

ANARCHY 44

TWO SHILLINGS

THIRTY CENTS



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From the step of a bus

ARTHUR MOYSE

THERE ARE CERTAIN AREAS OF PUBLIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY that every man considers himself qualified not only to comment, advise or pontificate about, but to lay down dogmatically immutable laws, state plans of action and announce future policies that if followed would (he will assure the saloon bar regulars) produce profit for all and victory for some vague and ill defined target. Men who gaze into the internal workings of an open pocket watch with the fascinated horror of an hypnotised rabbit will, with the aid of a pencil and a captive audience, resite atomic plants, lay out huge industrial townships, transfer tens of thousands of their unfortunate fellow countrymen half way around the world for the greater good of industrial productivity and devise transport hells that not only would span the world even to the utmost limits of the bar room counter, but would populate deserts and jungles though at the same time turning the habitable parts of this earth over to the beasts and the birds. There are such men who would hesitate to switch on a television set without the supervision of some qualified woman, yet left to themselves would out-Napoleon Napoleon by sending armies flat footing across Europe, fleets of planes into other peoples broad blue yonders, and navies across oceans, up rivers and down canals to win undeclared wars for undeclared objects. Yet such is the fundamental simplicity of most of our human problems that in most part they are correct in their assumptions. For unlike the experts they approach these problems not from the experts' wet-eyed view-point but from that of the social user and sufferer. Time and time again the Unit One of the human race has been sacrificed without apology for a drawing board mistake; and millions of men, women and children have lived out their short and miserable lives to enable an industrialist or a politician to prove a thesis or show the shareholders a profit and when the second generation experts have arisen to lay their dry dead hands on new "facts", or with the wisdom of hindsight burning bright within the rims of their rimless spectacles, proven that all previous theories were the intellectual dross of their dear old dad, then they in their turn will expound heresy. Unless they accept the simple and fundamental truth that individual man must not be sacrificed for a mythical future for posterity and that the key and the test of all human activities is the well being of each and every individual. It is at this point that the saloon bar dreamer and the expert make common cause and reach a common failure. For whatever plans they conceive, whether drawn in beer or

typed in triplicate, they are geared to their own particular social grouping and can only be put into operation at the expense of less fortunate people. But of all fields of social activity none occupy the user more than that of mass human transport. Here is the one social function to which they are forced by circumstance of employment or pleasure to be the daily victim. Each day in every town and city they stand in their queues waiting and waiting for the bus that never seems to come. They will crowd, in conditions that rightly we would not allow animals to suffer, into the Underground systems of the major cities of the world and they will vent their hate and anger on the lone and solitary bus conductor in the prison/warder relationship that this mobile Kafka circus creates. For here is the one person who can be forced by economic imprisonment to stand and accept their whines, their insolence, their bitter contempt, their intelligent observations or their stark babbling lunacies. Yet of all men the bus conductor is the least able to help them for like them he is the victim of a society that holds that profit and not social service must be the key-stone of every communal endeavour, for it is a system that panders to the bully among the passengers and the whining gutless sycophant among the employed staff. And men will stand in rain-swept queues and prove to their damp and indifferent neighbours that if such and such a plan were followed and put into immediate operation they would have a transport service that would carry them with ease and swiftness to their destinations. And they will huddle in the swaying bus searching for the small silver of their fare worrying and wondering if they will reach their place of employment on time and what excuse they can offer for their lateness.

And the object of their contained hatred forces his way through the bus as irritated as the traveller and hating the collective for its slowness and its insolence and the stupidity and the arrogance of the small but vocal minority. As the passenger is the prisoner of those who plan our society for their own minority well-being, so the conductor in his turn is the victim of this same abstract authority. Behind him stand an array of uniformed and plain-clothed officials that demand that he shall be held responsible for every single uncollected fare and even for the traveller who would, by accident or design, ride a hundred yards passed his paid journey. For London Transport obey the oldest of bad employers' weapons: to govern by fear and threats. Let a child of three be found on a crowded bus without a ticket and the bus conductor will be reported for an official interview with the Chief Depot Inspector. Let any person, by accident or design, travel beyond his paid journey and the conductor will be held responsible and asked to explain why he allowed such an incident to happen on "his bus". That it is literally impossible for any man to know what ticket each person on a crowded bus is holding or where each person has booked to should be self-evident and a simple test could prove it. A crowded bus holds sixty one people, ignoring the fact that people are continually boarding and alighting, and the cold and clinical test is to have sixty-one people standing in a line. Let an official walk along that line and then let each individual name a fare of his own choosing. Then let that same official again walk

along that line and correctly rename each and every one of the sixty-one named fares. It is, of course, a mentally impossible feat and London Transport, as ever other employer knows, is aware that this fact is self evident, but they work on the ancient and historically tested thesis that fear is the easiest weapon to control those you hire and that targets of work should always be pitched beyond the workman's capabilities. Its outcome is that a man works like a rat in a Pavlov trap without any apparent supervision yet always with the knowledge that at any moment a uniformed official will check the bus or that at any time of the day and night he is under the unknown supervision of plain clothed officials travelling on these self same buses as fare paying passengers. It could be held that this is but the trivia of any discontented staff, were it not that within our present society a whole organization is built upon men and women doing what is a completely time-wasting function. For it is on the basis of what the conductor collects in fares that our transport service is planned or cut.

Within the last few years there has been a large influx of coloured and casual labour and it is thanks to them that much of the childish discipline of London Transport has had to be abandoned.

The pre-war bus crews were men who loved the lash. Highly paid, and cocks within their own working class areas, they took a perverse pride in their subservience. They were the men who loved to stand to attention, wear their gleaming white coats on the correct day of the year and who knew their well-paid place within their semi-military organization. But undisciplined labour from overseas has made a fortunate havoc of many stupid rules. The bare headed men and women, the coloured scarves, open necked shirts, brown shoes, the occasional punching of a passenger, skirts of their own choosing instead of the official uniform-wear, are small comforts that have been won against the employer and without any assistance from the official union by people who are indifferent to the prized humility of the old guard busmen. For the constant breaking of drear little rules have forced the employer to shrug off with an ill grace their impossible enforcement. That there is a lesson there for the union officials to learn is but wasted effort, for though the casually employed coloured workmen and women have done more to lighten the disciplinary burden within the last five years than the old time bus-men and the official union have achieved within the last fifty years, it would be idle to suggest that this debt is acknowledged. The old guard is still there, though in smaller numbers every year, forever seeking an official ear to whine into about the good old days when men knew their place, and when one had to collect fares looking like a busman. And they will tell old nostalgic tales of how, so many years ago, Old Piss-the-Bed was sent home for not wearing a white shirt or of how they beat a report by the quoting of an obscure regulation and how the governor winked at them as they marched smartly out of the office.

And they gaze with open contempt at their coloured workers and wonder in loud voices when all this riff-raff will be kicked off the job, and the job get back to normal, and the official leaning through the

cubby hole will nod his head in sage agreement and talk of the need for discipline. The London Transport system is always referred to as public transport and by the continual use of that simple title people have come to accept it as a public service and to judge its failings accordingly. This is one of those abysmal jokes that even old Unit One standing on a windswept, rainswept street waiting for a non-running bus cannot drain out of his mental background. Yet the London buses are there, as is every other business big or small, for no other purpose than to sell to those who can afford to pay, and when there is no profit to be made they do the same as every other business clique does: they close shop. Like the small shopkeeper they close down their business when or where trade is slack and like the multiple stores they close branches or routes that are no longer considered profitable. Old Unit One standing at his suburban and useless bus-stop will grip his membership card of his local Conservative Ass, and tell the world, in a low and respectable rage, that the London Transport Executive have no consideration for the general public and Unit One is so right. Yet in a society that accepts the profit motive as its only dynamic and cares for its old and sick under duress, busless Unit One never asks himself the obvious question of why anyone in the social set-up which he approves for others, should waste time and energy running a bus for his paltry fare.

The small child without the price of a bus fare will have to walk and the old men and women will drag themselves on their aching legs for the luxury of public transport is not for them, no matter how many buses clog the road. For without a handful of copper coins the phrase public transport is a dismal mockery. It is indeed a mockery to label any industry that operates on a profit basis a public service. One can have little sympathy with the broad mass of the lower-middle-class who on one single day of every fifth year pledge their allegiance to the principles of personal profit, cut-throat competition for others, and the abrogation of any social service that does not benefit them directly, then spend the intervening four years and three-hundred-and-sixty-four days demanding that their means of transport should operate in their particular suburb as a publicly-subsidised social service along with their public lavatory, library, church and sewerage system.

One can have little sympathy with old Unit One but no matter how much one may dislike him and all he stands for with his personal greed and anti-social attitudes, except where his own personal comforts are involved, one cannot plan any social enterprise on a basis of hate or contempt. For no matter how much others may abuse or deride what one has attempted or achieved one must still plan for better social services not as a single and reachable goal but as links in a chain that alters with the new social conditions that each new social change will create. It was a supreme tragedy that the Labour government of 1945 failed to measure up to the task and the opportunity that history thrust upon them. It was not because they were the incompetents of the tory press, or the traitors of the communist press, that they failed; but that the whole of their background and training blinded them to their destiny

and these nice middle-class Fabian intellectuals threw away a century of working class idealism in a worthless effort to prove that they could run a State-capitalist society as profitably as the individual industrialists whose broken and bankrupt industries they took over.

Yet already they held in their hands an industry that could have been the show piece of public ownership and public service and this was the London Transport system. This system could have been the cornerstone for the whole of public ownership as envisaged by the John-the-Baptists of the militant working class for the Labour Party could have pointed to its London transport system and said "here is the blue print for a new way of living". With a Machiavellian use of capital in their first year of office they could have abolished the fares system and instituted a realistic scheme of workers control and management that others would have accepted as the fount of all other social endeavours.

Here was an industry free of the dead hand of middle-class control for all control was already in the hands of men with working class backgrounds, and though there is no virtue in this fact it meant that as every official was a minor career man already broken to the acceptance of working without challenging those who formulated policy, the industry would not have had to fight the blackmail that the medical politicoes did not hesitate to use in their battle against Bevan. A transport system operating for need not profit with only the cost of wage/maintenance to find.

Without its hoards of parasitic officials, as free to use or reject as the water in a public fountain. Operated by the men themselves and answerable to each local council. Owned and controlled by the community it would be regarded not as the harlot among our pseudo social services but an accepted and indispensable part of our social fabric.

In the trucks

LEILA BERG

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW MANY HUNDREDS are packed into the trucks. Heads down in self-defence, looking for footholds, partly anxiously-resisting and partly eager to find a safe place, they are pushed, rammed inside. And once in, their heads come up again, straining for air. The air is foetid. Shoulder to shoulder or face to face they breathe each other's breath. They are crammed so tight, their weight is not on their feet but on each other. They sway in one mass, as the truck sways, then break into jostling desperate atoms, fighting for their balance, as the truck jolts. They are completely powerless, but they cannot fall—unless the

doors are opened. Is there no law against this?

Men move down beside the trucks, cramming them in, pushing against their rumps so that they can close the doors on them. Sometimes the doors will not close on the solid bodies, and then the men run and swear and shout and push harder until they force the mute accepting bodies half an inch further inside, and the doors meet and the truck moves off.

Heads nuzzle each other, cheek touches cheek, body presses on body, chin rests on another's shoulder, in an appalling mockery of tenderness. At first they try desperately to get away from each other, to stand alone, to breathe their own air. But it is impossible, and soon their eyes close and they see nothing. Do they then secretly regain dignity, or only the relief of blankness?

Such tired eyes. How weary they are, how utterly weary. I look through at the packed, sweating mass, and of every ten heads I see, in seven the eyes are closed. Yet the journey is only just beginning. Whenever the truck grinds to a halt, the eyes open, blink once or twice, and peer round, then close once again in an impassive resignation. Those near the door fall as the door is opened, and, regaining balance, either stand there bewildered and buffeted and sometimes knocked headlong again by those who fall after them and those who at once fight their way through to the air, or else, caught in a new moving mass, are themselves pushed inexorably along to another path, another truck. Is there no law against it, no humane Act of Parliament, no individual moved enough, angry enough, to shout aloud as poets and writers once shouted?

What is so extraordinary is their passivity. They were proud creatures once. One hears—at chosen times—of their independence, their spiritedness, their indomitability. Surely they have strength, they have intelligence. Poems have been written about them. Songs have exalted them. Artists were once stirred by their grandeur.

Occasionally one turns momentarily on another and snarls a little with a sudden flare of maleness, or another tosses her head and sighs in infinitesimal protest. But nothing happens. The herd clamps itself together again, thigh against thigh.

And eventually they stumble out of the trucks, blinking, grateful enough that now they can breathe more easily, and they move their heavy heads with the half-closed eyes slowly from side to side, surprised to find movement will come at will, and they move up the London Tube train platform.

The whippet plan

JEREMY HUNT

SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE, if Buchanan's ideas are ever carried out, our urban roads may run on three levels. Long before that, we can expect an attempt to control the increase in big city motor traffic by additional taxation. But will any government be brave enough to restrict the electorally important private car owner from using his vehicle in the centre of London and other cities, yet not compensate him with a much improved public transport service? And this, because of the huge cost of building underground railways, means buses.

The buses have been losing passengers to private cars, scooters and even bicycles for about ten years, and the question is can this self-propelled part of the population ever again be persuaded to rely on public transport?

It will be difficult to convince the motorist that public transport can be as quick and convenient as his private car. How can a transport concern provide a service elastic enough to cope with both the shopper and the rush hour worker? Even if the growth of traffic is checked artificially it is unlikely that the overall volume will be diminished.

Let us take London as our example because the problem is really big. London Transport want to introduce their "Standee" buses but, though they may reduce operating costs, will they provide a much better service to the public and help to make London a more agreeable town to live, work and enjoy ourselves in?

Towns are places for people to live in and as well as providing a commuter service the transport system should enable us to move about conveniently from point to point within the central area, otherwise town life will wither and die.

We want mobility within the central area so let us start by getting rid of the ponderous big red bus. In place of this the "Standee", or why not the "Whippet" one-man bus with perimeter seating for about 20 people and with standing room down the centre for another 20 rush hour passengers. These single-decker buses would have automatic doors, one for "on" and one for "off" and fares on the single price carnet system (by which tickets are bought in advance like books of stamps). None of this is new but it would help increase the momentum of surface transport.

Having changed the buses let us also change the route pattern. Within the central area we need many more and much shorter routes. The "Whippet" buses would operate, perhaps only two or three at a time, on short shuttle routes, not running to timetable but controlled by supervisors. The shortened backwards-and-forwards routes would cut out gaps in the service. They could, with the smaller buses, run on many streets not now used thereby covering some of the transport deserts of London, such as Bloomsbury and Mayfair. On the shortened routes

the staff would become known to their passengers, thus encouraging an efficient and friendly service.

What would this innovation mean in practical terms of journeys in central London? A typical shuttle route would be between St Pauls and Trafalgar Square, via Fleet Street and the Strand. The service would be continuous and there would be no delay at the terminal points. Coming from the Strand the bus would drive round Trafalgar Square and be off again down the Strand towards St Pauls. Changes of driver need take only a minute. Another route would be between Marble Arch and St Giles's Circus at the foot of Tottenham Court Road. This would cut out the present accumulation of many different bus routes running along Oxford Street. The shuttle service along Oxford Street would be fed by other routes meeting this main artery at right angles.

How would this new system affect the commuter or shopper coming to central London from the outer suburbs? We must assume some restriction on private cars coming into London during the rush hour periods and this would make it possible to provide a better express bus service using double deckers, probably with fewer stopping points than Green Line buses, and not trundling all the way across central London but turning at key connection points such as Aldwych (from south London) or Marble Arch (from the north west). These express services, costed on their own, would probably be unprofitable because peak periods of commuter traffic are one-way, but they could be subsidized by the shuttle routes within the central area which should be highly profitable.

No bus route (as happens at present) would start in the suburbs, cross Central London and disappear outwards again. Passengers would undoubtedly have to use their feet when making connections between shuttle routes, but this hardship could be made less cruel in a damp climate by arcading the streets at some terminals and even heating the pavements.

At busy pedestrian centres, strips of moving pavement similar to flattened out escalators should be considered.

These suggested changes are aimed at making the town transport system more flexible without involving us in crippling cost while we wait for our Buchanan triple layer roads. Travelling in towns might even become enjoyable as well.

Each weekday, about 1,250,000 people travel to the City and West End. Of this total, 220,000 travel in 5,200 bus loads, and about 100,000 in 70,000 private cars. The remainder travel by tube or train.

The buses during duty occupy an area of approximately 1,250,000 square feet and the cars, while travelling and at rest, somewhere in the region of 10,000,000 square feet of public space. This is a very conservative estimate indeed, as parking alone could account for this. We may fairly assume that the space occupied by trade vehicles is of a similar order. As will be seen, each car occupant utilises about 100 square feet of space throughout the entire day, whereas the bus passenger occupies under 6 square feet and that only during the time he is travelling.

—MARTIN HUTCHINSON
in *The Listener*

Irrelevancies of Beeching

WILLIAM SPRUCE

ON THE VERY FIRST DAY OF FLAMING JUNE this year, (remember it?), a daily journal which shall be nameless, but which boasts of holding up a mirror to life on a mass circulation basis, ("Tuckshop Annie may be a teacher"—"The army flies Barbara to love"), used up the whole of its precious middle pages, (except two three quarter columns advertising one of its women's weeklies, and three squares of a daily strip), in adulation of Dr. Beeching and the success of his Plan. "His greatest achievement—halting the slide into the red"—"A twin track look at the British Railways"—(or at a one track mind?).

This perturbative ballyhoo on Beeching impels one to seek for the reason behind it all, (apart from that of mass circulation). Has Dr. Beeching decided to use admas methods in appealing to the masses? ("I would like people to know that I didn't set out to plan the future of British Railways in isolation from other forms of transport"). Can it be possible that the Institute of Directors, Aims of Industry, and the Road Haulage people, have combined to "persuade" this daily journal that "profitability" is the one key word to the future? (People who interfere with that sacred cow do *not* matter—the customer is *not* always right). But this mirror of life needed no persuading. It acclaimed the Beeching Plan, at its inception, as a "Great Plan". It published a map with the main lines inked in heavily and the feed lines washed out. Hurrah. Profitability is the watchword. Ignore the added congestion on the roads. Dr. Beeching has told us that integrated road and rail traffic is a "governmental responsibility". Now we can use our cars to get to the main line stations in time to catch the trains which will get us, in comfort and at speed, to our main line destinations on time. (Or may we, once in our cars, decide to travel all the way, door to door?) On this map, Skegness was out, Bournemouth was in. With Dr. Beeching's flair for the blue pencil, shall we now be seeing unused Skegness posters overprinted, like grocers' window stickers, "*Bournemouth* is so BRACING"?

And what is this Beeching Plan? It is the result of a doctor of philosophy's acceptance of the task of carrying out the Government's proposal that the Railways should be "*made to pay*", on their own. This proposition ignored the fact that the railways had already been sacrificed to a "free for all" ideology, by throwing their road haulage source of income to the wolves, who, insisting on their own "profitability", repudiate their financial responsibility for tearing up the public roads, and incommoding other traffic. Was the good doctor not aware that the railways, even before nationalisation, had to be subsidised? Was he not aware that holders of converted railway shares are

now grateful for being in receipt of a steady income? Was he not aware that the roads, and road and rail traffic, are supremely interdependent? But no, he shrugs off any responsibility for the roads, and decides to increase their burden of traffic by "pruning" the railways, perhaps relying on those very debatable statistics regarding the probable increase in road users. As a doctor of philosophy he is presumably trained in the humanities, so he brings out his surgeon's scalpel and cuts out what he calls the "dead wood". Is he not aware that he is pruning the roots that feed the tree? And root pruning is a delicate operation, not one for mass loppings which deny an already crippled tree its rightful sustenance. He lances here, he lances there, and the communities of Lancing and other places are killed. He should be grateful for the prunings so far resisted. For instance, the plan to cut out the Southport line—until someone discovered it would require another four hundred buses or so to cope with the traffic transferred to the roads. Alternative transport? Dr. Beeching must know this is a myth when he evades responsibility for roads originally designed for horse traffic.

He claims that he has halted the slide into the red. How has he measured this? By using an elastic tape measure marked off in the financial symbols of £. s. d.—that continually fluctuating measure used by accountants to determine profitability, with no regard for economic or social costs? The saving or earning of pounds, shillings, and pence, does not mean a thing without its being translated into current economic and social values. These prunings may very well bring temporary profitability, but it will be at the expense of all the other interdependent concerns they have damaged, and the railway tree will eventually grow lopsided and denied its full usefulness in harmony with its surroundings.

In these "twin track" pages of whitewash, there is also the boast that, "five hundred expresses a week now do their journeys at an average of 60 m.p.h.". Has not Dr. Beeching heard of a train called the Silver Jubilee which, thirty years ago, did the run from Newcastle-on-Tyne to London, non-stop, travelling at 100 m.p.h. for long stretches? Business men in those days went to Town in a morning, conducted their business, and returned in the evening. Today, the expense account executive goes to the airport, (main line station, or all the way?), in his Bentley, stays two nights in London entertaining his "business associates", (?), and charges the cost of the whole trip to the taxpayer.

Profitability? In the economic and social sense, (what doth it profit a man?), YES, by all means, YES. In its accounting sense, (indiscriminate financial gain?), NO, definitely, NO.

London buses are slower today than they were in 1914, Mr R. J. Mellish (Lab. Bermondsey) told the Minister of Transport, adding that roads in Central London were so congested that it was virtually impossible to run a scheduled service at all.

Mr Marples had informed MPs that between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekdays, 1,434 buses per hour run through the Central London area, compared with 2,176 buses and tramcars in 1950 and 2,458 in 1938.

THE GUARDIAN 16/5/1964

Too many cars

TOM JONES

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSPORT are an epitome of collectivism and individualism. The user of the former subordinates his personal timetable and itinerary to that of the vehicle he is using. The user of the latter has full freedom of choice, limited however by the fact that millions of others are exercising their similar freedom. The motor car has decentralised transport. As Lewis Mumford put it years ago, when he wrote *The Culture of Cities*: "Instead of the train, which increases in economy up to a point with the number of cars attached, we have . . . a more flexibly used individual unit, which can start or stop, take the highroad or the branch road, at its own convenience, without waiting for other cars. And instead of the railway line, which tended to centralise transportation along the main arteries . . . the motor car has brought into existence the new highway network. Thus the motor car can penetrate the hinterland in a more effective and economic fashion than the railroad could: for economy in railroading depends upon loading the tracks to maximum capacity and confining transportation, as much as possible to the main routes. Moreover, the motor car can climb steep grades and penetrate hilly country with a freedom unknown to the railroad . . ."

But twenty years later, Mumford stresses a different aspect of the autonomy of the driver: "Consider the bright idea engineers are already seriously playing with: the notion of taking the control of the private motor car out of the hands of the driver, so that he will become a mere passenger in a remote controlled vehicle . . . look at the human consequences. The driving of a car has been one of the last refuges of personal responsibility, of the do-it-yourself principle, in our machine-oriented economy. At the wheel of his car the most down-trodden conformist still has a slight sense of release; he may capriciously choose his destination, alter his speed, explore a side road, or loiter in a woody glen for a picnic lunch. One by one, in the interests of safety or maximum speed, these freedoms are being taken away. The final triumph of automation would do away with all the subsidiary purposes of travel by private vehicle; nothing would change, neither the man nor the occupation nor the scenery. Obviously the mechanical results have already been more efficiently achieved in a railroad train, while the same boredom could have been arrived at more cheaply by the simple non-technical device of staying at home."

We do not, however, have to imagine radar-controlled electronic "autoways" to reach this conclusion. The standardised landscape of the super-road, made necessary by the volume of traffic, takes the point

away from this kind of travel for pleasure. What is the point of going anywhere when the place you leave, your destination, and everywhere *en route* are exactly the same?

The obvious advantage of the motor car to the individual user is that it can provide a door-to-door service. But this advantage is diminished considerably in town journeys by the ever-present problem of where on earth to park the car anywhere near the appropriate door.

The obvious disadvantages of the motor car are the appallingly high casualty rate associated with it—to which we are so accustomed that we take it for granted; the congestion, confusion and delay that it brings to travel; and the way in which piecemeal attempts to accommodate it in cities that grew in the days when the rich travelled in horse-drawn vehicles and the poor stayed put, are not only destroying the pleasure of being in a town, but are also failing, at a fabulous cost, to cope with the problem.

Economically the private motor car is an aberration. As Herbert Manzoni once put it, "The present-day motor car has developed from the horse-drawn carriage; there is every evidence of this development in its form and size and it is probably the most wasteful and uneconomic contrivance which has yet appeared among our personal possessions. The average passenger load of motor cars in our streets is certainly less than two persons and in terms of transportable load some 400 cubic feet of vehicle weighing over 1 ton is used to convey 4 cubic feet of humanity weighing about 2 cwt., the ratios being about 10 to 1 in weight and 100 to 1 in bulk. The economic implication of this situation is ridiculous and I cannot believe it to be permanent."

He is right of course but his sober rationality is not likely to make much of a dent in our fellow-citizens, whose addiction to the private motor car is probably not entirely rational. The motor car is still a newcomer in the life of mankind and we have yet to work our way through its impact and come out (if we survive) on the other side. On the basis of past trends and of American experience it is estimated that in Great Britain, this tight little island, there are likely to be 18 million vehicles including 12 million cars by 1970, and 27 million including 19 million cars by 1980, and perhaps 40 million including 30 million cars by 2010. Since there were last year about 10½ million vehicles, these estimates imply a doubling of the numbers in 10 years and nearly a trebling within twenty years. Professor Buchanan emphasises that nearly half the total increase is expected within the first ten years.

How can we, in a country of this size, possibly cope with these staggering increases, and with the chaos and slaughter which we are bound to associate with them?

The Minister of Transport, Ernest Marples, is a gimmicky, inconsistent character who during his term of office—which presumably ends this month—was responsible for commissioning both the Beeching and the Buchanan reports. But the two documents belong to different centuries in their approach, and exemplify the difference between financial and social accountancy. Dr. Beeching, the £25,000 a year former ICI director, was briefed to make the railways pay, and, on the basis of figures which some people have found questionable, and of railway

operating methods of fifty years ago, has taken each line in isolation on a crude profit and loss test. (Even in the nineteenth century Parliament insisted that the railway companies should take the rough with the smooth and use the lucrative routes to subsidise the ones which would not pay on their own.) The Buchanan Report is a document of an entirely different kind: it is a study aimed at discovering the principles which will enable us to defend civilised urban values from the effect of traffic. When Marples took office he asked who knew most about the impact of the motor vehicle on society. "Get him! Wherever he is, abroad or at home!" He was told that just round the corner, in the Ministry of Housing, was an architect and town-planner who had written the best book on the subject. The man was Colin Buchanan and the book was *Mixed Blessing: the Motor in Britain*, published in 1958. (This book, brought out by a technical publisher, did not make much impact when it appeared. Far and away the longest discussion it evoked was in the anarchist press: FREEDOM 22 and 29 March, 5, 12, 19 and 26 April 1958).

Buchanan gathered around him a small team of about seven people, and, so he tells us, "we studiously avoided anything resembling committee procedure. We created instead a studio or drawing-office atmosphere in which, from morning to night for nearly two years, traffic in towns was the subject of discussion and not infrequently of heated argument." The report they produced, *Traffic in Towns*. (HMSO £2.10.0. Abridged edition, Penguin 10s. 6d.) is a fascinating book, which seeks, not to recommend any particular course of action ("because this seems to be a matter that society must decide for itself") but to demonstrate the courses of action that are open to society.

Colin Buchanan sums up he "law" which emerges from his study group's report in these words:

"Provided reasonable environmental standards are to be secured, then the amount of traffic that can be accepted in an urban area depends on what the community is prepared to spend on physical alterations and what it is prepared to accept in the way of a new look. If the community in question finds that some proposed set of measures is altogether too expensive and too disruptive of familiar scenes, then it can have less expensive and less disturbing measures, *provided it is reconciled to not having so much traffic*. It might even reconcile itself to not spending any money at all, in which case, provided it wanted a civilised environment, it would only be able to have a small amount of traffic."

The Beeching Report has been accepted by the government, with action, the Buchanan Report has been accepted—with words. Is it simply going to be shelved? Professor Buchanan, when asked this question, replied: "It was written to influence the way people think, and once this process has been started (as I feel fairly confident it has in this case) then it is difficult for the process to be 'shelved'."

Almost simultaneously with the Buchanan report, there appeared a book for architects and planners and the people who employ them, full of detailed information and examples of how to translate the prin-

ciples which emerge from a civilised approach to the problems brought about by the motor vehicle into practice. This is Paul Ritter's *Planning for Man and Motor* (Pergamon Press £5.5.0.), largely a manual on pedestrian and vehicle separation—in residential districts by means of Radburn type housing layout, and in town centres by means of multi-level planning. (For Ritter's application of his ideas to his own city see his article in the Nottingham issue of this journal—ANARCHY 38).

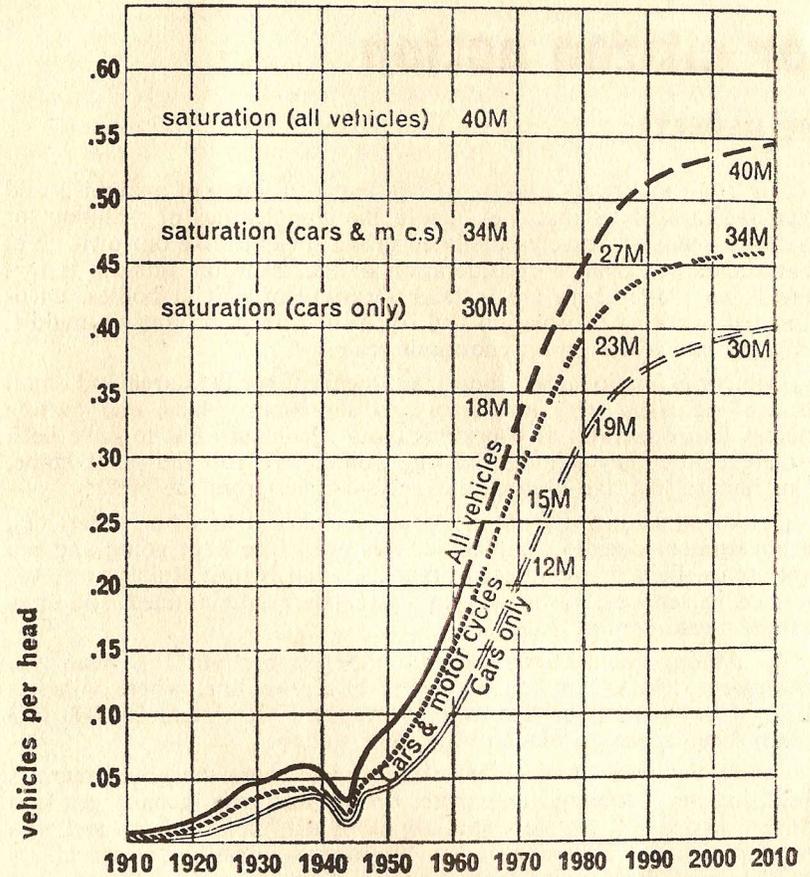
Both the case studies analysed in the Buchanan Report and those discussed in Paul Ritter's book provide a yardstick for assessing the wisdom and utility of the roadbuilding and improvement schemes which are being undertaken at the moment. Malcolm McEwan comments on the implications of Buchanan, "If society wants to go on spending £900 million a year or more on vehicles, then it must be prepared to spend, say, another £900 million on accommodating them. I see no evidence that either a Conservative or a Labour government will be prepared to invest capital on anything like this scale, and clearly the present Government does not intend to. But the alternative, if Buchanan is accepted, is equally unpalatable. It is to curtail not only the use, but also the manufacture of motor vehicles, which are our principal export and one of the mainstays of full employment."

This is the absurd situation that we are in: not merely the Galbraithian paradox of private affluence and public squalor, but the fact that this is rendered permanent and immutable by the fact that 10 per cent of the country's total labour force is employed in the road transport industry.

Wouldn't it be a first step to sanity of those 2,305,000 people were to get together and decide what they really wanted to do with their lives?

Politically, the government has acquired an interest in the expansion of the motor industry. The Minister of Transport has proclaimed the objective of making Britain "a car-owning democracy." An MP has defined the pedestrian in a Conservative Britain as the man who has parked his car and is walking to his destination. The number of cars on the road is now taken as an index of national prosperity, so that any falling off in the rate of growth would be interpreted as a sign of political failure. Lord Derwent, the Chairman of the British Road Federation, said at its annual meeting this year: "We must be realistic and accept that a rising standard of living carries with it a vehicle birth rate—at present one every 50 seconds of the day and night—which takes its course as inexorably as human multiplication." Is this realism, however, or fatalism? It is not a bit too late, when the fifteenth child arrives (apparently by some inexorable process of multiplication) to call in the Family Planning Association? 100 million cars may not be 100 times better than 1 million: they may well be 100 times worse, for if it is a fallacy to despise the machine it is also a fallacy to suppose that human happiness can be measured by the number of machines and not by the quality of life.

—THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL



Future growth of numbers of vehicles. The curves indicate probable trend assuming that no drastic restriction measures are applied and allowing for expected population growth

Transport: the scope for citizen action

JOE GARNETT

ONE OF THE OBJECTIONS RAISED TO THE POINT OF VIEW of anarchists and other decentralists is that they ignore the complexities of planning for the social needs of densely-populated urban societies like our own. Yet what stands out from a consideration of the transport muddle is that there is *no* plan: there are instead a variety of official bodies, unco-ordinated, working in isolation and often in secrecy, producing muddle, confusion and waste on an enormous scale.

Ministries, nationalised industries, local authorities large and small are working away with long-term and short-term plans, and putting schemes into operation at enormous costs which turn out to have been obsolete before they left the drawing board. To rub the point home, let us itemise just half-a-dozen current examples from the press:

1. When British European Airways makes a loss on its services, the government decides that the services are to be kept going and the empty seats filled by *reducing* the fares. When British Railways makes a loss on its services, trains with empty seats are discontinued, and fares on those remaining are *increased*.

2. Among the stations closed on September 6th this year was Castlethorpe, Bucks, on the main Euston-Crewe line, where villagers sat down in front of the last train in protest. More than £45,000 had recently been spent on modernising their station.

3. At Stranraer in the west of Scotland, where the government is subsidising new industrial enterprise, British Railways recently put into service a new 3,500 ton ship, specially designed for the Stranraer-Larne ferry. But in Dr. Beeching's plan, Stranraer will not only lose all its special express boat trains from London, Newcastle and Glasgow, but it will actually become almost 60 miles distant from the nearest passenger-carrying station.

4. The London Traffic Management Unit of the Ministry of Transport is attempting to alleviate traffic problems in London by introducing large-scale one-way traffic systems. Simultaneously the London County Council is trying to do the same thing by large-scale roundabouts, like those in the Red Lion Square and St. Giles Circus areas. The two methods contradict and cancel out each other.

5. Battersea Council has had to abandon a major part of its housing programme, because of proposals for a six-lane motorway which no-one had told the Council about and of which it had never heard until planning permission for one of its housing schemes was refused.

6. Doctor Beeching is proposing to close the railway between Newcastle and Washington in County Durham at the very moment when a New Town is to be built there.

What is the remedy for absurdities of this kind? The Labour Party (which can hardly blame "the jungle of private enterprise" since it is public bodies which are involved in each of these instances) proposes yet another government department to co-ordinate the activities of all these bodies, and produce what we so conspicuously lack: a plan for transport. In terms of practical politics and procedure, the trouble with this kind of "overlord" body is that in practice it is never given the power it seeks—and is never strong enough to overrule sectional interests—this is the experience of "democratic" countries like Britain and the USA as much as that of "dictatorships" like Nazi Germany and Stalin's Russia.

A citizens' plan

Our own approach would be quite different. We want a citizen's plan for transport: an alternative to official proposals, to serve as a focus for informed pressure and agitation. We would like to see transport workers and transport users draw up their own national plan, and then enforce it. The indispensable bodies of special knowledge already exist in the form of the transport workers' unions and transport users associations. Now, when everybody has some interest in the subject either because of their own actual transport problems or because of the impact of the Beeching Report and the Buchanan Report (which has made everyone aware of the link between town-planning and transport planning) is the time for transport users and transport workers to prepare their own local and national plans.

One aspect of a Citizens' Plan for Transport, is that suggested by Robert Swann in his article "Direct Action and the Urban Environment" in ANARCHY 41: a campaign to "defend the city against erosion by automobiles". Swann envisages citizen action of the civil disobedience kind as the teeth of such a campaign. In this country Professor Buchanan himself recommended the same kind of thing last June, in his "Don't let traffic ruin your communities" speech.

Another approach, in rural areas, is that of citizen self-help. We have all discovered, while on holiday in isolated places, that what appears to be a district without a transportation system, has in fact a network of one-man operators or voluntary bus services, which in a variety of ingenious ways adjust their operations to suit the passengers' convenience, or combine the bus with goods deliveries. (There is even a government pamphlet explaining the way to go about running such a service—*Village Bus*, HMSO, 1956).

Again, we all know of abandoned railways which have been taken over by groups of enthusiasts and have achieved some financial stability. The Bluebell Line in Sussex is a famous example. Another is the Middleton line at Leeds which makes a profit on the freight it carries under the direction of Dr. R. F. Youell of Leeds University. These

amateur adventures may simply be the real-life version of those old Ealing Studios Comedies, but they embody several important social truths—which a leisured society should not ignore. (See Ian Nairn's article "Do it Yourself" in ANARCHY 23). In a society in which the distinctions between work and play diminish, many socially useful but "uneconomic" activities can be moved from one sphere to another. And surely what can be done on a small scale by a bunch of amateurs can be done on a grand scale by professional transport workers. We want the disgruntled transport users and the disgruntled transport workers to join forces to this end.

Citizens against Beeching

One citizens' initiative set off by the Beeching Report is embodied in the pamphlet *Hampstead and the Broad Street Line*, published by the Save the Broad Street Line Committee, 62 Upper Park Road, London NW3. (3s. by post). Dr. Beeching proposed to close the Broad Street to Richmond Line to passengers, even though it carries 18,000 of them a day, on the grounds that the service loses money. A public meeting was held to protest about the proposed closure, and it set up a committee which has produced a report that not only demolishes Dr. Beeching's calculations, but investigates in detail who actually uses the line and what the cost of alternative means of transport would be. The social cost analysis set out in this report indicates that the actual cost to the community as a whole of closing the line would be £578,000 a year, as opposed to the claim by Dr. Beeching that British Railways lose £69,000 a year on running the passenger service. The detail and impeccable statistical analysis which this group of citizens has assembled will certainly make it considerably more difficult to close the line.

And for Buchanan

Similar citizens' groups have been formed to "implement" the Buchanan report—in the sense of applying Buchanan's approach to local problems. This is an uphill task, as this letter from Mr. Robert Timms demonstrates:

"I am a member of Bromley Design Group, a voluntary group of architects, surveyors, art teachers and like-minded people. We disagree with our local council's 32-year-old plan, just about to reach fruition, for widening the bottleneck High Street shopping centre to speed the flow of traffic through the town. We prepared a study of the town centre, complete with a scale model of an alternative scheme, maps and sketches. Our alternative to the present plan of widening the shopping street, with offshoot traffic diversions down residential roads, was to turn the "bottleneck" into a pedestrian precinct, opened on one side to a public garden at present accessible only by a path between the public lavatory and the library fire escape. In mid-April we exhibited our scheme, complete with a perfectly feasible and comparatively inexpensive ring road. After an interval for digestion, the local Chamber of Commerce publicly applauded it as superior to the council scheme. The council has yet to reply to the Chamber of Commerce

request for consideration of the study. Buchanan remains where he was—off the ground on a pedestal out of reach."

What Mr. Timms calls the "insurmountable obstacle of local authority philistinism" and its equivalent in other public authorities, are likely to be the brick wall that most citizen action groups will find themselves up against. What they can do about it. Well, the only alternatives are to give up, or to increase the pressure. A handful of really determined people who don't intend to give up, can achieve what otherwise seems impossible.

A social situation

An example of this comes from another field of transport, the canal system. In sharp contrast with other countries where large-scale construction of canals is being undertaken today, canal-building in this country, apart from the Manchester Ship Canal, ceased in 1850. Canals are by far the cheapest, safest and quietest means of regular heavy freight traffic. (Even our neglected canals in this country carry over 4,000,000 tons of coal, 2,500,000 tons of petroleum products and more than 3,000,000 tons of general merchandise annually. Mr. Marples, needless to say, would like to fill them up and forget about them. But other people, notably the redoubtable Robert Aickman, of the Inland Waterways Association, think differently, and the example we have in mind is the Stratford Canal restored to use thanks to a Midlands architect, David Hutchings.

The British Transport Commission proposed to close this canal at an estimated cost of £125,000. After a campaign of protest in 1958, the National Trust took it over, and employed Mr. Hutchings to bring it back into use, after 30 years of total neglect, for £50,000. Mr. Hutchings says, "When I was an architect in Coventry I got involved in preserving canals and so on. And when this came up the National Trust asked me to do it. We had no plans, no tools, no men, no money, no anything. Ever since, it's been a job of getting contacts, persuading them to help, scrounging equipment, making people give things they didn't want to give, volunteer when they didn't want to, and work far harder than they wanted to for much longer than they wanted."

Mr. Hutchings talked his way into getting the army, prisoners from Birmingham prison, and hundreds of volunteers to work on the canal. It took three years and involved dredging half a million tons of mud, rebuilding 30 locks, replacing 70 lock gates each weighing over four tons, and virtually redigging more than half the canal bank. The 13 miles canal was reopened this year, and, inspired by this success, the National Trust is thinking of restoring another 16-mile canal. If this kind of forceful energy, which never takes no for an answer were applied to citizen intervention in other aspects of the transport system, who knows what might not be achieved. As Colin Buchanan says, "It is not a traffic problem we are faced with, as much as a social situation."

The morality of anarchism

IAN VINE

THE MORAL IDEA BEHIND ANARCHISM has always been somewhat elusive. There have probably been almost as many anarchist moralities as there have been anarchists, but for analysis they can be broadly divided into two categories: the socially positive and the socially negative. The positive anarchist moralities have derived from many sources from William Godwin onwards, but the negative aspects can chiefly be traced to the influence of Max Stirner.

In his theoretical attempt to escape from bourgeois hypocritical morals Stirner went to remarkable lengths in glorifying crime and denying all that was considered good by the respectable middle-class of his day. This total amorality was quite rational if one began with his premises, since one could owe no allegiances to a society to which one had no responsibilities. Stirner's disbelief in altruistic actions, and his virtual deification of the individual, was quite consistent with his belief that others were to be regarded as little more than means to the end of personal self-realisation. But this justification of theft, dishonesty, rape and murder is in a sense the very opposite of anarchistic. When we complain that people are being exploited by the ruling-classes we are not only complaining that the people continue to endure it. We are also complaining about exploitation *per se*; and it is this very act of regarding a person as a means rather than an end that underlies Stirner's philosophy. The Stirnerite attempt to escape this problem is to postulate a union of egoists, in which "enlightened" self-interest is best served by co-operation, although he prefers to call it competition! It is interesting to imagine an application of this. When two egoists make love each one tries presumably to please the other *solely* because such reciprocation of pleasure facilitates his or her *own* enjoyment of the act. This may sound unreasonable, but such introspective evidence is not enough to prove that it might not represent our true motives. I do not believe that we can take the easy path of dismissing Egoism out of hand, tempting thought it may be to some temperaments.

Godwin, in contrast to Stirner, was a humanitarian, and believed that Justice—the general good—was above individual interest, although he realised that a person's conception of exactly what *was* the general good could only be a matter for conscience. He was important in that he denied the Catholic doctrine of Original Sin, and asserted that we are born neither good nor bad. He was a moral man, and proclaimed that we have "no right to act anything but virtue and to utter anything but

truth". We can see here the complete disagreement between his idea of the moral anarchist, and Stirner's affirmation that morality is rubbish. Both of these men made distinct contribution to anarchist thought however, although I think neither of them held views which were completely or distinctively anarchist in the moral sphere. It would be inconsistent with the spirit of anarchism to say that either one had, or could have had, the sole and absolute truth, for it is unlikely that anarchists will ever be absolutely unanimous on anything, especially with respect to morality. In mild criticism of Stirner I would say that to assert that we can *never* act altruistically is tantamount to denying freewill, and I think that Godwin's dogma that we *must* follow truth and virtue in all circumstances is somewhat authoritarian. But I think that any anarchist morality must borrow points from each of them.

Although the Stirnerite and Godwinian trends in anarchist morality have been supplemented by others, I do not regard these as very radical alterations of principle, and so I intend to turn now to a man who is not regarded as a member of the anarchist ranks, yet who to me is one of the foremost anarchist moralists—Jean-Paul Sartre. In his article on the Ethics of Anarchism (ANARCHY 16) Bob Green did not mention Sartre once. I find this rather remarkable in the light of Sartre's views. The fact that he calls himself a communist should not allow us to dismiss him, since he is repudiated by the French CP, and must be the most un-Marxist communist since Kropotkin. Sartre, probably without having read them, achieves the feat of bringing together the anarchistic elements in the moralities of both Godwin and Stirner while omitting the unanarchistic elements of each.

Sartre agrees emphatically with Godwin's rejection of the notion of original sin, yet still recognises that men are born into a society which presents them with a "common predicament". Man is totally free inasmuch as his values and decisions are in no way laid down beforehand by determinism or his genetic and environmental inheritance, although the *conditions* which delineate his choices *may* be influenced from without. Thus man is no more destined to "sin" than he is to do good—in every moral situation there are at least two possible courses of action, and it is entirely up to him which he chooses to follow. What is more, since we are totally free there can be no external authority or guide for our actions. We cannot escape our total responsibility for whatever acts we do, and having denied an external source of moral law or moral judgment we must build our own moral codes as free individuals. Consequently there is not, as Godwin seemed to be saying, any inherent moral sense to tell us what is right and wrong. "Right" and "wrong" have no absolute meaning; having destroyed God we are in an arbitrary world of our own where we must choose as individuals what is right and wrong for ourselves. Sartre is in fact saying, with Stirner, that in any absolute sense there is no morality.

This doctrine of total freedom and independence is one which should appeal to any strong-minded and confident anarchist, since it fundamentally counters dogmas of revealed truth which have been the pernicious inspiration of so many tyrannical systems. To me the anarchist must not only reject political authority, but also moral authority.

It is this fact that makes the position of christian anarchists so precarious. Sartre seems to say that God is dead simply because we have killed him by asserting our own freedom and authority over ourselves. It is immensely tempting to accept Sartre's denial of God and determinism, since it removes the theoretical barrier of "human nature" which is supposed by our opponents to be incompatible with anarchism. Sartre says that we make our own natures by our choices and actions, that a man's morality is what he does. Also, since one's choices are really one's own, it doesn't matter tuppence if one happens to find one's morality coinciding with the bourgeois morality Stirner hated on certain points. In other words, if it is "bourgeois" to refrain from murder, arson, and rape then I can be proud of being "bourgeois" if I refrain from these things from choice rather than fear of punishment or from social conditioning. Every moral situation must be considered on its merits. To reject a moral axiom just *because* it is bourgeois would be for Sartre just as much *mauvais foi* (bad faith) as to try to avoid moral decisions altogether. I knew anarchists, who reject truthfulness and responsibility with the phrase: "they're just bourgeois values". If one takes the view of Sartre this defence is inadequate. As we have seen Sartre is *the* advocate and philosopher of responsibility. The popular view of existentialism as being aimlessness and amorality could not be farther from the truth. Sartre says that there is no way of knowing what is "right", yet we can never make excuses for our actions, since we have freely chosen to perform them.

So let us realise this: all our moral decisions stand alone as choices for which we bear entire personal responsibility. We often recognise this when criticising an obedient thug like Eichman, but we seem to forget it when we talk about fighting the system with its own weapons. We may choose to do this because we feel it justified in a particularly bad situation, but we must be under no illusions about such a choice, it is a free one, and we cannot validly assuage our consciences by saying that the State forces us to do it. Unfortunately one tends to choose reasonably consistently, and however tempting it may be to use State methods (e.g. violence, trickery, theft) in our attempts to destroy all that is rotten in our sick society, we have to realise that by doing so we are perpetuating the very values we seek ultimately to destroy. Perhaps if we realise how responsible we are as individuals for this perpetuation we may in future think twice before employing or advocating such methods. On the question of responsibility in practical affairs, such as keeping appointments, doing what one says one will do, and generally being loyal to other comrades, it seems to me that anarchists are no better (and sometimes worse) than other people. Yet anarchists should, as Jack Stevenson said recently, be the *most* responsible of people, in fact reliability and self-responsibility are essential conditions for calling oneself an anarchist. It must be obvious to all shades of anarchist thought that the Free Society would require more self-control, more self-consciousness, than any other social system that has been devised. I believe then that Sartre, in providing the philosophical background to such a view and rejecting the notion that man is nothing

more than a product of his environment and heredity, has made a vital contribution to anarchist thought.

In propounding Sartre's views I have not attributed to him any specific moral code, merely pointed out a few of the consequences of accepting particular codes. This is because Sartre does not in fact advocate a moral code. Sartre believes that one's life is the exposition of one's own moral values, and in his case these have been distinct and consistent. That they can be loosely defined as humanitarian brings us back to Godwin. In fact Sartre, although defining no rules of actual conduct does make one point about conduct in general. The philosopher Kant had postulated the categorical imperative—that one should act as though one's moral maxims were a universal law—and Sartre takes this one stage further, saying that *necessarily* one acts as though one would wish others to act in the same situation. This increases still further the burden of moral decisions, and gives some degree of objectivity to them. Yet at first sight it may appear that universalisability is an un-anarchistic concept. Why as anarchists should we not act as we wish without wishing other people to act likewise? This is in fact the extreme individualist position, but it seems to me that such extreme individuality is at variance with anarchism as a movement, for it denies society. Any society is built on universalisability, what I would call a social contract entered into voluntarily by every individual in it. It is the force which restored the social cohesion threatened by the destruction of authority. It is the basis of mutual aid. When I offer my hand in friendship I do not expect to get stabbed with a knife—yet were the arbitrariness of values and modes of behaviour universal this would be quite consistent. So clearly, whether or not one wants to go quite as far as Sartre, it is important to realise that universalisability is implicit in any morality to some degree. The situation is made less ominous than may appear by the fact that Sartre realises the individuality of situations—as a result one may feel compelled to take a particular action in a particularly desperate situation, and will that another person should do the same, without willing the same action in far less desperate circumstances that would normally occur.

Having said all this I hope to have shown that Sartre can provide us with some useful starting points for developing our moral codes. Clearly the implicit social contract which I have postulated derives from his ideas, and clearly if it exists it must be honoured by the vast majority of people if the society is not to break down. I am not saying there must be no exceptions. The curious thing about human nature (or rather, human choices) is that we tend to hate people who are really and consistently moral, and most of us lesser mortals would find a completely moral society rather intolerable. However, we must realise that those who advocate a new society have a special responsibility in this respect, since we are supposedly its vanguard and are to apt to be regarded very critically by those we seek to influence. Viewed in this light many of us need to question the adequacy of our anarchist ethic, and think again every time we feel like acting irresponsibly.

Not quite an anarchist

JOHN CRUMP

"THOMAS PAINE . . . WAS NEVER ENOUGH of an optimist to let his natural anarchism run its full course."¹ His contemporary, William Godwin, said in his "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" (1793), "With what delight must every well-informed friend of mankind look forward to the dissolution of political government, of that brute engine which has been the only perennial cause of the vices of mankind . . . and no otherwise to be removed than by its utter annihilation." Paine takes a more negative stance:— "Some writers have so confounded society with government as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness . . . Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a *necessary evil*."²

Thomas Hobbes thought that without government "the life of man (would be) solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."³ Paine took an opposing view; "Great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of Government. It has its origins in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man." In theory then Paine believed that man was essentially a responsible being who should be perfectly free, providing that his liberty did not infringe on another's freedom.

He was sceptical of the practice of subordinating the mass of men to the guidance of a few. We have seen that he clearly differentiated between society and government in "Common Sense", and he returns to this subject in "The Rights of Man", saying here ". . . society performs for itself almost everything ascribed to Government." He goes on to elaborate this theme, describing the state in America when there was no formal government for more than two years following the outbreak of the War of Independence. He maintains that the disappearance of government there caused the flourishing of society, "common interest producing common security."

Here then there at first appears to be a clear-cut position. Paine held that many of the activities which governments concerned themselves with were superfluous. Not only were they unnecessary and a waste of time, but often definitely harmful. Pursuing this line of argument he writes—"But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or destroyed by the operations of Government." And again— ". . . instead of consolidating society it (government) divided it, it deprived it of its natural cohesion, and engendered discontents and disorders which otherwise would not have existed."

However, even admitting that the effects of governments in general were harmful or irrelevant, Paine could produce no real alternative. In a sarcastic reference to Burke he says: "Mr. Burke has talked of old

and new whigs. If he can amuse himself with childish names and distinctions, I shall not interrupt his pleasure." But, having stated this, Paine then proceeds to distinguish between good (new) governments and bad (old) ones, even though previously he had been slating the principle of Government. This accommodation of contradictory ideas sometimes appears in the same sentence. For example:

"Government is no farther necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to show, that everything which Government can usefully add thereto, has been performed by the common consent of society, without Government."

What is obviously a very important aspect of this doctrine—"The few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent"—is left for us to guess at.

The good and bad governmental systems are outlined as follows:

". . . the old is hereditary, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely representative." "Government, on the old system, is an assumption of power, for the aggrandizement of itself, on the new a delegation of power for the common benefit of society."

Carried away by revolutionary fervour, Paine eulogizes the French and American patterns and sinks into idealistic myopia.

". . . the representative system diffuses such a body of knowledge throughout a Nation on the subject of Government, as to expose ignorance and preclude imposition . . . Those who are not in the representation know as much of the nature of business as those who are . . . Every man is a proprietor in Government, and considers it a necessary part of his business to understand. It concerns his interest because it affects his property. He examines the cost and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the slavish custom of following what in other governments are called LEADERS."

The two hundred years of historical experience that separates us from Paine enables us to see that he was mistaken. Instead of "exposing ignorance and precluding imposition", these still exist together with a rampant apathy. Paine considered that it was one of the sicknesses of the "old governments" that a farmer was induced, "while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuits, and go to war with the farmer of another country." From our advantageous position it is obvious to us that elected governments have been just as successful as hereditary ones in persuading their populations to wage wars.

Paine writes elsewhere that there should be "no such thing as an idea of a compact between the people on one side and the Government on the other. The compact (should be) that of people with each other to produce and constitute a government." The Oxford Eng. Dic. gives as a definition of the verb "to govern"—to rule with authority; Malatest called it the "coercive organisation of society."⁴ When any body of men becomes appointed with this function it is inevitable that the gulf between governors and governed will be established. Proudhon, born in the year of Paine's death, summed it up saying "Between governing and governed, . . . not matter how the system of representation or delegation of the governmental function is arranged there is necessarily an

alienation of part of the liberty and means of the citizen.”

The fourth right of man was that of political liberty. The seventeenth was that concerning property; “The right to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it.” Paine could not realize that the accumulation of property by one man puts him in a dominant position with regards to others, whose economic and political liberty are correspondingly restricted. With the further insight of the nineteenth century, Proudhon again was able to ask himself the question “What is property?” Instead of deciding that it is an “inviolable and sacred” right he came up with the answer “Property is theft.” In agreement with this decision, theorists like Marx and Kropotkin called for the abolition of property, whereas Paine had advocated its protection.

“Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society: all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation.”⁵

“All things are for all men, since all men have need of them, since all men have worked in the measure of their strength to produce them . . .”⁶

To wind up, Paine’s main ideas are certainly of importance in the quest to establish political justice, but they by no means guarantee it. Few people would now argue with his opinions on hereditary rulers. His other suggestions, though often paid lip service to, are rarely implemented. He could hardly have expected such an anaemic doctrine as the “necessary evil” of government to be very satisfactory. He could not grasp the nature of property, and he was optimistic when estimating the degree to which representative government can reflect the interests of its citizens.

As a communist (not a bolshevik) I believe that all men must benefit when a system of co-operation replaces the present one based on exploitation. Society spontaneously arranges itself into basic nuclei—the village and the factory for example. Each separate unit should be self-controlling—the running of it being a direct reproduction of the wishes of its members. Co-ordination could be achieved on both regional, national and international scales by congresses of elected representatives. What would distinguish these delegates is that they would be merely the mouthpieces of their electors, and not individuals given the power to make decisions for, and thus rule, the population. I should like to emphasise that this would result in a society of healthy and free citizens, but not in the creation of healthy states, which would in fact cease to exist. We have had sufficient experience of politically healthy states, often displaying all the symptoms of virile power, (thousand-year Reichs and the like) to realize that their flourishing existence by no means guarantees the happiness and well-being of their inhabitants.

1 *Anarchism*—George Woodcock.

2 *Common Sense*—Thomas Paine.

3 *Leviathan*—Thomas Hobbes.

4 *Umanita Nova*, September 16th, 1922.

5 *The Communist Manifesto*—Marx and Engels.

6 *The Conquest of Bread*—Kropotkin.

Other quotations from Paine all come from ‘The Rights of Man’.

An anarchist in Africa

JEREMY WESTALL

AS AN INTRODUCTION TO THIS ARTICLE it is my intention to establish that, through my ancestors and myself, I can claim to be a person who is interested in helping Africa rather than exploiting her. This is worth mentioning because many Europeans who have been associated with Africa have been greedy exploiters, taking rather than giving, destroying rather than building.

There is however a tradition in Africa which speaks for European radicals. It can be seen historically in the life-work of Livingstone; today men like Guy Clutton-Brock and Terence Ranger fit into this tradition. In Africa “the liberals” are renowned for courage and determination, they are a proud example of belief being transferred into action; unlike the weak liberalism of the European countries Africa’s liberalism is tough and practical. Its radical toughness places it close to the anarchist philosophy.

I can claim some association with the Livingstonian tradition. My great-grandmother was the sister of Adam Sedgewick, a close friend of Livingstone’s. Adam Sedgewick as a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge was influential in assisting Livingstone. Of Livingstone Sedgewick wrote: “He stood before us a plain, single-minded, cheeful man and he addressed us in unadorned and simple words.” The authors of Sedgewick’s biography¹ report that when Sedgewick spoke at a meeting in Cambridge after Livingstone “he entreated his hearers not merely to welcome and thank Livingstone for what he had said, but to carry forward the noble work which he had so auspiciously begun. His words were few, but well chosen, and when he sat down the applause told that they had gone straight to the hearts of his hearers.”

Sedgewick, as can be seen, was a rather sentimental Christian and his attitude was a trifle exalted but when Livingstone’s “Lectures” were published and Sedgewick wrote the preface the authors of his biography write that “Probably nothing contributed more directly to the establishment of the Universities Mission to Central Africa than this short essay.”

Writing of the Livingstonian tradition in Central Africa Patrick Keatley² mentions the two empire builders of Rhodesia, Cecil Rhodes who “built with money and military power” and David Livingstone who “built his empire in the abiding allegiances of men.” Keatley quotes an old African friend of Livingstone’s who wrote of Livingstone

as a person who "treated black men as brothers" and whose "words were always gentle and manners kind, and who knew the way to the hearts of all men."

For myself I feel it legitimate to claim that to teach in an African run school in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia for close on a year at half wages is evidence of a desire to help the African people. I have worked out that the amount of money due but not paid to me by Highfield Community School is rather more than the contribution made to the school by the British South Africa Company over the same year.

The School

In his description of the birth of Highfield Community School³, Mr. Chinamano the Principal of the School paints the background to the story by mentioning the lodger system which operates in the Highfield African Township of Salisbury. These lodgers were allowed in Highfield so that the owners of the houses would be better able to pay off instalments on their houses. But "because, according to law, children of lodgers may not enter government schools, this year (1962) more than 1,500 children found themselves without schooling."

Mr. Chinamano goes on to describe the demonstrations that the children made for schools. "Government" he wryly remarks "decided to stick to the legal aspect and dispersed the children with tear-gas. Determined to get school, these youngsters decided to 'Invade' classrooms demanding to be taught. And again government turned deaf ears to the demands of the children and instead charged them with trespass." Eventually the community of Highfield formed an association to provide schooling for the children.

"By means of this self-help effort", Mr. Chinamano continues, "Africans were able in a matter of a week, to raise about £3,000 as school fees." The Government tolerated the establishment of the school but did not support it and a fund-raising campaign was started. Enough money was raised and church halls and old shops were lent or given to the school, 32 teachers were employed and 1,300 children provided with school.

An interesting comment is made by the School Principal in his report when he writes: "The Highfield Community School Association is convinced that the answer to this educational crisis lies in the hands of the people and not of the Government. As a result of the Highfield scheme various centres in the country are establishing similar locally supported schools."

In September 1963 I left Britain to teach at the Highfield Community School. A return to Livingstonia was evident in the fact that a trustee of the school, Sir Robert Tredgold is related to Livingstone. It was not my first visit to Rhodesia, those interested in my earlier experiences with the Northern Rhodesia Government can find them related in the "University Libertarian" No. 11.

Before I was able to enter Rhodesia the body which was sponsoring my journey, the Scottish Union of Students, received a cable attempting to stop them sending me. It was claimed, I am informed, that I was a Communist. Obviously the British secret police and the Rhodesian Government work hand in hand and distort the facts in the process. However by the time a final cable forbidding me to go to Rhodesia had arrived in Britain I was in the air being transported, ironically enough, by the South African Airways, armed with a work permit issued in some bureaucratic error.

Whilst I was teaching at the school the number of children there rose to 1,800 and the number of teachers increased. From month to month the school just managed to pay salaries and even the Government provided a little when all else failed. As a correspondent of *The Times* pointed out in an article about the school "As a social service it has an undoubted value, recognised by the police in keeping potential juvenile delinquents occupied throughout a full working day." The school was also important to African nationalists as a demonstration of their creativeness and practicality.

Conditions at the school were poor. Classes were over 50 in number, text books were scarce, classrooms became very stuffy and hot in the warm weather, the load for teachers was very heavy. Yet through all this a cheerful school emerged. A memorable Christmas carol concert was given by the school to the community and African songs became part of the concert.

Many is the time at the end of an exhausting day when one could hear three or four children singing together in a classroom demonstrating the Africans' great love of song. I taught History, English and Biology mainly to the class preparing for 'O' level and the intensity of their political views over-reached itself in the history classes, whilst in Biology total lack of equipment meant experiments were impossible.

Trouble for the school started earlier this year when the Principal of the School Mr. Chinamano was arrested with Joshua Nkomo and restricted to a remote area of Southern Rhodesia. It seemed to all of us that the Government was set on destroying the school and we heard rumours of plans to close it down. Somehow we managed to struggle on but in recent months an unhappy series of events has brought the school to its knees.

I can quote from an article I wrote for the African "Daily News"⁴ shortly before I left Rhodesia which explains the position. "We have had a very hard time recently at the school. Somebody has organised a disruptive element both inside and outside the school.

"These thugs have made teaching difficult. They have broken down the desire to learn and they have intimidated the children into demanding that all teachers with affiliations to the Zimbabwe African National Union should be boycotted.

"Three of the longest serving and most loyal members of staff were attacked or boycotted by the children at the school. It was a deplorable exhibition of children being used for political motives.

"Indeed Mr. Chinamano in his letter to me wrote: "I was sorry to hear that Mr. Mafukidze was subjected to unhealthy treatment by the students."

"He wrote this because he knows it is fatal if politics, rather than education, is the main consideration at the school.

"Nevertheless, when the teachers had been boycotted I was shocked to discover shortly afterwards that the teachers in question had been replaced. They had not resigned, they had not been dismissed but they had been replaced.

"I was dismayed that the committee of the school could allow themselves to be intimidated into treating these teachers so unjustly.

"It was after this that I decided to resign in the hope that it would be realised the unjust treatment of the teachers was not condoned by this particular member of staff.

"I would emphasise that my action has no political motive. It is action over the principle of a person being victimised for his opinions.

"If the tables were turned and a PCC teacher was victimised for his opinions I would take similar action.

"I believe, very strongly, that education dominated by politics becomes indoctrination and that this worthless substitute for the real thing is a mark of totalitarianism. For a political movement to have control of children's minds is fatal—no freedom can flourish in such an atmosphere. An attitude of slavish obedience is driven into the malleable minds of the children so that they cannot think for themselves.

"All I can do is ask you, for your own sakes to build a sense of toleration of other people's views. Do not follow the example of Ian Smith and call those who disagree with you enemies of the people. Do not repeat the worst mistakes of European history where dictators have sought to wipe out the flower of freedom."

That I was advised to leave Rhodesia at the earliest opportunity after the publication of this article shows that it had some effect at least.

African Nationalism

Writing in ANARCHY No. 3 on "Africa and the Future" in May 1961 I wrote: "Whatever one says or thinks of the African nationalist politicians, it is good to see a people throwing off the yoke of colonialism. To me the thought of one nation forcing its customs and culture on to another is so despicable that I rejoice in the fact that the Africans want to make their own way. This is what gains my qualified support for the various struggles for independence. What I do emphasise however, is that the struggle is *only* for independence and is, sadly, nothing to do with freedom." My recent experiences of African nationalism as related above confirm, to my mind, this approach. A time has come to get the matter of African nationalism in its true perspective. It is in fact a concept which is dangerous to those ideals which anarchists hold dear. I have lost all patience with pacifists who support the "non-violent" Kenneth Kaunda and greet the slaughter of 300 Africans by Kaunda's

Government with silence. No amount of double-talk can justify the person who mouths words about fair play and turns a blind eye to the brutal and cruel treatment meted out by Africans to other Africans who oppose them.

One reads a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*⁵ by the Minister of Justice in Northern Rhodesia, Mainza Chona with unutterable disgust. Concerning the suppression of the Lumpa sect in Northern Rhodesia the Minister of Justice writes: "Your sympathy for these savages is giving rise to suspicions that an imperialist may be a brain behind Lenшина." He continues to complain that "In Chinsali the Lumpa Church was not merely non-political; it was positively anti-politics. Its leaders hurled the worst and most primitive abusive curses at leading politicians." For myself, having seen at close quarters the workings of African politics I would commend wholeheartedly the anti-political stand taken by the Lumpa Church.

Anarchism has been of relevance to a few Africans in the present age. In the war years Jomo Kenyatta wrote for the anarchist press, but look at him now, a committed centralist. The Foreign Minister of Zanzibar has claimed an intellectual sympathy with anarchism and Kaunda is friendly with the libertarian John Papworth. Although the whole direction of events in Africa seems to be rushing away from anarchism I am confident that soon the shortcomings of African nationalism will be seen and lessons will be learnt.

The mutinies in East Africa and the general strike in Nigeria are pointers to the fact that the African people are not content with black leaders who line their own pockets at the expense of the people. In my own experience I know the communal ideas of anarchism are of instinctive interest to Africans.

We may yet see the day when the end of white supremacist rule in Southern Africa coincides with the African people awakening to the ideas of anarchist communism as they appreciate the similarities of the white settler rulers and the black rulers. One only needs to add that these twin events in Africa would involve the Iberian peninsula in a resurgence of the anarcho-syndicalist struggle set off by the overthrow of Salazar.

1 *Life and Letters of Sedgewick* by Clark & Hughes. 2 Vols. (Cambridge Univ. Press).

2 *The Politics of Partnership* by Patrick Keatley (Pelican).

3 *The Story of Highfield Community School* by J. M. Chinamano.

4 "Why I Resigned from Community School" by Jeremy Westall (*Daily News* 29/7/64).

5 "Lumpa Sect Crimes" by Mainza Chona (*Daily Telegraph* 13/8/64).

OBSERVATIONS ON ANARCHY 42: ANARCHISM AND INDIAN THOUGHT

THE QUOTATION FROM ADI DOCTOR'S BOOK, which Tristram Shandy singles out as a valid observation, strikes me as a bit asinine. The Gandhians certainly preach against materialism but they don't tell the peasants that they should be satisfied with their lot. They've been arguing for more attention to be paid to raising living standards of the masses by concentrating on small scale projects in agriculture which would bring pretty immediate returns, rather than some of the grandiose politically inspired projects whose returns are long run, if at all, and which exacerbate the present inflationary trend. (There's some signs that the government under Shastri is beginning to see the point.) More generally, the Gandhians argue, sensibly it seems to me, that stateless communism can't be achieved if you adopt the materialistic standards of the West. The trouble with the idea of free distribution when combined with "materialism" was pointed out by Keynes: There is never likely to be enough caviare to go round. A sensible limitation of people's demands seems to be an indispensable condition of free distribution. In addition, there's the point that the multiplication of wants in the West, engineered by the advertising racket, provides a very useful means of social control by the rulers. The big stick is a very crude means of control; the dangling carrot is much better. Naked power is transformed into manipulative power. Gandhi latched on to the truth pointed out by Rousseau speaking of the Red Indians: How do you enslave men who go naked in the chase? Gandhi's and Vinoba's success, such as it is, stemmed in large part from the application of this principle. Gandhi once said: "My enemies can do me no harm for I have nothing to lose, as they have nothing to gain." Gilbert Murray writing about Gandhi also saw the point: "Persons in power should be very careful how they deal with a man who cares nothing for sensual pleasure, nothing for riches, nothing for comfort or praise or promotion, but is simply determined to do what he believes to be right. He is a dangerous uncomfortable enemy—because his body, which you can always conquer, gives you so little purchase upon his soul." After a couple of years as a privileged plutocrat in this goddam half-starved country, I appreciate the sociological significance of the old saying about the rich man finding it easier to pass through the eye of a needle, etc. When one is almost infinitely better off than most other people around one, one can't behave decently except by ceasing to be better off. What I admire about Gandhi, in contrast to paper anarchists like me (and most of us) is that he really believed what he said, i.e. his beliefs were existential, expressed in action.

AN ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA.

