

**MICHAEL BAKUNIN WROTE:**  
'If God really existed, it would be necessary to abolish him.' To which some forgotten cleric replied: 'If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him.'

Here in a nutshell is the difference between the libertarian and the authoritarian: the one who wants to see man free and the one who wants to see him in chains. Conflict between these two has been present in human affairs down the ages and always, it seems, the authoritarian has won.

But in order to win, the authoritarian has to pretend to be concerned for the freedom of those he enslaves. This may not always have been the case. The despot of old could tell his subjects quite honestly 'You are my slaves and you will do as I say or I will kill you' and everybody knew exactly where they stood—up to attention or up against a wall. Nowadays, however, such honesty on the part of any ruler would create an uproar of protest, most of all from the very people who profit from subtler forms of slavery.

For, next to the confidence trick

## THE GREAT CON

of the God idea, to which Bakunin referred, the greatest con ever worked is that of the Government idea, which has undeniably been invented by man and must just as certainly be destroyed. As God has faded out as an acceptable authority, except in backward countries like South Africa and Northern Ireland, where the old magic is still invoked for the shabbiest of political motives, some form of authority has had to be developed which has the appearance of rationality. And the name of the game is 'Democracy' by which the real rulers of the country hide behind a facade of 'participation', through which the people are made to think that they play some part in the running of affairs.

Even the blatant dictatorships pay lip service to the procedures of democracy by having a form of election every so often (sometimes

just the promise of a form of election is enough!) but in the full-blown democracies the farce is given the full treatment.

### A DISCREET LEAK?

In Britain, as in America, all the weight of the mass media is thrown into the phoney battle before it even begins. 'Election Fever', we are told, builds up until, as Mr. Wilson said, 'Everybody seemed to want an election.'

The impression this particularly unpleasant little man wishes to create by such a statement is obviously that he wants to give the people what they want. Unfortunately he also wants to appear to be honest and far-sighted, so elsewhere in the same week he declared that he had decided on a June 1970 election no less than two years ago! It is most likely therefore that all the opinion poll blarney and the whipping up of artificial interest in the Press and on the TV political chat shows was the result of a discreet leak some months ago. A 'kinder' budget than in previous years and a favourable balance of payments, was considered enough to take the risk of a General Election, especially if it was held in warm summer-time, and certainly before the full term of the present Government is run, a year hence. For next spring, we are in for the biggest upheaval and chaos the British money system has ever known, when, in February 1971, we go over to decimal currency.

The muddle, uncertainty and confusion this will create for most people, together with the inevitable price rises that will follow conversion from both price 'adjustment', which will naturally always be to the advantage of the shopkeeper, and the sheer cost of converting all those machines, and training staff, etc., etc., etc., all this would most certainly have sealed the doom of any government unlucky enough to be seeking re-election immediately after. So Harold does it before.

### EVERYBODY HAPPY?

This June also had other advantages for Harold, instead of the only other alternative—next October. In June for example, all those terrible students will still be involved in

of professional politicians overnight. Therefore a simple leaflet and poster stating the permanent institutions which really concern our everyday lives would be one shot in a continuous anarchist campaign.

We can put in appearances at the polling stations with our own newspapers and magazines putting the various anarchist points of view. This will be the most effective way of raising anarchist programmes and policies. The burning of ballot boxes will only be an inconvenience not a philosophy.

DENNIS GOULD.

### Freedom Pamphlet No. 2

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exams. October would have meant campuses full of freshmen raring to go, reinforcing experienced campaigners back from holidays full of energy and ideas picked up from Continental and American contacts. The other hazard about waiting until summer was over was the threat of the Holy Game of Cricket being disturbed by violent demonstrations, giving the Tories all the handle they wanted for a 'Law-and-order' election issue.

Wily Harold has scotched all that. Even the two or three games planned for before the 18th would have created an impression of a Government unable to govern either the cricketers or the demonstrators. So the Government leaned on the Cricket Council, thereby avoiding all that embarrassment and at the same time letting the whole hotch-potch of supporters of STST—from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Sir Edward Boyle to the wild Young Liberals and anarchists, think that Britain's Labour Government hates apartheid just as much as every good solid democrat does.

This sensible move has relieved the police, who have no relish for situations where they might get hurt (bashing pickets is something else) and should win back some of those liberal votes which five years of Labour has surely lost. All of black Africa is now happy with Harold, while cricket with the West Indies and the Commonwealth Games are both saved!

On such considerations are elec-

## LESSER EVILISM: AN AMERICAN LESSON

**LESSER EVILISM** returns to plague British Politics in 1970. 'If you don't vote Labour, the Tories will destroy everything! All the progress we've made will be ruined. I know Wilson is bad, but we have no choice!'

In 1964 elections in the United States, young Americans were trudging from door to door, begging with people. 'Look,' we pleaded, 'if you don't vote for Johnson, Goldwater will be president. He is sure to bring on an incredible slaughter in South East Asia, race riots at home, and economic chaos everywhere! We talked with anyone who would listen. Every once-in-a-while someone would close the door in our faces saying, 'They're all the same.' We were shocked at the naïveté of these people.

Onward we travelled, undaunted, our eyes still wet from watching the Kennedy funeral on television. The myth of the good-looking young hero still blinded us to the Bay of Pigs and the Missile Crisis. It was only later that we saw through the pretty face, the nice smile, and the firm handshake to the politician who lay underneath the facade. For the time being, we were on the trail to save America.

The night of the election, the entire country heaved a sigh of relief, as Johnson took the election by the largest landslide since Franklin Roosevelt. On the day of the inauguration we all smiled as Johnson drawled, 'My fellow Americans, let us continue. . . .'

A few months later we turned on our radios to hear a special bulletin. 'Today, President Johnson announced that the United States has begun air attacks on North Vietnam. This action was taken as a response. . . . The nation closed

tions timed and won and lost. It's very like cricket, really, and just as important. Unhappily, the British people don't get as worked up about the farce of elections as they do about racist cricket!

So how about a Stop The Seventy's Election campaign? How about threatening to sit in at polling stations, flashing mirrors in the voters' eyes and running in front of the tellers' tables? How about attacking the hypocrisy of pretending that white, black or brown Englishmen have any say in running their lives, just by marking someone else's name with a cross once every five years?

If any 'sporting' event in this country was as crooked as politics; if any game was a con game to the extent of an election; if every competitor was merely a front guy, pepped up and propped up from behind like the candidates; if any tickets cost as much and we got such a shabby, unconvincing display of shadow boxing in return with every contender failing to live up to his earlier promise—if the World Cup contest ended up like a General Election, we would have revolution tomorrow!

But we won't, because it isn't. The Election is presented straight and the customers fall for it. It is a programme of Grand Guignol melodrama, overlaid with black humour from the Theatre of the Absurd. It is so incredible that everybody believes in it—while it is being performed. And afterwards it is too late. We are the suckers who pay for our seats, pay the players—winners and losers!—we even build the bloody theatre!

And the next morning we go back to work as though nothing has happened. And, of course, it hasn't.

JUSTIN.

## AFTER 1984—What?

**DUE TO INCREASING** abstentions from voting and the increasing successes of the psephologists, pollsters and computers in forecasting the results of the elections, it was decided in 1980 to abolish voting but to continue the public opinion polls. The formulae was based upon the football pools based upon form predictions in unplayed matches and computer prize-fighting. Football matches were banned under the Public Order Act in 1976, and Dame Edith Summerskill had by a snap vote on a sleepy afternoon in the Commons, succeeded in banning boxing.

It was decided to keep the party system, nomination of candidates as it was, but simply take all the public opinion poll figures on one particular day (the one after that appointed for expiry of the government's term of office), feed them into the computer together with the names of candidates and the resultant would be the elected candidates. In fact the number of public opinion polls was so many and the actual voting numbers were so low that the numbers of electorate fed into the computer was higher than the average polling. Returns of members were, of course, by proportional representation, since it was not possible to programme

the complexities of the previous system.

In 1984 after the second computerized election, the Minister of Technology, Mr. Spode-Chambers, announced that a technical committee had been set up to look into the possibility of computerizing the decisions of Parliament. It would mean analysing the responses (on the Eynsenck scale) of all the parties on all the major political issues of the day and feeding in the tapes to enmesh with the frequency occurrence wave of various issues. These would agitate the responses of the party tapes and release a disc which would signify a negative or a positive response from the activated electrodes. These discs, when set in balance against each other, would activate a lever which would record 'Yea' or 'Nay'. Speeches could be fed in for the purpose of measuring decibels and a degree of emotional concern would add to the weight of the discs on both sides. Whichever could shout the loudest would tend to swing the balance. There were some snags in this process but it was felt in the main by the Ministry that the scheme was possible and after all 'what was sauce for the goose, was sauce for the gander'.

JACK SPRATT.

## After the Ball is over

**WHILST THE MAJORITY** of people are distracted from their normal and important everyday lives by the election, the anarchist minority has an opportunity to put more basic questions to people of every kind, whether 'eligible to vote' or not. Since many people will be watching the World Cup Football in Mexico, whilst others will be supporting other demonstrations, there will be not a little opposition to the charade of expressing political opinion by a small sign opposite someone's name. However, sufficient people will always be prepared to vote away their power to professional politicians until they are deeply convinced otherwise—that not voting is a positive step towards a fundamentally more libertarian society.

One small but significant contribution that readers of papers like *Peace News*, *Catonsville Roadrunner*, *It*, and, of course, *FREEDOM* and *Anarchy* can make, is to point out the permanency of civil servants; police; soldiers; magistrates; lawyers; that body of men and institutions (such as Banks; Universities; Schools; Town Halls) which really de-

termine the character of our society; and which, politicians however liberal and concerned about civil liberties, hardly disturb or alter in any fundamental way at all. Indeed how could they, since, in the final analysis, these same people and same institutions are the ones which maintain and support the politicians—with force and violence if necessary.

It can never be repeated too often that one of the main functions of a police force is to police the state. To police the people of the state. To act as the internal army of the state. The various civil servants of the community are the uncivil masters of the community. The soldiers, far from being there as the defence force of the whole of society, are there as the defence force of the government—the governors. Magistrates and lawyers, far from exercising justice, practice law. The whole state machinery is a permanent blot on the landscape of a libertarian society. To help remove the myths and faiths of voting is to reveal the way in which society works day by day. A way which would not be seriously altered by the disappearance

its eyes to see Johnson smiling as he pulled off his mask to reveal the countenance of Barry Goldwater. Goldwater then ripped off his face and there, underneath, was that good-looking all-American boy John Kennedy, still smiling and waving to the crowd. On that day, half a generation learned the fallacy of lesser evilism.

We learned that changes must come through people, not politicians. During the next election there were new faces. They went door to door, telling the people within to vote for one candidate or the other because he was the lesser of two evils. There were less this time, though. The old faces were now on the streets of Chicago, or in the Ghettoes of Miami. Their ballots were their bodies. They no longer were taking 'one or the other', they were making a real choice. The Yippies nominated a Pig for president, then ate it. 'For the first time, the people will eat the candidate, and not the other way around.' They called their celebration 'a Festival of Life', an alternative to the Democratic 'Festival of Death'. In Chicago, the forces of Death were too strong. They stamped out the Festival of Life, but not before the idea effected an entire culture. Next time we'll be stronger. We may even win. Even if we don't we will be truly able to say we made a choice.

Now the British people are faced to decide between the quick kill of the Tories or the slow death of the Labour Party. There is another alternative, one yet to be created. One to be made with the bodies and souls of people who reject 'lesser evilism in 1970', people who will dare to make a real choice.

MIKE BOARD.

# To the Censor all Things are Censorable

This letter was enclosed with a publication we received from Scandinavia. It should be self-explanatory.

## TO THE 'SICK' MORALISTIC LETTER SPY:

NOW THAT YOU HAVE opened this letter, do you feel better?

Perhaps you feel excited that you are spying on other people, more respectable than yourself, whose sense of decency would not allow them to open your mail even were they given the opportunity. In point of fact would YOUR mail bear close scrutiny? To judge from your employment that can be called into grave doubt.

Of course you fall back on the old defence, 'it's my orders'. THAT IS WHAT HITLER'S SS CONTINUALLY BLEATED AT THEIR TRIALS!!! It takes all responsibility from you (but not the blame—how spineless and subservient can you be?), and places it firmly on the shoulders of your employers. You should have the sense to realise that YOU do THEIR job for them because they are much too wise to do something that is, in the eyes

of the world (and make no mistake, the world knows that you do it), contemptible and makes a mockery of 'democracy' which is so much prized, ON PAPER, in England.

Do you honestly think (if thinking has not been trained out of your system by your employers) that a person who sends for pornography for his/her private gratification, is a monster who will harm the nation? What is more immoral: to read a book one likes or to open letters addressed to others? Letter secrecy is a fundamental right in all free countries, letter censorship exists only in countries of slaves.

If you agree that what you are doing is wrong (and how could you not so agree), then show that you are a rational human being with the courage commensurate with your standing. Give this letter to your employers and tell them to do their own immoral work. For the first time since you commenced this degrading employment you will have done the RIGHT thing.

If none of the foregoing has made any impression on you, then perhaps your employers and you could take your-

selves to an uninhabited island where you can all found a colony of immoral, fanatical, puritanistic, repressed, frustrated people??? Please don't stay in England, the Country does not deserve you.

Apart from the immorality of your action do you think it is legal? It is doubtful.

According to the Postal Convention which you refer to, obscene matters may be seized—but it does not say that you are entitled to violate letter secrecy in search for these things. Surely a

nude man would not be allowed through the customs because of his indecency—but if you undress all guests coming into England you'll find that they are all nude underneath. With genitals and all. The letter you hold in your hands could never have been obscene to you—unless you had opened it.

Should you still prefer to seize this letter remember what the Postal Convention you always refer to says: the postal authorities in the country of the sender HAVE TO BE INFORMED OF YOUR PROCEDURE. Do inform them. This gives the British censorship a certain—not flattering—reputation internationally. Don't be afraid, follow the rules and let the world know how little freedom in Great Britain is respected.

## Freedom of Assembly Denied

MANDERS' PROPERTY LTD., proprietors of a large shopping centre in Wolverhampton, have attacked the freedom of speech and assembly by banning political groups from using the centre's precincts for distributing leaflets and petitions. The ban is being challenged by the Young Socialists who were collecting signatures opposing the South African Cricket Tour, and the Anti-Common Marketeers.

Legally the owners may impose conditions on those who use the area controlled by them and, if these are broken, can take action for trespass. There are those who want to see trespass made a criminal offence, but at present, it remains a civil matter and one which can only be dealt with through the courts. This takes time. Alternatively if a disturbance occurred because people refused to leave the area, the police could be called and charges of breach of peace

brought. On the face of it, legal restrictions on activities on private property seem reasonable enough. But the private ownership of shopping centres in provincial towns certainly confronts protesters with difficulties when exercising rights permitted on public property. Manders could have been more sensitive to the problem by granting permission for the collection of signatures, but this they are not prepared to do. Their financial director has stated: 'This is a shopping centre, a commercial venture. We do not want to get mixed up in politics.'

The NCCL (152 Camden High Street, London, N.W.1) would welcome assistance in establishing whether or not this problem is confined to Wolverhampton, for we believe that citizens' traditional freedoms should take precedence over commercial interests.

NCCL BULLETIN.

## 2 POSTERS!

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and  
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## Marxism and Human Affectivity

MARX WAS TOTALLY unaware of the complexity of human affectivity. Even if Marx concretely conveyed the notion of alienation, he, nevertheless, limited its causes to economic factors. He was incapable of recognizing the immediate aspects of fundamental alienation: i.e., egotism, avidity, combative passion, and absolutization.

Marx had foreseen that capitalism would drive the masses to misery and revolt. In reality, capitalism, having discovered that the productive worker was also a consumer, found itself obliged—in order to increase its profits—to augment the buying power of the workers, thus giving them the illusion of wealth and property, and making them lose their class consciousness, and without the enormous injustices—due precisely to the existence of these classes—disappearing.

Marx deluded himself into believing that wars between nations would disappear owing to the bourgeois-proletariat conflict. But two World Wars and multiple nationalist wars have proven that national borders have retained their effective and destructive virulence—for example the Sino-Soviet conflict. They have demonstrated the supremacy of passionate factors over economic factors. Economic conditions do not suffice

any longer in explaining the complexity of the sentiment of love: dutiful love, sentimental love, pleasurable love, etc. It is very necessary, then, to attribute to the character of a special reality within the framework of human affectivity.

What Marx did not see was that the fundamental needs of man are:

- free love (equalitarian and constructive, but suffocated by the State and religious prejudices);
- creative autonomy;
- social fraternity.

When these needs remain unsatisfied, they grow into artificial needs of the passions (possessiveness, avidity, 'will to power', etc.). By remaining cut off from the knowledge of EFFECTIVE man, Marx and the Marxists can explain:

- neither the primitive accumulation of capital;
- nor the living and creative character of freedom (reduced by them to a tactical choice);
- nor the degeneration of 'revolutions' into new totalitarian regimes (which they purely and simply deny).

G. E. VARLIN, *Espoir*, No. 412, Dec. 14, 1969, translated by George Wuerth.

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We missed Monday post, 'cos some folk treat it like a Sunday occasionally. So if you would have sent the Press Fund some money on Monday, we don't mind if it's posted today. Better late than never!



All correspondence to  
Peter Le Mare, 5 Hannaford Road,  
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## ANARCHIST FEDERATION of BRITAIN

**LONDON FEDERATION OF ANARCHISTS.** All correspondence to LFA, c/o Freedom Press, Black Knight Group, 5 Nelson Road, N.8. Meeting Wednesdays.  
**LAVENDER HILL.** Contact C. Broad, 116 Tyneham Road, S.W.11 (228 4086).  
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**PORTOBELLO ROAD ANARCHIST GROUP.** Contact Andrew Dewar, 16 Kilburn House, Malvern Place, N.W.6. Meetings 8 p.m. every Tuesday.  
**FINCH'S ANARCHISTS.** Regular meetings. Contact P.P., 271 Portobello Road, W.11.  
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**YORK.** Contact R. Atkins, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.  
**LSE.** St. Clements Buildings, Houghton Street, W.C.2.  
**LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY GROUP.** At the Anarchist Bookstall, Union Foyer, every Friday lunch time or write Anarchist Group, Student Union, Liverpool University.  
**SCHOOLS ANARCHIST GROUP.** Kate & Joe, 3 Withy Lea, Leonard Stanley, nr. Stonehouse, GL10 3NS, Gloucestershire.  
**SCHOOLS ANARCHIST GROUP — BELFAST AREA.** Michael Scott, Longshot, Ballyvaughis, Lisburn.

### ABROAD

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**BELGIUM.** Groupe du journal Le Libertaire, 220 rue Vivegnis, Liège.  
**RADICAL LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE.** Box 2104, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.

### PROPOSED GROUPS

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**BRISTOL GROUP.** Alex Bird, 59 Belvoir Road, St. Andrews, Bristol.  
**MONTREAL, QUEBEC.** Anyone interested in forming a Montreal area Anarchist group please contact Ron Sigler. Tel. 489-6432.  
**NOTTINGHAM** and area. Contact Jim Hewson, 43 Henry Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.  
**NOVA SCOTIA.** P. Ridley, c/o Newport Post Office, Newport, Nova Scotia, Canada.  
**OXFORD ANARCHISTS.** Dave Archard, Corpus Christi College, or John Humphries, Balliol.  
**VANCOUVER I.W.W.** and Libertarian group. Box 512, Postal St. 'A', Vancouver 1, B.C., Canada. Read 'The Rebel'—please send donation for postage.

Please notify us if entries in these columns need amending.

# TUMBRILS ON THE CRICKET PITCH



**T**HE CANCELLATION of the South African cricket tour has been made (to coin a phrase) a political football. The sly Mr. Wilson has circumvented the trap of a demo-haunted election day, has put Mr. Callaghan (his party rival) on the spot, has appeased the Police Federation and gained some progressive votes—'After all, he did stop the Seventies tour'. In fact he did not stop it although the right wing will go on believing that he did.

The advent of the election has made clear thinking on politics even more difficult than usual. To hear right-wing politicians one would think that South Africa was dear to our hearts, and that cricket was out national sport... if demonstrations had threatened the World Cup games or had been anti-Mexican, that would have been something.

All that can be done now is to emphasise that the Labour Government have given way to blackmail. In fact one of the hard lessons of political life (and real life) is that one has occasionally to give way to blackmail. And if, as Mr. Wilson craftily saw, there are some advantages to be gained from giving way, one might as well do so, otherwise one might resist. Mr. Wilson has never given way before to the 'blackmail' of a demonstration or a proposed demonstration.

Many years ago in FREEDOM it was

pointed out that 'sport is the opiate of the people' and that 'cricket with its pre-occupation with protocol, leisure and space and the comparative complexity of its equipment and costume marks it out as a leisure class activity with a highly-developed factor of conspicuous consumption. The consumption of time and of space and the apparent unimportance of the result ("It matters not whether you lost or won, but how you played the game") makes it an obvious upper class pastime. It is the only game which has [or had] the honesty to proclaim a contest between gentlemen and players and Kipling has observed the distinction between "muddied oafs and flannelled fools".'

What one might take to be a leading satirist now writes 'Cricket in England was more than a game. It was a national institution, a way of life, the symbolic representation of a certain national attitude of mind—leisurely, gentle, relaxed, essentially non-violent. Like unarmed policemen and the village pub it was the outward and visible sign of a settled, peaceful, orderly society, a white-flannelled, summer afternoon, strawberry and cream society blessed by sweet composure and cool ritual. That idyll is now over.'

Most social historians seem to feel that 'idyll' ended about 1914. The success of *The Forsyte Saga* was due to the

way it recaptured the nostalgia of the pre-1914 era—for the upper class! This tribute to cricket, if you hadn't guessed it, was written by Peregrine Worsthorpe of the *Sunday Telegraph*. He goes on, incredibly enough, 'The protest industry has done what war and slump had failed to do; interrupted the Englishman at play, destroyed the dream, disrupted the illusion. The fall of the Bastille marked the end of the *ancien regime* in France. The humiliation of the MCC is a comparable act of revolution, none the less sinister for being played out behind the scenes. Bitterness and anger have triumphed over peace and calm. Nothing will be the same again.' We know there's an election on but in the words that G. K. Chesterton addressed to F. E. Smith on a similar occasion, 'Chuck it Worsthorpe!'

Does Peregrine really believe that the cancellation of the South African tour means that Peter Hain has pre-empted the authority of the Home Secretary? That the 'rock' of a Home Secretary has proved to be a 'sponge'? That Britain is setting the pace for disintegration? That this government has abdicated responsibility?

He must really remember this is an election for the Labour Party too and whilst they must appease their left wing by cancelling the tour, the Conservatives must rally their right-wing by opposing

the cancellation, if not on pro-South African grounds, on grounds of law-and-order (the same grounds which Callaghan presumably put to the MCC).

Peregrine Worsthorpe then completely goes to pieces. He has fantasies about if the Government only uphold the law when they choose to, the rule of law is undermined. True, that is why we are anarchists—the Government *always* chooses the laws it will uphold. He withdraws his support of the Government's stand on 'lawandorder' hitherto. He thinks their record is good up to this one point but 'this is a surrender of government itself'.

His earliest reference to the fall of the Bastille typifies his characteristic dream—he sees the Labour Party ushering a reign of terror with Harold Wilson as Danton and Peter Hain as Robespierre, but who for Napoleon? Not Jeremy surely? After all Hain is only a Young Liberal, a between-election anarchist. Lords is not going to run with blood. The Committee of Public Safety is not taking over from the MCC. The guillotine is not being set up in The Tavern.

Harold Wilson is more Talleyrand than Danton. He will survive whatever the 'revolution'. And this South African tour cancellation is more grandstand play than prelude to revolution. Calm down Peregrine! JACK ROBINSON.

Any book not in stock, but in print can be promptly supplied. Book Tokens accepted. Please add postage & cash with order helps.

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## Is 'Freedom' an Anarchist Newspaper?

Dear Sir,  
I would just like to comment on Pete Ridley's letter (May 9 issue). I do hope book reviews (you don't have too many) or Arthur Moyses' 'Around the Galleries', won't be cut out. I really think, as is said nowadays, they are therapeutic. 'The Myth of Intelligence' was very good reading indeed, that should please Pete. I'm satisfied with FREEDOM and the Squatters are great.

Belfast JOAN TONER.

## The New Holy War

Dear Comrades,  
I would like to clear up a few points in Dave Coull's letter re 'The New Holy War'. Did I write incoherently or did Dave misread it?

First, I never disputed that FREEDOM is an anarchist newspaper, nor, anywhere in the article did I infer that it should be anything but that.

According to Dave I believe art to be more important than anarchism. That's a pretty hair-raising generalisation of the statement that I am a man first, writer second and anarchist third, a statement that I concede is arbitrary, as

all elements go up to make the whole. To develop fully what I meant would take up too much space.

Thirdly, not knowing me, how can Dave be sure, as he certainly is in his letter, that I would be annoyed if my 'favourite arts magazine'—(cringe, cringe)—I haven't got one Dave—showed signs of developing into a revolutionary journal?

I get annoyed by the moral somersaults, paradoxes, simplistic thinking and slogan bashing that occurs in FREEDOM, so never mind about this theoretical 'favourite arts magazine' of mine.

And lastly, Dave, I was criticising a state of mind, to be found amongst some anarchists, and, again, nowhere claimed that FREEDOM was guilty of a consistent line on the political artist.

Best wishes,  
Isle of Arran PETER GRAFTON.

## Secret Information or Police Con?

Dear Comrades,  
It is a stale fact that the State Machine nurses computerised data and microfilm information on every known dissenting activist alive on this island. Libertarian theoretician, revolutionary militant, urban guerrilla, anarchist insurrectionist, peace freak; whoever, whatever. You are investigated, evaluated, defined, categorized. Right down to your tastes in

socks, contraceptives, beer. All very ego-boosting for which system-screwed would not weep upon discovering that he'd failed to make the official grade as a dangerous extremist. What is not generally known is just what the Machine has in store for the filed brotherhood in certain vaguely defined moments of political crisis or conditions of supposed national emergency.

## Letters

Some weeks ago I was approached by two quietly-dressed middle-aged characters who radiated a sickly aura of officialdom. Their story was that for some time they had enjoyed partial access to such records held by the newly constituted Lancashire police authority. A twinge of conscience or a resurrection of humanity (?) impelled them to spill the beans, inasmuch as they were able, to somebody in a position to disseminate the harsh facts to those primarily concerned. Not sure if we can trust these guys. This could be a genuine liberation of secret informa-

tion. Conversely it could well be a deliberate police leak; albeit imaginative fantasy or objectively correct. Whatever the case, it reads as a grimly interesting story.

Known extremists are to be placed under immediate arrest and removed to local detention centres until it is expedient to house them in special security accommodation. Families will have mobility restricted to the direct area and will remain under the surveillance and care of a delegated official. All contacts carefully scrutinised and checked until they can be realistically and effectively cleared. Extremely thorough investigation of prisoner's effects and all pertinent material removed for detailed examination.

Prisoners must not have access to telephones, newspapers or be allowed visitors. In no circumstances will explanations or other information be given them, relating to their circumstances and detention. Solicitors will not be contacted. As soon as convenient an examination by a visiting psychiatrist is intended and considered essential. Prisoners should be encouraged to talk freely and have a sympathetic hearing. They will be requested to attend group therapy sessions with resident officials. At this stage some prisoners will be released under observation but others will have to be housed for indeterminate periods in special security accommodation or sent to suitable existing institutions.

Unbelievable or credible? It is very disturbing. How authentic it is I honestly don't know. Nonetheless, spoof or not, it is a tale that should never bore with repetition. If only life was as simple as university files on leftist students.

I'd never seen these men before and have not met them since. They both had traces of Lancashire twang in their clipped, precise voices. The information was supposed to have been obtained from several files. They could produce no documented proof. Nor would or could they verify their own official capacity.

Regards I can't be clearer.  
Best wishes,  
DAVE CUNLIFFE.

## HARSH REMAND TREATMENT

**T**HE NCCL MEMBER who investigated the refusals of bail following the Endell Street and Fulham squatting incidents encountered some disturbing complaints about conditions at Ashford Remand Centre. The inmates were subjected to boredom and frustration due to a lack of spare-time activities such as games or indeed any communal activity. One person was invited to join just one PT class during a 3½ month period awaiting trial. This appeared to be

fairly typical. Many prisoners complained of the lack of information about rights and privileges and stated that the regime was in some ways more harsh than an ordinary prison. Some young French prisoners were completely bewildered as virtually no attempt was made to explain anything to them or find an interpreter. There was often only one exercise period a day, contrary to prison regulations. No clear direction was given

regarding pay entitlement and a boy who protested that he had received less than his due, alleges that he was threatened with physical force. There were many incidents concerning the arbitrary conduct of the staff when visitors tried to bring in clean clothing. Our observer found it difficult to determine whether this was calculated harassment of unpopular prisoners like the squatters, sheer muddle due to overcrowded conditions, or a mixture of the two.

The dozen or so squatters who spent several months awaiting trial at Ashford, regarded their stay as equivalent or worse than an actual prison sentence and were demoralized and embittered by their experience.

NCCL BULLETIN.

## WITHDRAW FROM BARCLAY'S

**WE ASK YOU** to withdraw your account from Barclays and to write to your local manager to explain why.

We are sincerely disturbed that you may not know the true facts about Barclay's involvement in South Africa.

Everyone agrees that apartheid is an evil system, but it is the economic support that the Western world provides through financial involvement, that keeps it alive.

Barclays Bank has a 54% controlling interest in Barclays DCO (the overseas subsidiary of Barclays). 909 of Barclays DCO branches are in South Africa. This is the greater part of their entire operation. They also have branches in Rhodesia.

South Africa is Barclay DCO's biggest sphere of operations. It is one of the biggest banks in South Africa and one

of its largest customers is Anglo-American, leader of the ZAMCO consortium. Harry Oppenheimer, Anglo-American's Chairman is one of DCO's Directors. So is Sidney Spiro who is also Deputy Chairman of Charter Consolidated, which acts as Anglo-American's overseas arm. Charter Consolidated is a London-based mining and finance company, 38% of whose assets are in South Africa and which acts as UK share transfer secretary to 58 South African mining and investment companies.

Barclays DCO is involved in financing the construction of the Cabora Bassa Dam in Portuguese Mozambique. This is to serve Mozambique, South Africa and Rhodesia, and is contrary to the Sanctions Laws against Rhodesia.

To subscribe to racism is to be a racist. (Issued by ARM, Anti-Racist Movement, 22 Topsfield Parade, N.8.)

## WARNING

**WE PROCLAIM** to comrades that a youth, Aniello d'Errico, has travelled from Milan to Piacenza, to Bologna, to Forli, to Ravenna, to Rimini, to Canosa di Puglia, always followed at 200 metres by the police, thus permitting these to locate the houses of militants, offices of groups (two of which have been closed), inculcating thus dozens of sincere and generous comrades. We don't know if he is a paid or a blackmailed police spy, an agent-provocateur or simply an imbecile. In any case we ask all comrades to welcome only those provided with a letter of introduction.

Linee per Una  
Rivoluzione Libertaria,  
194.70.  
Trans. S.M.

## The Myth of Intelligence

Dear Comrades,  
I'm afraid that Geoffrey Barfoot has got things muddled. I am a professional psychologist and a behaviourist, and I can assure him that behaviourist psychologists do not reject the concept of intelligence—read their books and articles. They reject 'the mystical soul-shit' because it doesn't mean anything; but intelligence is a meaningful, useful concept like height, weight and speed. To say that intelligence is a 'myth' is just like saying that height is a 'myth'. Perlo's article read like the howl of a dwarf denying the existence of height. Such ravings have no relevance to anarchism, which is a rational system of ideas.

One does not have to be a physical culture expert to use the concept of height any more than one needs to be a psychologist to use the concept of intelligence. We know from our

# Freedom Press

publish  
FREEDOM weekly at 9d.  
and ANARCHY monthly at 3s.  
from  
84b Whitechapel High Street  
London E1  
01-247 9249  
Entrance Angel Alley,  
Whitechapel Art Gallery exit,  
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own experience that some men are taller than others and some men are more intelligent than others. We all differ in these and other personal attributes, and if necessary such attributes can be measured. But it does not follow that the taller or cleverer among us are in any sense 'better' or more deserving of consideration. Taller men are entitled to longer trousers ('To each according to his needs...') and cleverer men can be expected to do more intricate work. But, as we know, our present form of society has a power structure and a system of differential rewards which we anarchists oppose. To pretend that we are all alike, to deny the very great individual differences among us is sheer reactionary nonsense. What anarchists desire is the abolition of the power structure, the wages system, etc., in favour of creating a social system in which we all—tall and short, intelligent and stupid—have a chance to develop a way of life happily suited to our individual personal attributes. I'd hate the life of an athlete—my legs aren't long enough for that.

Psychological techniques are useful in finding things out about individual differences—just as tape measures, weighing machines and stop watches are. But some poor kids are awfully frightened of bogey-men.

TONY GIBSON.

**HIS IDEAL** is to see property so widely distributed that even urban man has something to fall back on—whether it is a workshop in the backyard or a croft in the Highlands. Since the amount of land is limited, he is prepared to accept that there must be some limitation to the amount of land which any individual may own. He envisages the Scotland of the future as a body of autonomous self-dependent individuals regulated by a state which is judge and law-giver rather than an over-mighty centre of power.

This comes from a book entitled *Scottish Nationalism*, by H. J. Hanham, New Zealander, now Professor of History at Harvard. It refers to Dr. Robert MacIntyre, father-figure of the SNP, blamed by Hanham for that party's 'excessively libertarian' outlook.

'Anyone who reads the SNP 1946 policy statement (which is still official SNP policy) will recognise that he is reading an unusual document. For it deliberately sets out to offer something quite different from the offerings of other parties. The nearest parallels are with the Social Credit movements in Canada and New Zealand and with the Populism of the United States and Scandinavia. There is much the same emphasis on the little man, and on building up small-town democracy, as in these movements outside Scotland. And there is the same mixture of influences at work—Henry George, Douglas Social Credit, Christian Socialism, Anarchism, Political Radicalism—everything except a frank acceptance of the modern state and of modern bureaucratized industrial, political, trade union, and commercial empires.'

Certainly, Hanham's description of MacIntyre could have been written about the 'individualist-anarchist' Ben Tucker. Even the law and order bit—Tucker supported capital punishment. Of course, no political party is going to bring about a society consisting of 'autonomous self-dependent individuals'. In practice, the SNP would be little different from any other pack of power seekers. Still, we should note in passing that FREEDOM's official line on Scottish Nationalism—

# What about the Petit Bourgeoisie?

that its appeal is purely xenophobic\*—cannot be taken seriously.

## ARE THE PEASANTS REVOLTING?

Until recently a militant demonstration by impoverished British farmers would have sounded improbable. Yet it has happened before our very eyes, or at least in front of the television camera. By now we are all aware that some farmers live in genuine poverty.

I grew up in a semi-rural environment, and am at present staying in the village of my birth. Less than two miles away there is a large house set in spacious grounds, which I explored during my scrumping days. I also worked for the gentry who own it. The County of Angus Education Authorities gave all children two weeks 'tattie holidays' in the autumn. They still do, and from what my niece has told me, things haven't changed much. These 'holidays' provide cheap labour for farmers, and are sometimes extended, depending on the weather, until the whole potato crop has been brought in.

At the age of ten I went on a 'half-bit' (adults gather a 'bit'). I've done many kinds of toil since then, but there's nothing more back-breaking than tattie liftin'. We only saw the farmer on Saturday, when he drove up in his Jag to give the grievance (foreman) our wages. Strangely enough, we enjoyed these 'holidays'. After all, provided they've

got some energy to spare, it's marvellous what kids can get up to in the country; and fortunately, the 'digger' could be sabotaged. Nevertheless, farmers are not my favourite section of the community.

I'm prepared to accept that this part of the country is untypical, that many working farmers and their families live precarious lives. Yet even the poorest peasant looks down on the proletariat. He may be state-subsidised, but he believes in 'rugged individualism'. It would be nice if the small farmer would join forces with the rural and urban working class, but such alliances are only forged in the heat of a revolutionary situation. Which brings us to the point of this article, I'm glad to say—just exactly what does the revolution offer to the 'small man'?

## THE FREE SOCIETY

Hanham attributed to MacIntyre a belief in 'the widest possible distribution of property'. Proudhon, another champion of 'the little man' said 'property is theft'. These ideas aren't contradictory. A free society would surely encourage the widest possible distribution of both necessities and luxuries—for who is to say which is which? If a bloke wants to operate a workshop, either alone or with one or two friends, or farm a few acres without exploiting anyone, the best of luck to him. But you just can't cater for the needs of the world's teeming millions working on that scale. Even with de-

centralisation, there will still be some very large industrial units. And control of them by a privileged group is theft.

One thing which ought to be taken into consideration is the rapid development of oceanology. For thousands of years man has been a hunter upon the seas. Now, no matter what form society may assume, exploitation of the vast underwater food and mineral resources will happen. It won't be done by 'little men', and the mess which capitalists and bureaucrats would make doesn't bear thinking about.

But perhaps I'm getting out of my depth, or at least a bit off course. The one thing we anarchists shouldn't do is to make blueprints. However, we can examine some of the possibilities. For instance, the kibbutzim. These used to be held up for our admiration, and indeed there is much to admire. But the passage of time has revealed serious drawbacks. Children brought up in a kibbutz have a certain sameness about them. On their home ground, kibbutzniks treat outsiders with amused condescension. Away from the kibbutz, they become withdrawn, lacking in confidence. It is significant that the few kibbutzniks who leave feel like and are regarded as turncoats.

Probably the best kind of agricultural association (and similar principles, of course, apply to town based craftsmen) would be a loosely organised and completely voluntary co-operative. Possibly

some farmers wouldn't want to be considered part of it. Well, it's a free country. Or at least it will be. This is something which many people find difficult to grasp. A comrade once told me that in a free society every community would have its village poet. I replied that he was welcome to write poetry, but everyone should do a share of the dirty work. It had never occurred to him that we might not want a village poet.

When discussing anarchy, those who are afraid of freedom often express a worry that some mythical body may force them to join a commune against their will. I have tried to show that this couldn't happen in an anarchist society. Like most anarchists, I have a very simple attitude towards my fellow man. He can do what he damn well likes—provided it doesn't interfere with my freedom.

DAVE COULL.

\*FREEDOM editorial, 21.2.70.

N.B.—'Petit Bourgeoisie' is used here in the Proudhonian sense of 'self-employed workers'.

## Contact

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

**Chemical and Biological Warfare Action Group.** Meeting on Monday, June 15, at 7.30 p.m., at 6 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.1. All who are concerned welcome.

**'The Alternative Election'** — Anarcho-Syndicalism; illustrated poster available, 4/- post free or 7 copies for a guinea. From Syndicalist Workers Federation, c/o 18 Scoresdale, 13 Beulah Hill, London, S.E.19.

**American Anarchist** will be in Amsterdam for a week starting about August 18. Needs lodging. Write Mike Board, c/o Freedom Press.

**Angry Art Films.** Camden Studios, Camden Street, N.W.1.

**'The Hornsey Film'**, June 5 & 6, 8 p.m.

Admission: 5/-; Membership: 2/6. Phone 263 0613.

**Birmingham.** Anyone interested in street theatre, experienced or not, contact Alan Dipple, 28 Dyott Road, Moseley, Birmingham, 13. Tel. 021-449 3134.

**'Spanish Political Prisoners' and 'Looking Back After 20 Years in Jail'** by Miguel Garcia Garcia. 2/6 the pair inc. post from Freedom Press.

**Merseyside Anarchists:** Meetings 8 p.m. on first Sunday of each month at 172A Lodge Lane, Liverpool 8. Contact J. B. Cowen at above address.

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

**Manchester Anti-Election Campaign.** Bill West, 16 Northern Grove, West Didsbury, Manchester 20. Meetings every Wednesday.

**Tory Five Point Fascism Electioneering.** We must start our work now—preparation for printed leaflets and posters for a nationwide factory gate campaign—money and ideas needed—Interested? Contact L.S.F., c/o Keith Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York.

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

## The Industrial Relations Act

**IT IS, OF COURSE,** a maxim of the revolutionary movement that the working class must act by itself and seek its own salvation. Daily, anarchists, solidarists and other libertarian elements curse the state and seek to prove to the working class that the state is a poison. We also spend a great deal of our time trying to persuade the workers to defend themselves... while the workers live in daily fear of dismissal if they do take action. In Britain 1969, the boss can still sack you, entirely without reason, and that harsh fact is still a governing factor in working class life.

To the vast majority of revolutionaries, the Government's proposed Industrial Relations Act is anathema. Like all the other offerings of the state, we can see little in it, beyond another dreary swindle perpetrated on the working people of this country. But, I would contend, stripped of the 'penal clauses', the new Act, although at heart still an anti-working class document, can be used to good advantage by militants. Let us remember, especially those who have had no part in any real struggle and who idealise the workers from afar, that only about 30% of the working population of this country are organised in trade unions; and this after nearly 200 years of organising. For the rest, life constitutes a virtual rape by the employers; wages are miserable, conditions

hellish and such industrial legislation as the Factory Acts remain virtually unapplied.

Let any man or woman voice any discontent in this type of set-up and the employer uses his ultimate weapon, the order of the boot. I have worked in places where workers fell over with the cold, where women were threatened with the sack for going home when stricken with severe period pains, where the safety precautions were nil and the fire precautions even less. Anyone who has worked in fish processing, shop work, slaughter houses and a considerable part of the offices and farms of this country needs no lesson from revolutionaries as to what tyranny means. Anyone who has been sacked, not just for militancy, but for the basic 'crime' of attempting to organise trade unions where none existed before—and here I speak from bitter personal experience—cannot feel to give the provisions of the proposed Act more than a second look.

I can only say, that if the proposed Act had been in force a few years ago, one of my mates and I wouldn't have spent 7 weeks on the dole and wouldn't have been blacklisted for trying to bring trade unionism to the ruthlessly exploited fish workers of Aberdeen and quite a few other Aberdeen employers would have been forced—courtesy of the local Sheriff Court—to join the 20th century.

The car plants of the Midlands—where organisation of the workers is strong—may not need legal enforcement of the right to organise in unions, but for millions of workers I can only regard it as a fact that, without legal backing, they will remain without the elementary right to hold a union card.

Of course the Act contains clauses calculated to put workers in the dock for striking, but does anyone really see the Government jailing 20,000 Ford car workers? The militant and the organised will disregard such provisions; the advanced sections of the working class will cock the same snoot at the Government as they do at the union officials and bosses already. The downtrodden—often in areas where the concepts of feudalism are very far from dead—will, for the first time, have in the new laws a device which can give them that essential measure of human dignity—without which any advance in a socialist direction is impossible. People have got to be raised from the gutters. Imagine the effect in an unorganised factory or shop where elementary conditions are deplorable if a militant were to call in the Factory Inspectorate, issue trade union recruiting literature, set up a union branch, and then, after the ritual sacking, return to the place after a court victory. Would the workers in such a place ever again be the docile sheep they were? Would they not feel strengthened and heartened

by their witness of such an experience?

Mercifully, I'm now a student and well away from the problems of union organising and industrial militancy, but even during my vocational work, I've had it rubbed into me just how bad things can be in places where the workers are weak, vulnerable and their organisation bad. Working in a large supermarket where, in the first week of January, the heating and lighting packed in for hours, I was forced to impotently watch while the workers slaved on for hours in lousy conditions and my attempts to organise a walk-out met with the repeated expression by my fellow workers that they would get the sack. Were anyone sacked under such circumstances when the Act is in force, they could almost certainly, under the new proposals, expect reinstatement. For various reasons, chiefly the employment of workers from rural areas, married women and literally, mental defectives, it is very unlikely that a high degree of organisation will ever be obtained in this shop. Legal protection is the only defence they can, given the continued existence of capitalism, ever expect.

No doubt our ultra-revolutionary friends, half of whom have never had to sweat in their lives, or who engage in industrial militancy without having the tempering responsibility of maintaining homes and families, will now label me a toady of the Labour Government, etc. I would maintain that I live in a real world, speak from experience, and have the measure of the problem. Debate invited.

IAN SUTHERLAND.

## Black People's Legal Aid and Defence Fund

**ON SUNDAY, APRIL 26,** twenty brothers and sisters were arrested on the Solidarity Demonstration in support of our Black brothers and sisters in Trinidad and Tobago.

After the Court hearing on Monday the Black people who attended, left the Court at about 1 p.m., peacefully on their way home, escorted by a number of uniformed pigs. On reaching the ticket office at Oxford Circus tube station, they were suddenly pounced upon by a number of pigs in plain clothes, resulting in the further arrest of one sister and two brothers.

Brothers and Sisters, because of what happened on April 26 and 27, and no doubt what will continue to happen, we have seen the necessity to launch this Defence and Aid Fund.

The Brothers and Sisters who have

fully committed themselves to the struggle, need moral and financial support from all Black People so we can function more effectively in the coming confrontation with the law.

The welfare of brothers and sisters who are held in prison must be looked after, e.g. rent, food and clothing.

Please contribute what you can afford financially or otherwise.

Your donations will be used solely for this purpose.

All donations to be sent to:  
A. Williams,  
3 Hornsey Rise Gardens,  
London, N.19.

We also urge that you make a weekly/monthly contribution to 'THE DEFENCE AND AID FUND'.

## Festival in aid of Spanish Political Prisoners

**CONWAY HALL**  
**Red Lion Square, London WC1**  
**JUNE 20th at 7 pm**

Andalusian Dances—Guitar Solos  
Jotas—Disco-Dance, etc.

**Admission**  
**Adults 7s6d under 14's 4s**

Tickets obtainable from 84 Ilex Road London, NW10 (by post) or Freedom Bookshop

### JUMP

MY BROTHERS

### JUMP

Poems from prison  
by Tim Daly

edited and introduced  
by Adrian Mitchell

ANARCHY 110

anarchist pamphlets

# Freedom

NO. 2



## Students for a Stalinist Society

**I**T SEEMS to be finalized: Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the cutting-edge of the Movement in America, the mass organization (somewhere between 45,000 and 80,000 people; depending on whose statistics you happen to believe in) of the New Left in America, the working-coalition of the revolutionary Left in America: SDS has been fragmented and dogmatized and ossified. The Maoists (PL: for Progressive Labor Party) and the New Stalinists (several varieties, amalgamated into RYM: for Revolutionary Youth Movement) have succeeded at last in culminating two years of factional combat. RYM have excommunicated PL, and PL have excommunicated RYM (for historical precedents: please consult a textbook of medieval history, *The Great Schism of the Western Church*). All other tendencies within SDS have been victimized in the process (or soon will be) and must obediently accept the power-manipulations of one elite or the other . . . or else face expulsion on grounds of 'Anti-Communism'.

Two years ago, many Anarchists in this country were in agreement that it was desirable and necessary that we co-operate in an attempt to build a Coalition of the revolutionary Left. SDS seemed to provide the most practical and principled organizational-base for such a coalition. Originally, SDS was founded in the old days of the CR movement by a bunch of dewy-eyed Liberals, ritualistic Social Democrats, and unregenerated Anarchists. The Liberals furnished the vision, the Social Democrats provided the driving force, and the Anarchists concocted the organizational conception (decentralization, local autonomy) and

the style. But, two years ago, SDS was transformed into a Coalition of the revolutionary Left (the New Leninists, the New Trotskyists, the Maoists, the Anarchists, the Marxist-Humanists, the Guevarists, the castrati, various independent types of revolutionary socialists, etc., etc.): the organizational conception and style remained unchanged; the vision and the driving force were altered: no longer meliorism, but revolutionary socialism.

On our part: we Anarchists were of the opinion that the only basis for such a Coalition had to be a freely-accepted and open agreement, that the nature and direction of the Coalition had to be undogmatic and non-rigidified and experimental, that the attitude and style of the Coalition had to be free-wheeling, and that the form of the Coalition had to be decentralized and non-coercive. We were of the opinion that there were important priorities: direct action against the weakest manipulatory institutions of the American Leviathan, and the organization of a mass movement preparing to crush Capitalism and destroy the Government (the Empire: economic and political). As to factional combat: we were of the opinion that if it wasn't irrelevant . . . it was certainly dysfunctional. We were of the opinion that non-exclusionism as policy would prevent the disasters of previous Revolutions: that the Coalition could survive only as long as every tendency was free to follow their own programmatic conceptions and no group was placed in the position of being forced to compromise principles.

What was the result? Did we expect too much? Were we impractical? I don't think so. The result of our informational

agitation and resistance organizing, the result of community alternatives and offensives against the pig-power, the result of direct action against the most blatant aspects of coercion, militarization, and racism by the Establishment (the Corporations, especially, and the Universities): the result of our thinking, our analysis, and our activity: THE YEAR OF BLOOD, from the Insurrection at Columbia to the Battle of Berkeley. The attempt on the part of the Establishment to create a new, managerialist class (as a first stage in the process of transforming Monopoly Capitalism into Technology Capitalism) has been seriously sabotaged if not hopelessly prevented. Huge segments of the raw material for this new class have revolted (from San Francisco State College to Harvard and the University in Madison) and the Hayakawa methodology of discipline and the Morrill Hall Doctrine of (Corporate Liberal) pre-emptive co-optation have failed. We have won for ourselves a breathing space: time to expand and escalate both creative and classical approaches to revolutionary activity and organization. We have grown up at last: we are no longer a movement of vague, utopianistic sentimentality, we are no longer a movement of self-righteous, smug, moralistic indignation, we are no longer a movement of spastic and occasional activity; we have transformed ourselves into a movement of conscious revolutionary activity, we have transformed ourselves into a movement of conviction and wilfulness, we have transformed ourselves into a movement of struggle for a liberatory society. The unity of thought and action: this has been the basis of our self-transformation. Our actions have been constant and continuous: we have not dissolved our energies in a single uprising; but, on the contrary, each new uprising has created the impulsive thrust of the next. Our actions have been educative: but they have not been symbolic. They have been concrete. The Movement in America, during the last year, has constituted itself as a serious threat to the survival of the military-industrial complex.

## Honesty is no Threat to Socialism

However: the time has now come when we must re-examine our situation and clarify our thinking. If we do not, then the fragmentation that PL and RYM have succeeded temporarily in forcing on SDS . . . will develop into a general ossification of the Movement, an artificial sectarianism or a wishy-washy optimistic smugness. Some of us have kept quiet for too long. After all, we were told: shut up! don't do the Man's work for him! keep quiet! And, after all, some of us did not want to appear as if we were disrupting our own organization, some of us did not want to provide any ammunition to the parties of the Right in their constant and increasing attacks against SDS, some of us did not want to have anything to do with evidence against our brothers in the Movement before the Judiciary (the divine liturgy of Law and Order). But: self-imposed censorship is a fraud. Whatever damage and danger it was supposed to prevent: has already been committed against us.

If I have learned any lesson within the last three months, it is simply that honesty is no threat to socialism (at least the libertarian variety: the functional, joyous, personalized, delirious, sexualized community of the Anarchists) and that by maintaining our critical convictions, our reasonable commitments, our sceptical attitude, and our libertarian principles, we are more likely to prevent than cause sectarianism. What was described as self-imposed censorship was not self-imposed: it was not voluntary, it was not reasonable, it was not practicable. It was imposed on pain of public opinion by the National Office (controlled by RYM). It was part of a plan of manipulation. It was part of a struggle for power. The time has come when we must examine our situation and actively criticize the mistakes of the past few months. We must rescue our revolutionary potential from the wreckage of SDS.

The yellow press has concocted the myth that the fragmentation of SDS ('Two, Three, Many SDSes') by PL and RYM was caused by a clash of ideologies: the beliefs of one side antagonizing the other, the slogans of one side betraying the other, the scheming of one side outdoing the other, the Utopia of one side repulsed by the other. As is usual with the yellow press, they had part of the picture: the smaller part. Though it is true that there was a clash of opinions (for the last two years) between PL and RYM (prior to the Convention: known as 'the National Collective'), primarily centred around definitions of 'imperialism', 'racism', 'working class', etc., this was only a symptom of the disease.

Actually, the ideologies of PL and the National Collective (RYM) are nothing more than two collections of absurdities.

RYM and PL do not even respect their own Divine Abstractions: they change absurdities, they switch absurdities, they conveniently forget previous absurdities, they even exchange absurdities. Thus, for PL, the ideology of PL is important only in what it is used for. And, for RYM, the ideology of RYM is important only in what it is used for. Honest and valid analysis is ignored: for them, there is no unity of thought and action.

According to PL (the Maoists), the Progressive Labor Party is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Vanguard Party: it is the only Vanguard Party: it is the True Vanguard Party. PL believe that historical inevitability has been revealed to them through divinely-inspired Sacred Scripture: the Old Testament (the writings of Marx and Lenin), the Apocrypha (the writings of Trotsky), and the New Testament (the writings of Mao Tse-tung). PL believe that Sacred Scripture must be read in a literal manner (which means: subjectively). PL believe that Mao Tse-tung has come to save mankind from the wages of sin. PL believe that Stalin was sent to make ready the way of Mao. According to PL, the Working Class is the pillar of the heavens and the earth: the Working Class is perfect, the Working Class is all-virtuous, the Working Class is good; there is no racism in the Working Class, there are no flaws or personal faults in the Working Class, the Working Class is beautiful. In short, for PL, the Working Class is not a poor and powerless socio-economic caste situated at the point of production, the Working Class is nothing more than a subjective abstraction. This reaches the level of ludicrousness when young Harvard PLers dress in the costume of the workers on weekends and fervently profess to be automatically part of the Working Class. PL rejects anyone who thinks that the black liberation movement is a unique aspect of the Revolution in America. PL believe that the Last Judgement will occur only after 'the Working Class' has been solidly organized within the One, True Vanguard Party. At that time, Mao Tse-tung will lead the saved souls into the New Jerusalem: or something like that: maybe.

According to RYM (the Leninist-Stalinists: the New Stalinists), the Revolutionary Youth Movement is the elite of the future Marxist-Leninist Party. RYM believe that historical inevitability has demonstrated itself in the Third World: the movements of colonial rebellion and national liberation. RYM believe that we have entered the final stage of class struggle: the class struggle has been 'internationalized'. Consequently, for them, it is irrelevant to have anything to do with the Working Class at home, it is irrelevant to prepare for a Social Revolution at home, it is irrelevant to do anything constructive at home. RYM believe that the primary task of a revolutionary youth movement in America is to support the struggles of the Third World: the movements of colonial rebellion and national liberation. RYM believe that the Vanguard Party of the 'internationalized' class struggle is that of Ho Chi Minh (cf., the Government in Hanoi and the National Liberation Front). RYM believe that the Internationalized Vanguard Party will bring Imperial America to its knees. RYM believe that all actions at home must be calculated to cause as much internal damage to the Empire as is possible. RYM believe that the black struggle in America is nothing more than the revolt of a colony against the Mother Country, the White Mother Country. RYM have solemnly proclaimed the Black Panther Party to be the Vanguard Party of the black national liberation movement; a few nasty blacks (ignorant petit-bourgeoisie; obviously) have suggested that this is just another example of racist paternalism, that the black liberation movement is perfectly capable of creating its own leadership, that the black community is capable of fighting for the Revolution without being manipulated: RYM have attacked these miserable, nasty blacks. RYM believe that 'good' black leaders must be supported and that 'bad' black leaders must be fought: a 'good' black leader is not someone who fights the Establishment, resists oppression, and struggles to build initiative, independence, and social justice in and for his people; a 'good' black leader is someone who has the CORRECT opinions about historical inevitability. RYM believe that the Revolution will occur in America only after Ho Chi Minh's army has been victorious. RYM believe that: every day, in every way, Ho Chi Minh's army is doing better and better. RYM believe that Ho Chi Minh's military adventures have been concretely and objectively successful: RYM believe that Ho-Ho-Ho's English language publications must be interpreted subjectively (which means: read in a literal manner). According to RYM, after the White Mother Country of the American Empire has been totally destroyed by the black colony and the Third World and the Revolutionary Youth Movement (inspired by all sorts of groovy-hip cult customs), Ho Chi Minh from above will lead the faithful remnant into the end of history: the Golden Paradise. RYM,

of course, will provide the elite-party for the Utopian Marxist-Leninist Government.

### Subjective Abstraction

The ideology of PL is entirely based upon a subjective abstraction: if we have the correct attitudes about the Working Class and the Vanguard Party of the Movement, the Vanguard Party of the Working Class: then we will be successful. This is absolute subjectivism. Plato would be jealous; Bakunin (and Marx) would be dismayed if not terrified. PL are not revolutionary socialists: they are an extreme type of irrational liberalism. On the contrary, the ideology of RYM is entirely based upon a subjective abstraction: if we have the correct attitudes about the Third World and the black colony and historical inevitability and Ho Chi Minh and the Revolutionary Youth Movement: then we will be successful. This is absolute subjectivism. Plotinus and St. Augustine would be impressed; Kropotkin would only vomit. RYM are not revolutionary socialists: they are an extreme type of irrational liberalism. But, after all, neither RYM nor PL are particularly concerned about consistency and valid analysis. Thus, for PL, the ideology of PL is important only in what it is used for; and, for RYM, the ideology of RYM is important only in what it is used for: a struggle for power, a battle to control the Movement. Now we have been brought down to it: expediency as means and end.

Last year, the National Collective (so-called because they control most of the national and, to a great extent, regional leadership positions of SDS) convened a National Council of SDS in Austin, Texas. A National Council is a periodic gathering of representatives of the local chapters to determine policy on urgent, immediate, and important matters between the annual Conventions. However: there were several peculiarities about the Austin NC. Firstly, Austin is a highly remote place, most delegates would have difficulty in getting there, only those with independent sources of money could do so with ease. This instantly excluded most of the far-Left: we are not noted for our ability to waste finances, and most of us were involved in local struggles at the time. Secondly, there was even confusion about this location: word was sent out that the location had been changed; then, word was sent out that the location had not been changed. Thirdly, no one was quite sure as to what was on the agenda. Fourthly, even if anyone had known what was on the agenda, it would have done little good, the NC had been called at such short notice that there was no time for adequate discussion and decision by the local chapters. Thus, the NC opened at Austin with a manipulated assembly of delegates: with only a vague impression of the intent and purpose of this meeting, and inadequate and indecisive instructions from the grass-roots membership of the organization, and the non-existence of the sceptical balance provided by the far-Left.

At the Austin NC, the thin-lipped Jacobins of the Progressive Labor Party and the thin-lipped Jacobins of the National Collective (soon to be renamed the Revolutionary Youth Movement) engaged in a struggle for control of SDS. The struggle took the form of debates surrounding resolutions and position papers presented by the combatant sides: it was tacitly recognized that whichever sect's resolutions were victorious by majority rule vote . . . that sect would win the battle . . . and proceed to enlarge and escalate its control over the organization. On and on it went, great reams of incomprehensible sophistry, the endless drone of imaginationless rhetoric, huge hunks of archaic language lifted from the more tawdry moments of Lenin's journalistic vituperation, big ulcerating sores upon the intellect (stinking like the pus that fills them), a metaphysical nightmare invoked by the dry and dusty Shamans of a withering creed: a continuous babble, a constant prattle, chant following chant, slogan after slogan. Finally, the rigid oxen of the Progressive Labor Party were outdone by the fleshless faces of the National Collective. The National Collective had learned a new trick. Previously identified as New Leninists, they suddenly discovered that they could out-quote Stalin to the Maoists. The Maoists, being bulky, and strangers to spontaneity, as sexless as a nun, dissolved in cries of paranoia: whimpering, muttering, threatening. The rigged assembly voted. The Toughs had lost. The Toughs had won. The National Collective emerged victorious. The Austin NC was the rock that shattered SDS: the Convention was only a priestly epilogue. The damage already had been done.

As an incidental ploy in their push for power, the National Collective also presented a resolution calling for total support to Ho Chi Minh (something like the pious obedience and un-

questioning worship that is due an Oriental Emperor): this was interpreted as a blatant attack against the Anarchists, Marxist-Humanists, and other libertarian socialists, an attempt to exclude them from the organization, an attempt to prevent them from fighting the idiocy of power games. After the Austin NC, I was casually removed from all SDS mailing lists: I no longer received *New Left Notes*, etc. My continuous objections to the National Office met with no reply. I soon discovered that this was not a localized phenomenon: selectively, many Anarchists around the country had also been victimized. Repeatedly the national membership of SDS was warned by Movement publications to beware of the Anarchists: they were told that we are entering a stage of history (obviously revealed by the fluctuations of the stars) when the Anarchists will have great influence. They were told that the Anarchists are 'dangerous' and must be fought and destroyed.

### Anarchist Conference

Some time before the SDS Convention, the Solidarity Bookshop group (in Chicago) wrote to me (among many others) trying to find out if there could be any kind of consensus as to holding an informal Anarchist Conference in the same city and at the same time as the SDS Convention. Everyone who knew about it was excited for two reasons, it was thought necessary and desirable that we clarify our position, and there was the possibility that we could implode a libertarian perspective into the Convention. Preparations were made to inform all the Anarchists on our mailing lists . . . as soon as we could. There were just two tiny problems: no one knew where the Convention would be, and no one knew when it would be.

The National Office was required to convene a general Convention during the Summer. It was also required to hold the



Convention somewhere in the Midwest. The National Office delayed and hesitated and complained: an appeal was sent out to the local chapters asking them to find the needed facilities. The National Office bragged that the Convention had been forbidden in over a hundred locations. The Mass Media, in hysteria, frothing with the excitement of a situation that had been pushed beyond the point of no return, whining in compulsive terror, a dreadful electric staccato of Calvinist obsessions, pontificated that the Convention had been forbidden in over five hundred cities. The parties of the Right, we were told by the National Office, had played out the Establishment into preventing the Convention.

In Minneapolis, in the meantime, Doctor Moos, president of the University, banned the Convention: the leadership of the local SDS chapter, after consulting a lawyer and moaning about civil liberties for a week, let the matter drop. I was amazed: Minnesota, unique among the many states, has a long history of social democracy, protection of dissent, rule by the Farmer-Labor Party, and concern for civil liberties. This, of course, is no big

thing: usually, all the words are changed, the things remain the same. Usually, the Corporate Liberals of Minnesota create the appropriate plan of pre-emptive co-optation in each new emergency . . . and teach it to the national politicians. The national politicians, in turn, regularly allow the parties of the Right to take their vengeance on Minnesota by preventing the regional Establishment from following the humanistic letter of its own benevolently despotic plans: a sort of cosmic backlash. This, of course, is no big thing for revolutionaries; however, it does mean that our point of confrontation with the Establishment in Minnesota is almost never on an issue of the right to organize (as it usually is everywhere else).

I was certain that if a crisis was made of the situation: Doctor Moos would easily relent. Inquiries were made to the Minneapolis chapter, and even Duluth suggested as an alternate location. We were simply told: the matter has already been taken care of. I soon discovered, however, that this was not a parochial phenomenon: many Anarchists around the country informed me that the same wishy-washy approach had been made to holding the Convention in their areas. But we put the matter completely out of mind: rumours were in general circulation that the Convention had been postponed until later in the Summer. Several Anarchists who had been chosen as official delegates to the Convention were so certain of this delay that they wandered off to California to enjoy themselves while they were waiting.

## Far-Left Excluded

Suddenly, one night, on going down to watch Walter Cronkite's news programme on the television, I was told that the first day of the Convention had been concluded. I went into a total rage for the rest of the week: much of the far-Left had been excluded again. On the second day of the Convention, I received a letter from the Solidarity Bookshop group informing me that they had just found out about the Convention: that it had been suddenly called for Chicago during the following week. Their letter, although sent by air mail, had taken longer than a week to reach me: on the same day, I received a letter from Florida that had been mailed by regular postage just two days before. Needless to say, much of the far-Left had been excluded again: the only Anarchists that got to the Convention were those already in Chicago, a New York group, and a few isolated delegates. Despite this miserable showing, several Movement publications seemed to be openly titillated that the Anarchists were capable of convening an independent oppositionist caucus in the Wobblie Hall. Unfortunately, it wasn't enough to implode a libertarian perspective into the Convention, it wasn't enough to prevent the authoritarian chaos of the Convention, it wasn't enough to prevent the wreckage that followed.

The Convention, I am told, was like a plastic hallucination of totalitarianism by the Living Theatre, a spatial whirlwind of dreams and deceit and ritualized illusions and personal anguish, a jumble of passionate pretence and screaming people and prurient gnawing frustrations, a fantastic fragmentation of time falling back upon itself and on the pale tomb of Stalin, strange people in strange apparel that would move and flare and carry with them a dull but leering glare in the eyes: there was a young man with very thin arms and an angular face and long slender fingers, his flesh was white as the leprous moon; he was rhythmically beating the air and chanting the name of Ho Chi Minh.

## Session Dissolved

At the Convention, the liturgy of exclusionism went on and on for three days: first, one side would clumsily grab the initiative and, forcibly occupying the platform, shout out ferocious and mechanical slogans at the exhausted assembly. Then, the masses of the faithful, as if by cue, would collectively rise and reveal little red prayer books that they would frantically shake in the air while calling on the divine Mao Tse-tung to miraculously intervene in the proceedings. The Maoists, it seems, were sharp and spiteful at the shame they had suffered in Austin: with vengeance, they had packed the Convention. The other side, not to be outdone, would viciously seize the platform and scream out incomprehensible and hideous slogans at the exhausted assembly. Then, the masses of the faithful, as if by cue, would frantically rise and shake their fists in the air while calling on the eternally divine Ho Chi Minh to miraculously intervene and bring racism to an end. The New Stalinists, it seems, were sharp and spiteful

and vindictive. At this point, the Maoists would reoccupy the platform and begin again to shout out their mechanical slogans at the exhausted assembly. This solemn ceremony was repeated and repeated for three days. Occasional attempts by the Anarchists, a small group of Marxist-Humanists, the delegates of the Independent Socialist Clubs, and a caucus of revolutionary socialists from the University of Chicago to introduce rationality into the Convention, were overwhelmingly drowned by blood-curdling cries of 'Anti-Communism'.

Finally, the self-proclaimed Revolutionary Youth Movement brought representatives from the Black Panther Party to the platform. The Black Panthers denounced the Maoists. The Black Panthers said that the Maoists are racists. The Black Panthers said that the Maoists ought to be expelled from SDS. Several nasty blacks (FBI agents: obviously) suggested that the Black Panthers had been manipulated by RYM who were only trying to get at their enemies. These nasty blacks suggested that RYM were guilty of racist paternalism. The evidence is not completely clear, however, as the Black Panthers also seemed to have manipulated RYM so that they could get at their own enemies. At this point, the Convention was dissolved into separate meetings for a day. The next day, after the restoration of the general assembly, RYM, having clarified their strategy, proceeded to denounce PL as racists and expel them from SDS. Then, a masterly bit of modern Machiavellian cunning, RYM dissolved the session and abandoned the building in procession: since they alone controlled the apostolic succession of the leadership of SDS, only those who followed them out continued to be part of SDS.

The dull oxen of PL, however, continued to hold their own controlled Convention in the same building: they voted on resolutions for SDS, they elected national officers for SDS, they made future plans for SDS. They had been outwitted, but they would show RYM: they would have their own SDS. In the meantime, RYM reconvened their own controlled Convention in another building: they voted on resolutions for SDS, they elected national officers for SDS, they made future plans for SDS. They felt very smug in the justification of their apostolic succession, the bourgeois forces of Law and Order had awarded them legal title to the equipment, money, etc., of the National Office. They had outwitted the Maoists, but the power-lust of the fleshless faces of RYM was not satisfied: they had to eliminate the uncontrollable elements. One of their resolutions, newly-made for SDS, declares that all members of SDS must support the 'revolutionary' Governments of Vietnam, Cuba, China, and Albania. (Can you guess who gets eliminated by that one?) Another resolution declares that all opponents (i.e., someone who is guilty of criticism) of SDS are Anti-Communists: both outside the organization and within it. This is nothing more than the strategy of Joe McCarthy turned inside out: RYM identify themselves as Communists, and then say that anyone who criticizes them must be an Anti-Communist; a Communist, after all, would never think of criticizing them: obviously. This resolution also declares that 'Anti-Communists' must be fought 'by any means necessary'.

Perhaps it is worth mentioning at this point that a sombre flock of youthful members of the CP (the young Old Stalinists) were present during the agonizing farce of the Convention: they were very colourless and grey and quiet and huge, they didn't seem to understand what was happening, they were severely silent. Naturally: when it was all over, they supported the winner. Perhaps it is worth mentioning that the SWP (the Socialist Workers Party: the old and young Old Trotskyists) were not present during the Convention: despite the fact that previously in the year they had agreed to enter the Coalition of SDS and play games of power with PL and RYM; they were afraid of burning their fingers, however, and quickly got the hell out of it. Naturally: when it was all over, they still didn't understand what had happened. Perhaps it is also worth mentioning that there were a few libertarians who were critical of PL but not equally critical of RYM: personally, I have no desire to play the part of Zhelesniakov to some new Lenin. I think it worth remembering that in revolutionary activity: those who are fooled, are beaten. The Anarchists are very seldom fooled; and, since we do not play games of power, there is only one way to beat us, there is only one way to eliminate the grass-roots influence that we may have: by killing us. In America, with the struggles of the Movement for Revolution and a new society, and the emergence of a New Stalinism, I think that we have been brought down to it again: either we fight or we die.



## A Thousand Squabbling Splinters

I accuse the Revolutionary Youth Movement and the Progressive Labor Party of crimes against the Movement: for the sake of petty power, they have endangered the spontaneity and driving impulsiveness of the Movement; for the sake of controlling the situation, they have threatened to hack the Movement into a thousand squabbling splinters; for the sake of subjectivist abstractions, they have resurrected the grim and murderous pallor of Stalin; for the sake of their own illusions of glory, they have piously plodded on with a puritanical attempt to restructure an authoritarian vision of the past rather than deliriously plunge into a patternless attempt to crisply build a new society, a liberatory society. I accuse the Progressive Labor Party and the Revolutionary Youth Movement of adopting the tactics of thugs: they have taken to sending gangs of brutal sadists to barbarously pound the shit and the sweat and the blood out of anyone who has grievously committed the mortal sin of openly criticizing them . . . however mildly. I accuse the Revolutionary Youth Movement and the Progressive Labor Party of proposing a vision of revolutionary society that is repulsive to any person of sensibility: a dreary, colourless, oppressive, sexless, rigid, passive, thick, hierarchical Calvinist Paradise. I accuse the Progressive Labor Party and the Revolutionary Youth Movement of inaction: if they cannot control an insurrection, they will not take part in it, they will even oppose it; throughout the past year, every major incident of political importance committed by the Movement has been brought about entirely by local initiative . . . and in spite of the abstractionizers. I accuse the Revolutionary Youth Movement and the Progressive Labor Party of being crude imitations of the Capitalist Establishment: a hollow Totalism, the childish incantations of a victimized proto-bureaucracy, the envious whimperings of a prospective military-industrial complex: the one becomes the other.

Is there any possibility of rescuing our revolutionary potential out of the wreckage of SDS? I certainly hope so. There are already several indications of activity in that direction: at the Convention, a group of Anarchists from New York established a *Radical Decentralization Project* as a means of ignoring the Stalinist-motivated fissure and making a direct appeal to the mass membership of SDS. Since most of the grass-roots members of SDS are not Leninist ideologues, and since most of them are free-wheeling in approach if not consciously anti-atrophy, it is highly probable that the schismatic Stalinists will be confronted by more of a swelling opposition on the Left than they had bargained for. Also: another group of libertarians has proposed the formation of a third SDS as rival to the two authoritarian

alternatives. However: I am very sceptical that much will come of a single approach. Many Anarchists and Marxist-Humanists have already burned their SDS-membership cards in rage. In one sense, though, the disintegration of SDS will be a productive development: it has finally forced the far-Left to take independent action in pushing for the Revolution. The Radical Libertarian Alliance has recently been formed; it is a loosely confederated network of Stirnerite groups and individuals. The Anarcho-Communists and Anarcho-Syndicalists are also pushing their points of view in a fresh reconsideration: by action. The Resistance, previously organized around the country on a single-issue (i.e., anti-conscription activity) basis, has recently abandoned the single-issue approach in favour of working out a general strategy of anti-imperialism (with Anarcho-Syndicalism the professed objective of a large and loud segment of the Resistance) and resistance to all aspects of authoritarianism.

Luckily, the Revolution does not depend on the survival of any single organization like SDS: even though some people find such an organization to be desirable and very comfortable, urging everyone into the grasping-greedy arms of Holy Mother Organization. Revolutions, however, have a spiteful habit of refusing to follow the most perfect of human timetables: they are always popping out at times and places where they are least expected, and never appearing where we hope the hardest. The Revolution in America is no longer a matter of partisan invective: it is, growingly, a fact. The Revolution in America is no longer the private property of a few elitist intellectuals: it belongs to everyone. The Revolution in America is no longer a matter of petty manipulations by some Vanguard Party: the Revolution is being made by masses of the people in motion: preparing to pull down the Government and Monopoly Capitalism . . . and build a new society. The New Stalinists will not prevail. The collapse of SDS is almost irrelevant. The masses in motion are the Revolution.

We are struggling for Anarchy. As a prerequisite for such a new socio-economic order, we must have massive redistribution of wealth on the basis of need, production for use, and control of the socio-economic process by direct democracy. At the same time, the collectivization of the economy must allow us to create a decentralized socio-political environment in which we are free to develop autonomous communities on the bases of cultural diversity, the ability to initiate activity, and the principle of federalism. Socio-economic liberation must extend and complement personal liberation; individual aspirations and collective needs must coincide only by mutual agreement. We are struggling for a classless society. We are struggling for liberty and socialist-humanism. We are struggling for Anarchy.

JAMES W. CAIN.

# THE MYTH OF THE PARTY

**S**Ocial revolutions are not 'made' by 'parties', groups, or cadres; they occur as a result of deep-seated historic forces and contradictions that activate large sections of the population. They occur not merely (as Trotsky argued) because the 'masses' find the existing society intolerable, but also because of the tension between the actual and the possible, between 'what is' and 'what could be'. Abject misery alone does not produce revolutions; more often than not, it produces an aimless demoralization, or worse, a private, personalized struggle to survive.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 weighs on the brain of the living like a nightmare because it was largely a project of 'intolerable conditions', of a devastating imperialistic war. Whatever dreams it had were pulverized by an even bloodier civil war, by famine, and by treachery. What emerged from the revolution were the ruins not of an *old* society but of whatever hopes existed to achieve a *new* one. The Russian Revolution failed miserably; it replaced Tsarism by state capitalism. The Bolsheviks were the tragic victims of their ideology and paid with their lives in great numbers during the purges of the Thirties. To attempt to acquire any unique wisdom from this *scarcity* revolution is ridiculous. What we can learn from the revolutions of the past is what all revolutions have in common and their profound limitations compared with the enormous possibilities that are

now open to us.

The most striking feature of the past revolutions is that they began spontaneously. Whether one chooses to examine the opening phases of the French Revolution of 1789, the revolutions of 1848, the Paris Commune, the 1905 revolution in Russia, the overthrow of the Tsar in 1917, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the French general strike of 1968, the opening stages are generally the same: a period of ferment that explodes spontaneously into a mass upsurge. Whether the upsurge is successful or not depends on its resoluteness and on whether the State can effectively exercise its armed power—that is, on whether the troops go over to the people.

The 'glorious party', when there is one, almost invariably lags behind the events. In February, 1917, the Petrograd organization of the Bolsheviks opposed the calling of strikes precisely on the eve of the revolution which was destined to overthrow the Tsar. Fortunately, the workers ignored the Bolshevik 'directives' and went on strike anyway. In the events which followed, no one was more surprised by the revolution than the 'revolutionary' parties, including the Bolsheviks. As the Bolshevik leader Kayurov recalled: 'Absolutely no guiding initiatives from the party were felt . . . the Petrograd committee had been arrested and the representative from the Central Committee, Comrade Shliapnikov, was unable to give any directives

for the coming day.' Perhaps this was fortunate: before the Petrograd committee was arrested, its evaluation of the situation and its role were so dismal that, had the workers followed its guidance, it is doubtful if the revolution would have occurred when it did.

## France 1968

The same kind of stories could be told of the upsurges which preceded 1917 and those which followed. To cite only the most recent: the student uprising and general strike in France during May-June, 1968. There is a convenient tendency to forget that close to a dozen 'tightly centralized' Bolshevik-type organizations existed in Paris at this time. It is rarely mentioned that *virtually every one of these 'vanguard' groups were disdainful of the student uprising up to May 7, when the street fighting broke out in earnest.* The Trotskyist JCR was a notable exception—and it merely coasted along, essentially following the initiatives of the March 22 Movement.\* Up to May 7, all the Maoist groups criticized the student uprising as peripheral and unimportant; the Trotskyist FER regarded it as 'adventuristic' and tried to get the students to leave the barricades on May 10; the Communist Party, of course, played a completely treacherous role. Far from leading the popular movement, they were its captives throughout. Ironically, most of these Bolshevik groups were to manipulate shamelessly in the Sorbonne student assembly in an effort to 'control' it, introducing a disruptive atmosphere that demoralized the entire body. Finally, to complete the irony, all of these Bolshevik groups were to babble about the need for 'centralized leadership' when the popular movement collapsed—a movement that occurred despite their directives and often in opposition to them.

Revolutions and uprisings worthy of any note not only have an initial phase that is magnificently anarchic but *also tend spontaneously to create their own forms of revolutionary self-management.* The Parisian sections of 1793-94 were the most remarkable forms of self-management to be created by any of the social revolutions in history.† A more familiar form were the councils or 'soviets', which the Petrograd workers established in 1905. Although less democratic than the sections, the council form was to reappear in a number of revolutions of later years. Still another form of revolutionary self-management were the factory committees which the anarchists established in the Spanish Revolution of 1936. Finally, the sections reappeared as student assemblies and action committees in the May-June

\*The March 22 Movement functioned as a catalytic agent in the events, not as a leadership. It did not 'command'; it instigated, leaving a free play to the events. This free play which allowed the students to push ahead on their own momentum was indispensable to the dialectic of the uprising, for without it there would have been no barricades on May 10, which in turn triggered off the general strike of the workers.

†It is unfortunate that so little has been written about the Parisian sections in English. The sections were neighbourhood associations based on face-to-face democracy, not on representation. These extraordinary bodies not only provided the real momentum of the Great French Revolution but they undertook the administration of the entire city. They policed their own neighbourhoods, elected their own revolutionary tribunals, were responsible for the distribution of foodstuffs, provided public aid for the poor, and contributed to the maintenance of the National Guard. It must be borne in mind that this complex of extremely important activities was undertaken not by professional bureaucrats, but for the most part by ordinary shopkeepers, workers, and craftsmen. The bulk of sectional responsibilities were discharged after working hours, during the leisure time of the section members. The popular assemblies of the sections usually met during the evenings in neighbourhood churches which had been expropriated for their use and were open to all citizens, without property qualifications after the summer of 1792. In periods of emergency, assembly meetings were held daily; normally, they could be called at the request of fifty members. Most administrative responsibilities were discharged by committees, but the popular assemblies established all the policies of the committees, reviewed and passed on their work, and replaced section officers at will. It is not too difficult to surmise why these sections have received very little attention by Marxist theoreticians; they were much too 'anarchic' to please the pontiffs of the 'Left'.

uprising and general strike in Paris a year ago.

We must ask, at this point, what role the 'revolutionary' party plays in all of these developments. In the beginning, as we have seen, it tends to have an inhibitory function, not a 'vanguard' role. Where it exercises influence, it tends to slow down the flow of events, not 'co-ordinate' the revolutionary forces. This is not accidental. The party is structured along hierarchical lines *that reflect the very society it professes to oppose.* Despite its theoretical pretensions, it is a bourgeois organism, a miniature State, with an apparatus and a cadre, whose function is to *seize* power, not *dissolve* power. Rooted in the pre-revolutionary period, it assimilates all the forms, techniques, and mentality of a bureaucracy. Its membership is schooled in obedience, in the preconceptions of a rigid dogma, and taught to revere the 'leadership'. The party's leadership, in turn, is schooled in habits born of command, authority, manipulation, and egomania. This situation is worsened when the party participates in parliamentary elections. Owing to the exigencies of election campaigns, the party now models itself completely on existing bourgeois forms and even acquires the paraphernalia of the electoral party. The situation assumes truly crucial proportions when the party acquires large presses, costly headquarters, and a large inventory of centrally controlled periodicals, and develops a paid 'apparatus'—in short, a bureaucracy with vested material interests.

## The Hierarchy of Command

As the party expands, the distance between the leadership and the ranks invariably increases. Its leaders not only become 'personages', but they lose contact with the living situation below. The local groups, which know their own immediate situation better than any remote leader, are obliged to subordinate their insights to directives from above. The leadership, lacking any direct knowledge of local problems, responds sluggishly and prudently. Although it stakes out a claim to the 'larger view', to greater 'theoretical competence', the *competence of the leadership tends to diminish the higher one ascends the hierarchy of command.* The more one approaches the level where the *real* decisions are made, the more conservative is the nature of the decision-making process, the more bureaucratic and extraneous are the factors which come into play, the more considerations of prestige and retrenchment supplant creativity, imagination, and a disinterested dedication to revolutionary goals.

The result is that the party become *less* efficient from a revolutionary point of view the more it seeks efficiency in hierarchy, cadres, and centralization. Although everyone marches in step, the orders are usually wrong, especially when events begin to move rapidly and take unexpected turns—as they do in all revolutions. The party is efficient in only one respect: in moulding society in its own hierarchical image if the revolution is successful. It creates bureaucracy, centralization, and the State. It fosters the very social conditions which justify this kind of society. Hence instead of 'withering away', the State controlled by the 'glorious party' preserves the very conditions which 'necessitate' the existence of a State—and a party to 'guard it'.

On the other hand, this kind of party is extremely vulnerable in periods of repression. The bourgeoisie has only to grab its leadership to virtually destroy the entire movement. With its leaders in prison or in hiding, the party becomes paralyzed; the obedient membership has no one to obey and tends to flounder. Demoralization sets in rapidly. The party decomposes not only because of its repressive atmosphere but also because of its poverty of inner resources.

The foregoing account is not a series of hypothetical inferences; it is a composite sketch of all the mass Marxian parties of the past century—the Social Democrats, the Communists, and the Trotskyist party of Ceylon, the only mass party of its kind. To claim that these parties ceased to take their Marxian principles seriously merely conceals another question: why did this happen in the first place? The fact is that these parties were co-opted into bourgeois society because they were structured along bourgeois lines. The germ of treachery existed in them from birth.

The Bolshevik Party was spared this fate between 1904 and 1917 for only one reason: it was an illegal organization during most of the years leading up to the revolution. The party was continually being shattered and reconstituted, with the result that until it took power it never really hardened into

a fully centralized, bureaucratic, hierarchical machine. Moreover, it was riddled by faction. This intense factional atmosphere persisted throughout 1917 into the civil war, nevertheless the Bolshevik leadership was ordinarily extremely conservative, a trait that Lenin had to fight throughout 1917—first, in his efforts to reorient the Central Committee against the Provisional Government (the famous conflict over the 'April Theses'), later in driving this body into insurrection in October. In both cases, he threatened to resign from the Central Committee and bring his views to 'the lower ranks of the party'.

## Factional Disputes

In 1918, factional disputes became so serious over the issue of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty that the Bolsheviks nearly split into two warring Communist parties. Oppositional Bolshevik groups like the Democratic Centralists and the Workers' Opposition waged bitter struggles within the party throughout 1919 and 1920, not to speak of oppositional movements that developed within the Red Army over Trotsky's propensity for centralization. The complete centralization of the Bolshevik Party—the achievement of 'Leninist unity', as it was to be called later—did not occur until 1921, when Lenin succeeded in persuading the Tenth Party Congress to ban factions. By this time, most of the White Guards had been crushed and the foreign interventionists had withdrawn their troops from Russia.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that the Bolsheviks tended to centralize their party to the degree that they became isolated from the working class. This relationship has rarely been investigated in latter-day Leninist circles, although Lenin was honest enough to admit it. The Russian Revolution is not merely the story of the Bolshevik Party and its supporters. Beneath the veneer of official events described by Soviet historians there was another, more basic development—the spontaneous movement of the workers and revolutionary peasants, which later clashed sharply with the bureaucratic policies of the Bolsheviks. With the overthrow of the Tsar in February, 1917, workers in virtually all the factories of Russia spontaneously established factory committees, staking out an increasing claim in industrial operations. In June, 1917, an all-Russian Conference of Factory Committees was held in Petrograd which called for the 'organization of thorough control by labour over production and distribution'. The demands of this Conference are rarely mentioned in Leninist accounts of the Russian Revolution, despite the fact that the Conference aligned itself with the Bolsheviks. Trotsky, who describes the factory committees as 'the most direct and indubitable representation of the proletariat in the whole country', deals with them peripherally in his massive, three-volume history of the revolution. Yet so important were these spontaneous organisms of self-management that Lenin, despairing of winning the soviets in the summer of 1917, was prepared to jettison the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' for 'All Power to the Factory Committees'. This demand would have catapulted the Bolsheviks into a completely anarcho-syndicalist position, although it is doubtful that they would have remained there very long.

## An End to Workers' Control

With the October Revolution, all the factory committees seized control of the plants, ousting the bourgeoisie and completely taking control of industrial operations. In accepting the concept of workers' control, Lenin's famous decree of November 14, 1917, merely acknowledged an accomplished fact; the Bolsheviks dared not oppose the workers at this early date. But they began to whittle down the power of the factory committees. In January, 1918, a scant two months after 'decreeing' workers' control, the Bolsheviks shifted the administration of the factories from the committees to the bureaucratic trade unions. The story that the Bolsheviks 'patiently' experimented with workers' control, only to find it 'inefficient' and 'chaotic', is a myth. Their 'patience' did not last more than a few weeks. Not only did they end direct workers' control within a matter of weeks after the decree of November 14, but even union control came to an end shortly after it had been established. By the spring of 1918, virtually all Russian industry was placed under bourgeois forms of management. As Lenin put it, the 'revolution demands . . . precisely in the interests of socialism that the masses unquestionably obey the single will of the leaders of the labour process'. Workers' control was denounced not only as 'inefficient',

'chaotic', and 'impractical', but as 'petty bourgeois'!

The Left Communist Osinsky bitterly denounced all of these spurious claims and warned the party: 'Socialism and socialist organization must be set up by the proletariat itself, or they will not be set up at all; something else will be set up—state capitalism.' In the 'interests of socialism', the Bolshevik Party elbowed the proletariat out of every domain it had conquered by its own efforts and initiative. The party did not co-ordinate the revolution or even lead it; it dominated it. First, workers' control, later union control, was replaced by an elaborate hierarchy, as monstrous as any structure that existed in pre-revolutionary times. As later years were to demonstrate, Osinsky's prophecy became bitter reality with a vengeance.

The problem of 'who is to prevail'—the Bolsheviks or the Russian 'masses'—was by no means limited to the factories. The issue reappeared in the countryside as well as the cities. A sweeping peasant war had buoyed up the movement of the workers. Contrary to official Leninist accounts, the agrarian upsurge was by no means limited to a redistribution of the land into private plots. In the Ukraine, peasants influenced by the anarchist militias of Nestor Makhno established a multitude of rural communes, guided by the Communist maxim: 'From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs.' Elsewhere, in the north and in Soviet Asia, several thousand of these organisms were established partly on the initiative of the Left Social Revolutionaries and in large measure as a result of traditional collectivist impulses which stemmed from the Russian village, the *mir*. It matters little whether these communes were numerous or embraced large numbers of peasants; the point is that they were authentic popular organisms, the nuclei of a moral and social spirit that ranged far above the dehumanizing values of bourgeois society.

The Bolsheviks frowned upon these organisms from the very beginning and eventually condemned them. To Lenin, the preferred, the more 'socialist' form of agricultural enterprise was represented by the State Farm: literally, an agricultural factory in which the State owned the land and farming equipment, appointing managers who hired peasants on a wage basis. One sees in these attitudes toward workers' control and agricultural communes the essentially *bourgeois* spirit and mentality that permeated the Bolshevik Party—a spirit and mentality that emanated not only from its theories, but from its corporate mode of organization. In December, 1918, Lenin launched an attack against the communes on the pretext that peasants were being 'forced' to enter them. Actually, little if any coercion was used to organize these communistic forms of self-management. As Robert G. Wesson, who studied the Soviet communes in detail, concludes: 'Those who went into communes must have done so largely of their own volition.' The communes were not suppressed, but their growth was discouraged until Stalin merged the entire development in the forced collectivization drives of the late 'Twenties and early 'Thirties.

By 1920, the Bolsheviks had isolated themselves from the Russian working class and peasantry. The elimination of workers' control, the suppression of the Makhnovtsy, the restrictive political atmosphere in the country, the inflated bureaucracy, the crushing material poverty inherited from the civil war years—all, taken together, generated a deep hostility toward Bolshevik rule. With the end of hostilities, a new movement surged up from the depths of Russian society for a 'Third Revolution'—not a restoration of the past, but a deep-felt desire to realize the very goals of freedom, economic as well as political, that had rallied the 'masses' around the Bolshevik programme of 1917. The new movement found its most conscious form in the Petrograd proletariat and the Kronstadt sailors. It also found expression in the party: the growth of anti-centralist and anarcho-syndicalist tendencies among the Bolsheviks reached a point where a bloc of oppositional groups, oriented toward these issues, gained 124 seats at a Moscow provincial conference as against 154 for supporters of the Central Committee.

## The Kronstadt Revolt

On March 2, 1921, the 'Red sailors' of Kronstadt rose in open rebellion, raising the banner of a 'Third Revolution of the toilers'. The Kronstadt programme centred around demands for free elections to the soviets, freedom of speech and press for the anarchists and Left Socialist parties, free trade unions, and the liberation of all prisoners who belonged to Socialist parties. The most shameless stories were fabricated by the Bolsheviks to account for this uprising, which in later years

were acknowledged as brazen lies. The revolt was characterized as a 'White Guard plot', this despite the fact that the great majority of Communist Party members in Kronstadt joined the sailors—*precisely as Communists*—denouncing the party leaders as betrayers of the October Revolution. As Robert Vincent Daniels observes in his study of Bolshevik oppositional movements: 'Ordinary Communists were indeed so unreliable . . . that the government did not depend upon them, either in the assault on Kronstadt itself or in keeping order in Petrograd, where Kronstadt's hopes for support chiefly rested. The main body of troops employed were Chekists and officer cadets from Red Army training schools. The final assault on Kronstadt was led by the top officialdom of the Communist Party—a large group of delegates at the Tenth Party Congress was rushed from Moscow for this purpose.' So weak was the regime internally that the elite had to do its own dirty work.

Even more significant than the Kronstadt revolt was the strike movement that developed among the Petrograd workers, a movement that sparked the uprising of the sailors. Leninist histories do not recount this critically important development. The first strikes broke out in the Troubotchny factory on February 23, 1921. Within a matter of days, the movement swept in one factory after another until, by February 28, the famous Putilov works—the 'crucible of the Revolution'—went on strike. Not only were economic demands raised but workers raised distinctly political ones, anticipating all the demands that were to be raised by the Kronstadt sailors a few days later. On February 24, the Bolsheviks declared a 'state of siege' in Petrograd and arrested the strike leaders, suppressing the workers' demonstrations with officer cadets. The fact is that the Bolsheviks did not merely suppress a 'sailors' mutiny'; they crushed by armed force the working class itself. It was at this point that Lenin demanded the banning of factions in the Russian Communist Party. Centralization of the party was now complete—and the way was paved for Stalin.

We have discussed these events in detail because they lead to a conclusion that our latest crop of Marxist-Leninists tend to avoid: the Bolshevik Party reached its maximum degree of centralization in Lenin's day *not to achieve a revolution or suppress a White Guard counter-revolution, but to effect a counter-revolution of its own against the very social forces it professed to represent.* Factions were prohibited and a monolithic party created not to prevent a 'capitalist restoration' but to contain a mass movement of workers for soviet democracy and social freedom. The Lenin of 1921 stood opposed to the Lenin of October 1917.

Thereafter, Lenin simply floundered. This man who, above all others, sought to anchor the problems of his party in *social* contradictions, found himself literally playing an *organizational* 'numbers game' in a last-ditch attempt to arrest the very bureaucratization he had himself created. There is nothing more pathetic and tragic than Lenin's last years. Paralyzed by a simplistic body of Marxist formulas, he can think of no better countermeasures than organizational ones. He proposes the formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection to correct bureaucratic deformations in the Party and State—which body falls under Stalin's control and become highly bureaucratic in its own right. Lenin then suggests that the size of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection be reduced and that it be merged with the Control Commission. He advocates enlarging the Central Committee. Thus it rolls along: this body to be enlarged, that one to be merged with another, still a third to be modified or abolished. The strange ballet of organizational forms continues up to his very death, as though the problem 'could be resolved by organizational means. As Mosche Lewin, an obvious admirer of Lenin, admits: the Bolshevik leader 'approached the problems of government more like a chief executive of a strictly "elitist"

turn of mind. He did not apply methods of social analysis to the government and was content to consider it purely in terms of organizational methods.'

## Means Replaced Ends

If it is true that in the bourgeois revolutions that 'phrase went beyond the content', in the Bolshevik revolution the forms replaced the content. The soviets replaced the workers and their factory committees, the Party replaced the soviets, the Central Committee replaced the Party, and the Political Bureau replaced the Central Committee. In short, means replaced ends. This incredible substitution of form for content is one of the most characteristic traits of Marxism-Leninism. In France, during the May-June events, all the Bolshevik organizations were prepared to destroy the Sorbonne student assembly in order to increase their influence and membership. Their principal concern was not for the revolution or the authentic social forms created by the students, but the growth of their own parties. In the United States, an identical situation exists in PL's relationship with SDS.

Only one force could have arrested the growth of bureaucracy in Russia: a *social* force. Had the Russian proletariat and peasantry succeeded in increasing the domain of self-management through the development of viable factory committees, rural communes, and free soviets, the history of the country might have taken a dramatically different turn. There can be no question that the failure of socialist revolutions in Europe after the First World War led to the isolation of the revolution in Russia. The material poverty of Russia, coupled with the pressure of the surrounding capitalist world, clearly militated against the development of a consistently libertarian, indeed, a socialist society. But by no means was it ordained that Russia had to develop along state capitalist lines; contrary to Lenin's and Trotsky's expectations, the revolution was defeated by *internal* forces, not by the invasion of armies from abroad. Had the movement from below restored the initial achievements of the revolution in 1917, a multi-faceted social structure might have developed, based on workers' control of industry, on a freely developing peasant economy in agriculture, and on a living interplay of ideas, programmes, and political movements. At the very least, Russia would have not been imprisoned in totalitarian chains and Stalinism would not have poisoned the world revolutionary movement, paving the way for fascism and World War II.

The development of the Bolshevik Party, however, precluded this development, Lenin's or Trotsky's 'good intentions' aside. By destroying the power of the factory committees in industry and by crushing the Makhnovtsy, the Petrograd workers, and the Kronstadt sailors, the Bolsheviks virtually guaranteed the triumph of the Russian bureaucracy over Russian society. The centralized party—a completely bourgeois institution—became the refuge of counter-revolution in its most sinister form. This was the *covert* counter-revolution that draped itself in the red flag and the terminology of Marx. Ultimately, what the Bolsheviks suppressed in 1921 was not an 'ideology' or a 'White Guard conspiracy', but an elemental struggle of the Russian people to free themselves of their shackles and take control of their own destiny. For Russia, this meant the nightmare of Stalinist dictatorship; for the generation of the 'Thirties it meant the horror of fascism and the treachery of the Communist Parties in Europe and the United States.

Reprinted from *Anarchos*, May, 1969. The whole article has been reprinted by the Libertarian Students Federation in their pamphlet *Listen, Marxist!*

This pamphlet is No. 2 of a series to be published by Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1, in the Anarchist weekly 'Freedom.' Further copies may be obtained at 1s. each (inc. post.)

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