

FREEDOM ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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FIFTEEN PENCE

Greece P6 Food Co-ops in Minnesota P4

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MALVILLE: NO FRONTIERS!

'IT WON'T BE A FESTIVAL' warned a statement issued earlier this year about the plans for the March on Malville, site of the Super-Phoenix fast breeder reactor a few miles from Lyon. As anarchist and pacifist papers reported in May and June a meeting held to discuss plans for action had agreed that picnics, festivals and other legal activities had been fruitless and that the site of the Super-Phoenix should be occupied and all constructed installations destroyed. "The idea is to submerge the police by weight of numbers and determination, without initiating violence. Militants will have to have protective clothing, wet blankets and cloths soaked in lemon juice to lessen the effects of tear-gas, and also tools for entering and destroying the site." Participants had to be prepared to take risks.

The warnings were well founded. As we now all know the invasion of Creys-Malville over the weekend of 29/31 July ended in the death of one French demonstrator and in injuries to 100 more of the estimated 30,000. Two protesters lost a hand and foot when teargas canisters exploded and one of the reported number of 5000 police (which included the military and riot CRS squads with police parachutists dropping in to hold the inner perimeter of the site) also lost a hand.

Particular attention has been given in the media to the "vanguard of the march" - "men and women in crash helmets and goggles (who) threw petrol bombs and iron bolts, brandished clubs and waved anarchist black flags" (Times). The reports of this vanguard were phrased to seem as terrorist as possible. It contained people "believed to be members of the Baader-Meinhof urban guerillas" who "carried rainbow flags, the emblem of the peasant revolt in Franconia-Baden in 1525" (Guardian). The German element of the invasion, which also included Swiss, Belgians and some British, was sensationally exploited. The local xenophobic prefecture dubbed the Germans (no doubt justly, but not with that intent) "anarchists who knew no frontiers", while simultaneously comparing them to the Nazis who had occupied the area during the last war! These statements were given prominent treatment by the British media but not the reply of the German demonstrators: 'We are not paramilitary commandos. The Prefect's statement uses the fascist myth against

us, who are fighting precisely for the abolition of fascism, particularly the kind that a nuclear society will bring. The atom has no frontier. The construction of the Super-Phoenix is in part financed by German capital. We are here to support the population of the Isère against Super-Phoenix."

Earlier the authorities had hoped that this great demonstration would be dissolved by the fine but persistent weekend rain. Instead, like Brokdorf and perhaps more so, it will be a debating point and point of reference for further action, for some time. Meanwhile the political row that has followed from it in France is centred not on the morality but on the clumsiness of the State's handling of the occasion. For if President Giscard d'Estaing was, at the same time as

Malville, visiting the secret military installations of Pierrelatte, which processes enriched uranium, and singing its praises as symbol of an "independent, secure and responsible" France, the neo-Gaullist Communist Party, together with Mitterrand's socialists, were trying to 'recuperate' and weaken the anti-nuclear opposition by holding meetings concurrent with the demonstration in nearby areas. Now what they fear is that the death of one and the serious injuries to others will create sympathy for a cause they do not support. So it is good politics to start a row with Giscard.

As we go to press there is little time to enter into any detail about the events of the weekend, which can in any case be found elsewhere, but several important points arising from them should be noted.

Firstly, the determination of the (in this case French and German) State to destroy the anti-nuclear opposition through a process of criminalisation. This is shown, for instance, in the remarks about urban guerillas and fascists and in the collaboration of the German with the French police in handing over film on German anti-nuclear protests that would identify known activists and help study their tactics. It is also shown in the tactics of the police themselves, heavily armed with the technology of war and with license to kill where thought necessary. Thus equipped, violence was a virtual inevitability once they had trapped several thousand demonstrators between two roadblocks on the outskirts of the village of Faverges. But the violence is always blamed on the demonstrators,

giving the authorities a chance to claim how insincere is the talk of peaceful demonstration, and to indicate on the contrary the demonstrators' irresponsibility and criminal intent.

Secondly, the clear proof of lack of support not only from the left-wing parties but from the ecological groups who fear for their credibility vis-à-vis the State and who, in their anxiety for "respectability," hastily disown those who use violence to defend themselves or who get caught up in violent incidents. This must lead to the recognition by revolutionaries

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CNT FESTIVAL

THE CNT'S FESTIVAL or "Jornados libertarios" was held in Barcelona between 22-25 July. At such an event estimates of numbers attending are virtually impossible. According to some there were 500,000; we thought there were up to 300,000.

CNT membership in Barcelona is currently something over 5000, and national figures are about 50,000.

There were basically two parts to the festival. "Formal" meetings were held in Saló Diana, an old cinema in the city, and included debates on "Anarchism and Marxism", "Sexology and Feminism" (very popular, this one) and others. The Diana also provided films, theatre, etc. The less organised events took place in Park Güell, further out from the centre. Here music and dancing went on from midday till dawn. The Park is an amazing place, designed by the "people's architect" Gaudi and has to be seen to be believed. Also in the park were stalls set up by the local syndicates and groups such as Mujeres Libres, the CNT's feminist section. Here the CNT proved to have a healthy commercial sense, raising money by the sale of food, drink, books and ephemera. International groups set up tables here too, including FREEDOM, FLAG, a comrade from Oxford and another from a women's London anarchist group, AWA and groups from France, Italy, Sweden and elsewhere. Great interest was expressed in British anarchism, as well as in some archive material from the time of the time of the civil war. In particular an English language pamphlet commemorating the death of Durruti, printed in Barcelona in 1937, narrowly escaped being liberated on several occasions.

There can be no doubt that anarcho-sindicalism is expanding rapidly in Catalonia, and the enthusiasm was overwhelming. The events, conversations with Spanish comrades and some history of the Spanish anarchist movement will be written up in detail soon. Meanwhile, the slogan of the Days -

SALUD Y ANARCHAIA

AA & DP

The Wish For Peace

THE CYNICAL PROVERB runs 'If you wish for peace prepare for war'. If this is true, the wish for peace was never greater than in the world today, for war preparations have reached frightening proportions. It is unknown what they will do to the enemy but they terrify us.

Harnessed as we in Britain are behind the war chariot of N.A.T.O. and our American allies we must perforce partake of the same benefits, guilt and possible annihilation.

The keenest brains of our time have developed the most fiendish devices to defend and protect us, or, all too often to threaten and eventually, if necessary, overwhelm those who would attack us. If, to quote another proverb, we are convinced that attack is the best form of defence, it may be that these hellish weapons will be launched strategically prematurely against our chosen enemy. Or rather, against the enemy chosen for us by N.A.T.O., the Americans or our Government which will be no choice of ours. At present the weapons are pointing at the heart of Russia but history has its deviations and yesterday's enemy can be tomorrow's friend.

The international situation is like a poker game with much of the hand concealed but cards are played from time to time and the bids are raised.

We, as spectators—and future victims—are shown, and pay for, cards from time to time as the opponents monotonously overbid.

We are expected to appreciate the finesse and skill which have gone into the playing of each card but as our opponent calmly overbids we feel there is no merit in the game.

First, we were assured as was demonstrated at Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and they were demonstrations of a new-found power that we had nuclear superiority. Now we are told that nuclear bombs have become so common that every anarchist can theoretically produce a do-it-yourself bomb on the kitchen table. However, Governments still have the monopoly of bombs ten times as destructive as the Hiroshima bomb and tests now take place underground since the dangers of nuclear fallout are obvious to the most stupid of statesmen. On Friday July 28th the Daily Telegraph showed a rather unconvincing picture of the Chinese successfully testing a hydrogen bomb which they 'would continue...as long as the Russians and Americans continue to do so'.

Electronics have made a difference in degree to modern warfare; there is no longer the reliance on the aeroplane as a method of delivering explosives upon the chosen spot. Indeed the precision

of computer-controlled missiles makes it possible to fly under radar and at the same time follow the contours of the landscape and home in on the pre-ordained target. A devilish variant is that the mere heat of the target will, in itself, attract the rocket toward it, pursuing if necessary. Additionally such missiles may be directed from mobile launching platforms or their launching sites may offer a bewildering row of targets so that the attackers may not know from which launch-tunnel the rocket will emerge. We have already learned of the warheads carried by prowling submarines ready at any time to emerge and strike.

We have now been told that one of the messier by-products of war has been eliminated—along with people. We are told there is now a bomb which will respect the inalienable rights of property, that will uphold the sacredness of institutions, will keep the heart of our great cities still intact and will preserve our glorious architectural inheritance. In short, this bomb will wipe out unprepared people but after the clouds roll by our gallant soldiers (what remain of them) will be able to resume the bloody business as usual of wiping out what remains of the enemy whilst maintaining intact his vital industries (under new management); his lines of communication (for our use. This is of course assuming that the clouds roll by quickly enough and that we can use fighting gear—probably lead suits—making it possible. It is believed that monkeys have survived such a test.

All the assumptions in the last refinement of weapons are that conventional warfare will survive, at least in the preliminary stages, and this will, to use another charming military anachronism, hold the fort until the big battalions get going. Military minds have an inborn tendency to fight all wars with the weapons of the previous war—in-ate conservatism. We are told that one of the aims of the military in 1939 was to increase the fodder allowance and limit the amount spent on new-fangled tanks. The dear gallant old-fashioned anti-semitic Poles replied to the Geremo-Russian invasion of tanks with cavalry charges.

The wish for warfare is a need of scientists and the military to try out these new dangerous playthings. The nation states of the world do not actively wish for war but they wish for those things which they cannot have without the risk of war. They need security: for assurance that their paranoid fears are untrue; for stability in their political systems no matter how unjust; for preservation of their boundaries and gains no matter how arbitrary and ill-gotten.

The deadly gavotte of China, Russia and America continues. Each eyeing

the other cautiously and aping each other's belligerent motions and gestures.

Behind the scenes business as usual. These delightful toys of weapon-systems are sold worldwide to whoever has the money or political necessity for such arms. Such is the flexibility and opportunism of some of the emerging powers that they are quite agreeable to accept arms from all major powers who nominally represent the forces battling for the soul of mankind—and cash on delivery except to approved customers.

The wish for peace conflicts with a need for the money gained from work. In the same way that the scientists welcome war preparations since they give them a chance to exercise their brains and skills, so does the worker unconsciously dig his own grave by welcoming and working in war production industries.

Such is the nature of war preparations today that the equation no longer has any value, the X equals nothing. We might as well start afresh with bows and arrows since no one has any conscious intention of using any of these grim weapons, they merely have them to frighten others.

However a place is still found in technological provisions for the humble conventional foot soldier. For him there has been invented a plastic bullet. Its prime function? Well, when it has been used, it is impossible to detect by X-ray in which part of the human anatomy it has lodged; therefore the chances of hospitalization and recovery are less than from ordinary rifle-fire wounds. Humanity has no place in war preparations. Property preservation yes.

Not until humanity turns around and says 'No' to all this compulsory suicide will the wish for peace find conscious expression.

JACK ROBINSON.

MALVILLE (cont)

within the anti-nuclear movement, and by anarchists and antimilitarists in particular that they are the only real opposition to the plutonium economy and its deep political and social and environmental consequences. The ecological groups will not come to their help when needed, and cannot therefore be treated seriously.

Thirdly, the silliness of the British liberal attitude (prime example, Guardian editorials) which chastises the French government for not holding their equivalent of the Windscale enquiry, thus defusing potential violence, and congratulates itself on the "democratic" attitude of the British authorities. Nothing could be further from the truth! The only lesson to be derived from Windscale versus

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White Lion loses, but lives

WITH NO THANKS at all to the ILEA, White Lion Free School* is almost certain to continue in operation. The final vote on funding the school went 18-15 against, despite 6 Labour abstentions, 1 Labour vote in favour and the support of the Tory opposition. I suppose that it is not as ironic as it first seems that the Tory party should come out in favour of the school, considering that the school's usual public 'aura' is educational rather than political, and it exists within the loopholes in the law that the ruling class originally inserted for their own independent educational reasons.

A bevy of well entrenched educationists and London head-teachers have all thoroughly discredited the authority's supposed reasons for not funding the school, as quoted in David Peers' article (9 July). In the end of course it all comes down to questions of power and control. (In a wider sense, it is widely recognised that voluntary efforts in all spheres is much frowned upon, in principle, by Labour theoreticians and practitioners, Such thinking presumably being logical to them, though reality repeatedly makes them eat their hats.) The

*See FREEDOM vol.38 no.13, and Review this issue.

July 29 Times Educational Supplement has a quite lengthy piece by Peter Newell on the political processes that have been apparent during the ILEA's attempts to do the school down over the last 5 years.

Though some readers of this paper would probably criticise the school for the fact that some aspects of its operation are in close tie to the system, I think such carping should be set aside. Now is probably a crucial time to be pushing the idea, and supporting the existence of, educational alternatives, as society in general really gets its teeth into the 'schooling issue'. A recent review in the Times Ed. of a book on Education and the Alternative Press** ended by saying that what was needed was an alternative educational press that was reformist rather than revolutionary (little realising that that is largely what we have got). Socialist teachers of supposedly revolutionary intent would gladly see the likes of White Lion die, and everyone go beaver away within the state system. So they talk endlessly about Bullocks and Bennetts and Eysencks and Boysons and the NUT, and when they talk about kids it's usually in abstractions like

**The Underground and Education by Mike Smith (Methuen, £1.60)

'working class kids' or 'underachievers'. What White Lion and its less publicised (and presumably more struggling) counterparts are doing is making education work in human terms. What better justification could there be. What the aforementioned socialists (and book reviewers) have yet to realize is that even a 1000-place let alone a 4500, comprehensive is doomed from the beginning. Given even their most ideal society, who the hell - at 11 years old - should be expected to cope with being an individual in an institution that size.

However, despite the aggro, White Lion has firm offers and promises for £17,000, which will probably keep them going for the next academic year. £5000 has come from the Hayward Foundation, £3000 from the Gulbenkian Foundation and £1700 from a front page appeal in the London Evening Standard. £100 £1000 of this last alone was from Horace Cutler—Tory leader of the Greater London Council, no less. The yearly grant of £11600 from Islington Social Services continues.

Long may the school flourish.

PETER CUMMINGS

Sth Place Ethical Society

THE JOURNAL of the South Place Ethical Society carries a regular feature by the society's general secretary, "For the Record". Although the journal carries the general disclaimer that "The views expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the Society", presumably the monthly pronouncements of the general secretary (Peter Cadogan) can be taken as an expression of current thinking within the Society. This feature in the June 1977 issue of The Ethical Record opens with the words "A religious revival proceeds apace in Britain at the same time as the traditional churches decline." But the article is not expressing regret or disappointment at this revival of religion after a couple of hundred years of propagation of freethought and rationalism. It asks "How can this extraordinary contradiction be resolved?" and goes on to speak of the good contacts that have been re-established over recent years "with our friends in the Unitarian church from whose fold we departed in the 1830s", and reproduces a letter from Peter Cadogan to the Unitarians' paper The Inquirer in which he comments that "There are large numbers of deeply religious people in Britain who will never go near a denomination church again. Are they to mill about in isolation for ever?" He later says "I look forward to the day when every church takes down its denominational sign and becomes, as in the Middle Ages, the local religious centre for everyone living round it." "...There aren't enough churches." For his readers in SPES he explains that this suggests that denominational churches throughout Britain might take the road taken by South Place: "We have shown for over 100 years that it works, although we have to admit that we have not been successful in establishing a local community base. Many churches, however, have such a base, but are inhibited by their dated and exclusive ideas and rituals."

Now, despite the architecture of Conway Hall and the form of its Sunday morning meetings, the association with religion might come as a surprise to the various secular organizations and groups who have for many years enjoyed the hospitality of its accommodation for political and anti-religious and anti-authoritarian meetings. Yet the South Place Ethical Society states as one of its aims "the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment free from all theological dogma".

But yet again, its current preoccupation with whether or not it has a religious ethos is not purely a spiritual wrestling with itself, but also a painful material problem.

For many years ethical, humanist and rationalist societies enjoyed equally with religious bodies the benefits of recognition by the Charity Commissioners as charitable organisations, with the increase in income that came from Covenanted donations not being subject to income tax. Under the recent reappraisal of the Charities acts they lost this status (although the Goodman commission had recommended that ethical societies should be recognised as charitable). SPES contested this and has a case in the High Court to test whether or not they are a religious society. On the outcome depends whether or not they regain their status as a charity, and whether they regain their licence to perform marriages (which the Unitarian church is conducting for their members at present). But something else depends on the outcome. The case has brought the Official Solicitor to question whether they are not in breach of their trust, which dates back to the 1890s, according to which they are a religious society, and he is testing this in the High Court. Should he persuade the courts that SPES is in breach of its trust, all its assets will be forfeit—and these include Conway Hall.

It is a sore dilemma, and one which evokes true sympathy even from those who would counsel against seeking favours from the state. And certainly some members of SPES would and do claim that the Society is their "religious" communion, but the seeking of religious status seems to be a turning back on the tide of enlightenment, rationalism and tolerance with which South Place has always been associated. Paris was "worth a Mass." Is Conway Hall worth a genuflection to the Deity, even without a crossing to the Trinity?

M.C.

ZERO benefit

LONDON FRIDAY 19 AUGUST. Zero Benefit Bop, with Heavy Skiffle, Disco, Food, Book-stall, etc. at Covent Garden Community Centre, Seven Dials Club, Shelton Street, WC1 7.30 - 11 pm. Admission 80p (claimants 60p). Come along if you can

KIRKDALE

KIRKDALE is a Neill-inspired parent co-operative dayschool in Sydenham, South London. Parents interested in libertarian education should ring 778 0149. We have room for children aged 3-11 years. 186 Kirkdale, S.E.25

SEE REVIEW SECTION

THE PRESENT upsurge of a Cooperativist movement in Minnesota represents the fourth wave of cooperatives in the North Country in the last hundred years. Co-ops in Minnesota began with the Granger farm movement and the Knights of Labor urban co-ops. Both grew, prospered, and were crushed before the turn of the century. (Contemporary with these movements, we may describe the co-ops of the Populist movement. And the Irish-speaking Utopian Socialist communes of south west central Minnesota, which were crushed as a result of an anti-red scandal engendered by the Hearst newspapers). In the twenties workers began the National Cooperatives with the "circle pines" emblem. Soon after came the Midland Cooperatives, still headquartered in Minneapolis, the Minnesota Farmers Union and other agriculture co-ops. Today, they are not cooperatives but powerful business corporations. (The Midland Cooperatives, in the late thirties, became a battleground for power between the Stalinists and Anti-Communists ... with the Finnish-language IWW as Third Force). In the sixties, the latest wave of co-ops got underway. They grew out of the anti-war movement.

In 1970 the People's Pantry, operating off a back porch, began selling bulk whole and natural foods to radicals living near the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. One year later, North Country Co-op started as a regular storefront selling in addition to whole grains and flour, dairy products, vegetables, frozen foods and spices. Response was enthusiastic and the store was an immediate success. People came from all over the Twin Cities to buy low priced natural food unavailable elsewhere. As North Country Co-op's volume skyrocketed, customers were urged by besieged volunteers to start their own stores in their own neighbourhoods. Many did and new co-ops slowly cropped up around the cities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The People's Warehouse was organised to enable participating stores to buy in greater volume at lower prices.

By 1975 there were over fourteen food storefronts in the Twin Cities and twenty-five more throughout Minnesota with two more regional warehouses. Other cooperatives then sprang up and, thus far, none has folded. There are now in Minneapolis three bakeries, five restaurants, the Red Star Apothecary, a hardware and dry-goods co-op, bookstore, bicycle factory, sewing factory, co-op garage, another warehouse, plus an assortment of collectives and two- or three-person cooperative ventures.

There is a strong local cooperative community network. It is made up of co-op workers and users, Anarchist groups, left political groups, communes and individuals working on various independent projects. This network has been able to support the new co-op system to the tune of \$2,500,000 in annual sales, an ever growing figure. No longer can the new co-ops be called a mere folly, or a hobby for intellectuals. They have become a force to be recognised. They cannot be ignored. The success of this network is, however, causing rather serious growing pains.

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE REVOLUTION

Over the past three years, a group of disenchanted co-op activists has been levelling sharp and pointed criticisms at the new wave co-ops they themselves had helped to create. Never numbering more than about fifty, this group has tried to apply Leninist and Stalinist teachings to turn the co-ops from "hippie

Co-ops of Minnesota

havens" to organising centres for the "working class". They call themselves the Co-op Organisation (CO).

Not enough was being done to stock the stores with food items (i.e. canned goods) used by "common people," charged the CO. Nor was there enough outreach into the communities. (But some Anarchists had already been making these criticisms, only with a different methodology). The CO blasted co-op workers as an elite group of food purists and hippie intellectuals. According to the CO's analysis, the middle class bourgeois co-op leadership were maintaining their class control of the stores and had "utter class contempt" for the working class.

CO posters proclaiming: "Criticism, Discussion, Transformation" and "Stop Private Ownership and Control of Co-ops, by Individuals, by Class Cliques" went up on the walls of many co-ops. A struggle to gain the People's Warehouse as a stronghold for the CO ensued. CO people, armed and violent, took over the warehouse, briefly imprisoned some workers, and ultimately ousted all workers who did not agree with the new politics. Four co-ops were soon controlled by CO.

There has always been a variety of political people working in the co-ops. Trotskyists, Anarchists, Maoists, Debsians and many others saw the co-ops as a radical model and a forum for their ideas. Others saw the co-ops as a radical freeing from politics, merely setting an example by providing nutritional food at low cost and by stressing cooperative decision-making. Many worked in co-ops just because of the good feelings they felt working in a pleasant atmosphere. The onslaught of the firm rhetoric of the CO jolted the rather complacent Policy Review Board (PRB), the All Co-op body which somewhat casually and inefficiently decided the policy of People's Warehouse.

A number of people left the co-ops. Many people became more involved. The Anarchists became the principle organised opposition to the Stalinists of CO. A crisis filled summer ended with many issues still unresolved. The personal and political implications of several years and a conflict series of events remains to be fully understood.

The growing importance of co-ops to more and more people as well as its expanding economic significance has led to controversy and to personal clashes. The co-ops are now seen as something to be fought over. The largest co-op, and the one most central to the entire system, is the People's Warehouse. It was a sought-after political plum which got picked.

The Stalinist CO have argued that "people in co-ops are exploiting the labor of those bricklayers who built the building when they are not included in the decision-making of the store." This argument is absurd. We do not consult the assembly-line worker who built a car each time we think about driving it somewhere. Workers in a co-op should be talking with shoppers and farmers and other people who have specific knowledge, as a practical part of running a

good co-op. But as workers we are responsible for doing the work. We make the decisions about it. It is the vagueness and the sloppy romantic posturing in such phrases as "let the people decide" that hides the reality of who really does make decisions. This vagueness also inhibits people from acting.

Our point is this: Workers in a co-op should have control over their co-op. Workers in a factory should control that factory. If anyone wants to come into a co-op to work and decide about such things as what the store should sell, fine. They are making decisions as a fellow-worker. But to say that "the people" should decide is meaningless without saying what people. To say that "the working class" should decide is meaningless without saying which members of the workingclass.

It is paternalistic for someone to say that the "workingclass" should make decisions about work that I am doing. It is the essence of liberalism. And Stalinist CO thinking is Liberal thinking when they say that they are acting in the interests of "the workingclass."

We can only act in our own interests. If we try to act in someone else's interests, we oppress them. We should act in solidarity with people and not for people. The reason we work together is because of our realisation that we cannot get what we want for ourselves by working alone. Cooperativism means just that. It takes two to cooperate. It does not mean social-work relief. There is a sort of Welfare Liberalism and social-worker mentality in Stalinist thinking. They say that someone besides an individual knows what is best for the individual. Obviously, without much strain, the Stalinists can extend this argument and methodology from the individual to groups to the workingclass itself.

The Stalinists at one co-op told several young Anarchists that they should listen and follow what a Black woman Stalinist had to say, because she "represented" more people from "the community" than anyone else. One Stalinist said that these young Anarchists should "not be so arrogant that you wouldn't give up your own individual power and submit". These Anarchists replied: "We believe in the principle of one person, one vote. We do not believe in giving up the power to make decisions to anyone." The Stalinists denounced them as "racist". The Anarchists rejected the argument: "to treat black people differently than we would treat white people shows low self-respect." A few white workers at this co-op, afraid or not willing to offend the Stalinists, said that these Anarchists "did not relate well to the local black community". The Stalinists then publicized the comment throughout the city.

The verbal abuse went on. The Stalinist CO vigorously attacked anyone who disagreed with them. The attacks became crude and vulgar. One Anarchist wrote: "I began losing respect for myself and others who continued to subject themselves to it. It became harder for me to appear at the next meeting. It became harder

to fight them. I was fighting it out feeling alone most of the time. People snickered at me while I spoke. I got very painful stomach cramps and ate very little for days on end. I was depressed most of the time." The Stalinists then developed an index-file of the sex-habits, idiosyncracies, and personal activities of their opponents. (It was later exposed, but was undoubtedly useful to them for a long time.)

The Anarchists were then threatened with physical attack as an inevitable consequence of libertarian positions. One Anarchist wrote: "I have been called all the derogatory names I can take. It has been a painful experience for me to be insulted, treated with disrespect, and generally trashed. I have dreams of stomping on these people and fantasize about wildly cursing and punching out a dozen of them." The Stalinists turned vigorously to violence, a number of serious assaults, sabotage, fire-bombings, etc. The capitalist Media were titillated at the scandal.

OUT OF THE ASHES

The results of this controversy so far have been that another warehouse has been started: the Distributing Alliance of the North Country (DANCe). This is an acronym taken from the Emma Goldman quote: "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution." Most of the co-ops have adopted a decentralized proposal which set up a federation of all co-ops called the All Co-op Assembly (ACA). The purpose of these two actions has been for many co-ops to break off from People's Warehouse and assume much of its centralized power. They also hope to strengthen the Cooperative system as a whole. Whether this will succeed remains a question.

Will the outcome of this upheaval be the death of the Cooperative Movement or will it grow stronger? We do not know. The idea that co-ops should broaden their appeal has been well received. Canned foods will find their way into the co-ops. A real and libertarian process of decision-making will be made within most co-ops. Many co-ops are recognizing themselves as a political force. The CO, on the other hand, will probably not be identifiable, as Organization, after awhile. The CO only had political base in the Cooperative Movement, just as the Weathermen had real political base only in the SDS which they destroyed. Thus, the CO lacks three things: a dimensional philosophy of revolution (freedom), independence of Party organization from the Coalition they seek to influence, and focus for activity. Many of the CO members are more interested in vanguardist political revolution than in distributing food. Already some CO people have left the co-ops and have tried with small success to organize women and workers in the Twin Cities.

There are two points that deserve special attention regarding the clash of the political and the personal within the co-ops. The first is the issue of authoritarianism vs. non-authoritarianism as organizational models. The second is an underlying issue of personal anxiety and how it affects intimate relationships of co-op people. Observations on these two points stem from our personal involvement with Cooperativists and our combined political analysis of events.

Perhaps the clearest distinction to be made between supporters and opponents of the Co-op Organization is their opposite outlooks on power and authority. The CO leadership is interested in obtaining power for themselves. Their aggressiveness is directed towards that end. They see political revolution as occurring when the

"workingclass" gains power. The CO likes strong discipline and authoritarian organization. Thus, it is not surprising that they also like secrecy. Their method of organizing within the co-ops has been to form small secret cell-like study groups. They study the writings of Stalin. Only the CO leadership is allowed to know the names of study-group members; members speak of each other with code-numbers or code-words. When asked about their leadership, the CO refuse to reveal names "for security reasons". Everything they print is unsigned. The total Hierarchical organization of the CO prevents broad participation of people and inhibits local initiative.

Opponents of the CO cannot be characterized as neatly as members of the CO because of their lack of organizational totality focus. Most non-CO people believe that the spirit of cooperation is a basic principle in their work. Many place great importance on the process involved in political struggle. Many carry a somewhat irresponsible fear of organization. Their work structures, however, are implicitly decentralized, non-authoritarian models. Each co-op is autonomous. Complicated co-op tasks are broken down into small jobs that encourage involvement by more people. Generally, co-ops are run by collectives of people and decision-making power is spread out. Respect for the individual who expresses a different point of view is important. These principles of Anarchist-Communism are shared by many people trying to learn how to make the Cooperativist movement successful.

The political uproar and clash of styles have put a severe strain on personal relationships within the co-ops. Numerous friendships have been broken between people who had worked together closely in the same co-op. A number of male/female couples have split up because of the controversy. More often it was the man who supported the CO and the woman who opposed it. The Feminist liberation movement in Minnesota has placed a strong emphasis on respecting feelings, and politics on the left in Minnesota have thus experienced a humanist dimension. Yet, personal anxieties have continued to be largely suppressed during the co-op controversy. CO and non-CO people share some of the same sexual insecurities, loneliness, and daily emotional deprivation characteristic of the society both are trying to change. But generally speaking, these problems have manifested themselves in each group very differently.

The type of revolutionary personality CO people can be characterized by the serious looking, humourless (male) radical reading his Stalin, Mao Tze-tung, and Lenin. Their Calvinistic penchant for self sacrifice is only outweighed by their enormous frustration and guilt. They are impatient, always anxious that things happen quickly. They feel extremely guilty about their own privileged backgrounds. Those who do things "foremost for themselves" are condemned. Talking always of "serving the poor and workingclass" exhibits a kind of a do-goodist liberalism; they try to act in someone else's behalf. The CO's manipulation, intimidation, and impersonal confrontation tactics at meetings seem the consequences of their own emotional repression. A more frightening result is their tendency towards physical violence when challenged.

Non-CO people also share emotional frustrations, but usually express more willingness to deal with them in the supportive social atmosphere found in many co-ops. The personal ten-

sion and fears of non-CO people are more evident in meetings as they are more open about their feelings. Also, gestures of warmth and support are more freely given: touching, hugging, laughter, numerous emotional support groups, and verbal validation of personal feelings. There is a general acceptance that a part of working in co-ops is dealing with each other as people with all of our joys and sorrows. It still does not always work out that way. . . but people are trying.

One final issue we would like to address is whether the co-ops can be political vehicles for social change or just a different kind of store which expresses the random service and eating habits of its members. There are many people within the co-op system who shun politics and who want the co-ops to be apolitical. The present structure and style of the co-ops, however, are expressly political. The new wave Cooperatives in Minnesota are explicitly anti-capitalist, alternatives to agribusiness monopolies. Stores have made decisions to materially support local radical organizations such as the American Indian Movement. Co-ops have aided striking workers. Co-ops are active in their support of the United Farmworkers Movement. They serve as social meeting grounds for other political activities in which many co-op people participate. In the days of intense anti-war and community organizing, co-ops were instant information centers.

The co-ops are examples of self-directed institutions, a network grid, in economic decentralist Pattern, created by people to serve the needs of themselves and their neighbours. They are models for nutritional education and social centers. The many experiments with collective work structures and workers' self-management concepts are efforts at re-defining society's oppressive boss-worker relationship. Co-ops are autonomously group-owned and operated, and allow for a diversity of approaches to Cooperation. Keeping the localism and neighbourhood nature of each co-op indicates a political direction that builds strength in people at a level where it is needed most.

There are a lot of things that need to be improved within the co-ops in the Twin Cities. There is a general lack of definition and understanding about what a co-op is. Not enough thought has gone into formalizing decision-making and responsibility. Internal education and outreach about the ideas and benefits of cooperatives needs to be stepped up. More conscious effort in giving positive reinforcement to co-op workers and shoppers would go a long way in keeping people within the co-op community.

Twin Cities co-ops have not yet dealt with the implications of a growing scale of operation. As the co-op system gets larger, its effect on markets will become more pronounced. Pressures from large institutions like banks, wholesalers, and agricultural corporations will increase. There will be the temptation to become locked into the business routine of being a part of the giant food industry. The danger of maintaining a strong interest in the status quo can quickly be a reality for rapidly changing small time co-ops. But preserving and improving the internal democracy of the co-ops and the overtly political impact on their workers and shoppers is vital if their continued growth is going to mean something for radical social and economic change in our society. That is our challenge, as Anarchists.

In the 'Sixties, people joined "the movement"
(cont p.7.) →

Greece

FOLLOWING on from the article on Greece in the last issue of **FREEDOM**, more details have emerged of the anarchist trial in Athens on 31 May and of the background to it.

As related in the previous article, one peaceful evening in May police broke into a flat in an Athens suburb and there charged a group of anarchists, not for possession of drugs and weapons, which they had hoped to be able to do, but for resisting arrest, insulting justice officials and abusing the name of God. Those arrested included four Greeks, two French people and a Dutchman, Jaap van der Laan. A member of the Anarchist Collective of Utrecht, he had come to Athens to collect anarchist literature for the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and was staying with a group of Greek anarchists, among them S. Papadopoulou and C. Konstantinidis, coordinators respectively of the "Mavro Rodo" bookshop and the "Diethnis Bibliothiki", an anarchist publisher's. The defendants were acquitted at the trial on 31 May but because the prosecution appealed Jaap, and presumably his French companions, will not be allowed to leave the country for several months, if then.

Jaap's friends in Utrecht have publicised a letter from Jaap about the maltreatment of the anarchists at the Athens police station before the trial took place. Jaap writes, "At 9.30 I was roughly woken by a policeman pulling my hair. At that time we were in Sylvia's apartment with Mikis, Nikos, Jean-Marie and Laurence (the French comrades) and myself. Christos (the fourth Greek who lived there) arrived later. It was he especially with his long black hair and beard who angered the police. Three or four of them jumped on him and pulled him by the hair to a car.

"At the police station we became aware of the special hatred that seems to exist for anarchists. We were handcuffed (the handcuffs were marked with the symbol of Greek democracy!). The police continually mocked, hit and kicked us. We were sitting in a room four by three metres with three chairs in it. The French girl and Sylvia were in a very nervous state and Laurence was continually fainting. A policeman remarked 'That's one less'. To revive her they hit her in the face with their open hands. When it all got too much for Christos he broke a window in the door with his handcuffed hands and threatened to slit his throat.

"Suddenly it went still. Then the commissioner appeared with 30 men from the riot squad, wearing helmets and armed with truncheons. In the tumult that followed the commissioner broke a chair over the head of Christos, who was pushed into a corner. One by one we were dragged from the room. I got punched in the mouth but no more, as I looked too foreign to be really badly treated. I saw how Jean-Marie, who looks a lot like Christos, was kicked by six policemen and hit while he lay on the floor in the hall. I also saw them starting to beat up Christos, who was really treated like a beast. For two days he was in the hospital. Sylvia was also beaten, but I did not see that. Afterwards she too was taken to the hospital, but came back a day later."

Jaap's friends report that although Mr Beeking of the Dutch embassy attended the preliminary

hearing, no-one from the embassy was present for the trial itself, at which the district attorney began with an openly political statement, saying how terrible anarchism was, and how the anarchist intellectuals were especially dangerous.

As Francois Everson indicated in his article for **FREEDOM** of 23 July, there is particularly intense activity against anarchists on the part of the Greek authorities. Last year huge anti-



militarist demonstrations took place; during the conflict with Turkey banners could be seen declaring that "The Aegean Sea belongs to the fish!" During the past year there have been several trials of anarchists who were handing out leaflets and putting up stickers and posters. The 1 May demonstration this year ended with a battle between the anarchists and the police. The trouble started when the police blocked access to a square the demonstrators were heading for, and while the anarchists refused to move back the Marxist-Leninists withdrew. At this point the police charged with their sticks into the ranks of demonstrators and watching crowds and made 30 arrests, with 23 people coming subsequently to trial. Since then the Greek press - right, left and centre - have tried to whip up feeling against anarchists by carrying long and distorted articles on anarchists and anarchism.

Christos Konstantinidis and Sylvia Papadopoulou in foreground, in background from right to left Mikis (with glasses), policeman, Jean-Marie. On Christos' forehead, the marks of the beating.

Messages of solidarity should be sent to: C. Konstantinidis and S. Papadopoulou, Diethnis Bibliothiki, Delfon 2, Athens, Greece.

able outcome in favour of British Nuclear Fuels and the plutonium society was fairly arrived at and must therefore be abided by.

Fourthly, but not last, the role of the workers, apparently conspicuous by their absence at Malville. The left-wing French paper *Rouge* laments the attitude of "the majority organs of the working class," because "only the joining of the anti-nuclear movement with the workers' organisations will be able to block the development of the French electro-nuclear programme." *Rouge* adds a reassuring note that there are signs of growing concern about nuclear energy in the "workers' movement". Still, the fact remains that the attitude of the workers, naturally anxious for jobs or heavily influenced by their Communist and Socialist unions, is the most serious obstacle to the development of the anti-nuclear opposition. This desperately needs to convince them of the universal threat of the fast breeders.

FBG

MALVILLE



Malville is the greater subtlety of the British ruling class. Windscale will help to prevent the build-up of a militant opposition because it is absorbing and exhausting the nuclear protesters in a long court wrangle; it is helping to divide them among themselves and at the same time gives the impression that the prob-

Matriarchy

Dear Friends

Prevailing feminist fantasy of past matriarchal societies is pure wishful thinking. Margaret Mead, who knows something about anthropology, declares that "All the claims so glibly made about societies ruled by women are nonsense. We have no reason to believe that they ever existed."

Witches, that is the ancient herbalists and sorcerers, were both male and female. Similar herbalist practices are carried on today by African and South American brujos (mainly men).

Are Monica Sjoo and company genuinely mistaken (not doing their homework properly) or simply inventing the evidence?

Brightly Shining

Dave Cunliffe

TWO

Dear Editors,

We all know that every system has its pantheon of gods and shibboleths which all feckless conformists and craven votaries respect and reverence. Two in this glorious British system are Christ and Queen (or King) which for various reasons have come to the fore (yet once more) in this year of grace. Indeed, ye Maker of the Queen's Musick has nobly struck a bullseye by composing a Mass—yes, they're still being written it seems—entitled "Christ the King". Now you can't do better than that to demonstrate your sycophancy, surely!

LETTERS

Christ, however, has had his reputation im-
guined by a follower who is both academic and poet (of sorts) and who happens to be of the same persuasion as a multitude of Romans whose empire at the time spawned the myth of Christianity, to supplant Mithraism—another myth. But of course there will always be zealots and fanatics to be found in every system, in every mythology, and sure enough the age old crime of blasphemy is invoked and—a fine is imposed. In a former millenium Socrates paid for such a "crime" with his life so Leman can count himself lucky. And if the Reformation had never occurred. . .

The events of this year just prove the strength of generations of conditioning—is it any wonder that the appeal to God, King and Country (the latter another powerful shibboleth) can cause droves of humans to hasten forth to partake in mass carnage? It is a chilling thought to contemplate such prejudice, patriotism and intolerance in our midst. Surely the events that overtook Germany in the 1930s are not that incomprehensible as so many subsequent observers have suggested. All the more reason therefore why the following words in N.W.'s article "Blasphemy in 1977" (FREEDOM No.14) disgrace an anarchist journal: "The judge was Mr. Justice King-Hamilton, an elderly Jew..." Surely his class background is sufficient to indicate that reactionary bigotry is only to be expected from such an impartial "Justice"?

Now there's another joke.

Yours truly,
B. J. CLIFTON

MANAS

Last paragraph from column 3

on page 15 (Review Section)

old material, that so many of them fall by the wayside.

Now, how is the student to learn for himself? By solving puzzles. The function of the teacher should be, first, to select in a wise way the material on which the puzzles are based, second, to make sure the puzzles are well-suited in difficulty to the sophistication of the student, third, to answer questions, and finally, if the teacher is capable of it, to give an occasional word of inspiration.

What is this book about? It is about ten different ways of looking at the universe and trying to understand it.

Co-ops

because of activity. Many of us joined the Anarchists because we saw that activity wasn't enough. Today, many have learned the lesson of the 'Sixties and want to create a living and dimensional philosophy of freedom which will be both consequence and cause of activity. This is so important for Anarchists because Anarchists have been asking "What happens after?" ("after" the revolution, "after" a particular action, etc.) since the First International. Not only doesn't the Left see the connections of China and the U.S., Russia and the U.S., but when they look around for opposition to redneck Jimmy Carter they come up with "the Movement is dead". This kind of thought means taking the one-dimensional as Truth. . . taking white, student, male youth equal to the Movement and revolution. It is the other side of leftist tail-ending of state-capitalist Powers. The only real Other to the three state-capitalist super-Powers is dimensional and total freedom revolution. We will find "the Movement" not in structures, forms, not in categories, but by pushing through layers over layers, deeper and deeper, to find the most rebellious layers of workers, Blacks, women, etc. And we will find revolutionary Movement only through Philosophy which is dimensional and alive.

We have learned one lesson through the battles in the co-op movement. A classless society is not enough. A classless society is certainly abolition of all socio-economic classes. This is mere negation. This abolition is desirable and necessary. But it is not enough. A classless society is what those who consider themselves revolutionaries are always talking about. But what they do not proceed to is: what then? We, as Anarchists, must seek no mere negation of class-structure but rather a society in which each individual and group is a reflection of the totality of society, the dimensionality, the freedom. A free classless society is a society in which every group reflects, and is, the whole of society in and for which it lives, rather than one characterized by a mere negation of class-structure. Through the abolition of all socio-economic classes and governments there arises positive humanism beginning from itself.

TOM COPELAND and
SEAMAS CAIN

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Myths

ONE

Dear friends,

In issue 14 (vol.39*) I notice the old chestnut of collective guilt, that theme which condemned millions of Jews to the ovens for their ancestors' supposed killing of Christ. Giulia, reviewing feminist books states that "women should recognize the possibility that they were . . . responsible for their own humiliation and oppression..." How can any individual be blamed for what some ancestor in the ancient past did or did not do? As anarchists, this thesis surely should not be part of our vocabulary. This imaginary solidarity with undefined people in a semi- or even totally mythical past is an identical sentiment with nationalism—the wish to avenge those who were offended, no matter how long ago, with fresh rounds in an endless vendetta.

You also published the notorious Gay News poem. I was surprised at how innocuous it is. How it is possible to libel someone who most probably never existed is a mystery to me. Surely the courts ought to have tried the evidence for Christ's existence before any libel suit could be brought. On the evidence, they would say that you can't libel a fictitious figure. That superstition has such power is merely further evidence (if we need it) of the superstition upon which the power of the church and state is based. The monarchy, church and state in Britain are cross-reinforcing institutions. To attack one is to attack them all, so Gay News was slammed by the Whitehouse brigade whose raison d'être is the upholding of the status quo. Such prosecutions also have the added effect of suppressing the publication by covert means, namely depriving them of the funds to continue. They did it to Oz, which, despite much irrelevant content, was subversive and popular, and had to go.

Soldier on!
Nigel Pennick

*This should be vol.38 Nos. 13 and 14 have been mistakenly shown as v.39

FREEDOMS CONTACTS PAGE

WE WELCOME news, reviews, articles, letters. Latest date for receipt of copy for next issue (no. 16) is MONDAY 15 AUGUST (and it is helpful to have it on Thursday 11th Aug.)

NEXT DESPATCHING date is THURSDAY 18 AUGUST. Come and help from 4pm onwards. You are welcome each Thursday 4-8 pm for informal get together while folding FREEDOM.

Groups

ABERYSTWYTH. Mike Sheehan, Neuadd Ca Caerleon, Victoria Terr., Aberystwyth, Dafyd. BOLTON. contact 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. 387516)

CAMBRIDGE. Ron Stephan, 41 York Street. CANTERBURY. Dave Norman, 12 Claremont Place, Wincheap, Canterbury. Individuals/groups wishing to form Kent Libertarian Fed. please also contact.

CORBY anarchists write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby. Northants.

COVENTRY

EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians, Martyn Everett, 11 Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex.

EXETER (during summer) Anarchist Society, Devonshire House, Stocker Road, University of Exeter.

LEAMINGTON & Warwick, c/o 42 Bath St., Leamington Spa.

LEEDS. Tony Kearney, 4 Ingle Row, Leeds 7 LEICESTER c/o Blackthorn Books, 74 Highcross Street, Leicester.

MANCHESTER contact Al on 061 224 3028

NEWCASTLE anarchist group, 91 Beaconsfield St., Arthur's Hill, Newcastle NE4 5JN

OXFORD. Martin Harper, Keble College

PORTSMOUTH, Carolynne Cahm, 2 Chadderton Gardens, Pembroke Park, Old Portsmouth

ST. ALBANS. John Morton, 21 St. Peter's Road, St. Albans, Herts.

SHEFFIELD: (1) Tikka, 4 Havelock Square.

(2) Anarchists, Libertarians, Situationists &c. Flat 1, 1 Victoria Rd. Sheffield S10

STOKE anarchists. 52 Campbell Road, Stoke-on-Trent.

THAMES VALLEY, Adele Dawson, Maymeade, 6 Congress Rd. Maidenhead (tel. 062 2974)

LONDON FEDERATION of Anarchist Groups: Anarchist Black Cross, 123 Upper Tollington Park, N.4. (tel. 691 6533)

Anarchy Collective, 29 Grosvenor Ave. N.5. (tel. 359 5795—before 8 pm)

Brixton Anarcho-Situationists, 8 Heywood House, Tulse Hill SW2 (tel. 674 6402)

Clapham, 3 Belmont Rd. SW4 (tel. 622 8961)

East London Libertarians, 123 Lathom Rd. E.6. (tel. 552 3985)

Freedom, 84B Whitechapel High St., Angel Alley, E.1 (tel. 247 9249)

Hackney Black & Red, 64 Brougham Rd., E.8 (tel. 249 7042)

Kingston Libertarians, 13 Denmark Rd., Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey (tel. 549 2564)

South London Coll., Knights Hill, West Norwood, SE27 (tel. 674 7886)

Zero, tel. 555 6287

MIDLANDS Anarchist Federation: Secretary Louise Crane, 13 Arden Terrace, Brovingstone, Leicester (tel. 82345)

NORTH WEST Anarchist Federation. For mthly

Newsletter and details of mtgs. contact 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. 387516)

ANARCHIST STUDENTS NETWORK. For contacts list and information on next Conference (5/6 November) write to Exeter University Anarchists, Devonshire House, Stocker Rd. Exeter, Devon.

SCOTTISH Libertarian Federation:

Aberdeen: Blake c/o APP, 163 King Street

Dundee: Mike Malet, 1 Lynnewood Place.

Edinburgh: Gibson 7 Union St. (tel. 557 1532)

Glasgow: C. Baird, 122 Benneray St. Glasgow G22 (tel. 336 7895)

Stirling: D. Tymes, 99 Rosebank, Souchie, Clacks.

International

AUSTRALIA

Canberra: Alternative Canberra Group, 10 Beltana Road, Pialligo. ACT 2809.

Victoria: La Trobe Libertarian Socialists, c/o SRC, La Trobe Univ. Bundoora, Vic. 3083.

Libertarian Soc. Fed. of Aust. c/o 4 Roosevelt St., Reservoir, Vic. 3073 (branches other areas).

New South Wales: P. Stones, P.O. Box 26, Warrawong, N.S.W.

Sydney Fed. of Australian Anarchists, Box 92, Broadway, 2007 Australia.

Sydney Libertarians, P.O. Box 54, Darlinghurst 2010

NEW ZEALAND

The anarchist movement can be contacted via P.O. Box 2052 Auckland

P.O. Box 22-607 Christchurch

International Books, 123 Willis St. Wellington

Daybreak Bookshop, P.O. Box 5424, Dunedin.

U. S. A.

NEW YORK: Libertarian Book Club, Box 842, G.P.O., New York, 10001.

S.R.A.F. Freespace Alternate U., 339 Lafayette St., New York City, NY 10012.

MISSOURI: Columbia Anarchist League, P.O. Box 300, Columbia, Mo. 65201.

GERMANY

Anarchist Federation of Baden: ABF Info-Burð, Postfach 161, 717 Schwabisch Hall, Germany

Meetings

LEICESTER 17 SEPTEMBER. Third Midlands Anarchist Fed. Conference 1 pm at Blackthorn Books. Inquiries to Louise Crane, 13 Arden Terrace, Brovingstone, Leicester (tel. 82345). Murrays Benefit concert in the evening.

LONDON SEPTEMBER. Central London WEA autumn programme: Problems of Modern Africa; Music, right and left; Political Economy of Women, a historical perspective; Social Psychology; Full programme from Sidney Billson, 33 Compton Road, N.1. (SAE please.)

LAND for the PEOPLE every Tues. at 8A Leighton Cres., London NW5, upstairs No. 8. (telephone 267 1184 or 485 3572)

BIRMINGHAM Lib. Socs. meet Suns. 8pm at "Fox & Grapes", Freeman St. (Moor St. Stn.)

Desires

French girl comrade would like to meet other anarchists in Bloomsbury area. Telephone Patricia Lemaire at 636 7972 (evenings) or write to her at Raglan Hotel, 33-34 Bedford Way, WC1

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES Liberation Group enquiries c/o Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, London N.1.

IF LAURA SEES THIS, PLEASE SEND ADDRESS TO FREEDOM

WILL THE LANCASHIRE SUBSCRIBER who sent without name £ 3 Postal Orders (received 30 June) for sub. renewal please reveal identity.

Literature

Since January 1977 the "Anarchistische Bund" (Anarchist Association) Berlin have published a monthly magazine Anarchistische Texte (Libertad Verlag, Postlagend, 1000 Berlin 44)

MURRAY Defence Group postcards and stickers from London Defence Group, 29 Grosvenor Ave., N.5. (send a donation).

Prisoners

Mike Murphy (C01039) HM Prison, Ashwell, Oakham, Leics.

John Nightingale (336645) HM Prison, Parkhurst, nr. Newport, Isle of Wight

DUBLIN anarchists Bob Cullen, Des Keene, Columba Longmore, Military Detention Centre Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Eire.

MARIE MURRAY and NOEL MURRAY (life sentences). Defence Groups: London c/o 29 Grosvenor Ave., N.5. Dublin 155 Church Road, Celbridge, Co. Kildare, Eire.

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FREEDOM'S *Anarchist Review*

6 Aug 77

—AN OPEN LETTER FROM— KIRKDALE SCHOOL—

WITH THE THREATS of closure from White Lion Street School and others, and an increasingly reactionary atmosphere in educational circles, it is becoming difficult to maintain much optimism for the future of radical education.

Yet for thirteen years Kirkdale has lived on an irrational optimism, plunging from one crisis to the next, each one seeming the final one. Somehow we have always emerged and indeed the very hopelessness of the present situation is transformed into a renewed determination to survive. Just how we are going to manage this is still uncertain; hopefully one of our various current attempts to achieve financial solvency will be successful. One thing is absolutely clear—that both White Lion Street and ourselves need as much public support as we can gather.

Finance has always been the bugbear of free schools—it's what everyone talks about when they come together, and is almost invariably the explanation for many abrupt demises. Kirkdale's economic structure is a source of great discontent to all of us, which as yet we have been unable to resolve. The expenses involved in running the school are met and shared by the parents on a formalised basis of regular contributions. These are decided according to means, with scholarships available to those who cannot afford to contribute anything. Parents can offer work instead of cash, and we encourage those that are able to take part time work outside the school to maintain it. One of the plans which we are currently investigating is a work co-operative.

When the school first started in 1965, this was a perfectly satisfactory arrangement. For the first time many parents found themselves enjoying complete control over their child's educational environment, with none of the aloof professionalism offered by conventional institutions. This was, however, a period of comparative prosperity which has now ended. Sadly, no present parent can afford his portion of the school expenses without considerable sacrifice, and, worse still, some cannot afford it at all.

We have reduced all expenditure to an absolute minimum, using as much urban waste and industrial surplus as possible, and receiving nominal or no wages. Yet education has many hidden and unavoidable expenses, and it is depressingly difficult to maintain even a steady overdraft.

Kirkdale has always been totally self-sufficient financially, with no external support of any kind—but this is now a luxury we cannot afford to tolerate, and we are currently engaged in a campaign for outside funding, primarily grant aid from the Inner London Education Authority and/or the social services, which we feel is our prerogative.

There are certain glimmers of hope in this, although mostly overshadowed by gloomy precedents and statements of policy from various levels of officialdom. Our interdependence has many facets; the idyllic freedom and tranquility of the educational backwaters is marred by a distressing irony—that a school which offers genuine equality of education cannot offer genuine equality of access, because our constitution has placed us in a no-man's-land where no authority has jurisdiction for responsibility to help us, even if they could. We fall outside all criteria for aid, and it is our depth of conviction alone that determines our survival. Another by-product of our isolation is that very few individuals have any clear conception of our aims and methods, and when our work is discussed it is generally in stereotypes that have little to do with the actuality.

THE HOW

The nature of freedom and the role of structure are frequently open to misinterpretation as careless licence or a sloppy *laissez faire* attitude, both of which easily lead to compacency. We place a fairly strong emphasis on formal work, and our educational aim is to kindle self discipline. This formal work is always seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself. That end must always be free for interpretation and can only be alluded to as 'complete education of the individual'. Basically we see each child as an individual who in his particular way must fit into soci-

ety as it stands and as it will be, and it is our responsibility to help him develop his own gifts by providing a socially coherent framework for his imaginative flights and needs. I personally try to lead the children to an appreciation that their talents and skills are not theirs alone, and that abilities which are not shared with the community are meaningless. As a consequence, the school is naturally non-competitive; it is also non-hierarchical. Following the sad death of our founder, John Powlesland, there is no principal, nor is there any distinction between parents and teaching staff. We work on a job rotational basis with areas of specialisation, where parents and children share cooking, cleaning and maintenance responsibilities. This clearly leads to more humane relationships, and has a disintegrating effect on the rigid formality of the school as an institution, on the nuclear family and on the definition of authority. School is not split off from home, and becomes a place where children can naturally evolve together within a supportive environment.

The adults in the school strive to stand back as much as possible, whilst continually observing and stimulating progress within the child. Parents and staff share responsibility for this progress, and are primarily concerned to encourage active positive choice and initiative at every opportunity, and to co-ordinate this initiative with the needs of the community. The democratic constitution demands that parents, children and staff are fully involved in organising the curriculum and school policy.

Recent trends in education appear to be moving further and further from our own aspirations. Already large comprehensive schools are merging into grotesquely huge units, where not only do the children have no effective choice of activities, but teachers find themselves restricted: in certain schools they are presented with prepackaged project work by a headmaster who has no real contact with the children. It is difficult to believe that much consideration has been given to the social problems involved in large schools, and it would seem that the line of thinking is the same as that which led to the development of high rise flats, i.e., a lack of consideration for the human elements. There is much talk now about the needs of industry and the responsibility of education to meet these needs. Yet we must be fully committed to a concern with the quality of our children's emotional and imaginative lives, for as is pointed out in a Big Flame pamphlet, what industrialists increasingly need is not so much skilled labour but docile consumers. As schools become instruments for a retrogressive social training, with qualifications as the red herrings boding a materially better life—when in fact there are no jobs even if you have the qualifications—then we should be devoting more attention to equipping our children to cope with leisure as well as with the alleged reality they are continually threatened with. If ever a Marcusean utopia of automation arrives, we shall then perhaps start to ask what these O levels really signify.

THE WHY

Yet as we are continually pointing out to our children at Kirkdale, there is no Marcusean utopia, not even on the horizon, and lack of these O levels represents a distinct limitation of access to real—and frequently worthwhile—power. It would be foolish to deny that many potential employers are still impressed by qualifications, initially at least, and that employment prospects, particularly for youth from the wrong class, are diminished without them. It is not necessary to pursue the hypocritical path described by Colin Ward in FREEDOM vol. 38 no. 12*, although what he says is a perfectly familiar pattern. Children educated to understand what qualifications really mean should have no real problems in getting through the exams if they feel the ultimate gain is worthwhile. Hopefully they have learnt that qualifications are not reflections upon themselves as individuals.

With so much of society obsessed with arbitrary evaluations based upon tangible evidences, it is essential that our children learn to appraise themselves objectively, and defuse the highly emotional connotations of such classifications. We master a skill or develop a knowledge to further

our enjoyment of life, and we submit to grading to expand the possibilities of that enjoyment within society.

So yes, the "three R's", O levels and so on are important at the moment, and it is desirable that our children should collect them. However in many ways the critical task of education is to develop a sense of integrity and autonomy, and to establish a model for the social relations of learning—and it is nonsense to suggest that such considerations cannot be a part of school life. Certainly they do not lend themselves conveniently to grading or examination, nor can they be slotted into a curriculum. It is largely the responsibility of the individual teacher to infuse his class with an appreciation of the values he lives by, and to determine an appropriate means of conveying those values. There are of course many teachers who are deeply concerned over these responsibilities, and work towards realising their aims. All too often however this is not possible, due to restrictions in the policies and expectations of the school, and the demands imposed by the school in general. Most experienced teachers can learn to overcome these confinements and teach effectively, despite the difficulties. However it is not these problems that concern us most, but rather the insidious effects of school as an institution upon the child. Along with the home, the school is instrumental in helping to shape the values of the child, and it is the tacit assumptions and social patterns—what Illich describes as "the hidden curriculum"—that the child absorbs or reacts to. This is an aspect of school life that does not seem to feature very prominently in our 'great debate', and which needs greater consideration. It is essential that education is answerable to principle rather than the vagaries of the economy, and the 'supply and demand mechanisms of the job market'.

What we are concerned about is the emotional underdevelopment in the child. Large class sizes, and an almost totally adult orientated school order, do not readily lead to the autonomy of the child, who at school is often bewildered by a machinery which excludes him from its processes. In the classroom, it is not so much the child but his productions that are valued, which is frequently confusing. This soon leads him into the habit of acquiescence, where action is dependent upon external stimulus. He also learns that the inverse side of anonymity is ferocious competitiveness. These two extremes—atrophy of the will, and overweening desire to achieve status—are what many teachers struggle to avoid; yet their power must be matched against the seductive appeal of 'the hidden curriculum', and the odds are quite simply stacked against teacher and child. It is more than distressing to observe motivation degraded by institutionalised attitudes, and while some sectors of the community may find this desirable, it is a point of view that is hopefully disputed, or at the very least considered.

It has often been said that schools are the most artificial of communities, and the artificiality appears to increase as the school grows larger. The child cannot feel that school has been designed for his needs, and soon learns to disassociate himself from the idea that he can influence its motions. He will frequently find that initiative is inconvenient, hence discouraged, and it is very easy to leave control of his life's decisions to parental figures. Authority itself becomes confusing where large establishments demand a complex bureaucracy and a firmly structured hierarchy to maintain the patterns of efficiency expected of them. At the very bottom of this authoritarian bond, the child will feel the burden of this pressure, and a very prevalent response to this is a similar ambivalence to that mentioned earlier—the attitude towards authority in schoolchildren is on the one hand a fawning supplication and affected worship, and on the other mindless irreverence and automatic distrust. It would be extremely naive to suggest that such responses are solely attributable to large classes, but it would seem clear that personal contact is invaluable in establishing realistic relationships, and this is highly difficult where expediency must dominate teaching methods.

This may seem perhaps exaggerated, but we at Kirkdale feel it would be foolish to underestimate the need to develop a robust autonomy, so that they do not become engulfed in the stresses of inner city life. With so much talk of violence, vandalism, racism and so on, we need to continually question the fundamentals of social relationships, and place our children in a situation where this is a norm. Schools such as White Lion Street and Kirkdale, and a scattering of others around the country, have been expressly created with this end in mind—to provide awareness through experience of the mechanics of community life, where active and mutual responsibility are the norm. This can only be fully achieved in small, fluid units which are flexible enough to tolerate minorities.

Without any external financial support, survival amounts to a hand-to-mouth existence for many of these schools and for some, such as White

Lion Street, survival is not possible. I.L.E.A. refused grant aid on the grounds that the interests involved are too parochial—which in the light of the issues referred to above is ludicrous. Of course the politics involved in ILEA's decision are highly involved. By all accounts that decision seemed to ignore the fact that White Lion Street School came into being to meet a need that could not be catered for elsewhere. It is, of course, no easy task to assess the achievements of White Lion Street, even by their own standards, as the scope of their work is very wide ranging, and it is the long term social implications that we must consider, rather than the crude results alone. In many cases, simply the attendance of the kids is a considerable achievement. The staff at White Lion Street, however, insist as we do at Kirkdale that in no way are our schools waste disposal pipes for the rejects of the state school system, but something positive in our own right which, whilst we may offer an ideal haven for those who cannot adjust to the schools provided, are far more than a remedial annexe. School refusers may frequently do so on legitimate and reasonable grounds, and their behaviour is not so much a reflection of a defective personality as a response to the inevitable shortcomings of maintained schools. The root of many such 'problems' is that the individual feels that school life does not cater for his growing needs in ways to which he can relate.

Quite apart from school refusers and potential school refusers, there are many children—and their parents—who would like an education which takes them into account, and has greater social consciousness. Of course the number of people who truly want such an education is limited—yet it is a significant minority, and whilst not that many are actively involved in the schools themselves the number of visitors and enquiries is enormous. This, as mentioned above, is an important aspect of our work. If we are to avoid becoming a totalitarian state, it is important to recognise minority concerns and to provide choice, and also to support well founded experiments which will serve the community. Whilst the number of people concerned is not very large, neither is the amount of money in terms of the educational expenditure. Smaller units working as a job rotating co-operative are more efficient economically—the cost of educating a child at Kirkdale last year was just over one-third of the cost of educating his counterpart at a state maintained school.

So it really would not cost very much at all to support these independent projects, and it seems particularly important to do so if they are working tangentially to the current trend yet in a way which exerts an influence over the mainstream. In their respective ways, Kirkdale and White Lion Street Free School are symbols of a freedom in education, and both need as much public support as possible before it is too late.

Please write to Kirkdale School, 186 Kirkdale, London SE26 if you feel you may be able to contribute in some positive way, or if you have a child you would like to 'enrol'.

STEVE HAISMAN

*"Towards A Poor School"



White
Lion
Street
Bulletin
No 3.



THE ANARCHIST movement over the years has succeeded in creating an image of men and women dedicated to a mindless violence or the growing of fertiliser-free lettuce and the throwing, firing and glazing of clay pots. On violence one must endorse or denounce it as an individual and for the free flowering lettuce I can take it or leave it providing it is well swamped with Heinz Salad Cream rich with malt vinegar, vegetable oil, sugar, eggs, salt, mustard, food starch, stabilisers, herbs and vegetable colour all guaranteed to do for the diner what the cigarette does for the smoker. It is the pot that would appear to have become the symbol and the urn of all those aesthetic types who wish to contract out of their society and there is not a coastal resort, a pretty village or a romantic slum from the shores of the Mediterranean to the coastlines of America, Atlantic or Pacific, that does not house some praying mantis of a potter turning and churning out more and more of those useless pots. A clay utensil that ceased to be functional nearly two hundred years ago. An art form that only requires a limited skill, it has created its own mystique for an article that can and does end up as a useless gift for someone else. Yet the production of the useless and the tasteless is not confined to those cannot conform except to their own accepted cult ritual for the Victoria and Albert Museum has mounted, with a banging of gold bars, the Faberge 1846-1920 exhibition. Carl Faberge was the Goldsmith to the Imperial Court of Russia and for his weekly take home pay he designed and produced toys for the courts of Europe. Vulgar, tasteless trifles they were created to please and all that they

FABERGE at the Victoria & Albert Museum § GRAHAM SUTHERLAND Portraits at the National Portrait Gallery, Paintings at the Marlborough Gallery § CANALETTO—KOKOTSCSKA at Somerset House § RUBENS at the British Museum § SILVER JUBILEE TRIBUTE at the American Embassy § LARRY RIVERS at Gimpel Fils § HILARY McCUE at the Royal Academy (Basement) § ANNUAL EXHIBITION—PART TWO at the Hayward Gallery.

the empty food bowl and for the crowned head of Europe it was the pretty uniforms and Faberge's golden toys.

Yet let us not imagine that with mass visualisation the message has been learned for at the National Portrait Gallery there are a number of portraits by Graham Sutherland. The Marlborough Gallery is exhibiting the 'old' Sutherland of grey green thorns, Christlike against a veil of dying tones, but the NPG are to be commended for giving us three or four good portraits and many that are plainly awful. There is the fine portrait of Somerset Maugham, brutish and evil yet what is missing from this exhibition is the portrait of Winston Churchill for it is held that Churchill and his kin blew their collective skulls when they saw it and the portrait has now 'vanished'. I believe that this Churchill portrait and the Maugham were the best things that Sutherland painted but censorship both high and low is a powerful thing and if the

Beautiful it ain't

demonstrated is that the crowned heads of Europe were as philistine in their taste as the rank and file buying their Greek statue with an eight day clock in the gut.

Doc Strong makes the point that Faberge was pandering to the fin de siecle decadence as epitomised by later Victoria etcetera and one doubts this, for like the garish rubbish that is sold at holiday resorts this is that eternal work produced by people without art for people without art. Like the glazed pots it has to be bright and glossy, full of pretty colours and intricate enough to give the illusion that it is a product of a fine mind to a fine mind. Doc Strong has chosen to house this particular exhibition in almost total darkness with only the cases lit by an internal light so that the whole has the appearance of an aquarium. Yet on press day the hall held a solid queue of the famous and the infamous, the Town and his punk tinted frau and Robert Melville late of the Statesman and now with his Architectural Review invite and he should be so lucky. And the question must be asked why were we all there in packed formation to bear witness to an exhibition that many of us dismiss as shoddy and vulgar and the answer is that all these royal trinkets are created with gold, silver and rare stones. This and this reason alone pulled in the kulture mob for we were to see wealth beyond the dreams of Lord Ryder. In this situation I always make a mental change, of the ancient art of transmutation, and I judge these toys as baubles made of brass, copper and coloured glass and when the economic value of these things is removed then we are left with nothing more than fairground handouts. Let no one stand in judgement, except me, for these things gave pleasure to a few and the sad thing about this exhibition is that human greed is the motive and the drawing power behind it. In Case N there is a small group of figures and the description of one of them surely sums up the age, this exhibition and the great divorce between leisure and labour for N9 is a labourer or zemlekov in purpurine, lapis lazuli, with obsidian hat and boots, sard beard and hair, aventurine quartz face and hands, Norwegian sunstone coat, quartzite socks, cabochon sapphire eyes and holding a silver-gilt shovel. Engraved ΦΑΓΕΡΚΕ. If only those crowned heads of Europe had given a fraction of the care and attention to this labourer that they gave to the production and the buying of this fashioned mannikin then Faberge would not have had to flee to Bond Street and the crowned heads would still be reviewing the Imperial Guard, but they were just as much the victims of the age as the hungry zemlekov and just as incapable of shaping the great historical events. For the labourer it was

Churchill portrait has not been destroyed by the 'family' then it must lie in some family bank vault. An odd exhibition with Giorgio Soavi tied to a chair. Jeffress of the Arthur Jeffress Gallery who committed suicide in a Paris room in 1961 and never paid me for a watercolour he had off me. And Prince von Furstenberg described in the catalogue as a 'Bavarian aristocrat' or from the good to the ghastly, for I see Sutherland now in his role as the replacement for the late John Sargent, a fashionable painter for free money and passing fame. But the wine flowed free and Polish George was there to sup it with me and together we made our way to the Strand to Somerset House to view London & the Thames.

It was in this column in this paper that the claim was made to return Somerset House to the people and the people are still waiting, for the fact that the Town and his web footed frau are being charged £1 a head to visit the upstairs rooms in Somerset House to view a coffee table arrangement of 'famous artists' from Canaletto to Kokoschka all painting the Town's sewer does not mean that the London mob has finally come into its own. Ten years or more ago I made the point that the facade of Somerset House should be cleaned of the small tatty shops and that the entire House should be permanently and freely opened to the people but not a Queen's Silver Jubilee Committee at £1 a head.

But the muse called and I found Polish George once more among the free sherry at the Rubens exhibition at the British Museum. It is a magnificent exhibition, if one is that way fat rosy women, for one comes to reject Rubens' fixation with the bulging muscle beneath the flabby flesh, but what is exciting to the artist is to be able to compare again and again drawings of black wash and brown chalk against the final engraving. This is a rare pleasure and the British Museum is to be praised for we have always had to accept the finished engraving in its sharp divisions of black and white and without ever seeing the master's original work that gave birth to the period mass production, and within this exhibition there is this rare opportunity.

The Town offers much, from American Art at the American Embassy as the "folks'" contribution to Brenda's Jubilee to the pretty Larry Rivers at Gimpels and Hilary McCue's beautiful evocations of 1920 German art in the basement of the Royal Academy, but duty calls to the Hayward Part Two

(Cont on back p9)

3 IN A CELL (continued)

Hawkins in his first chapter and in his introduction pays a grudging tribute to Kropotkin, stating that the Kropotkinian solution of the prison-problem—abolish them all!—is "enjoying a revival among contemporary criminologists".

Hawkins admits, as any observant and sensible man would, that prison is not a deterrent. It should reform, he claims, but it is politically inexpedient and financially improbable that enough money could be allocated and found to make prisons into centres where reform is the aim. (He is writing chiefly about American prisons but he has experience of the British, and no doubt of the Australian, prison administrations.) He feels that the idea of withdrawal, of containment of socially dangerous types has something to recommend it. He feels it is a modern substitute for outlawry and deportation.

On Vengeance he writes:

It would probably be generally agreed by penologists that one of the principal obstacles to penal reform has always been, and remains, public opinion. Indeed some would say that it is the greatest obstacle. This view was eloquently expressed over twenty years ago by the English penal reformer Margery Fry [who wrote] "One has only to propose some change in our penal laws to become aware at once that ages of traditional emotion, of obscure thinking, of desire for vengeance and terror of bad men, of distrust of authority, of religious doctrine, of sadism, and love of power have woven around the subject a complex tangle of motives and beliefs... At the present moment it is no exaggeration to say that the greatest obstacles to the revision of our penal administration is this mass of confused thought and emotion in the public mind."

Hawkins shares with Margery Fry this view of a public demand for vengeance but Hawkins does not point out the constant role of the press in inflaming what they feel to be 'public opinion'.

Witness the whipped-up indignation about the routine release of Anna Mendelsohn and Hilary Creek, and the steady persecution of Myra Hindley (leading directly to a violent physical attack) and Ian Brady in the popular press. (A recent copy of *New Society* contains a thoughtful article by Laurie Taylor on the prison persecution of Brady.) Given the secretive nature of prison administration the remedy for such excessive pressures and criticism from press and public is simple. Don't tell them anything; the administration of prisons, it can be said, is a technical specialist job and nothing to do with press or public. But in view of the frequency of leaks and tit-bits about notorious criminals and the avidity with which Fleet Street picks them up one is inclined to suspect officially-inspired leaks.

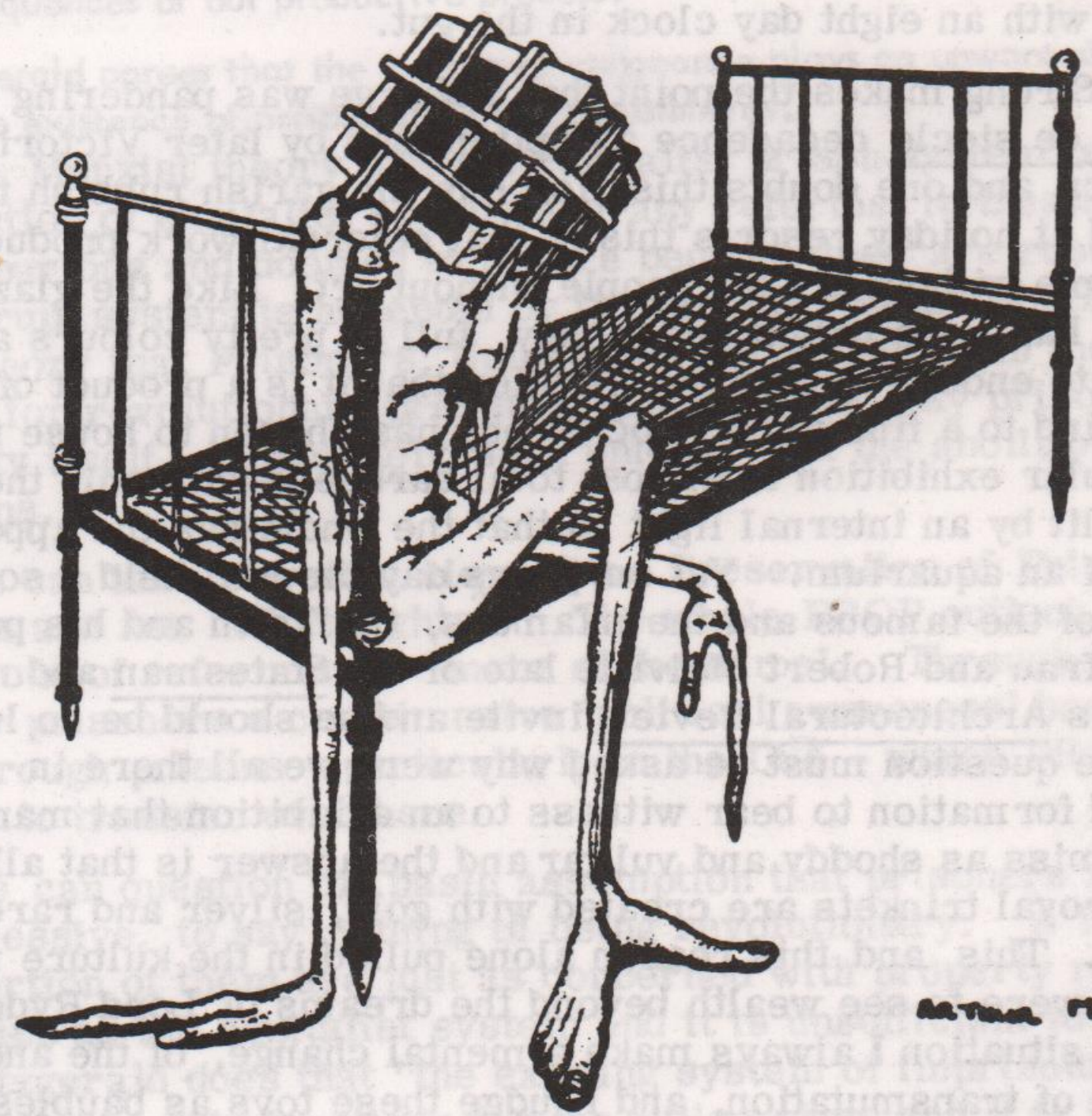
Hawkins in one of his frequent 'On the one hand' soliloquies writes

The kind of estimate of the importance of public opinion and its significance as an obstacle to reform seems to rest on two beliefs about the nature of popular thought and feeling regarding punishment. On the one hand it is suggested that punishment, being in origin a substitute for private vengeance, still fulfills the function of providing some kind of vicarious satisfaction for the general demand for vengeance. On the other hand it is urged that the idea that criminals deserve to be subjected to some suffering, irrespective of its consequences either for the offender or for society, is an intuitive notion which is accepted, approved, and strongly held by the great majority of members of the community. It is questionable however, whether this collective desire for vengeance and for the meting out of deserved suffering is anywhere near as powerful a force as it is sometimes assumed to be.

On the question of the harmful effects of prisons and as to whether prisons create crime—vide Kropotkin's dictum—Hawkins quotes Hans W. Mattick who said "If men had deliberately set themselves the task of designing an institution that would systematically maladjust men, they would have invented the large, walled, maximum security prison." Hawkins states the position (which he does not agree with) that prisons have failed because they are not sufficiently punitive. He points out that a more punitive policy would greatly intensify unrest and "a substantial increase in death and injury for both staff and prisoners". He then in his involved way goes to the heart of the prison problem. "Apart from that [punitive measures]

there is no good reason to doubt that insofar as deterrence is held to be a function of imprisonment it is fulfilled by the deprivation of liberty." Hawkins denies that the statistics of recidivism (that is, people returning to prison again and again) are insufficient to prove Kropotkin's thesis that prisons are universities of crime. The point has been made before that the lack of establishment of any values in prison save those of 'woe to the vanquished', the inculcation of revengeful attitudes (whether guilty or not), the social opprobrium of ex-prisoners and the institutionalisation of some all lead to a return time after time. John Barron Mayes estimates the habitual offender, in Britain, as between 20 and 25 per cent. Mayes further points out that as statistics are presented we do not know whether one individual was prosecuted several times for the same type of offence in one year. Incidentally Mayes says "Punishment as a deterrent is in fact only effective with psychologically normal people and only in certain circumstances with them."

Hawkins, writing with the scientific detachment of a man who has never been in prison—except on the right side of the door—says of those who would abolish prisons, or who seem to say this, that "[in their writing] 'the absence of tiresome qualifications, cautious parentheses, and saving clauses seems in itself like a foretaste of the mass liberation proposed.' He goes on to say that this is a misleading view since many are "not really abolitionists". He follows with what seems to be a tongue-in-cheek sentence: "[Even with some abolitionists] one finds that the fulfillment of that aim is seen as dependent upon the prior achievement of other changes in social organization, changes so universal in scope and radical in nature that by comparison the abolition of prisons seems a relatively minor adjustment." That takes care of the anarchists. Hawkins feels that proposals for abolition are utopian (in the swearing sense) and obscure the need to treat urgent, immediate problems.



As to whether prisons can be reformed and if this is advisable, he quotes other authorities including Samuel Jordan, a former Pennsylvanian prisoner who said, "The prison reformer—wittingly or unwittingly—is an agent of capitalism. . . His mission is to repaint, adjust, or gloss over the flaws in one of society's patent control mechanisms." Hawkins points out how reforms are liable to have unwanted consequences. For example he cites that the presupposed reforming tendencies of prison have encouraged justices to impose long sentences. One may say that even the abolition of capital punishment, welcome as it is, opens up fearful vistas of life sentences which are living sentences of death. Hawkins goes on to criticise abolitionists as a barrier to reforms. The good is always an enemy of the best.

Hawkins makes a quote from a prisoner at Attica, the New York prison where a prison revolt was bloodily put down (with the death of hostages falsely blamed on the prisoners). The allegedly revolutionary demands of the "implacably hostile inmates" were put by this inmate as, "Well, I think the actual expectations what individual inmates wanted, varied. There were guys in there that all they wanted was more pink ice cream,

we will say, and there were guys in there that were concerned about getting cake in the mess hall and there were guys that were deeply concerned about improving the parole system and trying to get fresh minds into the institution; to do something about rehabilitation." Even Angela Davis, according to Hawkins, thought the prisoners of Attica were on revolutionary course. He quotes from the American Friends Service Committee publication *Struggle for Justice* (1971) on reforms in prison. "The experts—even the most enlightened and progressive—also line up solidly in support of the system asking for more of the same." When one comes to consider PROP's (Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners) Charter of Rights one finds it to be 'more of the same' although it must be admitted that by the inevitability of gradualness such improvements would eventually whittle away the *raison d'être* of prison. This, however is precisely a reformist case and if the loss of freedom is the prime function of prison—this one thing will never be replaced.

Whether prisons are improving or not depends again, Hawkins says, upon your viewpoint. Bentham believed that his Panopticon at Millbank, London, was "a mill grinding rogues honest and idle men industrious", thus inculcating virtue. If you believe in original sin (cf. Lobroso) or man's innate desire and necessity for freedom you will not believe that a prison however model is an improvement. One recollects a prison officer asking a recidivist with a twenty-five year gap if he thought prisons had improved. The reply was that the changes merely proved that the old system was useless and unnecessary.

Hawkins is the most 'establishment' of the three writers and he has the academic's unfortunate talent for walking round all sides of the 'bus and never getting on. However he is very fair to those viewpoints with which, from his professional position and background, he cannot sympathise. Nevertheless not only does he never catch the bus, sometimes it is doubtful if there is a bus at all!

* * *

Jessica Mitford is a very different case-history. She was the Communist party member of the Mitford-Redesdale family; possibly she is no longer a Party member but her loyalty seems to have transferred itself to the Blacks and Black Panthers who understandably play a larger part in American prison life, largely due to impoverishment and racial discrimination. To repeat her statement: "Criminal law is essentially a reflection of the values; and a codification of the self-interest, and a method of control, of the dominant class in any given society." Elsewhere she speaks of the 'criminal' type as created by "ethnic prejudices of a given society".

On deterrence she writes: "To what extent is fear of prison successful as a deterrent to crime? Obviously those who have been caught and convicted were not deterred, and from the large number of repeaters/recidivists one must infer that the prison experience did not turn them into the paths of righteousness."

Jessica Mitford was 'imprisoned' (as part of a criminological project) in a Washington detention centre under Mrs. Patricia Taylor who, speaking of reform possibilities in her prison, concedes that there is barely even the pretence of a useful trade, or education programme, for the women, most of whom she expects to see back again in her custody shortly after they are let out. They exit and re-enter as through a revolving door; "three quarters of those who are in now have been here before". Chances of getting a decent job when they leave, slim enough for black ghetto women in any circumstances, are almost non-existent for those with prison records, so inevitably they turn to their old ways when released.

Jessica Mitford subscribes to the theory of conditioning in prison, that prison shapes a person—an environmental theory which is being made a physiological and psychological reality by the various methods of conditioning by drugs, therapies and neurosurgery. It will be remembered that the presumed discarded pre-frontal lobotomy (i.e. severance of the portion of the brain believed to cause 'aggressive behaviour') was part of this programme of behaviour modification. Prison re-form takes on a new meaning when considered in the terms of this new Dr. Frankenstein's experiments.

STONE WALLS DO . . .

The title of Ms. Mitford's book was originally (in the U.S.) *Kind and Usual Punishment*. This is a play upon the blessed words in the American constitution which forbids 'cruel and unusual punishment'. It is significantly her belief that prison usually brutalises in spite of the veneer of kindness—and thus creates more crime. A significant factor in the deterioration (if such a word can be used or such a thing is possible) of the prison both here and in America is the size of individual prisons. One hesitates to say in such a context Small is Beautiful but the problems of bigness, the remoteness, inhumanity and the accumulation and

pile-up of frustrations and grievances on a grand scale lead to revolts and riots on a grand scale. Yet on economic and bureaucratic grounds the big house is still being favoured.

Hawkins in his book attacks Jessica Mitford for her selection of advocates for the abolition of prison. He contends that she chooses reformers who condemn prison as it is now and wish to provide a substitute. Certainly this is not the case with the early Darrow (who makes possible abolition conditional upon a juster society) or Kropotkin who obviously opts for an anarchist society.

Mitford concurs that the change of labels is insufficient, agreeing with the Quaker authors of *Struggle for Justice* that "Call them 'community treatment centres' or what you will, if human beings are involuntarily confined in them they are prisons." The Quaker authors suggest an easy way to test the real intent of the proponents of abolition: Is the proposed alternative program voluntary? Can a person enter at will and leave at will? If the answer is No "then the wolf is still under the sheepskin". Mitford speaks favourably of some methods of individual treatment, notably as practised by Dr. Jerome Miller in Massachusetts, cutting down the population of the local juvenile prison by returning prisoners to their homes, to foster homes or prep. schools. On grounds of cost alone this experiment has justified itself—and it is cost which is making many governments rethink ideas of prison and sentencing.

Ms. Mitford deservedly devotes considerable satirical space to the activities of the American Correctional Association—a do-gooder association embarked upon the streamlined, P.R.-efficient programme of conventions and junketings centering on the concept of prison. They have become so involved with prison that its abolition would leave a gap in their lives and they have become like so many penologists, a vested interest.

Contrasted with these worthy citizens she cites Mrs. Ysabel Rennie of Columbus, Ohio who, equally worthy, Ms. Mitford says "hardly strikes one as likely material for insurgent activity aimed at a stronghold of American political power". Mrs. Rennie frequently passed the Ohio penitentiary and the thought occurred to her, "Supposing it turned out that dreadful things went on inside: would I be any different than all those 'good Germans' who passed Dachau and Buchenwald and never asked questions?" It took two riots and at least five deaths in that prison for Mrs. Rennie to involve herself in active investigation into what went on in Ohio Penitentiary. Her ultimate statement to a committee on prisons: "You don't want to appropriate money for better prisons. I say, don't do it. Giving money to the states to build better prisons is like giving money to Himmler to build better concentration camps: it is wrong in principle."

As to the reform of prisons, Jessica Mitford has recorded that "reforms tend to confer legitimacy on the prisons and thus help to perpetuate the system". She notes the feeble attempts at prison reform by changing the names: the Attica Commission report evaluating the work of a 1965 New York State committee to study the treatment of prisoners concluded that the committee's major accomplishment after five years was the change the names of all the state's maximum security prisons: "Effective July 8 1970...there were no more prisons, in their places, instead stood six maximum security 'correctional facilities'. The prison warders became 'institutional superintendents', the prison guards became 'correctional officers'. No one's job or essential duties changed, only his title... In the same spirit some prisons are now called 'therapeutic correctional communities'; convicts are 'clients of the correctional system'; solitary confinement and punishment cells and punishment cells have become 'adjustment centres', 'seclusion' or, in Virginia, 'meditation'." One is reminded of Brendan Behan's observation that the only change in Irish prisons after the achievement of independence was a change in the badges of the warders' caps. By the way, English 'warders' are now 'prison officers'.

In this effort to reform and improve prisons, the most weird and wonderful experiments take place. Ms. Mitford gives details of a project in Alabama: "Correctional Officer training in Behaviour modification". This consisted in officers counting the number of curses ejaculated by prisoners (secretly recorded). During the first ten days the rate was 57 curses per hour per man. (Although this was an average, a small number of men did the majority, and rather than single words they emitted long episodes of cursing.) On the eleventh day and during the following eleven days the officer placed the 'curse counter' on his wrist and everyone knew what he was doing. "The rate of swearing dropped to .28 which the report says as indicated by the median test ($X^2 = 15.68$ df = 1 p is less than .05)." Cunning bastards!

Ms. Mitford writes of 'the built-in contradictions that confound the conscientious therapist who tries to apply the principles of his training in a prison'. She quotes from Dr. Harvey Powelson, resident psychiatrist



at San Quentin, who found 'a striking contrast between the custodial and the psychiatric view of the prisoner, at least unofficially, as a special form of humanity', and the custodian, goes on Dr. Powelson, acts on the premise that "each prisoner is a cunning malingerer and that each staff member who is not a guard falls an easy prey to the chicanery of the criminal mind".

Many prisoners to whom Ms. Mitford talked spoke of the "Catch 22 of modern prison life" —in the words of Dr. Menninger "the combination of diagnosis, evaluation, treatment, and classification". Professor John Irwin, a former convict, describes this as "a grand hypocrisy in which custodial concerns, administrative exigencies and punishments are all disguised as treatment". "Prisoners," said Prof. Irwin, "were led to believe that they would be able to raise their educational level, to learn a trade, to have physical defects corrected and would receive help in various individual group therapy programmes in solving their psychological problems".

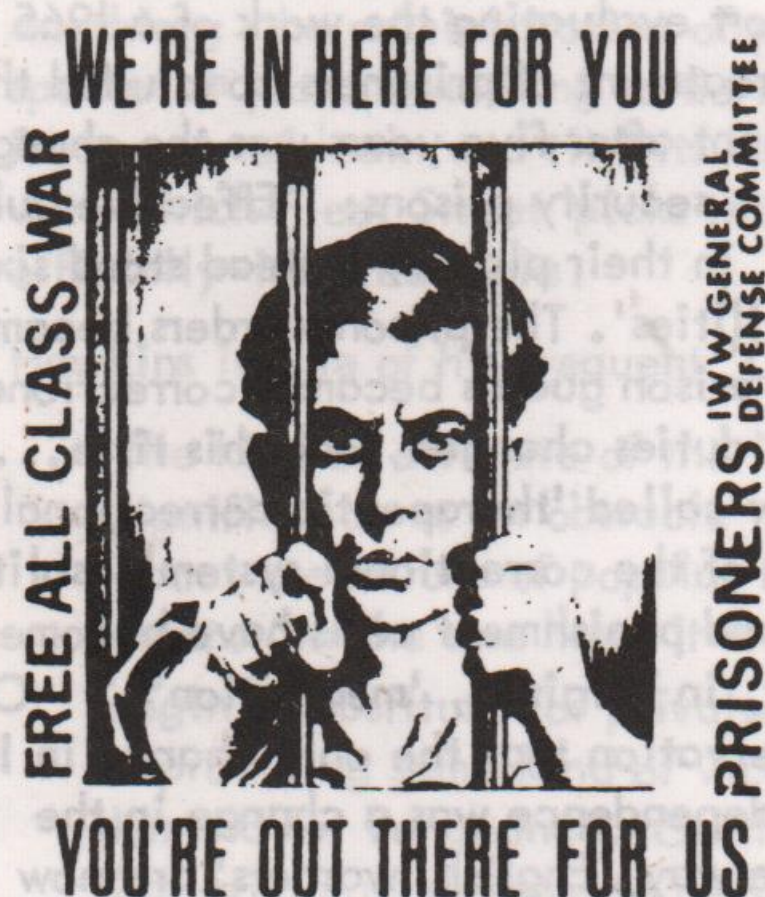
Instead of which in many prisons the programme is of behaviour modification, the use of surgical techniques, of drugs with dangerous side-effects, and programmes of aversion therapy. (One knows of a one-time drug addict who had been treated in England by aversion therapy to cure alcoholism. This 'cure' made him a drug-addict.

Ms. Mitford heads her chapter on this aspect of prison treatment "The Clockwork Orange". Those who saw and remember this controversial film will recollect that the tragedy of the conditioning of the 'anti-hero' is really the point of the film but the artistic presentation of crude personal violence detracted from this. (The film-makers were, in fact, 'playing both sides of the street'.)

This is the problem of the reformer: what does he put in place of prison which is not more degrading to the human personality? Ms. Mitford concludes her book: "Do prison experiments... foreshadow a Clockwork Orange society to come? Society created the prison in its own image, will history, with its penchant for paradox, reverse those roles?"

She finally quotes from the famous peroration of Eugene Debs:

While there is a lower class I am in it;
While there is a criminal element I am of it;
While there's a soul in prison I am not free.



Never can a new idea move within the law. It matters not whether that idea pertains to political and social changes or to any other domain of human thought and expression—to science, literature, music, in fact, everything that makes for freedom and joy and beauty must refuse to move within the law. How can it be otherwise? The law is stationary, fixed, mechanical, "a chariot wheel" which grinds all alike without regard to time, place and condition, without ever taking into account cause and effect, without ever going into the complexity of the human soul.

Progress knows nothing of fixity. It cannot be pressed into a definite mould. It cannot bow to the dictum, "I have ruled," "I am the regulating finger of God". Progress is ever renewing, ever becoming, ever changing—never is it within the law.

EMMA GOLDMAN

—at her trial, New York,
July, 1917.

Mike Fitzgerald is more concerned about the formation and development of the organization known as PROP (Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners). He sees the prison revolts, which naturally take up a large portion of his book, as a symptom of the sickness of the prison system. Somewhere it is chronicled that between 1855 and 1955 there were 400 revolts in British prisons.

Fitzgerald feels that "the notion of imprisonment as deterrence is untenable because it is predicated upon a view of crime which is palpably false. The decision to commit crime is not a 'rational' one, arrived at by weighing up the consequences of an act." And even in cases where

that decision is made 'rationally', certainty rather than severity of punishment is likely to be a more important factor. He quotes Sir Desmond Curran, a dissenting member of the Wolfenden Committee (on sexual offences) who said "I see little reason to suppose that the possibility of the maximum punishment of ten years as opposed to two years would have much, if indeed any, appreciable effect on deterrence. Only a small minority of the population know what is the maximum penalty for indecent assaults... Can it seriously be supposed that those who are guilty of indecent assault work out 'betting odds' of this kind before they indulge in their acts?"

Fitzgerald also quotes Nigel Walker that reconviction studies have shown "other things being equal, the more previous convictions an offender has the more likely he is to be re-convicted". (This could be not merely a reflection of the offender's mind but of police *modus operandi*—find somebody who does this kind of thing who *might* do it again and let him prove he didn't.)

Fitzgerald quotes Ramsay Clark of the USA President's Crime Commission who referred to prisons as 'factories of crime'. "Of those who come to jail undecided, capable either of criminal conduct or of lives free of crime, most are turned to crime." Terence Morris, in the *Twentieth Century* magazine (1962) wrote an article beginning "Perhaps the biggest breeding-ground of British crime today is the British prison."

Fitzgerald finds that the most disturbing development in prison reform is the growth of control units, which he says "must be viewed as only one part—albeit an important part—of the general system of repression which has developed not only in the prison, but in society as a whole during the past ten or fifteen years."

The 'withdrawal' theory of penal policy is described by Fitzgerald as a 'sanitation function' and he writes, "The crucial importance of the sanitation function of imprisonment rests in reinforcing the prevalent ideology that it is individuals, not social institutions, that are to blame for social problems and for social failure, it therefore serves to legitimise the basic institutions of capitalist society. By keeping the 'unproductive' out of sight, the prison provides an ideological veil to obscure the brutal consequences of our productive process."

Fitzgerald agrees that the motive of vengeance plays an unwanted part in the existence of prisons and their punishments.

The Marxist theory that the capitalist prison system is a reflection of capitalist society and any reforms in treatment are spurious and doomed to failure because they are rooted in a corrupt system is accepted by Fitzgerald. He subscribes to the theory that Prisoners' Unions like PROP can form the basis for revolutionary pressure to change not only prison, but society itself. Ultimately such unions seek the abolition of prisons.

One can take a cynical view of the Preservation of Prisoners' Rights and ask "What rights?" The whole PROP outlook seems to be one of reformism - 'more of the same'. Through black power prisoners a certain naive 'political awareness' has seeped through prisons - particularly in the USA - which PROP seeks to transfer over here.

One can question the basic assumption that prisoners are progressive, to say nothing of being revolutionary. A large proportion of them are just as concerned with property relationships as the capitalist system and it is insufficient to say as Fitzgerald does that "the existing system of imprisonment performs certain functions for the ruling class and it is in terms of these objectives that the 'success' of the prison must be gauged". If, as in the so-called 'socialist' countries the ruling class has been replaced by a bureaucratic managerial class (allegedly governing during the transitional period on behalf of the working class) who will ultimately usher in the classless society, this will not even 'ultimately' abolish prisons.

Statistically anarchism, in proportion to its adherents has more practical experience of prison than any other political grouping. This experience has been gained under both left-wing and right-wing governments and experience in the USSR and Czarist Russia alone would substantiate Kropotkin's statement that "the more one reflects about the partial improvements which might be made (in prisons); the more one considers them under their real, practical aspect, the more one is convinced that the few which can be made will be of no moment, while serious improvements are impossible under the present system. Some thoroughly new departure is unavoidable. The system is wrong from the very foundation".

Jack Robinson

MANAS

CHILDREN ...and Ourselves

ORIGINAL SIN IN EDUCATION

IN *Ten Faces of the Universe* (Freeman & Co., 1977, \$6.95), the British astronomer and cosmologist, Fred Hoyle, declares for the mathematical deity of Sir James Jeans. The sole activity of God, says Hoyle, is geometrizing:

All other attributes of God are without meaning, and it does far more harm than good to go on playing around with them.

As an example, consider the fact that something approaching the conditions of a civil war exists today in Northern Ireland. Although secular problems have played a significant role in causing this situation, a religious quarrel between Protestants and Catholics is generally conceded to lie at the root of it. Since the Christian religion is supposed to be based on an ethic of "love thy neighbor," this quarrel is perverse and contradictory. A while ago, I happened to suggest in a talk that a quick and simple solution to the Irish problem would be to arrest every priest and clergyman in Ireland and to commit every man jack of them to long jail sentences on the charge of causing civil war. When the ensuing laughter subsided, I was surprised that not a single person among the fair-sized company present seemed to doubt that this odd-sounding proposal would in the long run solve the Irish question.

Priests and clergymen do not intend to cause pain, but when they persist in repeating nonsense words and concepts to children, and insist that those words and concepts have great hidden significance, they *do* cause pain. The mental frustration of it all then erupts into violence, when two groups of people fed on different nonsense words, intermingle with each other. Where the Irish have a sensible objective, such as defeating England at rugby, nobody cares who is Catholic and who is Protestant. Together they simply get on with the job, and they do it very well. There is no such thing as Catholic eyes, or Protestant legs, or Marxist numbers, or capitalist geometry. Combining a nonsense word with a valid word produces this kind of ridiculous association.

What then shall we do, asks Mr. Hoyle, about the impulses of religion? They are natural to man and cannot be suppressed. An appropriate response to the religious impulse or longing, he suggests, is in evidence when "a scientist spends a good fraction of his life trying to discover the mathematical form of some new physical law." Hoyle adopts this general view of religion:

Whenever anyone, at whatever level of sophistication, makes the effort to understand a little more about the world, that is worship. There will never be any long-term purpose for our species other than understanding of the universe. If this purpose does not prove sufficient for us, if we are impelled to invent all manner of nonsensical substitutes, then very likely we shall not survive as the dominant animal on the earth for very much longer.

Fred Hoyle has the flair of a fine writer and the spontaneous movement of a clear mind toward matters which concern us all. No wonder his books are popular, and that he gets the reader on his side through simple common sense. We'll probably return to the rest of his book later on, but here the focus is on what he says in the first chap-

ter on education. Everybody, he proposes, starts life "as a potentially competent mathematician."

Watch a baby between six and nine months old, and you will observe the basic concepts of geometry being learned. Once the baby has mastered the idea that space is three-dimensional, it reaches out and begins grasping various kinds of objects. It is then, from perhaps nine to fifteen months, that the concepts of sets and numbers are formed. But now an ominous development takes place. The nerve fibers in the brain insulate themselves in such a way that the baby begins to hear sounds very precisely. Soon it picks up language, and it is then brought into direct communication with adults. From this point on, it is usually downhill all the way for mathematics, because the child now becomes exposed to all the nonsense words and beliefs of the community into which it has been so unfortunate as to be born. Nature, having done very well by the child to this point, having permitted the luxury of thinking for itself for eighteen months, now abandons it to the arbitrary conventions and beliefs of society. But at least the child knows something of geometry and numbers, and it will always retain some memory of the early halcyon days, no matter what vicissitudes it may suffer later on. The main reservoir of mathematical talent in any society is thus possessed by children who are about two years old, children who have just learned how to speak fluently.

Modern advanced societies have found no way to make effective use of the marvelous years in a child's life from two to five. Quite apart from the mathematical talent awaiting to flower, the child has uncanny linguistic ability. It is well within the capacity of the average child to learn four or five languages, perfect in accent and syntax. Yet we let the child fritter away these priceless years, feeding itself on the arbitrary conventions of our society. Only at a much later age, when the linguistic ability has largely been lost, is the child expected to learn a new language. Results, achieved at great expense to taxpayers, are by then poor.

There is so much obvious truth in this analysis that one hesitates to question it, yet *something* is surely left out. If we're all so smart at two, being thereafter blighted by a wicked, unimaginative society, why don't the wolf-children, brought up in splendid isolation from human kind and their dreadful conventions, turn out to be veritable geniuses?

Is it that the young, when they reach four or five, begin to inherit the penalties of some original sin that Mr. Hoyle has left undefined? On the other hand, the blighting effect of the exposure to society is real. People who have given their lives to studying what happens to children in school—from Herbert Read to John Holt—leave us in no doubt about this.

We might put the matter in another way. Children have wonderful natural instincts for coping with direct experience. The trouble comes when they start trying to use abstractions. There are apparently good (mathematics) and bad abstractions (theology), abstractions which increase the potency of thought and abstractions which involve us in nightmares of self-deception. The child may have an infallible grasp of geometrical realities, but he can't tell you about them. He can use them but not discuss them. Actually, few accomplished adults can explain well the things they do best, and sometimes, when they try, it confuses them. Knowing and teaching have different levels of knowledge.

Yet Mr. Hoyle has some good arguments on his side. The stubborn youngsters, like himself as a child—or like

the French mathematical genius, Galois, who at twenty-one set down the essentials of the theory of groups on a single sheet of paper the night before he was killed in a duel—sometimes preserve the freely inventive capacities of their early years. Galois was practically untouched by school—he ignored all that happened there except the classes in mathematics, which interested him. Hoyle followed a similar course. No teacher was ever able to run his life or organize his mind. He thought only about what he wanted to think about.

Are teachers then wholly unnecessary? Not at all; but Hoyle has distinct ideas about what they should do:

Having taught mathematics for twenty years myself, at the level of the dreaded and famous Cambridge Tripos, I have strong opinions on this subject. In the first place, students should never be *taught* mathematics at all. Everybody should learn individually, because each person has a different pace. Setting the pace right is critical, because all important ideas must be clearly and completely learned, to a point where ideas and techniques become wholly instinctive. A slow pace does not matter very much, because there is ample time in life to become an expert mathematician, almost regardless of pace. What does matter, crucially, is for the learning to be so precise and complete that returning over the old ground is scarcely ever necessary. It is just because students attempt to go too fast, and are then forced into endlessly reviewing

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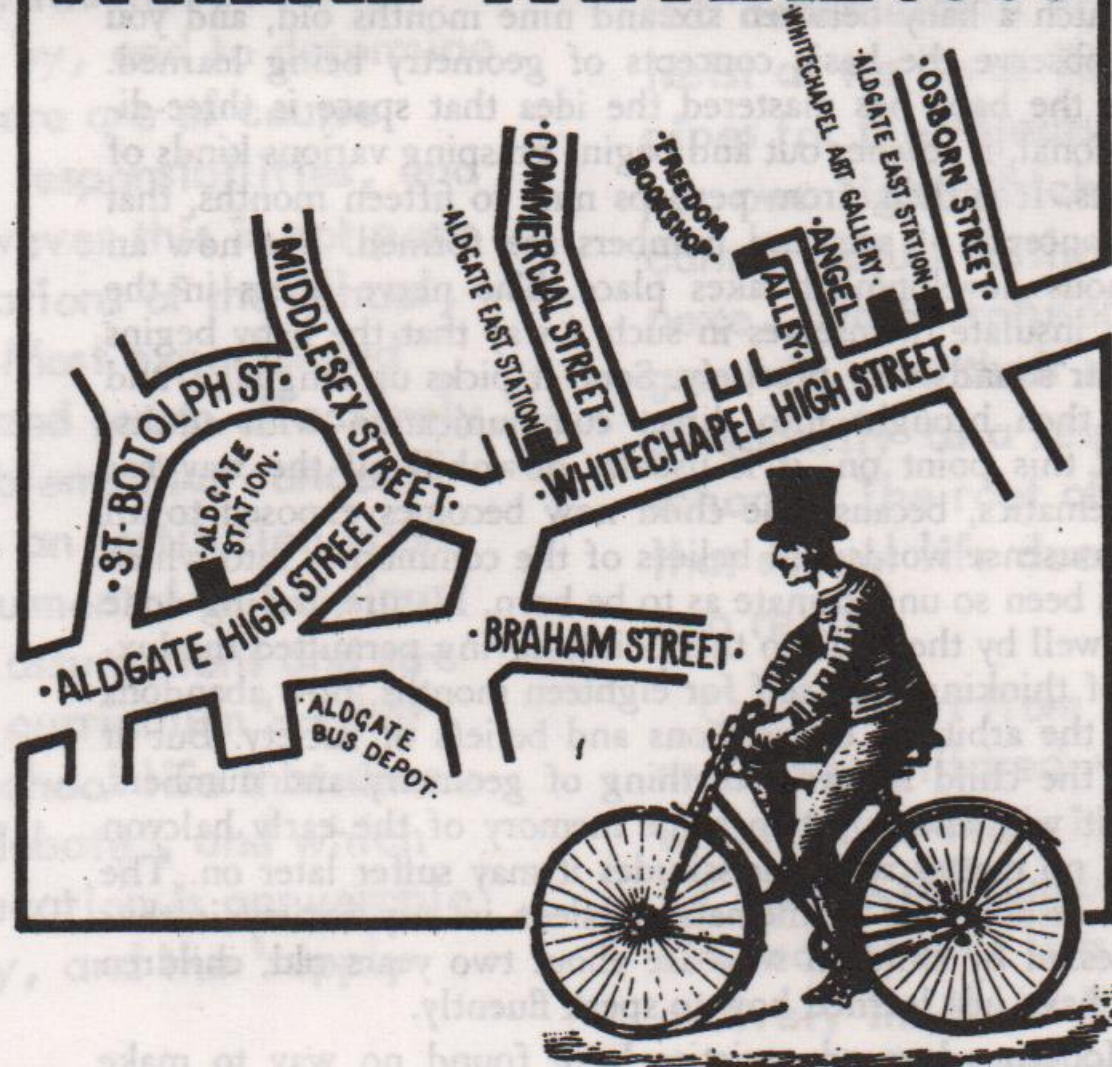
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"Now, this, son, is what we in the trade call a stiff!"



"We believe you can help us in our inquiries."

beautiful it ain't (cont)

Annual Exhibition. It is pretty, it is jolly and I loved every minute of it even the mad minute dash for the limited edition of free wine. Peter Blake and the rest are such gentle people that it is impossible to attack them but honour demands. It is the same chocolate box sweet and pretty rubbish that has haunted the town for a decade. Hockney long ago lost his way except to the bank and all the same tired old gimmicks are there. The all white and the all black painting, Flanagan and his coil of rope on the gallery floor, Burgin's roomful of the same poster bang bang bang. Yea even on the roof the Theatre of Mistakes doing "A Waterfall" wherein 14 people

in tennis whites, sprawled among scaffolding, pour a glass of water up and down while Anthony at the base intones. It was old hat in 1920 and is ancient hat now. And I sat and squabbled with Fife Robertson as he drank of the wine and attacked the labouring class and praised the middle classes for he is a radical TV man who knows his place within his society. For comrades they are history's puppets and from the V & A to the Hayward it is naught but pretty toys. From Faberge's golden playthings to the Hayward. Toys toys toys but beautiful it ain't.

ARTHUR MOYSE

A tired Ian too shocked by today's atrocities and lies has sought refuge in the past... but... "It is easy for an unscrupulous state, bent upon aggrandizing itself at the expense of a rude people to find a plausible ground of quarrel, which shall leave it free to seek such satisfaction as may best suit its purposes" (Vol 301 v. 715 India to Bombay 28/7/1856). "It might be presumed that the native inhabitants of any land have an incontestable right to their own soil: a plain and sacred right however, which seems not to have been understood. Europeans have entered their borders uninvited and, when there, have not only acted as if they were undoubted lords of the soil, but have punished the natives as aggressors if they have advanced a disposition to live in their own country. If they have been found upon their property, they are driven back into the interior as if they were dogs and kangaroos." "Cotton