JESUS CHRIST!

I NEED WASHING, CHANGING, FEEDING, BURPING, CUDDLING AND CARE 24 HOURS A DAY

20p or 50c
A mother is born

There's one born every minute!

Sod that, I'm going to be a plumber!

DOLLY PRAM that turns every little girl into a little mother

TRY TELLING THAT to the social security and see what you get.

Trufood costs more because we feel your baby is worth our extra care... Don't you?

... but we all know there can be no true happiness under capitalism.....

Cow and Gate. For contented fathers.
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THE BATTERED LIVES SYNDROME

BATTERED babies, battered wives... these are the extremes of the ocean of misery that characterizes life in this society, as in any society based on inequality. For every case that reaches tragic proportions and gets headlines there are how many 'problem families'? And for every 'problem family' there are how many people who avoid the notice of social workers but live under extreme stress, every day? - people with unhappy marriages, or children whose parents' rejection of them is too subtle to be defined as cruelty or neglect.

These troubles are created by the ruling class, which profits from
(1) economic conditions which create personal misery;
(2) the misery itself, which keeps the victims too unhealthy to fight effectively;
(3) the intimidation of people who might otherwise rebel, by the methods used in pretending to deal with the misery, notably imprisonment of children and of the homeless.

After the Maria Colwell case, a lecturer in social work wrote to the Guardian: 'The reaction to the circumstances of Maria Colwell's death, the desire for the reform of adoption law (making it easier for the long-term removal of children from the natural parents) and Sir Keith Joseph's and Dr. Mia Pringle's attitude to the so-called cycle of deprivation, all exhibit a possibly dangerous trend in social policy', specifically 'the increased possibility of stigmatising a much wider range of parents as unfit or inadequate and a concentration on the psycho-pathology of parents to the neglect of broader social and economic factors which influence family functioning' and 'the dangers to civil liberty as increasingly large numbers of parents are stumped as needing semi-permanent supervision'.

Perhaps like other working-class and/or unconventional people, I also felt uneasy when reading articles on the Colwell case, or on adoption. But not being a lecturer in social work I was afraid to trust this uneasiness, especially since the articles implied that no class prejudice was involved; that these things could happen to rich and poor alike; that social workers and judges are only concerned with people's psychology and the welfare of the children. (The welfare of the children was the argument used by a judge who deprived a natural mother of the right even to visit her child on the word of the foster parents that the visits were 'upsetting'. I wonder how hard the foster parents worked to ensure that this was so.) My instinct was that the attitudes shown in these cases added up to an anti-working-class witch-hunt.

In the Colwell inquiry the term 'witch-hunt' was used regarding the blame attached to the social worker handling the case. But the real object of blame was the unrespectable working class: all that section of it who aren't contenders for the 50-years-of-service award or the Mrs Britain title. The
social worker was merely blamed for not spotting the trouble in time, and of course a crew of her colleagues went in to defend her by whining about their terrible 'casework loads': how they suffer in the course of helping us. The newspapers created an image of stupid, drunken, irresponsible parents who have to be kept an eye on. It was mentioned that Maria was often late for school, that she had several times been treated for diarrhoea, that she wet the bed when returning from visits to her foster parents. This frightened me because all these things (only substituting 'father' for 'foster parents') are true of my son, and I know he has emotional problems. I became concerned about his cleanliness and punctuality at nursery school - anything to avoid their labelling us a problem family any more than they already did.

Even some soft cops themselves, such as this Guardian correspondent, and the 'radical social workers' outfit, Case Con, recognise the deficiencies of the state's approach. The Guardian writer takes the usual line of those who are relatively humanitarians and suggests that homelessness and mental illness can literally drive people insane; but he overlooks the thing which really destroys people, and which lies behind the material deprivations as well - lack of autonomy. (Like anyone of his class, he's also unaware that the state doesn't want to solve these problems.) He thinks that more supportive behaviour on the part of the social services might help. But social workers can only do harm because they represent more control over people besides that imposed by other parts of capitalist society. However kindly they may feel, however much they may aim at helping others to help themselves, any suggestion from them can be justly construed as an order backed by a threat, because they have coercive powers.

Working-class people are slaves. I remember an art teacher's comment that in ancient Egypt 'if you were a common man your life wasn't worth a nickel!' and I wonder how much this has changed. People have to be wage-slaves to get those few commodities that the employers' market permits them.

Sometimes these don't even include housing or enough food, so they have to become direct prisoners of the state and its means-tested benefits. Nothing is more destructive of personality than slavery. To quote a Case-Con statement: 'Social work practice maintains important aspects of this individualistic ideology, perpetuating the myth of the individual being totally responsible for his own actions and ideas, whereas in reality the individual is denied the opportunity to achieve this.' But even a Case-Con member does harm by being a social worker, especially if she/he accepts a state job. The contact with people who have coercive powers, whether they use them or not, is enough to terrify and humiliate social-work 'clients' and thus lessen their ability to cope.

Consider the three situations of baby-battering, wife-battering, and adoption.

In one of the first such cases, a little girl, according to the newspaper report, was sent to collect the family's benefit and when she brought it home it was less than expected, her stepfather flew into a rage and beat her to death. The mother was present and apparently neither called the police nor offered violent resistance. The man's reaction was abnormal; many people have been faced with such a situation without killing anyone; but who knows how many previous defeats and anxieties had preceded this last straw? He didn't kill her because the benefit was too small and he blamed her for it; but because he had to be collecting 'benefit' at all and couldn't get his own and the family's substance as men are expected to do. The passive mother didn't realise how far his rage would go until it was too late, and women are trained to feel helpless in the presence of violence. It's easy to swear that you would act differently, but how do you know you would?

In another case, a man killed his baby when he came home and found all the power cut off for non-payment.

A letter to an advice column from a mother who said she loved her baby but was periodically overcome by impulses to hurt it, and had hit it a few times, contained the statement 'Maybe it's because I had to get
married on account of him.' Why should a woman have to get married to have a child; why should that be the only alternative to overwork on the one hand or dependency on the other, with poverty either way?

A newspaper report on a medical conference investigating baby-battering observed: 'Any of the cases involved working mothers.' This would be interpreted by conservatives as evidence that women should be housewives, but that conclusion wouldn’t follow if working mothers didn’t have to make 4 journeys a day, do without leisure, feel inadequate because the house isn’t clean, and on top of this feel guilty about working at all.

Mothers in Action sent round a circular to members saying that the pressures on unsupported mothers might lead to child-abuse and encouraging them to talk about it and seek help. By 'help', unfortunately, they meant state counselling. The trouble is that all women partially lose their children because child-raising imposes such a terrible choice in this society, between dependency or a hopeless exhausting struggle to survive. We’re not allowed to give our children the joyous love that comes from freedom and reasonable security. To a lesser extent this applies to men also: they too are tied to a dreary domestic scene and made to feel inadequate because they can’t be better ‘providers’ - when they’re in no position to do any active providing at all; only to obey the bosses who provide through them.

In a case where a mother lost patience and shoved a dummy into a baby’s mouth, and it died before an operation could be performed, the father was acquitted and the judge remarked that she was ‘unstable and immature’. The newspaper report said that the father didn’t want the child and had urged his wife to have it adopted. She should have felt free to leave a man with such an attitude, but of course women can’t survive that way. How can you expect people to be stable when their life situation is unhappy and so inherently unstable, or to be mature when they have to play the role of children all their lives, vis-à-vis employers, husbands, bureaucrats?

The old moralistic words have been replaced by pseudo-scientific ones like unstable, immature and inadequate. We’re all inadequate when our power to act is denied fulfillment.

Wife-battering has recently been in the news as the latest social problem for liberals to wring their hands about, and charitable centres have been set up to help the victims and their children. But a woman in any unhappy relationship should be able to pick her suit-case, pick up her kids, and leave, without facing destitution and homelessness and having to become an object of charity. (Where the man wants custody it should be settled privately, perhaps with the help of more objective friends, not by a judge.) That she can’t be in the real disgrace, not just the extreme abuses of her situation. Social workers and liberals won’t recognise this; they still regard marriage or its imitation, cohabitation, as the norm. Nowadays the ruling class even gives fashionable approval to group sex or open marriage. The one thing which isn’t contemplated is freedom for women or men to bring up kids on their own - an arrangement which rejects marriage rather than merely varying it. (It’s no use saying ‘if you want to be free, don’t have kids.’ That’s just accepting the status quo.)

Liverpool Council won’t give housing priority to battered wives because it doesn’t want to be ‘involved in marriage breakdown’. Someone has to be murdered before people will admit that the sacred institution has failed. So besides the loss of home and income and dignity, the battered wife has to feel that somehow she is to blame for being a failure at marriage, if only by picking such a bad husband. Since she can’t comfortably leave him anyway, every effort is made to patch up the so-called marriage once the acute crisis is over. It’s like trying to get a prisoner to have a good relationship with the guard.

I wonder how many unions would last long if the financial obstacles to the woman’s leaving were removed. I’ve read of a woman taking her baby and running out into the snow because her husband had installed his mistress in the house and she couldn’t stand it any longer; a friend of mine and her 3-year-old were walking the streets looking for a flat one Christmas day because the father wanted
Adoption. The Children's Bill was dropped when Parliament was recalled: it may appear again and summarizes an anti-natural-parents trend in court cases and social work policy. This bill makes it possible for the authorities to assume parental rights over kids who have been in care 3 years; makes it harder for single mothers to adopt their own children; and weights adoption and fostering in favour of adoptive rather than natural parents. This sounds to some people OK, particularly if they've been reading the newspaper sob stories about kids wrenching from adoptive households to be returned to natural mothers (who are always subtly depicted as irresponsible and capricious) - somehow you don't see photographs of natural parents and their kids screaming and collapsing when separated. But those people forget that most natural parents in these cases are working-class and/or unmarried and have given up the children under pressure.

Shirley Frost writing in Freedom says 'Even some Case-Con social workers who are supposed to be radical, left-wing, etc., and have supported housing struggles, think adoption a good thing. One social worker has said she supports anything that 'smashes the family'. She should start with the families of well-to-do suburbanites, not the families who have already been mercilessly crushed by low incomes, housing shortage and bourgeoisie morality.' Who does that social worker think gets to adopt kids, anyway? Communists? Gay couples?

The bill is an anti-working-class, anti-women's rights, pro-marriage measure. How smug these adoptive parents are. How kind it was of them to give good homes to these poor neglected little bastards. Doesn't such a parent realize that she or he is no different from the people who buy babies from starving families in the streets of Naples? It would be all right if their motive was to get the kids out of institutions, but then they should do all they can legally and financially to restore the kid to its natural parent(s), unless the latter are both dead or really don't want it. Do adoptive parents imagine that many parents want to give up a child, or would do so except in desperate circumstances or under intimidating pressure from social workers? We're assured that all the state cares about is the welfare of children. If that were so, it would
do away with the conditions which cause them to be parted from their natural parents in the first place.

Even in those cases where parents don't want their children the state would rather keep them in institutions than find homes for them. In 'Paid Servant', Edward Braithwaite describes his experiences as a social worker in the field of child care, a job he was offered on the theory that his knowledge of the black community would be useful. The book centres round his efforts to place a mulatto child; in this case, the mother really didn't want it. He found one family after another which seemed suitable, but his bosses kept creating objections and delays and it was a long time before the child was placed. He tells us that the social-work pigs, while claiming it's difficult to place black children, do all they can to discourage prospective adopters by asking if they're aware of the problems they might face and if not, obligingly providing a long list. In one case a white family was warned that if they took in a little black boy there might be trouble with his white half-sisters when he reached adolescence! Shirley Frost's article mentions that one quarter of kids in care are West Indian - which in itself tells you that family breakup is a socio-economic, not a psychological, problem.

Middlesex Polytechnic

MA Deviancy and Social Policy

Social Science Graduates can apply now for this two year part-time course which includes study in deviant theory, social problems, social control, and social policy. Graduates not holding degree in the social sciences and individuals with some experience of social service work are also encouraged to participate. Part-time course starts in October and is conducted for both academic and practitioners with a view to equip them with the necessary knowledge and experience to relate developments in criminology and deviancy theory to practical problems.

This state which cares so much for the welfare of children runs (among many other such institutions for the homeless) Brighamgate Lodge in Grimsby, where a matron forbade a mother to give a 5-month-old baby a bottle, on the grounds that it was too old for one. The matron gave the child Weetabix instead, and when its brother tried to give it a bottle in secret, she took the bottle away (Women's Voice, Sept.-Oct. '73). But that's an extreme case, apologists for the social services will say: the matron was obviously unsuitable! Families shouldn't be subject to the whims of state employees, suitable or not.

When people ask for better housing and other state action to keep families together, what they're asking for (whether they know it or not) is not a special favour, that is, intervention into a situation in which it was previously neutral. The state isn't neutral now. All its power stands behind landlords, shopkeepers, employers. It will put you in prison for forcibly resisting violent eviction or for stealing food for your children; thus the employers who provide the necessary money are also sustained. When you ask for action on your side, you're only asking for a slight counterweight to the huge weight of force on the other side.

But anarchists know there's no point in asking for fairness from the ruling class. Its Children's Bill, reeking with concern for the children it has caused to become imprisoned and unlived in its institutions, is part of the rest of its current attack on the paid workers and female sub-workers who keep it rich. The threat to take children can be used against strikers, claimants, squatters, feminists, prisoners' wives and husbands, anyone they want to control or make an example of. People will think 'Better not antagonize the landlord'... 'Don't risk losing your job'... 'Make sure Johnny doesn't play truant'... 'Maybe better get married to be on the safe side - after all, we know it doesn't mean anything'. And when they do take children they won't admit it's an assault; no, they're helping you, they're solving social problems created by your inadequacy.

And if you tell them it's the fault of their class they'll say oh no, they know better because of their 'professional training' and their 'experience', the usual emperor's clothes. The only purpose of their training is to convince these pigs that they know something so that they can believe in themselves and mystify their victims; they speak of 'techniques' and 'technical language', of 'fieldwork' as though they were archaeologists, of social 'science'.

The threat to take children may not be part of a conscious conspiracy but results from the effect of reactionary political trends on the naive and mindless types who become
professional social workers.

It's a class matter even in the few cases where the victims are well-to-do people labelled neurotic or whatever. The ruling class stays in power mostly by keeping the workers down but also by distorting its own members' personalities. When the distortion fails, when a rich or middle-class person can't fit in and everything good in her or him turns to destruction and self-destruction, that person is also a victim of the class system.

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Two professional social workers to help develop LA and voluntary social services.

The first post, based in Edinburgh, is concerned with developing social work services for children including, in the first instance, work to establish methods of social diagnosis and assessment of children's needs. The second, based in Glasgow, is concerned with developing social work services in relation to elderly people, including the elderly and the disabled.

The Social Work Services Group carries out the functions of the Secretary of State for Scotland in relation to the development of local authority and voluntary services under the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

Candidates, preferably aged 21 or over, must hold a university qualification in Applied Social Studies or an equivalent social studies qualification and relevant experience at a senior level. For the Glasgow post, experience in services for older people would be an advantage. Starting salary will be within the quoted range according to qualifications and experience. Promotion prospects to £2,000.

For full details and an application form, to be returned by 30th March, 1973, write to Social Services Department, 2 Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1XV, quoting 7/22.

**SOCIAL WORK SERVICES GROUP**

SCOTTISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Anarchist solutions. We don't object to reforms so far as they do any good. But the ruling class will never permit any changes which do any good, because only by means which seriously threaten its power could we start to become happier, saner, more loving people. The state wants us to be miserable, twisted, guilt-ridden: too much so to fight; it wants to intimidate us by modern poor laws and child imprisonment. It's the height of naiveté to tell the state, 'These policies do no good; they're psychologically harmful; better to provide houses for the families; can't you see that?' The state can see it and that's exactly why they maintain those policies.

Family problems will be significantly reduced only in a society operating by voluntary work and free distribution, with no power existing to enforce the exaction of labour, goods or tokens in exchange for access to the means of production or to necessary goods. Then women or men who look after kids won't be marked as non-workers, with child care at best communalized by becoming another function of paid state employees; people won't have to justify parental work by means of tokens proving their usefulness to a boss. Parents will have a choice of how much time to spend child-minding and how much in other work; communal care will be done by people who love kids, not by those who happen to fight onto it as an easy-to-obtain sinecure; people will be able to choose what family and sex arrangements they enter into or don't enter into, without fear of economic sanctions. Old and handicapped people will stop being discriminated against and marked as dependents because of the need to obtain money in exchange for work.

Meanwhile, the best way to fight the distress arising from this society's pressures is to fight this society. It's healthy, giving to play an active role. Don't turn your anger against yourself. The sense of inadequacy of oppressed people, partly because of the sins the rulers find expedient to ascribe to them - 'If you had any guts you would stop moaning and try to get ahead by hard work', etc. - is one of the state's most powerful weapons. Self-hate is what always causes hatred of the nearest scapegoat, tragically the people we really love. Turn the hate against your enemies. Don't be taken in by 'expert counselling' from the imprisoners of babies.

Anarchists don't believe personal problems are unimportant. Personal happiness or unhappiness is the end product of any society, it's where it's at. If you're not happy, what's the point of any form of society? We want a revolution made by human beings, not lantern-jawed heroes: you know the kind of society they'll give you.

We hope that anyone with personal problems will contribute her or his experience and strength to our struggle.

Kathy Perlo
WHO KILLED

CARLO TRESCA?

JUST OVER THIRTY years ago, on the evening of January 11, 1943, two men picked their way along the dimmed-out sidewalk of wartime New York’s Fifth Avenue. At exactly twenty minutes to ten, as they were about to step off the curb at the corner of West Fifteenth Street, a short man with a hat pulled over his eyes walked up to them, fired several shots at one of them, and disappeared into the darkness. The man who had been gunned down died almost immediately.

A few seconds after the shooting, Menz von Erpecom and Otto Kjeld Nastooth, Norwegian Consular officials out strolling, saw a man run across Fifteenth Street and jump into a moving car, a dark Ford sedan. The first Police Department report was that a Chicago newspaperman had been shot "by a person or persons unknown".

Who was the murdered man? Why was he shot? What was the reason? What did he know?

His name was Carlo Tresca. He was born in Italy in 1879. In 1904, he emigrated to the United States. Carlo Tresca was a tall, slender, very handsome man who, by his early thirties, wore a beard to cover a bad scar on the side of his face, which he had received in an attack on him in Pittsburgh.

Tresca was not, however, an ordinary immigrant. He had become an anarchist. And he soon became well-known in the Italian-American anarchist movement. Although he rarely spoke English in public, he was a dynamic and eloquent speaker in Italian, and was a powerful "agitator" and organiser. About 1910, Carlo Tresca started up, and edited, his own anarchist paper, L’Avvenire. Although not actually a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, the Wobblies as they were called, until 1913, he had previously worked with the IWW. And in 1913, he moved to New York, editing his paper there. During the period both before the First World War and throughout the war, he was arrested many times, sometimes for allegedly libelling politicians, for supporting striking workers and for defending free speech campaigns.

For many decades, Carlo Tresca was the most well-known of all the Italian-American anarchist militants. He was closely involved in the struggles of railroad, mining, textile and hotel workers. He opposed the first "imperialist war". Following the war, he was closely involved with the Sacco and Vanzetti Defence Committee. With the coming to power of Mussolini and the Fascisti in Italy, Tresca joined the Anti-Fascist Alliance, a largely Communist "front" organisation, which also had many non-Communist members. Furthermore, what at first might seem odd, he also joined two other Communist "front" organisations - in 1929, the Reception Committee For Soviet Flyers, which had been set up by the Friends of the Soviet Union, and the New York branch of the John Reed Club. Despite his membership, from around 1929 to 1937, of a number of Communist organisations - and his close relationships with leading Communists - Carlo Tresca always considered himself an anarchist, perhaps in much the same way as the "soviet" anarchist, Bill Shatov, also considered himself one. For
reasons that will come to light later in this narrative, Tresca had become extremely anti-Communist by the late thirties. At the time of his assassination he was editing Il Martello, which was anti-Fascist, anti-
mosan, and, above all, anti-Communist. His death, therefore, was an international sensation.

Who, then, were his friends? Who were his enemies? And, even more important, who were his former friends and associates who had, later, become his enemies?

We must go back, first, to the year 1912. On January 11, the workers in the textile mills of Lawrence, New Hampshire, went on strike against pay cuts. The largest group of strikers - over 7,000 of them - were Italians. The IWW were the mainspring of the strike. And they invited, among others, two well-known Italian militants, Joseph Ettor and Arturo Giovannitti, who was editor of the paper, Il Proletario, to come up from New York to help the strikers. Both were working-class speakers in Italian and English. On arrival, they held meetings and assisted in the organization of the strike. But on January 30, there was a fracas between some of the workers and the police, at which a woman picket was killed. In an attempt to weaken the strike, the police arrested Ettor, Giovannitti and another Italian and charged them with the murder of the woman.

The outcome of the strike was largely a victory for the Lawrence mill-workers; but the three Italians remained in jail. The IWW started, in May, a campaign for their release. At the suggestion of Giovannitti, the Defence Committee, which included the well-known and fiery IWW girl speaker, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, invited Carlo Tresca to help in the building of a mass movement for the release of Ettor and Giovannitti. Large meetings were held and, mainly due to Tresca's and Flynn's organizing abilities, a general strike was called throughout Massachusetts. This had its effect. Ettor and Giovannitti were brought to trial, in Salem, in September. They, and their other comrade, were almost immediately acquitted.

Such were the circumstances which brought Carlo Tresca and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn together. Both were estranged from their "legal" spouses. They soon became "lovers" and, except when on various propaganda tours, lived together for over thirteen years, and also remained close for some considerable time after. Through Gurley Flynn, Tresca met many American radicals, socialists and, later on, Communists.

But Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was not an anarchist. In 1906, at the age of fifteen, she read Bellamy, Morris and quite a lot of Kropotkin but later in the year she was introduced to the works of Marx and Engels. She became a socialist. And for many years, she combined the mainly syndicalist tactics of the IWW with the socialist doctrines of Karl Marx. Between 1906 and 1916, she was very active in the IWW. Indeed, Joe Hill just before his execution called her the original Rebel Girl. Following the Russian Revolution, she, like very many "Wobblies", former "Wobblies" and quite a lot of socialists and anarchists, supported the Bolsheviks. She moved closer and closer to the young Communist Party, joining a number of its "front" organizations as did Carlo Tresca, and she became closely associated with many top American Communists, as well as a number of lesser-known characters of a rather sinister type. Among them were William Z. Foster, a one-time leading "Wobby" and later General Secretary of the American Communist Party, Louis Budenz, Benjamin Gitlow, Juliet Poyntz and George Mink. In 1937, Gurley Flynn openly joined the Communist Party.

Closely linked in the chain of events leading up to the murder of Carlo Tresca is Juliet Stuart Poyntz, a political associate of Flynn's. She may also have been one of Carlo's occasional "lovers". He had, as Gurley Flynn noted, a "roaming eye"!

However, one day in 1937, at the end of May, or perhaps the beginning of June, the exact date is not known - Juliet Poyntz walked out of her room in the Women's Association Clubhouse at 353 West 57th Street, in New York. She did not pack any bags, leave a note behind or tell anyone that she was going away. She was never to return.
Who, then, was Juliet Stuart Poynts?

She had been a schoolteacher, and later a Professor at Hunter College. She was an extremely able and forceful speaker. She had joined the American Communist Party soon after its formation. She had, both nationally and internationally, supported the Stalin faction for many years. In 1931, she visited the Soviet Union and spent some time in Moscow. After her return, she was appointed National Organiser for the Women's Division of the American Communist Party. She, like Gurley Flynn and Carlo Tresca, was a member of various Communist "front" organisations, including the American Association For Labour Defence, the National Committee of International Defence, the Labor Research Bureau, Russian Reconstruction Farms and, with Tresca, the Reception Committee for Soviet Flyers. But in 1934 Juliet Poynts suddenly ceased all public associations with the American Communist Party. In 1936, however, she was seen in the company of George Mink in Moscow. Such an association was ominous. It was also another link in the chain of events.

And George Mink?

He was originally a cab driver in Philadelphia. He was a short, rather dapper man. He joined the American Communist Party in 1926. Although he knew absolutely nothing about ships, he became organiser of the Marine Workers' Industrial Union, a Stalinist-controlled section of the Commnist International of Seamen and Harbour Workers, at its headquarters at 140 Broadway, New York. He was also organiser of the Stalinist-run International Seamen's Clubs of America.

George Mink was said to be related, by marriage, to A. Losovsky (S.A. Drisko), one-time boss of the Moscow-based Red International of Labour Unions. Mink visited the Soviet Union, for the first time, in 1928. He was also a member, with Poynts and Tresca, of the Committee For Soviet Flyers.

Mink began to travel widely. From about 1930 onwards, Moscow saw more of him than New York. In 1935, he was arrested by the Danish Police in Copenhagen, tried and found guilty of espionage "on behalf of a foreign power" - the Soviet Union. After serving his sentence, he returned to Moscow during the summer of 1936. Under the alias of Alfred Herts, he went to Barcelona in Spain. And in 1937, he was charged together with Vittorio Vidali (alias Carlos Contreras, alias Arturo Someni), by the Spanish anarchists, with the murder of Camillo Berneri and his comrade, Barbarici. He was last reported, in 1939, in Mexico, where he was suspected of assisting Mexican and Spanish Communists, together with GPU agents Vittorio Vidali (under his alias of Carlos Contreras) and Ramon Mercader (alias Jacques Mornard, alias Frank Jackson), Trotsky's assassin, with the organisation of the murder of Leon Trotsky. He was credited with a number of murders, including Juliet Poynts and other former Soviet secret agents.

George Mink was a GPU-NKVD agent. For some time after the disappearance of Juliet Poynts nothing was said - publicly! Then, Carlo Tresca charged that George Mink had disposed of her. Tresca said that he had the facts, and that he was on the trail of others. He also said that Mink had been sent by the GPU, from Moscow to Spain, to murder the famous anarchist, Camillo Berneri. Such revelations and allegations were dangerous.

Louis Budenz, a former friend of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, one-time member of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party and also a member of the Committee For Soviet Flyers with Mink, Poynts and Carlo Tresca, stated, after leaving the Communist Party in 1945, that he had been informed at the time of Poynts's disappearance that she 'had been liquidated by the GPU'. Furthermore, Benjamin Gitlow, a former member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (the Comintern), and a one-time leading American Communist who, later, became an oppositionist, also asserted a number of years after the assassination of Tresca that Juliet Poynts had been lured into a car in Central Park, driven away and murdered. He said that she had been "a disillusioned GPU agent". Following Budenz's and Gitlow's revelations, Gurley Flynn accused them of being "stoil-pigeons" and FBI agents! But neither Budenz nor Gitlow, however, backed up Carlo Tresca when he first accused Mink of the murder. After Tresca's murder,
Budens and Gitlow commented that there had been open talk in the top leadership of the Communist Party, following Tresca's accusations, that "Tresca would pay with his life for his treachery".

But what had the police done to find the murderer of Carlo Tresca? Whom, if anyone, did they suspect? They took a number of people in for questioning, including Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and George Mink's GPU associate in Spain, Vittorio Vidali (later to become boss of the Communists in the port of Trieste). They released him later "for lack of evidence". Their main line of investigation was also interesting. It, moreover, added to the mysterious circumstances of the shooting on the corner of West Fifteenth Street on that January evening in 1943.

When the police arrived at the scene, they found an unfired gun and one bullet, which did not fit it, on the sidewalk. They never traced the owner of that gun, but it is likely that it was Tresca's own weapon. Nor did they find the murder weapon; though they removed one bullet from Tresca's body.

Later that night, the cops found a black Ford sedan abandoned at Eighteenth Street, near Seventh Avenue, just a few blocks from the scene of the murder. The two Norwegian diplomats said that it looked like the car into which they had seen a man jump after shots had been fired. The car's registration number turned out to be a non-existent Charles Pappas, of a non-existent address!

The news pictures of the car brought in some "useful" information from the New York State Parole Division. On the night of the murder, two parole officers had been assigned to follow a certain Carmine Galante, an Italian-American parolee well-connected in the narcotic mobs of the Lower East Side. However, Galante had given them the slip by jumping into a moving Black Ford sedan. One of the parole officers managed to take down the number of the car, which turned out to be the same as that of the one abandoned near the murder.

Galante was identified as one of the occupants of the Ford car, was soon picked up (he did not try to hide or escape) and was charged with parole violation. He was not informed that he was Suspect No. 1 in a murder case. He at first denied having been in the car; but later, after he had received a "grilling", he admitted it, but claimed that he had got out and spent the early part of the evening at a cinema with a girlfriend, watching Casablanca. Later, he said, they toured a few bars and then both retired to a hotel room for the night. The girl was identified, and confirmed his story. After his arrest, Carmine Galante was put into a police lineup. Carlo Tresca's friend, Giuseppe Calabi, could not say that Carmine was or was not the killer. Neither could the Norwegian diplomats identify the suspect.

Meanwhile, the anarchists and many socialists argued that Tresca had been assassinated by the Communists; whilst the Communists denied that they were responsible, arguing that such allegations against them were diversionary Fascist tactics designed to undermine the anti-Axis war effort. A Carlo Tresca Memorial Committee was set up under the chairmanship of the veteran Socialist Party leader, Norman Thomas. Its object was to find the killer. The Committee functioned for very many years (it may still be in existence, for all I know), but has never come up with any concrete evidence. The Police Department also investigated the murder for many years (about twelve all told), assigning, at least in the early stages, six assistant district attorneys, six members of the DA's office staff of ten investigators, fifty New York cops, police from other cities, the FBI, officers of the City and State Departments of Correction, the State Parole Division, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the US Alcohol Tax Unit. And
still they could only find one suspect - Carmine Galante.

After a while, they put him in a cell with Emilio "Nick" Funicello, an Italian and a professional stool pigeon, who had been trying to get himself out of jail since 1932. The Assistant District Attorney had previously used him to get a first-degree murder conviction against a man named Williams. At the time of Tresca's murder, Williams' appeal was before the State Court of Appeals.

Funicello soon got to work on Galante. And after a while, he reported to the DA that Galante had "opened up". According to Nick Funicello, Galante had told him that two men named Buster and Pop had pointed Tresca out to him, so that he would know whom to bump off. Nothing, however, was said about a motive. And that, according to Funicello, was all he had found out. Following Funicello's "revelations", the Court of Appeals torpedoed him as a prosecution witness against Galante by reversing the conviction in the Williams case. The police now had no suspect.

Galante returned to jail as a parole violator, to complete his sentence. Then the Federal Immigration Bureau ordered Funicello to be deported as an undesirable alien. From 1943 to 1955, DA Hogan managed to keep the government from deporting Funicello, arguing that the Tresca case was still alive. But on August 10, 1955, he was deported to Italy.

Officially, the Tresca case was now closed.

Not only did Carlo Tresca know too much, but he had said too much!

Who killed Carlo Tresca? Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Tresca's former lover, died in 1964, without saying another word; Galante left jail, and was never accused again, either by the police or the Carlo Tresca Memorial Committee; Nick Funicello never repeated Galante's alleged confession; George Mink, Juliet Pouyat's likely murderer, disappeared "into the night", and Vidali was safe in Trieste.

Peter E. Newell

You might have noticed that ANARCHY has been coming out much more frequently lately than it has done for quite a long time. This is for a number of reasons, a major one being that several new people have joined the collective.

SPREAD ANARCHY!

This would seem to be a good time to increase circulation. You can help by taking more copies to sell locally or for bookshops in your area.

CREATE ANARCHY!

Anybody wanting to help produce ANARCHY should come along to a meeting. They are held on alternate Thursdays - why not write to find out the date of the next one.

THE ANARCHY COLLECTIVE
THE POLITICS OF PREGNANCY

IN ALL the storm about safe, simple and free contraception and abortion on demand people seem to assume that women are saying they no longer want to have kids, and all that it entails. I found this attitude prevalent when I was pregnant — men expressed surprise that I, a woman involved in women’s liberation, should be pregnant — as if the two were incompatible. It seems that the demand for a woman’s right to choose has been forgotten or ignored.

Leading on from people’s confusion about someone like me being pregnant I found that people reacted as if I were no longer politically viable — and in writing this I want not only to discuss the reasons I became pregnant and the fight I had when pregnant but to justify why I feel this has to be written. Among the Anarchy collective itself I think there will be people who see this article as apolitical, but will not come forward with that view in order to humour me. Those of you reading this that fit into the straight male anarchist role will probably wonder what this is doing in Anarchy. Well I’ll tell you...

Some of you don’t include women in your political life at all — politics is for on the factory floor, the picket line, the demo, the meetings, the written word — women cook for you, screw with you and generally keep you going on a personal level... never the twain shall meet. Token sufferance of women’s liberation is not an answer so some of you can wipe those smug looks off your faces for a start.

Kids exist but again not in the political life. Some people argue against having kids because they take up too much time that could be spent on “political” work. My answer to all these things is that if women have no place in the revolution then it’s not a revolution — if kids take up too much time we must organise child care in a communal way to free everyone for some of the time. If we wait till after the revolution to bear children we shall have no kids. If we make no provision for existing children then again it’s no revolution.

Everything we do is political. You are not revolutionary if you demonstrate outside Fords or write political theses but oppress the woman and kids you live with. If you believe that a woman’s place is in the home but your place is agitating on the factory floor then your revolution is towards nothing better than we have now. The pig is still in your head and your home, however much you despise him in your workplace.

I became pregnant not through a mistake but because I wanted to. Unfortunately in this society and with all the pressures still in my head from my upbringing in a capitalist world, the very fact that I chose to become pregnant was not a simple well-worked-out desire but a confused melee of pressures, uncertainty, vague ideas of proving myself and the like, along with a desire to experience pregnancy and see how I would react: would I become the prototype mothercare woman again or would I keep my present identity?
It seemed as if the only way I would get to live with a kid on a long-term basis would be to have my own. Collective break up and the kids gone with their mothers leaving me childless again.

I now have a child; she is 6 months old and her care involves a lot of time. I am fortunate in that I have not become un-supported mother looking after a child 24 hours a day with no time to myself and other work. It is well pointing out that the phrase 'un-supported mother used by social security for women without husbands with kids equally applies to many women in a marital situation where they alone take responsibility for the children.

As I said, when collective I was part of broke up the mothers took the kids. This seemed to me not very far from the oppression we are fighting. We end up with women's collectives being full of kids and men's empty of them. I was terror-struck once my child became a reality with the thought that I had her as a responsibility for the next 16 years or so. Everywhere we go women are pressured to be good total mothers. Live THROUGH our kids and our husbands. Give up our lives, personalities and desires to satisfy other people's. So it was that a friend in both a political and emotional decision offered to be the one responsible for the child. This was something we discussed and agreed on before her birth. He was emotionally attached to her and politically wanted to break down the inevitability that he would not be involved with her care because he was a man. There are many advantages to this: my dread of the total responsibility does not come from a logical decision that I cannot cope but from conditioning always around me that if I can't I am a failure. He does not have that same pressure. To me it is a relief that enables me to enjoy my time looking after her and possibly this makes coping all the more easy because I don't have to assess my success or failure in the usual way.

However there is the pig in my head and in your heads too, giving me feelings of guilt and confusion. When out together at an anarchist meeting people expressed great surprise because it was not I who left early with the then 2 months old baby. When seeing a move to the door people said goodbye to all of us - 'Oh, I'm not going' - strange looks, I felt guilty, they felt threatened. For the men C. was acting strangely. 'What's wrong with him?' 'He's really into kids, isn't he?' One of us had to leave and it was the man and not the woman that went. One day I hope that will not be so unusual a situation that people feel threatened - the women because I was not acting out the same role they had to. I was saying it doesn't have to be like that: the men because C. was taking a responsibility they had shamed. Well, how long can you shun it for and still be a viable prospect in a revolutionary situation? If you think I'm just sticking around to tend your wounds to the barricades and open up a soup kitchen for weary soldiers, think again brothers. Think long and hard.

The moment a woman becomes pregnant she is assaulted by all manner of propaganda. When the enormity of it all hit me I was really surprised that so many women go through pregnancy and childbirth and survive to continue the fight. Nothing at all encourages women having kids to become anything other than a mother. I was given 2 books on my first ante-natal visit, one a Family Doctor publication, the other The Baby Book. Both written entirely by male doctors with the exception of one chapter on breast feeding that dealt with the aesthetic fulfillment of the method with no bearing on practicalities.

The distribution of these booklets by hospitals and health centres, free, gives the propagandists an almost blanket coverage of the group they are trying to reach. A pregnant woman in this country who escapes hospital and/or clinics is so rare that I think she does not exist. So that the message these books relay becomes very important because I think it goes a long way in the conditioning of women to be mothers and to smother any subversion of that role.

By filling in a card, post free, one can receive a monthly publication called "Maternity and Mothercraft" and numerous leaflets on washing machines, nappies, prams, baby foods ETCETERA. Not only do these happy informative leaflets come plopping through my letterbox at intervals, but I find myself on a very wide mailing list - and even a year after my first fatal visit I find I am the unwilling receiver of countless offers of cookery cards and competitions offering me a full
colour life if I will only fill in the coupon.

There was a very important chapter on pregnancy and appearance in both of the original books. "This is the time to look and be feminine for there is nothing more feminine than a woman carrying a baby." "If you look good it will give pleasure to others. If you give pleasure to your husband and to others you will feel a lot better." In books like this it is not difficult to find support for the doctrine that women get their pleasure second hand. While pregnant we are supposed to feel enjoyment through seeing our husbands' eyes light up as we try on that slinky little black number that looked so beautiful on the unpregnant Mothercare model.

I am confused as to these people's definition of femininity: I presume that the unpregnant Mothercare models have lots of it - they look slender enough to twist round your little finger and eat out of your hand. Ask a woman who's 8 months pregnant and lugging her weekly shopping bags onto a crowded bus in the middle of a hot June day if she knows she's at her most feminine, attractive and appealing, and if she feels anything like I did last summer, and has any energy left at all, she'll punch you in the face.

Husbands now feature in these books. We are now told to include them in our pregnancy and child care. Ahh! I thought, gone are the dark days of hiding one's lump and dropping out of any social life, gone is the time when men were men and fainted at the sight of a shitty nappy, here at last is the good bit, a revolutionary doctor speaks. Well not exactly... while saying that the father (remember that word it's terribly important) must help, they point out that changing nappies is a bit much to ask, and mother (another important word; capitalism revolves round it) must always feed the baby because he (babies are always boys in books and hospitals; I felt pressured to ask where do little girls come from?) needs his mother's undivided love and attention. However this situation will not do - no, it's not because we'd drop dead from exhaustion without any help and no, it's nothing to do with giving us some time of our own (why! we wouldn't know what to do with spare time). You see, if we spend all our time loving baby, poor little hubby will feel unloved and get jealous - so we must encourage him to paint the nursery and oil the pram wheels, so he feels a real part of this glorious adventure and then when dear baby is asleep we must get our hair done and don another little black number - only it has to be a new, exciting, no longer pregnant one - and relax with hubby over a quiet candlelit dinner - which we rustle up in an unruffled jiffy.

I think these books go some way in explaining nausea in pregnancy.

It would be funny if it weren't for the fact that for some women these books are all the aid they have in getting through pregnancy and childbirth and the year's care involved afterwards. Can you wonder that many women don't have time for politics, don't have much to say in the evening when husbands come home? Could you carry on a stimulating conversation about washing nappies, burping a kid, and the queue at the cash desk in Sainsbury's? If one is to fulfill ALONE the requirements that a young child and a man demand they have, there is no time to get out of the trap.

You may have noticed the word husband and father comes into this article. It seems to have slipped the editor's mind that not all women who have kids are married and not all babies have fathers in anything but a short sharp biological sense which may have lasted nothing more than a few minutes. This is not a mistake; hospitals go to great pains to call everyone Mrs. at ante-natal clinics even when requested not to. Throughout nine
months I was called Miss only once, when I screamed it several times at very close range into a doctor's face. You see they would much rather we were married and if we aren't they will pretend and yes we can have the FATHER present at the birth—maybe in the excitement of it all he'll propose to us and then everything will have a happy ending.

I went to three hospitals during my pregnancy— I walked out of the first, was thrown out of the second, and finally came to rest, unwillingly because there was no time left, at the third, which I walked out of 48 hours and 10 minutes after giving birth.

At the first (Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital), I managed to morally outrage a doctor who had the nerve to ask me personal questions and become extremely agitated at my answers. I had a stand-up row with the consultant when she refused to examine me in the presence of a male friend, she then threatened me with a caesarean section, and if it was some months later when this threat became an inevitability that I walked out... never to darken Miss Boutwood's doors again.

At the second hospital (University Hospital), I and two friends, one male and one female, posed a serious threat to the male consultant; it was after all HIS department and I was HIS patient and those notes were HIS too, and if I was so immature as to not want to be alone with him, then I obviously needed help, which he'd be too pleased to give me if my friends would wait outside (presumably to collect the body afterwards). Anyway he never allows husbands into his clinic. "You're not her husband?" "You're not the baby's father?" "Leave immediately! Men are not admitted to my clinic." "You're a man, how did you crawl in then?"

Unfortunately I forgot to touch my forelock when aiming this remark at the great and revered Mr. Brandt— it was a grave error. He refused to treat me. He publicly stated that to me and two witnesses and as soon as we had departed the enormity of his action caused him to ring my g.p. to ensure I was armoured soon, saying how we had threatened him and how extrovert I was and how it was all a put-up job. Give it a kick and it might not quite fall but my it shudders.

Well, non-deterred we set off for the next hospital on the list kindly provided by my g.p. I was after all 8 months pregnant and an unfortunate mistake by doctors at my birth rendered hospitalisation a necessary precaution. Did I say Mistake? By a doctor? What I obviously meant was that I was a difficult baby and my mother was an awkward patient. Doctors don't make mistakes!

By the time I reached the Royal Free Hospital they had a file nearly as bulky as I was and two blue stars were fixed to it. No one objected to the presence of a male friend; I was assured that he wasn't the father of the child, and no one threatened me when I refused to answer the questions I deemed unnecessary and un适宜, that is to say none of their business. One thing that did seem to cause them some dismay was that I too carried a bulky file under my arm. Everyone involved asked what it was and looked worried when I replied "Oh it's my hospital file." It's only worth taking one with you, and if after a long, hard struggle for information, when they patronisingly ask if you've any questions at the same time as they make for the door, it's a wonderful sight to see their faces fall as a friend pulls out a wad of paper covered in writing and says: "Yes we did have some questions didn't we?"

On my second visit (it becomes a weekly ritual by the 8th month) I was assigned a Dr. Wright - the irony of his name I hope will not escape you. Although nothing too devastating happened for
couple of weeks I think I ought to warn you that all was not roses at the Royal Free.

Two weeks before the day (you know, the most important day in any woman's life, the day Dr. Wright smiled at me and my child was born), the consultant, a woman, suggested I come in for the week before I'm due to rest and so they can keep an eye on me. I was a bit dubious about this, in the same way as I wouldn't walk into a police station and give myself up, also losing the last week of not having a child to look after - I was getting very nostalgic about playing darts in the pub every night and being able to screw without any worry. However it was pointed out to me by a friend that I would be in a very good position to sensate the hospital and staff - the ante-natales are held at the main hospital, while the in-patient gynaecological department is in the annexe at Liverpool Road. So I fixed a date and a time and accordingly turned up with my carrier bags of goodies and a woman friend, who was mistaken for my husband, as was I from the back.

I was by now very tired. It was June and very hot and it had been an uphill struggle to get the information they forever write down about 'my condition', to counter the shifty patronising doctor/patient relationship prevalent in hospitals - so that when Dr. Wright popped in (as he frequently did) and offered answers to my questions I felt that maybe it would be alright after all.

However not being totally without mistrust I did explain that I was having at least one person, of my own choosing, and possibly a group of people taking it in turns, with me constantly during my labour and the birth and afterwards. Oh yes, he said enthusiastically, I always think it's a good idea to have someone you know with you, that's quite alright.

It was decided that if nothing happened on Monday (when the calendar said it should) then I was to go down to the labour ward at around 9 a.m. on Wednesday morning to be induced. This actually suited me fine as it gave a day for my friends to plan for and I was getting mighty tired of being pregnant.

At twenty nine I was told to get on a stretcher by two porters. I refused, explaining that I was not going down until my friends arrived. They looked perplexed. The sister came to deal with me. I insisted again. She countered by saying that my friends wouldn't get in anyway, it was husbands only. I found that during labour I became less able to stand and argue logically and to my horror started crying when threatened by the staff. This horrified me simply because it's terribly difficult to argue when I'm crying and tired and wish the hell they'd all piss off and leave me and my friends to it. Anyway, in the nick of time, like all good fairy stories, there they are all smiling and apologetic for oversleeping only they were reading it all up again into the small hours.

And so we proceeded to the labour ward, where a stroppy consultant has the nerve to tell me she's been waiting ten minutes for me. "Don't give me that, I've been waiting nine months." My friends were refused entry while they broke the waters and put a catheter up my cunt to measure the contractions, and stuck a drip into my left hand (I'm left-handed). I continued to ask for them. I refused to get on the bed and the sister said "Take her back to the ward." I was already contracting - as they noticed - before they broke the waters but they were all there to do just that and once set on course the great hospital production line cannot, it seems, alter. When they had finished their various, sometimes painful, always frightening intrusions, R. walked in. She had had to fight for admittance on any level as they couldn't understand why a woman was there at all.

The nurses were actually very nice to us all, I mean the ones without power; they were considerate and enjoyed reading the book we had on childbirth, "Our Bodies Our Selves". All the other medical staff were insufferable, including the medical student. We had one moment of triumph when on seeing how relaxed I was and how well my controlled breathing was going they asked me if I had been to hospital relaxation classes. "No, I did exercises at home with friends." The importance of this answer lies in their total lack of understanding that friends, comrades, can fulfil tasks that they fail miserably at.

Giving birth in a friendly, relaxed,
prepared for atmosphere can be a very enjoyable and exciting event. In unfriendly, alien surroundings it can be terrifying. C. alone was there for the last hour and the birth as R. went off for a meeting and to get reinforcements; we all thought it was going to take another 12 hours! When I say C. alone I mean of friends - there were countless strangers milling around. But the presence of one real friend helped to make it a groovy occasion and we really enjoyed the first sight of a very small, amazingly colourful human being.

But we must be brought back to the stark reality of hospital life and so C. was shown out for a few minutes”, in fact a couple of hours, while they stitched up my sore and bleedin' gunt that they had viciously assaul ted with a large pair of scissors. The cut (episiotomy they call it) was the only truly painful part of labour as I experienced it - but painful it was. And the slow sowing up by the medical student, with a local anaesthetic that didn’t work, was one of the most painful and frightening experiences of my life.

Then to a room at the end of a long corridor, where the nurses couldn’t hear the bell, where no one entered except to hand me meals and tell me to feed the baby.

You cannot tell me there is nothing political in the pain, the fear, the isolation and the put downs.

You cannot persuade me that fighting these things is not a political fight.

And don’t dare to say that to come out of it fighting and to win is not a political victory. A beginning of destroying the hold they have over our bodies, our health, our lives and our deaths.

Charlotte Baggins

TREATMENT GIVEN THE RETARDED IN OUR SOCIETY CAN BE PARALLELED WITH THAT METED OUT TO THE MENTALLY ILL AND OTHER SOCIAL DEVIANTS: THEY ARE LABELLED, SET ASIDE AND DENIED THEIR INDIVIDUALITY.

JOOTHAM, our Mongol son, was born nearly two years ago. I suspected something could be wrong shortly after his birth. He did not give the lusty cry I had been led to expect, and later, while I was still in the delivery room, one nurse muttered to another something about “this baby hasnt...”. The second nurse replied with an over-loud “We don’t want to talk about that here, do we?”

The next day staff took him away for feeding and examinations, with hurried and patronizing explanations such as “He is small and needs special care”. All the other babies were fed by their mothers, and besides I knew smallness did not necessarily equal special care. I strongly resented their interference, and wanted to feed him myself. However at the first opportunity I
counted fingers and toes, decided everything seemed intact and put all doubts from my mind. His lethargy I put down to the drugs used during delivery and although he had a strange fat deposit on his upper back, I ignored it, hoping it was typical of some new-born babies.

The following day he was again taken away at odd intervals. I insisted on a test feed because I needed to know for my own sanity that I could feed him as well as they. I could. They kept on about his sucking for some reason. They seemed to assume he couldn't. Again I hoped this was all because he was small and early. Later in the day Jotham developed jaundice and I began to latch onto that as the explanation for the staff's strange behaviour. Now they took him away for blood samples. The rest of that day and part of the following I cornered everyone I could for information about jaundice. My anxiety was rising all the time. I gained most information from a teaching sister who came around with a group of students. As they were using my baby I had no compunction in asking question after question until my curiosity about jaundice was satisfied. I wanted to believe all this was due to jaundice and his smallness, but deep down I was beginning to know better. After assuring me jaundice was not all that serious, she added, "I am not saying that is all that is wrong." I felt back exhausted; it was so difficult to get information. The group of nurses quickly moved on. Soon I was distraught and crying. I knew those bastards had information they were not about to give me. A while later a doctor and the ward sister came in. Again they examined Jotham. The doctor, half out the door ready for escape, said "Everything's all right, don't worry." But the sister added, 'Is the baby's father coming this evening?' I screamed at them to tell me but, tight-lipped, they disappeared down long corridors. I phoned Reg and tried to warn him as best I could that jaundice was not the whole story, and spent the rest of the day lying utterly shattered. I did not care anymore when they took Jotham away.

When Reg arrived the same doctor took us into an empty room and told us he was mongol. I had hoped it would be anything but that. The doctor asked Reg if he had held the baby. (Of course he had not - Hospital Rules.) The doctor then thrust the baby at Reg and said, "Hold him; mongols are very loving and rewarding and they respond so well to training." It was as if he were talking about a dog. He told us parents often reject their baby if they know too soon. Which is why I had gone through so much hell, I supposed? He also gave us what seemed like a lecture on our moral responsibility towards the baby. I was sitting in a state of shock and feeling embarrassed for Reg, who was still holding Jotham. Neither of us wanted to be forced into silly rituals to allay the doctor's fears. We managed to get rid of the doctor and calm each other down. The doctor returned and addressed Reg - I was the mere mother. Reg was out on his feet: he had been raised and charged, his grandmother had taken ill and now this. He

**MENTAL PATIENTS UNION: GENERAL MEETING**

Saturday, April 20th. 2pm. to 5.30pm.

at: The Music College, Manchester University, Oxford Rd., Manchester.

All Mental Patients and Ex-Mental Patients can attend this meeting, have full speaking rights and can vote on all issues.

People who are not, and have never been Mental Patients, can attend (unless asked to leave by those who have), but they cannot vote.

For further information please contact the MPU at: 37, Mayola Rd., Clapton, LondonE, 5. or c/o E. Beninson, 2 York Ave, Prestwich, M'chester.
suggested Reg take me home as he was sure I would "become depressed and upset the ward". I butted in and said "Look, originally I wanted to have the baby and leave the hospital within two days, and this hospital insisted I stay seven days. Now that I have a problem and want advice you want me to go. I am staying until I have seen the paediatrician." I could not have gone home immediately as Reg had still to cope with the aftermath of the police raid.

The next day they wanted me to take Librium because I seemed a "little upset" and they stopped taking Jotham away to guard against rejection. As to feeling upset, I felt a lot calmer now I knew what was going on and by the close of the previous day I had almost completely lost interest in Jotham because of their conspiracy to exclude me from all aspects of his care.

Our experience was quite typical. Everybody we have since met who has had a handicapped child found it unnecessarily hard to get information. Many were also told lies and half-truths. One friend had to live with her doubts for two weeks before being told her son was mongol, and this is by no means the worst. They rely on the ability of a mother to persuade herself that the baby is all right. We heard of one mother who was not told until her child was four years old. Her husband and GP thought the truth would break her.

Handicapped children are more common than one realizes. We were told at Guy's Hospital that 1:10 are born with a recognisable handicap. (This includes conditions that can now be remedied like Hare Lip.) A social worker told us she had read mongolism is on the increase. Rough figures for mongols are 1:400 conceptions and 1:600 births. (1)

People are not helped to face the possibility of having a handicapped child. Women who voice doubts to doctors are told their fears are groundless, and none of the advertisement-crammed literature mentioned elsewhere in this number ever hints that the baby will be anything but someone fit to be featured on their latest box of sweetened baby mush. Because the retarded are considered little use in our materialistic society, they are not talked about and many people still advise they be "put away". Thus when the unspoken happen and a handicapped child is born those involved feel at least momentarily devastated and cheated. They are not to know their situation is quite common, when it has been made outside their experience.

Our next problem was to find information on mongolism. The doctors and social workers were useless. In the end we phoned Hyde Farm (Mal) School Toftscot Road, NW12

Applications are invited for the Headship

of this school for 30 children aged 8 to 16 who have been assessed as needing special training. Local Government Grant £2,000 to £3,000 plus Exchequer allowance (1974 Government scale).

Under the present head who has obtained the headship at a large normal school in the IGSA service, and with the support of a psychiatric team, the school has achieved good standards of education and treatment.

the Head Office of the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, and received by return post a booklist and a booklet called 'Improving Mongol Babies'. (2) This book was full of practical help. Mongols have poor muscle tone and unless they are given exercises to improve their strength they become very immobile and miss out on a great deal of the early exploratory behaviour that is so vital to development. Things go from bad to worse. The book contained step-by-step exercises. I had asked the paediatrician if exercises were possible for Jotham but she had replied "No, go home and treat him as normal." Nobody at the hospital could put us in touch with the Association; we had to find it ourselves. Later a member of the local branch of the association called, but we did not find their activities very relevant. There was a lot of emphasis on fund-raising and merry-making in order to forget the problem at home. Very little seems to be known about mongolism from its causes to its effects. Most people who have handicapped children start off with a marked disadvantage because their primary contact,
the hospital hierarchy, don't know and don't seem to want to know. In fact after reading only a few books we found we knew more than some doctors we encountered.

Once I had left hospital we had the problem of telling everyone. We were not sure how to relate to others and they were not sure how to relate to us. Some people tended to avoid us because they did not know what to say. We all feel perplexed by handicapped people; because they are removed from sight we are often facing a completely new situation. We saw a blind person interviewed on television and he said that one of the most frustrating aspects of being handicapped was that people did not relate to him directly, thus they would say to his companion, "Does he take sugar in his tea?" However many of our friends had a calmer reaction; nearly everyone we met knew of a handicapped child and a lot of people have taken a genuine interest in Jotham. More older people said "Have you put in care," Reg met two elderly ladies at a bus stop who were off to visit their mongol sons in an institution. They said, "Put him in a home immediately as he will have to go eventually." It did not make Reg's day.

In our Borough the local Education Authority has the future of the retarded mapped out. At 2½ Jotham goes to a special school, with special staff, and a special bus collection service. He attends 5 days a week until he is 16 (they are trying to raise this to 19). He then goes to a sheltered workshop where he would do contract work, with other handicapped, supervised by special staff, for pocket money. We do not know the arrangements nationwide but these seem to be the ones aimed for.

The teachers and ancillary staff I have met in our area pay a great deal of lip-service to integrating their pupils into the community. Their aim in teaching is to help each child become as independent as she/he could hold outside employment. Some friends of ours went to a series of lectures run by Adult Education for all those interested in retardation. The theme centred around integrating the retarded into the community. The authorities no longer advocate "putting the child away" but that they stay with their families, who would be supported in their task by help from such facilities as those mentioned above, and ideally baby-sitting services and holiday homes. It is now very difficult to find a place in an institution for a retarded person. I find these aims admirable but the following points should be borne in mind:

1) There is no longer any community in the old sense. Quite frequently a mother is bringing up a child alone and even if she has a husband the sole responsibility for the child generally falls on the woman's shoulders. I have a friend whose 8-year-old girl, Sally, suffered brain damage at birth. Sally fell into a pattern of screaming and kicking when she was taken off the school bus each evening. The bus stopped on a busy road and on two occasions Sally shot her other sister off the pavement onto the road. She made such a fuss in the car that it was impossible for her mother to drive. My friend had no-one to help her cope with these tantrums and these were by no means the only tantrums; they seem to be related to Sally's brain damage. It is true institutions are no alternative and my friend would be the first to agree, but they are an alternative. All the parents I have talked to are worried about their handicapped child's future, especially after their own death. Not until there is a general alternative to the nuclear family will there always be someone to take an interest in the handicapped.

2) The second point about the teachers' ideals is that their actions are counterproductive. If the Education Authorities were seriously considering integration, surely they would have set up classes for the phys-
ally and mentally handicapped within the local schools. By grouping all children together, they will become aware of each other's problems, both physical and mental. They and their parents will become used to seeing the handicapped and hopefully learn to respond to their particular needs. When the authorities define an educational problem they always see the answer in terms of splitting off the children they involve. They want to separate and streamline the exceptionally bright, the dull, the moderately dull, the physically handicapped, the dyslexic, the emotionally disturbed - who is left? Part of the answer may lie in smaller groups of children and teachers who have not been thoroughly dehumanised by keeping 40 'ids chained to desks - but in the meantime the splitting off continues.

The authorities do not like parents who see the contradiction between sending their child to a special school and involving him in a wider society. I have spoken to one mother (a widow) who for the past two years has been struggling against the authorities to send her 10-year-old Spina Bifida son to the local school - he can walk slowly with callipers. She argues that when she has gone her son must look after himself and she does all she can to prepare him for this time. She will not allow him special consideration from his or her friends simply because he is partially paralysed. In no way is he gaining useful experience in his special school for the physically handicapped - its bent is too custodial and too medical. However the authorities put block after block in her way of getting him into a local school. Perhaps the cruellest blow of all, they label her "a rejecting mother" and tell her she does not "accept" her son's handicap.

They have also used this weapon against another friend of mine with a 5-year-old mongol. After a trial term she refused to continue to send her child to the school for mentally handicapped as his particular difficulty was speech and she knew this would not be helped in a group of speechless children. In spite of the authorities' efforts to persuade her otherwise she found him a place several days a week in a local nursery school. Children seldom learn more than their situation allows or demands, and the demands of special schools are unrelated to demands outside.

To repeat, if you are unwilling to slot your child into the position the authorities allocate, you are entered in their notes as a person who 'rejects' their child or does not "accept" the handicap. You are treated accordingly with a barrage of social workers and health visitors who see it as their job to put you straight. They always know best. They even stoop to sending "orthodox" parents around in the hope they will help you see sense.

There are parents who do not reach the authorities' expectations in another direction. These parents are labelled "over-protective". They give their children very little room to develop. The matron of the school boarding unit gave us an example of such a mother in order to impress upon us how we should not act as parents of a handicapped child. Parents are expected to make certain efforts in teaching their child to become independent. This particular mother treated her 10-year-old mongol son as though he were a baby. He even slept with her at night. The child was taken into the boarding section of his school where he "learned" the basics in self-care, but as soon as he went home his mother again dressed him, bathed him, fed him, etc. Even though I find this mother's behaviour towards her child very hard to take I would not give the power to the authorities to do anything about it. They do not know where to stop.

There is one general attitude I find disturbing. Some people over-sentimentalise. Several women I have met said that if they knew they were to have a mongol baby they would go ahead with the pregnancy (doctors can now test for mongolism within the first few months of pregnancy, giving a woman a tested choice of a termination if necessary). They look at Jotham and say "isn't he lovely?" Will they feel so disposed towards him when he is forty? Will their husbands work with him or more importantly have him working for them?

Margaret Bourne


(2) op. cit.
ISLINGTON MEN'S GROUP

THE FIRST group of men met at the end of 1972. A couple of us were going through a period of great depression to do with our relationships with women, and felt the need to talk to other men on a personal level. Five of us met, two of whom were gay. This group only met a few times.

The next group started in Spring '73 and, apart from a break in the summer of about 2 months, has been going ever since. We meet every Wednesday; at first about 15 attended regularly, but since the summer there has been a regular attendance of 8. Altogether some 20 men have been involved at one time or another.

The original suggestion for this group came out of a mixed meeting of libertarian/community activists. We definitely all saw it as a development of our politics rather than the establishment of some sort of therapy session, but this in no way means that we don't look for (and find) emotional support and tenderness in the group. Quite the contrary. The development of this between men is a prime concern of ours.

It's not as if we all decided that men's groups were the 'politically correct' thing to get involved with, and indeed most of us were (and to a lesser extent still are) pretty unclear about the 'politics' of it all. But we didn't feel inhibited by this, perhaps because we all felt pressing personal needs. All of us had, in the previous 3 or 4 years, seen an integral part of our politics as being an attempt to understand, and to struggle against, the ways in which capitalist oppression gets into our heads and fucks up our relationships with each other (by relationships we don't only mean those that are sexual). Most of us had, for instance, been involved with attempts to live collectively, to bring up kids collectively, and to work out better personal relationships. These early attempts came before the perceptions of the woman's movement had penetrated our everyday lives. We had no real understanding of the ways in which we'd been formed as men. Our attempts to break through family structures, to question monogamy and all that goes with it, were distorted by our male fantasies and outlook.

We'd all been content to relate to each other as men in pretty straight ways. That is to say we didn't really seek emotional support/tenderness from each other, being content to get this from the women with whom we were having sexual scenes. Our relationships were, in many ways, based on our respect for/fear of each other's strengths rather than the ability to accept our weaknesses fully and work them through together. This meant that we were trapped in the old, old trip of keeping up images, of hiding much of ourselves for fear of rejection. The competitiveness which expresses itself not only in sexual rivalry, but also in our work, discussions, and indeed in every aspect of our lives, went unchallenged.

For 2 or 3 years some of us had had ideological beliefs about relating differently to other men but it now became a necessity. With the growth of the woman's movement we got less support from the women we were involved with and the true poverty of our masculine fantasies of independence and of not needing people were exposed with frightening clarity. We became very envious of the togetherness of the women.

Then we began to meet. At first it was all very shy and tentative. It was very odd to sit in a room with other men and have no reason other than your emotions for being there. We were all embarrassed when talking to other men about our involvement in men's groups. The thing that kept us going was the urgency of our need to break the masculine barriers between us, if we were going to stay sane. We still feel that need very strongly, but the little progress that we have made gives us some confidence in the political validity of what we're doing.

In early November there was a conference of men's groups and some 'unattached' men in Birmingham. About 100 men were there and probably a dozen or so groups were represented. Half a dozen of us went from Islington and were really knocked out by the experience, as were most of the people we talked to. The atmosphere there was fantastically
warm and friendly, which, unfortunately, is in striking contrast to most other conferences (though not, probably, to women’s conferences). For instance: the Saturday session consisted of half a dozen groups of 20 or so people. When someone new came over to a group he wasn’t just ignored and left to catch up with the discussion but was made to feel really welcome, was told what was being talked about and was drawn in. An incredible effort was made to show sensitivity to each other and not to get into any of the pitfalls of male (and other) gatherings. Like, there were very few interruptions; no-one criticised in a way that would make you feel put down; no-one felt impelled to raise his voice (because no-one else was raising his); you didn’t have to hustle to have your say; you didn’t get the situation of one person following another in rapid succession (usually the same people) so you had plenty of time to get your thoughts together and articulate them. This was also made easier by the friendly and unthreatening atmosphere. There seemed to be no reason why you shouldn’t be as unsure and as tentative as you felt, so there was no need to remain silent because you couldn’t get your thoughts and arguments together with the forcefulness and articulateness that are usually required. Not only were people eager to say things, but were also eager to listen to and to understand other people’s experiences.

We feel that it is important to emphasise these aspects of the conference, because they highlight so much of what is wrong with the ways in which we usually relate to each other in discussions, meetings, or conferences.

We’re not claiming that it’s always like this between us, even in men’s group sessions. Indeed, one of the things that disturbs us is the way in which we tend to get back into the same old trips once we’ve stopped talking about ‘personal matters’. The meetings are quite ramshackle and two or three times we’ve got onto talking about things like the economic situation, Chile, automation, or similar topics. Once such more traditionally male discussions start we become much more self-assertive. We interrupt each other, talk each other down, raise our voices, get irritated with each other, dominate.

Another point about such discussions is that we often catch ourselves slipping into this as an excuse for not talking about more personal things. It’s so easy for men to hide their personal life and emotions behind a facade of concern for the ‘more important’ matters of the world. It reflects one of our basic oppressions.

For us, men’s liberation is about seeing how we have been conditioned by the various institutions of capitalist society into having a particular personality, of relating to other people in particular ways, into playing certain roles, all of which fuck us up in specifically male ways. It’s about men coming together and getting to know each other in ways different from those in which men usually ‘know’ each other, about giving and receiving emotional support from each other, about opening yourself up to other guys.

None of us wish to commit the error of seeing our liberation as anything other than the task of a mass revolutionary movement. But to see your personal problems as political it seems necessary as a first step to talk about them, to share the unarticulated subjective experience of being oppressed and fucked over with other men. To try to see where our experiences tally and to relate them to the conditioning that we have all undergone, and still undergo 24 hours a day.

This openness in itself can be a mind-blowing experience. Being a man can be quite lonely: often there’s this whirlpool of feelings, fears, uptights, uncertainties, going on inside of you. And so often you feel embarrassed to come out with it because it seems so stupid, or trivial, or weak. You get to feel that it’s just you, that your problems are no-one else’s, and that you are in some way ‘inadequate’ (which is - of course - just what THEY want you to think). Just coming out with it can be such a relief as you discover that your brothers are going, or have been, through similar things. That they not only understand and sympathise with your private hell, but they actually know how you feel because they’ve been through the same shit themselves.

Being a man in this society means a continual game with yourself and with other people. You have to behave in ‘manly’ ways. Be hard, be strong, be forceful, be decisive, keep cool and in control. Never show your weaknesses, fears, and anxieties, never let your emotions ‘get the better of you’, never get upset.

It’s like having to keep up a front all the time, continually denying part of yourself - especially any dependencies - translating any pain into aggression (being ‘pissed off’ or ‘upright’ rather than ‘upset’, getting angry rather than crying). Be upright, be aggressive, be nasty, but never, never ever be weak, or never show your weaknesses. Disguise them, deny them, fight them, contest them. But never express them.
And so much do the male ways of relating to each other reinforce all this. We can all remember the social sanctions against any cracks in the armour: “Big boys don’t cry”, “If you can keep your head when all around are losing theirs you’re a man, my son, a man”. How much of our relationships to other boys and other men consisted of digging for their weaknesses and then using them against them (“only a bit of fun”).

So it’s quite easy to see how our relationships to each other come to be built on an admiration or fear of each other’s strengths. We’re conditioned to see men as austere, as people whose respect/love we have to earn. Earn by behaving in certain ways, by being a man, by being strong. This was how we learnt to relate to the first man we ever knew – our father. A distant figure, imprisoned in his own masculinity, and the ultimate source of authority over us (if mum said “Wait till your dad gets home” we knew we were in real trouble).

Getting away from these oppressive, competitive, reserved ways of relating is very much part of what we’re about. It’s a process of softening up, of feminising ourselves. But this needs quite a few qualifications. We certainly don’t want to confuse a struggle against our masculinity with an uncritical attempt to assume ‘feminine’ characteristics – as they are at present defined in this society. For example, it’s all very well to talk about men’s liberation as being about putting men in touch with their emotions (like women are supposed to be) but these emotions are pretty fucked up too. Indeed, being too easily overwhelmed by their emotions is, perhaps, an integral part of women’s oppression.

Neither do we want to get into blanket putdowns of everything ‘masculine’. In our struggle against a repressive society there is a sense in which we need our ‘male’ virtues as much as we need to develop more ‘feminine’ ones. Capitalism needs weak, indecisive, dependent people who can be easily manipulated to play out their roles as workers, housewives, or consumers. And yet its institutions can turn men into seeing ourselves as strong, decisive, autonomous, independent, courageous, and all the rest of it. But what do these things really mean? And from where do we learn what it means to be “strong” or “decisive” or any of the other things? There is but one source: bourgeois ideology. The various channels of indoctrination – the family, the school, the newspapers, tele, adverts, pop music – all tell us what we should be, and how we have to behave to be it. They give us perverted and distorted ideas about qualities that are essential to any whole person, male or female, the better to fit us for our roles in capitalist society.

Thus, ‘strength’, ‘courage’, or ‘independence’ are the qualities attributed to the scum for resisting ‘pressure’ from his workmates. ‘Decisiveness’ is all to do with making decisions on your own, with exercising power over people. A man’s ‘independence’ or ‘autonomy’ has nothing to do with having any real control over his own life (how could it have?) but is measured by how often he goes to the pub leaving his wife at home with the kids.

And all these characteristics are put over as being attributes of individuals. You, individually, are born with them because you’re a man. Nowhere in the ideology that forms us do we find a recognition of the fact that (e.g.) strength or courage come from other people, that it is only our brothers and sisters, our comrades, the movement who can give us any real strength or courage. (In so far as such a recognition is made it is, of course, distorted – “The woman behind the man”.

The competitiveness of ‘male’ ideology forces us further into our individual prisons. The distorted ideas of ‘masculinity’ divide us. We measure our ‘autonomy’ and ‘independence’ by our distance from others, our
'strength' by our power over others. Being more of a man than other men (with all the put-downs, aggression, and ego games that it entails) is very much part of being a man.

So, like we've said, we're not attempting to overthrow everything 'male', even if that were possible. There are many so-called 'male' characteristics that we wish to keep or develop. There are many situations in which, if we are to fight successfully against the society that has so mutilated us, we must be more on top of things, more together, more tough, more clear-thinking, more aggressive, more worked out, more forceful. But if that struggle is to be really successful, if we are to overthrow capitalist human relationships as well as the capitalist relations of production we have to develop the consciousness within us all of the contradictory nature of our masculinity. The aspects that are essential attributes of any whole person, and the false, role-conditioned aspects that are so integral to our oppression.

Guess the men's group experience is a period of self-questioning for us all. Questioning every aspect of ourselves and our aspirations and trying - together - to distinguish the false, role-conditioned aspects from the real ones. But this seems essential if we are really to be in control of who we are and what we want. It's a process of trying to suss out the extent to which capitalism has infiltrated our every emotion, thought, and need. And how, indeed, it has infiltrated and distorted our revolutionary ideas.

The roles into which we have been conditioned, the characteristics we have been trained to have, are all to do with social power and domination (albeit a very limited power for the vast majority). It's certainly not enough to turn on a few ideas about changing society in order to change all this shit. So what we have to do is to look at the extent to which we recreate our conditioning, live out the roles we have been trained to play, in our revolutionary activity.

Before the woman's movement became a real force 'revolutionaries' totally ignored anything not directly connected with economic and political power (the very things men have been trained to be concerned with). Even the most oppressive task of all - housework - was forgotten. Nothing that was outside a man's very limited view of the world was considered. The family, kids, human relationships, living situations, any mention of these was regarded as 'deviant', 'subjectivist', 'petit bourgeois' or whatever and as problems that could be sorted out after the real business of the revolution had been got together. The understanding of capitalist oppression and ideology was partial and was, therefore, itself ideological. It was distorted by bourgeois ideology in its sexist guise. And so, therefore, was our revolutionary activity. (Is it a coincidence that it was Alexandra Kollontai - a woman who raised the question of sexuality in the Russian revolution.)

We cannot afford to have our eyes blinkered by our male conditioning any longer. We must continually increase the scope of our critique of capitalism and of our fight back, questioning all the time the (male) hierarchies of importance in which we still place our activities. Bourgeois ideology has - via our male conditioning - not only distorted our ideas about what the revolution is, but it also affects our ideas about how we get it together (organisation), and about our relationships to each other as revolutionaries.

We are, perhaps, beginning to realise that you can't just decree the abolition of all hierarchy or of the power of some people to impose their will on others. The roots of all this go much deeper than the formal hierarchies found in Leninist and similar organisations. Perhaps these are merely the outward expression of the interpersonal power games that still go on unabashed when we reject the structures. Getting rid of these structures that enshrine the domination of power groups is but a first step to getting rid of domination itself and such a project must still figure very much in our organisational principles.

It's quite difficult to make any assessment of the progress we've made through our involvement in the men's group. It's not as if we have particularly clear goals towards which we're working and it's probably fair to say that we continue to move because we all feel a strong personal need to come together in this way. Our confusions about who we are, and in what ways we want to change ourselves, demand that we work this out with our brothers and sisters, that is to say that we make ourselves accountable to each other. Such accountability is something that is crucial to us, but it is very difficult to develop. We hope we are beginning to establish that mutual trust and affection that is an absolute necessity if we are going to confront and criticise each other without the usual aggressiveness/defensiveness. Some of the best 'highs' we have experienced have been when we've approached such candour.

Our group is still at a pretty embryonic stage of development. We usually talk in a pretty structureless way about how we experience things. We all meet sometime between 8 and 9 (it's supposed to
begin at 8) with no clear idea of what we're going
to talk about, start rapping by 9.30 and split up
around midnight. We've talked about the various
ways in which sexual relationships can be organised,
how our maleness might affect our attitudes to politics
and political violence (to what extent can it be said
that it reflects male fantasies), how we are affected
by the demands of a job or of a "politically active
life", jealousy, depression......

These discussions are often frustrating for many
reasons. They tend to [jump around a lot from one
thing to another so you're left with the impression
that out of all the really interesting things that have
been touched on nothing has been talked about as
thoroughly as it might have been. Moments of inti-
mate honesty are followed by periods of closing off
when we get into more 'manly' conversations, pos-
sibly out of sheer emotional exhaustion. We are
thinking of having a bit more structure, possibly
setting a topic before the meeting or getting one
person a week to go through a personal history.

Another difficulty is the lack of clarity as to how
men's groups will develop. Unanswered questions
that arise here are what are the possibilities and limita-
tions of a men's movement (let alone the dangers
feared by some women and gays). What are the pos-
sibilities of more practical activities? (Campaigns
for men to get time off work to be with their kids?)
How can we get away from being a small, closed,
quite inward-looking group whilst still preserving the
intimacy and - yes - security which we see as essen-
tial to the development of our relationships with
each other.

At the moment we have an arrangement with the
women who meet on the same night as us to run a
crèche on alternate weeks.

As a group we mobilised ourselves for a demo
organised by Women's Abortion and Contraception
Campaign against the anti-abortionist Society for
the Protection of the Unborn Child. We joined a
motorcade driving around Westminster in a van car-
rying two large placards saying "Islington Men's
Group" and "Abortion - a woman's right to choose"
and the other saying "Men against Masculinity".
(In retrospect this slogan was a bit confusing because
it failed to distinguish between the real and false
aspects of masculinity.)

We feel that if the group were to grow too large,
or be made too open to new people, then the size of
the group and the changing members would make it
difficult to create any trust, and therefore that the
honesty and warmth which flow from that trust would
be lost. But we feel a responsibility to individual
men or groups of men who ask us about the meetings.
Remembering how tentative we were ourselves during
the first meetings, we think it's not enough to say
"Why don't you form a men's group yourselves?" We
would like to play a more conscious part in the
growth of new groups. The open meeting is perhaps
a first step in this direction.

It is still a small minority of men who have the
possibility of getting together in men's groups (largely
politicos towards the libertarian end of the Anarchist-
WRP axis, or educated middle-class men in contact
with the Women's Movement (?)). So many men
suffer sex lives geared to the rhythm of the production
lines. So many suffer stifling family situations and
are force-fed fantasies of bronzed women coming out
of Jamaican seas and can survive only through put-
downs of their own and others' sexuality. The expe-
rience of men's groups can give us the strength to go
out to other such men more openly than before.
Hopefully that means more than having the strength
to confront sexism in different situations (not always
possible or fruitful). But what else it means at this
time, beyond recognising that we have much more to
say on sexuality in our leaflets and papers, isn't clear
at the moment.
a Lifetime
Growing
Wiser

OUR EXAMINATION of the child in society must begin with Dr Spock's book of "Baby and Child Care". The author writes in straightforward terms to the anxious mother and advises her to relax. He takes away the demanding tone and says: "Don't be afraid to trust your own common sense...the natural loving care that kindly parents give to their children is a hundred times more valuable than making a formula expertly." Perhaps the most significant postwar development is the extension of much of this theory and practise of child care to the wider age range of childhood. Starting with the infant we have seen the development of the pre-school playgroup and the community nursery. Now we are witnessing a radical questioning of the method of school as a satisfactory means of education.

The questioning of school, or the dissenting tradition, has an interesting history. A.S. Neill always objected to the "borschalaization of children" in State schools and declared often that "our criterion of libertarians isn't learning but living". Neill, in turn, found his source of inspiration in Homer Lane, penal reformer, educationist and psychotherapist, who, according to his friend W.H. Auden was "killed in action" whilst being persecuted for managing a libertarian establishment, the Little Commonwealth. Homer Lane's simple message was that "children should be free" and Neill followed this by providing "a free community in which they (the children) are free to be themselves". As one of Neill's ex-pupils Joshua Poponoe writes in a beautiful book "Inside Summerhill": "If everyone went to a school like Summerhill, and followed its philosophy, the world would no longer be made up of stereotyped plastic people who conform to their nation's ideals rather than their own. Their souls have been lost in the glove compartments of their annually new, annually bigger, and annually more powerful automobiles.

"Each child is the only person on the earth who knows what is best for himself, and no one has the right to act as his boss, for that will inevitably harm rather than help the child's emotional development. More and more people are coming to realise this as the truth. But unfortunately, the power is held by those who think differently, and undoubtedly a great many years will pass before a complete change is made to a natural and humane form of education."

Neill acknowledges the influence over him of the work of Wilhelm Reich. "Freud and his school," writes Neill, "with the exception of Wilhelm Reich, never believed in freedom for children." The American child psychiatrist Paul Adams even pro-
claimed "The first duty of a revolutionary is to build a society geared to children... only rarely have revolutionaries undertaken to think about a world fit for children... what men neglect, women and children embrace and enjoy. It is in this way that children and women perpetuate even in our civilisation a trend that sticks close to Eros and keeps pockets of freedom viable even in mass, capitalist society." It is these expanding pockets which are of great interest to us and the fact is that they are becoming more and more difficult to ignore.

Anarchists tend to go back to William Godwin when discussing education, with good reason, for he is a veritable forerunner of much libertarian educational thinking today. "The true object of education, like that of every other moral process, is the generation of happiness," wrote Godwin in 1797. Like a modern de-schooling society advocate he also wrote: "Whenever government assumes to deliver us from the trouble of thinking for ourselves, the only consequences it produces are those of torpor and imbecility." Paul Goodman, a modern libertarian, echoes the same sympathies when he writes "It is for a small child, under his own steam, to poke interestingly into whatever goes on and be able, by observation, questions and practical imitation, to get something out of it in his own terms."

Between Godwin and Goodman lies the Spanish educator Francisco Ferrer, executed in 1909 for allegedly leading an insurrection in Barcelona. Ferrer founded the Modern School in 1901 in Barcelona. Of governments he said "They know, better than anyone else, that their power is based almost entirely on the school." He felt that schools had accomplished the things Godwin had warned of and he sought to break government's control over education. Another modern anarchist, Herbert Read, set great store in children's art. "Gradually we have come to realise that we have in art an instrument of education and not merely a subject to be taught... we maintain that the encouragement of a normal creative activity is one of the essentials of a full and balanced development of the personality."

Read's forbears are Ruskin "who first suggested that the child's artistic activity should be entirely voluntary" and the English psychologist James Sully "who first made any considerable study of the characteristics of voluntary activity". However it is to Froebel, with his insistence on the importance of spontaneity in all forms of education, that Read finally turns. His feeling is that "all forms of spontaneous activity have a special educative value, especially artistic activity."

We must also acknowledge a vital anthropological contribution in bringing to light varying child-rearing practices throughout the world. G.S. Ford and F.A. Beach's "Development of the Individual" examines early sexual experience of children, and the teachings of Freud and more especially Reich immediately spring to mind. The authors write: "Adults in a large number of societies take a completely tolerant and permissive attitude towards sex expression in childhood (32 examples are cited). Under such conditions youngsters engage in a certain amount of sexual play in public. The.\n
The reflection of the impact of "The Little Red Schoolbook" on a horrified adult population and an interested child readership comes immediately to mind. It is also useful to remember Ford and Beach's conclusion "The degree to which such tendencies (towards sexual behaviour) find overt expression is in part a function of the rules of the society in which the individual grows up, but some expression is very likely to occur under any circumstances."

If Read emphasises artistic activity, others set great value on play. "Adventure playgrounds," writes Leila Berg, "were places where a child went voluntarily, experimented freely, where no distinction was made between play and work, where the only surveillance was that of a friendly non-dominating adult, and where parents, grandparents, big brothers and sisters, and the
lonely person who lived down the street could contribute skills, experience, knowledge and materials and where the environment was accepted. Understandably the adventure playground has been termed "a parable of anarchy". The idea seems to have started on junk heaps in Copenhagen in the 1930s and came to Britain after the war. Those working in adventure playgrounds talk of "a spontaneous lease of life" the playgrounds encourage and explain that "the place stands for far more than a mere playground. It's a place where the children have an infinite choice of opportunities. They can handle basic things - earth, water, plants, timber - and work with real tools; and they have an adult friend, a person they trust and respect." It is not unlike the environment advocated by the de-schooled society proponents. As Keith Paton writes in the engaging and excellent "The Great Brain Robbery": "The environment (for a community centre to replace the school) should be highly manipulable so that children can learn that they are in charge. Bits of old wood and cardboard, pots of paint, screens, and a wide range of the more sophisticated materials of modern architecture should be available to the children; while the basic design of the building would be capable of many varied adaptations and rearrangement... education would not merely happen in the community cultural centre. It would take place in the whole community itself."

Something along these lines is, in fact, happening with the Freightliners school in Camden for truants from the State system. This free school is supported by Camden to the tune of £20,000 per annum and their obvious desire is to keep the truants off the street. Truancy is described by some as the particularly anarchist method of applying direct action to the problem of the school; in Deptford, SE London, there are confidential figures which suggest a truancy rate of 25% in some areas and the Freightliners experiment might well find advocates within the official educational structure.

The best advocacy of the school comes from one of the children there. "I have been going to Freightliners free school for 1 and 1/2 years at first we had three full time teachers and about 5 part time teachers there was 2 full time teachers with the smaller kids and one with the older kids we had two regular part time teachers on which we was doing art and the evolution of man mainly. we done geology with Roger and we went to Folkestone to collect fossils for the geology lesson. we have been to loads of places on educational trips. we have done a project on different countries but that got boring after a while so we dropped it. we went to Haslemere and the little ones and me went camping with Pauline and Roger. It was pretty cold in the mornings but we had a really good time up there. plus I have been to the lake district with my age group this time it was really peaceful up there so we had a good time. well thats holidays but we have done projects on crime and poverty and the West Indies and Ireland - we do a lot of talking really, when we got the freightliners we all had to do it up and paint it and all that took some time. out of the three full time teachers only one stayed around because the other two had to go because of their own personal reasons. when it was all done we had some newcomers along so it wasn't just a few of us. it is now really together, the younger kids have done a lot of art work and
reading and writing, we have done a booklet about our free school."

A rather different attitude lies behind the reasons for truancy and a comparison between the Freightliners and poems by children collected by Chris Scarle, who was sacked for publishing them, is enlightening.

**THEM**

They don't want truth
They don't want a truthful person
They must have it their way
They are the authorities
We're nothing, just students
We must do as they say
They make the rules
We are forced to obey

or more simply:

We hate the governors
Oh yes we do,
We hate the governors
Oh yes we do....

Tony, aged 13, explains,

I have my own identity
I have my own ideas
With what should be done with the world.

One is reminded of Kropotkin's advice in "A Letter to the Young": "Ask what kind of world do you want to live in. What are you good at and want to work at to build that world? What do you need to know? Demand that your teachers teach you that."

Even within the school system school-kids are demanding far more than that today. Schools Action Union, with all its sectarianism and manipulative tendencies, has a healthy list of demands:

**a. SAU supports the right of all people to free speech.** We will support the right of school students to freely criticise the running of the school, the actions of the head, individual teachers and students. We will oppose all attempts by the school authorities to stifle free speech and we will support all students who produce and distribute freely within the school uncensored magazines and
ewspapers subject only to the laws of libel and obscenity.

**b. SAU supports the right of all people to freedom of assembly.** We will support the right of school students to organise on school premises in school time, during breaks and after school hours without staff interference. We are opposed to staff attendance at student meetings, clubs, societies and associations without being invited by the students. We support the right of school students to form student associations run democratically in the interest of all its members.

**c. SAU supports the right of all people to freedom of political activity.** We support the right of school students to join a school students' union and to engage in political activity including the right to strike. We will support all school students who take collective action in defence of their interests and against any victimisations. We will also support all school students who defend themselves against physical attack.

**d. SAU opposes corporal punishment and all forms of punishment imposed by the head alone and will fight for a 'code of self-discipline' to be decided by the general assembly of the students, teachers and other staff in each school.**

**e. SAU opposes the dictatorship of the head and will fight and commit itself to the struggle to establish day-to-day control of the school by a democratically elected schools council representing students, teachers and school staff. SAU will support all organisations working for greater democracy in education. SAU will fight to abolish all forms of streaming and selection and to end secrecy and confidential reports in schools. SAU opposes compulsory school uniforms, compulsory religious instruction and official acts of worship and compulsory physical training. SAU will fight to end the prefect system and all forms of military training in schools.**

**f. SAU is fighting for a fully comprehensive education system excluding all other types of schools without discrimination by class, race or sex. We are also fighting for higher education open to all, much greater...**
government expenditure on education, more pay for teachers, a maximum of 30 in a class, a crash programme of school building to end slum schools and schools, colleges and universities to be opened as local community centres of educational and cultural activity. We demand a job for every school leaver in his or her home town with a minimum wage of £15, 50 per week or the full adult rate whichever is the higher, day release classes with no loss of pay for all young workers, and a living wage for all those wishing to continue their education beyond the school leaving age.

Although these demands are made within the State system and could be termed reformist they hardly allow Neill to maintain that "the mass of the proletariat are not educated enough to demand free schools". The important factor here is that free schools have usually been for middle-class children, simply for economic reasons. However it is very noticeable that more free schools are being developed in working-class areas with an involvement of the whole local community in the venture. In America is the example of George Dennison's "First Street School", in Britain we see the Scotland Road School in Liverpool and the Jelington Free School.

Michael Duane and his experience at Risinghill Comprehensive in North London. Duane refused to use corporal punishment in a notoriously troublesome area but none the less reduced the delinquency of the children markedly. One wonders whether today he would have met a similar fate which resulted in the closure of Risinghill and his own departure.

Today we are met, in fact, with either radical reform of the school or an alternative educational milieu. Ivan Illich has pioneered the phrase "deschooling society" and perhaps this is most succinctly summarised by the American school dropout who asked: "Why should I go back to school and interrupt my education?" The emphatic point of the deschoolers is that they are profound educationists; they see the community centre where children come and go as they wish - as the only educational necessity; the rest is experience of life and the following of interest. Exams go by the board in practically the entire debate as fundamentally anti-education; true education is the totality of life. We are always learning, every man is a teacher. As Keith Paton writes in "Children's Rights" No. 39: "Nothing less than the abolition of compulsory schooling will meet our demands as learners of all ages, together with opening society up to become safe for enquiry and creating alternative learning networks."

Paul Goodman's community of scholars brings the concepts to the University level and our experience of the students' sit-ins, their demands for control and desire for a different system are all worthy of note. Hornsey, LSE, Warwick, Sorbonne, Berkeley: all are experiences of student direct action grappling with freedom and control. As the Association of Members of Hornsey College
of Art expressed their position whilst in occupation:

TALK WITH US
Understanding is free
Understand us
We are part of one another
No more them against us
Each one is indispensable
Talking and working together
We create an education
Education means
A lifetime growing wiser
Is there anything more important?
Wisdom equals thought
Alive with feeling
What else can answer our questions?
The quiet noise of wisdom working
THAT IS REVOLUTION

Or as they said it in Paris, May 68

IMAGINATION SEIZES POWER

Our final thoughts are with the editor of "Freedom" who wrote in 1959: "Because it is against everything government stands for and against the present order of society, one cannot imagine a State education system encouraging the free development of the child within a free environment, however successful it proved to be for the child."

Since 1959 many more educationists have come to agree.

Jerry Westall

FRANCO'S PRISONER BY
MIGUEL GARCIA

THE PUBLISHERS of this book have either not read it at all or not understood it. Do not be put off by the blurb at the beginning where they say, "Miguel Garcia has fought for nearly 40 years for the freedoms we take for granted - the freedom of open elections, of a free press, of a free trade union organisation..." Miguel is not so liberal about his aims!

He begins the book in 1952 at his trial 2½ years after his arrest, and then follows through his 20 years in prison to his release. I wondered at first at the lack of explanation as to why there was a resistance, but if that were gone into fully it would be a history of Spain, not a history of imprisonment.

Due to the system and escape attempts Miguel covered several gaols in his 20 years, as he says the bad and the very bad. He uses the distinction a lot between political and criminal prisoners. In this case it is a fairly easy distinction to make although the emphasis some people put on it here and in Ireland is, I think, divisive. In Spain political prisoners have no privileges except that of closer surveillance and baiting by the gaolers.

Miguel brings home that 20 years is a very long time and it is obvious that you have to believe very firmly in what you are fighting for to survive it and to come out fighting. In Miguel's case he came to England and has continued to work around Spanish political prisoners and the cause he has been fighting for for so many years.

On reading this book it brought home to me again that being one of the survivors of a revolution that fails takes a lot of guts. I think it would be well for movements to stop spending so much time and paper on our martyrs and concentrate on surviving.

The book is very easy to read which makes it available to everyone; the price however does not, £2.25. At the moment it is published by Hart-Davis in hardback but it is apparently coming out in paperback. Rip it off for May Day.

C.B.
If I was an unsupported mother all I'd be getting is a kick in the teeth...