



Libertarian Student Monthly

October 1969

blackguard 1

1/-

"LIBERTY, the Mother, not the Daughter, of Order"



why

For a year now a number of people have been urging co-operation among the student groups of the 'libertarian left' as a necessity in the changing situation of increased political awareness in schools, colleges and universities.

Most of us do not subscribe to any 'red' (or 'black') 'base' theory per se, but see educational establishments as one of the most successful areas for radical politicization at the moment, although, in the main, we feel that the real struggles must be outside these nurseries of revolution.

As a step towards increasing understanding and more effective co-operation between libertarian socialist opponents of liberalism and leninism we are creating the monthly 'blackguard'. It starts with a handful of us and depends on those interested for its development - we hope to carry news as well as views but that will be up to the people who make the news of local action as well as those who write to us about it. We will publish any contributions subject only to space being available.

We intend to progress from the magazine to an effective liason between groups. We do not intend to preordain the development although of course we have our own desires on the subject.

WVW

For a year now a number of people have been writing co-operation
among the student groups of the 'libertarian left' as a necessity
If the magazine sells well and attracts sufficient contributions
we shall hold a meeting of those interested comrades, to discuss
further development, in November.

Most of us do not subscribe to any 'red' (or 'black') 'base'
Onward to the Daily Blackguard!
theory per se, but see educational establishments as one of the
most successful areas for radical politicization at the moment.
(extremely) Provisional Committee for a
Libertarian Students' Federation.
although, in the main, we feel that the real struggle must be
outside these nurseries of revolution.

As a step towards increasing understanding and more effective
co-operation between libertarian socialist opponents of liberal-
ism and Leninism we are creating the monthly 'Blackguard'. It
starts with a handful of us and depends on those interested
for its development - we hope to carry news as well as views
but that will be up to the people who make the news of local
action as well as those who write to us about it. We will
publish any contributions subject only to space being available.

We intend to progress from the magazine to an effective liaison
between groups. We do not intend to preclude the development
although of course we have our own desires on the subject.

BASELESS

IST ?

In Britain we have a system increasingly alienating its young people by its total lack of humanity and vision. It is a society where inequality is entrenched and maintained, where 2% of the population own 55% of all private wealth (alternative figures are 10% owns 80%); where the income of the top 1% is the same as that of the bottom 30%.

Inequality in income mirrors the basic inequalities in all the opportunities of life. In education - 79% of schools in slum areas are "gravely inadequate", of the working class children who pass the many obstacles to a Grammar School Course (ie Grammar or equivalent grade in Comprehensive) only one in fifteen goes on to University - the comparative figures for children of a middle-class background is one in four (IN FACT THE STATE EDUCATION SYSTEM IS FAVOURING THE MIDDLE CLASSES TO AN ALARMING DEGREE) - the number of working class children getting to University makes slow progress (2-3% per annum), yet the middle class children achieving this has quadrupled since the 1944 Education Act.

The relationship between class origin, education, and employment opportunity is undeniable yet a deeper problem even than this rank injustice is even more ignored. That is, new thinking about the basic personal and social aims of education is sadly lacking. "Educational Advance" consists of 'creaming' the working class children who survive school with any degree of ability (as measured by the needs of the system), and setting exams for the majority which only serve to label them 'not GCE standard'. Reforms in structure may well be hotly fought - Comprehensive schools may be imagined as more than a bilateral system under one roof - University apparatus may function with more democratic gilt - but the attitudes imparted remain the same, the social system is mirrored and perpetuated, even strengthened, by the absorption of the 'brighter' working class child who can 'get on' if he rejects the values of his origins and learns 'better' ones.

To libertarians the basic question of education is the kind of people we want

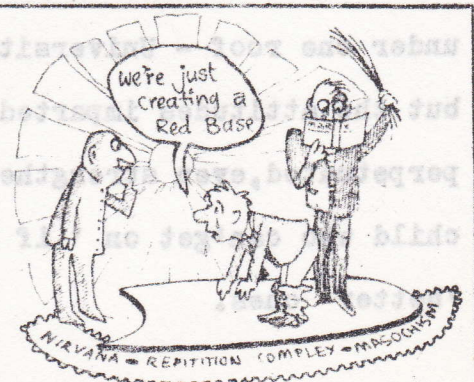
to help people make of themselves, rather than filling the requisite occupational grades. Education in the present order is a commodity - knowledge is one of our fastest growing industries (developed industrial societies have a tendency to overdeveloped 'service' sectors), this produces a whole new set of problems as the system adjusts to industrial techniques through its length and breadth, (the humorous vision of a time and motion study on Vice Chancellors may be allowed to distract us for a moment), but we must remember to fight its essentials and not its peripheral harshnesses alone.

To us the place of education is as an organic part of a libertarian society, the flow of people in and out of centres of education should be two-way and unrestricted - town and gown would then mean more than Vice Chancellors and academics swilling with business-men and local oligarchs, it would mean the educational institute a real part of a real community, controlled and owned by that community and catering for the needs of its people as they become aware of them. The false division of lives into workers and intellectuals, manual and mental labour would be overcome.

As with all our struggles, libertarians emphasise the identity of ends and means. Just as the Action Committee is the local organ of struggle it is also the local unit of the libertarian society. To achieve the unity of the alienated parts of human society we must forge it in the struggle, as part of the struggle, since it is the end of the struggle. To do this students and workers must be involved in each others lives. There can be no revolutionary advance towards a libertarian society if the struggle is isolated, all theories of exclusivism will serve only to bring about a new arrangement of the divisions and not end them.

"Libertad."

meanwhile



White Man's Prayer.

I wish some black Tarzan,

With bulging muscles,

And brains to match,

Would swing down,

From the trees,

To our civilisation,

Solving our problems,

Just as easily,

As our Tarzan,

Solves theirs.

Developed Countries.

Even the poets are rich.

H.T.

To R. On Blackheath

Lay the hill, under a September sun,
A high point for London, you often said,
In September, but should have been Spring for us,
Blue and Yellow budding where we tread.
It should now be a warmer season for you and me,
A vintage summer, selected from the best,
To raise the senses, to raise the sap,
While skin is by a holier light caressed.
Have you forgotten the rivers very ruffles?
Can you tell me of its height and shade?
Remind me of the smile you cast, sidelong, in the bus.
I've lost all track of the movement you and nature made.
I can remember only a little of the whole,
That you were there and that was all.
I can remember you as the light.
I can remember - it was fun.
Will you remind me of the details, a second time there,
Under a summers' sun?

D.Poolman.

The Theses of May '68 (translation of notes taken during the Sorbonne Soviet.)

THESIS 1 - The May crisis is but the result of the growth of the productive forces of the world and of the necessary adaptation of the conditions of production to these forces which are shackled by the former. As the same relations of production, complemented everywhere by relationships of distribution which are essentially identical to them, dominate the whole of society, the various classes and social layers are more or less directly defined by the one or the other of these relations according to the position and the situation they occupy. Thus the student and workers sections of the movement form two parts of one and the same whole.

THESIS 2 - The students are a productive force which reproduces itself as such but is hindered in its development by the conditions of production which date back to the beginnings of the bourgeois epoch. An isolated student movement can only result in the replacement of these conditions by modern capitalist conditions, although this movement can only be conceived and understood as revolutionary practice.

THESIS 3 - The students are neither a new class, or a new type of proletarian, still less are they privileged bearers of the socialist revolution. But thus being placed outside all experience as to the relations of distribution which they have no need to challenge, as these enable them to live in the ideological milieu of near abundance, they can merely question their social position, i.e. the relations of production which make their situation unbearable. The absence of any possible quantitative claims leads them inevitably on to the qualitative level, namely that of revolution. Thus the revolt of their victims against the social hierarchy and the ideology brought about by the relations of production which force them more and more into passive self-alienation, has as the main characteristic the rejection of all hierarchy and the rejection of all exterior ideology in practice, during which they overcome alienation.

The student milieu merely materialises in advance social relations which tend to become general.

THESES 4 - Because of their hierarchical and ideological character all organisational party and trade union forces went bankrupt in the Latin Quarter. This allowed the movement to come into being and develop itself with some kind of Guevarist spontaneity and to oppose its spectacular violence to that of the State which, thrown off balance, revealed its true nature for everybody. As this very movement can only extend itself in a milieu of homogeneous social relations, it can only succeed in transgressing the limits of its sphere of origin to the degree that the social relations of this milieu are already those of a sizeable fraction of the working class, in particular of a layer of young industrial proletarians who at their age are more sensitively aware of their position in the productive process than other layers.

THESES 5 - The movement of the working masses, starting on the basis of social relations identical to those of the student milieu, is evolving into another.

From an ideological viewpoint it is clear that for these masses the question is to modify the relations of distribution from which they expect that which the dominating world ideology is promising them i.e. individual abundance.

They tend to accept this ideology entirely in as far as they consider as their real basis the raising of their standard of living, which is the obligatory accompaniment of the growth of productive forces - also in the existing totalitarian models of 'socialism' which are devoid of any attraction. The movement of these masses is guided by no other aim than their desire to enter into the sphere of abundance.

From an historical viewpoint this movement is progressive even if for the time being it enables the party and trade union bureaucracies, in accordance with their true nature, to base themselves on a massive rear-guard, as sections of the avant-garde, which they have been able to keep in check up to now, are leaving them.

THESES 6 - The main indication of a generalisation of social problems favourable to the development of an awareness of the real problem, is that everywhere where the local relation of forces was favourable to its revolutionary

avant-garde, the latter was able to find, without any guidance from outside, the organisational forms of struggle and very quickly regrouped the majority of the workers which were joined by important sections of the professional classes, whilst radicalising them to the extreme. When the struggle reached a different level, this autonomous organisation was preserved.

THESIS 7 - The growth of the means of production is the precondition of the slow unmasking of the social relations which generate revolution and hasten simultaneously the end of capitalism and of bureaucracy.

The economy passing through the levels of abundance and scarcity is the mediator, embodying in practice the dialectic which unites the relations of distribution to those of production. This is unavoidable as the relations of capitalist production are increasingly approaching those of socialist production.

THESIS 8 - Any crisis can only be resolved through the ability of capitalism to continue to develop those productive forces which it can contain. As progressively the inability of capitalism in this respect becomes an established fact, the passive general strike, which at the moment benefits the bureaucracy more than anybody else, gives way to the active strike. Out of the latter emerges naturally the new social organisation. It thus inevitably and rapidly moves towards the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie. In this process of radicalisation the backward layers join those of the avant-garde. The former puts into the service of the most advanced aims the whole violence of which they are the most outstanding bearers.

Therefore the coming socialist revolution will be a revolution by the whole radicalised class and will, for the first time in history, overturn the whole of society ; if the bourgeoisie will try to use against it its forces of coercion, an extreme but short lived violence will be the response without interfering, by the centralisation of the struggle, with the new organisational principle; case of production in the developed countries, the law of uneven development tends to become obsolete - the intervention of world capitalism would immediately pose the problem of a socialist world revolution which always had as its axis the most advanced countries.

THESIS 9 - By showing their true face at factory level, the trade union bureaucracy reveal its true nature in that they tend to put themselves in the place of the bourgeoisie in order to manage capitalism in its stead, by means of similar but rationalised methods; bureaucratic socialism is merely capitalism veiled by an ideology the basis of which is the preservation of the capitalist relations of production, the improvement of the relations in distribution, the negation of the dialectic uniting the two. The real social basis of the bureaucracy as a class are all layers of society who, for various reasons, share in this point of view.

Its historical chance lies in the fact that the growing weakness of the bourgeoisie compels it to relinquish the whole or part of its powers. From this results the fear of the bureaucracy of being overtaken by the development of the forces of production and the growing consciousness which this entails; it therefore has no other choice but to smash the revolution which would sweep it away as well as the relations of production from which it draws its life and historical hope. The trade union and the party bureaucracies have become the first lieutenants of the bourgeoisie; they tend, before reaching that stage, to become the worst enemies of the revolutionaries and of the international working class, as they are not a historically necessary formation in the advanced countries.

THESIS 10 - The tendency towards hierarchical centralisation decreases with the growth of the forces of production and with it the tendency towards spontaneity. The problem of organisation will only disappear with the accession and realisation of true communism.

As class consciousness had never any other basis of realisation than the material conditions i.e. the whole class, the autonomous organisation of the proletariat is the only revolutionary organisational form which this class can give itself. Its essential characteristic is the absence of any institutional or other division into categories. It is ruled by organic centralism, i.e. by the natural organisation of the practice, evolving from the theory which is its expression and by which is expressed the real meaning of the movement. It is the model of the future society. The Leninist

theory and practice are thus historically outdated; they are now **only the** highest expression of the bureaucratic ideology.

THESIS 11 - The bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy have merely generalised the relations of capitalist production, the task now is to abolish them.

prepared by the progressive and anarchist group of students of the Centre Censier.

SUBVERSION AT SCHOOL

Comment CHILDISH — BUT SINISTER

COPIES of a childish but sinister leaflet have found their way to Barking Abbey School. In essence, it urges disobedience and contempt of authority on the pupils.

It has been suggested that this was intended as a publicity stunt by the perpetrators (and the fact that a copy of the circular, plus the information that it was being distributed at Barking Abbey, was sent anonymously to us would tend to support the theory).

Should we, then, make no record of the incident so that the plan will be thwarted?

No we believe it best that the parents and teachers at other schools, which as has been threatened might be similarly afflicted, should know what is going on.

The leaflet is a mischievous and evil

attempt to influence young and immature minds. It preaches anarchy and nihilism with the obvious intention of stirring up trouble.

Its effect, though, can be easily countered providing teachers and parents are well prepared. And prepared they must be, since this sort of propaganda is the worst.

Remember how the Hitler Youth were brainwashed in Nazi Germany? And note how today's young Russians are thoroughly indoctrinated with the tenets of Soviet Communism. Minds are most easily influenced when they are in young bodies.

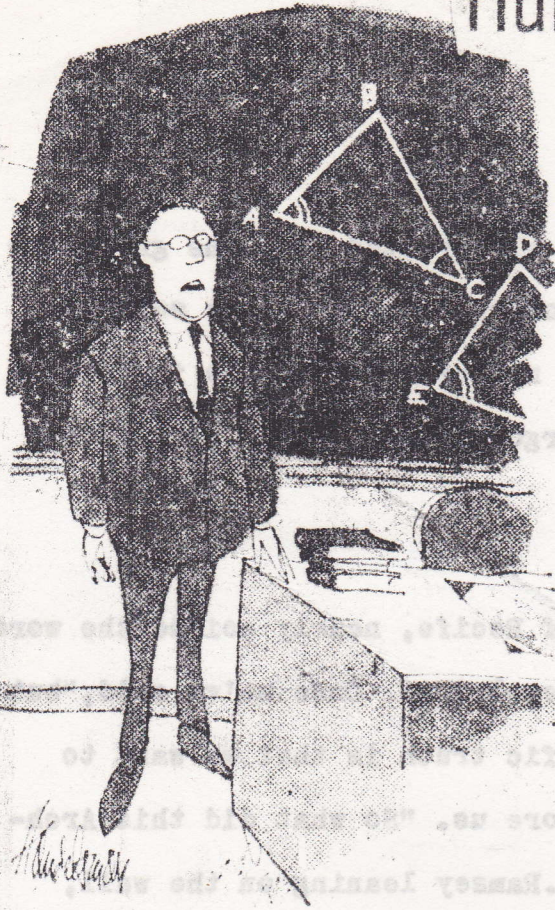
This leaflet stunt may have been intended as a headline-grabber. It is—but not in the sense anticipated. It is malicious and the facts must be known so that no ill befalls innocent victims.

FREE SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN

90, ERMINE ROAD,

S.E.13. 01-690/1572

Humour in revolt



"Some of you students have urged me to teach that bourgeois society is corrupt. Bourgeois society is corrupt. Returning now to the question of congruent triangles. . . ."



Accosted by anarchist types in coffee bar. Listened to heated sermons on the infamous concept of property. Predictably, was caught for 6 coffees, 6 slices of gateau and 6 Crauloises. Does anarchy depend on people like me?



"The post-office returned this - insufficient postage."

HUMAN TORCH

Student Bruce Mayrock, 20, who set fire to himself outside the United Nations headquarters as a protest against the Biafran war, died in a New York hospital.

SUPERHUM

**

It's rather shocking to see how far we've all drifted from the greenness and cruelty of life. I don't mean we all ought to re-create a sort of splendid savagery. Our vision, rather, is neither that of the industrial age nor of the agrarian Arcadia. We've forgotten the rhythm of life and have become somewhat underhum.

Your brother, Helder Camara, Archbishop of Recife, nearly coined the word. We're not fully aware of our potential, he claimed. Once we've said, "but what can I do?", we've given in. The horrific truth is that we want to escape, being fully aware of the task before us. "So what did this Archbishop do?" we scornfully ask. Imagine Dr. Ramsey leaning on the wall, silently, of a London prison where two of his priests were locked inside for anarchism! And getting them out without saying a word! Fancy the Cardinal Primate of Westminster organising the depositing of rotting, stinking fish in the local town hall! Dom Helder did just that, as a protest against the local chemical firm dumping its waste in the sea, thus poisoning the staple food of the seaside native. And he got a sympathy strike from the town's dustmen! And he managed the local unemployed in digging proper waste sites to save the fish in future.

So he's rather more than us. Or is he? Wouldn't it be great to have such nice, clear issues to fight? But you have dear reader. Not two but a hundred lie in prison for revolution, and ten thousand beside. So Amnesty's a liberal, bourgeois, reformist etc? Yeh!! But what the bloody hell are you doing to take the prison gates away? When do you smash the prison of your hate that confines the convenient scapegoat of your radicalism? Or would your society of dreams need goals? If so, why? Read any good Jung lately?

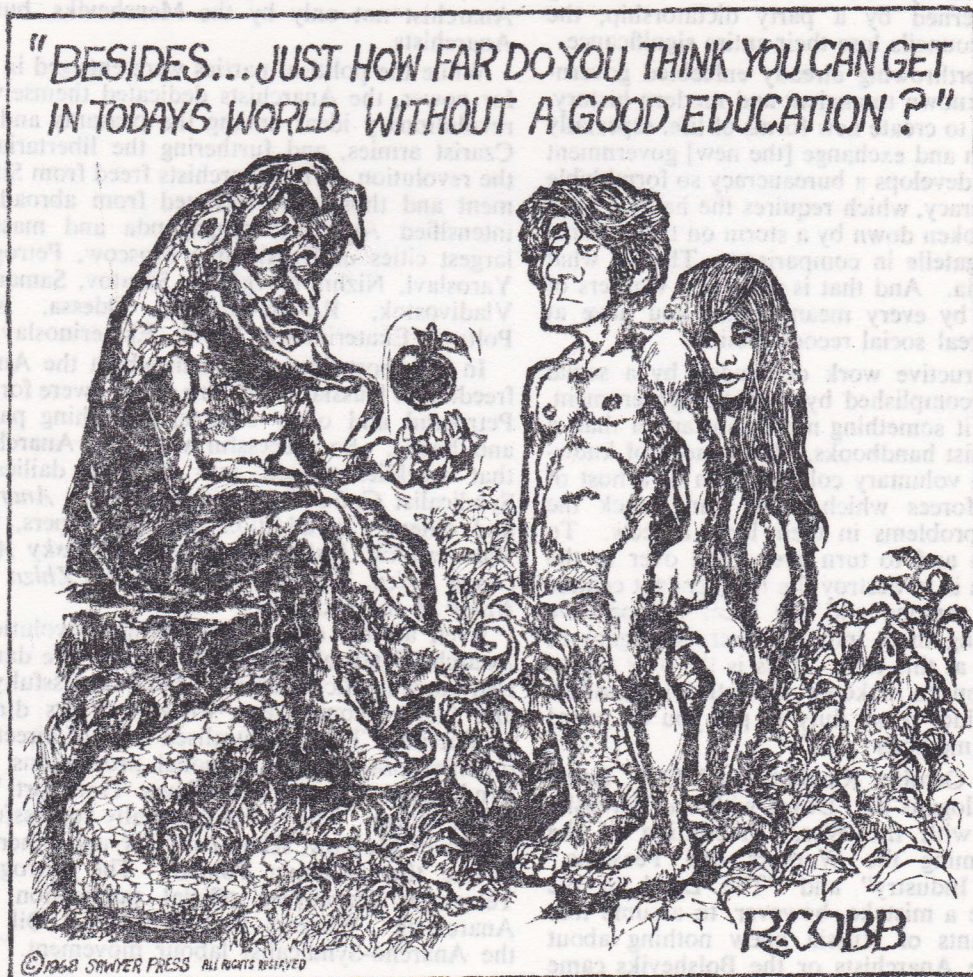
And you've got some stinking cod about! Rotten with chemical poison! Perhaps you've shouted about US Imperialism and so on. When were you at Porton? When we were at Ruislip, where were you? How many GI's have you actually faced?

The danger with radicals is that they need an enemy, like the forces they oppose. Many revolutionaries are, in fact, scared of action. It might mean commitment and the last thing so-called rebellious spirits really want is commitment to humanity. Perhaps they're impotent of love or something.

So get back to the life-art comrades. Think food, drink, sleep and sex.

Summers here soon. Stare the sun in the face! Underhum, you've had a busy day! See you in hell.

Dave Poolman.



Syndicalists in the Russian Revolution

(Direct Action Sept./Oct. '66)

Ed. Note: The article that follows was written by a comrade who, in addition to participating in the Russian Revolution, has also studied the vast literature on the subject. The events sketchily touched upon in his remarks took place in the early period of the revolution—between February and October of 1917, before and shortly after the Bolsheviks seized power. Anarchist participation in the Kronstadt Rebellion and the Makhno movement in the Ukra'ne are relatively better-known than the events dealt with below. Material dealing with this period can be found in the English translation of Maximoff's "The Guillotine at Work," and Voline's two-volume history "The Unknown Revolution."

THE ATTITUDE of the Anarchists toward the deformation of the Russian Revolution by the Communist Party and the constructive libertarian approach to the problems of the Revolution were broadly summarized by Peter Kropotkin in his prophetic "Letter to the Workers of Western Europe," written in 1919 while in Dimitrov:

"... this effort to build a communist republic on the basis of a strongly centralised state communism under the iron law of party dictatorship is bound to end in failure. We are learning to know in Russia how not to introduce communism—the idea of soviets, that is to say, of councils of workers and peasants—controlling the economic and political life of the country is a great idea, since these councils should be composed of all who take a real part in the production of national wealth by their own efforts. But as long as the country is governed by a party dictatorship, the workers' and peasants' councils lose their entire significance.

"The methods of overthrowing already enfeebled governments are already well-known to ancient and modern history. But when it is necessary to create new forms of life, especially new forms of production and exchange [the new] government becomes a nuisance. It develops a bureaucracy so formidable that the French bureaucracy, which requires the help of forty officials to sell a tree broken down by a storm on the national highway, is a mere bagatelle in comparison. That is what we are learning in Russia. And that is what you workers of the west should avoid by every means, since you have at heart the success of a real social reconstruction.

"The immense constructive work demanded by a social evolution cannot be accomplished by a central government, even if it had to guide it something more substantial than a few socialist and anarchist handbooks. It has need of knowledge, of brains and the voluntary collaboration of a host of local and specialised forces which alone can attack the diversity of economic problems in their local aspects. To reject this collaboration and to turn everything over to the genius of party dictators is to destroy the independent centres of our life, the trade unions and the local co-operative organisations by changing them into bureaucratic organs of the party as is the case at this time. This is the way not to accomplish the revolution, to make its realisation impossible. And this is why I consider it my duty to put you on guard against borrowing such methods..."

Before and after the October Revolution of 1917, Lenin echoed such anarchist slogans as, "Down with the Kerensky government," "Down with the War," "Abolition of the standing Army," "Arming the Workers and Peasants," "Workers Control of Industry" and "The Land to the Peasants." It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the workers and peasants of Russia knew nothing about these demands until the Anarchists or the Bolsheviks came forward and persuaded them to accept these slogans. The

fact is, that all these demands were raised by the people and carried into effect before the radical groups were even known to them. Any movement wishing to gain popular support had to accept these slogans. It so happened that these slogans coincided with the Anarchist conceptions. The Anarchists rightfully viewed the spontaneous raising of these slogans as a vindication of their theories.

The slogans of the Revolution did not, however, coincide with the authoritarian Marxist theories of either the Bolsheviks or the Mensheviks. Lenin understood that his party could not come to power if he did not endorse the slogans raised by the Revolution. Lenin deliberately repeated the Anarchist slogans of the Revolution to gain popular support for his party. Subsequent events showed that once in power, Lenin and Company immediately instituted a dictatorship over the organisations of the workers and peasants and forgot all about his promises.

The "Marxists" in criticising Lenin's ideas inadvertently acknowledge the Libertarian tendencies of the Revolution. When Lenin tried to square his endorsement of the Anarchistic slogans of the revolution with Marxism, the various Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists tried to dissociate Marx from Lenin and associated Lenin with Bakunin and Anarchism. Thus, R. Abramovitch, a leading Menshevik, could still write in his book, "Soviet Revolution," (1962):

"[Lenin's] concepts shocked the Russian Marxists of April 1917. They considered [them] as a betrayal of scientific Socialism, a reversion to the old utopian Bakuninist, Maximalist, Anarchist idea" (page 30). Lenin was mistaken for an Anarchist not only by the Mensheviks, but even by some Anarchists.

While the political parties were engaged in a bitter struggle for power, the Anarchists dedicated themselves to spreading revolutionary ideas among the peasants and workers in the Czarist armies, and furthering the libertarian tendencies of the revolution. The Anarchists freed from Siberian imprisonment and those who returned from abroad developed and intensified Anarchist propaganda and mass action in the largest cities of Russia like Moscow, Petrograd, Kronstadt, Yaroslavl, Nizhni-Novgorod, Saratov, Samara, Krasnoyarsk, Vladivostok, Rostov-on-Don, Odessa, Kiev, Kharkov, Poltava, Ekaterinburg, Kursk, Ekaterinoslav and Viatka.

In the short-lived period in which the Anarchists enjoyed freedom in Russia, publishing houses were formed in Moscow, Petrograd and other centres, publishing papers, pamphlets and books. So successful were the Anarchist publications that weeklies turned into popular dailies, such as the Syndicalist *Golos Truda* of Petrograd, *Anarchy* of Moscow and others. In addition to these papers, there were also *Burevesnick*, *Rabochaya Mysle*, *Sibirsky Anarchist*, *Rabochaya Zhizn*, *Trud i Volya*, *Volnaya Zhizn* and the famous *Nabat* of the Ukraine.

Even at this early stage of the Revolution, the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists already foresaw the dangers of centralised bureaucratic unionism. They successfully organised shop and factory committees, where workers directly controlled production. This decentralised form of direct action workers' organisations took on national proportions. The Anarcho-Syndicalists organised the River Transport Workers' Union of the Volga. They were especially successful in the Bakers' Union in Moscow, Kharkov, Kiev and other cities, and also in the then Russian Poland. The Petrograd Postal and Telegraph Employees official publication was edited by Anarchists. Workers from the Nobel Oil Refinery joined the Anarcho-Syndicalist labour movement.

THE ANARCHISTS were very successful with their propaganda for workers' control of production. The publication *Novy Put*, organ of the Conference of Factory Committees, was edited by the Anarchists. The Bolshevik, I. Stepanov, after a study of these factory committees that spread like wildfire, concluded that: "We are witnessing something which partakes somewhat of the Anarchist visionary dreams about autonomous industrial communes."

The Anarchists enthusiastically engaged in the socialisation of housing, forming house committees that grew into city-wide block and street committees. It is interesting to note in this connection that in Kronstadt, the Bolshevik faction left the soviet in protest against the socialisation of dwellings, because it was not controlled by them.

In Petrograd, according to Sukhanov, the Anarchists had their territorial base in the Vyborg district, where the working class masses were densely settled. The Anarchists socialised the secluded villa of the Czarist Minister Durnovo. The beautiful, spacious grounds and gardens were not usurped by the Anarchists for their own use, but rather were used for kindergartens and playgrounds for children and a place of rest for workers. Kerensky threatened to "burn the Anarchists out of the villa with red hot irons." After long hesitation, Kerensky's Minister of Justice, gave the Anarchists 24 hours' notice to leave the Durnovo Villa.

Immediately, 28 factories went on strike. Armed worker detachments and crowds of workers joined the Anarchists in defending the villa. To dislodge the Anarchists, Kerensky mobilised a reliable military unit of Czarist officers. In the

fighting, the Anarchist forces suffered many wounded and some fatalities. The workers held out as long as they could, but were forced to give up the villa in the face of overwhelming military power. The whole affair increased the growing dissatisfaction of the Petrograd workers with the Kerensky government.

These are but a few examples of the widespread Anarchist activities during this period. If the Anarchist message was favourably received, as we have indicated, because the spontaneous action and the demands of the people coincided with the Anarchist ideas, why did Anarchism fail to shape the Russian Revolution? On this question there has been a good deal of speculation. The best explanation we think has been given by the Russian Anarchist, Voline. There are spontaneous libertarian tendencies in every revolution, but spontaneity is not enough. The fact that people unconsciously, accidentally, act in a libertarian manner does not mean that they understand the ideas and principles of Anarchism. They may even be reactionaries who do not have even the faintest notion of the implications of their acts. This explains why promising popular movements are taken over by clever politicians. Voline sums up the situation in these admirable paragraphs of his book *1917: The Russian Revolution Betrayed* (pp.15-16):

"... despite the unfavourable circumstances [which Voline discusses in a separate chapter] the Anarchist idea could have blazed a trail, or even won, if the mass of Russian workers had had at their disposal at the very beginning of the revolution organisations that were old, experienced, proven, ready to act on their own and to put their ideas into practice. But the reality was wholly otherwise. The organisations arose only in the course of the Revolution.

"To be sure they immediately made a prodigious start numerically. Rapidly the whole country was covered with a vast network of unions, factory committees, Soviets, etc. But these organisations came into being with neither preparation nor preliminary activity, without experience, without a clear ideology, without independent initiative. They had no historical tradition, no competence, no notion of their role, their task, their true mission. The libertarian idea was unknown to them. Under these conditions they were condemned to be taken in tow from the beginning by the political parties. And later the Bolsheviks saw to it that the weak Anarchist forces would be unable to enlighten them to the necessary degree.

"Under these conditions, in order that the Anarchist idea might blaze a trail and win, it would have been necessary either that Bolshevism didn't exist, or that the Revolution had left sufficient time to the libertarians and the working masses to permit the workers' organisations to receive that idea and become capable of achieving it before being swallowed up and subjugated by the Bolshevik State. This latter possibility did not occur, the Bolsheviks having swallowed up the workers' organisations and blocked the way for the Anarchists before the former could familiarise themselves with Anarchist concepts, oppose this seizure, and orient the Revolution in a libertarian direction."

Voline's remarks should not be taken to mean that the Anarchists and other revolutionists, faced with Bolshevik "victory", surrendered without a fight. The Makhno movement, the Kronstadt uprising, the strikes and revolts that took place all over Russia, were heroic attempts to save the Revolution from its usurpers. These relatively "unknown" fighters have written a glorious page in the history of man's struggle for freedom.

S.N.J.



"All right, you own the means of production and distribution.

Now what?"

Further Degeneration Expected or How Transitional was my Program

Ever since the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign proved a minor success in recruiting for its directors - the International Socialites and the International Marxist Group (a joke in itself) - the various trotskyite factions have been looking for new 'liberation struggles' which will give the politically immature and emotionally starved a vicarious participation in 'revolution'. It would be unfair not to admit that the variegated Maoist sects have taken up the practise, with perhaps greater validity.

Recently the spotlight has been on the struggle of the poor downtrodden arabs as against 'Zionist Imperialism' (ignoring the existence of that fatherland of the proletariat - Saudi Arabia). However the language of these campaigns is pure, blatant, rationalism. Hardly surprising then that they share the honour of "Full support for the Arab Cause" with that other bunch of starry-eyed idealists, the National Front - with whom they demonstrated when Golda Meier, Israeli P.M. came to London.

Ignoring the complexity of the Palestine issue, (ie. does the justice of the refugee cause do anything for Kasser's regime, if Egypt is progressive or socialist what was Hitler Germany - not in terms of racial policy but of social organisation alone?), and declining to take a principled position on the conflict, their opposition to This Month's Agent of Imperialism automatically sanctifies whoever it is in conflict with. On this line Churchill was a progressive when opposed to Hitler and the trots were all wrong when they opposed him, and the wartime coalition, for a mere principled position. We remember how they made the late Ho their hero and slandered everyone who tried to spell out the kind of regime he ran, which was founded on the bones of their compatriots as well as ours. Ben Bella was for a period the new Trotsky, whilst his earnest admirers ignored the suppression of the syndicalist movement and all independent socialist groups, and even praised his deal with the 'colons'. Castro Cuba for a while has been the New Jerusalem to these

looking for a new home when the stench of fifty years 'degeneration' of the Russian 'Workers' State' drove them to new positions, but no analysis of Cuba mentions the suppression of left-wings groups and unions, and the libertarian militants who were back in the mountains (see the controversy in current issues of ANARCHY).

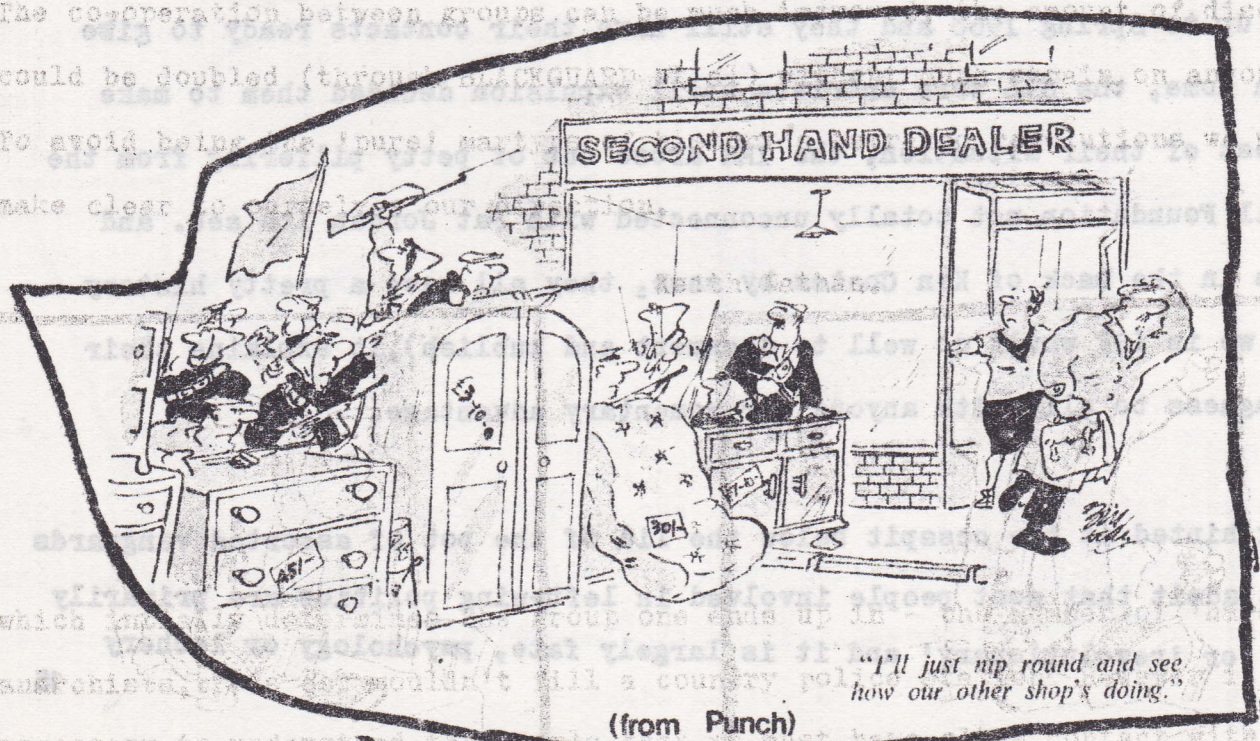
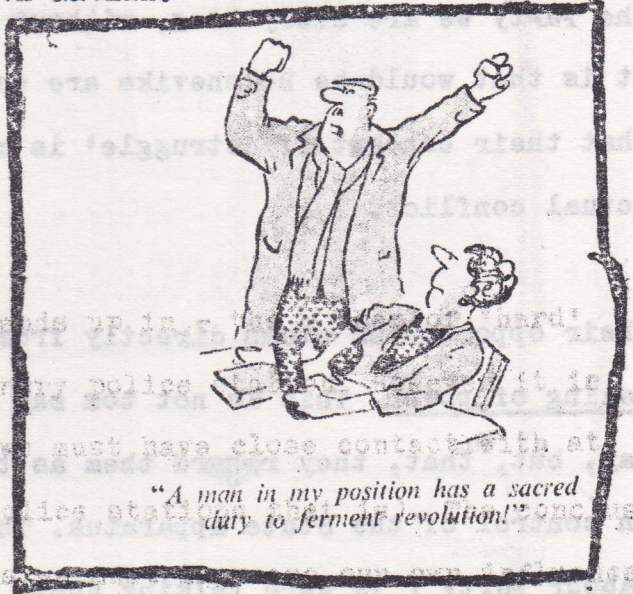
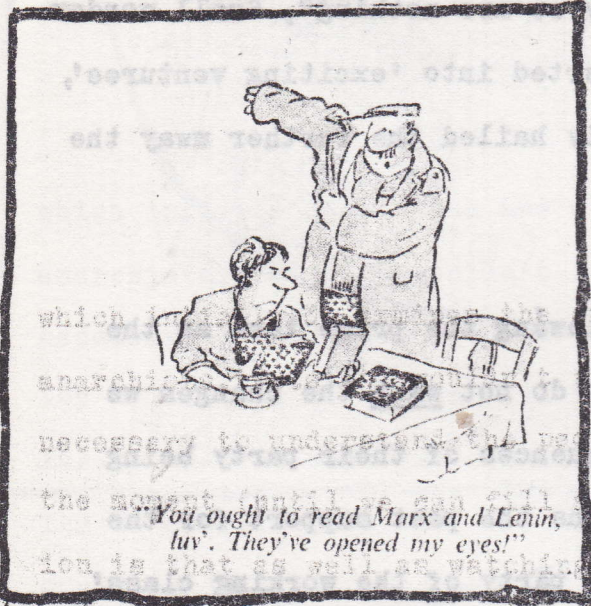
The Leninist emphasis upon hierarchy and centralisation leads not only to cumbersome, totalitarian organisation but also to loss of identity by the individuals concerned - a tendency encouraged by the determinism and mechanistic quasi-dialectics of Bolshevik 'philosophy' - eg. "Trotsky: with the Party we are everything, without the Party we are nothing". Small wonder it is that would-be Bolsheviks are easily diverted into 'exciting ventures', that their concept of 'struggle' is more loudly hailed the further away the actual conflict.

Their opportunism stems directly from their viewing the prime task as the taking of power. This is not to say that they do not want the changes we may, but, that, they regard them as the consequences of their party being in control of the State apparatus. This explains the past support for the Labour Party (IS were talking about 'the mass party of the working class' right up to Spring 1968 and they still have their contacts ready to give them a home, the SLL were entrists until expulsion decided them to make the best of their situation, the IMG arose out of petty pilfering from the Russell Foundation not totally unconnected with Pat Jordan its sec. and a stab in the back of Ken Coates by same, they all have a pretty history which we in LSF would do well to document and publish), it explains their willingness to ally with anyone for momentary advantage.

Having hinted at the cesspit below the lid of the pot of assorted vanguards I must admit that most people involved in left-wing politics are primarily 'left' or 'revolutionary' and it is largely fate, psychology or lechery

which intially determines the group one ends up in - the number of 'hard' anarchists, trots etc wouldn't fill a country police station. However it is necessary to understand the people that we must have close contact with at the moment (until we can fill seperate police stations that is). The conclusion is that as well as watching our backs we must increase our own influence. The co-operation between groups can be much improved, the amount of discussion could be doubled (through BLACKGUARD et al) without much strain on anyone. To avoid being the 'pure' martyrs of history's betrayed revolutions we must make clear to ourselves our direction.

Keith Nathan.



(from Punch)

HOW DO WE KNOW WE'RE ANARCHISTS 'TIL WE TRY?

Many of the perennial arguments among anarchists are concerned with the pattern of a future anarchical society, and arrangements that would or would not work in practice in this far-off society. We all try to work out the theoretical position we think best and study the theories of other thinkers in the process.

We rarely, however make a thorough practical exploration of our ideas.

Anarchists, almost by definition, each have their own ideas about how an anarchical society would work, and it's great that we should be prepared to discuss and consider everyone else's ideas. But how about some more practical experiments to see how things work out?

There are of course many very good examples of practical action being taken - Squatters, Summer Camp etc. - but some peoples' experience of practical anarchism can't extend much further than sharing out cigarettes in a group

meeting. There are lots of other projects we could try - adventure playgrounds for instance. These are an opportunity to give some kids a more interesting and exciting time than they might otherwise have, and to show them that said time can occur without the authoritarian structure they have been led to expect from school. It is also an opportunity to test different theories of organisation,

and to test our own belief in anarchism in practice.

We rarely, however make a thorough practical exploration of our ideas.

Anarchists, almost by definition, each have their own ideas about how an anarchical

Although theoretical discussion is of course necessary we must not become too society would work, and it's great that we should be prepared to discuss and exclusively devoted to it. Let's try out a few more ideas in practice and see consider everyone else's ideas. But how about some more practical experiments if we can prove they're worthwhile.

to see how things work out?

There are of course many very good examples of practical action being taken -

rege's page.

(with apologies for bad layout by a tired keith)

feel anything yet?

Advice from a stranger in darkness

'will you talk a little wilder?'

(dedicated to the hermit and my other teachers)

Said the pseudo to the drag

'it's the marijuana scene babe'

Don't be afraid

We must get it in the bag

Connect our souls infinity

With shoelaces to you

Drive nails into reality

Until we reach the root

The silent one is smiling

Although her eyes are shut

The pseudo's settling nicely

In his usual verbal rut

The smoke is rising gaily

The stranger starts to fret

Perceptively he whispers

'Feel anything yet?'

There are friends out your hand

If I will not take it, others will

Seek wholeness

and remember

to join those who love to lose their minds

is as bad

as to give way to those who have none

I know you fear rejection

I know

I have shared your fear

but

reach out your hand

or none can take it

Give me words I

Don't lose yourself in trivialities

fearing laughter

hide yourself in risibles

give me your words!

If I will not take them

others will

Be vulnerable!

When the love between us died

you lit candles nearby

and swore it was only sleeping

But I

I grew weary of carrying the corpse

And when someone took my hand and led me from the grave

I left without a tear.

Now they tell me you are dead

and a new soul occupies the body that once taught me to love

He who now brings me life

brought me the news

I turn to my friends and see

no accusation in their eyes

they tell me it was suicide. Still I weep.

PREJUDICE

With even the Labour Party grinding along to the idea of equal pay, the position of women seems to have improved somewhat. There is still however a great deal of conscious and unconscious prejudice against them even among people who one would think would know better. A lot of remarks pass as jokes but in fact contain an unwelcome attitude towards women. Sure they're alright as friends and quite human really, but they're not people like men are.

There is an easy way to tell if this attitude is present - substitute the name of a group that people really are concerned with prejudice towards. To take a really bad example: "I have tried having white assistants at first..... but it didn't work. They tend to be too independent: Whites like to have individuality. Negroes can become an extension of the boss. They don't mind working overtime, they are more loyal and they can take criticism better." This statement was in fact made comparing men and women workers.

How many remarks are made even in Anarchist meetings on the level of 'let the women make the coffee - it's their job'? Would they say that sort of thing about negroes? Sure most of these remarks are jokes - but would people be prepared to make similar jokes in front of negroes? They might if they knew the negroes well and were sure they would take it as a joke, and if they knew that nobody who was really prejudiced was present. But people make patronising and derogatory remarks about women the whole time without, it appears, ever wondering if they are being offensive. There are quite a few men who ought to examine their own feelings and assumptions and decide whether they are prejudiced against women.

"ALP"

BOOK REVIEW

WILHELM REICH: A PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY by Ilse Ollendorff Reich, with an introduction by Paul Goodman.
xxii, 167 pages, with 8 pages of black-and-white plates, Elek Books Ltd. 42s

"Mock on, Mock on Voltaire, Rousseau;
Mock on, Mock on: 'tis all in vain!
You throw the sand against the wind,
And the wind blows it back again".

Voltaire and Rousseau have survived, of course, as collected Wit and Intellect; and poor Blake is still regarded as an unbalanced genius (by some) if not a flamboyant lunatic (by many more). We do not love Blake any the less for that. To us his vital message is for the heart and not the head. So too, perhaps, with Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957).

This new biography, by his third wife, will be too honest for anyone who wants to make a cult-figure of Reich. On the other hand, it will be specially welcomed by those who (like this present reviewer) find it difficult to evaluate his work on Sexual Economics, the Orgone, etc., or reply to the charge made by many scientific authorities that Reich was a psychoanalytic crank, one of many.

He was certainly an eccentric. In the very beginning, amongst the Freudians of Vienna and Berlin, his work was controversially avant-garde, and what appeared to be a twin-obsession with communism and sex gravely embarrassed his chances of winning over the psychoanalytic (or any other) Establishment, to his very original ideas. Reich never escaped from the grossly unfair accusation that he was obsessed with sex. Surprisingly, his attitude on sex was often rather selfish and inconsistent. He declared, for example, that it was a hygienic and not a moral matter: but refused to take homosexuals for treatment, and turned one away with the remark "Ich will mit solchen Schweinereien nichts zu tun haben" (I don't want to deal with such filth).

With commendable honesty the book outlines Reich's jealous, obsessive genius, and describes its degeneration into the paranoia of his last years. His dread of the Red Fascists scheming to destroy his life's work is an ironic inverted reflection of that early Marxist enthusiasm at the height of which he had given his first wife Dr. Annie Reich a choice between agreeing to a separation or placing their children in a communist children's home. It is not surprising, however, that the years of disappointment and persecution should have had some effect on the mind of this brilliant and emotional man.

Amongst the closest friends of Reich was A.S. Neill; though Neill never allowed himself to be considered a disciple, in his practical work many of Reich's ideas and ideals show through. Some of the finest things in this book are extracts from the correspondence between the two men. For example, Neill to Reich, in what was (quite literally) a moment of trial:

"Reich I love you. I cannot bear to think of your being punished by an insane prison sentence. You couldn't do it and you know it. I wish to God that you'd simply let some good lawyer take up your case from the legal angle.....The majority in USA, Britain, Russia, in the whole world are anti-life, so that you do not need to look for specific enemies like the FDA; they are only the shot that was fired at Sarajevo, not the basic cause of the attack on you. In any court your defence should be in big letters I AM FOR LIFE AND LOVE....."

Reich the scientist is harder to defend than Reich the man. Paul Goodman says, in his Introduction to the biography, that

"whether or not the theory of the orgone is exact physics, it was certainly a courageous new attempt to fulfill the human conviction that there must be a connection between natural energy and psychiatric depths....if it is only analogy and projection, it is not mere raving but is in the great line of the archaic chemists and Paracelsus, groping toward what must be fact in the long run. This kind of gigantic error is abounding in truth". With which I shall not argue.

For the book itself: Ilse Reich's style is refreshingly plain and straightforward (as Reichiana goes), but occasionally naive or silly. She shares very few of her late husband's delusions, and none of those which now surround his memory. She reports Reich as "definitely" believing in government, and announcing that

"We don't want anarchy, we want order. We take the rational core from anarchism and communism. I have great admiration for Kropotkin. But they forget that times change, that yesterday's truth is today's lie". Readers will find Reich's theory of "work-democracy" worth discussing.

The format of the book is very attractive. Albeit expensive at forty-two bob, it is a biography all admirers of Reich will want to possess.

F. C. J.

ADDENDUMS.

we have a few reports of local groups and their activities, but not very many. however we would be glad to hear from anyone about what's happening locally. we'll save space in the next issue, so if you see a blank page it'll be you.

we've heard from:

Stop the Seventies Tour Committee - 21a Gwendolen Avenue,
London S.W.15.

news of demos/stickers/broadsheet/etc from Hugh Geach at the above address.

National Council For Civil Liberties 4 Camden High St.,
London N.W.1.
01-387-2544/5

for copies of Your Rights on Arrest plus much useful lit. and advice.

A stalinist outfit, the International Union Of Students, keep sending us stuff about third world liberation movements from people's Prague - we don't know whether to laugh or cry.

the Student Humanist Federation 13 Prince Of Wales Terrace,
London W.8. 01-937-2351

who have been extremely friendly to our early soundings, they publish many good pamphlets.

and many others whose letters have been carefully filed to prevent access by everyone, including ourselves.

Articles/Comments/Enquiries

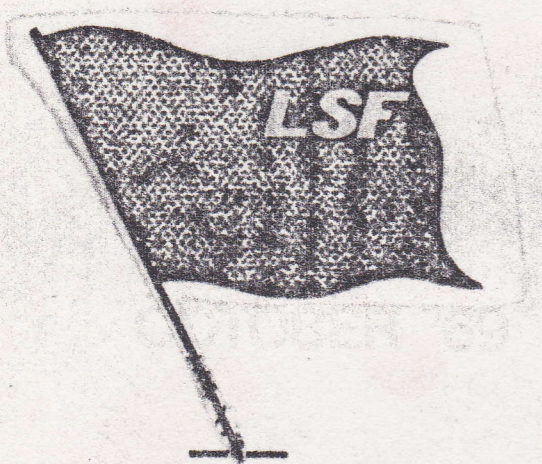
Any correspondence for LSF, Blackguard, or about the Nov. meeting. Please send c/o Keith Nathan 138, Pennymead, Harlow, Essex.

We'll be publishing monthly accounts in each issue but will hold this month because the main expenditure for No. 1. will be postage. Detailed report in no. 2. Don't let that put you off sending a donation or ordering a bundle - 10/- per dozen, £1 for 30. post paid.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

are not only a mark of quality but one way to ensure survival. 6/- ensures you the next six issues post free.

OCTOBER '69



**Libertarian Students'
Federation**

138, Pennymead, Harlow, Essex.

ONE SHILLING