

THEY WANT YOUR VOTES - WE WANT YOUR ACTION!

For years the "openness" we have here has been contrasted with dictatorships. In fact we have more mass persuasion and suppression than anywhere else in the world.

Just take one instance. Now that "openness" (glasnost) has been introduced into Russia for the first time you can hear Anarchist views sensibly presented by Anarchists on the radio, read of the industrial struggles of the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement, or well-documented books of its history as you never could in Tsarist or Bolshevik -Russia and still can't here.

In the British media, Anarchist references are deliberately misleading; they are treated in films, fiction and the daily press in a totally biased fashion, and when are they allowed to give their own point of view?

Criticising ourselves, it is true that at election times all we ever say is Don't Vote (or the even more negative Why Vote?) Perhaps that's all there is to say. But there is a lot more to Anarchism than not voting every four or five years.

ANARCHIST MANIFESTO

What is Anarchism? Anarchism is the belief that the only way to achieve working class democracy - governing ourselves by having no government to tell us what to do - is by independence of government, parties, institutionalised leadership and class rule. Building up a State means you have a ruling class. Parliamentarism can at best only be used to reform that system of class rule; more often it only legitimises it. Anarchism is free co-operation so that no person is put upon by another.

Anarchism outside the class context is impossible. Within the framework of class society that is true. The State is needed to protect the rulers and keep the chain of command in place, Anarchism is possible only in a true socialistic society. Anyone can see that capitalism or the State has failed to achieve a fair distribution of wealth. While there is this problem the State will need to impose laws to regulate who grabs what from whom and how much.

The Economy

The main issue in the election is which of the parties likely to gain power propose to run, or have run in the past, the economy. The economy is not a natural phenomenon. It is something

deliberately planned, either by the State, by an international ring of financial gangsters, or because a "free market" (which is nothing of the kind) enables profit for the few.

Unemployment and recession are like wars, they are planned. They are unlike floods, hurricanes, tempests, earthquakes or other natural disasters (and even these are sometimes caused by economic policies - compare the effects of the destruction of the ozone layer). In the rare event they are not deliberately planned they are the result of inefficiency, i.e. someone meant to cause poverty to reduce or control the population, not necessarily so much as happened.

In the first years of the century we had poverty, then war, and in the 20s the burden of reconstruction. There followed slump, depression, war, sacrifice, austerity, recession. The plain fact is that capitalism does not work. It cannot bring universal prosperity. All it can do is to make the rich richer and in exceptional times extend the boundaries of the privileged class.

In Russia the Communist Party took over from the Tsar and made itself all-powerful and its members privileged. It pretended to be a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was a dictatorship by the Party.

Changing the State, like changing the Government, means changing the faces of the privileged.

That is why we oppose Parliamentarism, which is a means devised to aler the Government without altering the State. It is not the opposite to Dictatorship, which we detest, which is about strengthening the State to make the ruler supreme. **Democracy has not failed - it has never been tried.** If we define democracy as the direct responsibility of the people for every decision that runs their lives, we can tell it is difficult, but it is plain that it has never been remotely on the agenda.

What is now called "the recession" - homelessness, poverty, unemployment, the crime culture - has been forced upon us to accept a certain unsatisfactory way of life. It was deliberately chosen to produce deliberate results. which could not be democratically decided because nobody would choose it for themselves.

Social Services

A State is imposed on society. Unless it meets certain requirements it will cease to exist. There is more to it than running up a rag on a flagpole. Cities must be built. They must have sanitation and elementary methods of hygiene. The citizens need to feed and breed, learn to read and write and communicate with one another, They need to be safe. Houses must be built and communications established. Unless these things exists, there is no society. It will be taken over by .the people, or by an outside or inside military force, This is now happening in Eastern Europe. The State dictatorship having broken down and no other system working, smaller States and divisions within them emerge. In these circumstances sometimes foreign States see if they can intervene and seize parts of the land.

We do not accept that the necessities for normal social life are favours granted by the State. If the State cannot maintain them adequately it forfeits its only claim to exist. It does not work.

It will collapse. We have seen this happen recently in the Russian countries where the Soviet Union collapsed, after years as a super-Power, as if it had lost a war. It is breaking up in desperation. Whether that was partly the result of "communism" as imagined by Marxists or not, it was the break-up of the State, usually done by war or revolution. Capitalism is failing less dramatically but gradually.

For years Statists said anarchism is impossible - this disguises the truth that Statism is not only impossible but undesirable. The collapse of a State may mean chaos. But **Anarchism (the absence of Statism) is the social reconstruction of society.**

Where's the money coming from?

There are loads of empty houses. There is no shortage of bricks, there are plenty of tools and even more hands that can use them. It is certainly not concern for the environment that stops new houses being built. So why is there a housing shortage?. Why are people homeless and building workers unemployed? Building workers being both unemployed and homeless would be unthinkable in a desert island! What makes it acceptable here?

There are healthworkers, doctors, hospitals (many closed down) and there are sick people waiting for treatment. Why?

If it's a shortage of ready notes, there are redundant printworkers ready to fill the presumed gap at Waterlow's printing works. If the banks are allowed to do so, they will grant unlimited credit for those they favour.

What prevents "money" being spent on productive and useful services is not that it is spent on wasteful ones. The techniques for building warships are not the same as those used to prevent cancer.

Money is only the yardstick by which Governments dole out resources in favour of the ruling class. It may or may not be a useful alternative in everyday life to barter. But it has become the lever to control the economy. Given the raw materials and the skill and muscle necessary, everything is possible. Civilisations are not built by a bureaucrat or bank manager signing his name to a piece of paper. That is modern superstition just as blessing a project is an ancient one.

Defence of the People

The State needs the police force, or armed forces acting as a police force, to impose its will. Without it, Parliament is a second-rate debating society without power. The whole economic and political system needs a chain of command-and-obey. If people cease to obey, the State does not exist. This has happened many times in history, but is immortalised in the Romanian dictator Ceausescu's look (seen on television) when he waited for applause and saw a hostile crowd.

We need a citizens militia to protect us from anti-social elements. The police not only generally fail to protect us from anti-social elements but act as one strand themselves, backing up criminal State decisions. A citizens militia is not the same police force under a different name, it is not a workers army or police force, It is the people in arms, prepared to defend themselves and their community. Few countries can afford to arm the people to defend themselves against invaders,

lest they overturn their own system, but that is the elementary basis of democracy..

The class struggle

The class struggle is between those who produce and those who are able to let their money work for them, living parasitically on the community. Those who do not work but are kept at poverty level are not parasitical: they are part of the means by which the ruling class is able to exert pressure on the rest of the workers. A ruling class prefers a slave system and uses the whip. When it does not or cannot, it uses the whip of unemployment. People who choose unemployment voluntarily, like slaves who take a whipping to save others, are not parasites and can even be commended. The ruling class are the parasites.

Because a class in revolt is likely to be less educated than a class that has seized power, unsuccessful members of the ruling class will always offer their services to the rising class to safeguard their power, or to get what their own class refused to give them for one reason or another. This is why revolutionary parties are formed and always betray. **The worst workers union is better than the best political party or vanguard, though the latter may be well organised, and may even gain power.**

What we want is workers control of everything to do with production and local community control of everything to do with social life.

Why revolution

Because the last thing to go when a State is breaking up is the means by which it imposes its will, cuts in social services and redundancies first in municipal then in governmental administration come after it has closed its manufacturing and productive industries and sold out to its labour force to overseas employers. It will retain its police and military forces to the very end, long after it has any way of resisting foreign Powers, to defend itself from "the enemy within", that is, the working class.

Anyone who thinks about it can see this happening in the world today. They give up hope, thinking it is not worth voting. True, it makes little difference, but that is not all one can do.

In the 19th century there were considerably more problems but there was considerable hope. Many of these hopes have been tried in the 20th century. Almost all have been tried and failed dismally because all of those tried were based upon the privileged leading the people. Now let us have done with politicians and professors, dictators and ideologues, literary and sociological experts, and get down to a revolution for and by our own class, because getting rid of the ruling class is a job we have to do ourselves. Nobody will do it for us.

There has to be a revolution. Not a change of government, not a change of State. EVERYTHING HAS BEEN TRIED BUT ANARCHISM!