in the electro-encephalograph and I have heard claims about a test of psychopathy, but I think it is reasonable to say that we cannot yet tell who is likely to be dangerous. This is not to say however that it is not possible to know.

In any event it seems likely that, in a comparatively small number of cases, there will be a necessity for some form of compulsory treatment. This naturally presents a number of dangers for a free society, and anarchists should try to arrive at methods that will deal with a particular situation without jeopardising the libertarian structure of such a society. Probably the first danger to avoid would be the institutionalising of methods, particularly the creation of any permanent organisation. What in fact would seem to be required is that such decisions and actions are necessary should be taken, in the first instance, by ordinary individual members of the community using ad hoc methods. This of course implies a much higher level of personal responsibility and personal involvement than we see in our present society. I am assuming however that a libertarian society breeds these virtues. Treatment itself must be a matter for specialists, again acting on individual responsibility. There are undoubted risks involved in these methods, both for the potential patient and for the community, but I am unable to visualise a society in which risks of all kinds have been eliminated.

However, if doctors were allowed free access to the resources of the community so that no limits were placed on the possibilities of research, it might be that methods of overcoming the problem could be developed which did not involve such risks. We have seen enormous technological developments in the last two decades. If the social sciences were freed from the straitjacket of authoritarian capitalism, who knows what advances we might see in these fields as well.

## ONE OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS

left of Communist Marxists produce for their socialist state concepts is that it is necessary for a transitional phase from the overthrow of capitalism to the establishment of socialism. A long time ago Bakunin pointed out the answer to this one in Marx's own words, the state reflects the struggle of classes within a society, being the executive committee of the ruling class in that struggle. But the fact that many anarchists have said, more than once in FREEDOM, that anarchism cannot be established by violence, but that the state cannot be overthrown without, suggests that for these anarchists at least there will be a transitional phase between the ending of one system and the emergence of another.

If one looks at what did happen in Russia it is certainly true that there was a period when the Tsar and pre-(*entrepreneur*) capitalist society with him, when the capitalists were too weak to maintain their position as the Government, and when the new State-Managerial-Capitalist elite had not arisen to power; yet though the Soviets took power there was never a time when money was abolished, when class differentials based on economic differences were ever fully abolished.

## THE RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE

When the Leninists had taken power they had to ride the see-saw, balancing one faction against another; while fighting a war against Intervention backed by Western Capitalism they nevertheless sought and obtained Western Capitalist investment and development in Russia; while imposing one-man-management, wresting coal, petroleum and the railways from 'privileged workers' and 'disorganizers and disrupters', and attacking the anarchists of the Vyborg Quarter, they nevertheless devoted a considerable proportion of their efforts to building an international and building bridges between themselves and syndicalists in the West; while telling the peasants and *petit bourgeoisie* 'enrichissez-vous', they demanded a firm separation of their allies in the West from all peasant and *petit bourgeois* organizations; while integrating civil servants, military officers, secret police and other members of the Tsarist state apparatus into their own system (it is an

# TRANSITIONAL THEORY

interesting point that a far larger proportion of the officials of the Weimar Republic were drawn from the ranks of the Social Democrats—nearly all the police were—than that of the officials of the Soviet regime who were drawn from any of the Liberal or Socialist parties), they published on an international scale pamphlets, leaflets, magazine articles saying that there can be no transition to socialism unless the mechanism of the bourgeois state is swept aside.

Later one can see the new power elite emerge; if one accepts Engels's definition of the difference between a class and a caste—a caste becomes a class when it starts to send its children to different schools—Trotsky's claim, that in his day, that elite was a bureaucratic caste not a new or old class division becomes meaningful as this distinction is only found in the last two years of Trotsky's life which need not necessarily conflict with Lenin calling Russia state capitalist. In which case it is possible to say that for twenty years or so there was a society wherein no one class dominated absolutely; wherein certainly there were a few traditional capitalists, but these exercised little influence over the state; where certainly there were millionaire holders of state bonds, but there is no evidence to suggest that these bondholders ruled the Communist Party; where there were numerous factory managers and other executives pretty secure in their power, yet still subject to the secret-police knock-on-the-door; where certainly there were still peasants and kulaks but as these were subjected to conditions where millions died, it would be ridiculous to suggest they ruled; where certainly workers organized in soviets had once held power of an order unparalleled in previous history, but whose numbers were reduced during the Lenin period to 1/2 of 1% of the population, and who saw it made illegal to strike, saw speed-ups in industry far worse than anything Western workers have ever experienced, and who certainly had no economic equality with those

who ruled them. The Soviet Union was evidently a society in which for a short time no one class had undisputed dominance.

But the thesis that such a position could persist for more than one generation is absurd, inevitably the state apparatus, capable as it was for a time of maintaining an independent power base, or could not become hereditary and so would have—with age—to give way to one or other of the contending classes. Because Trotsky could not envisage hereditary power other than in terms of inherited private property, he insisted in the 'Revolution Betrayed' and though he conceded a doubt in his 'Testament' he continued all his life to insist that the bureaucracy was not a class and could not last. (Trotskyists remember the first half of this, but not the latter—which was for Trotsky the necessary corollary of the former; if it didn't last it wasn't a class, if it did it was—it has!) In no other Communist country does this problem arise, for in none did the working class, however temporarily, throw up its own organs of power; though workers might—in Cuba and China—strike in support of the revolution, they did not participate in its direction; the revolutions were the product of peasant and army movements, led from outside those classes by 'leftist' *petit bourgeois* intelligentsia.

## IN FRANCE

If with a flight of the imagination one looks back to France 1968, where according to many reports disaffection in some French army and even police barracks had almost reached the point of mutiny at the time of the revolution, and where therefore it would not have needed much more for the Gaullist regime to collapse, one would have had a situation where the left parties were indissolubly tied to parliamentarianism, but unable to win an election in terms of votes, where the Gaullists could have won an election but could not control the loyalties of the organs of coercion or the consent of the uncoerced productive workers. The state as it then existed would most certainly have been overthrown, but since the anarchists were—for all their prominence in the rising—in a negligible

minority amongst the people, an anarchist revolution was certainly not then on the cards.

What was? Much was made by the Communists—justifying their role—of the danger of a move to fascism. But if De Gaulle was only just able to rally sufficient support to re-establish power then there is no reason to suppose that the *Algerie Francaise* fascists, whose power De Gaulle himself had decimated, would then have stood a chance. (Now of course it is different. De Gaulle had to win the army's favour and the conditions on which he got this were obviously the pardon for the extremists and his own retirement to allow them back into politics.)

The Communists had the necessary numbers but not the will to revolt, though had the rising continued in time, no doubt from among the ranks of the CP or CGT there would have risen a new set of leaders—perhaps purely opportunist, perhaps relatively honest—eager to carry the struggle beyond the limits set by their party. The Trotskyists and the PSU would undoubtedly have continued to make recruits and as an ever-increasing section of the CDTF was moving leftwards, they were as it was beginning to find a trade union base.

In such circumstances, workers, soldiers, smallholders, even small businessmen and minor civil servants, become far more receptive to new political ideas than they are normally. Ideas which conflict directly with established modes of thought. In normal times the normal man accepts that what is must be, and only questions this when he comes directly in conflict with what is. (The abnormal man because of the abnormality in his own background can question the set-up earlier, cf. Koestler—*Yogi and Commissar*—the Intelligentsia.) But when, in abnormal times, society is in a state of rapid flux, then there can be no presumption that any particular system of society is inevitable; and so everyone is forced to start thinking what society should be, or was, why and how to attain what is wanted.

But though it is not clear what could have emerged from an impasse such as I have described in a Western country, it is clear that unless the 'extreme left' had managed to make an enormous number of converts in a very short space of time, it would not have been anarchism or anything remotely resembling it. It is of course highly possible that the CP, the SFIO and the Socialist Clubs would have entered into a pact with the

right to 'maintain democracy', but it is problematic—if it reached that point—whether the CP would have been able to rely on enough of its members to rally to the preservation of capitalist democracy. The fact that the CP was negotiating through the rising with Pompidou suggests that this possibility was considered and that the CP was demanding more than its rightful thirty pieces of silver for its part in the deal when De Gaulle cut the ground from under both sides.

## FOR THE FUTURE

It is possible to assume then from experience that it could well be that a sufficiently militant struggle waged by a working class which had not reached an anarchist consciousness and perhaps allied to militant students and others, might make it impossible for anyone else to govern. That this might well happen, when a Labour Government was actually in power, is suggested by the relative greater militancy on the industrial field abroad now than under the Tories; after all Labour's planned and managed capitalism obviously hits the workers more than the less efficient Tory capitalism. Assuming that *Tribune* is then as timid as it now is, and that the workers could only reach the degree of solidarity necessary for mass action if they had shed Powellite delusions, one can say that there would be no obvious claimant to alternative power. The fact that Heath and Thorpe (or their equivalents) would rally to Wilson's (ditto) support in such circumstances is of nugatory importance, on anything but an electoral level.

Given that most leftists have illusions about the advantages of nationalization, it is possible that Labour might stifle an upsurge of militancy by a series of industrial nationalizations, but since this would either lead to a repetition of the 1945-51 experience of nationalization, with yet greater 'rationalization' of work (which would not be tolerated by a working class which had not already lost its initiative as it had by the time of the election in '45) or some real concessions to the working class which would alienate all but the most intelligent capitalists. Either way it could only be a temporary measure.

If nationalization were brought in to stem one upsurge of working class activity and if it did not succeed in killing it, then the mere fact that the workers were faced by a state which 'controlled the commanding heights of the economy' and was in the hands of an allegedly socialist party, would make the revolt tend to take anarchistic forms—a decentralized version of syndicalism, so that there could then be serious hopes of a strong anarchist movement and in turn a possibility of anarchist revolution next time.

L.O.

# THESES OF REVOLUTION

IN REVOLUTIONARY movements, just as elsewhere, what is called love often manifests itself as hatred.

It is not possible to nurture hatred of our enemies without beginning to hate our friends as well. Or at least, to find among our friends more and more enemies to hate.

The espousal of the interests of the working class alone is dangerous in two ways: it can lead to mere workeritis (the uncritical acceptance of anything proletarian and the philistine rejection of anything bourgeois); and it usually means that the interests of an abstraction are put above the desires of the individual working man.

Revolutionaries are too religious: they do not believe in God but they still believe in the Devil. Capitalists and landlords, policemen and judges, politicians and councillors are regarded as demonic: incapable of any good ideas or actions, lacking any redeeming features, closed to persuasion, and worthy not of humane treatment, but only of personal loathing.

The rejection of bourgeois morality should not include the rejection of all ethical action. If one substitutes only tactics and self-interest, one substitutes precisely that which characterises the action of the established authorities. The form of revolutionary action has too many points in common with the form of bourgeois action: the enemy is different, but the approach to him is the same. The form of action as well as the content must change.

Revolutionaries share with their enemies the belief in absolute truth and right, which only they possess. The consequence is intolerance of and violence towards opposition. In the movement this is becoming dogmatic irrationalism. Revolutionaries are substituting activism for action and abuse for discussion.

What is worthy of note and repetition is not the way authorities repress op-

position, but the way they can absorb even the most extreme protests, and the way they can become stronger by acceding to the most radical demands.

The idea of tactical and temporary violence is a chimera. One cannot use violence without being or becoming a violent person. The use of violence affects the agent as much as it affects the object of violence.

The habit of violent self-defence must lead to tactical aggression (striking to defend) and to the institutionalisation of violence. There is no other way of using violence effectively against an enormous power like the state.

The need to defend oneself with violence does not decrease. It actually increases: violent self-defence escalates conflict.

It is an illusion to believe that people who have got used to bringing violence to conflicts will be able to stop doing so. Violence, like nonviolence, is permanent.

The line between aggression and defence can never be clearly drawn. Just as all acts are both response and initiation, so all violence is both aggression and defence. No violence springs out of a vacuum. Even the most apparently blind acts of aggression are a defence against some threat, and even the most clear cases of defence constitute provocation. But in most cases things are not so clear. Violent defence is inseparable from, and to be effective must move over to, defensive aggression.

Violent revolutionaries certainly under-

stand more about social violence than the defenders of the status quo do. But their understanding is still superficial.

To realise the inherent violence of authority, to realise that violence breeds violence, and then to allow the violence of the authorities to provoke one into violence, which one knows will continue the vicious circle, is to accept cynically and complacently the permanence of violent group conflict. This is hardly a justification of revolutionary violence; it is an indication of how much revolutionaries have in common with their enemies. If a violent society produces violent revolution, violent revolution will just as surely produce a violent society.

One does not deny that violence is effective and that it gets results. That is indisputable. It is beyond doubt that black power would fail without violence. Communism would also have failed without violence. Stalin and Mao would not have achieved what they did without violence. Nor would Hitler, De Gaulle, McCarthy or Churchill. One does not oppose violence because it cannot get results, but because of the sort of results it gets.

One of the greatest errors is activism: the belief that action is the only thing that matters; that the more easily seen, disruptive, large scale, noisy or illegal the action, the more radical and effective it is; and that discussion must be reduced to a minimum and the amount of overt action be increased to a maximum.

It is absurd to imagine that effective action could ever be engaged in without careful consideration of its long term as well as short term consequences. The most effective action is action which constitutes a way of behaving which is radically different from the materialist and authoritarian way of capitalist and governed society. In many cases, such action is the most inconspicuous, and the most conspicuous action is often the least relevant.

The doctrine of heightened consciousness through involvement in overt action draws attention from the more important doctrine that a socialist man is a changed man. A free and egalitarian

society demands as a prerequisite men with a character structure different from that of capitalist and authoritarian men. Industrial action, tenants' struggles and street demonstrations will involve people and deepen their understanding of their society only to a limited extent. They do not become changed men and women solely through such involvement.

Mindless activism presents us with the absurd and pathetic spectacle of the selfish socialist and the authoritarian anarchist.

Haven't we had enough of the endlessly repeated clichés of militancy? Anyone who believes that the quality of life can be improved without a more profound understanding of ourselves and our social relations, condemns himself ever to 'move in revolutionary circles'.

A radical transformation of society demands not merely the ousting of the bosses and the policemen around us, but the ousting of the boss and the policeman within us.

There are fashions in revolutionary politics as much as in clothes. In Easter 1967 everybody shouted the name of Rudi Dutschke. But Red Rudi was a slogan not a man, and now he has been forgotten. To succumb to fashions and to sacrifice one's independence of thought and action is hardly radical. It puts counter-conformity in the place of conformity. The revolutionaries of today are the conservatives of tomorrow—and the conservatives of today are the conservatives of tomorrow too. People fit into the system not because they believe in the system, but because they believe in fitting in. One should break not only with the system but with fitting in as well. One should not be browbeaten by labels, and one should be able to speak one's mind about those revolutionary fashions one disapproves of, and to advocate unfashionable things if one believes in them.

Nothing is sacred. Nothing except one thing. It is not revolution or the people, not socialism or anarchism. It is each living individual. To regard anything else as inviolable is a danger,

because it will result in the worker of flesh and blood being sacrificed to the working class, and the man of flesh and blood being sacrificed to Mankind.

If, to ensure the triumph of the revolution, liberty has to be jettisoned, how can the libertarian do anything but jettison the revolution?

One should never be a wholly dedicated revolutionary, or devote all one's time and energy to social change. For what does one do when these things are achieved? There is only one thing one can do: be a revolutionary leader. Because one has no friends, only comrades, no occupation, only revolution, and no interests, only politics.

Revolutionaries have hitherto attempted only to change social institutions. The point is to change human relations.

PETER PRYOR.

## MARCUSE

Continued from page 3

### THE NEW ELITISM

Marcuse's gloom leads inevitably to the political elitism permeating his calls to the 'new left'. For example, note his 'Nothing is Forever in History' speech (published in *International Times*, 11.4.69), seeing salvation in 'mass movements which, in large part, are lacking political consciousness and which will depend even more than before on political guidance and direction by militant leading minorities'.

From here it is but a short step to a call to repeat the experiences of Stalinism. Marcuse continues:

'I still believe the alternative is socialism. . . . Now, if this is the alternative, how do we transmit it, because the people will look around and will say, "Show us, where is this kind of socialism?" We will say, it is perhaps, it is probably going to be built up in Cuba. It is perhaps being built up in China. It is certainly fighting in Vietnam against the super-monster.'

BOB POTTER.

# BLACK POWER CORRUPTS

THERE IS NO DOUBT that the black immigrants in this country, as have the indigenous blacks of the United States and the citizens of the newly 'liberated' black countries in Africa and elsewhere, have thrown up their own bourgeois middle-class, even upper- and ruling-classes. Even in the 'liberating' religious-nationalist movements the leaders have thrust themselves forward making illusory the human dream of equality.

One of the best-known 'leaders' flung up by black immigration in London is Michael X, otherwise Michael de Freitas. On the recent troubles in West London he is reported by the *Guardian* as saying, 'The battle for true liberation of all our territories will have to be fought in the streets of London.' Michael X (the adopted name is a melodramatic presentation of the fact that slaves were given the name of their owner—therefore surnames are a mark of disgrace and should be repudiated, with the not very imaginative adoption of the 'X'—sometimes supplemented by a number to differentiate possessors of the same given name) is a spokesman for the more vague pretensions of the rising black politics.

He is a man with a checkered career. No doubt like many Black Muslims to whom he seems to owe some inspiration, if not allegiance, he is a reformed character and was converted from the errors of his ways to the more rigid

puritanical ways of black power structures. He was formerly a strong-arm man for the notorious rent-racketeer Peter Rachmann and, as he said (inaccurately), 'I am the only man living or dead who had to suffer as the result of the Race Relations Act.' He was, in fact, imprisoned as a result of this act whose application was so arbitrary that its other catches include Colin Jordan and some left-wing Labour Party supporters while it has allowed some of the bigger fishes, including the notorious Enoch Powell, to escape the net.

Of Enoch Powell, Michael X has said—in reply to a question in the *Guardian* whether he agreed with Mr. Powell on repatriation—'I have never discussed this situation with Mr. Powell. Mr. Powell is a man of rhetoric—just like those other people who talk big, he has never sent anybody home himself. But I have. I always go beyond rhetoric. I have paid the fares for people to go home. In fact, I have a number of names of people on my files now asking "Please assist us with our passage home". If it was possible to do so we would, and as soon as it is possible to send some of our people back home we will do so.'

Michael X is not a lone voice in this sponsoring of repatriation, several middle-class coloureds have joined the call for an end to immigration, presumably on the grounds that they are

doing very nicely and more immigrants would mean more competition; and any worsening in public opinion of immigrants would be bad for business since they wish to establish a position for themselves as more English than the English. Michael X's position, like that of the late Malcolm X, reflects that of the pioneer of black power—Marcus Garvey—whose slogan was 'Back to Africa'.

The emphasis on the separateness of the blacks from the whites was made a central feature of the doctrines of the Black Muslims. It was no chance that Lincoln Rockwell, American fascist and racist, was photographed attending a Black Muslim rally. The insistence of Michael X, Malcolm X, Stokeley Carmichael, and many black militants, on the separateness of black from white bears a dialectical affinity with the *apartheid* doctrines of Dr. Verwoerd and the racial purity rubbish of Dr. Goebbels.

The Black Panther Party in the United States was based upon getting in the black vote to elect black candidates to public office in the towns and villages, by this method capturing foci of black power. The failure of this campaign led to the Black Panthers' emergence as a para-military organization with its repudiation of 'Uncle Tom' methods of non-violence. This led, inevitably, to a campaign by American police and the FBI to shoot it out with the Panthers. This culminated in the des-

pairing cry of a militant, 'They're gonna kill us all'.

W. J. Weatherby in *New Society*, 28.8.70, writes of the Panthers, 'the symbolism they [the Panthers] used was ironically enough the same as their opponents; uniforms, guns, rules, orders, military discipline'. Weatherby quotes Julian Bond's comment, 'To build more credibility in the black community, the Panthers will have to discover a way to expand their appeal beyond "woofing" at policemen, feeding breakfast to children, and providing medical aid for the poor'. Oddly enough, it was their decimation and martyrdom at the hands of police and the courts that, says Weatherby, gained the Panthers more public 'credibility'. Like many avowedly terrorist groups before them, they suffered from the presence of informers and 'agents provocateurs'. Like other terrorist groups too, they, the advocates of bloody violence, vowed to the high heaven their innocence of many outrages laid at their doors. Weatherby nevertheless thinks the Panthers are now putting away militarism and are perhaps growing, developing, responding, to the new black generation. It is perhaps no loss for a movement to lose its leaders.

Another lost leader has been in the news recently when it was revealed that the Reverend Martin Luther King had been 'blackmailed' by Mr. Edgar Hoover of the FBI into damping down his militancy. One's respect for Edgar Hoover was always lacking but one's respect for Martin Luther King increased when it was revealed that he held over Martin Luther King was on alleged sexual irregularities. It proved him to be human (which is more than can be said for Mr. Hoover), and his nonviolence no attribute of sainthood. The apparent failure of non-violence to gain rights for the blacks is no less spectacular than the failure of violence to gain very similar rights. Perhaps they are trying for the wrong rights?

Michael X in his interview in the *Guardian* (London, 15.8.70) said, 'I can go into almost any home in the country and get fed, if I was hiding there would be 100,000 homes open to me, if I travel on a bus I don't pay fares. If I travel in a taxi, the driver feels honoured to drive me. When I want a woman, there are an awful lot on hand for me. It's a rather nice position. I suppose it's an enviable one and that it does breed jealousy.' And later, after a question whether black people are given a fair deal, 'Nobody is given a fair deal anywhere. The strong live on the weak. And we had better get strong.'

Such Nietzschean superman dreams of power are ominous indications of the blind-alley path of Black Power adherents. Black power is in the blacks themselves and not in leadership.

JACK ROBINSON.

# UNEMPLOYMENT OF SLUMP PROPORTIONS

THE LATEST unemployment figures of 644,598 make depressing reading and represent the highest August figure for 30 years.

Usually, at this time of year, unemployment is on the decline but all the indications now show that things will get worse. This could mean as many as 750,000 unemployed by the end of the year.

Trade union leaders of both wings have called for the usual remedy of increased growth in the economy. But expansion needs a much higher investment programme than at present. To attract the money, investors must be confident that they will get adequate returns and with the present inflation, they are unlikely to get these results.

Certainly the state of the economy points to an increasing number of un-

employed, of slump proportions. There are now more without jobs than during other post-war periods of recession and the present figure is 18% above that of 1963, when there was an outcry of indignation. But now it seems to be taken for granted.

Although the 'traditional' enemy of the working class is now in power, the Tories cannot be blamed, for it was the 'party of the working class' who sowed the seeds that we are reaping today. It was a Labour Government which carried through and backed the programme of rationalisation and company mergers, while introducing higher social security benefits to sweeten the pill. This rationalisation has brought rich rewards for some, but not to those who are made redundant.

World trade is just not taking up the present slack in production capacity and

industry will not expand, no matter how much the trade union leaders demand it, unless it is profitable. The corporations and the City would be only too pleased to apply their expansion remedy if this was the case, but they will not expand just to please trade union leaders and to bring unemployment figures down.

What the trade unions should be demanding is a shorter working week, with a ban on overtime in solidarity with those who are out of work. This line of attack would also weaken the system, putting even greater strains on the profit margins, and bring about a genuine confrontation between capital and labour. The taking over and control of industries by those who work in them should be aspired to instead of the trade unions introducing cures for the profit motive system.

P.T.

YOU STILL HAVE TIME to reach the Isle of Wight to hear Joan Baez and Joni Mitchell (*Big Yellow Taxi*); Leonard Cohen and The Army; the great jazz musician Miles Davis; The Who and Ritchie Havens.

Time to take a selection of Freedom Press pamphlets, various issues of *Anarchy* and *FREEDOM* (tel. Graham Moss at 01-247 9249).

For selling last year a stretch of grass opposite one of the main entrances was used, just as the London newspaper sellers use the pavement.

Such festivals and gatherings are usefully covered by radical groups since people travel from wide areas to be present. Special broadsheet editions of news and ideas could be produced, so that the music festival becomes a centre of libertarian information as well as a lifestyle of weekend freedom.

A magazine *Riffraff* has appeared. One of the many new and hopeful signs of local community action. It is young poets' work. Living in the Redruth-Camborne area of Cornwall. Edited and published by Stephen Mossop at Home Farm, Bolenowe, Troon, Camborne, Cornwall. 1s. 6d. post free.

*Radio Geronimo* is on 205 metres, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, midnight to 3 a.m. It plays good music such as Bob Dylan, Grateful Dead, The Rolling Stones and tracks from Woodstock Festival Albums and much more. It is a commercial station but with that spirit which started, say, *Time Out* magazine. That is, having young people on it who know the music and from time to time give information of use. 30s. will give you a stake in the station and more news and views.

*The Method* is an unpleasant reminder of the tortures undergone by people around the world. In this instance the personal account of a Greek actor Korovessis since the Colonels took over.

However we know that in the Israel/Palestine War, in the Algerian War, in the Vietnamese struggle, in most such conflicts, people are tortured.

# Riff-Raff

In an old paperback on *De Valera* by Sean O'Fadin there are examples in the Ireland of the nineteenthcenturies:

'His boots had been removed by the Auxiliaries (ex-officers all of them) and men broke his toes by stamping on them. He was jabbed with bayonets, beaten in the face, half choked, and a red hot poker was held to his eyes in an effort to make him speak. His case was one of hundreds.'

The man was Ernie O'Malley, an IRA officer then within Dublin Castle walls. He wrote an autobiography—*On Another Man's Wounds* (1937). Another book quoted, giving an account of the times, is *The Irish Republic* by Miss MacArdle.

Then again in the August issue of *The Catonsville Road Runner* there is an account of Israeli torture (*Road Runner*, 1s. 6d. from 3 Caledonian Road, N.1. Next door to *Peace News*).

But to return to *The Method*: 'Two out of every three political prisoners had been tortured with an impressive variety of methods. In nearly every corner of Greece there is a force of regular or security police or soldiers whose job it is to systematically torture, almost to the point of death, anyone who is a "danger", even a potential one. I met people who had been tortured in Crete, Patras, Agrinio, Thes-

salonika, Kavola, Kotnotini, not to mention Athens and Piraeus.'

The book describes the guards, the interrogators, the fellow prisoners with an eye of acute understanding. He spent six months in jail and military hospital (being given electric shock treatment in the 'hospital') before luckily being released. But who were the majority of tortured?

'The great anonymous mass of young people is the common target of all the schools of torture. They have been tortured in an insistent combination of forms. Their names are unknown, and no one protests about them. Those who have a name usually escape the tortures, not of course through the kindness of the Junta but because immediately they are arrested there are protests and the Colonels use them to prove that torture doesn't exist. The concrete political significance of the tortures is that our generation should, in the long run, be destroyed: that is, the generation that has grown up since the Civil War and didn't experience the slaughter of those times.'

*The Method* by Korovessis (Alison and Busby) 30s.

Alex Comfort on *Peace and Disobedience* and Dave Dellinger (editor of *Liberation*) on *Absolution in the USA* are two of several important articles in a PPU booklet *Studies In Nonviolence* published by the Youth Association. I should think a 2s. 6d. postal order will cover costs from: John Hyatt, PPU, 6 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.1.

DENNIS GOULD.

# STRIKE AT BENTALLS

PAY CONDITIONS in this particular area of the South East are decidedly bad; this was even admitted in the report of the South-Eastern Economic Planning Council earlier this year. The average

basic non-productive wage at Bentalls was 5s. 4d./hour, piece-work rates are hampered by the depreciated condition of the machinery, making time and a

Continued on page 4



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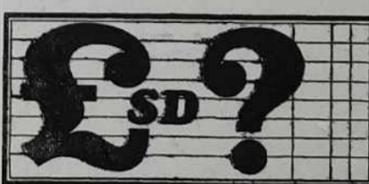
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lation of about 25,000 should help at least to bring the price of the paper down, and maybe give us the wherewithal to start printing books again, which is always more than simply necessary.

There's a fortnight to sell this six-page issue, so why not start this week?

# Panorama on Poverty

**CAPITALIST SOCIETY** is the society of the Spectacle. Even poverty can be widely publicised in the media since the media are controlled by the middle-classes who speak to each other about poverty and hence subtly reinforce the exclusion of the poor from their own society.

The 'Panorama' programme of August 17 on Poverty was a good example. At the level of content, it doubtless did a good job from a Fabian point of view. Child Poverty Action Group spokesmen were there to provide the expertise and to exorcise the myth of the feckless poor widespread in our society (why?), by the Sovereign Power of Reasoned Argument. The problem was 'humanized' by having real poor people saying what it meant to be poor—How could anyone want to dismantle the Welfare State?

All in all it represented a good liberal holding action against the forces of Powellite bigotry. And yet the liberal intellectuals in 'Panorama' ended up degrading and dispiriting any poor people who watched it. How?

## BALANCE—CONTENT AND CONTEXT

Conventional criticisms can be made: the problem of poverty was never located in the context of a poverty-generating (capitalist) society. True, there was one middle-class poverty 'expert' who mentioned the need for militancy by industrial and community organizations, but the programme as a whole contained neither analysis nor direction.

But then, who are we to expect the BBC to put across an anarchist socialist line? Such an emphasis would be a betrayal of 'balance'.

Balance. That's it. The alpha and omega of the BBC Ethos; which is why, if possible, we should try to demonstrate that the BBC consistently infringe their

own canon, not in the obvious way (too few lefties), but in a much more subtle way that is so pervasive that we ordinarily fail to notice it.

## THE FAT CONSUME THE LEAN

Let us ask first: Who was the programme really for? Was it for poor people themselves to use to better their situations collectively? Or was it for the middle-class to consume? The programme was framed by a folk-song: 'I'd like to show you the other side of the town'. Show who? Why, the Shelter-walking, Oxfam-fashion-showing British middle-classes. The programme was about the poor but the poor never really got a word in! Or rather they never got a word through or to or from. In other words, there is a balance of constituency as well as a balance of speakers, and this 'balance' all television ignores, even the Fabian-infiltrated BBC!

'But this is preposterous,' our bright young communicant replies, 'half the programme was poor people talking.'

Yes, but how was the programme put together?

'But honestly, the editing was a true reflection of the separate interviews. We gave people the chance to say what they really felt, they said it, and then we edited to get the best bits of what was said.'

## THE INTERVIEWING SITUATION

Our imaginary media-man is probably telling the truth but he has missed the main point of our criticism: Did the BBC bring together the poor people who spoke to edit their programme as of right, so that they could say what they really felt among themselves not just about being poor but what are we going to do about it?

Even if we ignore the question of political censorship by the BBC hierarchy

and the middle-class editing process, we still have our main criticism: the social situation of the interviews themselves were biased against getting genuine articulations of the poor speaking to the poor and their own purposes.

Consider the unmarried mother in her flat one morning, hears a knock at the door, opens it. 'Hello, I'm from the BBC. We want to do a programme on poverty. Could you tell me about how you feel about being poor,' etc. . . .

Why, it would never occur to her to really say what she feels. It's the BBC after all, that's not what it's for, is it—communicating to other shat-upon victims of the social insecurity system? So she just says 'a piece' for 'the programme', taking the sympathetic BBC bloke as her model listener. Who she speaks to is who the programme comes across to is who owns the air is who owns the factories.

Even if they weren't sandwiched between 'experts', even if the whole programme consisted of poor people talking, the poor would still be nowhere. So long as they are interviewed as isolated individuals by a middle-class interviewer who takes their bit off and may or may not edit it out, then a thousand hours of working-class people speaking on TV only reinforce the system.

## A 'THEM' WORLD

The working class (and the poor) have their consciousness of being a class for themselves expropriated in the very act of expressing themselves publicly. The poor live in a world of 'them' and can only speak in that world to them, courtesy of them, on their terms. The media, as such, don't exist for the working class for they mediate only the most narrow range of working-class ideas and emo-

tions—quiet resignation, brave struggling to make ends meet, even mild verbal protest so long as it is presented up the way. Never working-class anger at humiliation and never, never determination to act expressed horizontally.

This was seen in the way the programme ignored the Birmingham Claimants' Union in favour of the Child Poverty Action Group. From a lengthy interview with Union members the final edition contained only thirty seconds showing three people (in fact members) complaining about the absence of a loo in their SS office!

No mention of the Union by name, of its aims, its history, its fellow unions in other towns, nothing that might possibly result in poor people getting the message and coming together to fight. Nothing in fact on the very people who were going beyond memos to the Minister, who were trying to deal not with the Problem of Poverty but with their problems of poverty and exploitation.

## RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND TOTAL EXCLUSION

Instead of being enabled to point outwards to the bureaucratic-capitalist society which generated 'the problem' in the first place (i.e. which is the problem), the poor were made a problem for themselves. They were turned into objects of middle-class pity instead of being subjects of their own indignation. Because working-class anger just doesn't get through, the workers and the poor will be deprived of the media even when every home can afford a telly, indeed perhaps especially then. Deprivation may be relative in terms of £sd, but it is total in terms of control.

Which all goes to back up Paul Good-

man: 'The society in which I live must be my society. Its publishing houses must be my publishing houses, its institutions my institutions, its administration my administration. My society must be open to my actions and my voice, if not it must be destroyed. It is appalling how many people do not regard themselves as citizens in this basic existential sense. Most people vaguely regard themselves as living in society—whatever that means.'

LORD KEITH.

# Contact

Contact Column is for making contact. Use is free, but donations towards typesetting costs are welcome.

North-West Anarchist Camp, Llangollen, N. Wales, August Bank Holiday weekend, August 29-31.

Behaviourism & Revolution. Libertarian Study Group forming to consider the kind of question recently occupying the attention of FREEDOM correspondents. Contact J. Millinson, 111 Westbourne Terrace, London, W.2. 01-723 1587.

Los Amigos de Durruti. A group of active campaigners in London dedicated to the propagation of Anarchy (society organized without authority) and the defence of brothers in need. Write to Bill Dwyer, c/o Freedom Press.

Holiday for family from September 14-18 (if they can provide own food). Write: Six Chimneys, Bolerowe, Troon, Camborne, Cornwall.

Change of address. Will Comrades please note that Brian and Hazel McGee, *One and All* magazine and 'Close Nancekuke Now' have moved to Hillcrest Farm, Hicks Mill, Bissoe, Truro, Cornwall. Telephone Derranarworthal 43. Come and visit us sometime.

Rural libertarian community, French Alps, welcomes visitors willing to live and work in a pioneering style. No drugs please. Accommodation after August. Write, enclosing international postal coupon to E. Petrakis, Cite S.N.C.F. No. 7, St. Marcellin par VEYNES, -05- FRANCE. Sexually liberated persons aged 18-36 welcome, also people interested in horses (we breed and train them).

Typewriter wanted for five or six weeks only to finish book. George Foulser, c/o Freedom Press.

Some Things Magazine. No. 13. Poetry and prose. 1/- plus 4d. post from G. Charlton, 14 Willow Avenue, Birmingham 17.

Drug Dependents Care Group. Meetings on Thursdays, August 20 and September 3, at Housmans Bookshop (Basement), 5 Caledonian Road, London, N.1, at 7.30 p.m.

Proposed Bristol Group. Alex Bird, 23 Rosewell Court, Kingsmead, Bath.

Dave Coull is in Edinburgh, correspondence c/o Hughes, Top Flat, 40 Angle Park Terrace.

Frank Roach Personal Appeal. Frank Roach at present will be held in Brixton it seems until September. Comrades need not be reminded of the stirring deeds of this gentleman, but money for cigarettes, etc., would be very much appreciated. c/o Freedom Press, Box No. 02.

Free Citizen. Newspaper of People's Democracy. Available to FREEDOM subscribers for 1/- or 1/4 by separate post. Write to P.G. at Freedom Bookshop.

Anarchists in Enfield area please contact Leroy Evans 01-360 4324.

Please help. Union of American Exiles in Britain: c/o WRI, 3 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Proposed Group. Alex Bird, 23 Rosewell Court, Kingsmead, Bath.

Lowestoft Libertarians contact Ann & Gordon Collins, 9 Ontario Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, Tuesday evenings. Comrades welcome for short stay by the sea.

Notting Hill Libertarian Society. Meetings every Monday at 7.30 p.m., upstairs room of 'The Ladbroke', Ladbroke Crescent, Ladbroke Grove, W.11. Nearest tube station Ladbroke Grove. Correspondence to Sebastian Scragg, 10 Bassett Road, W.10.

Oxford Anarchists. New group being formed, contact Dave Archard, Corpus Christi College, or John Humphries, Balliol.

Wednesday discussion meetings at Freedom Meeting Hall from 8 p.m.

Urgent. Help fold and dispatch FREEDOM every Thursday from 4 p.m. onwards. Tea served.

## STRIKE AT BENTALLS

Continued from page 3

quarter a real slog. When I first came to the factory, I was surprised at not being asked to join a union, later I found that the only union in the factory was DATA, and that when they had taken over 15 years ago, Acrow had specified that they didn't want a union for the general workers in the factory. Their dream has now been shattered with the establishment of a branch of the AEF in the factory.

At about 9 a.m. on Monday, August 10, almost everybody walked out for two hours. In the past when somebody had tried to organise a strike at Bentalls, they had met with apathy and the threat of dismissal of the strikers (which is feasible due to their minority). One of the things that I noticed about the factory was the tremendous solidarity between the workers, something which was to manifest itself in the walk-out.

The strike had been called due to the dismissal of an apprentice; the firm claim he wasn't dismissed, but this means we were so quick in coming out, that they didn't have time to find his cards. The apprentice had been dismissed for refusing to operate a machine in the press shop, as he is a welding apprentice.

Whilst we were out, the union officers took advantage of the stoppage to press wage demands—a 7s. basic, which then wouldn't bring parity with other factories in the area. The management announced that pay increases would be notified in wage packets, carefully timed to coincide with the works holiday. Obviously they expect the men to have forgotten about the strike and pay claim by the time they return, but they're wrong. Negotiations will restart on the return to work, but the men expect to be out again within three days of resumption of work.

One of the virtues of the strike is that the factory has no trade union history, and so the workers might be saved from the pox and persuaded to demand the establishment of a workers' council, and possibly profit sharing. This has been suggested to union officials, who are showing an interest. We hope to ply them with suitable propaganda in the next few weeks in the hope of saving them from a fate worse than pure capitalism.

Maldon U.R.U.

P.S. It might also be noted that the town's renegade Liberal Party have offered the strikers use of their duplicated equipment, and help generally???

## Redundant Churches

**HARD ON THE HEELS** of an announcement by the Church of England that it plans a big church-building programme in the near future, is a report that 700 redundant churches may be on offer in the next ten years. More than thirty, it is suggested, may be destined for overseas owners. Potential buyers are invited to contact the Church Commissioners. And the Church of Scotland and the Methodists are hoping to share in the lucrative traffic. If the Blood of the Lamb is no longer saleable, perhaps people will buy the butcher-shops.

Within the last hundred years these three churches (like other organisations, alas) raised buildings whose loss whether to demolition workers or transatlantic souvenir-hunters, would grieve no one in Britain. Other churches and chapels will gainfully be converted to more useful ends, social or cultural. But, one fears, those most likely to be exported—and some which may be demolished—will be ancient buildings of architectural and historical interest, created by national resources of men and materials.

The Ministry of Public Buildings and Works and the Board of Trade should at once make it clear to these church authorities, and especially to the established Churches of England and Scotland, that premises long ago erected on public land with public finance (royal, parliamentary or municipal), maintained down the years by compulsory tithes or commuted tithes, and kept by the whole community tax-free and rate-free, are not now to be regarded as private assets to be sold to the highest bidder or given export licences to be taken out of the country.

Lord Grantchester has put down a motion on the Order Paper in the House of Lords proposing that they consider disestablishment of the Church of England. It is to be hoped that the Government will give full support to any forthcoming Bill to disestablish and disendow the Church of England and the Church of Scotland.

DAVID TRIBE,  
President,  
National Secular Society.

## Women's Liberation I.

Dear Comrades,

This is by way of being an open letter to Jacquetta Benjamin, in answer to her letter in FREEDOM, August 8.

Jackie: two years ago I didn't feel oppressed either; when you've been labelled '2nd class' all your life, and seen all the other females labelled 2nd class too, you eventually come to think it natural, like unemployment and road deaths, and even not to notice it any more.

The expression 'It's a boy!!' labels you and me second-class from birth. (I have heard 'it's a girl!!' said with something like the same enthusiasm only in a family already overloaded with boys.) Of course, we are so used to this attitude that it seems absurd to complain about it, until you start thinking about how things might be different. Most men, naturally, find this kind of complaint hilarious—like an anarchist I know who, when his friend became a father for the first time, and it was a girl, told him 'Send it back!' ('only joking', of course), and then turned round and told me that women aren't oppressed.

As for the economic situation, you say 'professional workers have equal pay already'; but professional workers are a minority, and a well-off minority at that. What about all the rest of us? And why do you say 'already' rather than 'at long last'? This is like saying 'Most workers are already down to a 44-hour week, and some even have three weeks' holiday a year—so where's the need for Unions?'

Even if it is true that the exploitation of women (and tenants and gypsies and blacks) is merely part of the general exploitation setup, does that mean that tenants should not organise as tenants to fight their specific form of oppression, and gypsies organise as gypsies and blacks as blacks, and women as women?

It is true that there are certain compensations to being a woman (although not every woman with children is able, like you, to live without working) and I suppose it is just possible that you yourself aren't actually oppressed. But surely you would not want to discourage other women who do feel oppressed from doing something about it?

London, N.1 ANNE-MARIE.

## Women's Liberation II.

Dear Comrades,

I always say that if you want to convince yourself that women are oppressed, you have only to mention 'Women's Liberation' in the presence of men and watch their reactions. In most cases, the effect is instan-

## LETTERS

taneous: they start to behave oddly; they talk out of character, or crack feeble jokes and then laugh too loud, or they suddenly get aggressive and start insulting you; often they become quite irrational. It's the guilt, you see.

Terry Phillips' letter (August 8) is fairly typical, and I should like him to answer a few points about it.

Firstly, he says, 'Women's Liberation is a Marxist answer to a Marxist problem'. Presumably he means by this that only Marxists think that women are oppressed, and that only Marxists join WL groups. Both these suppositions are false.

I among many others think that women are oppressed, am a member of Women's Liberation Workshop, and am not a Marxist. In our literature you will find little reference to Marx; we try to base our ideology on our own daily experience of oppression, not on anyone else's theories.

Next, Terry Phillips speaks of the 'female (?) Marxists' who revised Marxist theory 'to their own bored, middle-class situation', replacing class war with sex war, and thus founding the Women's Liberation movement. As he seems to know the history of the movement better than I do, perhaps he would tell us (a) who these women were (by name), (b) what is his definition of 'female', (c) what those particular women did to merit being described as 'female (?)', (d) what exactly is the 'peculiar logic' of the movement which 'seems to lead to the dictatorship of the Amazons' (as far as I know, only our extreme lunatic fringe, i.e. Valerie Solanas, advocates anything of the kind), (e) does he think a women's dictatorship would be worse than the men's dictatorship we have suffered for the last few thousand years, and if so, why?

Finally, in a society that regards sex as an act of aggression, it is not enough just to say 'We believe in sexual freedom'; it is going to take a lot of thought and effort—on the part of women too, but especially on the part of men—before we can learn to bring respect, tenderness and real equality into all our sex relationships.

London, N.5 JANE CORRIGAN.

## Political Prisoners

Dear Comrades,

I am hoping to publish a regular bulletin of information on left-wing political prisoners in Britain today. I would be very grateful if any comrades could send me information on people jailed after demonstrations, squats, bombings, etc., etc.

What I want is name, offence, length of imprisonment, etc.

Swansea IAN BONE.