



# AN ENEMY AT OUR DOOR

EVER SINCE Nixon first set foot on Chinese soil in the early 1970s it has been on the cards that, whatever their proclaimed ideological differences, Western and Chinese leaders were contemplating some loose military alliance against the Soviet Union.

So when the chief of the defence staff, Sir Neil Cameron, told Chinese officers on May Day that British and Chinese forces should pool their "common experience" because both of them clearly shared "an enemy at our door" he said nothing surprising.

He went on to say that he was not speaking for the NATO alliance nor for his own government, which the Foreign Secretary David Owen was quick to confirm. Not speaking for, but certainly thinking along the same lines.

The Labour left demanded Cameron's dismissal -- to have him replaced, no doubt, by someone who shared his ideas but would think twice before blurting them out.

Tory leader Margaret Thatcher -- who hates Communism like sin, or so she says -- suggested that the government "stand up for what Sir Neil said." And presumably sign a military pact with Chinese Communism.

The Soviet press blew its top, pleased to find a male counterpart to

the "Iron Maiden" to terrify its readers into supporting their own repressive system.

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What lay behind Cameron's statement made sense from a military and economic point of view. He observed that though Chinese forces on their western border with Russia may be massively superior numerically they are markedly inferior in quality.

In the west the relationship is reversed. The Warsaw Pact forces face NATO with double the number of men and aircraft and three times as many tanks. What more logical than to threaten the Soviet leaders with a war on two fronts?

And what more logical than to hold out to Chinese leaders the promise of modern weapons to cement the "common experience"? The Chinese state is in the market for aircraft and missiles. A military delegation is due here later in the year. A few kind words now could pay great dividends in the future.

The day before Cameron's speech a Marine commando colonel said in the Sunday Times that his role as commander of a unit in Norway was "to get Marine Bloggins in the snow with a rifle to kill Russians."

Cameron's statement differed only

in degree and we can be certain that, in spite of their denials, it had the blessing of the British Government.

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In all the criticism the most important point has been missing, and it is a point that only anarchists are willing to make with any coherence.

Such is the power of the state over most of our minds that it is considered normal to speak in terms of whole peoples being the "enemy" of other peoples.

Alliances between bands of leaders, whose only ideology is their own survival -- today you're my eternal enemy, tomorrow my lifelong friend -- are seen as quite natural and nothing to worry about.

Well, we do worry. We are angry that our lives are always seen as pawns in a game.

They always say: You must have government or we'd all run round killing one another. The history of this century alone shows that if we don't get rid of government that's exactly what we will find ourselves doing -- again.

HH

## BRIEF

This week saw the committal proceedings in the prosecution of Peace News, The Leveller, and The Journalist for printing the name of Col. H.A. Johnstone. Now that the name is widely known anyway there can be little point in the case on the grounds of security, but the prosecution is still maintaining a hurt, shocked air to any suggestions of vindictiveness. The basis of their case was that the magazines had ignored the "direction of the court", i.e. that the colonels anonymity should be maintained, although except for his actual name he had freely told the court everything except the size of his teddy bear's socks. When it became obvious that the court had made no such direction, the charge was hurriedly changed to "procedure of the court" that's a good one. Now the standard practices of the law enforcement system are to be enshrined as established fact. Next the blatant rigging of magistrates courts will be legitimised as normal procedure. The defence also submitted a plea that the whole affair was politically motivated. All this was, of course ignored and the two justices have retired to take their time in deciding whether the trial should go ahead.

Meanwhile a touching photo of an immaculate guards officer holding the Queen's handbag was splashed in the press on Thursday. His name? Lt-Col. Johnston. MPs continue to be upset at the slight to their dignity concerned in the whole rule of 'privilege', i.e. they can say what they like in Parliament and have it broadcast on radio, but anybody reprinting it is liable to prosecution. Some have already suggested that the records be censored.

AS WE approach the summer (although you'd not believe it by looking out of the window) the demonstrating season gets underway. Accordingly, hundreds of thousands have been stirred, protected against the elements by the glow of their revolutionary fervour.

Last Saturday (29 April) saw the march and rally organised by Friends of the Earth, delayed by the recent police ban. 10,000 turned up to protest about the proposed expansion of reprocessing at Windscale and, by implication, the whole nuclear economy. The march itself was quite short (Speakers Corner to Trafalgar Square, about two miles) and was followed by a rally, with speeches from MPs and such like, and singers such as Roy Harper, Arthur Scargill of the Yorkshire miners caused a stir by calling for a campaign of civil disobedience. Anarchist turnout was good, with many comrades from out of town. The revived anti-nuclear movement took more direct tactics at Tomess this weekend. Nothing on the scale of the continent, but encouraging all the same. An estimated 3,000 occupied the site of a proposed nuclear power station. This got rather more media coverage, and black and red flags were to be seen on television. The anti-nuclear movement in this country is rather slow getting off the ground, but so far, at least, it shows signs of avoiding the conciliatory tactics of CND.

An even better turnout occurred on Sunday for the anti-Nazi protest. 86,000 are estimated in total. About half of these went on the march (far longer this time). Again there was a fine anarchist presence. The weather picked up nicely for the carnival in Victoria Park. Reports in the papers seemed amazed that such a motley crew could display so much commitment and yet seem so pleasant. Interest in anarchism was great, it made a nice change to be pressed for papers. We sold out and Anarchy (newly printed the day before) were rushed off their feet. The Anti-Nazi League is expanding fast. The only signs of nazis were a few drunks in the doorways of pubs in Hoxton, safely behind lines of SPG. Remember, that pulling out all the stops nationally, such as for Lewisham, the National Front can manage less than 1000.

Unfortunately the weather didn't hold out for the anarchist picnic in Finsbury Park on the Monday. However a good crowd turned out (perhaps some saw the headlines in the Daily Mail on the Saturday?). Abroad, May Day events were on a larger scale. In Spain it was the first legal celebration in over 40 years. Our comrades were out in force of course. A photo appeared in the Guardian showing a young girl draped in an anarchist flag (unfortunately we've not enough room for it!) In Paris a group of anarchists objected to the way the communist CGT organised a march and fighting broke out. Naturally the riot police weighed in on the side of the communists, who are part of the establishment these days.

DP

## ZAPAL

(Polish Anarchist Information Exchange) NEEDS YOU! ... To read and consider this communication ...

Do not isolate yourselves through circumstances created by authority - including state borders and all manner of divisions.

Do not be restricted by national boundaries, or by polemics about Party vanguards and transitional phases.

Do not be put off by secrecy, silence, endless theorising and distortion. While you are silent and waiting oppression continues, people suffer for possessing thoughts and for acting, while even more waste matter is produced by the CP elite. Remember, people in the East are no different from yourselves, they are too capable of self-determination and require the anarchist solution. Don't you agree?

A number of proposals for the birth of a movement to help co-ordinate anarchists in the East and the West must be made. In brief, they need to involve the following ideas:-

1. Establish contact with as many groups and individuals as possible who have access to relevant information about Polish and East Europ-

ean society, predominantly with regard to:-  
a) The manipulation and restriction imposed on people's lives, and on those who have in numerous ways challenged the current system.  
b) Wider political issues concerning relations with the Kremlin elite, and other governments in the East and the West.  
c) The structure of Polish society, and where and how it is inadequate.

2. Establish contacts with whoever is able to speak, read or translate Polish, and is willing to interpret any literature on the Polish question.

3. Eventually, to create links between anarchists in the West and in the East - in order to show solidarity, interest and willingness to disseminate anarchist ideas in the East by whatever means we have at our disposal.

4. Begin to formulate some inter-national grouping of East European anarchists - whose common position is specifically that their respective communities are under the grip of CP control and oppression. This solidarity must be made clear to governments and organisations in the West as well as in the East - to stress that we reject both systems, and do not seek either

# ZAPAL

a 'liberal democracy' or a capitalist economic structure or totalitarian CP control.

It is debatable how much we can achieve, but we can try. Can you help in any way - by sending in any current information on Poland or E. Europe generally, informing us about valuable contacts willing to promote these proposals ... If you want to write articles, or analyse events, or can contribute in any way, or can think of anything else which may be attempted, please do not deliberate ... let us know! We await your response, as do people in the East suffering under authoritarianism!

If you have suggestions or want to react in any way please write to:-

ZAPAL c/o Freedom  
84b Whitechapel High St.  
London E1.

## FINLAND

*Kosti Lakus, aikaisemmalta Kosti Kustaa Karttokeri eli Tupla K, luvun lopulla oli pohjoismaiden "katon huumejunkingas", on jälleen esiin laajan huumeausainejuttun tavoimana.*

THE FINNISH authorities are continuing their campaign to keep anarchist Kosti Lakus in gaol on trumped-up charges - now they are trying to pin an allegation of manufacturing amphetamines on him.

Last year Kosti was given a year and two months for a stabbing he did not commit. He appealed for international solidarity but the Finnish state refused to release him or reduce the sentence.

At the time of his appeal he said: "It is very hard for them to release me as my political views are anarchist." But he expected to be eventually freed on 23rd May.

Now, in a letter smuggled out from Helsinki Penitentiary to his son in Sweden, he writes: "The state authorities have engineered a frame-up charge of drug felony with the intention of holding me in prison for the next few years."

They claim that while he was allowed a holiday from prison during the winter he manufactured amphetamines on a farm.

"It is true that I myself hired a little farm in East Finland last May," Kosti writes, "but other people have been living there over the winter. Police have found a small lot of chemicals in the possession of the people who lived on the farm."

He says that it is a regular trick of the Finnish police to pin charges on people who are already held in prison - it makes the crime clear-up figures look better for them.

He has asked for more details about

the charges - exactly when and where he is supposed to have manufactured the drugs - but the authorities refuse to go into any detail. "They are not able to answer and it seems to me that they do not know themselves."

When he was working for HAPOTOC they were able to reveal that a police controlled drug ring was operating in Finland. This, together with Kosti's political beliefs and activities, is what lies behind the frame-up.

He is appealing for letters supporting him to be sent to the court and other state authorities at the following addresses:

Kiteen Kihlakunnoikeus,  
Kitee, Finland.

Oikeuskansleri Risto Leskinen,  
Oikeuskanslerinvirasto,  
Helsinki, Finland.

Eduskunnan Oikeusasiamies,  
Eduskuntatalo,  
Helsinki, Finland.

Oikeusministeriö,  
Helsinki, Finland.

"The solidarity which I need is a great help to me in my struggle against this repressive and barbaric state," Kosti writes. His address is PO Box 40, 00551 Helsinki 55, Finland.

## PORTUGAL

JULY 1978

Programme of Events

Sunday 2nd at Almada:

PICNIC & CONFRATERNISATION

Monday 3rd in Lisbon and Almada:

PRESS CONFERENCE (Lisbon)  
DEBATE ON ANARCHISM, ART and SCI-FI  
LITERATURE (Almada)

Tuesday 4th in Lisbon:

DEBATE ON MARGINALS, DRUGS, DELIQU-  
ENCY, VANDALISM AND PRISONS

Wednesday 5th in Lisbon:

FILM SHOW

Thursday 6th in Lisbon:

DEBATE ON TRADE UNIONISM VERSUS ANA-  
RCHO-SYNDICALISM

Friday 7th in Lisbon:

PUBLIC MEETING

Saturday 8th at Montijo: (ONE DAY FESTIVAL)

ACTIVITIES & CRECHES FOR CHILDREN, BOOK  
FAIR, TOMBOLAS, FORUMS ON ANY TOPIC,  
FREE DISCUSSIONS, EXHIBITIONS, THEATRE,  
MUSIC AND SONGS, ETC.

Comrades and visitors from overseas are most welcome to assist and participate in the events. If you plan to attend this Lisbon Libertarian Week, please do not forget to bring with you anarchist/feminist/ecologist/anti-nuke/pacifist/alternative technology-energy literature published in your own countries. For more information regarding time tables, local events, transport and accommodation in Lisbon, please contact in writing the organizers: Comite Coordenador Semana Presenca Libertaria, Apartado 5085 Lisbon 5, Portugal. If already in Portugal, please contact personally the publication A Batalha, Avenida Alvares Cabral 27 Lisbon (evenings). Hoping to see you in Lisbon this summer ...

The Organizers of the Lisbon  
Libertarian Week 1978



*Non, je ne regrette rien....*

MAY '68 has become yet another in a long line of revolutionary myths. Although in fact by no means a revolution it did prove that insurrection was still possible in mid twentieth century. Often British anarchists and libertarians ask: when will Britain have its May '68? Or, why has it not already done so?

French and British history run along roughly parallel lines, but it would be foolish not to try to understand why May '68 failed to happen here, just as it would be to regret its absence and deplore British apathy. May '68 happened as it did in France for a variety of reasons, but not least for what made France different from Britain - above all a still Napoleonic, extremely rigid and centralised social and political structure. Only this could have allowed a row over sexual mores on the campus to sweep student rebels, as it were on the very shoulders of the riot police, toward the gates of central government. In Britain, on the other hand, the students stewed in campuses carefully distant from the cities, relatively independently run, marooned in that long experience of compromise and evasion of confrontation that pervades British life in general and which is the fruit of a respectable insurrectionary history. (Decentralisation is, after all, a great defuser of conflict as those modern French Jacobins, the Gaullists and the Communists have, it seems, still to learn).

So May '68 was as much a creation of the authorities and their agents as it was of their opponents. And its 'leaders', looking back over a distance of ten years, are well aware that, at least from a libertarian point of view, it could not have worked. Libertarian in aspect it was, of course, to an unprecedented extent. But it was also far too amorphous and confused in its aims. Those aims were at the same time too contradictory and too similar... If one is to believe the recent comment of ex-Maoist militant Alain Geismar: "Even the anars continued along the same Leninist lines: it isn't the students who will make the revolution but the worker and peasant class. Despite our practice, our language was old." And that is important.

Had the Fifth Republic fallen to the barricades, a faintly pink Sixth would simply have arisen from them. (Personified, perhaps, by Pierre Mendès-France, spectral survivor of the Fourth who, suddenly appearing on that famous occasion in the Charléty stadium, must have felt it a realistic possibility). Even the most valuable achievements of May '68, and the most lasting, were not its actual creations but evocations of pre-existing ideas. The workers' self-management, ecological, women's struggles of today, and so on, owe their origin

ins to a much longer and more complex process than the 'joyous anarchy' of that Paris spring, and were already taking shape in several different countries at the same time, not least in America.

But if it is foolish to look back on May with regret, or to hope for its repetition elsewhere, its lessons are well worth remembering. May '68 gave a concrete and vivid example of the recuperative capacity of the system\*, of Communist conservatism, complicity and utter identification with the status quo. It showed up the sterility of the student rhetoric too (notwithstanding the justly famous posters and slogans) and their empty workerism. It showed how futile is insurrection (or armed struggle, for that matter) without adequate preparation or groundwork, coherence of aim and strategy; how futile, therefore, a united front of anarchists and left-wing, revolutionary statist (however new left) must be.

Paris in May '68, like Rome or Bologna in 1977, was a splendid spontaneous explosion of rage. It cannot be blamed for what it had never planned - revolution. So when we look back let us also look forward to a different conflict. One that is consciously revolutionary, unashamedly purist in its objective, which is based on hard, widely-spread foundations (and is not therefore spontaneous); which fights not alongside other left groupings and parties but, if at all, with a variety of campaigners who, for the very reason that they are concentrating on single issues, lack the breadth and political coherence they need to prevent recuperation.

May '78 saw 10,000 marchers against Windscale gather in Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square. It was nothing to the old days of CND, from disillusionment with which the British anti-nuclear movement has yet to recover. But what mattered this year were the thousands of people cheering and applauding the call to civil disobedience. Not only Windscale, but Torness and other sites offer the means to carry this into practice. If we succeed, then we shall have gone a long way towards putting across our ideas in as vital a part of the revolutionary process as any May insurrection or urban guerrilla struggle.

GF

\* see the article on the recuperation of May '68 by Carlos Semprun-Maura, published in FREEDOM in March 1976.

YES! TO OCCUPIED FACTORIES



# Freedom

## Anarchist Weekly

MAY 18 1968 Vol 29 No 15



# Vive les Etudiants !



PARIS after the battle: Overturned cars were used as barricades. Note the slogan on a shop shutters: Vive la Revolution.

TEN MILLION WORKERS were called out on strike in France in support of the student demands. This follows ten days of militant action by the students. Considering that the Communist hierarchy has previously denounced the students as Anarchists, Trotskyists and Maoists, this action is as much bowing to public sentiment as the sudden capitulation of the French Government. The Sorbonne is to be reopened and cleared of the hated combat police and the release of all students was promised for today (May 13).

The antecedents of this struggle go back to January 26 of this year. On that day 40 members of the Nanterre University anarchist group marched into the faculty hall with comical posters ridiculing the police. The porters attacked the anarchists but were defeated. The authorities called in the police; one thousand students fought back and attended a protest meeting. The movement thus launched has grown ever since. The students are determined to get rid of the uniformed and plain-clothed police that haunt the faculties.

On May 3 a great meeting was called at the Sorbonne by the extreme left. The rector appealed to the police to dislodge the students. As the student protest grew, the Government stepped in and closed down the Sorbonne and Nanterre University, which were occupied by the combat police. The students organised quickly and brilliantly to reoccupy the universities from the hated police. As many as 15,000 students and sympathisers fought in street battles until the capitulation of the Government.

One of the demands of the students was that Danny Cohn-Bendit of the Nanterre anarchist group should not be deported to Germany.

There has been many conflicting accounts in the British Press about our comrade. Although NESTA Roberts of the *Guardian* has accurately described him as an anarchist, Joseph Carroll, in the same paper, on the same day, imputed he was a Trotskyist. Margot Lyons in the *New Statesman* said he was a 'Maoist' ringleader, the *Observer* said he was the leader of the 'anarcho-Maoists'. More to the point was Mandrake in the *Sunday Telegraph* who said amongst the students were many tendencies - Marxists, two kinds of Trotskyists, Maoists, Anarchists, Castroists, situationists. 'On March 22, they invaded the administrative offices of Nanterre University and demanded the right to hold political meetings'. The subsequent 'Movement of March 22' was led by Danny Cohn-Bendit and no doubt attracted others than anarchists.

Tuesday, May 7. Ten thousand students had taken possession of a vast circle round the Arc de Triomphe, their red and black flags massed on either side of the unknown soldier's tomb, singing the 'International'. The police kept out of the way. General de Gaulle declared that he would not tolerate any further student violence.

The students declared that they were ready for a dialogue on three conditions: withdrawal of the police forces from the Latin Quarter; release and immediate amnesty for the imprisoned students; reopening the Sorbonne and Nanterre. Four hundred and thirty-four demonstrators were that day under arrest. The police that day restored D. Cohn-Bendit's residence permit (but only for a short period).

Wednesday, May 8. Strong police forces still occupied the Sorbonne and the student union delivered an ultimatum to the Government. If the demands were not met they would 'liberate' his tune and said: 'The Government is ready to take the steps necessary for the adaptation of education to the modern world'. M. Pierre Sudreau, of the Party of Modern Democracy, said in the French Assembly that extremists had been trained in street fighting at two anarchist camps.

Thursday, May 9. The Ministry announced that until calm was restored the Sorbonne will remain closed. The students declared that as soon as they reoccupied the Sorbonne they would take over the premises and hold discussions day and night on the problems of the university.

Friday, May 10. The industrial unions (Communist and Christian) have thrown their lot in with the

students and called for a general strike on Monday. Beyond Paris the movement is now supported all over France. Several thousand young pupils marched through Paris with placards: 'Tomorrow we shall have the same problem'.

Saturday, May 11, saw the decisive battle and the defeat of the Government. There was ferocious fighting, barricades were set up by the students and cars were overturned to form a barrier. It was a night of the barricades which the capital had not witnessed since the Commune days of 1870. After a hurried conference with General de Gaulle, M. Pompidou, the Prime Minister, announced the concessions. The student unions were not overawed. The union described the concessions as 'extremely interesting' but they would wait till Monday to see if their comrades were to be released.

From all reports the population of the Latin Quarter was solidly backing the students. They showered debris over the police and water over the students to minimise the effect of the chlorine gas grenades. The demonstrators were themselves issued with a leaflet on how to protect themselves against tear gas. They took an anti-flu pill before demonstrating and one when the grenades started flying; carried lemon-soaked handkerchiefs and smeared bicarbonate of soda around their eyes.

The brutality of the police horrified all reporters. Photographs seen in London, but unavailable to this paper, showed policemen clubbing students on the ground, blood streaming from their faces. But the students also fought back, kicked gas grenades back to the police, and the police had to protect their faces from thrown stones with what looked like fencing masks.

The French Government is desperately trying to cope with the revolutionary situation forced by the students and now supported by the working class. The general strike is called on the tenth anniversary of de Gaulle's assumption of power, on the day that the Vietnam 'peace talks' were to provide him with added glory. The adulation in Sunday's British Press was an indication of the treatment he was to be given and still got without a reference to the upheavals!

The students will also have to fight off the dubious embrace of the Communist Party and all those who are now climbing on the bandwagon. But their cool determination hitherto to force their just demands is an inspiration to us all!

JOHN RETY.

# LETTERS

## BLAKE

Dear fellow comrades

I often enjoy Arthur Moyses's articles, but they are sometimes curiously wrong-headed; the remarks about Blake in vol. 39 no. 8 (last issue) provide an example.

In writing of Blake's 'simplistic poetry', Arthur himself is being simplistic. Blake's poetry is in fact highly complex, and it is within this complexity that the key to the so-called 'flaw' - his 'shymaking approach to the sexual organs' - may be found. If Blake does not generally portray them (sometimes he does), it is not from any prudery on the part of a fierce (and indeed dogmatic) devotee of Michelangelo and equally fierce proponent of free love. If Blake paints hermaphrodites it is not from any narrow puritanism (goddam it, where does Mary Whitehouse come into this?) but because an essential theme of his work is, in a sense hermaphroditism, and the synthesis of opposites - a theme that pervades all his work and which, in paint, could only be shown through such ambiguity. The splendid poem *Jerusalem* is a case in point.

I have read a lot of Blake, not just the proverbs of hell, and know his paintings better than I know most, and they tell me something quite different to what Arthur maintains. Arthur writes of Blake's vision as leading to a drab and dreadfully narrow-minded world. In fact Blake's is one of the greatest indictments of such a world that any artist has made. Blake became bitterly disillusioned with Jacobinism (a "pretence of liberty to destroy liberty"); in a political sense he became something of a reactionary. Yet his vision remains essentially liberatory. It aims, in his words, to show the "liberty both of body and mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination." To see a fault in the absence of well-defined genitalia is typical of the reverse puritanism of this post-Victorian age, if I may say so. It is also to miss the point. Blake is deliberately not a 'sexual' artist. ("Let sexes cease to be", says Los). But he is an extraordinarily sensual and exciting one, and if he has been "exposed over the years", to use Arthur's phrase, he is also still to be excavated. Until then, to move in the iconoclasts would be to tilt at non-existent targets. Fie to you too, Arthur Moyses!

G. Fleming

London

## JOHN NIGHTINGALE

We would like to bring to your attention the case of John Nightingale, who has nearly completed a five-year sentence, and is at present at Strangeways prison, Manchester. We visit him and are trying to represent his interests outside of prison, but we also think this case illustrates the failure of the Prison Department to behave responsibly, even according to its own supposed philosophy.

In brief, John started an Open University course while he was at Parkhurst. When he was

suddenly moved to Wandsworth in 1977, a week before he was due to take his first year exams this stopped because Wandsworth is not an 'OU' prison. He did all he could, with the help of people outside, to get to a prison where he could continue his OU courses. During this time David Steel MP got it in writing from Merlyn Rees that John should be at an OU prison. He gained a victory by being moved to Chelmsford prison in early 1978, having been grudgingly allowed to sit - and incidentally, passing - his first year OU exams in the interim.

When Chelmsford prison burned down in March he was moved with the other prisoners back to Wandsworth. Suddenly, on 31st March, he was moved to Strangeways.



This move must be seen in the light of these facts:

- 1) John is a long term prisoner and Strangeways is a local (short term) prison.
- 2) He is therefore in a cell with two others; at Wandsworth he had his own cell like most of the others. (Moreover, he was told he was being moved because Wandsworth was overcrowded!).
- 3) All his visitors and contacts are from the south of England.
- 4) He is trying to get a place as a student at a London Polytechnic, or at Ruskin College, Oxford; these attempts are now difficult if not impossible. (Entry requirements may include his writing a long essay - which is impossible when you are three in a cell; and whereas a College might be prepared to visit a student in a local prison to interview, this is much less likely if the prison is distant).
- 5) Strangeways is not an OU prison.
- 6) Previously during this sentence he had asked for a place at Colleg Harlech, North Wales -

Court of Human Rights at Strasbourg, with the help of the OU, in an effort to establish the right of prisoners to educational facilities.

This is just one example of many of what can happen to a prisoner who is taking steps towards his own rehabilitation - in this case by studying. The notorious Prison Rule number one - which claims that prison should help a prisoner to lead a 'good and useful life' - is being broken for the nth time by the authorities. In this case John is lucky to have the will power to persist in protesting, and friends who can help him - other cases probably pass unnoticed. We do not doubt that the authorities could have moved John to an OU prison; it is quite likely that prisoners from Chelmsford who are not doing OU courses (the majority) will find themselves moved to OU prisons!

We would like this case publicised, both to help John and to illustrate how the prison system is capable of working.

Ian and Ros and Jim

London E.11.

## AUSTRALIA

Dear Comrades,

It was interesting to note in a December edition of "Freedom" that there was an attempt at the formation of a national "Libertarian Socialist Alliance" on a specific task of fighting fascism. It interested us due to the fact that a coalition of the same sought (between anarcho-communist and anarcho-syndicalist) has been formed in Australia to propagandise for the self-management alternative to a nuclear future in the now very large movement in Australia against uranium mining. Hope to send copies of leaflets produced soon.

We think maybe a difference being was that the coalition was formed out of a closed meeting of delegates from the various factions. A move considered as necessary after the disastrous experiences of the (to be read with the sound of relief) now defunct "Federation" of Australian Anarchists.

Yours in Social Revolution  
THE LIBERTARIAN WORKERS

### RATS ROB DYLAN

The Sydney Sewer Rats printed and distributed 2,000 counterfeit tickets to a Bob Dylan concert last month.

"We would have liked to have given away 100,000 - we're not interested in copstars becoming multi-millionaires. The rich should be ripped off whenever possible."

A leaflet handed out at the concert said: "We must look to ourselves - not pop stars and their ilk - if we are to transform our lives."

They promise to do the same again and the story is they are hoping to make it 15,000 tickets next time.

Bob Dylan is coming to Britain later this year.

# POINTING THE FINGER



POLICE INFORMANTS are in the news and the way the subject is being handled anyone would imagine that their use by the police is something new. The picture of the detective patiently following up clues with a magnifying glass dies hard.

In real life nine out of ten arrests made by detectives are as a result of information being given them - some by the public generally but much of it by informants pointing the finger. The details are filled in later - evidence is a matter of concocting a plausible story.

In "Scotland Yard", Peter Laurie suggests that informants can be divided broadly into two types. "The first," he says, "consists of people who are apt to be arrested and give information to stave off the evil day, or who have already been arrested and hope to buy police forbearance."

The second group is made up of those who are willing to give information more freely. "Their motives may be to gain reward, to enjoy revenge, or to eliminate a criminal rival."

Laurie says: "The essence of the detective's job is to create conditions in which people will want to tell him useful things... Informants are a detective's bread, butter and reputation."

Interest in this arises with the Home Secretary granting the Royal Prerogative of Mercy to Charles Lowe. His work involved carrying coshes, shotguns, pistols, pickaxe handles and ammonia sprays. He was a criminal of the kind usually described by the law-and-order brigade as a "vicious thug". So why the gift of mercy?

When Lowe originally appeared in court he admitted 87 offences, including numerous robberies and burglaries. He was also into more sophisticated cheque frauds. He was given a

10 year sentence, the judge remarking that it would have been a lot stiffer had it not been drawn to his attention that Lowe had given a great deal of help to the police as an informant.

Lowe appealed against the sentence and - with more kind words from the police - the term was reduced to five years. Now Rees has released him, making the total sentence in effect two years, much of which apparently passed pleasantly in police cells with beer, women and regular trips outside laid on by the solicitous Old Bill.

All this - and more - has been justified on the grounds that, sad as it may be, if the use of informants is the only way the police can get to grips with mounting crime then it is only fair that informants are given every incentive to talk.

The case of Bertie Smalls in the early 1970s is cited as further evidence of how useful the State finds deals of this kind. "It was not until Bertie Smalls began to help the Metropolitan Police in late 1972," said the *Guardian*, "that the Met was able to have any appreciable success on organised bank robbery."

In 1972 there were 65 bank robberies in London. The next year this figure slumped to 26. On the way 150 men had been arrested. Lowe's track record seems less dramatic. He has put the finger on 45 men so far, but only 10 of these have been convicted. Perhaps some other bargain has been made?

In "The Fall of Scotland Yard", which documented the corruption running through the Metropolitan Police and, by implication all police forces, it became clear that detectives were as much involved in committing crime as they were in clamping down on it.

They operated a "licence" system in which criminals were free to operate in return for favours, often financial but also involving acting as informants. Thus, one criminal could work virtually unhindered if he helped the police catch smaller fry.

The next step was inevitably the "partnership" and these sounded very cosy. One CID Sergeant was recorded wooing a potential partner. "If you are nicked anywhere in London... I can get on the blower to someone in my firm who will know someone who can get something done."

Finally, the police themselves begin to suggest crimes for their partners. Who's not to say that the sudden fall in bank robberies in 1973 was due to bent detectives realising they'd overplayed their hand rather than as a result of their proficiency as crimebusters?

What has happened with Charles Lowe - and the lengths to which the press has gone to justify it - suggests that for all the purges and reform nothing has changed. Except that the Home Secretary has given his seal of approval.

What has always been clear, to anarchists at least, is that the State pays a police force less to deal with criminals than to keep us honest folk quietly paying our taxes, working and generally keeping up civilised standards of obedience.

The public side of police work is a charade. Look, they say, you need us to protect you against thugs and hooligans - and here are the statistics to show what danger you're in. If you need us, you need bosses and you need the State, because we all stand together.

But what goes on privately between the police and criminals is a game in which, much of the time, we're hard put to know who exactly is who. It isn't difficult to believe that the old "partnerships" are still going strong. Charles Lowe has done his favours and they are now being returned, by Royal Prerogative.

There is a smell about this, as there is about every little deal the police and the State are involved in. For a national newspaper to tell us "Why the police and the public need their Charlie Lowes" is approaching things from the wrong direction. More to the point is an explanation of why the public need the police at all.

HH

## BRISTOL

You are invited to a Bristol area one-day participatory conference on:

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO COUNTERING RACISM AND FASCISM

on: Saturday, 20 May, from 10.00 to 6.00 at: Friends Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, Redland, Bristol 6. Nursery/creche available. Food at cost. Admission: 25p.

The suggested programme includes a debate between a critic and a supporter of the 'No Platform' position; follow-up small-group workshops focussing on choices facing the anti-racist/fascist movement ('What political basis for organising?'); workshops on racism in everyday life, in institutions and in ourselves, then workshops on sexism and on fascist attitudes and policies to women and gay people. These would be followed by a general meeting to hear workshop reports and discuss common action.

The conference is being called by an ad hoc counter-fascist group of non-aligned individuals and individuals acting in a personal capacity who are also active in various movements, and who are "unhappy about the traditional left's methods of carrying on the anti-fascist struggle. We see that their tactics come out of organisations that are white, heterosexual and male-dominated. What follows from this is that there is never an emphasis on what the National Front and fascists in general have in store for women - their defence of the male-dominated family, attacks on any autonomous rights for women whatsoever, the total curtailing of women's sexuality and freedom, back to women's only function as bearers of (white, male) children. No mention that gay people's rights are totally threatened - homosexual men and lesbian women were amongst the first to go to the gas ovens in Hitler's Germany. And very little discussion of the racism inbuilt for centuries in the entire culture, all institutions and the very language itself in the Western, white world."

The conference will be followed by a men's camp, to be held on 26-29/30 May at Dun-

ford Farm, nr Timsbury, nr Bath. Bristol Men's Group are inviting all members of men's groups "and all men not presently in a group but who want liberation from their patriarchal conditioning and a new non-sexist society" as well as men in gay groups. Apart from "loafing around, making campfires, making music, football" etc., there will be "consciousness-raising and encounter workshops on our hang-ups; how we can stop oppressing each other, women, children; how we too are oppressed under patriarchy; and what we can DO about it."

Participants are asked to bring a tent if possible, as well as plates, cutlery, mugs, bog roll, torch, warm and waterproof spare clothes and musical instruments and any men's literature for sale or loan.

## IN BRIEF

Amongst the works on show for the painter Joan Miro's return to Catalonia is a triptych entitled "The Hope of Man condemned to Death", inspired by the garroting of our comrade Salvador Puig Antich in 1974.

## Freedom Press

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This is a supplement to our main booklist (for which send s.a.e.) published in September 1977. Please convert at £ 1.00 = 2.00.

- \* Research Group One: Anarchism and Formal Organisations £ 0.50p (10p)
- \* SRAF: The Anarchist Solution to the Problem of Crime £ 0.10p (7p)
- Isaiah Berlin: Russian Thinkers. £ 6.95p (54p)  
(on Herzen, Bakunin and Tolstoy)
- \* Henry D Thoreau: The Illustrated Walden. Illustrated with photographs from the Gleason Collection. £ 3.50p (54p)
- \* Bob Mendelson: Andrew Ant the Anarchist. A Fable for all Ants and those Humans concerned with Justice - especially for younger Readers of all ages. £ 2.50 (26p)



- H S Foxwell: Bibliography of the English Socialist School (84pp) £ 3.60p (15p). Reprint of the 1899 Edition.
- Max Nettlau: Anarchism in England One Hundred Years Ago (24pp) £ 1.50p (10p). Reprint of the 1955 Oriole Press Edition.
- Temple Scott: A Bibliography of the Original Writings, Translations and Publications of William Morris (120pp) £ 5.75p (15p). A Reprint of the Original 1897 Edition.
- Frank Kitz: Recollections and Reflections. £ 1.95p (10p). (36pp) A Reprint of the original 1912 Freedom Press Edition.

### BARGAIN BASEMENT

- \* Peter Kropotkin: Mutual Aid. Edited and with an Introduction by

Paul Avrich. £ 2.95 (54p) Hardback

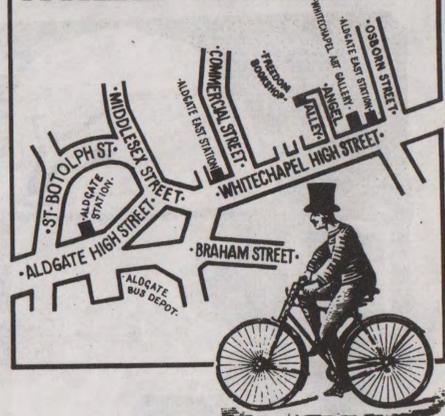
- \* Peter Kropotkin: The Conquest of Bread. Edited and with an Introduction by Paul Avrich. £ 2.95p (54p) Hardback.

(Please note - items marked \* are published in the USA).



- Albert Meltzer: The Anarchists in London, 1935-1955. £ 1.00 (19p)
- Uhuru Collective: Uhuru: A Working Alternative. £ 0.80p (15p)
- Katherine Anne Porter: The Never-Ending Wrong. On the Sacco and Vanzetti Affair. £ 2.90p (22p)
- Bureau des Temps Nouveaux: Petite Bibliographie Sociale en Quatre Langues (chinois, français, anglais, allemand). Reprint of original 1907 edition (20pp) £ 2.50p (10p)
- G C E Massé: Walter Crane: A Bibliography of Illustrated First Editions (60pp) £ 2.95p (12p). Reprint of 1923 Edition.
- Max Nettlau: Writings on Bakunin (68pp) £ 3.20p (15p)

## WHERE WE ARE....



### SOME FREEDOM PRESS PUBLICATIONS

- MALATESTA, His Life & Ideas, compiled and translated by V. Richards, 309pp. £ 2.00(26p)
- COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, Gaston Leval, 368pp. Cloth £ 4 (66p) Paper £ 2. (66p)
- ABOUT ANARCHISM, what anarchists believe, how anarchists differ, what anarchists want..., Nicolas Walter 25p (9p)
- ABC of ANARCHISM, Alexander Berkman (Pts. 2 & 3 of the now out of print 'Communist Anarchism' 50p (12p)
- ANARCHY, Errico Malatesta 25p (9p)
- BAKUNIN & NECHAEV, Paul Avrich 20p (9p)
- HOUSING : An Anarchist Approach, Colin Ward £ 1.25 (25p)
- MAX STIRNER'S EGOISM, a critique by John P. Clark £ 1.50 (15p)
- LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, Vernon Richards cloth £ 1.50 (54p)

# Anarchist Review Freedom

13 MAY '78

# ECOLOGY & MYSTICISM



IN THE introduction to his Russell memorial lecture Noam Chomsky (1) mentions a Japanese farmer who had a wall poster which read; "Which road is the correct one, which is just Is it the way of Confucius, of the Buddha, of Jesus Christ, Gandhi, Bertrand Russell Or is it the way of Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Hitler, Napoleon, President Johnson "

It is doubtful if Russell, a passionate sceptic and libertarian all his life, would have been entirely happy being associated with reactionaries like Confucius, or religious mystics like the Buddha - but this extract clearly and unambiguously depicts the false dilemma with which we are presented as soon as we begin to discuss ecology. Either we have to side with religious mystics and cultivate a 'sacramental' attitude towards nature, or we are alleged to align ourselves with the positivist tradition, with aggressive imperialism, capitalism and agribusiness. In metaphorical terms drawn from India the choice we are given is between the Kshatriya, who symbolises aggressive dominance and power, meat-eating and a strictly utilitarian attitude towards nature, and the Brahman (or Sannyasi) the religious mystic who exemplifies non-violence, vegetarianism, ritual piety, and the sacramental view - seeking through nature a union with the spirit.

This false dichotomy, which pervades contemporary thought, allows no alternatives, and largely determines the parameters of many debates within the ecological movement. The choice we are invariably presented with is this: positivism or the 'sacramental vision', agribusiness or vegetarianism. An example will suffice to initiate the discussion.

Some years ago the pages of *The Humanist* contained an interesting debate between the anthropologist Edmund Leach and one of the leading exponents of the counter culture movement, Theodore Roszak, whose book *The Making of a Counter Culture* did much to crystallise the emerging thoughts of a generation out of sympathy with the technician and authoritarian ethos of contemporary thought and institutions. Roszak's message (2) was simple; to counter bourgeois culture we should cultivate a 'magical vision of nature'. He cites at length the invocations of two Amerindian religious mystics - Black Elk and Smohala - in his advocacy of a return to a mystical or visionary relationship with the world.

His plea was highly romantic. The suggestion he makes that pre-literate people see nature "as a living presence that can be addressed and communicated with" is about as wildly inaccurate (and ethnocentric) as one of the verses in Mrs C F Alexander's famous 19th century hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' which read:

"The heathen in his blindness  
Bows down to wood and stone"

As if human beings communicate with bits of wood or stone or nature!?! Many pre-literate people - like Wordsworth, Jefferies and Seton - undoubtedly have an intense aesthetic feeling towards the natural world, but they view nature as 'personalised' and 'living' precisely because they see such phenomena

as embodiments or 'symbols' of spiritual beings. As far as I am aware no human being 'worships' or communicates with trees, or animals or stones: these simply are hierophanes of the spirit - to use a term of that well-known student of comparative religion Mircea Eliade. To see such a relationship as ecological is grossly misleading, and unfair to visionaries like Black Elk who in his prayers and invocations was addressing the spirit and not the tree.

A second misleading premise contained in Roszak's statement is the assumption that



pre-literate cultures like the Oglala Sioux have only a sacramental attitude towards the natural world. But as Malinowski long ago argued (3) - in opposition to Levy-Bruhl's idea that 'primitive' peoples had a pre-logical or mystical mentality - among pre-literate peoples a technological or scientific attitude coexists with the mystical vision which is evident in myths, and in the ritual context. Black Elk did more than merely offer invocations to the spirits.

In his critique of Roszak, Leach rightly interpreted this appeal to a magical vision as "half-baked poetic mysticism". Unfortunately Leach, calling on the redoubtable Vico for support, offers in return little more than a defence of positivist science. He notes the important historical role which positivism played in demystifying the natural world, and is alive to the adverse implications of a technology based on progress and on the domination of nature, but offers no perspective that will take us beyond this impasse. If positivism leads to a future that is "bleak and lonely", and oriental and tribal mysticism is "sentimental nonsense" what does the future hold. Leach does not tell us, nor does he present an alternative to these two perspectives.

However what is surprising about this debate is that neither Roszak nor Leach - entrenched as both are in ideologies of the past - see in the ecology movement possible liberation. Roszak falsely equated ecology with religious mysticism; Leach was rightly critical of the latter, but left ecology entirely out of account.

\* \* \*

There can be no doubt that the central concerns of the ecology movement were foreshadowed in the writings of the early anarchists, specifically Proudhon and Kropotkin. An emphasis - an insistence - on decentralisation and on non-authoritarian forms of social organisation; a refusal to become over-enamoured with the virtues of industrial production or to accept that the industrial proletariat was the sole agent of revolutionary change; a stress on self-sufficiency, and the need to integrate local industry with agriculture, thus ending the false division between intellectual and manual work, and between the rural and urban sectors - such were the central themes of the early anarchists. Although some writers on ecology have acknowledged that their basic premises have been drawn, or are at least consonant with, those of the anarchist tradition, most environmentalists (5) choose to ignore this connection. They take their bearings not from anarchism, but from oriental or tribal mysticism. Thus the advocates of 'small is beautiful', 'self-sufficiency', 'intermediate technology', indeed a broad spectrum of the ecology movement - as their views are reflected in such journals as *Resurgence*, *The Ecologist* and the *Whole Earth Magazine* - indicate to an alarming degree a religious and mystical bias. This bias is not to be found in the writings of the early anarchists, who, on the contrary, took it upon themselves to counter, with forceful polemic, the religious attitude to life. "If God is," wrote Bakunin, "man is a slave" - and this reflected the views of both Proudhon and Kropotkin.

To what extent the ecology movement has become identified with religious mysticism can be gleaned from the following extract; it is taken from Gary Snyder (6). It suggests - as examples of ecological enlightenment - that these should be encouraged; "Gnostics, hip Marxists, Teilhard de Chardin Catholics, Druids, Taoists, Quakers, Sufis, Tibetans, Zens, Shamans, Bushmen, American Indians..." and anarchists!

It is enough to confuse ecology with mysticism... but to align anarchism with this motley assortment of creeds and cultures is truly obfuscating. It is not only ecology we have to rescue from the mystics, but anarchism too!

It is my contention that whereas the science of ecology and anarchism are complementary perspectives - and Murray Bookchin in his various writings (7) has cogently explored the nature of this synthesis - religious mysticism is neither an ecological perspective, nor is it conducive to human liberty and well-being. The notion that one receives self-realisation or liberation through union with god (or the spiritual totality of existence) is not only mystifying and profoundly anti-libertarian but politically dangerous. It is no accident that such religious doctrines, of which Buddhism is a prime example, have always had a symbiotic relationship with political states. My concern here however is not with such issues but with the false equation made between ecology and mysticism.

As an example of what I mean let me briefly examine a

recent article in *The Ecologist*; it is typical of its genre... Roszak, Schumacher (8) and many others have expressed similar views, in suggesting that various forms of religious mysticism exemplify the 'ecological' outlook. In this article, entitled 'Options for the Ecology Movement', Henryk Skolimowski (9) suggests that certain 'factions' of the ecology movement tend to be over-emphasised, and there is a need to find a philosophical credo that will unite these various stands or sub-movements. He outlines four divisions within the ecology movement, namely the 'quality of life' movement (the humanists), the environmentalists (exemplified by the Conservation Society), the New Left, and the De-centralisation movement, which, significantly, he associates with the *Mother Earth News* rather than with anarchism.

One can sympathise with his attempt to provide a synthesis, and there are few of us who would disagree with his contention that there is a need to transform the world into an "ecologically sound, socially sane, and humanly enhancing world." Yet when Skolimowski actually comes to advocate a viable approach to the problems that confront us he lapses, like Roszak, into a naive advocacy of mysticism (of a tribal variety) and into a regressive denunciation of scientific rationalism. "God save us from the scientific rationalists", he pleads, ignoring the crucial fact that ecology is based precisely on such an outlook - until that is, it was commandeered in recent decades by the mystics and the purveyors of the occult.

The "new ecological world view" that Skolimowski pleads for in this article is already with us, and is being articulated by writers in the ecology movement who have not become entranced or enwrapped by mystical visions. Such a perspective, which involves a re-affirmation of anarchist principles, is not however to be sought by harking back to the religious conceptions of some Amerindian tribe, or to oriental mysticism - useful though such perspectives might be in countering, from an anthropological viewpoint, the 'man against nature' ethos of Judaeo-Christian tradition and bourgeois positivism. Tukano cosmology (10), which Skolimowski outlines with some fervour, is not ecology; the unity between humans and nature perceived by this mode of thought is mystical not ecological.

To clarify these criticisms of Skolimowski (and by implication, of Roszak too) let me present some cursory thoughts on the evolution of contemporary ecological thought - for though Skolimowski places much emphasis on 'evolution' the programme he offers is ahistorical and retrogressive.

A contrast has often been made and explored in many texts, between the western positivistic attitude to nature and that of pre-literate peoples and oriental religion. The contrast has been most succinctly expressed by Clarence Glacken (11), who sees the western conception, exemplified in the early chapters of *Genesis* and in Baconian philosophy, as essentially one embodying the idea of man against nature. *Genesis* in fact not only gives wo/man dominion over nature, but virtually defines humans as the only legitimate carnivores. Such an idea, the dominant one in western tradition, focusses on the notion of control over nature, viewing the latter as something alien to man. It is a conception that is inextricably linked to the idea of progress, and is seen as the essential key to human betterment. Glacken suggests that the early rationalists saw the relationship between humans and nature in terms of creativity rather than in terms of struggle, but nevertheless the underlying attitude was one of opposition and control. The understanding on which such control was based was, moreover, expressed largely in mechanistic terms. This attitude, as Nash outlines in his excellent study (12) of the wilderness concept, was also the disposition of the early American pioneers; their attitude towards nature was one of opposition, their concern utilitarian. Puritans, pioneers, positivists, and the 'man the hunter' approach of certain anthropologists - all express a similar viewpoint and articulate a fundamental antithesis between humans and the natural world.

It is easy (and still necessary) to castigate and counter this approach to the world; it is equally important to understand the important progressive role which this tradition had historically.



Some writers have mistakenly equated this positivistic tradition with 'western thought' generally, ignoring the counter-tendencies which the romantic movement and various idealist philosophies have

expressed; nevertheless it is fair to say that this mode of thought, postulating a fundamental opposition between wo/man and nature (and between the individual and society) has been the dominant influence over the past two or three hundred years. It is inevitably and rightly identified with puritanism, industrialisation and bourgeois hegemony.

Against this is usually set a mode of thought which suggests not a dichotomy but a oneness; an organic view that stresses that there is an essential balance or harmony between wo/man and the natural world. Chinese philosophy, as expounded by Lao Tzu is taken as the prototype of this way of thinking. Such a mode of thought, as Durkheim demonstrated long ago, is essentially religious. It is a theological attitude (whether tribal or theocratic) in which nature, society and the individual are encapsulated in a spiritual unity.

Two very different types of attitude towards the world are thus identified by Glacken and others, the one stressing a binary opposition, an antagonism between wo/man and nature, the other a complementary dualism, a form of 'harmonic whole.'

But the important point to stress is that neither of these two contrasting attitudes (or traditions) is ecological.

But allow me at this point a further historical digression. This will put the two traditions into a historical perspective.

The prevailing ideology of pre-capitalist Europe was embodied in the medieval concept of *universitas*, a divine order in which living people were merely parts. A person's natural status, *humanitas*, was associated with flesh and carnality - the term human in fact still carries certain perjorative connotations. In this conception of *universitas*, the individual was (as in a caste ideology) not recognised as such, but rather, as one historian put it, 'submerged in society' (13). In an illuminating essay on the genesis of wo/man as an 'individual' the anthropologist Louis Dumont (14) discusses the fragmentation of this *universitas* or sacramental paradigm. And in this process two medieval scholars are seen by Dumont as key figures. The first is the nominalist William of Occam - regarded by many as the founding father of positivism. The second is Thomas Aquinas who, by combining Christian revelation with Aristotelian concepts, restructured the *universitas* doctrine.

Two things emerged. One was the notion of a 'double ordering' of reality, implying not only a conceptual division between spiritual and temporal powers, but allowing for the possibility of naturalistic interpretations. The second was the notion that each person was a private individual in relation to god, and need not obey his superiors if conscience forbade it.

Both these notions were taken up in the late theoretical developments that accompanied the rise of capitalism.

On the one hand the division between church and state gave rise to political theory, and to the eventual emergence of social contract theories. Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau are key figures in this respect. Society (or specifically the state) was now seen not as some divine manifestation but as an association of 'abstract' individuals based on contract and according to the dictates of natural law.

On the other hand Christian religion, with its alternative doctrine that men were equal in the sight of god, became an important factor in the rise of individualism. In this respect Luther was a key figure.

Taken together what emerged was a shattering of the sacramental viewpoint, for the above ideas had revolutionary implications. God was literally kicked out of the universe. *Societas* replaced *universitas* - but society, though independent from divinity, was identified with the centralised state, and linked with the notion of a natural individual abstracted from any social context. Thus those two great abstractions of western thought, society and the individual, were posed as an antithetical pair (15). Equally, the idea of a natural order of things, independent of the spirit, led to the gradual emergence of the natural sciences, but again there was a false and unnecessary emphasis in the separateness of wo/man and nature.

A fundamental opposition between the individual and society, and between wo/man and nature was thus the theoretical legacy of the bourgeois revolution.

About the middle of the last century various writers attempted, as it were, to put Humpty Dumpty back together again, and to re-assert both the social nature of wo/man and the dialectical inter-relationship between wo/man and the

natural world.

With regard to the first dichotomy a number of reactionaries and critics of individualism advocated a return to theocracy. Others, more progressive, still nonetheless thought in a religious idiom; for example Comte and Saint-Simon. But there was a group of radical thinkers who, in stressing the social nature of the individual, attacked bourgeois individualism in all its forms. Bakunin expressed his dislike of the "base and fraudulent liberty" extolled by Rousseau; Marx went to town on Mill, Bentham and Adam Smith - the triumvirate of bourgeois liberalism; and towards the end of the century the guild socialist Durkheim presented a radical critique of Herbert Spencer's sociology. But being a historical thinker Marx applauded bourgeois individualism and the new



social forms it reflected; for he saw it as essentially liberating and more progressive than theocratic systems and ideas. But he and the other social thinkers stressed the need to go beyond individualism. They pleaded that individual and social needs were not necessarily antagonistic, and that maximum freedom and individuality could be achieved within the group, in a socialist community. Kropotkin expressed such ideas with a clarity that has never been bettered. But the essence of socialism was that this unity could be re-created without recourse to religion. Hobbes and other materialists had despiritualised the natural and social worlds; they had no intention of inviting the deity back. Indeed as libertarian socialists Bakunin and Kropotkin (in contrast to Marx) maintained a continuing critique of religion, and of all forms of authority. The authoritarian socialist Louis Blanc put it nicely - though displaying a limited anthropology - when he said that three great principles divided the world and history - authority, individualism and fraternity (16). They stood respectively for theocracy (the sacramental vision), capitalism (positivism) and the socialism he and many others believed to be historically emerging. Only the anarchist tradition can rightfully claim to be the mode of thought which historically transcends these two earlier ideologies. Marxism, with its advocacy of state institutions and its retention of the 'man against nature' attitude, never completely disentangled itself from positivism, and in fact, whatever interpretations may be given to Marx's own writings, became the ideology of bureaucratic state socialism.

A parallel movement took place in relation to the second dichotomy, namely that between wo/man and nature. The key figure here in this changing orientation, is of course Darwin, and to some extent the man who coined the term ecology, Haeckel. But as with the sociologists there were progressives among the natural historians who still clung to the sacrament-

al vision. In fact towards the end of the 19th century the two prominent traditions we have earlier outlined embraced the majority of biologists and naturalists. Loren Eiseley noted these two traditions when he wrote: "One stems directly from the purely scientific and experimental approach of Bacon ... the other more humane tradition descends from John Ray and Gilbert White, two parson naturalists, to the literary observers of later centuries, men such as Thoreau and Hudson." (17)

Around the turn of the century the first group were represented by hunter-naturalists like Roosevelt and Abel Chapman, by museum and experimental biologists, and by such animal behaviourists as Lloyd Morgan - individuals who stood squarely in the pioneer or Baconian tradition. Prominent naturalists outside this tradition however, Burroughs and Muir in the United States, Richard Jefferies and to some extent Hudson here, were not so much literary naturalists as writers whose outlook was still essentially religious. They belonged to the sacramental tradition-tempered with scientific rationalism. It was in fact Emerson's transcendental philosophy - philosophy derived not only from German idealist trends, but from the Hindu vedanta system - that formed the backcloth for the writings of both Burroughs and Muir. In this philosophy nature was seen as a metaphor of god - "nature is the symbol of the spirit" as Emerson put it. Jefferies writings too are permeated with a similar mysticism. Such a perspective however implied a very different attitude towards nature than that expressed by the positivists, or by naturalists like Roosevelt. An identity was postulated between wo/man and nature, but it was done in essentially religious terms; god was the mediator, or as Muir himself expressed it, natural phenomena were the "terrestrial manifestations of god."

The significance of the naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton (18), and that of several of his contemporaries, was that he made one of the first groping attempts to move beyond both these traditions. Taking his cue from Darwin, and sympathetic both to scientific rationalism and Amerindian philosophy, he refused to become entrenched in either of these two contrasting traditions. The intense aesthetic feeling he had towards nature, and his impassioned defence of the American Indian against American imperialism, meant that Seton fitted uneasily, in spite of his respect for science, into the positivistic mould. Yet the other tradition could hardly encompass his thought and strivings. Seton never saw god in nature, and throughout his life expressed an almost vitriolic dislike for organised religion, particularly Christianity. He stood completely outside the transcendentalist or sacramental perspective. What he achieved in essence was to remain attuned to scientific rationalism, but it was rationalism without the arrogance, without seeing a necessary struggle or opposition between wo/man and nature. In the words of Bookchin he attempted to cancel out all human pretensions to the mastery of nature, or as Seton himself put it in the final paragraphs of that poignant tale 'Tale of the Sandhill Stag' - "I have learned what the Buddha learned." But the organic link he so conceived, the aesthetic and intellectual perspective he had of man as a part of a complex biotic system was expressed, like Darwin and later ecologists, in non-religious terms. He left out the deity and thus de-mystified an outlook that has largely come to be associated with oriental religion and tribal cosmology. As with Marxism and Durheimian anthropology it was holism without the divinity. But it was a holism that did not involve a renunciation of science and rationality.

This perspective, for which Muir and Thoreau certainly prepared the ground, subsequently crystallised as the science of ecology. Although Seton was certainly a key figure in this changing orientation towards nature, it can safely be said that it was the product of many minds. But what is significant is that it was a product not of academic, or of philosophy, but of field naturalists. George Bird Grinnell, Eliot Howard, Charles Elton and Aldo Leopold - men whose writings many people have never heard of - were the spiritual founders of the ecology movement, not the Buddha - who thought living reality was an illusion.

Skolimowski's advocacy of an allegedly new ecological world view is not only obfuscating but profoundly retrogressive. For what he advocates - "we must identify ourselves with the transcendental heritage of the extra-personal foldings of the cosmos" (whatever that is?) - is not ecology, but a new cosmology to replace moribund Christianity, a cosmology akin to that of the Tukano Indians over whom he expresses such lyricism. Whether this requires us to take hallucinogenic drugs in

order to contact the spirits who - according to the Tukano - are in charge of the well-being of humankind he does not say.

Skolimowski's plea for a unified ecology movement may be applauded, though it is significant that he does not mention the anarchist tradition, the only political movement whose aims and ethos are consonant with an ecological viewpoint. But his plea for a new sacramental cosmology is but a romantic yearning for the past, and for a mode of thought that the bourgeoisie long ago destroyed. The future is with neither the mechanics nor the mystics.

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Throughout history religious mystics, whether associated with tribal cultures or theocratic states, have never been life-affirming in any positive sense. Both in terms of their life style, and in terms of their doctrines, mystics view the biotic universe as intrinsically an abode of pain and suffering, from which we must seek redemption or release. The natural world, life, individuality, as we know it and understand it, is ethically unacceptable - the world is illusory and any attachment to it is folly. There are various 'paths' advocated in seeking liberation from the natural world, and various metaphors are employed to depict the end state one is supposed to attain - nirvana, "the indeterminate cessation of being"; samadhi, "sleepless sleep", a consciousness of pure detachment from the world; or in spiritual terms, the union of the 'soul' with Brahman or with the universal soul, or in Christian mysticism, with god. However, because mysticism is associated with non-violence, vegetarianism and celibacy, it has frequently been seen as a counterbalance or critique of the dominant political institutions. For whether in tribal cultures or repressive states, the representatives of political power are invariably identified with assertive dominance, meat-eating (or more specifically with ritual hunting) and aggressive sexuality. Thus we have the division, with which I began this essay, between the Kshatriyas and the Brahmans, the positivists and the mystics, between the advocates of 'man against nature' who take a literal Hobbesian view of the world and those who advocate ahimsa or non-violence, a universal spiritual harmony. The dualism has a long history. In contemporary discussions both of the human personality and of ecology we are therefore invariably given a choice, as I noted before, between the perspectives of Genghis Khan and the Gautama, between power and spiritual love. Frequently no other perspectives are discussed or even broached.

Take for example the writings of Meyer Baba (19). For this holy man there are only two possible ways for a human being to relate to the world. Either he or she will affirm their 'separateness' - and their relationship to others will be one of opposition, hate, craving, fear and jealousy - a more lucid depiction of possessive individualism and Hobbesian positivism it would be difficult to find. No wonder he never spoke to anyone! Or through love, the individual, or rather his or her 'real self' or 'soul', will become united with an "infinite and everlasting 'I am' that includes all existence", a spiritual consciousness in which there is no sense of separateness. Individuality ceases to be problematic, and the natural world, in its materiality, no longer a human concern. Such a mystical vision not only fails to mention that there are alternative ways of relating to others, but, oblivious to the concepts of reciprocity and mutual aid, prevents us from exploring the possibilities of establishing a real human community. In short, it totally ignores the premises and perspectives of the anarchist tradition.

The same false dichotomy is developed by mystics in discussing the relation of the individual specifically to the natural world. The classical exposition of this, is of course, embodied in the concept of ahimsa or non-violence towards humans and animals. This concept has been uncritically embraced by many ecologists, who have seen in this doctrine an alternative mode of relating to the world. Nothing could be further from the ecological perspective, though again it can serve an ideological or polemical function in countering the fundamental premises of both Genghis Khan and positivism. The latter mode of thought, though naturalistic, sees the natural world simply as a utility to be exploited; the relationship between wo/man and the world of nature is one of opposition and hierarchical. The concept of ahimsa dissolves the opposition, but maintains the hierarchy. The relationship between wo/man and nature is not seen in naturalistic terms as one of inter-dependence, but rather the relationship (in earthly terms)

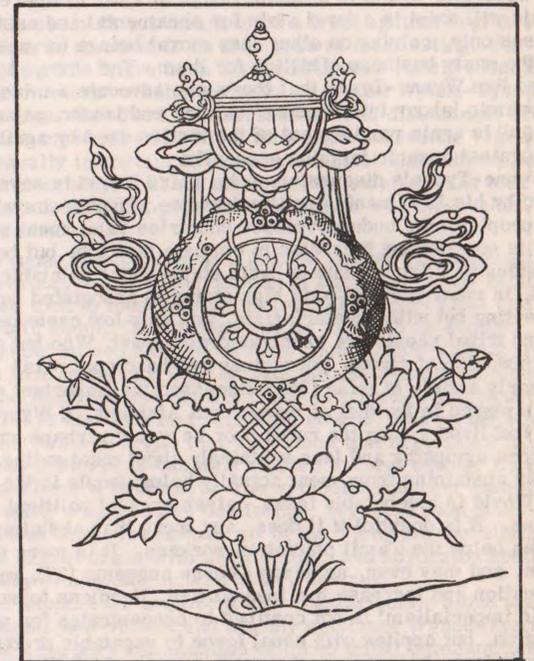
is ideally severed, and there is unity only in spirit. The goal is to sever all attachments to this phenomenal world, or as St John of the Cross put it; we must strive to "enter into complete detachment and emptiness and poverty with respect to everything that is in the world." This is profoundly anti-ecological. When an otherwise illuminating writer like Janet Barkas (20) suggests that the mystic Mahavira expressed "his oneness with all life, including plants" by starving himself to death, she indicates a complete misunderstanding of what such mystics are about. Mahavira's advocacy of fasting, self-mortification, nudism, celibacy and monasticism, and his insistence on non-violence, was not an attempt to express a oneness with life - as we understand the latter term, i.e. the biotic universe. Quite the contrary, Mahavira's extreme pessimism led him to stress, like both Buddhist and Christian mystics, that the natural conditions of mortal life involve nothing but pain and suffering and transcendence - and his mysticism expressed the need to escape from "this samsaric world into something that is beyond the passage of time" as Zaehner puts it (21). When the Jains, (followers of the religion Mahavira founded), express their disapproval of agriculture, since this involves not only the destruction of plant life but also of many living animals in the soil - it is not because they have any positive feelings towards such organisms (though such feelings may be expressed by individual mystics) but rather because they seek to free the 'soul' from phenomenal existence, from the trammels of karma. Such mysticism invokes a moral doctrine that expresses an essentially negative attitude towards the natural world. Moreover, human beings, or at least their true selves or 'souls' are seen to stand outside and above the natural world. Ahimsa invokes hierarchy - but in spiritual or idealist terms. The power of the political ruler is matched by the power of the mystic - and it is no accident that throughout history mystics have received the patronage of political rulers.

In ethical terms, ecology attempts to transcend both positivism and mysticism. In stressing the fundamental inter-relationship of all life, it advocates neither exploitation nor detachment. From positivism it derives a naturalistic outlook towards the natural world, and, as such, is a relatively modern viewpoint. With mysticism it attempts to forge relationships that are non-exploitative. But unlike mysticism it does not take a wholly Hobbesian view of the natural world, and, though accepting that there is a need to avoid unnecessary suffering, ecology rejects the negative pessimistic attitude inherent in mysticism. The ethic it supports is 'reverence for life' but only in the sense that it sees wo/man as a part, and thus dependent upon, a natural biotic system. Ecology is life-affirming, not life-negating, and considers the goal of human life not in terms of detachment or liberation from the world as we know it, but rather in terms of promoting or supporting the life-support systems on which our own and all life depends. What is grievous, ignoble and unprofitable, to use words attributed to the Buddha (22) is not the existential world nor is it our attachments to it (as mystics would hold) but rather modes of thought and action which serve to destroy or impair, in any way, these life-support systems. The crucial environmental and political issue then is not positivism versus the sacramental vision, but rather the promotion, and implementation, of an ecological perspective and ethic that will counter the growing forces of entropy. In the latter task, ecology and anarchism are complementary visions.

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In recent years many have come to see in vegetarianism a practical expression of such a viewpoint. Now what is significant about many of these debates on vegetarianism is that the parameters of the discussion are set within the either/or dichotomy earlier mentioned. On the one side we have capitalist exploitation, agribusiness and meat; on the other ecology, the 'whole earth' perspective and vegetarianism. Indeed, as in Jon Wynne-Tyson's recent polemic (23), vegetarianism and ecology are often equated. Anyone eating meat is deemed to be insensitive to the problems of the Third World, hypocritical, selfish, lacking in human compassion - and seen to be aligned with the positivist tradition against ecology. Although a negative attitude towards the natural world, derived from religious mysticism, is evident in this work - which is typical of its genre - Wynne-Tyson's advocacy of a vegetarian diet contains much that is valid and acceptable. But he gives no hint that

there is an approach that refuses to accept that these two alternatives - capitalism and vegetarianism - are the only options open to us, though he must be aware that writers like John Seymour (24) have continually tried to avoid and counter the implications of both commercial farming and the vegetarian perspective. Vegetarianism is not the only alternative to agribusiness. There is another approach which seems to me and others ecologically more viable than the one implied by vegetarianism. Abstinence from meat is no more entailed as a counter to capitalist exploitation than celibacy is a necessary antithesis to sexism. Such an approach moreover would be as critical as Wynne-Tyson of contemporary agribusiness - with its mechanisation, its energy intensive production and its deplorable specialisation in which animal life and arable production are segregated, not to mention the aggressive, utilitarian ethos that goes with it. Indeed, the sentiments Wynne-Tyson expresses about intensive livestock production and the situation in the Third World have been voiced and were largely advanced by non-vegetarians. Having vast herds of beef and dairy cattle



feeding on barley and on imported protein concentrates (or any human food for that matter) is a wasteful and irrational mode of production. And the priority at present given to meat and dairy produce certainly needs to be challenged and rectified. But thoughtful ecologists have been equally critical of the way most food crops are produced, especially plantation agriculture (25), and it is ironic to read Wynne-Tyson stressing the high yields per hectare that one can obtain from soya beans - a crop almost entirely produced (and continually promoted) by American agribusiness. Wynne-Tyson pleads for the starving millions of the Third World, sees 'meat production' as the principal factor in this situation - and this ignores entirely political issues and the fact that industrialised countries (leaving aside what the animals eat) consume about half the world's annual production of grain. This doesn't trouble Wynne-Tyson; it isn't meat. Indeed he quite happily quotes extracts from the propaganda sheets of agribusiness. Needless to say, capitalist farming is not particularly attached to meat - their aim is profit, and if it is good business to sell hamburgers made of processed soya (at what ecological cost and to what extent detrimental to Third World interests?) then they'll do it. What vegetarians might do out of the kindness of their hearts, agribusiness may well do for profit, namely to eradicate a whole stratum of the biotic pyramid."

The crucial issue that we face is not meat vs. non-meat, i.e. what we produce, but rather how we produce it (in terms of human well-being and the maintenance of life-support systems) and what we do with our food once we have produced it. Indeed the undue stress that is placed on food production is partly misplaced. One of the salient tactics of those advocating

a vegetarian diet is that they continually use narrow economic criteria (i.e. yield per hectare) to discredit livestock production (the same ploy agribusiness uses to discredit organic farming) thus ignoring wider ecological and social concerns. Jon Wynne-Tyson forcefully argues that the conversion of plant foods into meat is economically wasteful. The point is that animals do not need to be fed on human food (what non-vegetarian ecologist ever suggested they should?) and that the conversion of plants into animals, though it may be wasteful in narrow economic terms, is essentially what life (nature) is all about. On this sort of logic the production of cereals is wasteful (in contrast to root vegetables) and forests deemed to be a misuse of valuable resources. But 'nature' is interested in ecological stability as well as production - ad so should we. Though we may disagree and argue about relevant priorities in structuring the kind of landscape that is most conducive to human well-being, to advocate the eradication of domestic livestock is neither necessary nor ecologically sound.

The real issue then is whether our aim is to maintain a sustaining 'whole earth' or not. Vegetarians do not face this issue squarely, and have a quaint image of a world where animals will exist in a feral state for ornamental and aesthetic purposes only, relying on other less moral beings (or nature) to do the nasty business of killing for them. The charge by writers like Wynne-Tyson that those who advocate a mixed bio-dynamic labour intensive agriculture and landscape are "utopian" is again reminiscent of the tactics used by agribusiness against organic farming generally.

Wynne-Tyson's discussion of the Third World is severely limited by his Brahmanic apolitical stance. The reason why many people in the underdeveloped countries value meat so highly is not because they wish to emulate the rich, but because it provides a relish to make a basic staple more palatable. Indeed, in many parts of Asia high status is associated not with meat-eating but with vegetarianism, and only low caste peasants and tribal people are associated with meat. Who but a Harijan would eat civets, porcupines and bandicoot rats? In an early article of mine (26) I discussed the important part rodents played in the diet of many rural Africans. If Wynne-Tyson had lived among the rural poor he would perhaps write with more sympathy and less scathing about meat eating. Whether abstaining from meat actually helps people in the Third World is a debatable issue - given present political realities. It is doubtful if it does, any more than abstaining from tea helps the Tamil plantation workers. It is more of a gesture, and may even, as Susan George suggests (27), worsen the situation and increase the inequalities. Needless to say 'protein imperialism' is not confined to concentrates for meat production, but applies with equal force to vegetable products (the avocados, bananas, cashew and peanuts which Wynne-Tyson rates so highly) that are extracted (through questionable cash-cropping systems) from the Third World for human consumption here. But is this an argument for not eating plant proteins?

How animal life, both wild and domestic, fit into the vegetarian perspective is none too clear. Either they don't - in which case the world becomes an increasingly barren and sterile place to live in. This has been the general trend given widespread deforestation, the drainage of low lying swamps and the continuing decimation of animal life. In many areas it is literally a question of domestic livestock or no animals at all. In such an ecologically depleted world human beings become the only legitimate herbivores. Vegetarians however instinctively seem to draw back from such a stark conclusion; they advocate the retention of wild animals in game parks and the phased elimination of domestic animals.

Alternatively, animal life, even if specifically feral animals do not have a place in the vegetarian scheme of things - for social and aesthetic purposes. They follow the positivistic ethos here in seeing animals either as utilities (which they reject) or as creatures to be kept for aesthetic purposes. But then we must ask; do not the arguments used against using land to produce animals for food apply with equal force to producing animals for other purposes? You can't have it both ways. If animals - wild or domestic - are to continue to share living space with us (as I hope they always will) they must be given their share of the earth's resources. As Winstanley put it; the earth is the common treasury for man and beast. No one would dispute that crops grown for animal feed are wasteful. But unlike us domestic animals eat grass, and there are

other more humane, more rational, and ecologically more viable ways of keeping animals. But such arguments tend to be lost on many vegetarians, for ultimately their vegetarian stance is based not on ecological or political criteria, but on ethical grounds.

"Eating low on the food chain" is certainly a valid premise, but the implications of a production system geared specifically to this is to down-grade, as it were, the environment, to reduce the 'chain'. Not surprisingly environmentalists who push this slogan (e.g. Holliman - 28) invariably shift their position, as do some vegetarians, when faced with the question of wild-life conservation, and advocate the 'ranching' of wild ungulates as an ecologically viable alternative. This of course raises issues which some years ago plagued the Fauna Preservation Society. One issue is whether it is feasible in the absence of natural carnivores (for historically they have been eliminated) to maintain an ecologically viable ecosystem with animals without a certain amount of 'culling' - which some human being has to do.

The second issue was whether it made ecological sense at all to assume that human beings, and specifically their livestock, were not an integral part of the systems that conservationists wish to maintain. It is a fact worth noting for instance that some of the more interesting and diversified ecological communities - the Sussex downs with its flora, and the Kenya plain with its ungulates are examples - are the direct outcome of livestock production. The maintenance of viable ecosystems is an essential concern of us all, and it is misleading to imply, as vegetarians tend to, that meat production alone is destroying "delicate ecological balances." Jacks and Whyte's classic study (29) on soil erosion long ago showed that many types of agriculture - extensive and intensive - have at various times wreaked havoc with the environment. There are indeed many parts of the world, as Eckholm indicated (30), where, on ecological grounds, it is more sane to replace present crop production with permanent grazing.

I find it ironic that people who express so much concern for animal life advocate an approach that legislates all domestic animals out of existence.

Although vegetarianism has been advocated by people of diverse philosophical creeds ranging from Epicurus to Hitler, it comes as no surprise that there is a close association between vegetarianism and religious mysticism. Mahavira, Gautama, Asoka, Tolstoy, Gandhi and Emerson were all vegetarians. Whatever the validity of their other arguments therefore, many vegetarians have come to believe that their position is unchallengeable on ethical or religious grounds. "Everyone draws a line on killing somewhere" writes one vegetarian (31). Taking life is indeed a pre-requisite of human existence - a thought that has led many mystics to renounce the world entirely as an illusion. It is a pity I must say that we are not saprophytic. Perhaps it is fortunate too that carrots don't scream when they are destroyed or vegetarians would face a moral dilemma. One of the interesting aspects of Wynne-Tyson's polemical essay is the emotive language he employs to describe meat-eating. It is the ingestion of dead and "decomposing flesh", predatory behaviour being seen as something inherently evil. Meat-eaters are equated with hyenas, for whom Wynne-Tyson obviously has no sympathy at all. The fact that vegetable products are also often eaten in a dead and decomposing condition - for such is the way of nature - seems not to occur to Wynne-Tyson. Whereas Judaeo-Christian tradition gives human beings dominion over nature - and hence is consonant with postivism - and Genesis virtually defines wo/man not as a vegetarian (as some would like to believe, 32) but as the only legitimate carnivore (Genesis 9:3), Wynne-Tyson keeps the notion of a moral hierarchy but lowers the threshold. Human beings are now defined as the only legitimate vegetarian and domestic animals legislated away. Perhaps, as in some Christian paintings, lions and hyenas will now be expected to eat grass. You can't argue with this. But what I will contest is Wynne-Tyson's bland assumption that all non-vegetarians are hypocrites and selfish, and that only vegetarians have a humane and caring attitude towards animals. Caught up in western dualistic concepts he sees nothing between doing violence to animals (which is equated with killing and eating them) and caring for animals. Our culture propagates this false dichotomy unceasingly, for the counterpart to the Belsen-like arrangements in which most animals are kept is the sham

sentimentalism that surrounds game parks (especially feral herbivores) and pets. The social and ecological costs of the latter

But of course unlike us many cultures do not have such a schizoid approach to animal life. Many Amerindian communities for instance indicate a caring and perceptive attitude towards the world, a sacramental view, which, though spiritual, implied an understanding that wo/man was an integral part of nature. This is one of the reasons why books like *Black Elk Speaks* have been popular among ecologists, and why writers like Roszak and Skolimowski have seen in this vision an alternative to western positivism. But such a sacramental view did not prevent the Sioux Indians hunting, killing and eating the sacred buffalo. Note how they referred to the animal they ate. I myself have witnessed an Indian tribal woman breast feeding and caring very affectionately for a young chevrota deer - only to put the creature in the pot and eat it the next day. Are such people hypocrites? Only someone with an extremely jaundiced view of the natural world would deem it unethical to engage in acts - like eating meat - that are in themselves supportives of life. What is unethical is not the killing and eating of animals (or plants) but causing unnecessary suffering, and, through profit or short-sightedness, committing acts that are detrimental to the life-support systems of this earth.



There can be little doubt that if the diet is balanced and varied there is no significant difference, in terms of nutrition and general health, between a vegetarian and a non-vegetarian diet. There is some evidence that a diet rich in protein or in animal fats is associated with certain disorders, and that animal products have specific problems relating to storage and hygiene - though Wynne-Tyson writes as if it was the meat rather than pathogenic organisms that cause the diseases. Water is even more problematic than meat, though I have yet to meet someone who advocates giving up water! The debates surrounding such issues are complex but it is clearly misleading to approach questions of health in simple monocausal terms, with meat eating seen as the prime factor. Take for instance the association between atherosclerosis and having a diet rich in cholesterol - found notably in animal fats. Significantly this condition is extremely rare among many communities, even among people like the Masai and Somali whose diet consists largely of meat and milk (over 80 per cent in the case of the Masai, 33). Wynne-Tyson notes these ethnographic facts, but ignores their implications - as he ignores the fact that plant products can also be carriers of pathogenic organisms.

The anthropological data used to support vegetarianism is subject to even more distortion.

Barkas presents an amazing evolutionary schema which suggests that human beings were originally cannibals, then progressed to carnivorous habits, and at the present time are becoming vegetarians. Presumably (with Mahavira again in mind) we will eventually give up eating plants and enter the stage when existence is purely ethereal. This schema is ethically satisfying but it has no basis in reality.

It is worth noting of course that Mahavira, whom vegetarians quote with such regularity, followed through the logic of his argument, and "drew a line" even lower than Wynne-Tyson. He believed, like certain medieval religious sects, in complete abstinence and in the logical end of all asceticism - the endura - a passionate disavowal of taking any life. This led to death through starvation. No doubt he would accuse Wynne-Tyson of being a hypocrite.

I can only plead like the man who faced the inquisition; "I am no heretic; for I have a wife and lie with her, and have children, and I eat flesh and lie and swear."

Needless to say the 'sacred cow' ideologists and some vegetarians are not particularly renowned for treating animals (or other human beings) humanely. Asoka's treatment of Indian tribal people, and Shaw's tracts on vegetarianism are sufficient evidence of this. As one of the latter read: "He (Shaw) has no objection to the slaughter of animals as such. He knows that if we do not kill animals they will kill us. Squirrels, foxes, rabbits, tigers, cobras, locusts, white ants, rats, mosquitos, fleas and deer must be continually slain even to extermination..." What could be more anti-ecological than this?

This essay is not meant to be a tract against vegetarianism; even less is it meant to be a defence of meat eating. For periods of my own life I have been a vegetarian and rarely indulge in the other 'vices' which also seem to arouse Wynne-Tyson's indignation. But there is a serious need to disentangle ecology from the mystical and ethical ethos that surrounds vegetarianism. It is equally important to examine medical and anthropological research in a critical but unprejudiced manner, and thus avoid the sort of distorted presentation of data which pervades Wynne-Tyson's book.

Wynne-Tyson, however, argues that we are 'naturally' frugivorous, but with the coming of the Ice Age (the Biblical fall) we took to meat eating. But what happened after that he is uncertain about. On the one hand he wants to stress that throughout human history we have been largely vegetarian... which in a sense is true, for with the exception of communities like the Eskimos and certain pastoral tribes, most of our diet has always come from a vegetable source. But on the other hand he wants to argue that the "blood that bespatters the pages of history" is causally related to meat eating. Clearly he can't have it both ways. The symbolic equation meat = sexuality = aggressive dominance, Wynne-Tyson takes as an empirical link! It reminds me of the Victorian moralists who linked sexual urges with meat eating, and advocated abstinence as a way of avoiding masturbatory desires.

To support the argument that vegetarianism alone leads to a humane, non-violent and healthy existence Wynne-Tyson makes a cursory examination of three tribal communities. Taking the Eskimos as the prototype of an "attempt" to live an almost total animal diet he points out, with little sympathy, that these people suffer much and have relatively short lives.



He puts this down to meat eating, to the total disregard of the harsh environmental conditions under which these people lived. The Eskimo he chides is a "poor advertisement" for his diet. As a vegetarian diet is not possible under these conditions, the vegetarian Eskimo is not around to advertise his superior claims.

In contrast to this Wynne-Tyson asks us to behold the vegetarian Hunzakut, long lived and outstandingly free of disease. In this case not only does Wynne-Tyson again fail to mention environmental factors (which are surely relevant in understanding such issues as longevity and health) but he completely distorts the ethnographic evidence which shows that the tribal Hunzas of Kashmir were not vegetarians. Of course, as with most human communities, meat was a relatively small percentage of their total diet - even with hunter-gatherers like the Bushmen and Hadza it is never more than 10-15 per cent of their total intake - but to describe the Hunzakut as vegetarian is misleading. They kept livestock, ate meat and dairy produce, and had, on ritual occasions, periodic animal sacrifices - something which shocked the pious Hindus of the plains (34).

To call the Tasadays vegetarian is equally misleading - though this group of people, numbering ten adults, is hardly adequate material on which to base generalisations about human nature. Falsely labelled a pristine culture, they are in reality an isolated family group of tribal food gatherers, driven from their neighbours and into remote forests by aggressive agriculturalists. Their lack of weapons, their extreme timidity, and their dependence on the outside world for metal goods, is typical of forest tribes throughout south and south east Asia. But rather than their non-violent image being an integral aspect of their 'primitivism' it is more a function of the harassment and ill treatment they receive from plains people. Indeed in parts of south Asia it is the vegetarian Hindus who are largely responsible for this aggressive exploitation of the tribal people. Though the Tasaday group themselves were recorded as only capturing freshwater crabs and frogs, half the members of the group belonged to

tribal communities which ate meat, and Dafal, described by Wynne-Tyson as the Filipino 'hunter' who introduced them to trapping, was himself a member of a closely related tribal community, the Manubo Blit, and only hunted with a bow and arrow. Robert Dentan's study (36) of the Semai gives an interesting account of the sort of community from which the Tasadays derive, and indicates that meat eating (as distinct from ritualised hunting) is by no means antithetical to the non-violent image.

It seems to me that the notion that wo/man is "naturally" a vegetarian is surrounded by as many myths as the "man the hunter" approach advocated by the patriarchs, agribusiness and some ethologists - neither approach is supported by our present knowledge of human cultures. If human beings are naturally anything they are social opportunists, even scavengers - which is one of the reasons they are so numerous!

The main purpose of this essay has been to rescue ecology from the clutches of the religious mystics. In doing so I may regrettably have given the impression of wishing to "put down" vegetarians. This is not my intention at all. Vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike within the ecology movement have too much in common, and there is too much at stake, for us to become engaged in acrimonious polemic. But the assumption, which pervades Wynne-Tyson's study, that vegetarianism equals ecology and a "whole earth" perspective needs to be challenged - especially when such views become infused with religious mysticism. I have yet to read an adequate response to John Seymour's contention that farming without animals can never be anything but ecologically unsound, and that we must embrace the whole (and not just plants) of creation in our husbandry. And rather than lauding the sacramental visions of mystics like Mahavira and Smohala, ecologists need to recognise that the social perspective that complements ecology is provided by anarchism, not by religion. Roszak, Schumacher, Skolimowski and Wynne-Tyson... they are blazing trails in a false direction. A creative future can be sustained only by a synthesis of ecological principles and anarchist thought.

BRIAN MORRIS

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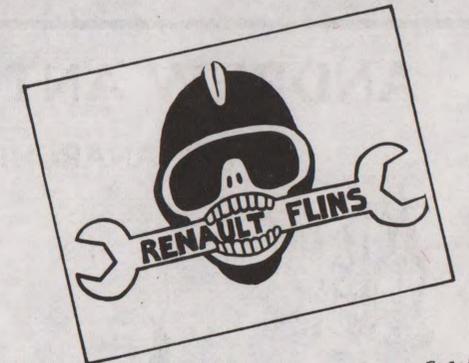
TO LATE CRS THE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT HAS NO TEMPLE!

TROP TARD CRS



LE MOUVEMENT POPULAIRE  
N'A PAS DE TEMPLE

TEXTS AND POSTERS BY ATELIER POPULAIRE POSTERS FROM THE REVOLUTION Paris, May 1968



↓ CIVIC ACTION - FASCIST VERMIN



VERMINE FASCISTE