

NEW READERS START HERE.....

W H A T
i s
a n a r c h y ?

For me, very briefly, it is this:-

ANARCHY is society organised without power, without structure, without coercion of any kind; no money, no property, or representation, law, work, police, bureaucracy, capitalism, the chaos of ugliness and without all those other things that you dislike too - without anarchists even!

ANARCHY is society decentralised to the ultimate degree - organised through love, solidarity, involvement, mutual aid, concern, and play; in a chaos of beauty and order...by YOU, directly, not indirectly, "doing it yourself" in any way you want - nobody else can do it for you! So take the law into your own hands, and run your own lives in your own community.

Well - what do you think about it?

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THE PECKHAM RYOTER

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Your Anarchist Broadsheet

"It does not matter who you vote for, the government
always gets in." (Trad.)

The People lose again

SO the G.L.C. nose bouncing is over for another period of years. The people having had their whisper (one can hardly call it a "say") suffer life again in the apathy to which they have been made accustomed; the dead beats of County Hall can likewise forget all the promises, and dig up again the old bromides and platitudes, shake off the dust they have accumulated since before the election campaign started, and off we go, back to "business as usual".

The difference between the parties is now so small that local government without the party system is now being bandied about by all and sundry as the only way to save our mindless-wonder party hacks the embarrassment of not being able to tell their Tweedledum from their Tweedledee. They should worry - many of us have not been able to tell the difference between the various shades of political grey for years! Is this an over-cynical view? "It is easy to knock politicians" you say - yes, too easy. It is easy because men out for power are not over concerned with those who get in their way, unless it is to use them, and discard them when they cease to be useful. Power for the few at the expense of the many, and it matters not who attains power from royal blue through to flaming red and back again. They promise us heaven and give us hell, they well out on all professed idealism quite happily for the sake of the necessities of "practical politics". The alibis at the disposal of authorities are so well known as to be cliches - yet still we do little about it.

True, our councillors, M.P.s and everyone else involved in the

administration of government are possibly the biggest victims of their system, but at least they believe in the monster to which they play Frankenstein. We may not believe in it as forcefully, but through our apathy, disinterest and passive sheepish obedience, we are all just as guilty. They believe in their own destruction and insist on dragging us down with them, and off we gaily go like a load of leaping lemmings. We are normally only too happy to oblige. We never walk taller than when we crawl on our bellies.

In the twenty-nine G.L.C. election results on April 10th, the poll in all of them was less than 50%. Does this really signify anything? Yes - it means firstly that the candidates had not sufficient personality in them to attract much by way of a response - it means purely on a statistical level that the whole election has not been conducted with the consent of even a straight majority of the people in whose name it is ostensibly being held.

I regard the lowness of the poll, of course, as being a good thing; it shows at least a degree of apathy that - in the face of all the mass media, political pressures and other forms of cajoling, bullying and browbeating to get the people to the polling stations like so many sheep - is no real vice. Although I concede that this may well mean apathy towards revolution too, though we have of course not had the facilities to communicate ideas to the extent that the forces of law and chaos have.

It means possibly a genuine dissatisfaction with the status quo - though people in the main have yet to look in great numbers

to anarchy as an alternative. Perhaps they should start looking now. [See "New Readers Start Here" feature, back page.]

Southwark was seventh out of all the G.L.C. boroughs in the new league table calculated on the basis of lowness of poll, and even then the poll here - like the poll of four other boroughs with a lower percentage, was UP on last time, and now stands at a magnificent 28.6% (27.6%) - not bad, really.

In other words, because just over one in four people voted, the other three of us are saddled with their G.L.C., which I for one did not want at all - and this is a democracy!

It would be interesting to discover just how many of the other abstainers similarly rejected as a deliberate act, and not merely "because they couldn't be bothered". But this we will probably never be able to know.

What would I put in the place of a G.L.C.? Nothing at all! Government at all levels is evil - like cancer - and, like cancer, there is at present no cure, one must merely destroy it and hope for the best. People are not that bad really, neither Mahatmas nor Krays, until they get their hands on a bit of power. So destroy power.

Dragging it out of a context that I do not know anyway, and which probably destroys all its revolutionary significance, I would go along with Disraeli, at least for the ten seconds it took him to say: We put too much faith in systems, and too little in men.

Jim Huggon

Stop Press 23/4/70.

Write served on 40 of Kingsdale Staff, by parents of SAU militants, claiming their letter to Short, 1. below.

Postscript to the Kingsdale Comprehensive Affair

[The following article was written by one of the parents of a boy suspended from Kingsdale Comprehensive School, Dulwich, for taking part in the Schools Action Union campaign, part of which is outlined below.]

Several ironies bubble up out of the Kingsdale Five affair - one, Short's decision not to intervene because he did not feel that the Governors had acted unreasonably. This must have resulted in unrestrained mirth within the Tory majority of the governors and some anger on the part of the Labour minority, especially the three who dissasociated themselves from the harsh Tory ultimatum to the youngsters and walked out in protest. The second irony is that 70 teachers wrote to Short asking him to REJECT our appeal, supporting the Head's disciplinary action and insulting both the children and their parents. The SAU supported the first militant action the teachers took in the recent salaries campaign, on November 20th, 1969, in a rally and march from the Albert Hall to Hyde Park, and Jerry was with them. I am wondering how many of the 70, who are now enjoying their miserable pay rise, have had second thoughts about their hasty, creepy, nasty McCarthyite letter. To their credit, a minority of ten repudiated the damaging statements in a letter of their own to Short.

The SAU is working for Democracy in Schools, via truly representative and effective schools councils, and it cannot be expected that teachers who are themselves the products of the authoritarian system can have the imagination or the guts to applaud the efforts of inspired teenagers.

The third irony is that the SAU calls for full comprehensivisation in order to provide equal opportunity for all children, regardless of their

advantages or disadvantages; and a so-called Labour minister, who seems to have created a precedent by settling the teachers' strike quickly and not according to procedure, allows five young advocates of socialist education policy to be sacrificed. The youngsters are now at other schools and I hope that they can re-adjust quickly. A beautiful friendship between Steve Morgan and Jerry (my son) was broken because Steve was asked to leave a Jewish home for having disobeyed the Kingsdale head (all bureaucrats stick together) and so he went to live with his mother in North London. The Principal's wife, who also occupies some position in the home, had warned Steve, and another boy, about the SAU and he did drop away. He went along on December 19th* to observe the march, losing one hour of school, along with another boy from the home who had been circulating a petition on behalf of the suspended five, and when he was caught for his absence on that fateful afternoon he accepted the head's punishment, and the petition disappeared along with several others. The whole affair is sickening particularly because no special consideration was given to those boys in care either by the headmaster or the home. Sam Silkin, the dissenting governor, referred to the harsh ultimatum of the Tories as "ill-advised, authoritarian and lacking in humanity and understanding" - to which all the parents involved responded with an appreciative "amen".

About the SAU in general, I feel that unless the atmosphere is created for a great release of energy based upon human and priritual values, our technological society will destroy mankind. The wiser youngsters in the SAU demanding freedom of expression, or rather of education, are rebelling against the factory system of instruction aimed at providing complacent consumers of endless manufactured products, much of which are harmful to life, to limb and to sanity.

Some of the youngsters are not so far-sighted and just want an end to corporal punishment and

CONTACT COLUMN

READ

- (1) The Mask of Anarchy by Percy Bysshe Shelley. A Kropotkin's Lighthouse publication price 1/- + post from Kropotkin's Lighthouse Publications, c/o Jim Huggon, 247 Peckham Rye, S.E.15.
- (2) "Peace News", radical pacifist weekly, 1/- + post from 5 Caledonian Road, N.1.
- (3) "Freedom", anarchist weekly, 9d + post
"Anarchy", anarchist monthly, 3/- post free
Both from Freedom Press, 84B Whitechapel High St., E.1.

VISIT Freedom Bookshop - same address - near Aldgate East tube station - for a wide range of new and secondhand books on anarchism and kindred topics. (Tel. 247 9249. Open Tues.-Friday 3 - 7 p.m. Sats. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

READ

- (4) "Minus One", individualist anarchist review, 1/- + post from S. E. Parker, 2 Orsett Terrace, W. 2.
- (5) "The Deptford Comment" - the little paper with the big punch! 3d + post from "The Albany", Creek Road, Deptford S.E.8 (Tel. 692 2347)

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- (6) Housmans Bookshop for books and pamphlets on non-violence and many other topics. 5 Caledonian Road, Kings X, Cross, N.1. 9.30 a.m. - 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday inclusive.

all forms of repression and in this, are on the right track to freedom.

Roz Balcombe.

*This was the date of the last-day of term strike/demonstration by the SAU which resulted in the Kingsdale suspensions (Editor).