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GRASSROOT ANARCHIST

The enemies of the people are those who know what people need

No.3. Police v. Miners. Stop the Cities.
Molesworth occupied. Venice Anarchist Conf.
Stirner. Squatting.





MINERS V. POLICE

THE MINERS' STRIKE IS IMPORTANT TO US

If they lose, a dangerously reactionary government will have defeated a major obstacle between them and rampant control and exploitation: the power of the organised working classes. A little time to let the dust settle, and then we will all have to watch out.

Whatever doubts many of us have about the Trades Unions, or Marxist theories of class, Tories understand. So whatever the short term financial cost, they are now determined to break the unions, potentially the direct political expression of the working classes. They are the people whose subjugation the Tories need: they are the ones who actually produce the wealth that the capitalists play with.

Many anarchists fail to recognise how important class awareness can be. Many of us are of the middle classes, heavily polluted with bourgeois values. Many of us are from the working classes, but have arrived at anarchism through our individual personal development, forgetting or ignoring that there is an oppressed class behind us. A deep, enduring, inevitable conflict goes on between the working classes and those who exploit them, however much it is denied by the many people who think they can sidestep out of this class struggle.

People are dying because of capitalism. (Although the worst suffering is hid out of sight by national boundaries.) People endure a semi-existence (often not even realising how much life they miss out on) because of modern capitalism. There is only one side that anyone concerned about our world can reasonably choose in the frequently ignored class war. The sooner we all recognise this and do something about it, the better. It is so easy to criticise "Socialism", "the Unions", "the Left", that we can lose sight of the greater damage being done now by the Right. By capitalism, by the passivity of so many blinkered

'moderates' throughout our society.

The day government or capitalists willingly support any 'green' venture is the day to be wary: beware whenever capitalism finds a way of incorporating attractive ideas - of taking them from us, making them safe and sterile, and then selling them back to us at twice the price! Fanciful thoughts of a "Third Way" between the Left and the Right must not blind us to the history of challenges to government and authority, to Commerce and Property, and how those challenges have been overcome in this country.

One feature of capitalism is how successful it is at incorporating and corrupting any hopeful ideas, each time stealing a fresh initiative to buy for itself a new lease of life.

Complete revolution, pushed forward beyond our wildest dreams - that's where hope lies. And there is no better self-preparation for revolution than to strike - to refuse absolutely to co-operate for a while with their system of wage-slavery - and to do so collectively, not for more money, but as an attack upon the very control the "bosses" have over our lives.

There are obvious links between the nuclear power programme and the run-down of the coalmines. There are grave doubts about the desirability of coal as an energy source. There are criticisms of the insensitivity of some miners to racist and sexist oppression. But these facts pale into insignificance beside the central point: miners and their communities are collectively resisting the destructive control the NCB and the Government wish to exercise over their whole way of life. They are fighting for a bit of freedom, defending the things they value. We should stand humbly with them, offering our support.

Tarquin

NEWS MOLESWORTH OCCUPIED

It's now a growing village called Rainbow Field.



2500 people trespassed onto Molesworth airfield and occupied it on the August Bank Holiday. The MOD did nothing, nor did the local police. (Molesworth is due to receive 64 cruise missiles by the end of 1986).

70 people are now living there, setting up a Green Village. They've ploughed up 10 acres for winter wheat to send to Eritrea. They've built a communal kitchen and are organising the education of about 20 children on the site. They've nearly finished the Chapel, which was consecrated by the Bishop of Huntingdon. Now they need cash for the roof tiles. And they need cash for lots of other projects.

The number of Greens at Molesworth seems to be increasing all the time and they're hoping that many more will come to celebrate the Winter Solstice Dec. 21.

LONDON STOP THE CITY

Demo spreads from the City to the West End.

There was one small rampage not far from the Stock Exchange where windows were smashed and cars jumped on and later a Barclays Bank off Cheapside had windows broken. There was graffiti sprayed all over the place.

However, it was a disaster for the communicators who had all leaflets confiscated and were unable to talk to people, with the police continually moving them on.

There were city workers who entered into the spirit of the occasion by wearing stickers proclaiming: 'aggravate an anarchist - support the City' (:*?)

By the afternoon many people, pissed off by police harassment, started heading out into other parts of the city - where some successful 'hit and run' raids took place. In Soho sex shops were damaged. Saatchi and Saatchi offices were 'trashed' - smoke bombs and thunderflashes let off inside and the windows smashed. Piccadilly Circus - windows in the area smashed and building materials thrown into the road. Trafalgar Square's fountains were dyed red. Also reported, attacks on Debenhams and some butchers shops. A Rolls Royce was damaged and car tyres were let down. A copper or two were reported in the media receiving 'neck injuries and a broken arm'.

Of the 470 arrested most were for 'obstruction' while sitting on a park bench. Most cases of obstruction were released without charge late evening/early morning - they make out that you should be grateful that they're not charging you when you didn't do anything in the first place! One person arrested for obstruction had nothing to do with the demo and was walking home from work at the time!

Camera film was taken out at the station (after possessions had been sealed up and taken away... Is this legal, you may well ask! :) There were cases of people being beaten up by the police while in custody, and how many cases have been totally fabricated - like ABH on a copper?

When we were getting our possessions back and being released a copper said "I suppose we'll see you in six months again, lads", Will he? Did the police tactics deter you or strengthen your resolve? We will see.....

On Sept. 27 an unguessable number of people came to the 'Stop the City' in London. 470 were arrested, in many cases for doing fuck all.

Was the London STC as big a flop as the media made it out to be? Events taking place in the Bank and St. Pauls 'City' area were certainly limited and their methods prevented any congregating of people.

What would be a SUCCESSFUL 'Stop the City'? Is it windows smashed in the thousands, Rolls Royces Damaged etc.....? Write in what we should do tactically if there's another STC in London or elsewhere.

CLASS

Class War isn't breaking windows

"In this cell that is ours, there is no pity,
No sunrise on the cold plain that is our soul,
No beckoning to a warm horizon.
All beauty eludes us and we wait."

WE LIVE in a permanent state of class war through no fault of our own.

Thousands of people dying of hunger every day whilst others wallow in complacent decadence: that is class war.

Natural resources being destroyed in the name of profit and greed, against the will of the people who need those resources to live: that is class war.

Being forced to go to school, to 'work' most of our lives in order to have what we need to survive: food and shelter gratuitously handed down to us: that is class war.

'Stepping out of line', 'stealing' in order to survive, speaking out against those in control, trying to change the way things are means prison or death if we get caught: that is class war.



Imperialist troops keeping control in Northern Ireland, Bloody Sunday, the reaction against the miners' strike (already planned and ready to be put into action ten years ago), two people dead on picket lines, Colin Roach, Blair Peach, Liddle Towers: deaths in police cells are so commonplace that they only receive publicity if thousands of people demand it: that is class war.

Nowadays most people take the police force for granted.

as though they are as much a fact of life as the food we eat and the land it comes from. The police force was created 150 years ago by a wealthy, landowning politician who wanted better protection from the peasants.

It is so blatantly obvious, it is there for all to see it is our way of life: we are all part of the class war!

And people still ask what we mean by class war!

Throughout the world there are two classes: the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. The rich and the poor. The exploiters and the exploited. Those in control and those who suffer.

Which side are you on? On the one side we have the multinationals, the monarchs, the governments, the 'landed gentry', the rich, those who have never been cold or hungry: those in control, and the servile lackeys who obey their every wish.

On the other side we have the people who were born in the 'wrong' bed, the poor, the hungry, the prisoners and those who strive for freedom, equality and peace: those who suffer.

There is no neutrality, to try and remain neutral is to do exactly what the oppressors want: to exist in a blind state of mute acceptance. To remain neutral is to side with the oppressors.

This is our reality: our lives stolen from us at birth, we are all prisoners and we are all hangmen until we begin to strive for freedom.

It is hard for most people to see this reality due to the training we have received through the school and the media: we are becoming permanently brain washed into seeing each other as stereotypes and accepting this reality as the only way: divide and rule, very subtle, very clever. We have all had to struggle for what little humanity we have.

It is impossible for anyone with any humanity left to accept this reality.

I want to be free, I want other people to be free. I want to live a life based on mutual aid, co-operation, trust and faith. No violence, no authority. I live in a police state. I must fight for that freedom. This reality is based on violence, so that fight is necessarily violent. I am constantly aware that the food I put into my mouth is at the expense of people and animals everywhere, who have unwillingly given their lives so that the exploiters may sell me that food: that is violence.

To talk of change within the law is ludicrous. To talk of achieving anarchism through parliamentary reformism (as I have read in previous 'Green Anarchists') is pathetic.

The State makes the laws, therefore what is within the law is within the containment of the State. The law is to maintain the status quo.

Which side are you on? Are you for freedom or against

WAR

just for the fun of it.

it? The struggle will be a long one. We won't achieve equality through two years of struggle, but maybe after forty years, maybe never, but we must try: to do nothing because you could only do a little is playing into the hands of the oppressors once more.

The only way to achieve anarchy is through mass insurrection. We need to bring together the parallels between the miners, Greenham women, the Animal Liberation Front and anarchists everywhere. We need to unite with the common aim of freedom and equality, and work together towards mass insurrection, work together towards widespread rioting and looting, no-go areas for the authorities, collectivising our homes and places of work, establishing communes where we look after each other. We must take up the offensive against the rich and the powerful: make them feel the insecurity they force upon us, force them to realise the capacity for change within their system.

For every attack they launch against us, we must attack them ten times over.

The tactics we must adopt have been proven to be successful: guerilla warfare, the only tactic the oppressors cannot contain: mass insurrection, as displayed by the hit squads on miners' picket lines and by the Animal Liberation Front who are everywhere and nowhere at the same time, made up of numerous autonomous groups who launch an offensive, hit hard and then disappear again. They are impossible to infiltrate or contain because they have no central organisation for the state to recognise.

The struggle is a long one and we must be careful: too many people are dead or in prison because they made unnecessary mistakes. Prison is no place for

revolutionaries, prison is living death. We must plan well and be very careful. Grasses and infiltrators must be dealt with thoroughly.

When we start to get somewhere, the state begins to show just what repression it is capable of, as demonstrated by the recent raids by South East Animal Liberation: they did six successive raids, three of them at the same time, they liberated many files and caused much damage. Now comes the repression; 25 arrests and questioning still going on.

There are 9 people from Alconbury Peace Camp on trial 'charged' with 'conspiracy to cause criminal damage'. The evidence against them is that the way they think is contrary to the laws of the country. 5 people are on trial in London, charged with the same offence, simply for being in the area just after some shops were smashed up. Bail was set at £2,500 and three of them have been remanded in custody.

The Animal Liberation movement in general is facing more and more repression, 'conspiracy' charges are proving more and more popular, all because we are getting somewhere.

Sounds like what they say about the police state in the USSR doesn't it? But it's not, it's 'Great Britain', so be careful.

Let us take back what is ours by right of birth. The time is now. The method is mass revolt.

Love and Freedom.

A member of 'Class War' newspaper collective.
Suggested reading: 'Class War'. 'I want to riot, not to work.' Inflammable leaflet. Aldgate Press.
'Towards a Citizens' Militia.' by Stuart Christie. Cienfuegos Press.

CLASSROOM REVOLUTIONARIES

Passing notes between desks takes on a new meaning

Dear Janey,
i, man. etc. I'm thinking of becoming a pig. 'Ello, 'Ello, 'Ello! It's alright, it was just a JOKE! I hate mem. Thatcher's stormtroopers, etc. Still not going to join me in leading the uprising? When we seize power, we'll throw them into camps and put Thatcher up against the wall.

Dear Kath, Sorry I can't join you - I think it's all wrong and that, but I don't want to do anything as drastic as some of the things you say - OK? Keep dreaming!

Dear Janey, If you are really committed to the belief that it all stinks, you should be prepared to take action against it. Don't you want to live life to the impossible limit? By the way, they probably dismissed Karl Marx as a dreamer too, but I don't intend waiting till I'm before the rebellion takes place: Be on the winning side, anarchy and peace, man!

Under Kath, Well, I don't want to spend all my life on the dole, without money, arguing and battling against the whole world. Yes, I do want to live life to the limit, but having money and family might help. Don't wait, do something, I'll most probably help eventually, but I'm not giving up my whole life for it.

Dear(ish) Janey, Well, that's not MY idea of heaven. Still, there's no point in arguing with you. I'll have to find others like myself who want an alternative lifestyle.

Dear Kath, What I mean is to try to have a career and build my own life and family - work and get money etc. in return. Home, kids etc. It'll be an exciting life. I'm gonna see the world, get married as late as possible, have kids and a lovely home and my own business. It would be pretty miraculous if we all had the same idea!

Kath.

As a pacifist WILL I BE PREPARED TO PASSIVELY STAND BY AND WATCH OUR LONG STRUGGLE DESTROYED BY THE UNCARING CYNICISM OF THE STATE?

..... Inevitably in a short article such as this, it is necessary to localise issues, but I realise that if any revolution is to be successful it MUST be international. It is not for me to define the type of struggle that others should follow in their own nation, they are informed of the issues and I have to trust that their considerations have been made to suit the locale. WHAT I MUST TRY TO ACCEPT IS THAT THEIR STRUGGLE IS MINE EVEN IF I DON'T WHOLLY SUPPORT THE METHODS.

Although I have considered myself a pacifist for as long as I can remember, my belief in pacifism has, perhaps because of the manner in which others have manifested it, worn thin. How can separatism be seen as pacifist? How can deliberate provocation and then deliberate servitude, as in blockade philosophy, be seen as pacifism. WE ARE ALLOWING OURSELVES TO BE PASSIVE VICTIMS, THIS IS NOT HOW I BELIEVE PACIFISM SHOULD BE PRACTISED. I no longer believe that mass protest will achieve anything but, at the best, mild reforms. I no longer believe it to be morally acceptable to see my comrades picked on and abused by agents of the State. I no longer believe that by demonstrating my own sense of awareness and love that it will have any effect whatever on those who have been brainwashed by the State to hate and hurt. By taking polarised positions WITHIN the Peace Movement we are conforming to the State's divide and conquer policy. More than any other philosophy, I believe that the feminist/N.V.D.A. faction is responsible for forcing the wedge of divide into the Peace Movement. How is it that actions that I might take are dismissed as macho where actions such as the Greenham fence pulling are heralded as demonstrations of a new spirit of womanhood. AREN'T WE JUST PEOPLE? Isn't anarchism the practice of self awareness, isn't pacifism the practice of self awareness, isn't feminism the practice of self awareness? WHERE IS THE PLACE FOR THE DIVISIONS THAT I FEEL ARE IMPOSED UPON ME AS AN INDIVIDUAL BY THOSE WHO ARE AFRAID OF THEIR OWN INDIVIDUALITY. I AM TIRED OF THE EXCLUSIVE GROUPS, TIRED OF THE WEDGES, TIRED OF BEING ALONE WHEN I FEEL TOGETHER.

I believe that it is time to AGREE amongst ourselves that DIVERSITY is DESIRABLE and that our various actions should be presented to the State AS A UNIFIED BLOCK. Might it not have been an act of generosity and love for the slogan to be 'Greenham PEOPLE are everywhere' and might it not have been MORE EFFECTIVE? Or is it too late to agree amongst ourselves?

I believe that it is time to diversify our actions, that we should form small groups who plan their own actions ranging from the now almost 'socially acceptable' form of vandalism, graffiti and super glue attacks, to the less acceptable 'vandalism' of bricks, paint bombs, wire cutters and matches. Now, I'm not so naive as to think that a paint bomb attack on an Army Recruitment office is going to bring the State to its knees. IT ISN'T. I do believe, however, that constant, widespread actions against ALL the institutions of the State could act as signals, or catalysts to a much broader dissent. Hand in hand with increased activity, there MUST be a wider distribution of information. If we sabotage a nuclear power station, we MUST make sure that as many people as possible know WHY. Of course we will have to be discreet, but the State MUST KNOW WHY IT IS BEING ATTACKED if it is to eventually fall. It is our job to INFORM ourselves of the workings of the State and to UNDO IT. We must match our actions with our intelligence and LET THEM KNOW THAT WE KNOW. Our art and our creativity are, I believe, our most powerful weapons. We must use that creativity to predict futures, we must start to prepare for a new world. No revolution is worthwhile unless there is a clear plan of what is desirable beyond it. Isn't it time to start stating WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING FOR? Isn't it time to start creating policies for debate concerning our future. We are so often forced into regression. We hide in our dark pits peering at the light far above us, isn't it time TO START REACHING FOR THAT LIGHT.

I AM NOT A WORM.

I AM NOT A WORM.

Now, perhaps, I have come to the hardest section of this article, the meagrest test of my essentially pacifist nature..... I believe that as the public become aware of the possibilities of real change, they will firstly passively support and then, given the right impetus, actively support the struggle. BUT the State, its agents and the agents of 'friendly' States, (hence the need for an international movement), will NOT be prepared to stand by and allow the people the freedom that they demand; but by then the people will not only have glimpsed that freedom, THEY WILL NOT BE SATISFIED UNTIL THEY HAVE ACHIEVED IT. So, for those of us who were a part of the great Peace Movement revival of the late 70s, who at that time were able to believe the purist pacifist theories of the earlier Peace Movement, there will be posed the crucial question.... DO WE FIGHT ON? DO WE FIGHT ON OR DO WE SUBMIT TO THE INEVITABLE BARBARITY WITH WHICH THE STATE WILL REACT TO A REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION? If the Peace Movement is truly a Peace Movement it CAN NOT AND WILL NOT TOLERATE THE EXISTENCE OF THE STATE IN ANY FORM WHAT-EVER BECAUSE TO DO SO WOULD BE TO ACCEPT THAT IT IS NOT ACTUALLY PEACE THAT WE SEEK, BUT A MERE SENSE OF SECURITY, A SENSE OF SECURITY CONTROLLED BY THE STATE. By seeking REAL peace, just as by seeking an end to sexual role play, we are seeking REVOLUTION because BY NO OTHER MEANS WILL OUR DEMANDS BE MET.

I believe that there will come a time when we are no longer confronted by the 'thin blue line', but by the fat khaki one, that is, I believe that the Peace Movement is by its demands creating a climate that will inevitably blossom into CIVIL WAR. I believe that ALL members of the Peace Movement, be they leftist, rightist, feminist, pacifist, militant etc. are contributing to a situation THAT WILL LEAD TO BLOODSHED, AND THAT IF THAT MOVEMENT IS TO SUCCEED IN ITS STATED AIMS, IT WILL LEAD TO MORE AND MORE BLOODSHED. It is no good pretending that this isn't the case, IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN THE CASE, AND ALWAYS WILL BE. SO, as a pacifist I am actually directly contributing to a situation that essentially contradicts everything that I believe. Catch 22.

As a pacifist WILL I BE PREPARED TO PASSIVELY STAND BY AND WATCH OUR LONG STRUGGLE DESTROYED BY THE UNCARING CYNICISM OF THE STATE? Isn't our years of hard work TOO PRECIOUS to be given away without a fight? By the acts that I have thus far involved myself in I HAVE ALREADY DETERMINED THAT ONE DAY IN THE FUTURE I HAVE PLACED SOMEONE'S FINGER ON THE TRIGGER, WILL IT BE MINE? When the time comes, pacifist or not, I believe that I SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE, AS SHALL WE ALL, FOR THE INEVITABLE SITUATION OF WAR IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES. We will be faced with the dilemma of whether or not we fight beside those who believe that it is their moral responsibility to do so. IS IT NOT THE CASE THAT IF WE ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THAT POSSIBILITY, WHICH WE INDISPUTABLY ARE, WE WILL BE MORALLY RESPONSIBLE TO SEE IT THROUGH? PERHAPS THIS CONFRONTATION WON'T HAPPEN IN MY LIFETIME, BUT THAT DOESN'T ALTER MY RESPONSIBILITY IN HAVING CREATED IT. MY FINGER OR YOUR FINGER? WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? IT IS OUR SHARED STRUGGLE AND WE ARE ALL MUTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS OUTCOME. SO, when the time comes, I accept that I will have played a part in creating a situation of armed confrontation. IF I FIND MY FINGER ON THE TRIGGER, WILL I PULL IT? THAT IS A QUESTION THAT I CAN NOT AND WILL NOT ANSWER. I categorically KNOW that if the world isn't destroyed by the State, THERE WILL COME A TIME OF REVOLUTION. I CATEGORICALLY KNOW THAT ALL OF US IN THE PEACE MOVEMENT WILL HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THAT REVOLUTION. I CATEGORICALLY DO NOT KNOW WHETHER OR NOT I WOULD BE PREPARED TO PULL THE TRIGGER AND IN THAT, AND THAT ALONE THERE IS A SPARK OF LIGHT THAT RISES FAR BEYOND ANYTHING THAT THIS ARTICLE HAS TOUCHED UPON. BECAUSE I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER OR NOT I WOULD PULL THAT TRIGGER I HAVE, I BELIEVE, MAINTAINED INTACT OUR MOST HUMAN AND ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS.... CHOICE AND HOPE. I hope that one day I might be able to create a philosophy that does not include suffering and pain, that gives us ALL dignity and integrity and I hope that we will all choose to take that option. For the while, my sense of reality precludes such possibilities, but I shall continue to look elsewhere, IN HOPE.

How very far removed from what I KNOW is right and decent and life-loving this all seems, yet how, apart from ignoring that sense of life, can I honestly perceive the outcome of our struggle in another light?

In love, peace and hope, a member of CRASS.



Anarchic Self Sufficiency

The second part about technology in our society.

I RECENTLY talked to a successful 'High Technologist'. He said, "I'm proud of serving mankind. I love to make breakthroughs - to help our economy and my fellow men (sic)." He worked on armaments. It was computer control for missiles, I believe.....

In effect, this technologist was craving for status and power (over people and things)... and above all - like nearly all of us - for money. I find it extraordinarily difficult to get any 'high flyer' technologist to come along, say, and give an elementary talk or contribution to a group of working class young people in what I have called a 'vernacular technical club'. That these privileged people, in fact all of us, should do this in a convivial society ought, I would have thought, to go without question. But we do not have a convivial society and alienation between have and have-nots runs very deep....

Where did the driving force for the dizzying spiral of technological 'advance' with all its status grubbing come from?

The scientific revolution - or what was once called the New Philosophy, is often linked with the remarkable schemes and prophecies of Francis Bacon. He wrote the 'Novum Organum' and 'The New Atlantis' in the early 1600s. There is much evidence that the Royal Society was founded on the inspiration of "our Lord Bacon", to quote Thomas Spratt, an officer of the Royal Society at the time. The expensive pattern of what was to follow - and the industrial revolution started shortly after all this, and in Britain - is seen in Bacon's description of his scientific research establishment as written in his science-fiction story, 'The New Atlantis', "The end of our Foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible." This famous aphorism gives the basis of a breathtaking vision virtually involving the idea of unlimited progress.

This vision, and the dominant forms of the protestant wing of Christianity after the Reformation, gave the West the go-ahead for this idea of 'progress', and the Puritan work ethic required for its exploitation. The religion had a 'sky Father Figure' and was totally male dominated and hierarchical in nearly all other ways. It was the ideal breeding ground for the rise of capitalism and resource exploitation. At this point I wish to make clear that in no way do I want to tread on anyone's religious sensibilities. Nevertheless, the libertarian critique that sharply attacks dominating hierarchical religious forms is on firm ground here. In no way can these forms be seen by radical workers as anything but evil. The basis of this interesting line - together with the demonstration that Marxism is but an apostate form of this Western religious ideology, is discussed by Professor Lynn White

in 'Notes for the Future', (Robin Clarke, ed.). Not all that is linked with Christianity is hierarchical and rapacious. I met a Quaker last year and when in discussion I said (feeling a little provocative....) "Quakers are really the Anarchists of the Christian religion, aren't they?" The immediate reply was, "Yes, that's right...." Whether all Quakers would see this point or not I don't know. But Quakerism is a fringe in religion - just as Anarchism is a fringe in Socio-political life.....?

I have contributed this unlikely area of discussion in a piece about technology and ecology because it is profoundly at the base of much of our 'other worldliness, our disrespect for the Earth and its resources - and our rapaciousness. It helps to account for the social and technological crises which are striking at our existence even more violently. It also accounts with some subtlety, for our attitudes towards women and for our 'slightly less than human' attitudes regarding those we feel to be 'a little nearer the monkeys' by race in the creation hierarchy.....?

WE CAN'T ABANDON TECHNOLOGY

Whatever the original drive to master the world and therefore to master people also, we still have to live with it. As I mentioned earlier, there is no way we can abandon technology and technique. This point applies to both the argument to convince 'society' or 'the State' or those with manipulative power over technical means to give them up (they won't....); and also to those individuals who wish to escape to some nether region away from technology (there's nowhere to run). Nevertheless radical action is called for to take over control and uses of technical means. This is where Alternative Technology and Self-Sufficiency (AT&SS) are educative. We may be approaching the so-called Post-industrial period, but it will certainly not be a post-technical age - unless we blast the Earth in a nuclear holocaust. Arguments can be advanced that although Britain was the first to enter the industrial revolution, such change was actually not thorough-going here. We may be placed in a good position to pass on to this next phase (post-industrial) because we never quite left the pre-industrial one.

You should study technology and its effects from a Libertarian point of view, because who controls these, controls people and resources.

Technical means tend to normalise language, attitudes and options. There appears to be a vast choice, but in practice there is a high degree of uniformity. Units of measurement is a case in point. Unless you use the S.I. system (Metrication), you tend either to be ostracised, or excluded. Again in practice, technical elitism shuffles and grades knowledge so that what was up to the minute, high-value knowledge yesterday, becomes old hat today.

This is independent of 'use value' and is a kind of (as I say, elitist) 'exchange value' of scarce know-how. And such know-how must be a kind of highly objective esoteric knowledge - craft skills or tacit knowledge doesn't count. A good discussion of this point is given in 'Architect or Bee' by Mike Cooley. Actually we as Anarchists know this and we don't require some Marxist analysis to point it out. But everyone else also knows it and jokes about 'knowledge obsolescence' and how old Jack - aged 40 - 'learned his stuff in the Ark and should be pensioned off'. The majority of people do nothing about such myths because most are totally unradicalised. There is an absence of such attitudes in the radical AT&SS movement because it is 'use value' which counts. But such Libertarian movements remain very small...?

TECHNOLOGY EXPROPRIATES SKILLS

Connected with the last observations regarding knowledge obsolescence is the emphasis on labour elimination by 'robots' or 'automation', 'computer control' - call it what you will. There is certainly technical means to complicate job tasks in production and distribution so that simple involvement of workers in these are eliminated. We are treated to a barrage of "this will eliminate drudgery in repetitive tasks" by expert pundits - and indeed this may be so, especially if there is a real use value production attached to durable artifacts instead of the highly technical 'planned obsolescence' throwaway attitudes to consumption capitalism engenders, (which it must if you think about it). The problem is that the highly automated throwaway ethos deskills many of us. A most radical part of the AT&SS movement is to rescue these skills and develop them. The capitalist outlook is expropriating skills as it once did property and wealth, therefore anarchic direct action in the AT&SS area is subversive.

This aspect is certainly true if the division between hand and brain work is considered. This elitist barrier between practical skills and theoretical ability clings amazingly and therefore must serve a valuable purpose in maintaining the class/hierarchical structure. In spite of Kropotkin's critique of this artificial barrier (discussed in article 1) it continues. But there is rejection of this division in the Alternative movements.

There is an accompanying problem that could have serious implications for us by reducing the freedom of access and choice. This reduction is achieved by technical means. The State and powerful interest groups can use these means to control populations and individuals. I am not just indicating computer data banks - with limited access to weaker brethren, or the use of powerful drugs developed by chemical technologists to

control mood, docility and obedience in children and adults. Nor am I commenting specifically on, say, such problems as the utter domination of the transport system by cars - with their ridiculous inefficiency both thermally and in materials use. All these are problems enough, which we are promised will be overcome by more technical research. (This is the famous 'Technical Fix' syndrome - even in conservative circles it is wearing a bit thin.) But without being paranoid, the comment 'the Technically Strong State' is the one to watch.

TECHNOLOGY FOR SUPPRESSION

Gradually as violence, racism, nationalism, and dissent in general worsens, crowd control, surveillance, physical/technical means of suppression (plastic bullets - water cannon....) and other sophisticated strong arm methods will have to be deployed by the State. Also, the technical means of (possible) survival by an elite few in the event of a nuclear conflict requires urgent attention. All these developments, from phone tapping, bugging TV camera surveillance techniques, to techniques of psychological torture (as used in Northern Ireland) and drug treatment (as used in American prisons - and, it is said, here also), are already deployed. Discussions of these developments have appeared in great detail by investigative journalists and writers, often from a Libertarian perspective. The 'Spies for Peace' revelations about the secret nuclear shelters that appeared in the 1960s was an excellent example of what can be done.

Thus technology needs its critical edge. This itself must be technically effective but also ecological and people-based. I have not found any movement capable of carrying this responsibility except the radical AT&SS movement, based on anarchist principles of networking and Mutual Aid. Such action operates mainly in the informal economy, which is an important area of action of the 'voting with your feet' kind. This ignores State controls and the bureaucracy as much as possible. (Another branch of this kind of action could be said to include the Squatting movement and the Freeschoolers/Deschoolers (at least some of them - not coopted) in education.)

Anyone inclined to enter the AT&SS direct action movements should become aware of what is involved. It is certainly not a soft option - a kind of Arcadian dream of peaceful workshops, lovely fields, hand-crafted artifacts (only), but involves alternative computer programs, anti-surveillance activities, technical investigations into what powerful people are doing with nuclear systems, military technology and other extremely anti-human misappropriations of resources.

Ken Smith.

Make the Third World connection

American activists are urging the European peace movement to link their anti-nuclear campaigns with the South American solidarity movements.

At an East-West Peace People study weekend three Americans presented a paper showing how the growth of the American 'solidarity' movement had coincided with the decline of the anti-nuclear and nuclear freeze movements. They suggest that the failure of the American peace movement to connect with imperialism in the Third World has led to the peace movement's demise, just as the British peace movement declined after its

failure to involve itself against Vietnam.

Their paper concludes: In the first place it must be realized that the American ruling class has traditionally been concerned with European developments, and they would certainly be hesitant to openly invade Nicaragua if they believed that it would stoke the fire of resistance to American cold war and nuclear policies. However they too have learned the lessons of the Grenada debacle

LETTERS PAGE

Anarch-syndicalist objections.

Dear Green A,
I am writing in response to your WHERE WE STAND article in issue 2. Richard Hunt's piece, How We Get from Here to There, owes more to 19th cent. anarchism of P. Kropotkin than it does to an analysis of the modern capitalist state. It is a flawed piece of anarchist writing because it ignores the people who keep the State ticking over - the workers. His comments about people starving to death after a revolution are ludicrous. In the social revolution that I, and other Anarcho-syndicalists, envisage, there will be food for the people because:
1. the workers will have siezed control of the transport system and especially the docks. Hence we can still bring food into the country. 2. The international relations that exist amongst anarcho-syndicalists will ensure support from the workers of other countries. Obviously, there is a long, long way to go before we even approach the stage where the workers accept anarchism - but that's why we are working so hard to get our message across to the people and not sit on our arses waffling on about the hippies and punks coming together to grow their own brown rice!

The second point follows on from the first. Green Anarchism is doomed to failure because it is an irrelevance. There is nothing in your paper (which is almost as funny as Class War) about the miners strike for example, or how the police are launching their biggest operation ever. You make the mistake of assuming that just because there are people like myself who regard the earth as important and who attempt to put anarchism into practice through sharing, poetry and music that somehow this constitutes a Green awareness. Maybe it does but, speaking for myself and myself and my friends, we know that all this hippy rubbish is a waste of time. Where are the Green Anarchists when it comes to squatting or to giving support to workers on strike? Where are these Green Anarchists when it comes to the exploitation of women? Where do the Green Anarchists stand on Ireland? NOWHERE!

Thirdly as regards Richard Hunt's bit on parliamentary action - well, we say that it's up to the Green Anarchists if they want to take part in Parliamentary Democracy but as far as we are concerned you are wasting your time. The Government will never abolish itself. It needs to be dismantled (I agree R. H.) The people with the potential to dismantle it are the unemployed, the workers, and those who suffer most - the homeless and our sisters and brothers of other ethnic/cultural backgrounds in the U. K. How many hippies does it take to smash the State?

Fourthly, your piece on the THE WARRIORS PATH OF ENERGY worries me quite a lot!! It seems that Green Anarchism involves the maximum of hocus-pocus and the minimum of reality. Zen and the art of revolution anyone? I mean, where are the Chinese now - up to their necks in shit and dressed in blue overalls. So don't give me all this mystical bit - all religion, all mumbo-jumbo is anti-anarchist. Really, just like the Green Anarchists.

Finally, would you consider changing your name to the Green Hippies as those of us who are anarchists find our job more difficult if people assume from the outset that we resemble you lot.

Yours in sympathy, Keith Campbell.
c/o 327, Little Horton Lane, Bradford, Yorks.

Come the revolution...

Dear Folks,
Thanks for GA 2, great cover!
Would Richard Hunt know a revolution if it got up and spat in his eye? To state: 'if we tried a revolution in Britain, the Americans would move in to protect their puppet politicians' implies a gross misunderstanding of green revolution. To make such a revolution possible we must have the full cooperation/participation of a majority of the people, in the act of disengaging from the state. Anything else is forcing them to be free. A revolution that seeks to do away with power does not take place in a week or even a month, and to do so implies a siezing of power. The revolution is happening now and will continue indefinitely. I don't think power is what we want. The people will make revolution and if it is a good revolution, they will defend it to the last.

Distant and vague though an 'international revolution' might be, when Richard says 'But in an international revolution there would be world financial collapse. Money would become valueless' - I say the sooner the better!

He says that 'we would not be able to buy any food from abroad' and 'half the population would have starved to death' and again he misunderstands revolution. For a green revolution to occur, one that denies power and leaders, the people must for some length of time have had the sort of radical attitude that allowed them to think ahead, to grow their own food, to be willing to cooperate with each other and to have drastically reduced their consumption (thus weakening the state) while increasing their imagination, compassion/life/etc.

When he talks about 'the reduction of the power of government by the reduction of taxes', does he honestly think that governments are going to voluntarily

reduce taxes without taking it back in some way? If you asked some one to strangle themselves (with or without pointing a gun at them) would they do it?!

On economics he talks like a state socialist, and an incompetent socialist at that.

While not denying violence as a final and drastic act, the sad lesson of 'pressure on the streets' and 'violence being the only thing which the Establishment understands' is that such violent action DOES NOT force our 'corrupt politicians to repeal their laws'. They ARE corrupt, and will not, as they see it, give in to violence, but clamp down with more repression.

I agree with Richard's first piece and also Alan Alabon's, but disagree totally with Richard's 'How we get from here to there'.

I agree with Graeme Hall about the lack of women in anarchism, but I have no solution, except to point out that we are macho, seemingly without realizing it. Why should women contribute or read anarchist mags such as 'Black Flag' or 'Anarchy' when they are so rale orientated? 'Freedom', Green Anarchist and 'Greenline' are more accessible, and 'Peace News' is the best, but we have a long way to go to make a synthesis of Anarchism and Feminism.

'Anarchic Self-Sufficiency' said nothing new and said it in a garbled, misunderstood and erroneous way. We need inspiration like 'Oxford Actions' and 'Southend Anarchist Group', (the best bits in the zine), not bad historical rehash.

All the best, Dave, at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Talking to themselves.

Dear Green Anarchist,
.... There is a tendency amongst some anarchists to publicise their revolutionary ideas to themselves rather than attempting to reach out and share their ideas with as many people as possible. GA should, hopefully, have a very broad appeal, judging by the variety of subject matter covered in the first two issues. Keep up the good work.

Love and Peace, Geoff.
5. Ellerburne Street, Thornaby, Middlesbrough, Cleveland.

Dear GA,
Remember that ancient communities had chiefs and shamans.

dice george