



THE ECONOMIST SEPTEMBER 3, 1966

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on. And that would mean that Russia and America had taken joint responsibility for keeping the peace in south-east Asia as they keep it in Europe. Then coexistence would really mean something.

It is still no more than a hope, but it is the way events are pointing. Mao Tse-tung is taking a double gamble—that he can turn China in double-quick-time into a model new society which will appeal to poor people everywhere, and that he can

make Vietnam a model of the way to follow his example. If he pulls it off, the world is at China's feet. But the odds are enormously against him because the mounting evidence of the last two hundred years is that revolutions—"permanent" or otherwise—do not neatly burst open the door to a better life. They add to the debts to be struggled through. Mao fails, he will have ended his life by leading China back into the wilderness.

## The Rejectors

Is the new left contracting out of modern society?

AS the left attract our sons—the left, that great corpse lying on its back riddled with worms? Six years ago Sartre's question would have got a positive enough answer from members of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Britain, but elsewhere there were precious few signs of life. Now the picture is very different. The phrase "new left" is applied to all sorts of protesters in the United States, to Provos in Amsterdam, to dissatisfied intellectuals in eastern Europe, and will be applied to whatever crop of rebels pushes itself in front of the cameras and into the courts elsewhere.

There is no single theme for these new left movements. In Britain "ban the bomb," whether international or parochial, gave an impetus which later cries have been unable to recapture. The British teach-ins on Vietnam were still-born (or were strangled by the then Foreign Secretary at birth), but in America they built up into one of the main currents of protest. The other American issues were domestic: the status of Negroes and criticism of the federal campaign against poverty. In Holland, protest has had a distinctly Zen look about it with the free supply of white bicycles and contraceptives bizarrely included in the Provo manifesto. East of the Elbe endemic protest against the rigidities of the *apparatchiks* has concentrated on demands which recall those of nineteenth century liberals living in the Kingdom of Naples: the right to publish, the right to travel, the right to criticise.

But these apparently heterogeneous demands for change have enough in common to give the term "new left" some validity. To begin with, they are all put forward by intellectuals. The paradox of the new left is that it is not a working-class movement. In Britain and America, trade unionists have largely ignored it, and, when it has been thrust under their noses, have been openly hostile. Only in eastern Europe have the working classes followed the university teachers and students. In the west the university has been at the centre of the movement, but it has been the only centre, sometimes swerving up into its orbit the world of the arts as well as the rootless Bohemia of the very young. In a country such as west Germany protest is very much of an intellectual adumbration. In Scandinavia it has often been no more than mere teenage violence.

If the working classes are seldom present within the new left, it is not for want of attempts to attract them. The idea of "participatory democracy," which lies behind much American protest, is found again in the British *New Left Review* and in the writings of would-be reformers in eastern Europe. A large part of the new left consists of an incoherent but honourable attempt to ensure that the average citizen has more control over his own fate. "Elite," "dominative attitudes," "bureaucracy," "professional politicians"—these are all bad words in its vocabulary. Even attempts to manage committee meetings are despised: at all levels the "processes of democratic decision" should be allowed to take their course. In America criticism of the poverty programme has resulted in the

apparent belief that it would go better if its application were left to bands of devoted amateurs rather than to bureaucrats.

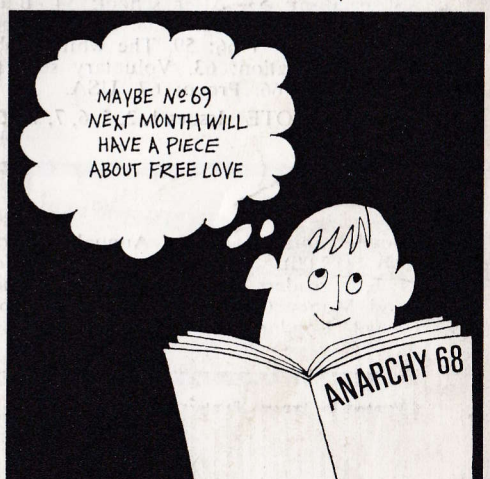
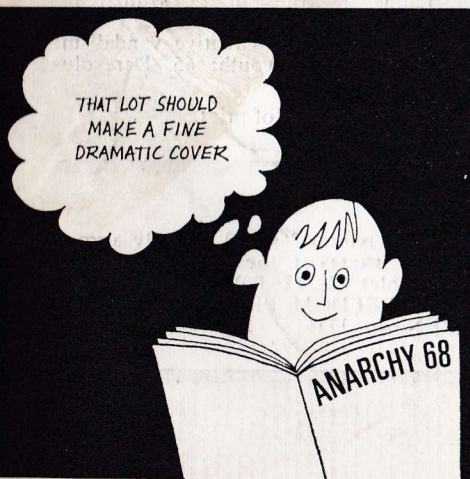
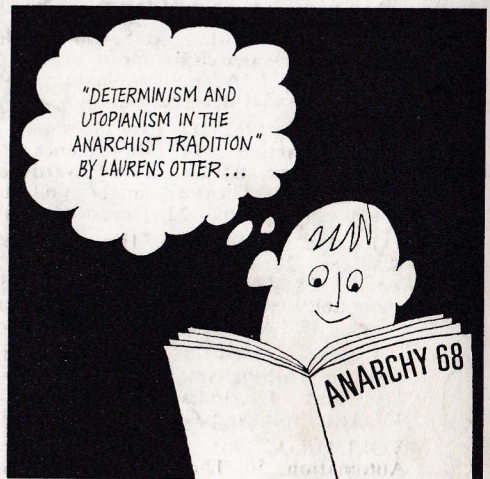
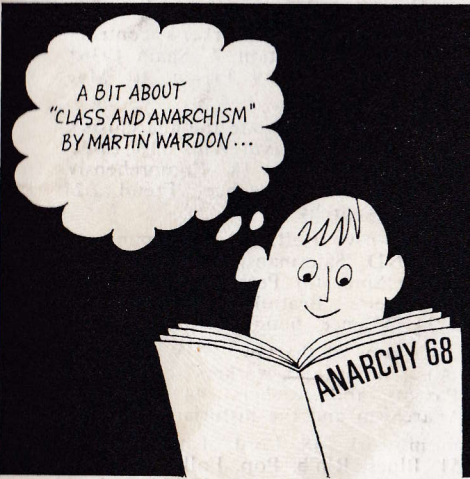
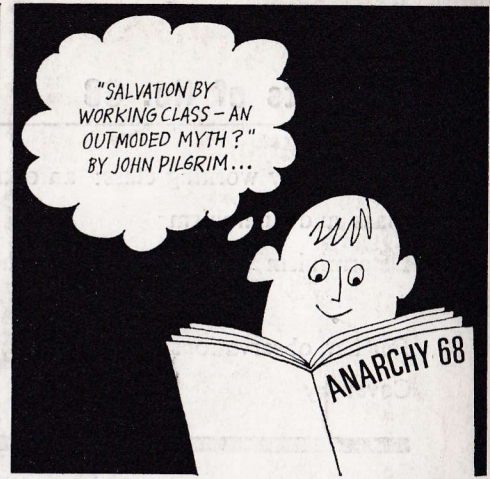
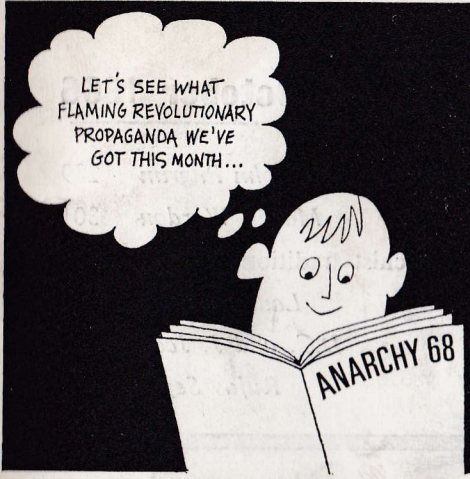
This emergence of a new *narodnik* movement, a fresh attempt by the intellectuals to "go to the people," differentiates the new left from its predecessors in world socialism—except for the guild socialists and the anarchists. Its appearance marks the end of the belief in the state as an instrument for producing a utopian society. State socialism, where it has been applied, has proved to be a means not of unifying and integrating society, but of developing yet another cleavage within it: the split between Djalma's "new class" of bureaucrats and the mass of the population. Aristocracy can be replaced by technocracy. Oligarchy remains, and this has been seen to be so in western and eastern countries alike.

But the trend towards rigid bureaucratic organisation is one that is in the nature of advanced industrial society. In this sense the modern state simply represents the structure of the society it governs. The opposition to the state as an institution implies the abandonment of the attempt to change things by political means. The protest movements (against Vietnam or the bomb or the police) exist outside the normal political processes. If they try to enter existing politics, the protests prove ineffectual. The anti-political stand of the new left means that it must rely for its support on essentially transitory surges of emotion on some particular issue.

It is easier to march than to sit in smoke-filled rooms with the professionals. It also seems nobler and more aesthetically satisfying. Much of the new left's judgment of contemporary society is based on aesthetic rather than political or even moral criteria. In Britain there is plenty of talk about the "quality of life," with the consequent denigration of advertising and the mass media. In eastern Europe it is culture itself that is the chosen battlefield between protest and the state. In America protest shades off into the total rejection of society and the beatnik assertion of some form of transcendent aesthetic value.

In essence, the new left bears little resemblance to a political movement; it is a way of life, designed to change men's hearts and setting itself up in opposition to the prosperity and organised conformity of the modern industrial society. Its purpose is a quasi-religious denunciation of the organisation man's world, the pampered consumer's flesh and the political devil of state power. This purpose, with a quasi-religious character, is fairly explicit in groups like the Provos. It is one that is liable to be attractive to those increasing groups of people who find society, and their own expectations, insufficient as an outlet either for idealism or for violent action. There is evidence of a growing demand for extreme non-conformity in the world of the modern city. The form the new left has taken is one symptom of this.

The trouble is that, as the history of the nuclear disarmers shows, politics have a way of taking their revenge on those who disdain to work inside the system. The new left is a



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# Salvation by the working class : Is it an outmoded myth ?

**JOHN PILGRIM**

*The main hypothesis and much of the wording of the following essay is taken from the paper "Working Class Authoritarianism" in S. M. Lipset's book Political Man published in 1960 by Heinemann and by Mercury in 1963. For the purposes of this essay I have grossly simplified Professor Lipset's arguments and applied his hypothesis to purposes for which it was not intended. Like my previous paper on Stateless Societies the present essay had its origins in a lecture delivered at one of the London Anarchist Group's Sunday meetings. I would like to thank them for giving me a platform to express what were, to many of those present, heretical and highly uncongenial, opinions.*

\* \* \*

ANARCHY 11, *The World of Paul Goodman*, began with an essay by John Ellerby in which he stated that he saw the function of ANARCHY as being to restate anarchist ideas "... in the light of the experience of a changed society and of the findings of psychological and sociological knowledge about the needs and behaviour of man". Although ANARCHY has largely succeeded in this aim it seems to me to have failed in a comparatively minor, but important, sector i.e. the exposure of anarchist myths and concepts, inherited from the 19th century, to the light of such modern knowledge. In ANARCHY 58 I discussed the idea that the

State was responsible for the innovation and maintenance of the primary divisions in industrial civilisation and attempted to show that such divisions were also characteristic of some stateless societies. A more prominent myth is the continuing belief in the messianic role of the working classes, in salvation by proletariat. This seems to be due partly to the anarchist tendency to over simplify highly complex phenomena and partly to the tremendous, and often unrecognised, influence of Marx. Much of what passes for syndicalist and anarcho-communist thought today is merely a rewording of Marx's ideas on the class struggle; a valuable concept with which to analyse 19th-century Europe but of doubtful validity when applied to what Dahrendorf has termed "post capitalist" societies. Indeed Dahrendorf's thesis, that social conflict arises out of the authority structure of associations, rather than hingeing on the ownership of the means of production, is not only unduly neglected by social theorists concerned with re-interpreting Marxian theory (which Dahrendorf subsumes) but also by anarchists, for whose analysis of power and authority he provides powerful, if unwitting, arguments.

In those useful but rather over-emotional pamphlets issued by the revitalised *Freedom Press Group* during and after the war we find phrases like: ". . . when the workers, as they surely will, realise their slavery and throw off their chains . . .;" and in George Woodcock's *Anarchy or Chaos* we find along with a recognition of the lack of revolutionary consciousness of the British Industrial proletariat a straightforward Marxist, even Leninist analysis:

"English capitalism, if it survives, will have a poor time of it after the war. Then the English workers will begin to experience some of the misery of their Indian comrades on whose misery their comparative, if slight, well-being has been based. As the contradictions of capitalism drive it to act for its own eventual destruction, it will turn the screw ever more severely on the proletariat. Then, if not before, we may expect to see a revolutionary consciousness among the English proletariat."<sup>1</sup>

In fact the end of the war saw, as now, a "Socialist" government failing to make capitalism work and the nearest thing to revolutionary consciousness came from the predominantly middle-class Committee of 100. Although not stated so romantically we find the same basic belief in the messianic role of the workers running through the recent writings of Jack Stevenson, Pete Turner and Bill Christopher.<sup>2</sup>

In the 19th century the working-class organisations were a major force in the extension of political democracy, and in waging political and economic battles. The fight was not just based upon the redistribution of income and equality of opportunity but was also involved with civil liberties, minority rights and international peace, while the conservative middle and upper classes of Europe tended to favour narrow suffrage, extremist political forms and jingoistic foreign policies. It was here that a major mistake was made by marxists, socialists, and anarchists. *Because the fight for liberty took place within the context of the struggle*

*for economic betterment it was assumed that the working class were interested in freedom as an end in itself.* It was the fact that a degree of freedom was necessary for economic betterment, because some freedom of organisation and speech, universal suffrage and so on, were necessary weapons in the battle for a better standard of living, social security and shorter hours, that the classical anarchist thinkers of the 19th century assumed a working-class desire for freedom. Malatesta alone seems to have had some doubts here. Writing in 1927 he said:

"Anarchists must recognise the usefulness and importance of the workers' movement, must favour its development and make it one of the levers for their action . . . so that it, in conjunction with all existing progressive forces, will culminate in a social revolution. . . . *But it would be a great and fatal illusion to believe . . . that the workers' movement can and must on its own, by its very nature, lead to such a revolution.* On the contrary all movements founded on material and immediate interests . . . tend to adapt themselves to circumstances, foster a conservative spirit, and the fear of change in those who manage to improve their conditions, and often end up by creating new privileged classes and serving to support and consolidate the system which one would want to destroy."<sup>3</sup>

Insofar, then, as the classical anarchist thinkers were wrong in their reading of working-class movements, to that extent does the traditional anarchist case fall to the ground. Regardless of the gaps in the welfare state (and I agree with Titmuss when he states that the gap between rich and poor is larger now than at the beginning of the century) the majority of the working class today are more interested in defending their higher living standard than in freedom or justice. Hence the 1964 Smethwick vote and the Labour Party's *volte-face* on immigration, resulting from the general feeling against immigrants in working-class areas.

It is in any case a major mistake to assume that a section of the community that is economically underprivileged will be "left wing" on issues other than economic. Blondel<sup>4</sup> shows clearly that on general humanitarian issues there is little partisan difference between "socialists" and "conservatives". In a survey conducted by the British Institute of Public Opinion, which he discusses, the general attitude of respondents was "left wing" on the House of Lords and "right wing" on crime and punishment. There was none of the division along class lines which one could reasonably expect if the working class were the vanguard of "the free society". In fact most of the work done in sociology and social psychology in the last ten years tends to show the opposite: that working-class life tends to produce individuals with a rigid and intolerant approach. Writing in 1955, long before immigration became a major issue in the political life of Britain, Professor Lipset said:

"In some nations working-class groups have proved to be the most nationalistic sector of the population. In some they have been in the forefront of the struggle against equal rights for minority groups and have sought to limit immigration or to impose racial standards in countries with

open immigration. *The conclusion of the anti-fascist era and the emergence of the cold war have shown that the struggle for freedom is not a simple variant of the economic class struggle.* (My italics.) The threat to freedom posed by the communist movement is as great as that once posed by Fascism and Nazism; and Communism, in all countries where it is strong, is supported mainly . . . by the working class, or the rural population. No other party has been as thoroughly and completely the party of the working class and the poor. Socialist parties, past and present, secured much more support from the middle classes than the Communists have.

Some socialists and liberals have suggested that this proves nothing about authoritarian tendencies in the working class, since the Communist party often masquerades as a party seeking to fulfil the classic democratic ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. They argue that most Communist supporters, particularly the less educated, are deceived into thinking that Communists are simply more militant and efficient socialists. I would suggest, however, the alternative hypothesis that, rather than being a source of strain, the intransigent and intolerant aspects of Communist ideology attract members from that large stratum with low incomes, low-status occupations, and low education, which, in modern industrial societies has meant largely, though not exclusively, the working class.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, Lipset goes on to argue, the socio-economic situation of the lower strata of industrial society creates a tendency to view politics in black and white, and thus a tendency to prefer extremist movements which suggest quick and easy solutions. In this respect it is interesting to look at the table drawn up by Tristram Shandy in ANARCHY 12.<sup>6</sup> Here the respondents to the FREEDOM readership survey are divided into working and middle class by educational background and occupation and then categorised according to age. While readers in their seventies are 50% middle class and 50% working class the teenage readership is 100% middle class. Now when all the qualifications are made (including the recognition of the middle-class bias that the questionnaire method always shows) one is forced to the conclusion that anarchism is becoming a middle-class philosophy; the table shows a continual rise in the middle-class readership as the working-class readership drops. One of the conclusions that can be drawn here is that as anarchism has ceased to be a philosophy that offers quick solutions so it has lost its working-class appeal, its fundamental libertarianism making little appeal to social strata that by reason of their situation in the socio-economic hierarchy, are predisposed to authoritarianism.

The phenomenon of persistence will modify this attitude to some extent of course. The authoritarianism of any strata is relative. For this reason the working class in Britain, which developed an early loyalty to movements which have fought for egalitarianism does not easily change its allegiance. Thus the worker who is predisposed towards authoritarian ideas will defend liberal democratic institutions because of his links with anti-fascist working-class parties. But speaking very broadly it can be maintained that those in the relatively more authoritarian lower-status groups are more liable to be attracted toward

totalitarian movement and that, once recruited, they will not be alienated by its lack of democracy, while the more educated or more sophisticated of its supporters will tend to drop away.

The attitude of the lower-status groups to highly authoritarian and power-centred philosophies is exemplified, to the point of caricature perhaps, by the interview which Clancy Segal conducted with an 18-year-old casual labourer accused of beating up negroes in 1958:

"That's why I'm with the Fascists," he says. "They're against the blacks. That Salmon, he's a Communist. The Labour Party is Communist too. Like the unions." His mother and father, he says, are strict Labour supporters. Is he against the Labour Party? "Nah, I'm for them. They're for y'know—us." Even though they were dominated by Communists? "Sure," he says. "I like the Communist Party. It's powerful like." How can he be for the Communists when the Fascists hate them?

Len says, "Well y'know, I'm for the Fascists when they're against the nigs. But the Fascists is really for the rich people y'know, like the Tories. All for the gov'nors, people like that. But the Communists are very powerful." I told him the Communist Party in Britain was quite small.

"But," he says, "they got Russia behind them." His voice was full of marvel. "I admire Russia. Y'know, the people. They're peaceful. They're strong. When they say they'll do a thing, they do it. Not like us. Makes you think: they got a weapon over there can wipe us all out, with one wave of a general's arm. Destroy us completely and totally. . . . When they say they'll do a thing they do it. Like in Hungary. I pity those people the Hungarians. But you see how the Russians went in and stopped them. Tanks. Not like us in Cyprus. Our soldiers get shot in the back and what do we do? The Communists is for the small man."<sup>7</sup>

This represents a type of authoritarianism in its most pathological form, but it is only an exaggerated form of the basic attitude of whole sections of the working class. Once liberalism is defined in non-economic terms, that is, in support of civil liberties, internationalism and so on, the correlation based on economics becomes reversed. The better off are more liberal, the poorer more intolerant. A reasonable index of liberal attitudes in "western" countries is the degree to which a multi-party system is favoured. A Unesco survey carried out in Germany, Austria, Japan, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and France showed that although the proportion favouring a multi-party system varied from country to country, the lower status groups in each case were the least likely to favour it. Eysenck's research in England produced similar results:

"The 'tough-minded' group tended to be intolerant of deviations from the standard moral or religious codes, to be anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic, while the 'tender-minded' were tolerant of deviation, unprejudiced and internationalist."<sup>8</sup> Wherever his respondents came in the political spectrum Eysenck found that those situated in the middle class tended to be more tender minded than those in the lower-status groups. (As Tony Gibson pointed out in ANARCHY 12,

anarchists cannot easily be accommodated on this two dimensional scale.) The evidence from various American studies points in much the same direction.

Both the public opinion survey and the research of social psychologists show a consistent association between the authoritarian personality and lower-class status.

"Recent research further suggests the possibility of a *negative* correlation between authoritarianism and neuroticism within the lower classes.\* In general those who deviate from the standards of their group are more likely to be neurotic than those who conform, so if we assume that authoritarian traits are more or less standard among those with low status then the more liberal members of this group should also be the more neurotic. As two psychologists, Anthony Davis and Charles Eriksen have pointed out, where the 'standard of reference on authoritarianism is quite high', people may be well adjusted *and* authoritarian. And the fact that this is often the case in lower-class groups fits the hypothesis that authoritarian attitudes are 'normal' and expected in such groups."<sup>9</sup>

The same connection appears to exist between low social status and fundamentalist religions. There is not the space here to look at this in detail but in summary it can be said that, again, the evidence points to the socially disinherited being attracted toward millenaral and highly authoritarian versions of Christianity and that in Holland and Sweden it would appear that Communism is strongest in regions that were once centres of fundamentalist religious revivalism. The point here is that rigid fundamentalism and dogmatism are linked to the same underlying characteristic attitudes and predispositions which find another outlet in allegiance to authoritarian political philosophies.

## WHY?

The problem is what causes these attitudes? Low education, low participation in voluntary organisations, little reading, isolated occupations, economic insecurity and authoritarian family patterns are among the most important. Probably the family, which is responsible for the basic socialisation of the child, is one of the most important of these factors. And one reason for authoritarianism in the family is the current pattern of industrial life. As Professor Titmuss has said:

"The progressive substitution of work regulated from the outside for work more or less freely shaped by the worker himself is . . . one of the chief characteristics of contemporary industrial evolution. Where the worker is dominated by the machine, by work schedules, by time-study checkers, by pace-setters, and by the clock—by what has been called 'scientific management' it can all signify submission, dependence, loss of

\*To protect myself from the wrath of my more easily aroused readers I should point out that the term "lower class" does not carry the pejorative overtones in America that it does in Britain.

initiative. The individual's will or creative energy is not challenged into action if there is only one 'best way' in which to act; if work 'does itself'. Judgement, selection and initiative, the ingredients of skill, the basis of self respect, are not called into being.

"In so far then, as modern industrial techniques lead to feelings of personal dissatisfaction, to a dispossession of personality, the problem thus becomes a personal and community problem. If the effects cannot be expressed at work, if relief and compensation cannot be found there, then the worker's home life is likely to be influenced and changed in many subtle ways. . . . In so far as he turns to his home for an outlet, as a source of satisfaction, it is arguable that two different and opposed patterns of behaviour may develop. One may take the form of submissiveness—of a lack of initiative and a reduced sense of control. The worker will thus be carrying into his family life the conduct expected of him in the culture of the factory. Or he may react, according to his personality, the personality of his wife, and the prevailing characteristics of the community at large, in an authoritarian and punishing way. He may react to the domination of the machine by attempting to dominate others. . . ."<sup>10</sup>

From the authoritarian pattern of family life the child goes on, particularly in working-class areas, to an authoritarian school, and thence to the factory. Thus a cycle is created in which the individual maintains a learned pattern of behaviour. Working-class children who overcome the effects of their environment and get to a grammar school are much more likely to go to a teacher-training college than to a university. (The proportion of working-class people at university in Britain is no larger than before the war.) And the training colleges tend to be much more authoritarian in their regimes than the universities. One training college Principal, for example, refused to give a character reference to a student who had married during the vacation without (the Principal's) permission, saying, in a notice to the college: ". . . I wish the College to know that this was neither with my knowledge nor sanction. This is particularly to be deplored since I have refused permission to those more honourable students who asked for it! . . ."

The use of corporal punishment in schools is a particularly virulent agency both in the inculcation of submissive attitudes to authority and in the breeding of authoritarian attitudes. Although its use has diminished considerably since the 'thirties, the comfortable belief that has virtually died out, except in the public schools, is far from the truth. Its incidence is particularly high in working-class areas in England, where overcrowded classes and unimaginative teachers, plus the socialisation towards personal violence that most of the teachers themselves experienced at school and training college, create a strong drive towards such authoritarian solutions. Thus again a learned pattern of behaviour is maintained. Arthur Barton, in an article in the *Guardian* expressed the attitude of the contemporary secondary modern teacher; talking of his own schooldays he said:

" . . . in most schools the cane was much in evidence, used here sadistically, there with genuine repugnance, but usually mechanically, because it was the custom, had always been, and seemed the only way to make boys amenable and industrious." Then turning to the contemporary

situation he says:

"In spite of Risinghill and the recent L.C.C. booklet which advocates the abandonment of corporal punishment . . . the same opinion prevails among the majority of men teachers in secondary modern schools today. . . . I would say that most boys' schools still use the cane in moderation. . . . Teaching is a job to us, not a vocation, and faced with thirty-odd noisy, insolent, bored, and unwilling boys, we enforce discipline in any way we can, and if it takes the form of an angrily administered cane, who shall blame us? . . . The cruelty of boys in the mass to a man who cannot, or will not, establish himself over them is terrible to see. . . ."

It is of course the final sentence here that is revealing. The complete lack of any understanding that the teacher-pupil relationship can be anything but authoritarian—the total inability to conceive that the teaching-learning process can be a co-operative effort—is a prime factor in the inculcation of the authority principle as an orientation towards social behaviour in our young.

The factors that make for the creation of the authoritarian personality are far too numerous and complex to discuss properly, or even enumerate, here. (Those interested are referred to Professor Lipset's essay for the available evidence.) But what emerges clearly from the work done in this field is that the authoritarian attitude tends to be created by the socio-economic situation of the lower-status groups.

" . . . economic underprivilege is psychological underprivilege: habits of submission, little access to sources of information, lack of verbal facility . . . appear to produce a lack of self-confidence which increases the unwillingness of the low-status person to participate in many phases of our predominantly middle-class culture."<sup>11</sup>

In other words the lower strata are isolated in a manner that prevents them acquiring the norms of tolerance.

Economic insecurity is particularly strong among unskilled manual workers and this will create a high state of tension which tends to require immediate alleviation. Such alleviation can be obtained by the venting of hostility against scapegoats, and it is noticeable that the unemployed are less tolerant towards minorities than the employed.

Among the other factors creating a psychological base of authoritarianism are greater suggestibility (itself a factor of authoritarian socialisation); lack of a prolonged time perspective; greater difficulty in abstracting from concrete experience, resulting in a tendency to elevate whatever general principles are learned to absolutes, and so on. These factors result in, among other things, an anti-intellectualism which in itself creates further barriers. Thus we can sum up this point by saying that the lower-status individual in our society is more liable than others to have been exposed to physical punishment, lack of love, and a general atmosphere of tension and aggression from early childhood; all experiences which tend to produce deep-rooted hostilities

expressed by ethnic prejudices, political authoritarianism, and a desire for short-term violent solutions.

In Professor Lipset's words: "Leaving school relatively early, he is surrounded on the job by others with a similarly restricted cultural, educational and family background. Little external influence impinges on his limited environment. From early childhood on he has sought immediate gratifications, rather than engaged in activities that might have long-term rewards. The logic of both his adult employment and his family situation reinforces this limited time perspective . . . all these characteristics tend to produce a tendency to view politics and personal relationships in black-and-white terms, a desire for immediate action, an impatience with talk and discussion . . . and a demonological interpretation of the forces conspiring against him."<sup>12</sup>

Now all this does not mean that the lower socio-economic groups will *automatically* support extremist authoritarian movements. The same factors that make for this tendency can result in complete political apathy. (Before Francis Ellingham jumps down my throat I should explain that I am using the word political in its broadest sense; thus the Committee of 100, or anarchists engaging in a "don't vote" campaign are equally taking part in political activity.) The tendency is there but the lack of a rich complex frame of reference is a vital variable which means that in situations where authoritarian extremism represents a more complex or long-term alternative than the lower-status group individual will choose the less-complex short-term alternative which may be in opposition to such movements. Thus in England we get the support for the reformist Labour Party (and it should not be forgotten that the oldest working-class party in the country is the Conservative Party: about two-fifths of manual workers still vote Conservative) which appears to offer more immediate results than the smaller, weaker Communist Party. This of course creates tremendous difficulties for the anarchist whose solution, from the point of view of the working class appears as both complex and long term.

#### A WAY AHEAD?

If the hypothesis advanced above is correct, then what is the direction in which we should move? It seems to me that the answer lies more in removing or changing those social factors that tend to create an authoritarian personality structure than appealing to a working-class libertarianism whose existence is doubtful. This does not mean taking refuge in what Alex Comfort has termed a "kind of sociological Fabianism" but in utilising direct action in those fields in which it is possible to create a responsibility and far-sightedness that is necessary for the creation of the type of society that anarchists would wish to see. Thus those who are struggling for workers' control of industry should do so with a view to eradicating the alienation that is an

ever-increasing problem in industrial society, to eradicating the subservience and authoritarianism that produce irresponsibility, rather than with the idea of producing a victory for a working class that seems increasingly distant and that would, in any case, result in a type of society that would be far removed from anarchism.

As a theory of social organisation we need to subject our own ideas to rigorous analysis in the light of the advances that have been made in sociology, social anthropology and social psychology since the classical anarchist writers. There is considerable ground for hope here. The sociologists (some of them) seem to be coming via a completely different route to much the same conclusions as the classical anarchist thinkers. For instance in a collection of essays written in honour of C. Wright Mills, and edited by Irving Horowitz, we find Andrew Hacker saying:

"There is little point in discussing who has the power unless one explores the sources of that power. This needs to be stressed because there is strong reason to believe that the institutional structure determines the behaviour of the men who hold positions in it. Put another way it does not matter who the office-holders are as individuals; for anyone placed in such an office would have much the same outlook and display much the same behaviour."<sup>13</sup>

And writing over 50 years ago we find Robert Michels, who was sympathetic to anarchism, and Max Weber, who certainly was not, coming to the same conclusions about the self-perpetuating nature of bureaucracies that have always been at the core of the anarchist analysis of capitalist societies.

And as a political theory we need to re-examine anarchism as a branch of political science. As Alex Comfort has pointed out in *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State* (quite the most important contribution to anarchist theory to be written in recent years) the earlier theorists of anarchism strikingly anticipated the findings of contemporary social scientists in their estimates of human behaviour and the means of modifying human conduct. In doing so people like Kropotkin were making use of the most advanced knowledge of their time, and if we wish to make any progress at all we must be prepared to do the same. Repudiation of authority, as Comfort points out<sup>14</sup> may spring equally from maturity or from immaturity, and in blaming all social ills on "the class enemy" we are exploiting the same sort of group resentment against stereotypes that the leaders of the world's two main power blocs are utilising with varying degrees of success to maintain their positions.

If we are honest we have to admit that to continue to attribute a messianic role to the working class, or to look for salvation in instant revolution, is to abandon the critical integrity that has always been one of the strongest points of anarchist theory. To move ahead in the direction we all desire means that we must abandon some of the myths

that have outlived their usefulness and of these the most important is the myth of the messianic role of the working classes, the idea that the workers' revolution can institute the free society. At the anarchist summer school of 1950 Alex Comfort said:

"The political field, and the type of revolution by a *levée en masse*, which earlier radicals looked for have never seemed bleaker in prospect: the new knowledge and study of the machinery of human societies and of individual character formation gives us . . . not only a field to work with every chance of success, but also an assurance that the ideas which we have espoused, for various reasons, conscious or unconscious, since the time of William Godwin are becoming increasingly the currency of scientific thought. Secondly I want to stress the importance of our keeping up with the work that is going on, of seeing all the results, *whether they support our preconceptions or not*. It is not good enough to read A. S. Neill because we like his ideas and not read those who criticise him. . . . I want to see something that has not been done before, a concerted, unbiased, and properly documented attempt to disseminate accurate teaching of the results of modern child psychiatry, social psychology and political psychology to the general public on the same scale that we have in the past tried to disseminate revolutionary propaganda."<sup>15</sup>

In the past anarchists seem to have possessed to a considerable degree what C. Wright Mills has called the sociological imagination, the ability to take a step beyond the evidence in their critical assessment of society. As Irving Horowitz has pointed out in his recent book:

" . . . anarchism is no more nostalgic than the sociological theories of Durkheim, who saw in social solidarity the solution to the deterioration of human bonds, or Mannheim who insisted that social planning be organic and not overridden by a rigid bureaucracy. . . . In short the anarchist response to the dysfunctional properties of large scale organisation and the bureaucratic state . . . has as its essential core the same kinds of social criticism now being offered by the leading figures in social science. . . . The anarchist belief in the evil power of State authority has received considerable support in the knowledge that State bureaucracy often turns out to be dysfunctional in operation and disgusting in its repressiveness. The anarchist insistence on the values of mutual aid has been transformed into a celebration of the worth of voluntary association. The anarchist belief in the potential co-operation of all men as equals has received support in the new psychological understanding of the plasticity and viability of human character."<sup>16</sup>

It is because I would like to see this sort of prescience restored to the anarchist movement that I feel the time has come to take a fresh look at some of our myths. It is time that we took our heads out of the sand, stopped seeing society in terms of a conspiracy theory and replaced "the will to believe with the desire to know". Those words are Malatesta's and, as he said elsewhere:

"We do not boast that we possess absolute truth; on the contrary, we believe that *social truth* is not a fixed quantity, good for all times, universally applicable or determinable in advance . . . our solutions always leave the door open to different, and one hopes better, solutions."<sup>17</sup>

Or again:

"I only believe those things which can be proved; but I know full well that *proofs* are relative and cancel each other out by other proved facts and therefore I believe that doubt should be the mental approach of all who aspire to get close to the truth. . . . To the will to believe, which cannot be other than the desire to invalidate one's own reason, I oppose the desire to know, which leaves the immense field of research and discovery open to us. . . . I admit only that which can be proved in a way that satisfies my reason—and I admit it only provisionally, relatively, always in expectation of new truths which are more true than those so far discovered. No *faith* then, in the religious sense."<sup>18</sup>

Using Malatesta's measure it appears, at the moment, that the myth of the messianic role of the working class is one which is long overdue for jettisoning. The available evidence would seem to indicate that the class war, the workers' uprising is not liable to bring about the type of society that anarchists would wish to see. We must recognise that the State is not the only institution which engenders authoritarian attitudes even though it maintains a social system which creates authoritarian attitudes in its lower-status groups. We have to work directly on the social factors that go to create the authoritarian personality as well as on the institutions which perpetuate them, otherwise we are kicking away the crutches of people who have not learned to walk. As Dr. J. A. Maryson said, in a pamphlet on anarchism published in 1935:

"It is not the agitation for the need of a revolutionary change in human society that has weakened the anarchist movement but *the exclusive sanctifying of the role of the proletariat uprising as the only method whereby freedom and justice can be ushered in.*"<sup>19</sup>

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup>*Anarchy or Chaos*, George Woodcock (Freedom Press).
- <sup>2</sup>*Anarchism: Six Essays by the London Anarchist Group* (L.A.G.).
- <sup>3</sup>*Malatesta: His Life and Ideas*, V. Richards (Freedom Press).
- <sup>4</sup>*Voters, Parties, and Leaders*, Blondel (Penguin Books).
- <sup>5</sup>*Political Man* (Ch. 4), S. M. Lipset (Mercury Books).
- <sup>6</sup>"Who will be the anarchists?", Tristram Shandy (ANARCHY 12).
- <sup>7</sup>"Portrait of a Fascist Beast", C. Segal (*New Statesman*, 1958).
- <sup>8</sup>*Political Man*, op. cit.
- <sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>10</sup>*Essays on "The Welfare State"*, Titmuss (Allen & Unwin).
- <sup>11</sup>"Portrait of the Underdog", Knopfer (*Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1947).
- <sup>12</sup>*Political Man*, op. cit.
- <sup>13</sup>"Power to do What?", Andrew Hacker from *The New Sociology*, ed. Irving Horowitz (New York O.U.P.).
- <sup>14</sup>*Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, Alex Comfort (Routledge & Kegan Paul).
- <sup>15</sup>*Delinquency*, Alex Comfort (Freedom Press).
- <sup>16</sup>"The Anarchists", Irving Horowitz (ANARCHY 50).
- <sup>17</sup>*Malatesta*, op. cit.
- <sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup>*Principles of Anarchism*, J. A. Maryson (Jewish Anarchist Fed. of America).

## Class and anarchism and the capitalist mentality

MARTIN WARDON

I COULD EASILY BEGIN this essay by outlining a few recent examples of the authoritarian and capitalist mentalities, selected from the realms of politics, big business, bureaucracy, the military, etc., etc. Instead I will briefly describe three recent happenings of which I have first-hand knowledge.

Last Saturday I travelled to work on a bus which, though half empty, just sailed past compulsory stops completely ignoring the people waiting at them. When I pointed this out to the conductor his face became contorted with fury and he screamed at me to shut up. He being a big bloke and discretion being the better part of valour I did so. One or two passengers chipped in to back up the conductor. It was clear what motivated them. To have stopped would have meant a minute's delay in reaching their destinations so to hell with the people waiting.

Again, I run a small one-man bookshop owned by a big company. During my lunch breaks and days off it is run by part-time workers. I run an easy-to-operate system of jotting down the serial numbers of books sold to facilitate re-ordering. Two of the part-timers refuse to co-operate in the running of the system although this doesn't cost the company a penny—it just makes my work twice as hard. They say the company stinks (it does), their pay is low (it is but they don't have to work there) and that they don't intend to lift a finger if they can help it. One of them used to co-operate thinking I was some sort of director but on finding out that I am only an employee like him ceased to co-operate.



In other words, according to these two, bosses are to be kowtowed to and workmates made mugs of.

Again, the dustmen where I live (Notting Hill) refuse to empty dustbins containing bottles on the grounds that they might cut themselves but they don't object to jagged tins which must be twice as dangerous. They also refuse to take anything too large for a dustbin unless given a good tip. The housekeeper of the building I live in is sick to death of this kind of thing. Recently she had in an electrician to re-wire a room. He made such a slipshod and dangerous job of it that another had to come in to repair the first one's repairs. My housekeeper is a working-class woman, a more or less "natural" Labour voter. Yet it wouldn't surprise me if she ends up by supporting some fascistic, Edward Martell type, get-tough-with-the-workers movement. She has no knowledge of economics, only of family and household affairs. She doesn't see that Martell-type propaganda is designed to cover up a much larger economic racket than that of dustmen and electricians.

To divide people and then rule them is one of the oldest games in the politician's book. However, the Fleet Street Press, which is the main propaganda organ of the ruling class in this country doesn't spend much time stirring up divisions among the people. It doesn't, for instance, preach hatred against minority racial groups—Irish, coloured, etc.—which is the easiest way of causing division. It hardly raises much steam against the "official" enemies of this country—the Russians and Chinese—just enough, on the one hand, to make war with those countries seem justified should it ever be necessary but not so much, on the other hand, as to impair trading relations. The British Press doesn't preach crude hatred and division because it doesn't need to. So deeply ingrained is the capitalist mentality in this country that the people divide themselves—trade against trade, group against group, neighbour against neighbour, workmate against workmate. In short the masses do the propagandists' work for them, they divide themselves.

The capitalist mentality is not the monopoly of capitalists. By the capitalist mentality I mean the unbridled desire for ever more material wealth and an inordinate concern with status. Now for someone who is poor, and two-thirds of the people outside of these prosperous islands are desperately poor (as are many people in this country), the desire and struggle for a decent living standard has nothing to do with the capitalist mentality but is a natural and wholesome thing. But what of people who have already reached a decent living standard and who, instead of relaxing and enjoying their good fortune, instead scream for more? What, for instance, can one make, to take an extreme example, of a millionaire who is surrounded by every luxury yet who continues to drive himself onwards until he succumbs to an early heart attack? The capitalist mentality is something that possesses an individual, smothering his finer feelings, and causes him to regard as his only goals ever-higher

financial and social status, with which he is always dissatisfied should he attain them until he goes at last, still discontented, to his grave. Not one moment of serenity or joy. The big-time capitalist buys the most beautiful painting in the world solely as an investment, his small-time rival in the suburbs buys a reproduction solely for snob status reasons. War ravages a foreign land, a beech wood is cut down to make way for a factory, and these things are considered only in terms of the higher profits or wages they will bring. In this country now, probably a third of the people are imbued at least to a considerable extent with the capitalist mentality and it cuts right across class lines.

But, ah, says the objector, come anarchy and the capitalist mentality will disappear. True, but shouldn't the sentence be rephrased to read, "How can there ever be anarchy while the capitalist mentality is so widespread?" Clearly, if there is to be anarchy there must first be a widespread change of values. And after a large-scale change of values there would be no need for a physical revolution to smash the state and capitalism. People with changed values would simply cause the state and capitalism to fade away. It will be objected that the idea of a large-scale change of values is highly optimistic. But it is not half so optimistic as believing that people deeply imbued with the capitalist mentality would ever desire anything other than capitalism, it is difficult enough to get them to consider, or even understand, anything other than capitalism.

A few anarchist propagandists, however, would never admit that the capitalist mentality affects other than the middle and upper classes. It is the deceptions used to cover up the fact that it is widespread among the workers too that gives so much propaganda about workers' control and the like its peculiar note of unreality. Thus an industrial correspondent in FREEDOM, ANARCHY'S sister paper, quite happily loads the whole blame for the poor public transport situation in London on to the shoulders of London Transport. Why doesn't he mention staff shortage and traffic chaos which are also to blame? The reason is that these things are inevitable by-products of the affluent (i.e. materially affluent) society of South-East England. Now, the bulk of the working class, like the bulk of the other classes, has swallowed the affluent society hook, line and sinker. Therefore to criticise side effects of the affluent society, like streets jammed with cars, implies criticism of the workers and this will never do.

A more subtle form of deception is to make people change their class according to their various activities. Thus 100 men in a factory are described as "working class". Come an election, and 25 of the 100 will, on a nation-wide average, vote Conservative. But they are not then described as the "working-class Conservative vote". No, the Conservative vote is always the "bourgeois vote". Another correspondent in FREEDOM, writing of the people queuing to file past the lying-in-state

of Churchill described them as “the bourgeoisie come to pay their last respects”. Now I worked near Westminster and saw this queue daily—country yokels, members of the bourgeoisie, working-class widows wearing the medals of the men Churchill had sent to their deaths—in short a good cross-section of all classes—other than royalty and aristocracy who got in without queueing. Thus a worker mysteriously becomes a member of the bourgeoisie when mourning Churchill, voting Conservative, doing Civil Defence, joining the Territorial Army, reading the *Daily Express*, drooling over royalty, etc., etc.

One argument put forward by syndicalists, etc., that is valid up to a point, is that the workers are, in their strikes and wage disputes, engaged in a struggle against authority. This incidentally is the justification given, if you really push the point, for the page in FREEDOM purporting to be about workers’ control and giving news of strikes. It is not claimed that shorter hours and higher wages are in themselves anarchist ends, it is the fact that they involve struggle that makes them worth mentioning. The syndicalists hope (as they have been hoping for 70 years) that the workers will so learn from the successes and failures of their present struggles that they will go on to real revolutionary endeavours.

But if struggle against authority in itself and irrespective of the ends is worth mentioning then why doesn’t the anarchist press report the struggles of the pacifist movement, OXFAM, the bodies fighting against the drowning of valleys with reservoirs, the campaigns against the destruction of wildlife, the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Welsh Nationalists, the IRA, mods and rockers? The list is endless. Clearly it is not the idea of struggle that motivates syndicalist propaganda but emotional feelings about the workers.

I hope I have shown that one of the things anarchists are struggling against—the capitalist mentality—is, like authoritarianism, not the monopoly of any one class. Similarly, anarchists themselves spring, as a glance at the article “Who are the Anarchists?” in ANARCHY 12 will show, from all classes. Once they are anarchists they work for a living, unless they are beats, and hence they are strictly speaking working class, but they are a rather odd sort of working class in that the jobs they do tend to be off-beat. Few anarchists, for instance, work in factories or would even consider it. The anarchist is poles apart from the average member of the working class just as he is poles apart from the average member of the middle or upper class. Anarchism is a struggle against the authoritarian and capitalist mentality, in oneself as well as in society, and to try to describe this struggle in terms of class is not only erroneous but downright bad propaganda.

## Determinism and utopianism in the anarchist tradition

LAURENS OTTER

THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONFLICT within anarchism between the two traditions of determinism and utopianism. This is frequently disguised by the more superficial differences between Tolstoian thought and the Bakunian tradition of violent anarchism, but this superficial difference serves only to confuse the issue. The Materialist starts from the fact that all men, rulers and ruled, are conditioned by the society they live in, and that the degree to which people may reject that society is circumscribed by the society itself, they can either do it within limits of “moderation” that is make no effective break with society, or they can do it outside these limits and cut themselves off as cranks from the people who have to be influenced to achieve social change. The Utopian starts from individual example, relies on the constant drop theory changing the nature of society generally but failing to allow for the fact that all libertarian organizations within an illibertarian framework are bound to be corrupted thereby, for the fact that while conditioning is uneven and permits a minority to rebel totally, this by definition must be a minority. Naturally few people lie purely within either tradition and I will return to the results of this later.

The Determinist puts his trust for getting socialism in the fact that all class systems have inherent conflicts (contradictions) at which

the natural drives of the class system turn in on themselves and so cause a breakdown in the normal pattern of events. Therefore all action is done at the point of contradiction, which was more often than not in the sort of society Marx and Bakunin described, the point of production. The Utopian on the other hand (and if an example of these is wanted that comprises neither pacifists nor anarchists one can look at the SPGB) insists that experience has shewn that where there is a breakdown in class society without the prior emergence of a conscious majority of socialists, a new elite arises and that it follows naturally that the old injustices are replaced by new and possibly worse ones.

### INTELLECTUAL SNAGS

It will be seen if one considers either the Determinist or the Utopian position that if either were entirely logical they would effectively do nothing. The Utopian withdraws from the evil of a class world into a "holier than thou" isolation or communitarianism, the Determinist so equates himself with his class that he deprives himself of the power to make an independent critique of the system; this didn't matter in a classical capitalist society, but as now all but a very small minority of the inhabitants of the metropolitan states have a vested interest in the maintenance of at least part of the established system it matters now. It is from those who fall between these two theoretical stools that in fact most activity in revolt is to be found. Those who originate in one or other tradition but concede an element of truth in the case of the other one. (When incidentally one says of the inhabitants of the metropolitan countries that they have a stake in the preservation of at least part of the *status quo*; one does not mean just what leftists of the 'thirties meant by this, that, everyone in a rich imperial power benefits from the superexploitation of the colonial people; but that the nature of all Managerialist exploitation—whether in Keynesian New Deal, Fascist or Communist forms—is such that in order to eliminate the boom-slump cycle of classical capitalism a very hefty proportion of industry produced for scrap—whether deterrent weapons, or sheer industrial waste—many others are employed in concerns that would be eliminated in a free society.)

I would assume that most readers fit somewhere into this middle ground being either Determinists with Utopian leanings or *vice versa*. One can pinpoint say *Peace News* as being more distinctly in the Utopian tradition or various libertarian socialist traditions as more in the Determinist, but generally the differences are those of emphasis. The difficulty, however, has always been that by and large everyone feels a need to argue their case in the unadulterated form of one or other tradition, although all constructive revolutionary agitation stems from the middle ground this is not intellectually respectable, as yet, one has to argue one's case in Determinist or Utopian terms and then

concede that though one is a Utopian one accepts that people are in large part conditioned, or in my own case though a Determinist—on a class but not an individual basis—one concedes the Utopian argument that to build socialism, anarchism or the free society one needs committed socialists. Either way one is conceding qualifications which logically make nonsense of the whole argument, and yet since all our experience tends to prove the rightness of the qualifications, we are seldom as embarrassed as we should logically be; purely because we know that intellectual consistency in this has always led to either quietism or ivory towerism.

A moment's thought will place in this middle ground movements such as the MCF, Anti-Apartheid, War on Want, CND and Committee of 100, the Friends of King Hill, penal reformers, campaigners for better conditions for discharged prisoners, old age pensioners, racial unity and so on; all of which to the traditional Determinist are concentrating on merely peripheral effects of the system, while to the Utopian since they do not start with individual commitment they are incapable of taking a fundamental stand. The present anarchist revival is both in origin and philosophically very much of a piece with these movements—indeed a Marxist friend recently wrote to me saying that anarchist rejection of immediate aims usually results in their concentrating on pushing for peripheral reforms and instanced such issues. It is therefore more than worthwhile for us to look for a rationale, an intellectual explanation of why we take the middle ground, rather than confining ourselves to the premises of others.

### MID-20th CENTURY INNOVATIONS

It has, of course, long been conceded by all but the most antediluvian materialists that the contradictions inherent in the Managerialist phase of capitalism—unlike those of entrepreneur capitalism—are not primarily economic. (This though most of them reject the term Managerialism and produce such euphemisms as neo-capitalism, c.f. *Towards Socialism passim*.) Issues such as alienation, colonialism, bureaucracy, militarism, and racism which were in the mid- and late-19th century suitable theses for erudite treatises from socialist philosophers but not the subjects of serious programmatic political consideration, are now the essential basis of any effective radical movement's theories and policies. This is reflected in the writings of most leading Marxist thinkers as of most post-Marxist theorists from the New Left to *Socialisme ou Barbarie*.

Similarly few of even the most other-worldly pacifists would now deny that there is a fundamental connection between the violence of society and that between nations; or that since nearly all schools, the mass media and so on, accept as dogma that there is a need for governments, that government violence is necessary and that wealth and privilege are essential facts of life, perhaps necessary evils but

undoubtedly necessary. (It is of course difficult for pacifist parents to prevent the state indoctrinating their own children to accept this, so it is obviously apparent that children without pacifist parents will generally at least initially accept the state's militarism.) Just as socialist and Marxist humanism reflects the adaptation of the Determinist so is this recognition of conditioning reflected in pacifist writings, these generally insist not merely that class society makes its members both rulers and ruled psychologically alienated, but also conditions those who react to it and of its nature, limits their number. So both among the Determinists and among the Utopians the very theoretical citadels have adapted their theories to meet some of the case of their rival ideologues and in so doing undermined their own position.

It is perhaps at this stage worth considering Koestler's essay on the intellectuals in the *Yogi and the Commissar*. This defined the intelligentsia as those capable of an independent political judgement and explained this ability by saying that the intelligentsia were usually drawn from social strata with sufficient privileges to be independent and able to rebel without too overt fear of penalization, but at the same time low enough in the social scale to see and immediately feel exploitation and react against it. This of course means that it is not in fact expressing a non-determined independence but that its independence is only real in so far as it is conditioned to the point of judging facts not purely by the judgements of the class, and so there is more likelihood of two members of this stratum disagreeing politically than of any other. He suggested that this situation gave rise to considerable psychological disorder, nervous and mental tensions and so forth and that such disorder is the occupational disease of the intelligentsia for which it should no more be blamed than that miners can be blamed for silicosis. It feels guilt over its privileges but is too much caught up in them to be ready easily to renounce them, and even those who do become *declassé* and so do are always marked by accent and educational origins as being born comparatively with a silver spoon.

One may well question whether in fact any such static body as Koestler discusses may exist, whether class divisions remain constant sufficiently long for it to produce such strata, whether if they do such strata need be neighbouring or parallel ones, whether social mobility would not cause people to belong at one stage having previously been beneath it and later passing through and above it. But having posed these questions there still remains an obvious kernel of truth which suggests that to make a revolution one must involve strata in making independent judgement who according to their normal conditioning would not; or that one must widen the bounds of the strata that are conditioned to make such judgements to the extent that they take in the vast majority of people. Either way we are faced with the deduction that to produce a revolutionary majority, one must before the

revolution learn to affect the state's conditioning process and upset its delicate checks and balances. The Bolsheviks, of course, have a simple solution (a minority takes power and frees the majority sufficiently that it will then be able to hold power for itself). Unfortunately we have seen how this one works and though some anarchists have derived from Bakunin or Mazzini views not unlike those of the Bolsheviks we have no such easy way out. Of course Koestler's Determinist explanation for the radical dovetails with that of Stirner, but by and large it is less doctrinaire and more in accord with observable facts than pure conscious egotism.

### WITNESS, MASOCHISM OR NO?

In the early days of the CND, supporters of the Direct Action Committee who like myself came from the Materialist tradition of Leftism, at first saw civil disobedience as a mere substitute for effective action (not in the sense that Colin Ward said in *ANARCHY* that the middle-class sit-downs to protest against its own impotence since that suggestion presupposed no desire to see one day mass working-class action—but in the sense that since no mass action was taking place and what is more all work towards such action seemed ineffective it was better than doing nothing and talking big). However, experience taught us very rapidly that here was a new propagandist means. We learnt that the psychological effect on those working on the Bomb—many of whom already had doubts on the subject but cloaked these with "well it's the Government's decision"—of people non-violently obstructing them was to cause them to think far deeper about individual responsibility and was to cut below years of state conditioning. Undoubtedly its process was through the Utopian concept of individual persuasion and hope for personal refusal to obey, but nevertheless it was a means that had a primarily social effect; those who were influenced normally raised the problem at their union, or site work's meeting and discussed it there—both at Aldermaston and at Pickenham sit-downs in 1958 led to union requests for transference to peaceful work; furthermore it was individually oriented action that took cognizance of conditioning and attempted to meet it. So we came to see the worth of NVR as a revolutionary technique—but we still made one major mistake as a result of our past thinking. Those who worked with who derived from a purely pacifist tradition frequently spoke of the reasons for civil disobedience, and it was normal for PYAG (Pacifist Youth Action Group) to dismiss these as masochists, and dismiss their theories as merely wishing symbolic rather than effective NVR; indeed I seem to remember so disparaging them in a pamphlet after I had ceased to be a full-time non-violent resister. This was unjust. Unjust because we did not understand the concept of witness referred to a peculiar form of non-revolutionary voting with the feet. If pacifists were seen to "witness" in sufficient numbers whether by protest, the formation of communities, and of co-operative organiza-

tions, or by conscientious objection, then through a process of pressure one can effectively build a direct democracy, not unlike the anarchist view of society (c.f. Allen Skinner's pamphlet *Towards a Non-Violent Society*). Of course this type of thinking can be geared to an openly revolutionary platform, as for instance in Bob Barltrop's speech in the Conway Hall on Easter Day.

In so far as the Utopian believes in building a majority movement of Utopians before changing society, in so far as most Utopians are par excellence democrats—the sort of democrats who see no distinction between the words democratic and libertarian—their witness was neither more nor less than a way of voting. They disliked the suggestion that they were revolutionary, merely because they confused revolution with the violent imposition of minority rule. As a result while they practised and worked for the extension of participatory democracy, their theoretical case was geared to parliamentary democracy its negation. However much one rejects the premise that it is possible under a class society to build a mass movement rejecting totally the ethic of that society; and rejecting this disagree with the Utopian proposals, the revolutionary Determinist should see the Utopian position in this light, should see that this non-revolutionary but nevertheless do-it-yourself and altruist politics, which one sees manifested in movements for racial unity, OXFAM, free schools, child care work and so on, may be tactically mistaken but is nevertheless not power-intentioned but on the contrary is an attempt to work for something not unlike what we want. There is a strong difference in tactics but little in principle; and even on the tactical level there seems to be considerable evidence to suggest that the Utopians are an aid to the materialists in their own struggles, and that the means can to an extent dovetail.

### AFFLUENCE OR FLATULENCE OF TODAY

At least on the surface, almost every inhabitant of a highly modernized and affluent managerialist-capitalist society has a stake in the continuance of the *status quo*. All those who work in industries connected with arms for instance (at least 40% of all employed people, when one counts those who work in the industries that provide armaments industries with parts, materials, food or services and those who in turn supply these) have an economic stake in the preservation of militarism; it may well be that workers in such industries may be very militant on issues of pay and conditions but it is a little hard to imagine them striking for disarmament unless they were first convinced of the whole case for anarchism, in which case they would be unlikely to stay in the same jobs. The Police Federation is at the moment one of the most militant craft unions in the country but one finds it difficult to imagine an anti-state and revolutionary police syndicate. Throw in other civil servants, all workers in advertising, insurance,

banking; throw in the unnatural transport system, the privatization and danger to life inherent in the family car and the business lorry, when free rail-transport could cut costs as well as death hazards; throw in all the other harmful and unnecessary jobs and one sees an enormous percentage of people who at first sight believe they have an economic interest in things as they are. No doubt you can explain to them that in a fully socialist society they would be better off still, but one is immediately back in the Utopian world of preaching, one is not starting from their real and obvious needs and showing that they must have socialism in order to get a living wage. When you do convince them you still have to turn to Utopianism to convince them that they must take the risks and start, as for a radical minority there are risks. Look around you, how many anarchists of yesteryear, Spugubs or Trots do you know now pulling in comfortable salaries or heavy overtime packets often at the expense of fellow workers and justifying this by saying that while capitalism exists they would be fools not to get as much as they can under the circumstances?

This partial identification of the modern worker, however unsatisfying his work and circumstances of life, goes far further than the partial identification described by Lenin and others at the beginning of the century, when they pointed out that the inhabitants of an industrialized metropolitan power derived financial advantage from the super-exploitation of the colonial proletariat, and that this allowed the Western capitalists to modify their exploitation of the Western proletariat. There is of course still an obvious truth in this, and the super-exploitation of the American Negro or the inhabitant of the Siberian slave camps, are of course refinements of this, but we live in a period of development where Lenin's picture of imperialism has grown so outdated, that even Enoch Powell advocates withdrawing from the colonies since these are no longer good business. No doubt neo-colonialism exists but the normal pattern of capitalist organization has now reached a fully internationalist phase and so capital being the same in all countries has no need of colonies or even neo-colonies when independent republics will do just as well.

Now the traditional Determinist view was that the expansive necessities of capital inevitably gave rise to the boom-slump cycle and other such obvious economic contradictions; that these would provide a natural reaction in the working class, who would even without being consciously socialist (let alone anarchist) act in a revolutionary way (whether Marxist or syndicalist). This would no doubt be fostered by the fact that, in Marx's day, the growth of the factory system and the last of the enclosures were all within living memory, that also no factory was then so large that it could not obviously be run by a council of all the workers therein. However, now with the coming of affluence, as much with the emergence of far larger factories based on automation or even just the conveyor belts (a post-Marxian invention)

one cannot, arguing simply from Determinist principles applied purely economically, posit any inevitable struggle going beyond pay and conditions and indeed such is the nature of affluence and this superficial stake in the *status quo*, that the Determinist must logically posit the inevitability of social-conservatism in most people.

### CONDITIONING AND CONTRADICTIONS

Just as Marx described capital as dead labour; and the struggle between capital and labour as that between the living human spirit and the dead weight of history; so social conditioning and the orthodoxies that pervade school teaching reflect not so much the direct interests of the existing rulers, as that of their predecessors. This is why one sees constantly the more efficient (and therefore more oppressive in their exploitation) sections of the ruling class align themselves with "the forces of radicalism and progress" (i.e. the conventional Left). This is why a certain amount of social change, a certain swing of the pendulum, modified victories for the cause of social equality, are a necessary part of the normal adaptation of class rule to changing means of production. But like the boom-slump cycle this is a contradiction of class rule, and probably unlike the boom-slumps an invariable contradiction whatever the nature of that class system. In order to happen, in order to mobilize the force necessary to establish the modernized class rule, the ruling class has to call into existence organizations of protest that had not previously existed. This can only be done by unleashing discontents that had previously been securely tied down.

The very existence of Utopianism is indicative of another contradiction inherent in capitalist conditioning. As every Determinist knows, ruling elites cause ethics to be preached which sanction their own rule and form of exploitation, the connection between the needs of mercantilism or industrial capitalism, and the preaching of the virtues of hard work, sexual continence, and abstinence from drink has too often been noted to be necessary to retail now. However, the need of the ruler for an ethic to provide his own hypocritical justification and an opiate for others, brings with it its own contradiction, because, given the existence of other directed and unchangeable moral codes, there will always be those who take them seriously and so doing come to challenge the rulers with the weapon they had themselves fashioned.

The fact that conditioning represents the past, and the very nature of ethics, whether externally directed or held to be natural, means that it is not in fact quite true that an ethic cannot change without prior social change; though since if the majority of people considered the society in which they lived sufficiently morally odious for them to withdraw consent it would collapse, a social system and the ethic thereof cannot be long opposed.

If it follows from all Determinist reasoning that the majority of the subjects of any system will have an ethic derived from the conditioning of that system; and if it therefore follows that Utopian radicals are limited by this factor then it is natural that the Determinist should then consider to what extent this ethic can be changed as part of a revolutionary process before the final abolition of the state and class power. It follows too that it is necessary to discover in purely Determinist terms if the actions of Utopians can contribute in any way to a change in ethical climate sufficient to permit further ethical developments and further Utopian movements. In like way, if for the Utopian it is a moral imperative to build a pacifist (socialist or anarchist) movement to change people's thinking as the pre-essential of social change, and if in any sense the Utopian concedes that social-conditioning affects this then it is also ethically essential that the determinants of ethical conditioning be studied.

### ESTABLISHMENT-DICTATED ANTI-ESTABLISHMENTISM

Part of our conditioning is "look after number one". Also the fact that even the most radical leftist has traces in his make-up of the ethic of the system that he rejects, as well as the fact that all—even the most liberated of Beats—depend economically and socially on the system from which they attempt to opt out. Most radical activity stems in large part from the needs of part of the Establishment to reform the rest. The Establishment dictates that there be opposition currents, that these behave in certain ways, and that certain sections of the ruled be alienated in particular ways likely to lead them to join the protest. (It should be emphasized that in saying the Establishment dictates this it is not suggested that this is consciously done, merely that it is the inevitable product of the needs of the ruling class.) The Establishment can only be menaced if these protest currents go beyond the point of mere reform; which is one reason why anarchism is far more relevant today than it was in Bakunin's day, then it was possible to conceive of a revolutionary change that nevertheless fell short of anarchism, now it is not.

Groups which protest against particular evils in society (merely perhaps want better street lamps), support feeding the world's hungry, work for integration, prison reform or so on; inevitably when founded by people who share the general social view held by the Establishment tend to model themselves on what society generally considers is the pattern for an efficient organization—that is an hierarchical one. Even (as with OXFAM) groups which started off with a basically different ethic when they wish to become accepted ape the established system. Therefore in this as in other things the nature and bounds of the rejection of the *status quo* orthodoxy is dictated thereby.

The general tendency of this sort of protest against particular

aspects of class rule is, as has been suggested, to mobilize support for those forces within the ruling élite that wish to eliminate deadwood from their own ranks and recruit new blood. However the existence of resistance to the Establishment and rejection of its orthodoxy dictates a necessity also for a smaller body of protest consciously advocating an alternative system which would obviate the need for these ills. It is not the nature for partial protesters in fact to align themselves with a root and branch oppositional theory, if it were the class system would collapse under the tension of too basic a division of opinion among its people; but though partial protesters of their nature accept the general viewpoint of their more subservient cousins they need intellectual and moral support when challenged by the guardians of orthodoxy, and get this by pointing to their allies on the Left and saying, "Ah, they've got the answer". But just as the partial protester cannot make a clean break with the consensus, or otherwise there would be no consensus and no system, so those with an oppositional theory cannot break too far from the partial protesters. In result, as the system determines the protest, the protesters determine the propagandist means of the Left (other than that of a miniscule section prepared to cry in the wilderness and yet avoiding impotence).

Just how far the climate of opinion in a society may change with no appreciable shift in the basis of power is demonstrated by the current boom in protest folk music. There is probably not one teenager in the country who has not got at least one anti-state and Establishment record; one record or other that protests against the barbarity of war, and suggests the obvious but nevertheless revolutionary way to oppose it is to refuse to fight, one record that protests about the way race is used to rule, or one record that derides the foolishness as well as the hypocrisy of our rulers. Even four years ago the idea that folk music would figure regularly at the top of the charts would never have been seriously entertained. I for one if anyone had suggested it would have explained how the state's powers of control over the mass media would undoubtedly prevent any significant boom in leftist songs. No doubt the fact that the state has not exercised this power is in large part on the vaccination principle, if you give someone a small dose of an illness you hope to prevent him contracting a serious bout of the real thing, and if you give people a small dose of a diluted and corrupted form of radicalism you should prevent further infection. (The Church hierarchies and the leaders of Left political parties have been doing this for years.)

Not so long ago anarchists delighted in the fact that *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* which was a pop song was once a wobbly one for which singers could be imprisoned for six months. But its tale of a new society was highly allegorical and little but a fairy tale. We were pleausurably astounded by *Sixteen* (?seventeen?) *Tons* which also had a short life. Within our own circles we applauded Philip Sansom's

songs for their content rather than their form and rendering, and perhaps sought out other similar singers in small back rooms who occasionally were to be heard speaking revolution in song. But now it is good business to be a protester, songs every bit as outspoken and uncompromising as Philip's are literally churned out, and every Tory child on the bus to his/her private school, every volunteer for the forces is to be heard discussing the latest Dylan or Jansch. Of course the state hasn't granted this out of the goodness of its heart, of course it carefully considered the relative dangers of suppression and freedom, but if you hear of the Government flying Salk vaccine into an area you presume it is trying to combat an epidemic, and both the fact that it provides vaccine against libertarianism and pacifism, and the fact that in the USA the authorities are actively promoting right-wing counter-protest songs is a most hopeful sign.

There are other good omens; frequently nowadays one comes up against advertisements which pay lip-service to a social conscience, or to an element of thought. On a recent trip to the big city I, as a yokel, was struck by the proliferation of adverts appealing to "individualists" a completely new development since I left London. (Again of course phoney, outside the anarchist movement—and sometimes in it—the normal person who insists on calling himself an individualist is one who is so uncertain of his individuality that he needs to reassure himself. If any individualist wishes to retort that the normal anarchist communist is someone who knows full well he is incapable of working co-operatively with anyone, I will concede that cap almost fits.) Governments now talk of their aid to underdeveloped countries; obviously phoney they charge 7% interest and a few years back the same money was entered in the Budget as overseas investment, with learned articles from economists showing that in the state of the world's trade as it is (or was) we derive far more profit from the money than just the interest, as how otherwise could these countries afford to pay us exorbitant prices for our goods? But the fact that hypocrisy is needed, and sound business investment has to be rechristened aid, however nauseating, nevertheless suggests that the Establishment is forced to pander to an awakening moral conscience. Even if, as surely happens, the state benefits from this awakening and did something to rouse it, it nevertheless bears within itself the seeds of the state's own destruction.

Look at the serious Sunday papers, look at the "Leftist" weeklies, these in the last few years have grown far more adult. Look at the Freedom From Hunger Campaign, the growth of OXFAM, World Refugee Year, however phoney these are (let alone the crowning indignity of World Co-operation Year), however little penal reform the abolition of the homosexual offences penalties and so forth mean when carefully examined they do reflect a need to appease public opinion; whereas not so long ago any appeasing to be done was done to the

Right. To come nearer home, the fantastic growth in the anarchist movement of recent years—and I yield to none in my scepticism as to the sincerity of anarchist conviction among some of the Easter anarchists (particularly those who insist on wearing YCL badges or carrying Vietcong flags behind anarchist banners)—is, even if nothing more, indicative of a changed climate of opinion among those who have begun to reject our society. Six years ago those who wished to protest turned to CND but though this was built on the basis of a central demand which was anarchist directed and could only be satisfied by anarchist revolution, nevertheless the contrast between the half-baked revolt of the orthodox campaigner and even the Easter anarchist is marked. This has been accompanied by a steady drift back of many old comrades who just have not been seen around for the last 15 years; no doubt these are coming back bleating that they had always said anarchists shouldn't be involved with CND (unlikely as they were no longer around when it was founded); no doubt they are asking us to revert to methods of action which had such disastrous results after the war that both sections of the anarchist movement virtually died out; no doubt their work will be confined to criticisms of innovations and their influence will be on balance harmful; but nevertheless they, too, are indicative of a changed climate; and this climatic change was an essential if we were ever to achieve social change.

#### THE LEFT AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE ORTHODOX

Deliberately oversimplifying and making static what is in fact in a state of flux (and which could not function were it not) one can analyse the Left and see to what extent it works for the good of the system and to what extent this working carries within itself the embryo of revolution. In order to embrace Utopians as Determinists one can define the Left *in toto* as the sum of all humanist rejection of the *status quo* and its thinking, whether this rejection stems from the self interest of the most exploited or from the altruism of others or from the mixed altruism and self interest of various strata of the exploited. (I was incidentally chided by a friend for using the current "in-word" consensus to describe the thinking of the *status quo*, this is a bit hard as I was using it before President Johnson sanctified it, and it is the only adequate term, but I yield the field.) Within the Left one sees, normally, three major divisions, the Conventional Left which is merely concerned to protect itself against the depredations of the rulers, to react against the betrayals of former Left leaders now integrated into the four-fifths who agree with each other four-fifths of the time. This Conventional Left, as we mentioned when considering conditioning, can only differ from orthodoxy in a very limited way, either in terms of its altruism or in terms of its self-interest it is bound to have its roots within the system in agreement with the many who praise the *status quo* with faint damns. Beyond this there is a Propagandist Left, with a vision of a social change, or social changes, which it holds will

obviate the more characteristic and important evils of society. Unilateral ND, in the context of the reforms that in 1958 most campaigners expected to be achieved, would rank as such a change; earlier neutralist anti-imperialism had so done; now with a Labour Government only openly revolutionary or pacifist groups are any longer able to propagate a policy which they can seriously argue will get to the roots of things. Nevertheless this radical Propagandist Left, is forced to act as if its aims are capable of immediate fulfilment or as if it is possible for it to identify itself with the immediate aspirations of the rank and file of the Conventional Left, convince these they can only fulfil these aspirations by revolution and mould them into a revolutionary instrument. Generally those who wish nothing of the delusion that socialism is round the corner, and who insist that since the members of the Conventional Left are bound by the short hairs to the Establishment they are unlikely to be revolutionary are condemned to sitting on the side-lines nagging; but a few more active ones (prepared to knock their heads publicly against the stone wall of the class system) can demonstrate revolutionary means while propagating revolutionary views and achieve something thereby.

The pattern drawn is that of the simplest division of the Left, but as we have said this is constantly in a state of flux; depending on whether or not the pendulum is swinging left or right (we talk now of those changes which the Establishment itself desires for the purging of its own deadwood) one sees a growth or diminishing of the Left (in each of the three strata) not as the product of a simple growth (this happens, but only to a certain point, where the change in balance upsets the patterns and causes realignments) but in result of a section of the orthodox thinkers aligning themselves for particular ends with the Conventional Left (and similarly a section of the Conventional Left aligning itself with the Propagandist Left in order the better to resist the system, and so on with a section of the Propagandist Left). In each case the products fulfil a dual function, the alliance between the Conventional Left and part of the orthodoxy produces a new Orthodox Left which while still fulfilling the role of a Conventional Left also as an orthodoxy produces its own rejection, with people reacting against its compromises and thereby forming a Conventional Left in relation to the Left orthodoxy. This latter role is fulfilled by the alliance of the Propagandist Left with sections of the old Conventional Left, it continues to propagate policies which would make sense of the Conventional Left's rejection of the old orthodoxy, but at the same time since the old orthodoxy is ceasing to be relevant it is reorienting so that its prime function is to refuse to subordinate the traditional message of the Left to a new compromise. Just as pure growth upsets balance so do these alliances, thereby producing new alignments.

So far the need for realignments and alignments has been unconsidered. I have made vague reference to balance and symmetry, it is not suggested, however, that the reason is metric, the symmetry is



of course effect rather than cause. If, as Determinists rightly argue, people can not for the most part rebel beyond a certain point against their own conditioning, then people conditioned by a "welfare state" society to think of politics and industrial action as merely being concerned with bread and butter issues and as being entirely unconnected; they are only able to be militant in revolt on such issues, and given a system in which economic contradictions are controlled then there is no such thing as a revolutionary bread and butter demand. Therefore, on Determinist grounds, since revolution is only possible when the ethos of society is such that those who react against the Establishment are prior-conditioned to make socialistic demands, and since bread and butter demands are not now this and cannot so be; revolutionary demands will only be posited after that ethos has already been changed by other radical action, sufficiently to adjust if not adapt the conditioning.

Similarly non-violence, seen as a means of withdrawing from the violence of militarist society, is qualified by the fact that only a few people can live in communities, or otherwise, in a state of isolation, since the economics of such life grow progressively more difficult the more communities there are to be found in an area, unless this is compensated by a direct effect of the communities on the thinking of their neighbours.

Therefore no Determinist movement can grow beyond a certain point without a change in intellectual climate; no Utopian movement beyond a similar point without a modification of social forces releasing new possible energies. However, any growth of either a Determinist or a Utopian Left inevitably weakens the Establishment and, as well, an advance of each is seen to be essential before more than a limited advance of the other is possible. When the general body of the Left is healthy and growing, both traditions grow and contribute to each other's growth, but as they grow the Establishment adapts itself to fight on different issues. (As we have seen there are occasions when the Establishment has found this growth necessary.) Each time the Establishment does this it accepts a slightly changed ethos, and a slightly changed balance of forces in social, economic, industrial and other political relationships. Because the two traditions are in this way mutually necessary the disdain each has in the past shewn for the other is unfortunate and probably positively harmful. The Utopian has put his trust in withdrawal from the violence and inequity of contemporary society, the Determinist in engagement in pushing the social process so that it collapses under the weight of its own contradictions. But in revolution as in coitus neither thrust nor withdrawal are much use without the other.

## FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON NARCOTICS

I HAVE JUST READ Ian Vine's article on marijuana. If anarchists really wish to achieve something approaching an enlightened society then advocacy propaganda for psychedelic drugs is an important prerequisite. Marijuana is one such chemical short-cut method of achieving personal and social insights which are often gained only after many years of deep meditative thought, intelligent reading and personal experience. Time is not on our side.

Why do I smoke pot? Well, like oxygen, sex, poetry, art and music, it is food for the living body-mind. It is a gentle psychedelic drug. It is, in the light of known medical and scientific research, perhaps the safest of chemicals, avoiding the built-in guilt-sin sickness hangover which endears the Judaic-Christian West to alcohol. The meaningful ritual of its preparation and smoking makes it an appropriate social drug.

As a drug which expands consciousness, pot has deep significance. It is a chemical revolutionary on the *avant-garde* front. It dissents in depth. Just as more intense psychedelics, such as LSD have revealed the bankruptcy of Western religious thought and the superiority of much Oriental mysticism (particularly non-instituted Zen), so pot denies fundamental concepts of dualistic thought and Western logic. Schizophrenic philosophy (the distinct you and me, we and they, Man and God) does not make sense under pot meditation. Incidentally there's a distinct correlation between the effects of disciplined deep-breathing exercises and the pot high. Yogis often utilise both techniques simultaneously, as to a lesser extent do most pot smokers.

Anyway, my personal concern at this moment is consciousness expansion as first a therapy means of getting myself free of hereditary conditioning, tribal inhibition and taboo. Only then will I be able to start exploring the real depths of Self and Universe.

So pot, to me, is a short-cut chemical way of tuning in to insight mind-networks of universal love, truth, reality, and this involves eating tastier sandwiches, enjoying better orgasms, understanding and appreciating music and poetry to a greater degree, and breathing correctly, just as much as deep monkish meditation. This is where we, and pot, came in.

Blackburn

D.C.

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A PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE of libertarians should be the liberation of the mind, and surely if any tangible results are to be achieved it is essential to work for an increasingly clear view of reality. Until one can see the existing situation clearly, its multitude of problems cannot receive the analysis necessary for concrete progress.

Therefore, the aim of the libertarian should be towards the

development of the strength to experience reality without the dubious crutches of analgesics, be they drink, drug, dogma or irresponsible escapism. An improved society requires the acceptance of equality of responsibility, the only sphere in which equality is a practical possibility. Until this is appreciated anarchism will remain a sectarian activity, cluttered with the debris of society, ranting, squabbling, posturing and deluding itself.

No cure for the ailments of society will be achieved so long as we appear to sanction the spread of some of the most malignant manifestations. Let us be unequivocal about it, opiates are evil, the more so because they give the impression of desirability in the initial stages: a sniff, a jab, a swallow, and suddenly all problems are gone; beautiful new realms appear, just waiting to be explored by adventurous souls. Forgotten is the relentless bondage to "the man", the doctor, the chemist. No need to think that our selfish gratification provides the, admittedly misguided, authorities with the convenient means of striking at all our comrades. There are few more effective ways to alienate the very people the movement should be striving to reach, than permitting the irresponsibility of a few adolescent inadequates to be used to ridicule a whole philosophic concept.

Therefore let's stop swallowing the bullshit about junk being the symbol of emancipation, the rights of the individual to do what he likes, when and where he likes, no matter who else has to pay, the vital benefits of expanded perception (how many addicts can cope with what they have already, without looking for more?), and face the facts that narcotics destroy the body, distort the mind, and *increase the user's dependence on the existing social system.*

I am fully aware that the hippies will be sneering at yet another do-gooder, who just doesn't understand. No, you're damned right, I don't understand. I've only had 16 years of living amongst, being lived on by—and being died on by—junkies. Nurse someone trying to kick, talk to or check up on long-time users, and see how many are still telling the world what a treat it's missing.

London, W.1

J. JACK

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**In next month's**  
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