

ECONOMICS OF AFFLUENCE

ANARCHISTS are often accused of being hopelessly impractical and idealistic. It is true that many think in political terms of revolution, and solutions that will only come with Utopia. Basically, however, the ideas have a relevance, and an urgency, if we have the wit and the imagination to break away from the old cliches that stand in our way. The cardinal difference between the anarchist approach and the political approach is that the party seeks mass acceptance and we seek mass participation. Man has come to the end of his reserves of productive virgin land, so the land we have has to be farmed in the real sense of the word. Farmed to feed and to continue feeding. To those who still think that industrialisation will solve these problems, I will quote Dr. E. S. Schumacher, who pointed out that intensive factory farming is no answer to the world food problem. He pointed out that: "The average American farm worker has behind him an investment of £10,000 and farm productivity per man is among the highest in the world. But productivity per acre of agricultural land was only half that of Britain, which in turn was a quarter of that of the United Arab Republic.

Economics Mumbo Jumbo

Today we are in a period of economic crisis, an impasse of a system of financial mumbo-jumbo that so-called socialist politicians are vainly trying to make work. At the mercy of the whims of this modern fetish, which has no basis in rationality or usefulness, men are willing to live their lives. The honeymoon of postwar prosperity has come to an end without an understanding of the real state of the world.

Most of the newly independent nations pin their hopes on industrialisation. It is thought to be a source of power, and it is in political terms, but in the long term it is going to be a source of weakness, danger, enmity, strife and human misery. If mankind retains the present financial set-up, the competition to sell industrial products is going to get fiercer and fiercer and the pace will get faster and faster and the workers will tie themselves to an industrial treadmill that is without purpose or satisfaction. In face of the continued world food shortage the price of this most essential of all needs is likely to rise steadily. The vulnerability of Britain's economy is obvious to all but the economists who urge greater production.

The sad fact is that we are gradually covering our greatest asset with concrete and buildings. The soil and climate of Britain is a peasant's dream

and although productivity in agriculture has far outstripped that of industry, its potential, in the context of a sensible social and economic policy could be immense.

Movement Bric-a-brac

The cry of course is that one cannot turn back the clock, but if the direction one is taking is a cul-de-sac, one has to turn round and try another way; and if the approach can be made without preconceived ideas and traditions, so much the better. In terms of human happiness even the affluent West cannot contend that industrialisation has been an unqualified success. There is little quality in life or production - houses and rubbish dumps are lumbered with the bric-a-brac of industry; cities and roads are so clogged with cars that there is no longer any pleasure here; the benefits of lying in the sun are more than counteracted by the nervous energy expended in getting there. Yet the only solution according to the politician is the production of more and more of this mediocre trash. Many anarchists have fled this madness, failing to convince their fellows of the folly of such a system. To continue to talk in political terms is to fail to make ourselves understood. People are not unaware of the unsatisfactory nature of the times in which they live and, if they hear the same sort of terms that they hear ad nauseam from the political parties, anarchism will continue to be dismissed.

The problem for ^{us} man is two-fold; to humanise industry and to deal with the spectre of famine that haunts the world, and this requires the participation of people, a study of the problems and what action people can take. The individual must regain control of his environment. The ability to grow food and control the source of food is probably the best way to secure this independence. Until the industrial workers realize this, they will remain essentially a slave to the



COFFIN CLUBS

The trade union and the co-operative movements have deteriorated into the same sort of impersonal corporations that abound in our society mainly because the mass of members fail to participate. They control vast funds, the membership still has constitutional control over these organisations, a small revolution could take place if they exercised their power. Trade unionists contribute vast sums in political contributions which, after all, goes to a political party that maintains the status quo.

Every local authority is obliged to supply an allotment to those who have no garden. There are acres of disused land which should be used. It may seem irrelevant when the shops are crammed with food but is it irrelevant to the millions who go hungry every day? The biggest contribution that anyone can make to the world food problem is to say we do not need to extract a contribution from the world larder.

Humanity achieved some sort of control over the environment. Today we have to achieve an independence from an artificial system that prevents a full enjoyment of all life has to offer. Modern techniques to peoples needs - physical and psychological. The modern Briton could do this, it must be the reply to redundancies.

Do not say to the government that you must do this for us, but say, 'We are going to see that our families are going to secure a more stable community' and use the union funds to this end, not only to procure a more stable community here, but also abroad by using industrial knowledge to enable the hungry to stabilise their agriculture.

The limiting factors in agriculture are low rainfall, soil impoverished of organic matter and sometimes badly deficient. The first factor is sometimes aggravated by human activity. The second is almost always caused by it. Often communities are caught up in a circle of poverty which they themselves cannot break. They burn the dung and the cover for fuel which makes the soil more and more arid. A big factor could be the provision of simple paraffin stoves and supply of fuel, the study of solar machines, wind generators, pumps, desalinators, improved hand tools, seeds, animals, provision of wind breaks, vermin-proof food stores

Just the indication that somebody cared would encourage enthusiasm and participation. We have made progress in breaking down religious objections here to population control. Perhaps some progress can be made in India with the sacred cow. We all have them, they are our biggest problem.

Alan Albon

REVIEWS

CURED TO DEATH

CURED TO DEATH: an anarchist report on the effects of prescription drugs. Article by Arabella Melville and Colin Johnson, published by New English Library price £2.50.

In Britain, as in most countries of the affluent world, drugs represent the first line of therapy for almost all health problems. Most people will take a pain-killer for a headache without a second thought, and if they suffer less familiar symptoms or anything apparently more serious, they will consult a doctor and, four times out of five, receive a prescription for drugs to suppress the symptoms. It is a situation that has become a focus of controversy over recent years, but it is proving remarkably resistant to change.

Cured to Death is a book that analyses the health care problem from an anarchist perspective. By focussing on the power relationships between business

and government, doctor and patient, salesman and target, we show that the structure of the pressures acting at all levels. Its effects are also predictable: when economic and institutional power are exercised in the way that is characteristic of our culture, the individual's welfare is subordinated to the greater institutional good. Thus the pharmaceutical industry shows healthy profits while we, the consumers of its products, grow steadily sicker.

With the growth of drug-induced disease that follows the explosion in the use of ever-more potent drugs, individuals become increasingly dependent and powerless. Drug therapy has evolved as a form of passive medicine: patients are expected to comply with their doctors' instructions, to take the medicine as directed, and are discouraged from questioning any decisions. When they fall foul of

the system and become seriously ill from adverse drug reactions, they are given more medication or rejected by the system that caused them damage. In the book, we document the impact of this reality on the lives of individuals. They discover, finally, that there is nobody to whom they can turn. The outcome of this analysis is that the only way that any individual can hope to achieve health is through taking responsibility for his or her own welfare identifying the causes of illness (which lie, almost without exception, in the nature of our culture), and acting independently of professional institutions. In health, as in every other aspect of our lives, we can only hope to fulfil our potential if we free ourselves from those institutions which would exercise control over us. Cured to Death shows that the benefits of medical care are a myth and thus opens the way for an individualistic approach.

IN THE STICKS:

WE HAVE NOT COME HERE TO PROTEST OUR LACK OF FREEDOM BUT

The Convoy. How it all began.

ONCE upon a time there were three sheep who defected from the herd saying they were fed up with having their wool ripped off. The consensus among the rest of the herd was that the fences around the field had been strengthened and the shears sharpened and used closer to the skin as a result of this escape. Moral: all legal movements will disown those who reject the unjust laws and customs and call them trouble-makers in order to maintain credibility vis à vis the moderate majority.

There is a widespread myth that the Convoy are bovver boys. In this the various peace movements of the UK have become victims of government propaganda, whose motive is divide and destroy. The most common lie, reproduced on the front pages of the pulp press is 'gun outlaws'. This was the excuse for the deployment of 50 police marksmen at the recent eviction from Stonehenge in which over 500 riot squad got their overtime and bonus. It is well known that there have never been any guns on the convoy. Another standard propaganda trick was the publication of the lie that "the Convoy beat up Windsor Angels" by the News of the World. This was a particularly nasty trick because the Windsor Hells Angels chapter is one of the most respected group of outlaws in the UK, the idea behind it being to insult the Angels' honour so that a fight would take place. In fact there has never been any contact or hassle between the Convoy and Windsor. That the Peace Movement should be influenced by state propaganda is to some extent unavoidable; it is part of the process of information transmission to which all humans subscribe. If you take nothing as given and find out for yourself, that is a first step towards liberty.

NO SUCH THING AS THE CONVOY

Recently a poster appeared with the motto: "Destroy the system before it destroys you." The author of this poster, when challenged, failed to demonstrate the existence of the 'system'. What can be shown to be is, for example, the existence of Mark or Jonathon who think and act in a particular way (they say they belong to the police force or the SWP). But even though Mark and Jonathon are, the groups they claim to be part of cannot be shown to be except as names on a piece of paper or data on brain tissue. So any 'system' is a collection of humans. We can say there is no

system apart from us, or alternatively that "the system" is our way of thinking, speaking and acting in the world. To say that political parties or groups are is like saying there is a thing called the BUS QUEUE in London. Sure there are bus queues all over the place as long as it is understood that 'bus queue' means a few people hanging around for the 31. Our thinking process is dominated by such woolly concepts based ultimately on the misuse of language. The so-called 'system' is our way of thinking and has to be changed.

Of course there is no such thing as the Convoy. On the other hand there are groups of people who travel together. At some point in time they take on different names. 'Tibetan Ukrainians', 'the Convoy', 'Green Albion' etc. The membership of these groups is not fixed. Whoever's on the road is part of the Convoy. If you get a mobile home and hit the road, you will be 'The Convoy'.

What does happen is a rendez-vous point. Around the last week of June some 1000 vehicles are expected to rendez-vous on the Salisbury Plain, between Glastonbury and Stonehenge, and to proceed to Porton Down for the stop-over.

Yet we must bear in mind that this convoy will be only Joe Bloggs and Mrs. Street and you if you come. If we can change our thinking habits, like the belief in things that are not there, we will make a step towards 'changing the system'.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

There was a free festival at Glastonbury in 71. There were 'White Panthers' and 'Diggers' and 'Squatters' in 72 who called themselves. 'Polytantic' and went to Windsor. There was a large squatting community in Chalk Farm which got evicted by Ken Livingstone. There was Dwyer who copped an extradition order after jail for his involvement in Windsor. There was a group of Wallies around 74 who changed their names and squatted Stonehenge. One of them is buried among the stones - Phil Russel alias Wally Hope, died in "unexplained circumstances" after his arrest and incarceration in a psychiatric ward (see a series of shock slogans and mindless token tantrums by Crass on Exitencil Press.)

THE CONVOY

TO CELEBRATE THE FREEDOM THAT'S ALREADY THERE.

His mate Jeff got done in in Epping Forest. A nother wally got given nine years for acid. There was this guy called Dr. John who organised a "Caravanserai" to Trentishoe Festival—some 30, vehicles in convoy left the Polytantric and got bogged down in a swamp. There was Tim Corker, lawyer-anarchist, of A. U. M. who would be seen marshalling vehicles from his blue bus and calling for convoy. Tim died in a similar "unexplained circumstances" inside a state hospital at Kings Cross. There are countless others still around, and each year the community on wheels gets bigger.

GREENHAM COMMON AND PORTON DOWN

There had been a number of one-day free festivals at Greenham. When the women's camp started, the 'Convoy' moved from Stonehenge and set up a free stage a few miles from the Main Gate in an area where a lot of old trees had just been felled by the MOD. There was a party one night when a 100 yards of fence disappeared and people went on to the base for a smoke and some fun. The party was interrupted by the arrival of a chopper full of the riot squad who started busting at random. The only publication to carry this story was 'Overthrow' in California. The British press was told to hush it and the so-called Peace press didn't want to know. Since then the women have carried out mass actions against the base and through the skilful use of publicity made it one of the most talked about issues in this country.

Porton Down is happening this year, and after the Convoy leaves, it is hoped that a large permanent camp will be set up there and that some group will do the publicity to make it a national issue. We weren't so much concerned with the politics of germ warfare as with the fact that the existence of the ideology of disease is firmly entrenched in everyone's mind. Disease is something that the state controls - via early conditioning in the family and later on through established institutions such as hospitals, universities, vaccination centres etc. Some of us think that herpes etc. were actually developed at some of these research centres. In the Soviet Union state control is achieved through psychiatry - the most common diseases being 'anarchy' and 'dissidence'.

The West is more subtle. Undesireables,

particularly of a political character, receive different treatment from others - like a mate of ours who had his leg rebroken by 'hospital orderlies' at the Royal Free, or like Tim Corker who was killed "by a virus" according to official sources. Other cultures who do not have an official theory of medicine manage much better than we do.

DRUGS

One of the most common accusations levelled against the 'Convoy' is that they advocate the use of drugs. This in spite of the fact that our way of life in the West is based on the administration of massive amounts of poison. The germ warfare centre produces specialised poisons. The pharmaceutical multinationals market common poisons and make a lot of money. The government condones the heroin trade in the belief that rebels, are more likely to try it and get hooked, thereby becoming politically inactive. If that doesn't work, 'sexual' diseases are introduced into radical circles.

The festival subculture, for we are talking about a way of life, uses alcohol, weed, hash and mushrooms, natural products of the earth, tested for generations by different societies. Mushrooms and other psychadelic drugs produce 'visions' which may result in a re-appraisal of the value systems of the Western world.

On their own, hallucigens have little effect. The myth of the last decade, "drop acid and see God" has been discredited by practice, for the people who relied on psychadelics alone made little progress and did not necessarily become better and wiser.

Combined with internal struggle, rethinking of the scenario, meditation and much effort, hallucigens can be useful, although, the majority use them for pleasure.

This is not to say that hard drugs are advocated or approved in any way. Heroin dealers who have attempted to cash in on the festival boom have been physically thrown out or otherwise dealt with.

SUMMER CONVOY

This year your rendez-vous on Salisbury Plain has been set up to include vehicles from Glastonbury Festival as well as from Stonehenge. See you around near Porton Down. Go for it.

Peter Todd

IN THE SMOKE:

Dave of London Greenpeace writes this personal view

There's a war on, a war between humanity all over the globe, and the Systems which control and destroy our lives, our environment and the natural world.

They exploit everything under the sun (literally)—all materials and resources on this beautiful and bountiful planet, all the food, all the nature. They rip up the earth, destroy forests, pollute our seas and dominate the land everywhere.

They exploit every person - build factories, offices and plantations all over and force people to work in them or go hungry. They reduce human communities to economic slaves, numbers to be stuck on graphs in their profit and loss accounts, who must obey and labour for them.

Fighting amongst themselves for influence, land and resources, these institutions fuel (and of course profit from) barbaric wars, causing fear, suffering and death to hundreds of millions of people, trapped in the zones of the Generals. Meanwhile as people's land and food is stolen and resources squandered, millions of others starve.

They don't give a shit about anyone, any of us. We are NOTHING to them. They don't give a fuck for the peoples of the world - never did and never will. So this is a picture without illusions.

The financial and industrial institutions which exploit us and the earth are complemented by those which defend, conquer and expand power blocs (the military), which control people (authorities of all kinds, police and armies), those which service us and make us dependent (shops, the traffic system, the welfare state), which mould people into obedient citizens (schools, media) as well as institutions which integrate us and neutralise our concerns, questioning and resistance (churches, charities, unions, political parties and parliament etc.).

In the past when people have rebelled, they have usually explained their struggle as a class struggle to make improvements in the System, or to seize control of it (the land, workplace and towns) from those who at present have power.

In the second case, by establishing worker councils (Russia 1905, 1917, Germany 1919, Italy 1920, Hungary 1956, ..) and town communes (Spain 1936..), they would be able to share and exercise power themselves, and so end oppression. However most

rebellions and revolutions have been diverted by political parties into struggles to establish a new kind of State control over industry and society generally.

As revolution and class struggle have been turned into problems of who should manage the system, so most working class people have turned away from, and in fact have been pushed out of politics. However, the struggle to protect our humanity, and the conditions and quality of our lives has continued daily.

By the 1960's, movements out of control of political parties began to develop—involving fresh ideas and forms of organisation and activity. Independent movements grew up against nuclear weapons, for women's liberation, wildcat strikes, occupations of housing and workplaces (especially in the 1968 uprising and general strike in France), for non-authoritarian relationships and lifestyle, and against ecological destruction etc. It was within this atmosphere of questioning and self-organisation that the group I eventually joined, The London Greenpeace Group, was founded (along with other such groups) in 1970. Primarily to campaign against nuclear bomb testing it gradually broadened out to question this whole society and our personal responsibility to act in our every day lives to change things.

In 1977, with all political parties and Unions defending nuclear energy, a large movement of independent local groups, protest and direct actions (occupations and blockades of sites etc) grew up all over Europe and America to close down all nuclear installations. One of the few independent groups in England to be active during this whole decade, London Greenpeace was able to spread valuable information and contribute practical and theoretical ideas to the anti-nuclear movement. This was especially helpful in the formation of regional, or issue-based, action networks and federations based on autonomous collective and groups. Members took part in site occupations and blockades, and blocking nuclear waste transport. There was a great awareness that it was the whole, centralised, destructive system which was being challenged, and that there were radical alternatives which it was up to ourselves to create. At the same time there was the resurgence of a wide range of self-organised

GREENPEACE

movements for change, including large, anarchistic youth revolts. By 1980, the anti-nuclear struggle had begun to come up against heavy police opposition on one hand, and on the other hand the now familiar attempts by Left groups to co-opt it. At the same time the threat of nuclear war stimulated the rebirth of massive "anti-bomb" protests. Whilst most of these seemed to be channelled into futile appeals to politicians, and into joining single-issue hierarchical organisations, there were many involved who knew something more fundamental was needed. In England, this peace movement totally failed to oppose the war in the Falklands. I joined London Greenpeace at this time as one of the very few groups (mostly pacifist and anarchist groups) active in some way against that war. Later peace camps began to spring up outside military bases everywhere, and a radical anti-war movement began to grow. This inspired us, especially with the large-scale blockades to try to close bases. It seemed that people were drawing on the experiences and strengths of the earlier anti-nuclear power activities.

It was then that some of us felt the time could be right for significant opposition to the war machine in our towns as well. With our hearts in our mouths we called for an occupation to Stop The City of London the centre of finance for the arms trade on 29th September 1983. After 1500 people took part in that encouraging action, a movement developed which decided to re-occupy the "City" in March this year. This time 3000 people from different movements came together for an amazing and determined protest against the profit system itself. Let's hope these actions continue to grow and spread to other towns.

All this time, we in the group felt that mass protests should complement and not detract from the opposition that's needed to everyday oppression all around us. Whilst protest movements give confidence and a focus to discontented minorities and sub-cultures, the majority of people face a daily struggle for survival and self-respect, to overcome isolation and constant hassles by the Authorities. This daily struggle throughout our society carries the seeds of widespread opposition and community solidarity.

Yet the system is maintained by their authoritarian culture. To encourage each other to question and undermine that culture helps us all to increase our confidence to oppose the controls forced on us. Hence, for us in London Greenpeace, it is vital that we relate our ideas to people's everyday lives and struggles. It's important to actively criticise and oppose the use of money, in favour of sharing to support opposition to the power and violence of the traffic system (probably more effective than the police in ensuring social control);
to encourage respect and defence of animals and the natural world, and for people to stop eating and exploiting animals;
to try to involve children in what we do, and support their struggles, as well as support parents with their responsibilities and hassles;
to encourage people to reject materialism, all the useless junk we are expected to buy and consume, especially junk food;
to explain the way the system buys us off with luxury imports (coffee, sugar, minerals, tropical fruit etc), and the effects this has on people in third world regions;
to encourage opposition to sexist attitudes, and active support for women's struggles;
to oppose the ever-increasing dependence of people on drugs of all kinds - tobacco, alcohol, coffee, dope, TV, sugar, vallium, etc.;
to criticise the idea that 'experts', 'leaders' and Authorities of any kind know what's best for us, or should have any power over us;
to support people creating their own entertainment, developing craft skills and educating each other;
to encourage mutual aid and solidarity in our neighbourhoods, and support all self-organisation and resistance to the various Authorities - tenants' groups, workplace organisations, parent and toddler groups, and associations of every kind which people create and participate in to fulfil a need.

To achieve this will be a process of ecological and social revolution, in which we abolish all the structures of the present system and create a world based on our humanity and common sense.

A personal view by Dave, (London Greenpeace).

