ALL OVER THE WORLD, THE SCHOOL HAS AN ANTI-EDUCATIONAL EFFECT ON SOCIETY.

THE GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY!
anarchy editors

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PART TWO.
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A NOTE TO THE READER—COERCIVE CONTROL, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL.

Comprehensives, the public schools, grammar traditions, streaming versus setting prefect systems, assessment methods, discipline techniques. P.T. compulsory games, school uniform, manpower investment, blah, blah, etc.

Take your seats for the next round! In the Red Corner we have Brian Simon and Brian Jackson... Howay, Howay! In the Black Corner we have Messrs Cox and Dyson... Howay, Howay!

And so the merry-go-round continues. Vital issues in some ways. But the good ol’ boys will never win until the debate is shifted away from the ground laid down by the enemy. Only when the fight centres round the cardinal issue of Freedom—freedom to learn—will the various minor controversies fall into place, into the bargain as it were.

This pamphlet-cum-book has the ambitious aim of completely shifting the terms of the debate in educational circles.

PART ONE begins by trying to demolish the Big Name in current educational philosophy, R.S. Peters. It is important to realise that Peters is not a reactionary but a semi-liberal, semi-progressive, semi-technocrate, equalitarian, semi-conservative elitist! In other words—a typical example of the current educational consensus, bogged down as it is in a mass of contradictions, as we shall see.

The whole scene is stagnant and needs a bloody good bomb under it to start things moving again in the direction of radical educational reform.

I chose to attack "ETHICS AND EDUCATION" merely because it was compulsory reading in my education course! But a similar critique could have been done for Bantock or any of the other sawdust gurus of the training colleges. Although they may differ on points, their ideas are virtually indistinguishable when compared with the ideas discussed in this pamphlet.

PART TWO attempts to answer the question "If you are so much against the school system status quo, what would you put in its place?" In suggesting alternative solutions, I have relied on recent developments in educational ideas in the States, where hundreds of students and teachers are really excited by what they see as a real breakthrough; I too see the new developments as a real breakthrough; and my aim in this pamphlet is to turn people in this country to the totally new way of looking at education that the breakthrough involves.

In PART THREE I discuss strategy for changing our whole way of educating kids and adults. I do not discuss tactics much, more the chief intermediate demands we might be making and the weak points we should be attacking. Part Three also contains a first but detailed criticism of the Bank and File group and left-Progressives generally, and some groping suggestions for libertarian practice in a normal college of education where radicals are often pretty isolated.

This booklet is for all interested in education (obviously!), but particularly for practicing teachers and teachers-in-training. More particularly, still it is aimed at (horrible phrase!) all who hate corporal punishment. (If you dig corporal punishment then I don’t think there’s much I can say.)

Good, so you hate beating too.

Many student teachers do. But after a year of teaching, after ten years... what then? The percentage of liberal teachers drops dramatically. Many who have been ardent opponents of corporal punishment end up using the cane or reporting boys for the Head to do their dirty work.

Now for a confession: at school I was never referred to become a prefect, or become an indistinguishable when compared with the ideas discussed in this pamphlet.

year’s voluntary service overseas— the latest in finishing schools for the English middle classes! During my year in a second-year school, I have had no end of exciting experiences. The end of my year I had physically assaulted a boy for not doing what he was told. I had threatened boys with the Head (the stick). What’s more, I had had accepted the logic of the schooling process— that I was superior to any position of moral superiority. At several points I will appear to be making unreasonable attacks on teachers for brutality, lack of respect for young people, etc. But I am fully aware of the fantastic pressures of the classroom. I have succumbed to them myself. I can sympathise with frustrated and unfriendly teachers just as I attack them. Because I am really attacking their role. I will really be attacking the crazy ideas of bottling up a person in one classroom with a Someone in charge, and expecting either to remain liberal and progressive or to remain lively and independent.

Oh, of course, some do retain their integrity. So, say, after five years of teaching in a secondary school. Those with special gifts for gaining the interest and admiration of kids. Another ten percent appear to retain their values, but only appear. They are the ones who are teaching the ‘bright’ children, the ‘good’ kids—the ones who have been brainwashed into obedience already! “Brainwashed into obedience already”— surely that’s a bit extreme?

I don’t think so. There are always two ways of controlling kids: one is physical, the other is mental. The physical way is cruder but often more honest. Working class mums use it when Johnny plays in puddles. ‘Hey, Johnny..."
(bif) don't you go splashing in
the wet. "Johnny doesn't
any
more!" Our mums who are
really boys who like
play in puddles. And when mum
isn't looking......

Middle-class mothers use a
more subtle form of control. By words,
"just don't get mud on your
girl's nice shoes. And don't
get your muddy puddles muddy.
Nice boys don't like having
muddy puddles. You really don't
like having muddy puddles and
getting all horrid and wet, do you
now, Johnny?"

This subtle form of emotional
blackmail is often more psy-
cho-lonely harm than any quick-
tempered cuff. The middle class
mother is able to put her con-
straints right into the centre of
her child's personality. She
controls his image of himself (a
good boy) by redefining "nice
boys" as boys who don't play in
puddles.

Later on, the teacher takes over.
He or she tells the class how
they really love painting, doing
sums, or whatever he wants to
talk next. So by the
time they get older they no longer
know what they want any longer
their 'they', their "I's" have been
implanted with Authority's
ideas of who they ought to be.
And therefore, being "good" pupils,
they are easily controllable.

 classroom school teachers can teach
French and History without com-
pelling them physically, because
someone else has already done it
(mentally) for them. Then the
products of this pathetic pro-
cess become neurotically fixated
on the only thing they can do
deliberately, pass exams in French lan-
guage, say, study it at university
and eventually go back again to
the safety of the school environ-
ment -- to teach French language
(All the time having to stifle
the uneasy semi-conscious realisa-
tion that they are missing some-
thing, but all the time too inac-
curately to ditch all the self-image
capital that they have invented
in their particular specialism.)

So, you see, if you are against
corporal punishment, you ought
also to be against mental co-
ercion, in my opinion. Either way,
coercion of some sort is very much
part of the school system, which
is what I'm out to criticise.

But please realise: THIS BOOK
HAS CONSEQUENCES FOR YOU! Treat
this book as a letter from a
friend or from an enemy. Throw
it away, burn it, write and tell
me what you do anything; but please REACT! Please don't
put it on a "Theory" pedestal of
unrealistic ideas available some-
where when ready to spout back to fool "progressive" college tutors with, until such time as you have served your
time and can enter the real world of work without education with a
stupid piece of paper saying that
you're 'qualified'.

So decide now whether you are
going to go through with this;
please. By going through with it!
I do not mean 'believe every
word of it'. I mean grapple with
it and criticise it ruthlessly.
But first enter into it... --Because
at the end of it you'll most cer-
tainly see pretty fantastic, far too
idealistic, utopian science fiction
even. But keep reading and it
will come right back to you.
Will you be among the many who
start out "progressive" in theory
but who end up reactionary in practice? Will you end up a tired
and, aged forty, always complain-
ing in the staff room about how
bad your kids are, with no pros-
pects except destructive boredom
ahead of you? Will you adopt the
phony 'realism' of the defeated
that is really a mask for des-
pair and cynicism. (For the op-
posite of true idealism is not
realism, but cynicism.)

Don't say "it can't happen to me"
It will probably happen to lots
of us -- unless we fight it! Our
ideas aren't enough; we've got
to understand. We've got to act
against structures. And to help
us we need a theoretical un-
derstanding, both of the system we
are out to change, and of the sort
of system we propose to replace
it by.

Suddenly some men in white
coats just took you off to an asylum. You call for
help and resist -- maybe even
violently. All to no avail: in
the eyes of the hospital
attendants it just proves
what a nut you really are.
"Hear that, Bill, say's
he's as sane as you or I well why's he banking on the back of
the van then if he's not a
tuny?"

Nothing infuriates us more than
having someone discount our
reasons for doing something.
If your parents didn't like
your preference for pop music
or your staying out late, then
what right have they, you're
just going through a phase?"

Misunderstanding can be unin-
tentional (eg. the policeman
thinking "that chap's got a
bad cough") or alternatively,
if not conscious: "He's just going through a
phase." In the latter case,
this very denial of your praxis
is itself the praxis of the
dummy.

There are two ways of looking
at what somebody does: you can
see it either as process or
praxis (or a bit of both) by
process we mean the idea of
everything happening to you,
everything being caused by
something else, not being
able to help it: like getting
tuberculosis and having to
cough. Cogs in a machine.

But there's also PRAXIS. Sup-
pose you are standing guard in
a burglary job and along comes
a copper. What do you do. You
cough. In this case a warning
cough would be a sensible thing
to do in the situation, it would
mean something, although with-
out understanding the
situation you wouldn't understand
the cough. Process can be
accounted for by impersonal
causes. But a piece of praxis
is definable only by what it's
intended to achieve. It is
projected out into the world as
the actor sees the world.

process
and praxis

If someone wants to keep you
down or put you down the best
way of doing it is to make it
non-sense of your praxis
and to take your meaning out of
your action and give it its own
meaning.

What separates humans from
dumb animals is our capacity
for praxis- meaningful action
appropriate to our situation,
intended either to change it
or to help us to adapt to it.
People like being treated as
persons and they know and hate
it when they are treated as
things. Wherever praxis is
reduced to process we can
speak of refraction: thing-
ification, reducing a person
to the level of a dumb
or a thing; Refraction
takes place in bureaucracies
which try(logically) to reduce their personnel to parts of a machine.

It also takes place in more subtle ways: Reduction of a person to an interesting psychological case- aren't children funny? - is exhibited in the following little tale by Paul Goodman:

"When the child in the story said, "but the Emperor has no clothes," the newspapers and broadcasts surely devoured many columns to describing the beautiful new clothes and also mentioned the interesting psychological incident of the child. Instead of being proud, his parents were ashamed; but on the other hand they received $10,000 in sympa-
thetic contributions toward his rehabilitation, for he was a newsworthy case. But he had a block in reading."

When your parents said,"Oh, you're just going through a phase", you probably protest-
ed and said:"I can decide for myself when I need your advice I'll ask for it. For goodness sake, stop treating me like a child."

In our society, "being treated like a child" means a being re-
sified, having our praxis denied, being explained out existence, in short, NOT being treated like a PERSON.

It will be the purpose of this pamphlet to suggest that a child shouldn't be treated "like a child" either. Even if they only decide to ask for help from an adult, children are persons and can decide for themselves to do this.

**Peters and Kant**

(1) Peters Use of Kant

In the first section of "Ethics and Education," Peters defines what he sees Education as in-
volving. Among other things it involves, Peters says, respect, or rights. In the second section he attempts to justify this and other moral principles. After discussing different theories of moral justification, he finally seeks a rational basis for moral principles in what he calls "the situation of practical reason."

The situation of practical reason is person A. asking person B. to give him his reasons for doing or not doing something.

For this situation to really work (1) A should be seriously committed to finding out what he should do. He must be able to "listen to reason and sub-
mit seriously to the conditions of the discussion."[165]

(Who defines "the conditions of the discussion?" Who defines "seriously"?) According to Peters this ability to weigh and balance abstract principles means having been educated into "worthwhile activities." This supposedly won't happen naturally as the child grows up but needs the attention of people in authority and therefore this condition of being able to listen to reason leads (for Peters) to the principle of Authority. Moreover, (2) if A doesn't have or doesn't receive reasons for a pro-
posed change of course then he continues as before (the principle of "no distinction without relevant differences" from which Peters also draws the principle of Equality.) Also, (3) if A wants to be helped, he must accord B freedom to say what he really thinks. He should do (principle of Freedom). Finally, (4) A and B must respect each other as persons (principle of Respect for Persons) (p209)

This last principle is crucial to the whole "what-in-T-to-do-
-and-why?" situation. For in-
stance, suppose Peters asks me how he should discipline wayward students and I tell him the whole concept of formal educational "discipline" is an abortion, giving reasons. In this case, if he puts me down as "just a child" or as a "pathological rebel" without countering my reasons with his reasons he's der-
ing my praxis. If I sense that, then I will be unwilling to go on explaining my reasons, which in any case he has probably categorized as un-reason. By not ascribing praxis to my reply, he shuts himself off from the message my words contain, and from the possibility they might be of use to him in his situation.

Peters' introduction of Kant's "situation of practical reason" therefore makes sense. His respect-for-persons principle seems to tally closely with seeing people as agents of praxis.

(2) Peters non-use of Kant

Peters highly selective application of this principle of respect for persons is an entirely different matter, however.

With minor criticisms, Peters' idea of education is easily reconciled with the national status quo in education. Having basically accepted our whole hierarchical edu-
cational system in Part I, he then introduces his nine principles in Part II to justify some sets or activities and relations-
ships within this set-up. Instead of starting from the idea of treating the other as an end in himself and building his definition of education up from there as he does exactly the opposite. He starts from education or rather schooling - as it is as an end in itself and only introduces the idea of respect for persons in very limited contexts, where its teeth are known as it were. Peters' Liberal Ideas function as a "nice" gloss that everyone can agree to in the abstract. This is because Peters refuses to apply his idea of respect for persons whenever it comes up against the status quo. In this way Peters takes the sting out of a highly critical concept.

For instance, Peters never has the teacher asking his children "What am I to do?" Nor does he allow the children to ask: "Why should we do this?" Rather the teacher first applies his policies by talking with people like Peters (who are Educated and count) and then applies them to his pupils (who are uneducated and therefore don't count).

Likewise, Peters doesn't apply his ideas of treating persons as ends in themselves outside classroom. Factory Managers see "their" workers as mere "hands." The State uses its police and soldiers and bureaucrats, treating them as cogs in a big Machine. Present-day Industry and the machinery of the State would collapse if people were treated as ends in themselves for only five minutes.

Since we are living in a society which treats people as things, is it not likely that the State will also want to deal with schools for its own ends? When we examine the pressures of the envi-
It is no good expecting children suddenly and spontaneously to adopt rigorous standards of performance at school leaving age. We are constantly told, by employers, that the schools are not preparing children adequately for work. Their complaints concern simple things which lie within our powers to remedy.

"In industry and commerce, good habits of working, matters of safety and efficiency require that instructions are obeyed. Will to work is paramount; accuracy is essential; perseverance is desirable."

The development of necessary industrial qualities is our job. It is too late when youngsters enter work. It is too late when children move to secondary schools. A lifetime of work-habits must be instilled whilst children are of primary school age."

Higher up the system we find talk of education as a "national investment" in "human capital."

To be sure, Peters is unhappy about many of the pressures on the business men and the State on education. Schools shouldn't just teach what will be useful to business. Peters insists that some activities are worthwhile in themselves.

True, on page 145 he hints it may be necessary to "sell" Higher Education to "hard-headed businessmen" on grounds of how useful it is to outside ends. But he himself believes that education is its own end, that it is good in itself.

Since the middle ages, more and more subjects have split off from the Arts and now justify themselves by how useful they are, not by how true or beautiful or good they are in themselves.

As long as capitalism continues, the Technocratic utility perspective (everything reduced to an instrument towards some other goal) is going to spread more and more. Suppose the "hard-headed businessmen" are to do a survey which shows that "production" is greater in a foreign literature doesn't really lead to higher exports. What will they do then? Liberal humanists like Peters are going to have less and less room for which to appeal against the tide of Technocracy, because it's the Technocrats who hold the purse strings. Moreover, Peters cannot go on the offensive, because he is a member of the middle class himself and his views are not the right order. But gardeners and plants creates an infinite superiority and an infinite inferiority.

Thirdly, plants are passive; children are active. Gardening model still leaves the educator with all the initiative- to respect or not to respect, to help or not to help. This is good because although plants can't make a move a-vis-a the gardener, children can. It is too easy to let them grow up in the respect towards plants. Nothing is holier than the sacrificial ram, bound just before the slaughter. Respect for persons in harder because it involves respect for the other's initiative over against you. The child is (or should be) able to explain or depart. Plants just have to wait to be watered or not, but children can ask for water and if you don't give them any you can give them poison- they can go and look for it. The gardening model makes more growth which makes it preferable to the clay model. But children can also grow as regards their wills; their independence can grow.

The potter had his hands constantly in the clay. Among the horticulturalists and shouted: "Hands off!" This was an advance, but the model is still inadequate.

Yes, the child should be "left alone" in onesense. But he or she will not let you alone. He will talk with you, and when you can no longer control him, he will move on. If you try to control him in subtle ways ("of course you enjoy washing dishes, but you don't have to do it so well.") he will not be fooled. He will be sensitive to your insensitivity and has the right to remove himself from your company. The task of adults is not to have no influence on the child, as the "hands off" cry suggests. It is rather to make sure that the child can escape any influence you may have on him if he wants to.

The third model is animal training. It is the basis of the ideas of writers such as E. F. Skinner. Skinner is a behaviourist who has done a lot of work in animal behaviour. Animals are obedient, unlike plants, animals can run away. But not when Skinner trains them! His basic piece of apparatus is such that the animal is put into and can't escape from it. All three models have this in common- the domination of persons to the sub-human gardener and young gardener: the two agree on the right order. But gardeners and plants create an infinite superiority and an infinite inferiority.

In chapter one Peters deals with different schools of education with different models. Peters plays one model (the model with clay model) off against another (the gardening model). He describes "child centred" education as merely a revolt against certain excesses of the potter.

Maybe this is true. But to discuss present day libertarian education only in terms of the gardening model is quite false.

Firstly, the plant analogy is misleading because of its individualism: Plants can learn from each other, our children definitely do. Secondly, the analogy creates a false division between adult and child. Big plants and small plants or old models of education

(a) Pottery making
(b) Gardening
(c) Training animals
(d) Initiative
(e) Dialogue and Free Association

A and B

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"The development of necessary industrial qualities is our job. It is too late when youngsters enter work. It is too late when children move to secondary schools. A lifetime of work-habits has to be instilled whilst children are of primary school age."

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level. As we saw in the first section, persons are agents of praxis: they have intentions and can act on the world in terms of their intentions or clay and plants can't. Rats can have a kind of praxis only when not imprisoned in Skinner boxes.

Almost the only valuable idea given by Skinner is the importance of circumstances in the development of children. Skinner's ideas are founded on the idea of "conditioning" by means of rewards and punishments. It is often claimed that by being there adults must be "conditioning" the child. This is at once true and misleading. In Skinner's learning situations the person doing the conditioning has sole control over the rewards; the animal can't choose which "reinforcers" he can get. This notion here means total control. But "conditioning" can also mean influence. Influence means that the animal can escape from the learning situation. Of course, adults cannot help "conditioning" (influencing) children, but it does not follow that therefore adults may as well "condition" (control) children.

(d) Potore own model in the Priest initiating the uninilitiated special knowledge. Peters several times criticises animal training models of education. Nevertheless when we explore religion we often find human/animal metaphors: eg. fishers/ fish, shepherd/lock, etc. The knowledge which the priest has is his knowledge, it is only priests who have access to such special knowledge. The position of the priest in Skinner's box is quite similar to the person being initiated into religion: one waits for jellots of food, the other for "spiritual sustenance". Neither has access to these resources for himself.

Super-human/human preserves the same gulf as human/subhuman. The implications of this knowledge are that the faithful could not have worked it out on their own. But for God and his priests there is nothing in either of these. The initiated may be seen as agents of praxis as regards everything else; but initiated their praxis must always fall short. All models which minimize the praxis of the other are liable to involve Peters stresses the intellectual superiority of the teacher in such a way as to justify controlling the child. (see the section "cognitive wedge") His position is somewhat like an intellectual Behaviourism, close to the rat model for all the apparent differences.

Finaly we come to the only model we think is adequate. Surprise! Surprise! The child is a PERSON. Unlike plants, people are mobile: they can wander into a zone of activity and wander out. Unlike rats, unlike congregations during sermons and unlike students in lectures, persons can talk back.

One main way persons affect each other is through talk. Dialogue is the basis of all worthwhile education. To be sure, older persons is possible to have more to contribute than younger persons. But there is a presumption in favour of equality which is absent in the trainer or priest models: the child is presumed to have something worthwhile to contribute on his part at an early age. His praxis is sudden and sudden recognition. Right from the start his praxis is recognised and this helps it develop. Two-way communication is possible whenever the child wants to.

We have several times criticised the other models for their inability to say the child must be able to wander off when he no longer wants to be conditioned by any particular adult. The reason is that he can't help being "shaped" (modelled) by those he meets, he should be free to choose those influences (models) that are all the time shaping him. He should be free to choose "grativate" wherever he needs to, whenever he needs to. He should even be free to adopt extra parents and go and live with them. Children need a multiple circle of models: warm friendly adults who accept having them around the place. With dialogue we must emphasize free association.

Here is Paul Goodman on education:

"My own bias is that education is spontaneous: it is itself part of the kaleidoscope of society. Youngsters are imitating and identifying, aspiring to grow up, asking why, demanding show me how. Adults are demonstrative, helpful, interested in what to mould, exploit, or get a following. Spontaneous learning and teaching can be more or less of any age. It may be better or worse for its participants; but as with any other exciting function, the proof of its defects lies on those who would interfere with it."

Ms.-education and The Community of Scholars", Vintage, 1962.).

Goodman is here invoking one of Peters' own principles: "no distinction without relevant differences". He restricts its operation to the question of equality, yet fails to apply it in any situation where it might lead to anything similar. Again we see how Peters non-use of Kant is more significant than his use of Kant.

It is important to realise that the libertarian conception of education is NOT child-centred. This comes out in another piece from Goodman in favour of what he calls incidental education:

"To be educated well or badly, to learn by a long process how to cope with the physical environment and the culture of one's society, is the human condition. In every society the education of the children is of the first importance. But in many primitive and highly civilised, until quite recently most education of most children occurred accidentally. Adults do their work and other social tasks; children are not excluded, are paid attention to, and learn to be included. The children are not "taught". In many adult industries, incidental education is taken for granted as part of the function: families and age-statues, community, labour, master-apprentice arrangements, games and plays, prostitution and other sexual initiation, religious rites and churches. In Greek paideia the network of institutions, the polis, was thought of as importantly an educator.

Generally speaking this incidental process suits the nature of learning better than direct teaching. The young see real causes and effects, rather than pedagogic exercises. Reality obviously "child-centred" is here being used in a special way. I have no objection to a general other-centredness of the self, to others as a moral precept. However, most child-centredness is not sensitive to the child in all his or her needs for autonomy in a safe environment--the reason why people any child-centred education and not normal living and relating--it is not something that I have identified the mainstream of child-centred theory with the plant analogy and not with the dialogue/participation/free association themes of generativity. However, the situation is confused by the number of libertarians who mean the latter, but use self-developmental "child-centred" (Goodman for example). (See also Section 14, Part 1)
spent on training if the State sets aside some time for "pure" education of the child for his or her own sake. Peters accepts that the aims of individual development are "not along side the State's requirement for training in skills and citizenship." (p153) To avoid a show of democracy, he hastily adds that the two goals are "not necessarily incompatible."

Peters writes that the schools should "consider the interests of child and state, and what is in their interest and have regard also for the public interest." (p157, my underlining)

I would want to rewrite this as follows: "education should consider the interests of children and what is in their interest and, in so doing, have regard also for society's interests. Although the interests of the State may be advanced by compelling children away from what interests them, it is not possible to advance Society's interests in this way. It is only by concentrating on the fullest development of individual capacity that, into the bargain as it were, one is of any use to "society". Some may think that this will lead to individuals developing themselves at the expense of the public interest.

'What guarantees', they ask, "can society have that they will not grow into selfish isolated geniuses?" The answer is that attempting to guarantee that by compulsion people are selfish is in fact the surest way of making them selfish.

Human nature is not such that the more the individual gets the less society gets. Children do not need to be social. They are social already, inherently social, inescapably social.

By leaving people in the freest circumstances, their social instincts will develop in the same way as the children to whom the 94th of the State is given, upon which knob Agriculture is based, and the Board of Education is.
The Arts/Science split, the work/play split is a product of class society. The useful and the beautiful need not be opposed. Science and Technology could be beautiful. Art could express itself in everyday life and work for ordinary people. The classless society (which does NOT mean a society where we would all be the same!) the individual would have ample opportunities to fulfill himself in ways which helped other individuals fulfill themselves.

An education system which strikes the sort of bargain R.S. Peters comes close to advocating (eg morning: useful work; afternoon: beautiful self-development) is liable to find the morning stretching until two, until three, until four o'clock! Moreover, it can merely perpetuate the sickness of class society. Society and the individual are not opposed principles (as Peters paints them). Therefore to harm individuals especially those individuals who end up on factory floors being useful to oh-so-cultured employers! is to harm all of society.

The individual's interests are not to be set alongside (Peters p139) the interests of his community. They should be seen as identical with them. They are only in opposition to the interests of bosses and bureaucrats (as are the interests of society).

NOTE: Advance Warning!

As the argument goes forward readers will several times want to stop and ask at me: "But that is to assume a utopian society".

I can only assure the reader that he is only partly right and ask him to have the matter out with me at a later point.

integration through diversity

The last section emphasised that the individual is social, tending naturally to contribute to his society. It is now time to emphasise that he makes this contribution not by suppressing or exploiting himself for the sake of society, but by being himself most.

Personality development. The individual is a slightly different person vis-a-vis his father, and vis-a-vis his various friends. This is because in different relationships different parts of our personality unfold. Quite often, children get "crushed", crushed occur when one part of their personality has been kept down in relationships with persons A,B and C. Along comes D with some of the right qualities and the child falls for him/her; the qualities he admires in D are the very qualities which the child has within himself waiting to emerge. If D doesn't come along the child should be free to move among a number of warm and friendly adults, so that he can gravitate towards D.

Moreover, once the child develops his relationship to D, he becomes more his (A,B,C,D,...z) self. People who are most themselves can allow others the psychological space to become most themselves as well. The more the child individuates himself, the more he contributes to D, and society, because the members of his group or society can now individuate themselves in relation to him. So again we see how wrong it is to think of the interests of the individual as having to be somehow balanced against the interests of society. To suppress a child's talents, to suppress a child's personality, is a crime against all his contacts as well.

Informal Communication: Many children are scolded by teachers when they help each other in class. This is quite wrong. In many ways children learn far more from each other than from teachers. In "The Language and Lore of the Child" and "Children's Games in Street and Playground", the Opies catalogue literally thousands of rhymes and games which children teach each other. Even now, the reader will probably be able to remember the chants he picked up in the playground far better than the pieces of verse contained in his primary school English books. (It is significant how ignorant teachers are about the culture of children; children are a conquered people, the conquered peoples' culture is always ignored/depised by the Master Race).

Very often, to teach children as a class is a great waste of all the informal learning and teaching among children. What's the point of telling your class about the film you saw yesterday, if he saw it yesterday too? But if he was visiting a factory, then you can swap experiences.

Here again we see that the more diversity of experience the group contains, the more the members of the group stand to gain. Each different child expands the environment of the other children in his own different ways. To standardise a child's experiences is to impoverish the child's friends as well.

Let us conclude this section and the previous one by quoting from Sir Percy Hunt, whose book "Education: Its Data and First Principles", for all its faults, shows up the mediocrity of "Ethics and Education" published fifty years later.

"We shall stand throughout on the position that nothing good enters in..."
to the human world except in and through the free activities of individual men and women, and that educational practice must be shaped to accord with that truth. This view does not deny or minimise the responsibilities of a man to his fellows; for the individual life can develop only in terms of its own nature, and that is social as truly as it is self-regarding."

(P.2)

"Developed conduct almost always includes a social reference, for it issues from a need for personal association with social factors."

(P. 248)

This view (social individual-in-society) runs completely counter to Peters' individual-and-society attitudes. The only development or integration Peters can imagine takes place as the result of Authority (the State). He completely lacks the concept of society; that is of integration through diversity.

At Selby grammar school, Yorks, 100 pupils staged a sit-down strike when a sixth-form concert which contained swear words and double meanings was banned. Headmistress Molly Blake said it could not go on because it was immorally relevant.

And at a secondary school in Liverpool, 50 children walked out of the classroom because, they claimed, they were too cold.

Marlene Cavallarder, a 14-year-old fourth-former, led a walkout of 70 pupils at High Chalk school, Tonbridge, Kent.

She alleged that "the standard of education was poor and the lessons were a drag."

Words. The medium is the message! What is meant by 'definition of the situation'? Suppose when teacher is talking, John at the back is reading the Beano.

In that case, John defines the situation as 'Beano reading time'. Why won't he let us go outside? What a drag! What must he be reading the Beano under the desk.

His definition of the situation is private and suppressed. The ruling definition of the situation is the definition of the ruler - the teacher! The teacher defines the situation (effective) but not consciously, as: "Education is good for me. I am talking. I am in control."

All initiatives in the room must first be accepted as legitimate by the official definers: "Put your hand up if you have anything to say." If all the pupils who were bored acted on their definition of the situation - boring talk, let's go and play - the teacher would have to introduce punishers to reinforce his definition of the situation - interesting talk, sit and listen.

Suppose that as a teacher talks, Denis the Menace lands an ink blot on the teacher's shirt front. This is an act full of meaning. It is a political manifesto for rebellion. What it says is clear: "You bore me. Stop controlling me. I want to be free!" It is an act of praxis. It makes perfect sense to the bored young person.

Now, in this situation, the praxis of the teacher will be to deny the praxis of the child: the definition of the situation is that there is only one definition of the situation; therefore counter-definitions will be defined out of existence. Denis is defined as incapable of classroom work, when in fact he is unwilling for it. Throwing the inkblot will be drained of social sense by the teacher: "senseless hooliganism". Dennis will be punished, either physically by being sent to the Head, or psychologically by being labelled as disturbed and sent to the school psychologist and form there to a special school probably.

The teacher exerts a sort of monopoly of constructive initiative in the classroom. Children therefore have the choice: either to grow up without initiative ("good pupils") or to refuse to accept the systematic denial of their independent praxis and to grow up destructive ("bad pupils"). Initiatives such as reading aloud in the class, going out to play, foot-stamping when bored, and even talking to one's neighbour will all alike be defined as destructive or troublesome. Who is responsible for this teacher's refusal to see that he is being destructive of the child's impulses. Only the teacher's viewpoint counts. This is what is meant by definition of the situation.
the cognitive wedge

(a) Peters’ use of the cognitive side of education - as a wedge for compulsion.
(b) The cognitive side of education.
(c) Objective Truth. Priestly and bureaucratic versions.
(d) Knowledge and Praxis: the real motivation to understand the world.
(e) Competence before Creativity: yes, but...

(a) Peters’ use of the cognitive side of education - as a wedge for compulsion:

The cognitive side of education plays a crucial part in Peters’ overall argument. In the first section, he defines education as initiation into "worthwhile activities." In the second section, "worthwhile activities" form the link between the situation of practical reason and justification of the principle of authority. According to Peters, asking someone for reasons only makes sense if he has been initiated into worthwhile activities (p134: such as philosophy?)

Because according to Peters, they cannot initiate themselves into worthwhile activities, they need to be constrained, to be Disciplined. In this way, Peters argues that disciplines(subjects) justify discipline( authoritarian coercion). He drives a wedge in from an Authority (the teacher may know more) to in authority.

Peters is correct when he writes that "judgement is passed on people's wants in deciding what is in their interest." But he slides over from deciding in one's own mind to deciding for other people (whether they like it or not).

(b) my position on the cognitive side of education.

I am not anti-intellectual, I'm not a Black Paper elitist who wants to keep working class kids down by keeping them away from knowledge. I am all for a "cognitive perspective." In Section (a) I said we had to understand education theoretically, but not for its own sake. We have to understand education theoretically so we can withstand the pressures of the school system. The better to revolutionize it. Cognition should serve oneself and their intentions. Man was not made for the Sabbath.

The same with children. I believe it is crucial that children should come to understand themselves, their situation in society, where they fit in Nature and History. But I think they can and will come to real understanding much better if they aren't forced to do school work. If knowledge is personally relevant, it tends naturally to be fitted into a cognitive perspective. The person is the natural organizing centre of this perspective. All this talk about getting children to see that History and English and Science aren't in watertight compartments ignores children's natural tendency in the first place to build up schemata of their world. The only reason they get to think that English and Science don't tie up with each other is that they were taught in separate 40 minute blocks of knowledge in the first place.

At several points in the book Peters puts the alleged consequences of freedom side by side with the overly idealized version of what goes on in normal schools. For instance, he criticizes "progressive" schools for the bullying that supposedly goes on. Apart from the fact that libertarians don't think much of most so-called "progressive" schools either, bullying in these schools would only be a criticism of progressive education, if bullying didn't happen in ordinary schools. But it does. Frustrated kids turn their frustrations against each other.

The same idealization of normal education lies behind Peters' criticism of child-centred education on grounds of not providing children with enough knowledge. Consider the average school-leaver. Has he or she really learnt much personally relevant knowledge? Has he or she really achieved a cognitive perspective? Most of the knowledge that he has will be obsolete in ten years time and then he will be at the mercy of the media. Moreover, his ability to find things out for himself will have probably been spoilt in the course of his being given the knowledge he now has. When he was a small kid, he had plenty of desire and confidence to find out about the world. Somewhere along the line, the school has made him stupid.

Or take Peters' idea of a "subject", say Poetry, as being worthwhile. Consider all the teachers who teach poetry to children. Peters may consider poetry "worthwhile", but do the teachers? How many of them pursue this "worthwhile activity" in the school holidays or at the weekend(except in the context of planning next week's poetry lessons?) Only poets and people for whom poetry actually means a great deal in their lives can infect children with its relevance.

Three-quarters of poetry teachers are gross hypocrites. No wonder that most people get the message that poetry is not for them. Art as a special subject is dead.

Peters would admit that much poetry teaching is done by people who do not themselves experience poetry as a worthwhile activity.
He might even accept my percentage of 75% hypocrisy.
He is clearly perturbed about this kind of institutionalised mediocrity. His solution is to de-institutionalise his teacher training— rendering it the same as for years, etc., etc., hence to de-institutionalise.
If he insists who doesn’t really care for poetry wants to give lessons in poetry; that is fine if he can find any children who join his lessons. But otherwise, let children gravitate towards people who live their poetry.
If there are too many children for too few poets, then that’s sad, but it can’t be helped. At least, let us not positively turn people off poetry for life by the present organised hypocrisy.

(c) “Objective Truth” Priests and Bureaucratic Versions.
Having established that I am not against knowledge and indeed that I use the present level of evidence in the general population as an argument against Peters’ support of the status quo we go on to discuss Peters’ ideas about knowledge and truth.

Objective Truth means that it is possible to know what is happening as it is, instead of as I or you or as they see and think it is happening. The official definition of the Truth is given by a Third Person with an infinite vantage point (God). God then sets a few people into the secret, the Priests, who pass on The Truth to the masses. If the Priests think differently, then the Inquisition steps in.

Galileo was forced to take back his theory about the earth being the sun and the sun, Dogmatism, backed by Authority, is bound to be self-defeating in the long run.
Very few academics now hold a simple ideology of Objective Truth. They recognize that there may be many partial viewpoints on any event. If they all get together (academic community) their partial viewpoints can coexist and correct each other. No single scholar has a corner on “the Truth.” To deny someone else the right to develop his viewpoint may be suicidal for one’s own development in the long run. Consensuses cannot be imposed from the Top by a few Super Academics. It can only emerge through “letting a hundred flowers bloom,” integration through diversity. Often the most creative breakthroughs have developed from unorthodox academics following the most unlikely leads. Academic Freedom that the Academic Community is all about.

In practice universities are very different sorts of places. Academic Freedom is confined to the few. With a certain amount of room for manoeuvre, most students have to learn what they are told—that is why many of the most creative students drop out. The very students who could have most to offer in expanding and challenging the ideas of the community. Instead of recognizing that young (potentially) can define truths academics tend to say that only a few people (Qualified Academics) know the Truth. Within the priestly caste disagreements may be allowed. The mass of the people have to learn the several theories. They can only choose among the “approved” theories. Without a degree, one cannot buy one’s way into the closed shop. God may be dead, but he lingers on in the shape of bureaucracy. The Priests may not dominate the universities, but hierarchy does (Hierarchia in Greek). Monopoly definition of the Truth gives way to oligopolistic definition. Initiation is still the basic model. Peters has the world-view of many Professors: a bureaucratic conception of Truth. But he admits that there is still a great deal of argument about the content of subjects. But he is completely rigid about there being only certain “right” procedures for getting at the content. Objective Truth gives way to objective procedures fixed from above. The teacher’s “basic task is not to teach students what to think, but how to think.” (p201)

Three examples:
1. A psychology Professor may insist that there are only a few “objective” ways of testing psychology. R.D. Laing is too “subjective” to count as a “proper” psychologist, and Nietzsche even more so. Their evidence is (defined as) “private”. Only public knowledge can possibly count.
2. A political Professor may insist that writer X is too “subjective”, too “emotionally biased” to write a “good” history of, say, the Vietnam War.
3. Peters is a Philosopher. If a student were to start questioning Peters’ courses from the standpoint of Eastern Philosophy or Existentialism, Peters would define such preoccupations as “not Philosophy.” The student would be failed in his exams, because he would be threatening to break the oligopoly’s hold on what counts as respectable Philosophy.

By controlling what counts as “responsible scholarship” and by controlling what will be called “public knowledge” the Top Academics still maintain a considerable hold over thought. The child rises from pupil to student to postgraduate to lecturer to Professor by accepting the rules of the academic game each time he sits an examination. Instead of an Intellectual Community where all ways of knowing count (including non-verbal ways of knowing and communicating) we have an academic power structure where the definition of the Professor is decisive. Instead of freedom to learn for real, there is freedom to be academic. The modern university has forfeited its chance to provide a simple setting for encounters which are both autonomous and anarchic, focussed yet unplanned and communal, and has chosen instead to manage the processes by so-called research and instruction are carried out” (Illich) (And training colleges are even worse, they don’t even have the ideology of the academic community. Oh, I

Like hell it is!
forgot - they call them colleges of education now. But you know you're being trained all the same.

Nowhere is Peters' Bureaucratic conception of Truth more apparent than in his constant emphasis on "standards". The "standards" are what the Establishment defines and controls, but Peters makes them sound objective. Thus Peters talks about the sculptor being motivated by the "urge to give concrete expression to certain standards of beauty.

But this is less than half the story.

The sculptor is mainly concerned to express himself, to communicate a vision to other people. He is not out to gain credits for coming up to certain fixed "standards of beauty". Those artists who have worked out their own standards of beauty, have almost invariably been ridiculed by the Establishment, the Professors of the World of Art.

These gentlemen were concerned to maintain what they honestly considered were the only true standards, the traditional standards. But an additional source of their antagonism to the new artists was the threat to their social predominance.

Throughout "Ethics and Education" there is a constant implicit emphasis on tradition and language. But tradition and language do not only pick out. They also screen out.

Peters (rightly) preaches the duty of scholars to remain open to the evidence. (But what is "the evidence"?) The "evidence" is what counts socially as evidence. What counts as "evidence" depends on Who's Top Dog. Peters would do nothing about the social position of the scholars which is the real trouble: the Galileo affair did not just happen in the bad old days: in every field of study there are Galileos whose heresies are being either suppressed or ignored by Establishment Scholars. In Economics, Medicine, in Ecology, in Philosophy, in Psycholgy, and every other branch of knowledge, heretics are being kept down.

(d) Knowledge and Praxis: The real motivation to understand the world.

Peters is quite right to emphasize the will to seek for truth means being open to evidence against you, being willing to change your ideas. But Peters would not expect most people to be supposed not to have a stake in really understanding the world. According to Peters few people are willing to submit to the "discipline of enquiry". Therefore professors should stand by to discipline the student into admitting evidence. But wait! Is not the Professor himself a student? What guarantees are there that he will not also be susceptible or reluctant to admit evidence against him? Surely he needs a Super-Professor to control him! Surely the Super-Professor needs a Super-Professor to check him!

Any attempt to develop guarantees that people will be open to evidence is a waste of time. The only situation which works is a situation where several people on a level have some common interest, some project they want to achieve together. Here there are checks, but not Authority-checks. For instance, a group of Alpine climbers might share our responsibility for planning different parts of an expedition. In this real situation there would be plenty of motivation to get the preparations right and to encourage the others members to do the same. If one of the members of the team had an interest in evading the advice which his guides, if uncorrected, would itself be open for correction from among the members themselves. But not if he was in Authority over the group. In that case the expedition would end in disaster (unless a Super Authority could intervene!)

Desire for feedback can only depend on whether one is committed to achieving the goal to which the feedback relates. The willingness to take all the evidence into account can only be as strong as one's project in the world. The state of official definers of reality is no way to solve the problem of dogmatism. In fact it worsens it: cut off from projects in the real world, academics tend not to seek for feedback from the real world; their project must always be liable to become confined to reflecting the world, making them over-sensitive to the opinions of senior academics. (Note that I speak of likeliness and tendencies only).

If Johnny says he can jump 14 feet across a stream and teacher says he can't, there isn't any point in teacher forbidding Johnny to jump. If the teacher wants then Johnny won't get wet. If the teacher is right, Johnny will learn from reality itself (and incidentally ignore value good advice more). There are intrinsic motives towards listening to all the evidence. To create external motives (such as, what a shame when some teachers subordinate their teaching to exams to an unwarranted degree!)

Academic community in universities is a myth because but academic freedom does not extend beyond the ruling caste in universities. But, in itself, intellectual freedom for all is the only really worthwhile basis for new ideas to develop to the ultimate benefit of the whole community.

Peters does not believe that students at universities and training colleges should have intellectual freedom. It is therefore not surprising that he does not really believe the children should or can make sense of the world under their own direction and for their own, often social, purposes. This writer, on the other hand, would extend the idea of intellectual community right down to right down to right down to the gardeners.

From baby to professor, everyone has ample motive to understand the world. To misunderstand the world is to be unable to achieve one's intentions in it. One's attempts are blocked; lack of reason means lack of freedom; reality becomes a prison. Restricting freedom (by example and hierarchy) runs clean contrary to any cooperative venture of understanding the real world.

To restrict freedom in the name of reason is a nonsensical exercise, since reason has freedom as its goal and freedom has reason as its prerequisite. Enough motives exist "naturally" for people to want knowledge and to be able to enjoy it. How else can they come either through discussion or through action in the world which goes wrong and forces one to rethink.

"Spare the exams and spoil the child's knowledge" is as false as "Spare the rod and spoil the child". If people don't want to be open to the world, they can't be made to. There are no guarantees, and any attempt to construct guarantees cannot
itself be guaranteed. A dictatorship of Professors and Teachers is as self-defeating on a large scale for many people as "cranky" or "biased" ideas are self-defeating on a small scale for the few who hold them— that is if they really are cranks and not genuine "schools of events" respect for persons must mean respect for their right to fall into error in their own way. If they do get into error, one gets them out not by compelling them but by letting them see you working out a better way and not pressuring them.

Peters emphasises that children need disciplined knowledge before they can be creative with it. There is much truth in the statement, "If for the children to realise this and to come to ask to be initiated into this or that topic or discipline, the disciplines must be for them (and their interest in real topics), not for the disciplines. At every point any interest in creative discipline must be accepted because it makes sense to the pupil, because it will advance his project. Learning when to learn is what education ought to be all about.

Peters argues against Rousseau-type individualism by suggesting that there are very few "primal objects" (e.g., breath, sun, soil, etc.) Most objects around the child are not "natural" but have been "put there for a purpose and have the imprint of the public mind upon them....most objects with which a child is surrounded are concretisations of social purpose and belief." Again we see how Peters gets into arguing about a static plant model and from a static individual AND society philosophy. For what Peters says is not an argument for Authority at all: it is only a problem for the madman who argues that, "shrouded on a desert island, the infant would grow up cultured and educated;" the point is that "this subjective world of social artefacts" is still directly explorable, like the child exploring the breast. Moreover society in any case will do the selecting, it does not need Authority to do it. The real question is whether the child is free to gravitate to richer more interesting parts of the verbal/cultural world within the overall situation of being born into a particular type of culture and language. The idea that Authority is necessary to provide the child with the necessary social verbal "gen" is quite simply laughable. Rain falls all around, and not just from the Gardener's watering can (which was in any case filled from the previous rains and not from the misdirections of some older, wiser Super-Gardener).

As John Holt says, "The sensible way, I think, is to start with something worth doing, and then, moved by a strong desire to do it, get whatever skills are needed.

To say that children should be allowed to direct their own development does not mean that a child can sit down in a corner on his own and spin an entire 17th century culture out of his head. A balance needs to be struck between the fact that a whole lot of clever men have thought of things before, and the fact that each child is potentially able to contribute to that culture, to create meanings not just to absorb them. But it is for the child to come to strike this balance by trial and error. It cannot be struck for him.

A child's development can still be self-directed, only be self-directed, if it takes place in the social context of a given culture. Only those who picture human nature as essentially that the child in the womb will find the occurrence of socialisation surprising. Authority appears to be necessary to the atomised pre-social individual AND his society (see Section 3). Those with a social-individual-in-society perspective can see that self-direction does not mean isolation. A child does not have to wait for Authority to initiate him before he starts picking up his society's culture and the rules and the skills about it. Propensities of self-direction should jettison the model of Emile wandering through the Garden of Nature because of its misloading trills of rural setting and neurotic child-centredness — if Rousseau hadn't been of the leisure classes we might have had a healthier situation of psychological breathing space for Emile, while Rousseau concentrated on making cloth or farming. But the idea of self-direction itself is still perfectly relevant in our society.

Even complex things like how a radio works can be "picked up" and are, every day, as the large number of amateur radio enthusiasts testify. Even obvious classroom activities as learning to read are "picked up" by thousands of children on their own initiative before going to school (I am not talking of those who are taught by their parents). It is quite firmly believed that, with the possible exception of children in a very remote rural environment most children would learn to read if nothing was done about it at all. With children living in an environment full of print, newspapers, magazines, writing on television, signs, advertising, I cannot imagine how any child who has not been made to feel he was too stupid to learn to read would not learn. (John Holt). In other words, the "realities" of a Technological environment do NOT lend any support whatever to Authoritarian Theories of Education.

Reich

"The personality structure of man today is characterised by an armouring against nature within himself. This armouring of the character is the basis of loneliness, helplessness, craving for authority, fear of responsibility, mystical longing, sexual misery, of impotent rebelliousness as well as the resignation of an unnatural and pathological type. Human beings have taken a hostile attitude towards that in themselves which is living, and have alienated themselves from it. This alienation is not of biological, but of social and economic origin."

Peters

"A person's character represents his own achievement, his own manner of imposing regulation on his inclinations."

Same Difference!!!
authority and respect for persons in the real context of the school

We have seen how Peters "justifies" Authority in terms of the situation of practical reason. We must now see (a) how he equates "principle" with "Authority", and (b) the real sociological and psychological consequences of educational compulsion.

(a) Authority and Respect for Persons

Peters's basic tactic is to distinguish education as a "task word" like listening from education as an "achievement word" (like hearing).

"The implications of 'education' as an achievement word (i.e., that in the end the overall process of 'education' will involve the consent and understanding of the educated person-K.F.P.) do not necessarily carry over to it as a task word. The scientist may have to work against a will which is that of a boy, to do experiments in which he had not the slightest interest. But by being trained to do them repeatedly under rigorous supervision he may eventually have come to develop an interest in doing scientific experiments and gone out of his way to do them irrespective of whether he was made to do them or not" (p.38).

In other words, it is legitimate to compel children for their own good. Their own good as you interpret it. Their own impulses do not lead anywhere. Apparently, then, there are still some evolutionary left-overs, like appendices, which have no function of guiding the organism (see section 16). The true guide lies outside the organism. The Animal Trainer/Priest/Philosopher-king knows the narrow path towards fulfillment. Of, he thinks he knows it!

Peters admits that compelling children may destroy interest and creativity. But he maintains that this is an empirical question to be decided in the future. In the meantime, the children DO WHAT THEY ARE TOLD. "Gifted educators are precisely those who can get children going on activities which have no initial appeal to them" (p.39).

Peters must recognize that this sounds suspiciously like manipulation, for he then writes: "To teach is at some points at least to submit oneself to the understanding and independent judgement of the pupil, to his demand for reasons, to his sense of what constitutes an adequate explanation" (p.39). The future scientist wants to go and play, does he? Well tell him what an adventure science will be when he gets older, and how much he will help the nation. What's this? He still doesn't want to buckle down? Well make him. (His "independent judgement" can't have matured yet if he disagrees with us!)

Peters does not write: "To teach is at every point to submit oneself to the understanding and independent judgement of the child." This would amount to full recognition of the child as an agent of praxis vis-a-vis you. Such recognition would conflict with Authority whose sole raison d'être is to deny praxis. Denying the child's praxis is necessary because the child doesn't know what's good for it, according to authority. Therefore we will submit ourselves to his independent judgement only "at some points" i.e., when his judgement isn't independent, when we know we can persuade him anyway! In other words we give reasons to make the child do more willingly what we're going to make him do anyway!

Because he never forces a showdown between respect for persons and authority, Peters' respect for persons principle never really convinces one. In practice it must degenerate into a rather superficial, personnel approach: respect for people insofar as they are "good" pupils is a phony respect. This phony respect is used to solve the conflict between (b) the pupil being put off by compulsory work and (c) the need for the child to be involved voluntarily in that work if it is to be any "good" for him.

(b) The Sociology of Educational Compulsion - the work of Willard Waller.

Waller began "The Sociology of Teaching" with the fundamental realisation that schools are unfree places:

"The school is a despotic in a state of perilous equilibrium, threatened from within and exposed to regulation and interference from without...the school is continually threatened because it is autocratic, and it has to be autocratic because it is threatened."

The threats from without are obvious: the latest most spectacular example in this country was Risingshill, but such threats are operating invisibly all the time.

The threats from within exist as a consequence of the threats from without. They are the rebellion of the pupils:

"Pupils are the material with which teachers are supposed to produce results (i.e., not ends in themselves, things not persons-KFP). Pupils are human beings striving to realise themselves in their own spontaneous manner, striving to produce their own results, their own way", (recognition of praxis incompatible with first sentence-KFP)
The subject is subject only part of the time and with part part of the time and with part of his insecurity is all King (It is unflattering to one's ego to be a subject. (KPP)

In schools the subordinated ones attempt to protect themselves by psychological withdrawal from the relationship, "to suck the juice from the conformity before rendering it to the teacher." This is why students are rebellious: they want to live!

"Whatever the rules the teacher lays down, the tendency of the pupils is to empty them of meaning!" The teacher says "Walk faster" and so the children run. The teacher says "Slower, silly" and the children crawl. "Many teachers learn to cut through the rules to deal with the mental fact of a rebellion, eg, "What was that Smith?" "Nothing sir, just a cough." Because the teacher's definition of the situation is dominant, the child is forced to deny his own praxis. The disaffected mutter becomes "Just a cough, sir."

The teacher has to get the children to learn even when they don't want to learn what he says. There is a constant conflict between making the pupils sit (sit quiet) and making them enthusiastic (sit and listen and learn). The Authority role of the teacher has to be tempered with a helpful nice-chap role of "I'm on your side." All well and good. But if the teacher can be a person, the children can be free to step out of their role as well especially as their role is less pleasant. When the teacher gets friendly, the pupils are always likely to get friendly with him. (They are labelled "getting familiar", the granting of privileges! "going too far"). At this point the children are no longer "working". So the teacher has to put on his Authority role again. His own personality contracts behind his role again, only to expand a little later again with some more smiles and jokes to get the kids interested again (or simply out of common humanity at first). The teacher needs to "jump on and off his high horse continually." Waller continues:

"This pulsation of the teacher's personality with its answering change of posture on the part of the student is usually replaced by a mere conversation of gestures. This conversation is the most significant social process of "endearment." At the point where pupils threaten to become people again (agents of praxis vis-a-vis the teacher), the adult is forced back into his teacher role since he is supposed to be the sole controller of initiatives.

Personal authority tends to be inefficient as the slave system shows. Some people seem having to do something "because I tell you." They tend to do it slowly and reluctantly and badly. This sort of personal authority Peters is against. He wants authority rationalised so that it no longer seems to come from nothing. The exam system is a way of forcing children to work without it seeming that anyone is responsible. To the teacher, exams must seem to be part of his environment, like mountains one can do nothing to remove.

In fact of course, the exam system is created by men, not by God. It is maintained as part of the praxis of the ruling class. To many children, especially working class children, examinations are a drag and class work is presented. Direct compulsion by a person and compulsion by seemingly impersonal requirements to pass exams, both feel equally bad. Inattention is the least painful way of surviving. Rebellion is always possible.

Peters recognizes that too much discipline is liable to alienate children as much as too much personal do-as-I-tell-you discipline. It is important for the Authority in English literature not to deride the child's first efforts. Nevertheless, the examination are approaching and you really have to improve your spelling, Johnny. The requirements stand over against the individual and can thus be closer to him. Taking the journey in easy stages cannot make mountains come nearer than they are. On the day of judgement, some will have made it: others not. The impact of the requirements may not be as severe as the impact of the classroom tyrant, but they can never be softened away completely. The teacher's results after all. "Requirements have require some- where along the line. Here is Paul Graham summing up the dilemma Peters sees, but cannot solve.

"Traditional motives (for authority) have been to dominate and be a big fish in a small pond. The present preferred posture seems to me to be extremely dishonest: to take a warm interest in the young person yet getting them to perform according to an impersonal schedule. Since from the teacher's (or supervisor's) point of view, the only evidence is the presence of the failure can quickly degenerate to being harsh for their own sake and hating them as incorrigible animals!" The Sociology of the School is summed up superbly by a 15 year-old: "If I didn't want to I'd Like". "The average boy goes to school, becomes bored, gets into mischief, is punished, taken down to the other boys, is crammed with knowledge for the exams, passes or fails his exams, forgets and has learnt to hate that subject through bad teaching. The average teacher (even the idealistic sort) has to face much knowledge on boys, tries teaching without punishment, boys "take it out" on him for the vicous masters, he becomes a vicious teacher."

(c) The Psychology of Educational Compulsion. Or, Why Tommy Really isn't Reading.

For the young child, the authority figure is a constant threat. Everything depends on approval from mummy or the teacher. Not only is there the task itself, but there is the question of how to get the teacher to say the magic word "correct". John Holt claims that when they have only to deal with reality children have natural "learning strategies" built-in as a result of mankind's long evolution. These learning strategies constitute an evolutionary wisdom of the mind, and are efficient. Timothy Leary has provided a brilliant analogy for the schooling process and its effect on our natural learning abilities.

"Your brain, like any other organ of your body, is a perfect instrument. When you were born, you brought into the world this organ which is almost perfectly adapted to some what is going on around you and inside you. Just as the heart knows its job, your brain is ready to do its job. But what education is doing is to be like taking your heart and wrapping it in rubber bands and putting springs on it to make sure it can't pump," (p.230, The Politics of Education.)

Leary then makes the same point in a different way:

"Its your trained mind, you remember, which prevents you from learning. If a professor of linguistics who doesn't know any French goes to France, and they both spend equal time with French people, who is going to learn French faster? The five-year-old who was a Frenchman, even with that Ph.D. in linguistics. Why? Because Dad has stuffed his
mind with all sorts of censoring and filtering concepts that prevent him from grooving with the French process."

Leary then goes on to claim that the pechadilla experience can release these learning blocks, citing the example of a brilliant woman who had a block against learning languages. She learnt to speak Spanish perfectly by being put in earphones and flooded with spoken Spanish for eight hours under the influence of LSD. I do not think that he means this is exaggerating.

Children's minds seize up when Authority comes along: when Authority explains something (eg, the easiest way to learn task X), it may not seem the easiest way at all to children from their position, with their different backgrounds. (R.F. Mager has shown this in relation to the sequencing of material in programmed instruction. See Mager, 1961, in "Educational Technology, ed. De Cecco, p132. So also Anarchy [3])

The children lose sight of the problem-for-itself. The main job becomes to do the task the way teacher says, and not to understand any longer. To this end children abandon their natural learning strategies and adopt "production strategies" instead, such as guessing at waiting for hints from the teacher. Children may express the most amazing natural intelligence learning how to produce the "right" answer. The wrong ways. With the result that they still have not grasped the principles of the problem-the problem for the teacher not for the problem for them was pleasuring teacher). When the form of the official problem is changed, they are at sea and get the answer wrong. and are defined as stupid. Once labelled stupid, what they do will be seen as less intelligent than it is. Expectations will be lowered and subtly communicated to the child. And so the child will have been stupid.

Wherever Authority intrudes itself, one problem becomes two; in addition to the (intrinsic) discipline of understanding the world there is the extraneous problem of gaining approval. And there is the anxiety that approval may not be given. This anxiety disrupts the learning process, making the child rigid, uncreative, less bold and confident in his thinking.

Later on the task of pleasing teacher becomes the task of passing exams. But still the interest is not the subject for its sake. Extrinsic motivation leads to children learning living theories as fail and deserve to fail. Exams are for failing.

(See also Section 14, Sex on Compulsory School, De Cecco, p132.)

Yet again, just as the more Reading Instruction Experts, the more "reading difficulties", and just as the more miracle drugs and wonder-working surgeons, the less positive health there is in the community, so in agriculture: the more Soil Scientists, the more pollution and soil destruction!

Indeed this process seems to run through every part and function of our bureaucratised Western societies:

-Mon many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to confuse process and substance. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed; the more treatment there is the better are the results. Realisation leads to success.

The pupil is thereby "schoolied" to confuse teaching with learning, advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schoolied" to accept service in place of value.

Medial treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military noise for national security, the rat race for productive work. Health, learning, dignity, independence and creativeendeavour are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on acquiring more resources to the management of hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question. Not only education but social reality itself has become "schoolied".

... I would say "bureaucratised" as I see the schooling process in education as a sub-aspect of the general bureaucratisation of natural functions."

A NOTE ON EDUCATIONAL "BLOCKS".

The concept of the educational "block" is of the utmost importance. To begin with, unless one is going to rely on the unlikely supposition that e.g., a block for Mathematics is determined by our culture, one has to admit that the only way Tommy, or more likely, Tommy's sister, could have acquired it is from his environment, i.e., the adults trying to get him or her to get their sums right.

Secondly, "blocks" are amaz-
ingly widespread at all levels of society. The writer's education has left him with a "block" for mechanical and many practical activities, as has the education of many other male students. Indeed, the writer has a "block", or potential for almost every learning situation other than sitting down with a book, thinking, or talking with someone about something I already know something about.

The implications of this are so shocking that I hesitated to mention my own difficulties, which I intend to work on. However, let us spell out the situation a little: schooling has incapacitated me as thoroughly for most forms of learning (and of action) in direct proportion as I have "succeeded" in the forms of learning officially designated as such. Compare this state of affairs that of a friend of mine who has had almost no formal education, unless being incarcerated in a reformatory at the age of nine for playing truant has counted education. Yet my friend, Peter, can sew and make clothes better than a tailor, deliver his own babies, deal in scrap and junk, mend and maintain motor-bikes, build houses, do woodwork, mine coal, act as a steeple-jack, etc. First aid, breed dogs, do interior and industrial painting, mend clocks and sewing machines, and a host of other skills. All this in addition to having worked out several sociological principles such as Parkinson's Law that by keeping his eyes open, having worked out the exact rate of exploitation on several jobs he was on, and having learnt not just how to deal with the Social Security System for his own purposes, but how to help others avoid being exploited, when he heard that I was writing a pamphlet on education, he started to attack orthodox educational theory (child-centredness) for messing kids around and never allowing them enough independence.

He'd even massed out the basic theory of libertarian education in bringing up his own numerous children.

Thirdly, the process is not absolute or totally beyond the control of the schooled persons to remedy. I must unlearn a certain style of learning a and get in touch again with my own natural learning strategies. We need all of us to have these learning difficulties, and we are all of us responsible for overcoming them.

Fourthly, Illich and Holt both point out that the more educational resources are pumped into teaching, the more learning problems "blocks" seem to develop among the "beneficiaries" of all this compulsory schooling.

Educators can justify more expensive curricula on the basis of their observation that learning difficulties rise proportionately with the cost of the curriculum. This is an application of Parkinson's Law that work expands with the resources available to do it. This law can be verified on all levels of schooling, and instance, reading difficulties have been a major issue in French schools only since their per capita expenditure have approached US levels of 1950, when reading difficulties became a major issue in US schools.

There is a somewhat parallel development within medicine: with each great new breakthrough in drug medicine, more and more people suffer from the illnesses of getting cured. (Admittedly the wonder drugs have saved millions of lives as well!) Iatrogenic disease, as this is called, is now a vast field of medicine covering everything from hospital comparison to institutional depression. The biggest problems are round drug medicines that knock out the body's natural defences at the same time as they hit (perhaps only temporarily) the invading organism. (See Brian Ingles: Fringe Medicine, for a good account of the crisis of drug medicine and of possible complementary approaches, if not complete alternatives at this stage of our knowledge.)

The last word will be with the sage, Lao Tzu, writing several thousand years ago --

"As for those who would take the whole world To tinker it as they see fit, I observe that they never succeed. For the world is a sacred vessel Not made to be altered by man. The tinker will spoil it; Usurers will lose it."

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**Do we need better teachers? or none?**

Anybody who has been inside a school staffroom will have noticed two topics of conversation returning again and again: (1) unruly classes -- "Is he a real terror" 'not as bad as Std 2?" (2) stupid children.

There is little direct evidence of how schools make kids unruly or stupid. However there is a huge amount of near evidence. For instance, it has been observed over and over again how "dull" children shoot ahead when they once get a teacher who loves and respects them.

Such evidence is obviously unflattering to teachers. They have to be very exceptional characters before they can accept evidence which suggests that it maybe isn't all the fault of Will and his home background if by the time he is in class four, William still can't read.

(Or Bernstein's work has filtered down into the staffroom is indicative here: Originally Bernstein set out to show how children came to school with different linguistic codes; any kids who were already operating in the same codes as the school would possibly be favoured by the teachers, not necessarily consciously. This message was dismissed until it now reads as follows in the minds of many teachers: 'Bernstein showed how working class children have a bad home environment as regards their language. Their homes disadvantage them for school.' In fact, of course, Bernstein's message was personal implications for schools: that the schools were disadvantaging working-class children.

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person in the classroom? Peters maintains that academic authorities ought to be in authority, force people to keep open minds towards the evidence. But what if teachers tend to become dogmatic, and professors entrapped in dead academicism?

In other words, the reason for setting up these forces for we wear and tear in the first place was the imperfection of children. Peters would call Utopian dreamers those who see children as able to direct the themselves, individually and socially.

But IS IT NOT MORE UTOPIAN TO HOPE TO IMPROVE TEACHERS? ATTITUDES BY MORE WORDS, HOWEVER PIQUE, FLING AGAINST THE HIGHEST OCEAN REAL CLASSROOM PRESSURES WHICH ARE EVERYDAY OPERATING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION?

Is it not Peters being utopian about teacher-human-nature by discounting as excesses and assumption that teachers who have been most shaped by the authority structure he claims is imperative?

Grammar school boys, at Cheshunt, Essex, staged a hooligan go slow against a teacher they said was always picking on them for trivial reasons. While he was being duly walked slowly up to the serving hatches and ate their food, one per a time.

From the fact of human imperfection it does not follow that Authority is needed. It rather follows that "NO MAN IS FIT ENOUGH TO BE ANOTHER MAN'S MASTER." When we consider the way Power corrupts; idealistic teachers, at the following conclusion: Authoritarianism is not an accident that can be discounted and eliminated with courses in Ethics for Teachers. It is structurally generated. It is not "better teachers" that we should be talking about therefore, but the complete abolition of the Teacher role itself, as we know it.

In place of the teacher and his leader (if not tyrant role), we should advocate a leading role, not fixed and tied to one person, but leadership that is constantly changing according to the nature of the group's tasks, a leadership that can come from any quarter, therefore.

Listen to Michael Bakunin: "I receive and give such is human life. Each direct and is directed in his turn. Therefore there could be fixed and constant authority, but a continual exchange of mutual, temporary, and above all, voluntary authority and subordination."

If you think that Bakunin was just a dirty anarchist agitator -- he was -- will you accept the evidence of Dr. G. Scott Williamson? Williamson and his team of medical biologists were interested in human ethology -- and in particular in the source of spontaneous action in man and in the notion of positive health. They found that the only way they could study their subject was to create entirely free conditions to see what people would naturally tend to do. Any Authority or control would spoil the conditions of the experiment. And so they set up the Peckham Community Centre where ordinary London families were free to come and go as they liked in their leisure hours (like most good experiments, this one was also closed down by the estate.)

Here is the evidence of the Peckham Experiment:

"Acclimated as is this age to artificial leadership, it is difficult for it to realize the truth that leaders require no training or appointing, but emerge spontaneously when conditions require them. Studying their members in the free-for-all of the Peckham Centre, the observing scientists saw over and over again how one member instinctively became, and was instinctively recognized as leader to meet the needs of some particular moment. Such leaders appeared and disappeared as the flux of the Centre required. Because they were not consciously appointed, neither were they consciously overthrown when they had fulfilled their purpose. Nor was any particular gratitude shown by members to a leader, either at the time of his services or after for services rendered. They followed his guidance just so long as his guidance was helpful and what they wanted. They melted away from him without regrets when some widening of experience beckoned them on to some fresh adventure, which would in turn throw up its spontaneous leader, or when their self-confidence was such that any form of continued leadership would have been a restraint to them. A leader, therefore, if left to itself, spontaneously works out its own salvation and achieves a harmony of action which imposed leadership cannot emulate."
a note on intelligence

The extent of innate differences is a politically-loaded issue; if inequality is not due to innate differences, it must be due to exploitation somewhere along the line. However, just because elitists use innate differences as a magical explanation for everything, egalitarians need not be seduced into denying that innate differences may exist to some extent.

Many left-wing critics miss the point: they call intelligence a reified (thing-like) concept. But this is obvious by definition: intelligence is thought of as 'the inert background against which a person operates'. It is something out of the realm of the person's praxis, just as, by taking thought he cannot add a cubit to his stature. (There is no reason to imagine moral differences in bodies may not be paralleled by normal differences between minds).

The trouble starts when variations in performance are wrongly considered to show up variations in people's innate endowments. Obviously children who for cultural or idiosyncratic reasons think that marriage is a hang-up will find it difficult to answer "correctly" such questions as 'why do people marry?' Their answers, stemming from their wills, will be reduced to evidence about their abilities, which is beyond even the content of the intelligence test. Rather it lies in the administrative situation.

To sit quiet and fill in the test to please the nice gentleman is already the sort of activity for which middle-class and conformist children are better equipped regardless of what is in the test. Middle-class children are motivated to do well in the testing situation. For working-class children the activity holds less appeal. To get a fair comparison it would be necessary to get working-class kids 'doing their thing' and to test how well they did it.

Since 'their things' are likely to range from delivering newspapers to playground insults, from Saturday shoplifting expeditions to Woolworths to scrounging for Guy Fawkes, we can see that fair comparisons are not necessarily measurable ones. It is extremely unlikely that any tests could be devised to measure across class boundaries without introducing class bias. In the middle class environment of the school 'different from' is interpreted as "worse than", and praxis is reduced to process.

A comparison may help. It is as if working-class kids developed the practice of slouching in school as a mark of class solidarity (some do). At the same time, middle-class parents send their children to department classes (some do). The tester from the physical education department then comes to measure their heights and concludes that middle-class children are 'innately' taller. For left-wing critics to emphasise the factor of environment would be legitimate up to a point: (middle-class children do have better diets.)

The main objection to the tester's conclusions would be that the working-class kids were refusing to hold themselves upright against the measuring rod. When all the objections concern the past environment, the testing situation and the content of the tests had been met, however, there might still be a rather small differential to be attributed to innate endowment. (This line of thought has been mostly cribbed from a remarkable article by David Ingelby in a critical context', Vol II, No 2, June '70, called "Ideology and the Human Sciences").

However the example of physique and slouching is unhelpful in an important respect. Physics is static. Mental performance is dynamic, with the best education available everyone could get far, far closer to realizing their full potential for development. And that's as much as we need to bear in mind.

Once we have rejected the myth of intelligence testing, we need to go further and reject the idea of any form of school or Authority testing whatsoever.

"The institutionalised values of school instills are quantified ones. School initiates young people into a world where every thing can be measured, including the imagination, and indeed, man himself.

"But personal growth is not a measurable entity. It is growth in a disciplineless, discipline, which cannot be measured against any rod, or any curriculum, nor compared to someone else's achievement. The learning I prize is immeasurable co-creation.

"School pretends to break up learning into subject-matters to build into the curriculum made of these pre-fabricated blocks, to build into the pupil a curricula made of these prefabricated blocks, to enable the result on an international scale, Men and women who submit to the standard for the measure of their own personal growth, soon apply the same ruler to themselves. They no longer have to be put in their place, but put themselves into their assigned slots...." (Ivan Illich, 'Schooling, The Ritual of Progress', May 1971, underlining)

law and order
or 'law or order'

The closer Peters gets to discussing the structural liberal alternative to orthodox(legal/parliamentary) education, the more the quality of the argument slips.

At one point Peters writes: 'The authority of parents and teachers is necessary for another generation to learn to live without authority'. In a world of bosses, bureaucrats, Commisars, and Governments...

This is Janet. This is John.
seems astonishing for Peters to claim that we adults are all living without authority! It may not seem astonishing, but any factory worker could tell Peters that authority was a very real factor in his life. (And in the lives of Peters' students, whether they be little or big, right or wrong, the authority of Parents and Teachers is necessary for another generation to learn to live without authority, if they can.)

On page 270 Peters writes: "A moral judgement cannot be justified by an appeal to a generalisation about man." Fifteen lines later we find Peters inviting us to imagine the chaos resulting from abolition of the criminal law, "men being what they are!"

On pages 275 and 276 Peters talks of 'our blackboard jungs' as if they were mere accidental blocks on our record, removable by more time and more money. In our blackboard jungs, class teachers are caught in the prevailing dilemma of which no philosopher can provide a satisfactory solution. By treating conflict as exceptional, Peters withdraws from the very situations which show his philosophy up as so much bunkus. What is really happening in such a situation?

In 'The School that I'd Like', Edwards gives us an example of a system which we cannot quote without accepting all his interpretation (in favour of 'liberal' authority).

'School children hate being out of control. ... I remember during my own early teaching days when I could provide farce and little else, the notable young boy white boy would, after a lesson with a quiet complaint. 'Your lessons, he said, give me a headache.'

In page 196 Peters asks a 'Have you stopped beating your wife?' Who do children learn to behave autonomously without a proper framework of order? Or course children don't develop without a proper framework of order. But what do we mean by order and how does it come about?

Children want order, but is order produced by enforcing Law and Order? In the blackboard jungle situation the teacher is essentially enforcing chaos, conflict and wear and tear, not order. To promote order he would have to let go of his own control completely. In the short term this would just lead to intensified chaos which every one would just have to ride out. But chaos would turn into spontaneous order. From being out of another's control (chaos) the children would come to control themselves (anarchy). Maintaining Law and Order stops conflict and friction working itself out and leads to an unnatural degree of conflict and friction.

Several times Peters mentions 'Lord of the Flies' by William Golding. This he takes to demonstrate that human nature is basically selfish and why therefore he is against it. But surely the school children are anything but pure examples of how human nature gets when it is left off control. The children have not only a very specific upbringing. They have been conditioned by conventional authoritarian education. Lord of the Flies can equally be read as showing the consequences of not letting children govern themselves from birth. Any well-intentioned teachers start off trying to "treat the children like adults." But because the children have been conditioned by authority structures, they interpret friendliness as weakness and start playing the teacher up. In this situation the teacher needs not just courage but also space and time and freedom from the school authorities. Incidentally, time and freedom are especially lacking during teaching practice - which suggests that all you can practice is procedure. (Peters, which is perhaps no accident.) This way the children can work their reaction to authority out of their system. But because the teacher himself is bound by the authority of the head, he cannot go through with the experiment. He becomes a 'participate unreasonable', thus confusing their reactions with the spontaneous tendencies towards co-operation and order that would soon appear. He is like the gold digger who stops digging a few feet above a rich vein and concludes that there isn't any gold in the ground. He acts like the man whose hand off a cork held down under the water and complains of its instability when it bobs up.

When he reasserts his authority, this confirms the children in their reaction that if freedom they are given is phony freedom. And this makes them more unresponsive and disorderly, when along comes another friendly young teacher the next year (when at Risinghill, the class teachers were given freedom by the Head, the school was just working through to real order when the authorities closed it down.)

This process doesn't just happen in blackboard jungs in ghettos. To some extent it happens in all schools. The conflict between teachers and children is a feature of all authority structures. The whole tragic process is something the student should be made to really offer much advice on. And yet it is the main dilemma facing teachers in their real situations 'liberals' and 'realists' end up abdicating in the face of the crucial dilemma, because they refuse to criticise the structures of schools. Within authoritarian structures, the dilemma is insoluble!

Bruner and Holt both attack the idea that you can tell an educated person by what he knows. Education means learning to solve problems, not learning facts or facts by not what he knows so much as by what he does when he does not know. Likewise in the sphere of discipline: the criterion for moral education is not how children interact vis-a-vis adults, but what they do when adults are not present. Have their education encouraged their social instincts, or only taught them to stick up for themselves? Have the children had the opportunity to learn to distrust demagogues and leaders motivated by power urges? (like Jack in Lord of the Flies.

Supposing the children stranded on the desert island had been used to general meetings on the Summerhill lines of not just pretending or the idea that they would have fared better, at least? And if they still failed in the end, wouldn't that be because of the number of adult incompetence models, practical know-how, etc.

To be sure, Peters recommends democratic process, but the democratic processes he recommends are as phony as the 'respect for persons' he also advocates. In this case, however, I think we are open that the democracy he recommends is one whose limits are narrowly set by authority:selections for Blackboard jungs are made by the representatives of representatives to School Councils which are without real executive power. This sort of democracy is indeed a training for our society--for our undemocratic society!

Peters admits that teacher-dictat order cannot be justified in terms of the principle of freedom (p.94). He therefore offers up an order in terms of the principle of 'PROMOTION OF WHAT IS GOOD'!!!

The old story: Teacher knows best! Who defines what the basic rules for an orderly environment are? Order to imposed. Genuine order rather than the exhausted stalemate of many 'orderly' classrooms. Is not the true order something that must grow organically if it is to exist at all? Waller again: 'There is need for a natural order in schools. That does not mean a chaotic order, or one which allowed one, but rather a social order which students and teachers (read --children and adults)--P.F.P.) work out for themselves from the beginning. Sufficient, an order which is intrinsic in the personalities of those involved, a social order result from the ground up, a stable and whole-hearted interaction of personalities." (My emphasis) And further: "We see human behaviour emerging from an intrinsic and subtle self-regulated process of dynamic interchange between the individual and the situation he is confronted with. He must stop trying to become a machine and strive to realize its destiny as a social organism.)
education and social control

We saw earlier how that to argue for self-directed growth (intellectual and otherwise) does not necessitate holding any romantic view of every child being a genius. Likewise to argue for a way of organising education without authority does not commit us to pretending all children are angels. We do not all need to grow wings for the abolition of school authority to be workable. Anti-social acts would certainly be fewer but those that still occurred would still be controlled.

We are not advocating the abolition of social control. We are merely advocating building an education system which recognizes the social nature of children. To return to our earlier analogy of the man holding the cork just under the water: If the man thinks he is stopping the cork from sinking it is not necessary for us to pretend that the cork will or ought to jump in the air if he lets go. It is enough for us to direct attention to the properties of the cork itself to refute the man's hypothesis of sinking or instability (unviability).

Freedom is not shown by any specific activity that I or any Authority decide free individuals should show. Rather "freedom is for and for all things in the universe, to follow their own natural tendencies and to fulfil their own virtues, qualities and capacities" (Vanzetti). Compare this with "The Way" of LaoTse, for those interested in eastern ideas (see again at the beginning of Section 16).

The social control of which we are speaking is not something exercised from a point above society, but something which results from the respective adjustments of fully formed egos: If my rights are infringed I will assert myself against the infringer. Hopefully this adjustment process would be non-violent and extremely sensitive. Hopefully too, nature people would find nothing threatening to them (and therefore worthy of repression) that was not "objectively" so. E.g., they wouldn't get up tight about other people going round nude for example, and the nudist wouldn't want to force the others to conform to them, either.

To advocate the abolition of all social control would be as ridiculous as to advocate the abolition of gravity: Social control is part of human nature: it is inseparable from the functioning of all social groups. To think otherwise is to reject it from an abstract picture of humanity. It would also be to start from a doomsday image of the "teacher", who also has rights as a member of the community. This point is brought out brilliantly throughout "The Open Classroom". Herbert Kohl's "Handbook for teachers who want to work in an open environment": "It is difficult to say exactly what an open classroom is. One almost has to have been in one and feel what it is. However, there are certain things which it is not. It is important not to equate an open classroom with a "permissive" environment. In an open classroom the teacher must be as much himself as the pupils are themselves. This means that if the teacher is angry he ought to express his anger and if he is annoyed he ought to express that too. In an authoritarian classroom annoying behaviour is legislated out of existence.

In a "permissive" classroom the teacher pretends that it isn't annoying. He also permits students to behave only in certain ways, thereby retaining the authority over their behaviour he pretends to be giving up. In an open situation the teacher tries to express what he feels and to deal with each situation as a communal problem. But John does not exist in a vacuum. When John takes Will's toys, Will gets his own back and John develops respect for other people. When fooling around in the library distracts readers, they turn round and say "shut up"! (Or rather they ought to - in practice they are liable to hand over their own function of control to a special official - in this case a librarian. In the case of children all very peaceable but historically the State has monopolised social control functions by a process of seizing them; in this respect the librarian example is slightly misleading). Control from outside weakens the control tendencies generated from inside the group itself. Likewise with schools.

In Summerhill anti-social acts are opposed in two ways: (1) by direct opposition - fighting against the person there and then, e.g. taking the bell off a boy's bike if he is making a nuisance of himself through noise. (2) by indirect control - through the weekly general meeting where the person has the opportunity to reply to the charges against him. Contrary to what Peters suggests, children are shrewd and fair judges if they are given real responsibility - at least they are no more unfair than adults. The punishments Summerhill children give are generally "making-good" punishments not vindictive punishments. Moreover, because they have been fully involved in making and enforcing the few "basic rules" they are much less liable to break them themselves. A further advantage is that unnecessary rules don't get passed, such as no eating in class. When unnecessary rules exist they tend to discredit those few rules whose breach is anti-social.

Peters would accept this last point. On page 26 Peters pleads for rationalisation of authority: the teacher should derive his authority from the tasks he promotes by using his authority. He should not derive it from the fact that He is Teacher - "Because I say so!"
The model Peters proposes for rational authority is the policeman directing traffic. But in that case, why can't the children delegate their own traffic co-ordinators? Can't they make and enforce their own rules, with the teacher just acting as a respected but equal member of the unit concerned? Peters' advocacy of rational authority seeks to return to the abolition of personal authority(Role Authority of Teacher appointed by Role Head appointed by Local Authority). If the only function of a policeman is to help old ladies across the road and to direct the traffic, then lets do away with the police force! Lollipop men and traffic wardens are enough! But the police also have the function of protecting Capital and they use their authority of the State- these are their main functions, the rest are frills. Likewise the industrialists who just use the law to make things for people- his real job is making surplus (profit) for himself. Where the two tasks class we build-in obsolescence.

Peters' ideal teacher doesn't just ask to co-ordinate the negotiation of social initiatives but to come out with a profit. The struggle is surplus, A surplus of social initiatives. If "his" class does good work it reflects well on him, over above the credit due to the class-members. Peters wants authority to be rationalised but not abolished. Rational task-authority for Peters is merely a front for the children's longer term goal. Naturally he hopes that moral persuasion will do the trick; but often he is only too aware that authority will have to be exercised if the moral appeal proves abortive" (p363)

"Trick" is the word! If a child is smoking, you don't just punish him- you tell him how harmful smoking is. But supposing he weighs up the decision and decides to continue, thanks for your advice all the same...? Or supposing he points to Mr. X on the staff and asks the teacher to discipline Mr. X since he is more liable to get cancer- being older...? "Do as I say, BOY! There are RULES against smoking!" With Peters, rational authority is merely a trick, since it functions as a "front" for the old coercive authority.

But suppose that the boy doesn't yield to the evidence terrifiedly. Then in this case the damage the boy would do to his body is small compared with the damage the teacher does to the boy's mind and personality by over-ruling him. (True, the body-damage over a life-time may be considerable, but we are only talking of the next week: an leaving school the boy will return to the forbidden fruits anyway- indeed they will have that much more attraction for being forbidden)

"Prima facie the institution of authority is an affront to rational man because it runs counter to the presupposition in favour of which that was outlined in Chapter VII, and because it involves the institution of a system where what is to be done is not settled necessarily by an appeal to reasons, but by an appeal to a man who may or may not have good reasons for what he lays down." What wild anarchist dreams is this? Is it Peters(p264)? Has he then undergone a conversion? No, for he now continues to defend this "prima facie affront to rational men" (Authority a third related line-of-the-defence of such a system must be by reference to considerations deriving from the paradox of freedom (see below C)), or to considerations connected with the effective implementation of fairness (the rule of law, etc) (see below A) or to the principle of the consideration of interests, security being in the interest of every rational being (see below B).

A The effective implementation of fairness:

The "rule of law" is weighted in favour of those who own capital. Similarly in schools: the teacher's authority to make an authority-surplus in the day's trading with his children. How else are we to understand a teacher's rules in sending a pupil home for arriving late? His motive can- not be concern at the pupil not getting sufficient schooling- else why would he send him home? His motive can only be to maintain HIS authority. The signs of the teachers' surplus of social initiative are evident everywhere. Where is the "fairness" where staff can arrive late, the pupils; staff have common rooms, but not pupils; staff decide the rules, but not pupils; staff have reports on children, but not children on staff, etc.

B Consideration of Interests and Security:

The security of a community depends not only on its general morale and cohesiveness, this morale is far more likely to be generated in schools which are not plagued either with Authority or with tedious wear and tear conflicts against that it Authority provokes. The child who wants peace between himself and the teacher is present to protect him from his more polished illusions; but pan-demonium breaks out when the teacher leaves! Authority guarantees security as little as it does "fairness".

C The "Paradox of Freedom" This principle goes on to the effect that "too much" freedom leads to too little revolutions must inevitably lead to counter-revolutions there is no reason to investigate the precise historical circumstances in which the Russian Revolution failed- in which no adult control, child leaders will develop whose Tyranny is far worse.

We have already criticised the view that this is likely to happen in our district ("Lord of the Flies"). But let us grasp the nettle of the worst eventuality: supposing tyranny does start to develop on the island? Well in that case adults can do nothing about it- UNLIKE SCHOOLS.

There weren't any adults on Golding's island, there were adults in schools. If tyranny starts to develop they should oppose it. NOT by jumping back on to their high horse or Role Authority and calling an end to the freedom game. (They shouldn't be able to.) They should oppose it as ordinary members or of the school concerned for its welfare.

As people who enjoy doing X Y and Z but find that a state of tyranny and changes conducive to what they want to do. As political actors among other political actors in the micro-politics of the school.

Maybe the children won't at first listen to their warnings about power cliques developing in the School Council(say). But they will later on when the power clique has made itself hated. But what if it takes six months for the children to listen to the wise adults calling for a new revolution against the new tyranny (gangs of sixth formers say)? What about the children's education in the meantime? Their book-work will have suffered, true. But surely the whole six months experience will have taught them a far valuable lesson: the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Far from being an abdication of the task of education but such a strategy of influence not but compulsion would be the best form of education libertarian adults could possibly give! It would be
education for real democracy, not phony democracy.

This of course, is still focussing far too much on the school as a special institution. If we substitute community centre for school, then such a struggle against power would take place in the community as a whole, with overall gains in social learning for young and old equally.

what is so special about educational ethics?

"Education is the art of imposing upon the young." This definition (Wallace's) may sound extreme. But let us go into it. The question is: What is "education"? Is there anything about an adult's dealings with children which is not covered by the ordinary morality of two adults dealing with each other?

Before we go into the question let us first pause to recall Peters' own dictum: no distinction without relevant differences.) On page 194, Peters discusses the moral dilemma of forcing the young to do school work because it is good for them. Apart from the question of whether forcing them is efficient, Peters writes:

"the basic point remains: no educator can be indifferent to what children want. He cannot, as in an ordinary social situation, assume that what people want to do is their own affair, provided that they do not damage others or interfere with the freedom. To adopt this laissez-faire attitude in a school would be to abdicate as an educator. Care-takers, maybe, can adopt such an attitude, but not teachers." What Peters is saying is that ordinary social situations are different from educational situations. It is this assumption that I wish to destroy.

To begin with libertarian education does not involve a laissez-faire attitude at all: it means that the adult gets involved in the workings of the school but only in the sense that the children also are free to get involved. When a movement occurs, quietly direct the traffic is not to abdicate as a traffic warden, but it is to abdicate as a policeman. Abduction as a jailer is not abduction as an educator. As Walter says, "the school is a gigantic agency of social control."

If a child isn't interested in work then the teacher has no right to force him! He may, as a concerned friend, mention that it's useful to know how to read. But so may the child's older friends of the same age. Sooner or later, if it is vital that the child learns something, this realization will come to the child: he'll find it annoying not to be able to read a train timetable and a danger notice (no harm done if he can't read "keep off the grass!"

"The writer has recently learned to type from a similar kind of motivation (typing part of this book!) Provided one isn't a lump of clay, a plant, a rat or a sheep, provided that is, one has one's own intentions in the real world, the real world is the only motivation to understand. (By understanding the world I don't just mean understanding a la how cars work, but also making sense of one's experience and comprehending the human situation, etc) This sort of reasoning applies to adults and children alike, not.

Peters justifies forcing children to work on the ground that it is good for them to know about... what is it? To know for a child's future in the history of the Russian Revolution, say (as it is good for them). In that case Peters would be forcing children to learn about the Russian Revolution on the grounds that it is important for people to know about it and know about it.

Or just for children? Why doesn't Peters advocate compulsory state examinations on contemporary events for all adults as well? You cannot maintain educational relationships are different from ordinary social relations and then "prove" it with a principle that can be extended across to adults. If he's so keen on forcing people to know things, Peters doubtless won't object to my forcing him to read all the books in my bibliography. If he were him, he would do him good!

What about acts against the public as a child putting objects on a railway track? Is there anything specially educational here?

To begin with, human nature isn't such that children put objects on railway tracks and no questions need to be asked. Of course, if the train is full of individuals who have personally tortured the child in the past, then the act really does make sense at face value: the child is out to kill and to thwart his intentions is to side with his torturers in a mini-state. But otherwise the act isn't intended to kill the train passengers. It can only be seen as making sense if it is interpreted as a symbolic act against authority.

And if Authority isn't present to frustrate the child in the first place, then it need not be present to defend its non-existent self against non-existent attacks by a non-thwarted child.

However, despite our protests that nottles would be much less prevalent in a revolutionized school system, let us again against the libertarian notion of the worst outcome: an object on the track and the train due to come. What do you do?

Firstly, surely, you remonstrate with the child-tell him how dangerous it is, show him your displeasure. Then if the
train appears in the distance you know the object off the track quickly. This is what many children would do with fellow children anyway. It is as though you would have to do with an adult who put objects on the track. There is nothing specifically educational about the most sensible course of action. Whatever you do to the child, even if you report him to the weekly school meeting, you do so as an equal of the child, not as someone who has authority over him. Listen to A. S. Neill:

"Mind you we are not above and beyond human foibles. I spent weeks planting potatoes one spring, and when I found eight plants pulled up in June I made a big fuss. Yet there was a difference between my fuss and that of an authoritarian. My fuss was about potatoes, but the fuss an authoritarian would have made would have dragged in the question of morality—right and wrong— and I say that it was wrong to steal my spuds: I did not make it a matter of good and evil. I made it a matter of my spuds. They were my spuds and they should have been left alone. I hope I am making the distinction clear.

"Let me put it another way. To give a good reason, I am no authority to be feared. I am the equal, and the row I kick up about my spuds has no more significance to them than the row a boy may kick up about his punctured bicycle tyre. It is quite safe to have a row with a child when you are equals.

"Now some will say: 'That's all bunk. There can't be any equity—skill is the boss; he is bigger and wiser.' That is indeed true. I am the boss, and if the house caught fire the firemen would run to me. They know that I am bigger and more knowledgeable, but that does not matter when I meet them on their own ground, the potato patch so to speak.

"When Billy, aged five, told me to get out of his birthday party because I had invited, I want at once without hesitation just as Billy gets out of my room when I don't want his company." (pp23-4)

We still have to discover what is so special about educational ethics. Nor will it do to say that children are weaker than adults. But wives are weaker than husbands. The duty of adults not to beat children is no different from the duty husbands not to beat their wives. Those who do want to beat their children are not such as to be swayed by a book on any kind of ethics, let alone "educational ethics." Likewise, the duty of teachers not to indoctrinate their children is still no different from the duty of parents not to mislead their friends when their friends ask them for information on a subject they are ignorant about.

Ah, you say, but your friend is less vulnerable. He can check up by going to someone else. If he finds you have deceived him he can stop being your friend and he can walk out on you. Children can't. They are more vulnerable. That is why you need school inspectors.

Nonsense! Precisely because they are more vulnerable every child must be able to walk out. That is why every person in the classroom must count as a source of checks, and not just the teacher and the school inspector who calls once a year or so.

The same goes for the sort of character-indoctrination by "charismas" that Peters rightly attacks. What was wrong with Miss Jean Brodie in "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" was that she was unconscious, and even consciously, out to mould the personalities of "her girls." What was wrong with the school is much more important however. Whatever else we can say about her, Miss Jean Brodie was alive, vibrantly herself, a real person not an antisepsic mask of a teaching role. Miss Jean Brodie was able to mould her pupils much because (1) they were assigned willy-nilly to her class by the Authority with the result that they would not have escaped, and because (2) they had so few real personalities available to them at their school who could have served as alternative models that they didn't want to escape, and (3) the other teachers being hung up on their Dignity, checks to the moulding process could only come via the Top-aware adults should have been able to warn the girls in her classes directly. But this would have been the ultimate sin of "disloyalty" breaking shan of the united front. The school's structural faults were more important than Miss Brodie's personal faults in the final tragedy.

Or take "respect for persons" as an educational virtue: shouldn't we have respect for fellow adults, old age pensioners, and so on? Why does Peters bring it up in a specifically educational context then? The answer (my answer) is this. "Respect for persons" is needed as a final leaf of "P". In educational moralising is required as a countervailing power, however flimsy, against the main school tendency towards denial of children's praxis. Peters has to advocate that teachers mustn't be authoritarians only because he recommends they still be in authority! In other words, what is distinctive about "respect for persons" as a specifically educational virtue is that it doesn't exist! "Pity would be no more, If we did not make somebody poor." (Blake)

The whole principle of respect for persons is an abhorrence as used by Peters. While some of his colleagues treat him with lack of respect? Why? He stops associating with them. If they value his company then they will reform their ways to win his back, before he finally withdraws. All relationships contain minor controls such as signs of boredom or annoyance. Peters has to preach respect for the person of the child precisely because children are in a position to enforce it themselves: if they show signs of boredom, the teacher will define them as "lacking ability" or "very restless can't sit still." If they show signs of annoyance they are liable to be punished. None of these conditions hold when Peters relates to his peers. There the "definition of the situation" made by both parties counts. The respect for persons Peters advocates is respect for persons in so far as they comply with the role I give them.

If he treated his colleagues like that he would not have so many friends. They are in a position to demand real respect because, unlike kids, they can walk out.

In the education Peters recommends, so much depends on the teacher precisely because so little depends on the kids. Waller's definition begins to look quite reasonable: "Education is the art of imposing upon the young."

Note on Compulsory Schooling

Finally, let us deal with one of the commonest justifications for schooling made by 'progressive teachers': that it is about kids from a bad background of slums and violence in the streets and boredom? Surely the school is a richness, a means of gaining experience?

This explanation is plausible until one realizes that it is not the school as School
(linked with coercive authority) which provides the richest slum areas should have richly good risks for the established order"(Illich) The system of education we now have could not even be reformed to provide equality to compete one’s way up the ladder. How useless then to look to it to help in the abolition of the ladder itself!(This does not mean the sameness of "barracks communism", the only other meaning of equality imaginable to Peirors)

Schools maintain and constantly strengthen the myth of rank of "better than". Hence, they provide a rationale for wage and status differentials, and, more by everyone, for fixed types of job carried out by individuals whose intelligence has been similarly "fixed" by the schooling process.

So long as revolutionaries are "hooked" on compulsory education—with its corollaries: 1) the monopolisation of educations; 2) the packaging of values; 3) their measurement; 4) the doling out of life chances; 5) education as a scarce commodity; 6) education as administered by a special caste of Experts;—just so long will any "revolution" they carry out lead to a worse, not a better, society.

The idea of schooling is basic to our society and becoming more so. Insofar as it is just so long will any "revolution" they carry out lead to a worse, not a better, society.

The whole question of Compulsory schooling has been well dealt with by Jane Kingshill and Brian Richardson:

"The school's educational shortcomings may be linked to the current inadequate notion Society has of children's civil liberties. If human rights are in some measure denied to children it is because we do not yet regard them as full human beings and our adult code of civil liberties is not felt to apply to, as it were, imperfect adults in a state of transition. Children are frail, vulnerable, inexperienced and immature, in varying degrees. So are we all. And it is of the essence of humanity to be human, not upon these variables, but upon the one and only constant: humanity itself. If intrinsic human rights exist, as such, they exist for all human beings alike; what would be an infringement of civil liberties for adults infringes the liberties of children no less.

An essential part of the present education system is compulsory attendance at school between the ages of five and fifteen(or its very definitely hedged-about equivalent). No conscientious objection is allowed, no pay is awarded in consideration for work done, submission to the authority of the school hierarchy is demanded and disobedience as well as absenteeism is punished. No amount of apologies; that education is a privilege, that teachers are enlightened and that the child's welfare is foremost in everyone's mind. It does not disguise the true nature of this situation; in a word it is slavery.

The child is born a "free" citizen, so he is told, lives in a "free" country where he is part of the "free" world. At the age of five he learns otherwise. He becomes subject to a state decree which..."
fundamentally affects his
daily life and his whole
future, which is inescapable,
even unchallengeable. This is,
in effect, and perhaps is
intended to be, a traumatic
experience conditioning the
person to the concept of
obedience on which the
authoritarian state system
depends.

Compulsory attendance at school
also places the teachers in
a difficult position and forces
them into an authoritarian role
Because dissent cannot be ex-
pressed by withdrawal from the
educational institution, it
has either to be repressed or
expressed as rebellion. Re-
bellion has to be ruthlessly
crushed for the sake of the
continuing operation of the
establishment. It is more
convenient if the pupils can
be forced to submit to au-
thority, and thus powers of
coercion have to be assumed
leading to a system of pun-
ishment sufficiently severe
to generate mental
and bodily fear in the in-
tending disserter. Small
wonder that teachers are
reluctant to give up the
right to use corporal pun-
ishment as a "last resort."
The entire relationship
between pupil and teacher
is soured by the fact of
compulsion and this is a
handicap that few teachers
have the power to overcome.
Not only a child's civil
liberties therefore but the
whole quality of ed-
ication is at stake."

(Arachy 103)

Indeed the very concept of
"human nature" needs to be
handled with great care.
Peters says it is something
linking down through an
isolated selfhood. I see it
as something social, that
develops itself in relation to
an environment. We live in
an environment which cannot in fact be
changed, the accommodation is
passive. Where it can be
changed, the accommodation is
active. Either way human
nature is not something gratuitous
it lies in the fact that the
activities people choose and
have a purpose in the situation
they see themselves acting in,
and that this purpose(want)
tends to be functional.(need)

Even apathy has a function:
adaptation to a situation
where other men control you.
And so if the mass of men are
grounded to consumption this is
a statement not about human
nature isolated, but about human
nature-in-the-sort-of-environ-
ment where work is boring and
meaningless and advertising
continually exhorts people to
consume. (Maybe capitalist
society requires it that the
mass of men are geared to
consumption? If they were
grounded to production more they
might demand all sorts of
subversive things such as
workers self-management)

Schools are the clutch for
getting children geared to
passivity and ignorance and
"consumerism". Peters would
put them down to (a) "bad"
schooling and (b) human nature
Somehow if we could only get
more imaginative syllabi,
better teachers, liberal atti-
itudes, new buildings, there
more people would be "saved"
I would argue that "bad" atti-
dudes and ideas in schools
aren't just an accident. The
skinhead doesn't just happen
to us. He's pushed down! Teachers don't just happen to
become authoritarian. Authori-
tarianism is inseparable from
the system Peters recommends.
Schools in poor areas don't
just happen to get worse
buildings and staff. It's
part of the way Britain as a
whole works. The system which
educates the "good pupils"
undereducates the "bad pupils!!"
"Compulsory Miseducation" is
an integral part of the
system's functioning. Peters
wishes for better education
while keeping the Authority
of Schools and Teachers. But
in this he is like a child on
a see-saw who wants both ends
to be up at once!

(But even so, how well are the
"good pupils" educated in the
Top Streams? It's the
skinheads who are made stupid-
there are plenty of learned
cretins with degrees.
"Education and the Working
Class" by Jackson and Marsden
contains several revealing accounts of interviews with that pitiful specimen, the "grammar-school 'success'" who thinks he's a cut above the average. A veneer of educational phrases can be imparted to the "everlasting" even, but wisdom is something that has to be taken through life). However, most of the failings Peters puts down to Human Nature. Improvements in our education system would certainly be, but basically the "final fruits" of education are highly uncertain because of "What Human Nature Is Like".

Let us examine a passage in detail:

"[The child-centred revolt was focussed on] procedural principles to the detriment of valuations about content... Adherence to ideas about respect for the child, etc., grammar-school 'success' for valuations about content, which determine the direction of growth and what interests are paramount. The child-centred teacher who believes in the principle of liberty, therefore, like the parent, the moral problem of choosing between letting children pursue their interests, which may not be in their interest, and getting them to pursue what is generally in their interest. For the teacher is institutionally concerned with fostering interests which it is in children's interests to develop. This is what education involves. Talk about "growth", "self-realisation" and gearing the curriculum to the interests of children, glosses over this fundamentally normative aspect of education. No doubt some formal educators were inclined to and ignorant about facts of development and motivation; no doubt they sometimes treated children with little regard for the principle of liberty. But they did at least have a clear idea that their function as educators was to hand on what is worthwhile in the way of content." (p33-6)

This passage, at a turning point in the argument of the book, contains some remarkable assumptions.

Assumption one:
The assumption of constant progress- "no doubt some formal educators WERE neglectful and ignorant", etc. Oh, the bad old days!

Assumption two:
The assumption that libertarian education is just a reaction at the level of attitudes.

By treating it as a just a kindly reaction needed at a particular stage, Peters devalues the libertarian tradition. In fact, libertarian education has a long history; in practice wherever there have been reasonably libertarian societies with faith in people; in theory—with thinkers from Lao Tzu, Socrates down to the present day. Libertarian education is not just a reflex of the heart without any head to it.

Peters all the time confuses the child-centred approach (progressive or liberal education) with the libertarian approach. It is true that the child-centred approach may be a case of the pendulum against the subject-centred approach of traditional teachers. But libertarian education stands for neither approaches. It stands for dialogue. Dialogue is not child-centred but equally balanced or mutually centring. It stands for participation. Participation, or joining in, by the child (or children) into activities which the adult (or adults or older children) were in any case doing and having centring their attention on. It stands for the child being able at will to escape the spoiling or stifling effects of always being the centre of attention. (Rousseau's Emile would have been highly neurotic!) It stands for adults having reciprocal rights which those bored adults are unlikely to do children any good, and very likely to do children harm.

"TEACHING MUST BE FUN!

Progressive education keeps its critical issues confined to attitudes. Libertarians see how important structures are for spoiling or improving attitudes. Too often we want structures which embody respect for children, so that there is much less need to press harder at the tops of the structures. The child-centred/subject-centred pendulum hangs on the subordination of children to Authority. Far from being a swing of the pendulum, libertarian education stands for the abolition of the pendulum itself.

Assumption three:
The Assumption We Know What is Worthwhile.

Who defines what is worthwhile? The Professors, the rulers of the culture? Or should not children be welcomed into the culture precisely as independent judges of what is valuable on the principle, the more judges the better? Every child, as he grows up from babyhood, experiences the culture in different ways. Every child meets up with different members of society. Because the picture he builds up will therefore be unique, it will be valuable to his society.

Peters seems to suggest that we know what is valuable and what isn't. The goals of society are fixed. The only question is: Are the children going to conform to our society or ours? But children can also grow up themselves to evaluate the values of the culture. For instance, they can criticise the viewpoint of those who talk about a fixed barrel of natural talent which "the nation" has to scrape.

The can occasionally have original ideas which show that the structures of academic knowledge aren't fixed by God. Maybe they aren't good at abstract word-knowledge. But words and theories aren't the only way of experiencing, they aren't even necessarily the most worthwhile ways. The children's ways of working on the world and seeing the world are worthwhile too, without their being forced to do "orthodox studies". Everyone including children, must define "worthwhile" together, not just a few Professors and Headmasters. The values of the teacher aren't the only values.

Now, of course adults shouldn't pretend they haven't got values. They should live their values. If the values are "wrong" then they are "wrong"—they cannot be made "right" by deception. Criticism then becomes social and ethical criticism—again there is no specifically educational recommendation to be made, no ground in front of children, I no grounds for an adult putting on a different self as he enters school every morning; no grounds for an Adult to be a smiling doormat forcing himself to feel kindly and "liberal" or "progressive" thoughts when it would be far better for him to give in to his instinctive response and express his anger: "Miss off if you're not interested!"
Instead of forcing children to appreciate Shakespeare, the "staff" should put on a Shakespeare play. Not because they expect the children to gain appreciation, but simply because they realize that it is worth doing. Of course, they think it is good, and they are supposed to like Shakespeare but because they really do value Shakespeare and enjoy playing Julius Caesar, say. If children notice a rehearsal taking place, if they slip in at the back and watch, that's fine. If a group wants to want to join in, then they can take part in the crowd scenes to begin with, and maybe find, later, they are being drawn into a discussion about Brutus' motives.

But if other children prefer to gravitate towards a wandering folk-singer living his values, that's fine too. Or, if they prefer to join in a "staff" study and action group on say, ecology, and find themselves getting into a discussion about politics, sociology, biology, etc., then that's fine too. Or if they prefer to hang around the harbor all day, messing about with boats, that's fine too.

If the children prefer Pop music to Beethoven then that's fine too. The parents and teachers won't "improve" the children's musical values by making them attend music lessons. But if, as the children are wandering along a corridor they hear Beethoven's quartet being played by two adults and two older kids, then maybe they'll creep in and listen. And see how much pleasure the players are deriving from Beethoven. If they still prefer "Seargent Pepper's" that's fine too. (Personally I like both)

The point here is not that there are no values, but that values can't be legislated or imposed, or underlying fundamental distortion. "worthwhile activities" are only worthwhile if they are being carried out for their own sake. If the worthwhile activities are only taking place to teach children how worthwhile they are, the children won't be fooled and everyone's time will be wasted. Listen to Martin Buber in an essay called "The Teacher and Education; Does it follow that one should keep silent about one's intention of educating character and act by abuse and mere inference? No. I have just said that the difficulty lies deeper. It is not enough to see that educating character is not introduced into a lesson in class; neither may one conceal it in cleverly arranged exercises. Education cannot tolerate such political action. Even if, the pupil does not notice the hidden motive it will have its negative effect on the actions of the teacher himself - by depriving him of the directness which is his strength. Only in his whole being and not as a spectating entity can the educator truly affect the whole being of his pupil. For educating character you do not need moral genius, but you do need a man who is wholly alive and able to communicate his life directly to his fellow human beings..." (pp. 133, 134)

Authority hampers spontaneity, both for those in authority and for those under authority. Buber's educational ideals presuppose anarchic structures.

Assumption Four: The Anti-evolutionary assumption that Human Wants are Gratuitous and Unreliable.

Peters assumes that children's interests aren't in their interest, that what children need is likely to differ from what they will want. Interest isn't just an accidental feeling that comes to a person for no reason at all. Man has evolved because he needed food, he felt an interest in getting hold of some food. The food is a means of sustaining the function. Animals are self-regulating organisms: that is to say, when deficiencies occur in animals' bodies, these needs make themselves felt in animals' minds in the form of wants. There is internal feedback: Animals don't have to be told to eat (external feedback). If monkeys are placed in a room with different sorts of leaves and fruits, they won't just add anyhydrates or only proteins. They pick a balanced diet. If they are deprived of one element (say vitamin B), they show an increased interest in leaves which give them Vitamin B once they are free to choose again.

This only applies to animals put in a natural environment for the species, e.g. where the right leaves are growing. Put in an artificial environment, where only various leaves are available, they obviously can't choose. (The intellectual ferme of schools is both concentrated and artificial hence the student is a need for authority).

Psychologists such as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow have indicated that babies also seem to have a very definite view of what they need. They are interested in FOOD, WARMTH and PROTECTION. And that is also what is in their interest. They need what they want and they want what they need. For want of "objective" evidence that eternal chimeras we should presume that human nature is viable. Babies are self-regulating beings. Now of course babies aren't self-regulating in a sense that they can fund for themselves. Self-regulation doesn't mean self-sufficiency. It means that the child directs himself to meet his needs from the environment assuming a normal environment of adults whose evolution has provided with caring instincts. Libertarian Education doesn't mean abandoning children but caring for them, letting them want vis-a-vis you. Respecting the child's praxis as realistic does not mean letting the child tyrannize over you; nor does it mean leaving the child on a hillside or on a desert island. But how does one explain suicide or people going mad, or stagnating in their development? Surely one can't say people who want to commit suicide have a biological need for it? Many children and adults do seem to want what we think are inferior things. This is the common-sense basis for Peters' assumption that Human Nature is unavoidable, that people can't regulate themselves. Obviously at some point in their development, children lose contact with their own feedback, so that they regulate themselves in less fully healthy ways. How do children lose contact with their own feedback? If they have promises which connect needs with wants, how is this connection broken? Our answer is: by Authority.

Note: many sensible people believe that the concept of "human nature" is positively misleading. However, I feel it is only useful but invaluable for any libertarian theory: for instance, Marcuse stays close to Totalitarianism for want of the concept; he needs the all-encompassing concept of the mass of men being infinitely manipulable and this leads him into the idea that the revolutionary elite of precious souls who have made The Great Refusal may have to manipulate people into Freedom, because they are incapable of wanting true freedom for themselves.

See "Growing Up Absurd" for a useful introduction. Also an important article by Amiel Staub: attempting to rehabilitate the concept of Human Nature from even a sociological point of view: recent issue of "Human Relations". 4, 75-352.
authority splits wants from needs

bull-shit moralism)
When wisdom and intelligence appeared
They brought with them a hypocrisicty.
The six relations were no more of peace
So codeveloped to regulate our homes.
The fatherland grew dark,
confused and strife;
Official loyalty became the style'.

Instead of advocating "better teacher training" or some such cretinous alternative, Lao Tse, unlike Peters, aaw the remedy:
"Get rid of the wise men!
Put out the professors!"
Then people will profit
A Hundredfold over.
Away with the kind ones;
Those righteous men too!

Let us consider several examples of how authority splits the subordinate from his own needs/wants.

(a) The baby cries for milk.
The crying serves a function.
The child has its own biological clock which very often says "I want food" and triggers the alarm (crying). But biological clocks aren't mechanically regular.

(b) The baby cries for milk.
The child has its own biological clock which very often says "I want food" and triggers the alarm (crying). But biological clocks aren't mechanically regular.

There are biological rhythms which mean that the child doesn't always want/need food at precise intervals. To feed a baby comes to feeding schedules decided by the parent with the aid of clock-time, is bound to slightly contradict the child's own bodily-time. The child gradually loses contact with its own impulses and coming to feel hungry only when Mummy says so, "Eat it all up dear, go on, I've told you twice". Really the child doesn't need it and that is the perfectly sufficient explanation for his not wanting it. But the Mother's Authority-feedback overrules the child's internal feedback. And so you see, serious children saying things like "Tell me when I've had enoughummy." This is because they are alienated from their own stomachs, and from the sense receptors which say when the stomach lining is stretched enough.

(b) Or take exercise: children's limbs "want" to be used, in the sense that the child gets pleasure from their functioning. When he is cooped up in classrooms for long periods, he feels restless but he has to learn to suppress or deny his own body-feelings. Eventually he becomes a "[..]. When he has completely lost contact with his own exercise feedback, he no longer wants exercise. So when the school intervenes to make games compulsory, maybe compulsory games are one of the dilemmas Peters is thinking about in the passage quoted.

But the school wouldn't have had to insist on exercise if it hadn't detested the child from his own prompting in the first place. Authority always makes work for itself. One complication seems to make another justifying it.

Two compulsions don't cancel each other out, however. When school is no longer there to force them, people lapse back into lethargy, even when their limbs are exercised, to be used. Middle-aged victims or coronaries are the endprodukts of Authority cutting the needs/wants connection in early years. They are literally out of their bodaces.

c) Personality growth. People can also be hables of their minds by the conflicting demands of authority. This is a main cause of mental illness (probably). Parents alienate their children from their own needs/wants by giving instructions in words which contradict their own real feelings. The child reads his parents' feelings from non-verbal cues such as a gesture or tone of voice. Consequently he is split in two-not knowing which set of instructions to follow, the verbal command or the non-verbal command. Such "double-bind" situations mean that the child is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. If caught frequently in such situations, children learn to go by the verbal instructions. They also learn to ignore their own feelings. They are not. Non-verbal cues. Because their social perception is damanged they find interaction with other people difficult: for example, because they can't go by words, they find it hard to know when someone is joking with them. They miss the non-verbal "joking" signals and react seriously thus causing people to consider them "odd".

Now some might say, "OK, this sounds feasible but what has this got to do with Authority? Either parents are psychologically healthy and they are not. You can't wave a magic wand and decrease the number of parents who put their children in double-bind situations."

But this is to ignore the structural factor of the Western family system. Being in a double-bind situation is highly unpleasant for the child. He needs/wants escape. But he can't because in our society (a) parents own their children and (b) there would be nowhere for the child to go.

(a) he is financially dependant-family allowances being paid to his parents at present, not him.

We have seen how the most

trans. R.R. Blakeney- he means chaos in the last line)

On the social scale the Tao Te Ching describes the consequences of losing our Way:
"The mighty Way declined among the folk And there came kindness and morality (eg R.S. Peters "Respect for Persons" principle and all the rest of his
important need for children is to be surrounded by plenty of warm, loving adults. The small family offers the child two parents. If the parents are stifling the child or confusing him, he can't escape: the small nuclear family is too child-centred if the parents are anything short of remarkably healthy. That is why one psychiatrist calls the nuclear family a gas-chamber.

Peters' chapter on Equality deals briefly with the family. Throughout the chapter he completely confuses equality with institutionalisation: according to Peters, the only alternative to the present nuclear family system is the spectre of long rows of bunks in huge dormitories staffed by Imperial State nurses. But what is the real alternative? Surely it is something like this: five, ten or twenty parents club together as members of a family of families. The children of any one family can circulate freely in the homes of all the other families. If one side of a child's personality is being sat on by his biological father, that child's partner will cry out for expression. This crying out for expression will take the form of an intense desire to escape. The child, it will also generate an intense admiration for that parent in the family of families who most complements the child's biological other, who would be most likely to allow the repressed side of the child's personality to unfold. If children are that way they would gravitate wherever the growth-needs of their personalities dictated.

In the first years of such a scheme, the adults would be no healthier psychologically than before. They would be just as liable to put their children in "double-binds". But because they would not be in the Parent-Role of exclusive control over their children, their individual children would be free to gravitate elsewhere, and the collective of children would grow up happier.(of course, many children might want to stay with their biological parents. This would be fine since it would indicate that they didn't feel the need to move on, that their biological parents weren't stifling or stifling them)

However, as it is at present, "society highly values its normal men. It educates children to lose themselves and to become absorbed, and thus to be normal"(R.D. Laing)

(d) Another "moral dilemma" for Peters might be children's desires to stay up late. But here again this dilemma can probably be traced to Authority. Children have their own Body-Time for sleep; it is called yawning, not 9-o'clock "when Daddy says". To send a child to bed is to weaken his own promptings. But what if the child ignores yawn-time for some reason?... of letting the matter go so far.

Even pain has a function. It means - look out, danger! The child who has put his hand on a gas ring once is unlikely to do it again. Of course, if one saw the child was about to put his hand near it, it would be cruel not to warn him. But a warning isn't the same as compulsion.

Not all feedback is as prompt as pain. That does not mean it does not exist. The child who reverts to "throwing balls and eating bananas"(Peters) may very well get bored with these activities and return spontaneously to activities which can be the vehicle of his own growth. When I was about eleven, I suddenly had a craze for dominoes and cards. If my mother had forced me to do something "worthwhile", like reading a book, I probably wouldn't be interested in anything much now. I would have remained fixated at a need for repetitive uncreative games.

But after three months I got bored, and went on to some more creative pursuits.

Blake said: "The fool who persists in his folly will become wise." Most times children are "fools"; they will correct themselves, and so develop their judgement for the future. If a child touches his face, it's because he needs to. Eventually he will get better. Repression therapy is based on the idea that even if the patient doesn't know what's good for him, he still knows better than any outside Authority! Compulsion can only interfere with the person's process of getting in touch with himself again, with his own needs. The voice of Authority drowns out our own "still small voice."

The number of times adults can act to alert the child to his own feedback or to the consequences of acts in the world, are numerous. The number of times adults abusively set overrule the child's own promptings are very limited.

(e) Finally we come to the most important part of feedback: curiosity. Telling children all the answers is the worst way to teach. Children are naturally curious, but their curiosity
is threatened wherever questions are used primarily to find out how much they know. Adults should never ask children questions unless the adults genuinely don't know the answer. Any other use of questions is PRONY and will sabotage the main motor of the child's intellectual development—curiosity, the child's ability to locate the gaps in his own understandings. Left to itself, this motor, which every child possesses, should be perfectly adequate for the rest of the child's life.

"The spontaneous wish to learn, as shown in its efforts to walk and talk, should be the driving force in education." (Bertrand Russell: On Education, p25)

"Man is by nature a learning animal. Birds fly, fish swim, men think and learn. Therefore we do not need to "motivate" children into learning, by wheedling, bribing or bullying. We do not need to keep picking away at their minds to make sure they are learning..."

"The learner, young or old, is the best judge of what he should learn next. In our struggle to make sense out of life, the things we most need to learn are the things we most want to learn. Curiosity is hardly ever idle. When we learn this way we learn both rapidly and permanently." (Holt)

Peters assumes that adults can know what children need. But as Holt says: "The human mind is a mystery. To a very large extent, it will probably always be so. We will never get very far in education until we realize this, and give up the delusion that we can know, measure and control what goes on in children's minds."

Unless one implicitly imagines a highly idealized picture of Authority, as does Peters, intervention is bound to be more or less inefficient. Hence the costs of Authoritarian intervention will be high for the children involved.

Even more serious is the damage compulsion in one sphere does to the children in the development of their overall personalities. Even if the boy who is forced to work becomes a brilliant scientist—which is highly doubtful—what are the costs to his overall personality? Will he end up making Atom Bombs? "Long before a thermonuclear war can come about, we have had to lay waste our own sanity. We begin with the children. It is imperative to catch them in time: Without thorough and rapid brain-washing their dirty minds would see through our dirty tricks. Children are you. That is why freedom is the only alternative. Not that it is good in itself, but that compulsion destroys everything it sets out to achieve. Above all it destroys communion with another person: "It is not the educational intention but it is the meeting which is educationally fruitful." (Buber, p 135)

Instead of saying, with Peters, "the good teacher is a guide who helps others to dispense with his services" we can say: "the adequate teacher (adult) is a guide who does not force his services on others in the first place— but who offers them when asked." Instead of saying with Peters, "if children are properly educated they will become self-motivating", we can say: "If children are properly educated they will remain self-motivating". Indeed the whole subject of "motivation" is a huge joke. The donkey is NOT a static animal—on its own it goes where it will. A carrot and stick are only needed when the donkey has some goddam fat-arsed philosopher on its back. "Motivation" talk always presupposes unfreedom for the person to be motivated and evokes the animal training paradigm of education, not yet fools, but we shall turn them into imbeciles like ourselves, with high I.Q.'s if possible." (R.D. Laing, Politics of Experience, p49)

Personalities develop most through open personal relationships based on trust: "When the pupil's confidence has been won, his resistance against being educated gives way to a singular happening: he accepts the educator as a person. He feels he may trust this man, that this man is not making a business out of him, but is taking part in his life, accepting him before desiring to influence him. And so he learns to ask."

(Buber: Between Man and Man, p135).

You do not learn to ask someone who has just compelled you.
a note on self-regulation and circularity

I consider the best psychologists paint a picture of human nature similar to the one I have drawn: "social, rational, forward moving and positive" to use Rogers words. I believe with Eric Fromm that "destructiveness is the outcome of un-lived life" and I see children as spontaneously out to live. But maybe "the best psychologists psychologists" are only those with whom I agree.

I have criticised Peters for attributing everything good to the fact that people have been initiated, and everything bad to allegedly removable faults in teaching or to allegedly immovable faults in "human nature". But may I not be doing the exact opposite? Attributing everything good to the un-taught child, and everything bad to past control from adults? In which case, my position would be circular: self-regulated children can regulate themselves: children who can't regulate themselves must have been regulated by adults earlier on.

There is no escape from this circularity for the libertarian. He may just point to birds flying without being taught, and fish learning to swim without being compelled, and other self-regulated animals. That is not to say that adult models aren't a help in e.g. learning to fly. The point is that the adult birds fly in any case and not just to show their young how to fly. Again the idea of "child-centredness" (or chick-centredness) is unnecessary: evolution is economical: what suits adults also suits the children.

The libertarian may also claim that it is up to Peters to say why he thinks that children need to be schooled if animals don't. (Peters' principle of no distinction without relevant grounds.)

But in the end the libertarian must just swallow circularity and drop pretensions to conclusive scientific evidence. My case is also involved. For me it is an article of faith that children should and can direct their own lives as soon as they want, need to, even if only to direct themselves back to ask for protection, or guidance, or instruction, or to be allowed to join in or watch.

However, there may well be a commonplace precedent for this sort of circularity. Rosenthal and Jacobs recently tried to prove that children act as bright as they are expected to by their teachers. They administered a bogus test which they told the teachers was to identify "late-starters" in the class, whom the teachers could expect to spurt ahead in a few months. Several months later they returned and discovered that the pupils designated "late-starters" now scored better on tests than control pupils they had previously done the same as. Their evidence is not altogether satisfactory from a strictly scientific viewpoint, but their hypothesis has been suspected by many for a long time.

If it is true it means that adults influence children by the very ideas they form about them. It seems to me obvious that children who are expected to need Authority will on the whole come to be in need of it. Maybe we should change our ideas and see children as positive and independent and visible not just to bring our ideas into line with how children are, but also (parly) to bring how children will be into line with our new positive ideas.

When one plays the word game one is always involved in circularity and articles of faith. The Christians can't answer

"who made God?": the thorough going agnostic can't answer "why is it right to doubt everything?" In educational theory too, it isn't so much a question of avoiding circularity: neither does Peters: but of choosing your circularity, and (partially)

constituting by your choice.

But in any case, prior to the theory is the relationship, the lived circularity of reciprocity. I love you love melove you love me... Or I compel you I compel you submit. If Peters and the educational establishment he represents choose Authoritarian circularity, we choose libertarian circularity. But either way: "It is not the educational intention but it is the meeting which is educationally fruitful." The abolition of Authority structures is not a sufficient condition for educationally fruitful communion. But it is a necessary condition ("sufficient conditions" and guarantees must always be illusory because they can never themselves be sufficiently guaranteed.)
(A) THE NEED FOR UTOPIAN THINKING

It is quite legitimate to ask whether revolutionaries in what they would put in the place of the present system. Indeed, it is absolutely necessary. Revolutionaries who shy away from giving an answer are hiding the fact that they haven't imagined anything very positive at all. The defense that you can't impose a blueprint on the revolution is true. But it sounds ill from the mouths of those who advocate a Dictatorship of the Proletariat or "party of the proletariat" (their party), with a line or program to put through at all costs that is binding on the whole of society, and with "socialist" policemen to punish those whom the central committee designate as "Enemies of the Revolution!"

A chief obstacle to children's learning to read is the present school setting in which they have to pick it up. For any learning to be skilful and lasting, it must be or become self-motivated, second nature; for this, the schooling is too impersonal, standardised and academic. If we tried to teach children to speak by academic methods, in a school-like environment, many would fail and most would stutter.

Although the analogy between learning to speak and learning to read is not exact, it is instructive to pursue it, since speaking is much harder. Learning to speak is a stupendous intellectual achievement. It involves learning to use signs, acquiring a vocabulary, and also mastering an extraordinary kind of 'logical' syntax with almost infinite variables in a large number of sentence forms. We do not know scientifically how infants learn to speak, but almost all succeed equally well, no matter what their class or culture. Every child picks up a dialect, whether "correct" or "incorrect", that is adequate to express the thoughts and needs of his milieu.

We can describe some of the indispensable conditions for learning to speak:

1. The child is constantly exposed to speech related to interesting behavior in which he often shares ("How's your goat?" "Now we're going to the supermarket", etc)
2. The speakers are persons important to the child, who often single him out to speak to him or about him.
3. The child plays with the sounds, freely imitates what he hears, and tries to approximate it without interference or correction. He is rewarded by attention and other useful results when he succeeds.
4. Later the child consolidates by his own act what he has learned. From age three to nine he acquires style, accent and fluency, by speaking with his peers, adopting their uniform but also asserting his own tone, rhythm and mannerisms. He speaks peer speech but is uniquely recognizable as speaking in his own way.

Suppose by contrast, that we tried to teach speech academically in a school-like setting:

1. Speaking would be a curricular subject abstracted from the web of activity and reserved for special hours punctuated by bells.
2. It would be a tool subject rather than a way of being in the world.
3. It would not spring from the needs of immediate situations but would be taught according to the teacher's idea of his future advantage, importantly aiming at his getting a job sixteen years later.
4. Therefore the child would have to be "motivated", the exercises would have to be "fun", etc.

5. The lessons would be arranged in a graded series from simple to complex, for instance on a false theory that monosyllables precede polysyllables, or words precede, or sentences precede words.
6. The teacher's relation to the infant would be further depersonalized by the need to speak or listen to only what fits the teacher's agenda.

7. Being continually called on, corrected, tested and evaluated to meet a standard in a group, some children would become stutterers, others would devise a phoney system of apparently speaking in order to get by, although the speech meant nothing: others would balk at being processed and would purposely become "stupid".

8. Since there is a predetermined range of what can be spoken and how it must be spoken, everybody's speech would be pedantic and standard, without truth to the child's own experience or feeling.

It is possible and necessary to think long and hard and concretely about possible alternatives. Nobody says anybody should impose finished blueprints, but we ought to have blueprints of a pool of ideas during times of creative social ferment.

(B) GOODMAN

One of the most brilliant thinkers along these lines is Paul Goodman, both concerning ideas on the wider society (see his "Communities"), and on educational ideas in particular. I shall reprint a recent article published in the New York Review of Books, which is a real mine of the best writing on education - and much besides. This particular article was reprinted in "The Libert-
EVIDENCE TO THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT OF MANHATTAN'S ENQUIRY INTO THE TEACHING OF THE HUMANITIES. Turn now to teaching reading. These eight diastrophic defects are not an unfair caricature of what we do. Reading is treated as abstract, irrelevant to actual needs, instrumental, extrinsically motivated, not personal, not creative, not expressive of truth or art. The teaching often produces awkwardness, faking or half-hearted efforts. Let me now make four further points specific to learning reading:

1. Most people who have learned to read and write do not contribute to the education of their own, with their own materials, be they library books, newspapers, comic books or street signs. They may have picked up the ABCs at school, but they acquired the skill, preserved what they had learnt on their own. This self-learning is an important point, since it is not at the mechanical level of the ABCs that reading drastically occurs, but it in the subsequent years when the good readers are going it alone.

2. On neurological grounds, an emotionally normal child in middle-class urban and suburban surroundings, constantly exposed to written code, should spontaneously learn to read by age nine, just as he learns to talk by age two or three (as is the conclusion of Walla Nauta of the National Institute of Mental Health). It is impossible for such a child NOT to pick up the code unless he is systematically interrupted and discouraged, for instance by trying to teach him.

But of course our problem has to do with children in the culture of poverty, which does not have the ordinary middle-class need for literacy, and the pressures put on it. Such children are not exposed to reading and writing in important relations with their parents and peers; the code does not constantly occur in every kind of sequence of behaviour. Thus there is an essential need for the right kind of schooling, to point to the code by the children and read them aloud, in use.

3. Historically, in all modern countries, school methods of lessons, learning, and textbooks have been used, apparently successfully, to teach children to read. But this evidence is deceptive. A high level and continuing competence were required of very few—e.g., in 1900 in the United States only 65 got through from high school. Little effort was made with children of the working classes, and none at all with those from the culture of poverty. It is inherently unlikely that the same institutional procedures could apply with such a change of scale and population. A dramatic effort has been made to teach adults to read, as in Cuba, the method has been "each one, teach one" informally.

4. Also, with the present expansion of higher education, teachers of English uniformly complain that the majority of middle-class students cannot really read and write, though they have put on a performance that got them through high school. As John Holt has carefully described, the real life need was not reading or writing but getting by. (This is analogous to the large group among Puerto Rican children in New York who apparently speak English well, but who in fact cannot say anything that they need or mean, that is not really simply parrotted.)

Trust that the aim of the Borough President's enquiring is how to learn reading and writing as truth and art and not just to fake and get by. Further, in these children do not have the continual incentives and subtle pressures of middle-class life, it is much harder for them to learn even just to fake and get by. And even if they do get by, they may not be paid off for them in the end, since they do not have money and connections. To make good, they must really be competent.

The question is, is it possible and feasible to teach reading somewhat in the way children learn to speak, by intrinsic interest, with personal attention, and relating to the whole environment of activity? Pedagogically it is possible and feasible. There are known methods and available teachers, and I will suggest an appropriate school setting. Economically it is feasible, since methods, staff and setting do not cost more than $8250 per child that we now spend in the public schools. (This was demonstrated for two years by the First Street School on the Lower East Side, and it is in line with the budget of Eric Maisel's school for negro children in Newark which uses similar principles.) Politically, however, my present proposals are impossible and unfeasible, since it threatens both vested interests and popular prejudices, as will be evident.

From ages six to eleven, I propose a system of tiny schools, radically decentralized. As in Cuba, for 20 years, has urged democratic decentralization in many fields, including the schools. I am of course interested in the Bundy recommendations to cut up the New York system into sixty fairly autonomous districts. This would restore some relevance of social structure (and the staff of the school to the culture of the community. But however valuable politically, it must be administratively impossible; it does not get down to the actual pedagogical situation. And it is certainly not child-centred; build your middle-class communities have their own ways of not paying attention to children's coming to their own prejudices and distant expectations. By "tiny school", therefore, I here mean 20 children, with four teachers (one grown-up to seven children) and each tiny school to be largely administered by its own staff and parents, with considerable say for the children, as in Summerhill. The four teachers are: A teacher regular in subject and salaried. Since the present average class size is 28 these are available; A graduate from the senior class of the New York college, perhaps just embarking on graduate study; salary $2,000. There is no lack of candidates to do something useful and interesting in a free setting; A literate housewife and mother who can also prepare lunch. Salary $3,000. No lack of candidates; A literate, willing and intelligent high-school graduate, salary $4,000. No lack of candidates.

Such a staff can easily be racially and ethnically mixed. And it is also the case, as demonstrated by the First Street School, that such a setting, with individual attention paid to the children, it easy to get racially and ethnically mixed, there is less middle-class withdrawal when the parents
do not fear that their children will be swamped and retarded. (We have failed to achieve "integration" by trying to impose it from above, but it can be achieved from below, in schools entirely locally controlled, if we can show parents that it is for their children's best future.)

For setting, the tiny school would occupy two, three or four rooms in existing school buildings, church basements, settlement houses otherwise empty during school hours, rooms set aside in housing projects, store fronts. The setting is especially indifferent since a major part of activity occurs outside the school place. The setting would be able to be transferr
ed into a club-house, decorated and equipped according to the group's own decision. There might be one school in every street, but it is also advantageous to locate many in racial and ethnic border areas, to increase inter-mixture. For purposes of assembly, health services and some games, ten tiny schools could use the present public school facilities...

The cost saving in such a setup is the almost total elimination of top-down administration and the kind of special services that are required preciously because of size and rigidity. The chief uses of central administration would be licensing, funding, choosing sites, and some inspection. There would be no principals and assistants, secretaries, accounts, superintendents. Curriculum, texts, equipment would be determined as needed and not the present putative and expensive scale; they would be cheaper: much less would be pointless or wasted. Record keeping would be at a minimum. There is no need for truant officers when the teacher-and-seven can call at the absentee's home and inquire. There is no need for remedial personnel since the staff and parents are always in contact, and whole enterprises can be regarded as remedial. Organisational studies of large top-down directed enterprises show that the total cost is invariably at least 300% above the cost of the immediate function, in this case the interaction of teachers and children. It would put this 300% into increasing the number of adults and diversifying the possibilities of instruction. Further, in the condition of a small real estate, there is great advantage in ceasing to build four-million dollar school buildings and rather fitting tiny schools into available niches.

Pedagogically, this model is appropriate for natural learning of reading:
1. It allows exposure to the activities of the city, a teacher can spend half the time on the streets, visiting a business office, in a playground, at a museum, watching television, chatting with the corner druggist, riding the buses and subways, visiting poor and rich neighborhoods, and, if possible, homes. All these experiences can be saturated with speaking, reading and writing. For instance, a teacher might choose to spend several weeks at the Museum of Natural History, and the problem would be to re-label the exhibits for their own level of comprehension.

2. It allows flexibility to approach each child according to his own style and interests, for instance in choice of reading matter. Given so many contexts, the teacher can easily strike while the iron is hot, in other reading the destination of a bus or the label on a can of soup. When some children catch on quickly and forget to read their own, the teacher need not waste their time and can concentrate on those who are more confused. The setting does not prejudice as to formal or informal techniques, phonics, Montessori, rote drill. Moore's typewriter, labelling the furniture, Herbert Kohl's creative writing or any other method.

3. For instance, as a writer I like Sylvia Ashton-Warner's way of teaching little Maoris. Every day she tries to catch the most passionate concern of each child and give him a card with that key word: usually these are words of fear, anger, hunger, loneliness or sex. So a child has a large, ineradicable but very peculiar reading list, not at all like Dick and Jane, but as she progresses to read and write anything. From the beginning, in this method, reading and writing are gut-meaningful, they convey truth and feeling. This method can be used in our tiny school.

The ragged administration by children, staff and parents is pedagogically a virtue, since this too, which is real, can be saturated with reading and writing, writing down the arguments for and against the penalties. Socially and politically, of course, it has the advantage of engaging parents and giving them power. I am assuming that the power is educative, if he attends to it with guidance. Normal children can learn the first eight years' curriculum in four months anyway, at age 12.

Further, I see little merit, for teaching this age, in the usual teacher-training. Any literate and well-intentioned grown-up or late teen-ager knows enough to teach small children a lot. Teaching small children is a difficult art, but we do not know how to train the improvisational genius it requires, and the untrained seem to have it equally; compare one mother with another, and one big sister or brother with another. Since at this age one teaches the child not the subject, the relevant art is psychotherapy, and the most useful course for a teacher's college is probably group psychotherapy. The chief criterion of selection is the one I have mentioned: liking to be attentive to children. Given this setting, many young people would be introduced to teaching and would continue with it as a profession; whereas in the New York system the annual turnover approaches 20% after years of wasted training.

As I have said, however, there are fatal political and administrative objections to this proposal. First, the Public School administration does not intend to work any of its out of business. Given its mentality it must see any radical decentralisation as impossible to administer and
dangerous for everything must be controlled. Some child is bound to break a leg and the insurance companies will not cover; some teenager is bound to be indiscreet and the Daily News will explode in headlines.

The United Federation of teachers will find the proposal to be anathema because it devalues professional perquisites and floods the schools with the unlicensed. Being mainly broken to the public school harness most experienced teachers consider free and inventive teaching to be impossible.

Most fatally, poor parents who aspire for their children, tend to regard unrigidly structured education as downgrading, not taking the children seriously, and also as vaguely immoral. In the present Black Power temper of Harlem, the possible easy intermixing is not itself desired. Incidentally, I am rather sympathetic to black separatism as a means of consolidating the power of black communities. But children, as Kant said, must be guided to a future better society which must not be separated.

In spite of these fatal objections I recommend that instead of building the next school building we try out this scheme with 1,200 children.

(from "The Libertarian Teacher" No.6.1970)

(C) DIVERSITY

Elsewhere, in "Compulsory Mis-education", Goodman has stressed the need above all for diversity in paths of growing up.

"The argument of this book is that every child must be educated to the fullest extent, brought to school to be useful to society and to fulfill his own best powers. In our society, this must be done largely at the public expense, as a community necessity. Certainly the Americans ought to spend more on it than they do, instead of squandering so much on foolish consumption, hardware, and highways. But it is simply a superstition, an official superstition and a mass superstition, that the way to educate the majority of the young is to pen them up in schools during their adolescence and early adulthood.

The hard task of education is to liberate and strengthen a youth's initiative, and at the same time to see that he knows what is necessary to cope with the on-going activities and culture of society, so that his initiative can be relevant. It is absurd to think that this task can be accomplished by so much sitting in a box facing front, manipulating symbols at the direction of distant administrators. This is rather a way to regiment and brainwash.

At no other time or place in history have people believed that televising schooling was the obvious means to prepare most youth for most careers, whether farmer, industrial worker, craftsman, nurse, architect, writer, engineer, lawyer, shopkeeper, party-boss, social worker, sailor secretary, fine schooling is not, payment or citizen. Many of these careers require a lot of study. Some of them need academic training. But it was never thought useful to give academic teaching in such massive and continuous doses as the only regimen. The idea of everybody going to a secondary school and college has accompanied a recent stage of highly centralized corporate and state economy and policy.

Universal higher schooling is not, as people think, simply a continuation of universal primary schooling in reading and democratic socialisation. It begins to orient careers and it occurs after puberty, and jobs and sex are usually not well learned about in academies. The bolder is however, that the long high school, not only inept, it is psychologically, politically, and professionally damaging.

In my opinion there is no single institution, like the monopoly school system programmed by a few graduate universities and the curriculum reformers of the National Science Foundation, that can prepare everybody for an open future of a great society.

Thus at present, facing a confusing future of automated technology, excessive urbanisation, and entirely new patterns of work and leisure, the best educational brainstorm ought to be devoting themselves to devising various means of educating and paths of growing up, appropriate to various talents, conditions and careers. We should be experimenting with different kinds of schools, no school at all, the real city as school, farm schools, practical apprenticeships, guided travel, work camps, little towns and local newspapers, community service. Many others, that other people can think of. Probably more than anything we need a community, and community spirit, in which many adults who know something, and notably professional teachers, will pay attention to the young.
system wastes these natural human incentives to learning that its demands on the taxpayer are constantly escalating. It is because those who have succeeded under the present system have ended up as such dehumanised beings — technicians and mandarins who are ready to provide so-called objective skills and information to those in power (Richmanns) - that students are in revolt on secondary and college campuses.

We should now be in a better position to make more concrete the meaning of the proposal (mentioned earlier) to "redefine the function of education in order to make it responsive and accountable to the community."

The Tories failed:
1. They failed to end the disgrace of oversized classes,
2. They failed to recruit enough teachers,
3. They failed to raise the school-leaving age,
4. They failed to end the 11-plus,
5. They failed to expand higher education,
6. They failed to consider the needs of those who left school at 15,
7. They failed to attack the privileged private sector.

They Failed to Abolish Schooling.

Instead of schools serving to drain selected opportunists out of the community, they must be functionally reorganised to become centres of the community. This involves much, much more than the use of school facilities for community needs—although this should certainly be expanded. In order for the schools to become the centres of the community, the community itself with its needs and problems must become the curriculum of the schools.

More specifically, the educational programme or curriculum should not consist of subjects like English or Algebra or Geography. Instead the school must be structured into groups of young-

sters meeting in workshops and working as teams. These teams are then encouraged (1) to identify the needs or problems of the community; (2) to choose a certain need or problem as a focus of activity; (3) to plan a programme for its solution; (4) to carry out the steps involved in the plan.

In the course of carrying out such a curriculum, students naturally, as part of the actual process, acquire a number of skills. For example, they must be able to research (observe, report, pinpoint—all related to the social and physical geography of the city); set goals or objectives; plot steps towards the achievement of these goals; carry out these steps; evaluate or measure the progress towards these goals.

Through such a curriculum, research becomes a means of building the community rather than what it is at present, a means by which the Establishment prepares counter-insurgency or pacification programmes against the community. Through the solution of real community problems, students discover the importance not only of skills and techniques but also of the ideas and principles that must guide them in setting and pursuing goals. In the struggle to solve their problems by learning the learning process rather than the handicap or drawback which they are presently conceived to be.

With the community, and, at times, the entire city as a learning laboratory, students are no longer confined to the classroom. The classroom is an adjunct to the community rather than the reverse.

Students have an opportunity to exercise responsibility by identifying problems and by proposing and testing solutions, with the teachers acting as resource consultants and instructors in specific skills. Students from various age groups can work together on the various projects, with each contributing according to his abilities at the various stages, younger students helping older ones, and through the capacity for leadership having an opportunity for exercising it.

One of the most important community needs, and one which naturally suggests learning activities, is the need for community schools which can be met by student-produced newspapers, magazines, TV news and documentary programmes, films, etc.

No one should confuse this curriculum with the curriculum for vocational education—either in the old sense of preparing young blacks for menial tasks or in the up-to-date form in which the Michigan Bell Telephone Co and Chrysler adopt high schools in the black community in order to channel black youth into low-level jobs. The only possible resemblance between these proposals and vocational education is the insistence on the opportunity for productive life-experiences as essential to the learning process. Otherwise what is proposed is the very opposite of vocational education. It is indeed education or preparation for the tasks of governing themselves and administering over things.

On the question of "child labour" it should be emphasised that what we are proposing is not "labour" at all. Labour is activity which is done for wages and under the control of persons or organisations exploiting this labour for profit. What we are talking about is work which the young people choose to do for the purpose of improving the community and under their own direction.

However, the clash is unavoidable. Because labour has been the only means for survival and advancement in this society, and because increasing automation and cybernation have cut down jobs, any kind of productive activity has now become a privilege monopolised by adults and increasingly denied to youth.

The whole process is now reaching absurd proportions: older people cannot do jobs that could be more safely and easily done by youth, while youth are supposed to stay in school, expending their energies in play, postponing the responsibilities of work and adult life, on the premise that longer schooling will make them capable of better jobs. Meanwhile the skills they are acquiring become obsolete. The whole procedure is based on the assumption that education is only for the young and that it must be completed before you start to be productive. Actually the time is coming when society will have to...
recognise that education must be a life-long process for old and young. In the end a rational society will have to combine work and play for all ages and for people in every type of activity, from manual to intellectual.

Rallying to the support of all these vested interests we can offer the intellectuals such as social scientists, physical scientists, claiming that by such programmes society will be doctoring up a supply of experts, intellectuals, scientists, etc. The charge is absurd. Such programmes will increase the supply because it will stimulate the desire for learning in great numbers of youth who in the past were turned off from learning. (Monthly Review, Sept., '70)

(E) END EDUCATIONAL DISCRIMINATION!

Further excellent proposals have been made by Ivan Illich: Illich compares education in the present century with Religion in the Middle Ages. Just as he is opposed to employees being discriminated against according to religious background, so he proposes that we should object to discrimination according to schooling background.

"Two centuries ago the U.S. lead the world in a movement to disestablish the monopoly of a single church. Now we need the constitutional disestablishment of the monopoly of the school, and thereby of a system which legally combines prejudice with discrimination."

This would not of course prevent employers from giving job-applicants aptitude tests worked out specifically for the job concerned. All it would do would be to put a stop to the connexion between education and the social-control-process of acquiring diplomas, the distribution of which is monopolised by the Powers-That-Be.

"To make this disestablishment effective, we need a law forbidding discrimination in hiring, voting, or admission to centres of learning based on previous attendance at some curriculum. This guarantees an education of performance-tests of competence for a function or role, but would remove the present absurd discrimination in favour of the person who learns a given skill with the largest expenditure of public funds, or-what is equally likely—has been able to entertain a diploma without any relation to any useful skill or job. Only by protecting the citizen from being disqualified by anything in his own situation can a constitutional disestablishment of school become psychologically effective."

Apo of his hang up to do with Ame to protect "the citizen" (poor little chap) Illich has put his finger on an absolutely crucial area. It is the exact equivalent of the Abolition of Money in the Economic World, Suddenly the Bricks and Millions of the pen-pushing millionaire and the soul (soul man) are all reduced to nothing: outlawed is a laughable bit of paper 'backed' by even more laughable yellow stuff called gold. To abolish diplomas would cause the greatest appleyz to all those who have 'got their degrees' (which is what Illich means when he proposes to the Superederated that they themselves take the ground out from under their own feet). But they feel a profound sense of liberation and a general freeing of their self-educational style.

(F) EDUCATIONAL CREDITS PAID TO THE LEARNER.

Illich also proposes a system of purchasing credits for education, paid directly to the learner. The aim would be the return of initiative and accountability to the learner or his most immediate tutor. Although the idea of educational credits has traditionally been associated with reactionary free-market economists wanting to boost the public schools, conceived as part of an overall programme, Illich's idea would undoubtedly be of the very greatest value.

At present schools pre-empt most educational funds. Drill instruction which costs less than comparable schooling is now privilege of those rich enough to buy the schools, and them whom either the army or big business sends through in-service training. In a programme of progressive deschooling of US education, at first the resources available for drill training would be limited. But ultimately there should be no obstacle for anyone at any time of his life to be able to choose instruction among hundreds of derivable skills at public expense.

Right now educational credit good at any skill centre could be provided in limited amounts for people in all ages, and not just the poor. I envisage such credit in the form of an educational passport or an "edu-credit-card" provided to each citizen at birth. In order to favour the poor who probably would not use their yearly grants early in life, a provision is made that interest accrues to later users of cumulated "entitlements". Such credits would per-

mit most people to acquire the skills most in demand in their convenience, better, faster, cheaper and with fewer undesirable side effects than in school.

Most of the skills which are in demand and which require human teachers have already been acquired by a great majority of the people who use them. They are now discouraged from sharing them with others by teachers who are paid by the hour and by unions who protect the trade interest. Skill centres which would be judged by customers on their results, and not on the personnel they employ or the process they use, would open unsuspected working opportunities, frequently even for those who are now considered unemployable.

Indeed, there is no reason why such skill centres should not be at the work place itself, with the employer and his work force supplying instruction as well as jobs to those who choose to use these educational credits in this way.

(G) SKILL MATCHING

How might such educational credits be utilised outside of special "educational" institutions? As regards the learning of skills, Illich proposes the idea of matching learner with teacher, wherever there is high motivation to learn/teach. As an example of how drills and skills may be imparted if the matching is right, Illich describes a crash programme in spoken Spanish:

In 1956 there arose a need to teach Spanish quickly to several hundred teachers, social workers and ministers from the New York Archdiocese, so that they could communicate with Puerto Ricans. My friend Gerry Morris announced over a Spanish radio station that he needed native speakers from Harlem. Next day 200 teen-agers lined up in front of his office, and he selected four dozen of them—many of them school dropouts. He trained them in the use of the US Foreign Service Institute (FSI) Spanish manual, designed for use by linguists with graduate training, and within a week his teachers were on their own each in charge of four New Yorkers who wanted to speak the language. Within sixty months this project was accomplished. Cardinal Spellman could claim that he had 127 parishes in which at least one person could communicate in Spanish.

No school programme could have matched these results.

Skill teachers are made scarce by the belief in the value of
licenses. Certification constitutes a form of market manipulation plausible only to a schooled mind. Most teachers of arts and trades are less skillful, less inventive, less communicative than the best craftsmen and tradesmen. Most high-school teachers of Spanish or French do not speak their languages as correctly as their pupils could, after half a year of competent drills. Experiments conducted by Angelou in Puerto Rico suggest that many young teenagers, if they are given the proper incentives, programmes and access to tools, are better than most school teachers at introducing their peers to the scientific exploration of plants, stars and matter, and to the discovery of how and why a motor or radio functions.

Opportunities for skill-learning can be vastly multiplied if we open the “market”. This doesn’t mean matching the right teacher with the right student when he is highly motivated in an intelligent programme, without the constraint of a curriculum. Free and competing drill instruction is a subversive blasphemy to the orthodox educator. It dissociates the acquisition of skills from “humane” education, which schools package together and thus promotes unlicensed learning no less than unlicensed teaching for unpredictable purposes.

(H) EDUCATIONAL MATCHING

Turning away from the inculcation of skills, Illich observes that:

Schools are even less efficient in the arrangement of circumstances which encourage learning for learning’s sake, for which I will reserve the term education. The main reason for this is that school is obligatory and becomes schooling for schooling’s sake; an enforced stay in the company of teachers, which pays off in the doubtful privilege of more such company. Just as skill instruction must be freed from curricular restraints, so must liberal education be dissociated from obligatory attendance. Both skill learning and education can be aided by institutional arrangement but they are of a different, frequently opposed nature.

An institutional arrangement that декларирует advocates to liberal education is again a form of matchmaking, but unlike training, not a matchmaking between teacher and learner but a matchmaking between learners;

The educational instructor is concerned with helping matching partners to meet so that learning can take place. He matches individuals starting from unresolved questions. At the most he helps the pupil to formulate his puzzlement since only a clear statement will give him the power to find his match, move like him, at the moment, to explore the same issue in the same context.

Matching partners for educational purposes initially seems more difficult to imagine than finding skill instructors and partners for a game. One reason is the deep fear which makes us censorious. The unlicensed exchange of skills—even undesirable skills—is more predictable and therefore seems less dangerous than the unlimited opportunity for meeting any person who share an issue which for them, at the moment, is socially, intellectually and emotionally important.

Let me give, as an example of what I mean, the description of how an intellectual match might work in New York City. Each man, at any given moment and at a minimum price, could identify himself to a computer with his address and telephone number, indicate the book, article, film or record which he seeks a partner for discussion. Within days he could receive by mail the list of others who recently had taken the same initiative. This list would then enable him by telephone to arrange a meeting with a person who initially would be known exclusively by the fact that they request a dialogue about the same subject.

Matching people according to their interest in a particular title is radically simple. It permits identification only on the basis of a mutual desire to discuss a statement recorded by a third person and it leaves the initiative of arranging the meeting to the individual.

Illich then discusses three objections to this proposal:

The first objection is: Why cannot self-identification be based also on an idea or an issue? Of course, such subjective terms could also be used in a computer system. Political parties, churches, unions, club and neighbourhoods and professional societies already organize their educational activities in this way and in effect they act as schools. They all match people in order to explore certain "themes"; and these are dealt with in courses, seminars, and curricula in which presumed "common interests" are prepackaged. Such self-matching is by definition teacher-centred; it requires an authoritarian presence to define for the student the starting point of their discussion.

By contrast, matching the title of a book, film, etc., in its pure form leaves it to the author to define the special language, the terms and the framework within which a given problem or fact is stated; and it enables the student to accept this starting point to identify themselves to one another.

The second objection asks: Why not let the identification of match seekers include information on age, background, world view, competence, experience, or other defining characteristic? The answer is that there is no reason why such discriminatory restrictions could not and should not be built into such many universities—without walls—which use title-matching as their basic organizational device.

But I fear that, more often than not, the real reason for proposing such restrictions is contempt arising from the presumption that people are ignorant; it is a mistaken way to avoid the ignorant meeting the ignorant around a text which they may not understand and which they read only because they are interested in it.

The third objection: why not provide match seekers with incidental assistance that will facilitate their meetings—with space, schedules, screening, and protection? This has never been done by schools with the entire inefficiency characterizing large bureaucratic systems; we left the initiative for meetings with the match seekers themselves, organi-

Mass walkout

At Samuel Pepys comprehensive school, Bromley, London, 170 sixth form boys walked out of morning assembly and put a list of grievances to the headmaster, Mr. Stuart Jarvis. They said they wanted more respect from senior housemasters when they went into assembly; teachers to knock on their "common-room door" before entering; less check from junior boys; more opportunity to consult the headmaster; and restoration of the right to visit a local delicatessen to buy sweets and soft drinks.
can perhaps serve as our model. As part of their overall recognised functions such centres would by definition also be open to the childrexn in the community and hence they could be designed partly with them in mind.

The general idea would be a FREE ACCESS ENVIRONMENT in which FREE ASSOCIATION was possible (access to people).

All the equipment of schools would be present: gymnasium, dramatic, artistic, scientific and technological toys, models, libraries, teaching machines with non-Skinnerian programmes, computerised information retrieval systems (built by the young people themselves), closed-circuit TVs.---everything except the cane in the Headmaster's room! (Actually, this room could exist either if there was any "head at all, he would have no special privileges and only general co-ordinating role, which could be rotated on a regular interval."

Especially important would be informal, junky, poky, musical places by windows and outdoors, which the kids could make up and overthrow in the thin partitions from next door; and places where people could be intimate together to all ages. (Contraception would also be available so that children could grow up without fear of their sexuality.)

Factories in the area, whose workers were also members of the community centres, could supply interesting, surplus, or waste materials (e.g., polyester foam, bits of electronics junk, paper, old machines, coloured glass, rope, wires, nails, timber, etc.) The workshop would either be supplied to the community centres directly, not through a pyramid of bureaucrats; or they would be available on request by children free to wander round or scavenging in factory yards and warehouse, council tips, etc.; or play/construction sites and spaces would be set aside in the work-places themselves.

Here is a description of a free access environment by the Peckham scientists. Incidentally, point blank with Peters' notion that forcing a child to do experiments may turn them into great scientists (p. 38)

"Our failures during our first eighteen months' work have taught us a lot. We have been very significant. Individuals from infants to old people, resident or fall to show any interest in anything presented to them through disci-

pline, regulation or instruction, which is another aspect of authority.

"We now proceed by merely providing an environment rich in instruments for action- that is giving a chance to do things. Slowly but surely these chances are seized upon and used as one opportunity for development of inherent capacity. The instruments of action have a common characteristic in that they must speak for themselves. The voice of the salesman or the teacher frightens the potential users. How does this fact reflect on organisation and the experimental observation on this material?"

"Having provided the members with a chance to do things, we find that we have to leave them to make their own use of them. We have had to learn to sit back and wait for these activities to emerge. Any impatience on our part, translated into help, has strangled their effectiveness. We have had to cultivate more and more patience in ourselves. The alternative to this patience is obvious- the application of compulsion in one or other of its many forms, perhaps the most effective of all for some people. But having a fundamental interest in the source and origin of spontaneous action as all biologists have---we have had to discard even that instrument for initiating activities." (Quoted in Anarchy, 60)

1) SAFE MANIPULABLE ENVIRONMENT

In addition to the free access idea, the environment should be highly manipulable so that the children can learn that they are responsible for 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 rearrangements.

At present architects and other so-called "experts" are often amazed when kids get bored with the specially provided concrete play-areas and prefer to play on old bomb-sites and junk yards. The reason is that kids need a lot of UNMAKE in their environment, rather than have everything laid on ready made and capable of only the one boring use.

A fairly high degree of wear and tear would be allowed for by the community as an indispensable part of the costs of building up free children
(although vandalism would probably not occur). In the same way homes and other public buildings would all be constructed in such a way that children didn't have to be repressed, prevented from exploring their environment for their own safety. (eg at a "private" section would be allowed for automatically when building channel ferry boats; ordinary houses should have sockets off the floor, etc) Provision for exploration might cost extra in some terms, but it would be considered a basic principle of a home, on a par with provision for warmth and privacy. The human costs of constancy having to pen baby in nest he burn/electrocute himself/fall out of the window/be knocked over in the street, etc etc would be recognised as being immeasurably greater than the cost of building an explorable world for the small child.

But education would not only be given in the community cultural centre. It would take place in the whole community itself. One such way would be the education of being on the streets. (see Jane Jacobs book in bibliography) This means designing livable communities where people would be "looking out for" each other's children as they went about their normal business, gossiped, etc. Such communities where the streets are safe informal -child-rearing places are mostly being destroyed as "slums" by town planners and welfare bureaucrats. I'm living in one right now.

(k) OPEN INSTITUTIONS

The principle of free access would have to be extended to all new and existing institutions of society. This does not just mean the phony openness of guided tours round factories. It means being able to wander round them at leisure and befriend workers who would have time to show youngsters what they were about. Time spent in this way would be considered part of the job of being a worker. The education function would be shared in with all our institutions. It would be recognised that the factories make people before they make things.

FREE INFORMATION AND TRANSPAR-ENITY OF OPERATIONS

But even more radical changes would be necessary. Just as it was considered unhealthy to dampen people's physical explorations was unhealthy, so to dampen people's intellectual curiosity would be considered to lead to stupidity and passivity. The child would not have to be asked questions about the origin and destiny of the work, the organisation of the overall work-process, leading out to curiosity about the regional and national distribution of labour etc. In other words children should have access not just to the shop floors, but to the factory and the office files.

The present top-down organisation of factories means that those at the bottom can rarely see the overall point of their work. Its contribution and human meaning: to make factories, offices, hospitals, etc open to children, it is first necessary to open them to the workers themselves in these institutions. This means that industry would just have to be socialised. (I do not say nationalised--State-ized)

Under workers' self-management with workers producing useful goods and services directly in identifiable communities, industry would begin to make sense again to the workers.

At present, the workings of the State and Capitalist Industry mean that for most of the time people are prevented from taking an intelligent interest in their own environment. This is one of the main contradictions of bureaucratic society: large organisations have to have a minimum level of participation to keep functioning, yet everywhere tend to alienate autonomous initiatives.

"Nurse, why didn't you use a bit of initiative, you're not a child now girl!" Next day: "And who told you to do that, Nurse X, you're not Matron yet you know." Too much and too little interest are both dangerous. (see Carden: Modern Capitalism and Revolution: Solidarity Book, 5s. from 52a Westmorland Road, Bromley, Kent)

Children learn to take an intelligent interest in their environment not by set-piece lectures from factory managers about the National Interest, how the trouble-makers are disrupting "our" Export Drive. They learn by mixing freely among people who themselves take intelligent interest in their environment--who have to, because they control it. Children would learn more about democracy from hearing a delegate committee submit controversial production plans to a factory assembly, than from a hundred books about Parliament in the school library. Moreover, once children had developed the consciousness of making an intelligent interest in their immediate environment, they would have a solid motivation to carry them into more theoretical

fields concerning the environment of their immediate environment, as it were)

Connected with this is an extremely important general principle: the principle of transparency. Our machinery should be built so that the average man or woman can see how it operates and can repair it if it breaks.

"People use machines that they do not understand and cannot repair. For instance, electric motors: one cannot imagine anything more beautiful and educative than such motors, yet there may be three or four in a house, cased and out of sight; and when they blow they are taken away to be repaired. Their influence is then retarding, for what the child sees is that competence does not exist in ordinary people, but in the system of interlocking specialities. This is unavailable to the child, it is too abstract." (Paul Goodman, p 78, Growing Up Absurd)

This important principle also applies to the social relations in the wider society--for this reason libertarians should be concerned with creating a human scale society in which the normal child can grow up to understand the workings of that society. But even if we must have decisions made about us in London or New York, then let that decision making process be open: let the TV cameras cover the actual strike negotiations and cabinet discussions for instance instead of making us dependent on the selective lies of pressmen standing in the rain outside.

Similarly a libertarian should oppose every curtailment of information such as secret brand formulae and so on. Indeed the scientific

Need for action over "truants' stressed"
venture is fundamentally a cooperative one, sharing in the interests of mutual education and scientists involved in secret research are acting against the spirit of science itself.

Until all scientific research is public, talk about the "duty of the scientist to educate the public" is mainly self-hypnosis that the information is free. The self-education process in the whole of society will be seriously curtailed.

(1) No Man a Teacher - Every Man a Teacher

From being in and finding out, the children should be free also to join in. Rough prototypes here: the child who helps Mummy in the kitchen; or the lorry driver's son whose father takes him along on a long distance trip; or the ten year old who gets a game of football from the big boys; or D.H. Lawrence helping his father roll fuses for down the pit; or the farmer's son driving the tractor to the regular driver is ill; Belfast kids helping their mums to fill molotov cocktails; gypsy kids who can recognize all the various types of metals by the time they are six.

In the Neighbourhood and Community centres, adults would reflect on their own purposes: the children would be around (some of them) and if it looked interesting they would stay to watch; if they stayed to watch they might eventually ask to be allowed to join in. At this point adults would obviously be free to say no. But healthy adults don't mind having kids around when they themselves are satisfied. It is mainly when the adult is totally centred around the child and his play that many adults find children boring). Once the "burden" of education and general education generally speaking it would be found not to be a burden at all. Free children would be very much more attractive to be with, since they would not have been either clever-clevred or loutified by class education. This attractiveness might spill out of the home.

In this way learning would take place, but there would be no teachers. The nearest that people would get to the teaching role would be the role of skill instructor.

Classes in the three R's and other skills and subjects would take place very much on the model of driving lessons. It would be educational classes (including the voluntary aspects of the model).

Formal instruction and even old fashioned "drills" (which still have their place in a voluntarily chosen programme as Illich argues) would still be necessary for some, and some people might be expected to develop more talents in this direction than others. Those people would spend more of their time with the children than the other adults did. But their relationship with the children would not be one of Monopoly Control; if the children found Learning First Aid with Mrs. X was horrid, they would be free to try and make their own arrangements, ask Y's mother to show them. And if Y's mother didn't show them she would have power of state persecution for unlicensed instruction. Here is Illich making a point which is absolutely crucial:

Both the exchange of skills and the matching of partners are based on the assumption that education for all means education by all. Not the draft integrated institution but only the mobilisation of the whole population can lead to popular culture.

Instruct is now pre-empted by certified teachers.

The teachers' competence, in turn, is restricted to what may be in school. And, further, workers in leisure are alienated from each other as a result: the spectator and the worker alike are supposed to arrive at the work place all ready to fit into a routine prepared for them.

(2) Time to Spare in a Good Society

In times of "teacher shortage" it seems like a good call for the abolition of the Teacher altogether. Aren't most people far too busy to have time to share with "needy" children? We have seen how much (though not all) of what we have proposed requires steps towards the socialisation of industry under workers' self-management; the freeing of information; and the development of community self-government.

Before we seek to tie it all down to earth again, there seems to be no harm in adding one more "hypothesis" condition: adults with time to spare.

This condition presupposes the progressive abolishment of waste and all useless surplus work. The concept of surplus has been dealt with by the American economists Baran and Sweezy, in their book: "Monopoly Capital", and also by Baran alone in "The Political Economy of Growth" (see also Anarchy 118). Paul Goodman has also emphasized the importance of understanding surplus, although from a different tack.

Goodman wants us to consider not only the effects of surplus (on the individual) but also of the innumerable superfluous jobs on people. Because useful work was once a way of sticking, young people have to grow up with the realisation: "during my productive years I will probably have to spend 100 hours a year doing what is no good."

Hence the title: "Growing up Absurd."

The general idea goes like this: the feudal lord had retainers to enhance his power and the retainers had fine clothes to enhance his prestige. From his point of view the work of the retainers and the work of making their uniforms was "socially necessary labour." In fact it was only necessary to maintain his authority, and not to maintaining society.

Likewise in our society there are many jobs which appear to be socially necessary, but which are actually the result of time from the standpoint of a rational society. For instance the advertising industry tries to persuade you to buy Brand X, while his competitor or even another adman in the same agency - to advertise the same product to you. The socialisation of goods is a fact, and the packaging is in our respect but packaged differently. From the standpoint of the profits of the separate private firms (X and Y) this is "socially necessary." In fact this work doesn't add a bit of real wealth to society.

The Social Security clerk and the insurance salesman both exist because people are scared of scarcity. Scarcity could be made obsolete if science and technology were used to make destructive industries(such as war or spectacular gimmicks) meaningless (such as the Space Race). If technology were developed to its full extent for human purposes it would put the capitalists out of business, since their priorities are profit. Just consider the fantastic productivity of industry if it worked at full capacity making useful things for people, under a system of workers' self-management. Many boring jobs could be automated, both manual and clerical. But many more could be entirely abolished: service jobs such as ticket collectors would become laughable in an economy of abundance. (In Paris it costs more to collect the fares than to run the underground itself!)

The list of potentially useless jobs is endless: stockbrokers; security guards; tax inspectors; and other legal fiddlers; real estate agents; bankers. - None
of these jobs would be needed in a society there were no priority given to making profits or maintaining Authority. Where, in fact, Bosses of every kind were seen as so many parasites.

All very nice, you say, but what has this got to do with education? Everything. More and more people would have more and more time in which to "do their thing". The basic ingredient to any education would be fulfilled-WARM AND FRIENDLY ADULTS WITH TIME TO LIVE. Even more than at work- albeit for only 20 hours a week, say, and in a leisurely creative atmosphere, people would have the leisure to develop their interests and their capacities, and in turn pass on what they have learned. When we are doing things only in order to live we are dead and closed and uncreative. If everyone including children were guaranteed a material living, there would be nothing for us to do but to live. The less we had to do, the more exotic we could become and the more we lived for our own purposes in the present the more we would learn.

But even work would become worthwhile, if only in itself. Time for democratic discussion and self-education would be laid aside automatically, as part of the definition of work itself. Men could take advantage of the highest achievements of modern technology to design highly efficient machinery that would be in control of Art and Industry would fly together more and more. Sir Percy Nunn's ideas would not just be applicable to Art lessons, but also to industry itself:

"There can be no universal aim of education if that is to include the abstraction of any particular ideal of life; for there are as many ideals as there are persons. Educational efforts must, it would seem, be limited to securing for everyone the conditions under which individuality is most completedly developed, that is enabling him to make his original contribution to the welteraged whole of human life as full and as truly characteristic as his nature permits; the form of the contribution being left to the individual (or the small group-K.P.P.) as something which each must, in living and by living, forge out for himself." (p 13)

The last point is crucial. The form of our contribution must be our decision. Because we are social, "doing our own thing", individually and communally, will naturally tend to help other members of society. Doing what we want will not just express our needs. It will also meet the needs of others. And if we do not need Bosses and Bureaucrats any more than we need Capitalist Bosses and Bureaucrats, to guarantee that we do will be socially useful. Ways of coordinating society without Authority will develop from out of the workings of society itself. As a result of the intelligent actions in-context of individuals and groups, realistically out to achieve their intentions, it should be possible to build a society of abundance, where equality and freedom both exist.

Here is one description of such a society: it could also stand for a community and its community centre (rather than "school") or for a family of families system. (See Section 6.6)

"(Anarchist-Communism) seeks the most complete development of individuality combined with the utmost possibilities of voluntary association in all its aspects, in all possible degrees of self-fulfilment; ever changing, ever modified associations which carry in themselves the elements of their durability and constantly assuming new forms which answer best to the multiple aspirations of all. A society in which pre-established forms, crystallised by law, are repugnant; which looks for harmony in an ever changing and fugitive equilibrium between a multitude of forces and influences of every kind, following their own course..." (Kropotkin)

(N) THE DESECULARISATION OF EDUCATION

Finally, let us return to the question of religion. The reader will remember how Peters took Priestly Initiation as the model for Edu-

cation: moreover a clear gulf exists for Peters between "worthwhile activities" which alone are educational, and "bingo, billiards and eating bananas", the humdrum everyday activities which are not educational. Now according to Van Illich covering much the same ground from his totally different position (he is a Catholic layman):

The major obstacle on the way to an educational society was well defined by a black friend of mine in Chicago, who told me that our imagina-
tion was "all schooled up". We permit the State to ascertain universal educational defi-
cencies of its citizens and establish one specialised agency to meet them. We thus share in the delusion that we can distinguish between what is necessary education for others and what is not—just as former generations estab-
lished laws which defined what was sacred and what was profane.

Durkheim recognized that this ability to divide social reality into two realms was the very essence of formal religion. There are, he reasoned, religions without the supernatural and religions without gods, but which does not subdivide the world into things and names and persons that are sacred and others that as a consequence are profane. Durkheim's insight can be applied to the sociology of education, for school is radically divisive in a similar way.

The very existence of obligatory schools divides any society into two realms; some time spans and processes and treatments and professions are "academic" or "pedagogic", and others are not. The power of school thus to divide social reality into boundaries; education becomes worldly and the world becomes noneducational.

Since Bonhoeffer contemporary theologians have pointed to the confusions now reigning between the biblical message and institutionalised religion. They point to the experience that Christian claim and faith usually gain from secularisation. Inevitably their statements sound blasphemous to many churchmen. Unquestionsably, the educational process will gain from the de-schooling of society even though this demand sounds to many schoolmen like treason to the en-
lightenment. But it is enlightenmment itself that is now being snuffed out in the schools."
LEFT PROGRESSIVES IN THE SCHOOLING BUSINESS- THE RANK AND FILE GROUP- FRATERNAL CRITICISM.

(Note: this section written with teachers in mind, not college of education students)

(a) The R & F position
R & F bills itself thus: "R & F is produced by left-wing teachers within the NUT who believe that the union should be an effective factor in forcing change and progress, both in the general educational field and in the struggle for better salaries and conditions." In its three years of existence, R & F has popularised and developed a class-and-privilege analysis of the British school system. This is certainly one component in an overall critique, and one that I have not much emphasised in my pamphlet precisely because the critique has diffused widely already (largely due to progressive groups such as R & F).

R & F has been widely reviled by the NUT hierarchy, the unspeakable N.A.S., the establishment Times Educational Supplement, and by some (no less establishment) Communist Headmasters. Any group which makes such people uptight has surely done good work!

R & F has published articles by Schools Action Union militants; and several R & F supporters have been sacked. (See excellent accounts of "How I Got the Sack" in issues 7 and 8.)

R & F was a major factor in the catalysing of militancy which forced the NUT executive to hold out for a £135 increase in the last salary negotiations.

R & F has published a well-worked alternative programme for the running of schools, "A Teacher's Charter", available R & F price 3d. (see address at back). This Charter begins by noting the frustration and powerlessness felt by many class teachers, especially young ones. It then indicates the basic power monopoly of the Head by quoting from "The Government of County Secondary Schools", issued by the Greater London Council:

"14... (b) Subject to the provision of these articles, the Head shall control the conduct and the curriculum, the internal organisation, the management and discipline of the school, the choice of books, the methods of teaching and the arrangement of classes; and shall exercise supervision over the teaching and non-teaching staff. He shall have the power to suspend pupils for attendance for any cause he considers adequate, but on suspension, he shall forthwith report the case to the Governors; the parent shall be notified that he has the right if appeal to the Governors and in all cases the Governors shall report the facts to the Council."

Within our democracy, how can we tolerate this antiquated and unjust state of affairs? the Charter asks. It then continues by proposing an alternative tripartite structure:

"What then do we mean by democracy? Basically a shift of power from the minority, authoritarian position of the head and education authorities to the full participation by the parents, staff, students, and the community at large, in all decisions taken in an educational context. To safeguard established democracy, two principles need to be built in: (1) the right of all teachers to recall their representatives, and (2) for those who earn their living in the educational service- Heads, Teachers, etc- comparable and related salaries. Otherwise we have a continuation of the existing structure, in which individuals, once elected, are free from majority control.

The Governing Body of each school should embody these democratic principles; it is at present appointed politically from outside the school and does not have particularly clear functions or power; as such it cannot be regarded as either democratic or effective. Instead we would propose that the Governing Body be made up of elected representatives of the school community.

We have recommended the formation of three associations, which will presumably elect some of their members to the places reserved for them on the Governing Body: a Students' Association, a Parents' Association, and a Staff Association. Each of these sections of the Governing Body will have their own particular concerns which make the existence of separate associations desirable but there should of course, be close co-operation and consultation between all these."

The Charter proposes the abolition of the Head and his replacement by an Executive Officer, elected democratically, by the Staff Association, and "responsible for the day to day administration of the school, subject to the overall control of the Governing Body, and in consultation with the Staff Association and the Schools Council. In larger schools, the functions would be shared by more than one person."

Finally the Charter puts
forward certain basic rights for class teachers, including: not having to teach overcrowded classes; not having to teach subjects other than those he/she was appointed to teach; the right to attend regular refresher courses and adequate facilities (staff room, telephone, rest room, creche for the children of teachers,);

"It is unprofessional for any teacher to make a report on the conduct of another teacher without the time acquainting the teacher concerned with the nature of it. It is not written and allowing the teacher concerned to make a copy of it. (This is already a union rule)"

This programme is realistic and serious; that there would be less frustration and more learning in such a structure is indisputable.

(b) My attitude towards the rank and file group
However, in this and the following sections I want to probe various weaknesses, over-emphasises and under-emphasises of the strategy for change put forward by left-progressive round R & F. Always it is a matter of tendencies and relative disagreements—basically I see myself as part of the same movement and I do not recognize any member of this serious and worthwhile group. Also I want to emphasize that I am very much in the dark as to the way forward in practical terms. Furthermore, my analysis of how schools socialize for ill obviously depends on how it is that one takes to be most ill about society that schools most fundamentally take after or inculcate. Obviously it is a libertarian (close to Solidarity and Anarchism, for those who care what labels I wear- I don't) I feel about society (and hence socialization) which many may find themselves disagreeing with. Nevertheless, I can only describe things as I see them.

This pamphlet asks for criticism! Many of the ideas are, to put it mildly, far out! I think that members of the R & F group will read it, benefit from the ideas (many of them only recently developed in the Spinet) and in turn criticise honestly and rigorously those specific ideas rejected, suggested into practice those ideas accepted, and put forward new ideas.

It is in this spirit of friendly but rigorous criticism that I now want to state what are, for me, some pretty basic criticisms of the "progressive" wing of State education, as exemplified by the R & F group.

First however, I would like to pursue some general ideas on Revolution and Society (c). Then I will double back on (c) in (d) and other sections to sharpen the meaning of some key passages and phrases. This will provide a lead in to various differences to be studied with the R & F group, and certain criticisms of the Charter. Finally we will lead on again to the wider issue of education and society and prepare the way for the next sections in which I will hint at a different sort of strategy and put forward points towards an alternative programme.

Blurb over- now the meat!

(c) The revolution comes from action in every sector of society

Can education be better than society?

Is education the way of changing society or must we wait until society is changed?

Peters is basically an idealist philosopher. His "idealisim" is not the same sort of idealism as when one says, "He is very idealistic." By idealism in a philosophic context we mean belief in stable internal "essences" which aren't influenced by what is going on round about. Although Peters recognizes the influence of circumstances to some degree (making the ritual appeal for better teacher training), his main position is that human nature is such, deep down, that "the mass of men" will always be "geared to consumption"; people are liable to revert to "bingo and eating bananas" if let off the leash of Authority. The "final fruits" of education must necessarily be highly uncertain. It is essentially the inner natures of people that are wrong, not their circumstances.

By contrast Robert Owen in the early 19th Century was a materialist. That is to say, he saw men as the passive products of their material circumstances (which made them bad). Thus Owen looked to a change in circumstances which would make people good.

This is what Marx said about materialists like Owen in his "theses on Feuerbach":

"The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator must himself be educated. This doctrine has therefore to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society."

It is not a question of enlightened rulers or Royal Commissions or Government Reports changing everything for the better. Being changed is the same old shit. It is when one realizes oneself as someone doing the changing, at the doing end of history as it is made, that the real difference occurs.

Moreover, as a result of action on reality, reality acts back and changes the actor. This is "dialectical" materialism, where subject and object change at the same time. (The word "dialectics" comes from dialogue) It is also Piaget: practical working on reality leads to the child's building up schemes which he could never have evolved from out of his head independent of the external world.

Society does not change when suddenly a generation of enlightened ones has somehow been educated in its school system. This is because:

1. (1) the old society will have influenced the way they were educated;
2. (2) the generation to come cannot be enlightened (passive) without being mystified; self-direction is what education is really about;
3. (3) once in top positions in society people are mostly changed to fit in with that society, not to change it.

From all this it follows that
Education is not the answer to everything as some idealistic student-teachers sometimes say. They think that education is the be-all and end-all as silly as saying that Economics is the only real cause of everything else.

Marx continued the above quotation thus:

"The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be grasped and rationally understood as revolutionary practice."

"Revolutionary practice" does not necessarily mean building barricades in the streets, although at the right time it could involve that. Revolutions is a whole process starting from me, from you, from everybody, from now.

Revolution isn't something in the future that just "comes". People have got to "come" the revolution. Revolutions come when "the situation" is ripe. But people make the situation. The situation is made largely by people like you and me, and by our actions over a long period. The situation is also made by economic factors, and by imperceptible social forces (including forces acting through us), but a while revolution only occurs when a lot of people are reasonably aware of what is happening and are trying to help society in a positive direction.

Our theories about society, our changing of society, change and our theories: the unity of all these is what Marx means by revolutionary practice. Then, our theories should also be about how to change reality; repeated failure to change reality in ways we intended should lead us to change our theories about society: only when we gain some purchase on reality does it confirm that our theories about it are on the right track, and provide the means for improving our theories.

Revolutionaries in Education who say when the Revolution comes society will be O.K. and education will be able to flourish are therefore caught in the same theoretical vicious circle as Owen, who said: "When Good Rulers come everything will be O.K." According to such crude materialism, Education is completely determined by Society. Moreover revolutionaries of this kind generally take the consequences to mean we should do nothing in the meantime. This lets them off the hook and allows them to continue repressing their classes in a way no different from teachers with reactionary ideas. Having Marx on your bookshelf does not make you any the less reactionary by itself.

It would be foolish to look only to an economic crisis to bring the Capitalist State toppling to its knees—though an economic crisis is still on the cards. No one part of society causes all. Revolutions happen when the interacting parts of society have been changing for a long time in ways which become incompatible with one or two other parts of society (eg Top-Down Control, Private Ownership).

Education is one such part of society. Struggling to change education is neither the be-all and end-all nor a waste of time. Education is part of the overall social-change process, and thus changing. Although one is not situated at the point of production to apply one's shoulder to the wheel of Revolution is as necessary if one is a Teacher as if one is a Factory Worker.

Up to now I feel that most left-progressives in education could agree with me. I now want to back-track over the last page or two to make several points in a new way which serves to indicate the deep differences between a "left-progressive" or "traditional revolutionary" way of looking at things, on the one hand, and the libertarian emphasis, on the other hand.

(4) Indoctrination

I have spoken of educationists "putting their shoulders to the wheel of revolution". By this I do NOT mean indoctrination of kids in Anarchism, Marxism, or any other idea—though it does involve not indoctrinating them with conventional ideas such as "The Empire was good for India", or "little girls must not get dirty", etc. A critical spirit is worth a hundred "correct" opinions: if we can indoctrinate kids one way, the rest of society will be able to indoctrinate them back again. The distinctive component of libertarian education is its method (free association without Authority), not any message. To make the point as strongly as I can— an anarchist lecturing kids in the normal classroom situation is more dangerous than a Fascist lecturing kids who have been free from birth, and the latter are free to tell him to get stuffed, and to seek more congenial mentors.

(a) Educating for its own sake

In fact "putting one's shoulder to the wheel of Revolution" is a doubly misleading term. All that is meant in the end is "putting one's shoulder to such and such a positive project (here education). The point is made strongly by Paul Goodman in the following answer:

"What do you think of the idea that this kind of do-it-yourself project is, in its own small way, one way of undermining power structures?"

Paul Goodman: Well I think that if you use that as your purpose, it's wicked. We should do everything for its own sake. Like Lawrence said: Make a revolution for fun, that's all. That is to say, I don't want to use the disadvantaged kids on the Lower East Side in order to undermine the system, but to educate them, period. Now if the process of educating them happens to undermine the system, so much the better. But I think any other way is a very spurious way of proceeding. That is, to sacrifice people's time and brains and talent and energies, and children and all that, for your own purposes, or indeed for any damn purpose other than that of actual people, is wicked. However, let me say that it is the case that if you do anything sensible in America today it's revolutionary. Anything! It had to be!"

(2) Instrumentalism

Related to (e) is the whole question of whether teaching is a growing (fulfilling, enjoyable) experience or whether teaching is a job like any other almost, involving sacrifice of so many hours in return for money and "free time".
living at a decent standard, working or not, dustman or scientist. In this situation all interaction would involve a free exchange of one's own energies, instead of being dragged out of one by the promise of a wage. We should be aware of how capitalism instrumentalizes life, and, as libertarians, we should transcend it to some extent from the word go (not just "after the Revolution").

Besides, one of the paradoxes of the revolution is that one finds that actions-for-the-revolution often tend to be less effective than other actions that were never geared to winning "converts" in the first place. In addition to propaganda by word and propaganda by deed, the subtext of the most important of the sort of instrumental action that can be put on the agenda and done by next week. It only won't be subconscious. In addition to the aims of any movement there is the way it is done. In addition to what is said, there is the way it is said. All action has an instrumental component and an expressive component off as it were, unique to the person. It is this expressive component which attracts people and repulses people, independent almost of what is being said.

It follows that in education too, the most fruitful interaction cannot be planned for. It can only come from who we are. Any reformist "corporation" as it were which kids (indeed adults too) are most yearning for.

Living as a revolutionary libertarian is not another technique of political awareness it is no substitute for personal response, in education as in the rest of life. Here is Martin Buber:

"(Education) demands of you a reaction which cannot be prepared beforehand. It demands nothing of what is past. It demands presence, responsibility, it demands YOU."

It is the supreme merit of Herbert Kohl's little book, "The Open Classroom", that, for all its practicality and realism, he never loses sight of the paramount, a simple quality of authenticity: a quality which is nevertheless hard to attain after years of being a teacher or even a few weeks T.P. in the normal T.P. set up where one is being judged not on educational ability but on the willingness to adopt the Teacher's Role.

(g) Union activity and "Collective Action"

Union activity, even syndicalism about and for kids and with the aim of liberating kids- all this is no substitute for "living presence" with kids, and their own T.P. in the collective. More specifically, I think I detect a danger that a business with Rank and File and Union activity may actually function as an evasion from the duty to push as far as one can go in one's own situation.

The rationale here is the phrase "collective action" which is in danger of being swallowed uncritically. For the libertarian, the collective action, the organization which takes that action and any identity one derives from it, are, in all reality, Foremost of the processes of self-education, including growing in relation to one's students and hence helping them to develop.

This means that if a national organisation (Rank and File) doesn't enable one to operate better than before in one's own situation, then it has no function and no existence. In other words, it is not a question of: "I'm a teacher; I'm also involved in a union of some kind at the national level." Rather: "I'm a teacher I join Rank and File-participate in the Libertarian Teachers' Associations/MEBAS etc etc THE BETTER to help my pupils educate themselves." At present I fear that much (good) collective action among the R & F group only takes place on a basis of a shared attitude to work which is one of alienation, sacrifice, instrumentalism, the Teacher Role, etc.

(b) Sacrifice and the Child-Centred Model

But surely there is a contradiction here? How can I approach left-progressives both for sacrificing themselves to kids and for treating kids as means to an end (instrumentalism)? If I have to call it "sacrifice", how does this differ from the "free gift of oneself and one's energies" I have advocated?

I think there only appears to be a contradiction for it is of the nature of the unalienated relationship that one both relates to the other in an unselfish way and receives personal gratification, self-fulfilment, knowledge, etc from the relationship. In an unflawed community the chain of reciprocity is broken- what is good for you
is good for me, and vice versa. This is the deep truth that folk dance celebrates and symbolizes.

For example, the community (or association or neighbour-hood) is in any case going to put a play on, be it for itself. It is also into the bargain of value to the children who can participate, introduce changes, etc. Or, still within the idea of the school, such and such a teacher enjoys putting on plays, both for the sake of the satisfaction he/she gets from his relationships with the co-participants eg. watching Jenny get more confident, etc. But when we get to the teacher who feels he or she OUGHT to put on a play, because it will be "educational" for the kids, because he feels guilty if he doesn't do it, or because there is monetary gain, or career kudos to be had-then the harmony of social-individual in society is flawed, the chain is broken.

This raises the whole question again of the idea of child-centredness, which most progressives are in favour of. I believe that it is a reaction to the subject or teacher-centred approach, but a reaction which will still perpetuate the conditions of alienation. Child-centredness equals the plant analogy which implies the static (locked in) child unable to find other people to relate to (Section 4, Part one). Hence, the teacher must sacrifice himself; yet because the door is locked he is also exploiting the children, and therefore his sacrifice is such that his sacrifice does not return to his again in terms of the normal intrinsic rewards of a mutually-centring, mutually educative relationship. The dance is broken. The teacher must draw the goodness from his own self-to-feed the plant, but never recuperate substance in return. This is not because the pupils ARE plant-like, obviously, but because the basic social premise or definition of the situation is that the Gardener-Professional-Liberal-Teacher knows what is best for his "charges" (telling phrase).

The point is so basic that another example drawn from the Teachers Charter is in order: a Staff Association of child-centred teachers which is responsible for selecting the text-books for every child in the school (albeit in cumbersome con-
become untrue: for as we have seen, good relationships are mutually and intrinsically fulfilling. The three hours are played with children or young people, the number of hours worked becomes an irrelevancy. The one is against the Myth of the Career itself, the issue of "career opportunities" ceases to matter. Where one ceases to educate with schooling, one sees that the opportunities for education are infinite and not dependent on the number of "places" at this or that institution.

In particular we should pose the issue of freedom, for children and teachers alike. Only then can people find their own experiences of wear and tear in a closed box articulated, their own (suppressed) hopes set forth without trimming in the present or postponement until the "revolution". Only then will large numbers of teachers (and parents) realize that all stand to gain at an initiative level. Personal relationships are not fundamentally scarcity relationships (except in a power hierarchy or money system) but abundance relationships, where there is a dialectic, an uncalculating, unselfish, loving and being loved. The politics of liberation aims to unlock directly the wealth of the body politic, so crazily blocked with the result that man developed the insane idea of playing relating to others, people needed to be compensated with the false wealth of money. The politics of liberation aims to free directly the wellspring of Eros so long blocked at source by the garbage of the Monster Scarcity. Why compete for diplomas and scramble for "allowances", when we are so immeasurably rich? Why engage in fruitless "campaigns" against cuts in the Education Budget, when it is because the present system most limits natural human incentives to learning that its demands on the taxpayer are constantly escalating? (Boysy)

"The Cup Contains The Fountain Overflowing"
(Blake)

Socialisation and Education: Just how does schooling serve for a rotten society?
I have criticised the dogmatic Marxist view that the education system is a purely passive factor, and that all the weight lies with the economy, and all the revolutionary weight lies with the industrial proletariat. Most leading people such as the International Socialists within R & F would also want to criticise this position. I believe that they do not dissociate themselves thoroughly enough from the position, so that remnants still remain.

One such remnant lies in the analysis of how schools socialise. R & F members tend to over-emphasize the class-and-pride level of the analysis (in my opinion) and under-emphasize the Bureaucratic Initiation aspect.
To be sure, the public schools train the sons of the Top 5% for the Top 5% jobs.
To be sure the grammar schools train the next 20%.
To be sure also in the content of much school teaching is reactionary (eg. children's readers). Moreover, on the part of the socialism, the children with whom I am disagreeing (somewhat) DO mention the factor of authoritarianism, of training in a bureaucratic manner. However, here we come to the crux of the disagreement: they emphasize this side often in a somewhat mechanistic manner - a matter of attitudes before and after.
A more sociological position would be that the school performs its socialisation function through the very structure of the schooling process itself. This isn't very clear so let me spell it out. It gets a bit complicated but I think there is an important and distinct view to be at least considered.
A bald synopsis of the left-progressive position would run like this: "schools are class biased and factories are owned by capitalists; secondarily school teaches obedience and the factories are bureaucratic."
For me the relations (greatly oversimplified) are increasingly working something like this:
(1) authority is the chief evil of our society;
(2) consciousness is a sub-type of authority - authority to dispose of goods irrespective of one's need;
(3) bureaucratic authority is the chief form authority takes from a sociological point of view;
(4) production for the sake of production is necessary to stabilize authority whose rationale depends on staving off general need-fulfilment (eg. built-in obsolescence);
(5) hence the complementary consumption for the sake of consumption must be introduced and maintained on the basis of a secure rationale;
(6) the bureaucratisation of education leads to children being taught the essential features of bureaucratisation from an early age;
(7) it also results not just in the reproduction of class differences but in the generation of status differences (expert, skilled, unskilled);
(8) meritocratic status differences provide the competitive rationale for consumption for the sake of consumption (both of goods and services and hence
(9) play a crucial part in consolidating the whole social order.
A key feature of Bureaucracy is supposed to be its non-favouritism; this is what meritocratic criteria, according to the Merit and roles, not according to particular class likes or dislikes. In fact, of course, the people in the superior roles are human, not robots, and judge subjectively, for all, on the merits. Moreover, who defines what "merits" are? The "universalistic" criteria of advancement are not objective or God-given.
A particular class or caste has decided on them.
The family socialises for capitalist society in the general sense of specific attitudes, and small character structure, which later on may lead to the children growing up privatised and fearful of being independent. It is this general type of preparation of the individual for capitalist society which left-progressives also see operating in schools. My theory of bureaucratisation explains how children are prepared for the specific features of a bureaucratic society. They are prepared not by getting (or not getting) certain wrong attitudes at one time which will lead them to act accordingly for the rest of their life as citizens, but by actually living in a bureaucratic world-through-time so that they develop an adequate world-view for their already bureaucratised present and future existence.
Take another example: a child is threatened with the stick for talking too much. A static picture of the consequences for that child at that moment
and another static picture of that child in 20 years' time—being a good yes-man in industry—these two pictures provide the obvious connection, but they fail to capture the essence of the situation for the child. For the child, this incident is one more in a whole series of incidents in which his spontaneity has been curtailed at the demand of a supposedly non-favourist teacher, backed by a supposedly non-favourist Headmaster. The incident is seen subjectively through time, as the constant growing in of an increasingly central (and hence unnoticed) World View—namely the curtailment of potential, a phenomenological funnelling in which the future holds options that are ever more restricted as one advances. This is the real meaning of the bureaucratization of Natural Life.

Function (communication, work, love, etc.) from the standpoint of the individual social actor. It is in this context, I think, that the bureaucratization of the particular natural life-function of learning is best seen.

Schooling is a situation where one's options and life-chances are objectively managed and stand out over against one. Participation in this objective and structured life-trajectory inevitably leads to a certain overall world view so long as one is objectively held in place in it. The whole schooling process in its essentials therefore, imparts to its participants a whole world view appropriate to maintaining our society.

This view is different from the idea that only certain aspects of (e.g., authoritarianism) inculcate certain psychological attitudes, merely, which dovetail with the necessary industrial qualities; or that certain class-biases operate to ensure that the capitalist class is "the educated" and can take up key jobs in the economy.

I consider that my view finds support from the Warwick files incident and repercussions. Following the "discovery" that the Warwick administration was (a) very much in league with local Big Business and (b) keeping the "secret files" on "politically-motivated" students, Warwick students, and students throughout the country, sat in, broke into files, etc.

A tiny minority of revolutionaries tried to link this question into a wider framework of Control of Information, which also covered closed committee meetings and struck at the heart of the authority question (e.g., "God speaks from out of a cloud but mortals cannot escape God's all-seeing gaze, not even under the bedclothes eg sociologists can get money to study shop-floor decision-making (for the benefit of management), but not to study decision making at the top). The NUS seemed most concerned about the career prospects of students that TCs ever get to know that Joe Bloggs once said boo! to his superior. The NUS is the institution in which, for all its concern about the class and privilege aspect of education, personifies the Myth of Schooling, which is advanced with a missionary zeal. In this the NUS is simply being a good union. For most students, including most "left revolutionaries", also acted or felt strongly on the issue for all the wrong reasons. In other words they had swallowed completely the Myth of the Career. This Myth is not just an attitude communicated by wicked capitalist stooges such as career officers and vocational counselors, but of the revolutionaries would see them as such). Rather the Myth of the Career is inevitably generated by their hyper-schooling objective situations.

My view is also supported by Ivan Illich: indeed it partly derives from the following quote: The Myth of self-Perpetuating Progress: growth conceived as open-ended consumptive eternal progress can never lead to maturity. Commitment to unlimited quantitative increase vitalizes the poverty of organic development.

Ritual Game and the New World Religion

"School serves as an effective creator and sustainer of social myth because of its structure as a ritual game of graded promotions. Introduction into this gambling ritual is much more important than what or how something is taught. It is the game itself that gets into the blood and becomes a habit. A whole society is initiated into the Myth of Unending Consumption of services. This happens to the degree that token participation in the open-ended ritual is made compulsory and compulsion everywhere. School is also a ritual of ritual rivalry into an international game which obliges competitors to blame the world's ills on those who cannot or will not play.

School is a ritual of initiation which introduces the neophyte to the sacred race of progressive consumption, a ritual of propitiation whose academic priests mediate between the faithful and the gods of privilege and power, a ritual of expulsion which sacrifices its dropouts, branding them as scapegoats of underdevelopment.

How Central is the Education Business? A Matter of Emphasis

The traditional revolutionary also tends to neglect the sheer size of the education industry; education has now passed Defence as the biggest State expenditure and spending will escalate further, for that is the nature of the bureaucratic(schooling logic) attempted cuts will be fought bitterly—precisely because the Myth of Schooling is so generally established in people's minds and because so many economic opportunities do hang from qualifications.

Although I certainly believe that our society should devote more of its resources (not just monetary) to education in its wider sense, I cannot help feeling that when left progressives agitation on the question of schooling
cuts, they are in danger of strengthening, not weakening, the myth of the rat race, education as a commodity, etc, and thus strengthening, not weakening, the status quo.

Here is illich discussing the education industry in the US where it is even more central than it is here: The notion that the School is not only the New World Religion. It is also the world’s growing labour market. The engineering of consumers has become the economy’s principal growth sector. As production costs decreased and the cost of palliatives increased, there is an increasing concentration of both capital and labour in the work of educating or equipping man for disciplined consumption. During the past decade, capital investments directly related to the school system rose. Disarmament would only accelerate the process by which the learning industry moves to the heart of the national economy. School gives unlimited opportunities for legitimate waste, and as its destructiveness goes unrecognized and the costs of palliatives goes up. If we add those engaged in full-time teaching as those in full-time employment, we realize that this so-called superstructure has become society’s major employer. In the US, sixty million people are in school and eight million at work elsewhere. This is often forgotten by neo-Marxist analysts who say that the process of de-schooling must be postponed or bracketed until after the workers are re-educated. But education is understood as more fundamental, are corrected by an economic and political strategy only if school is understood as an industry can revolutionary strategy be planned realistically. (See Rowntree’s ‘The Political Economy of Education; Young As a Class’ K.P.P.) For Marx, the cost of producing demands for commodities was barely significant. Today most human labour is engaged in the production of demands that can be satisfied by industry which makes intensive use of capital. Most of this is done in school.

Alienation, in the traditional scheme, was a direct consequence of work becoming wage-labour which deprived man of the opportunity to create and be re-created. Now young people are pre-alienated by schools that isolate them from the world of work and play. School makes alienation preparatory to life, thus depriving education of reality and work of creativity. School prepares for the alienating institutionalisation of life for producing the need to be taught. Once this lesson is learned, people lose their incentive to grow in independence. They no longer find relatedness attractive, and close themselves off to the surprises which life offers by the method not predetermined by institutional definition. And school directly or indirectly employs a major proportion of the population. School either keeps men and women for life or makes sure that they will be kept by some institution.

The New World Church is the knowledge industry, both purveyor of opium and the workbench during an increasing number of an individual’s life. De-schooling is therefore at the root of any movement for human liberation.

(1) How Central is the Education Process? Completely

In section (c) I wrote: ‘Education is part of society’, and compared the worker in Education to the worker in industry. So doing I was deliberately confusing Institutional Education (Schooling) with education as a natural ongoing function of processes throughout the whole of society. It is this mistake which I believe the N & F group has consistently made (in practice, if not in theory when the matter is explicitly discussed). I quoted Marx in section (c): ‘With materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator must himself be educated’.

In that context, I imagine that some of readers may have made the slide I was unfairly encouraging from education as process to education as institutional commodity: the message would then have concerned colleges of education training good teachers. But wait, haven’t college lecturers themselves to be trained? In this context I would like to broaden the use of the word ‘education’ invite the reader to re-read the above quotation with the now broad meaning in mind.

A possible criticism of my proposals might be: but where is your constituency if you don’t look primarily to teachers? As we shall see, I consider that youth are the constituency who will rebel most against schooling (and have already in the States where most City High Schools have policemen in the corridors)—that is, when the High Schools are not under total occupation by the students.

Moreover, in a very real sense everyone is a constituent for a libertarian analysis of education. For the State/society distinction should not be understood simplistically as meaning that the State (bool) sits on the all-virtuous society, which without this "unnatural" constraint would develop to a marvellous degree of mutual aid and tolerance. The faults of the whole are mirrored in traces throughout the grain of the parts. The Toad Authority like the Toad Works also in US. Hence our revolutionary practice or our project of independent self-education does not simply involve us in staying the same, only becoming (through practice) more cunning, more absolute etc against them. The ways in which we change will be fundamental so that in the future we will be different than the present. Our self-education process does not refer solely to aspects of strategic theory and the psychological necessities of effectiveness. Everything is at stake if we remain open to the world. And if we remain open to the world, everything can be won.

Madmen in the Middle Ages used to be excluded from citiees. The trouble was that they just went off and 'plagued' somebody else's city and their 'madness' came and plagued you! So society began to expel people to single places, locking them in to Asylums, but still, at least, locking them OUT of society. Similarly with compulsory education: the dominance of the schooling process does not simply mean that schooling equals education; it also, perhaps more importantly, to which we are not supposed to carry its own lessons, that everyday life is non-educational to the adult. In that context, the destruction of Schooling does not only mean that every adult is a Teacher of the Young—the on the whole it would otherwise be in schools), it also means that everyone (who would otherwise be "out of it") is a Learner.
In many other situations an indirect approach (which is nevertheless worthwhile) does not seem to work. Notably to encourage the parents to keep educating themselves. Later on the children can gravitate naturally into the skill-matching, T.V. and book discussion, soccer, film club, tenants’ associations, etc. And from there the basis is laid for the demand that such extra-institutional options be available in “school time” but outside the schools.

In their Charter, R & F propose that teachers should receive time and money for regular refresher courses with full pay. Hence, as teachers they recognise the need to keep educating themselves. Unfortunately seen as a demand for re-schooling, (with pre-fabricated curricula, diplomas, and the chance of promotion) the demand confuses education and schooling. It directs attention away from the educative or non-educative effects of the teaching-learning relationship, or of schooling as such and such a length of service. But let us make the demand as a call for time for self-education (albeit possibly in a Centre with others).

Now let us make the somewhat unfair charge that the Charter does not appear to understand this demand to parents. In their tripartite structure for governing the school, the parents participate as educational controllers or overseers (as would appear — maybe the appearance is not intended as in the paragraph above). Parents do not appear as people who are educating themselves, first and foremost, and secondly, taking an active interest in the education of their children as part of this overall open concern.

Bank & File might well reply: “Yes, well what you are suggesting is the ideal of course, we’ve all agreed about that, but our demands were put forward with short-term and middle-term possibilities in mind. At least they would be a step in the right direction.”

In this case, we may criticise on a different tack, and say — “In that case if the Charter is meant to operate in the near future, are you sure that it’s cooperation you want between Parents’ Associations and the Teachers’ Staff Association. The Charter seems to suggest that this is a straightforward approach — cooperation. But teachers are able to turn parental ‘loyalties against then (the kids). The number of jokes about REPORTS CLEARLY DUE LATE or the number of times that a child’s father demands that P.T.A. be made responsible. The number of complaints about TARDINESS and TENSION that exists at the school/home interface for many, many children.

We are not far off Pedagogic 1964; huge and cumulative school directories on kids’ history, “home background” and so on, which parents and child cannot see, but which both have unwittingly contributed to “Hands up all of you whose Daddy is out late on Friday nights, whose Mummy goes to Bingo, what does black mean” etc. OR “In Mrs Smith, so good of you to take such an interest in your child — after all that’s what it’s all about. What can I do, I can’t help’”

How do you think they could be so kind as to fill in this form: simple little questions, just things like does Johnny ever show signs of antagonism towards school, if so, towards which teachers, does Johnny ever have nightmares and dreams, if so, what about, does Johnny ever copy his homework, etc. Who else, who from, to suggest parents should take to stop children experimenting with their own and each other’s bodies, etc. etc.

P.T.A.’s are active in many districts, and nearly everywhere in the world of education thinks this a good idea. Obviously, it is a healthy sign if parents are taking a considerable interest in their children’s education. Unfortunately there are areas which demand more attention and elsewhere, the extent to which the parents’ role is acknowledged is uncertain.

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in so far as they give way to parents’ desires to be influential in the upbringing of their own kids, but then immediately go on the offensive again from a libertarian analyst; in other words “Teachers’ Rights” aren’t worth fighting for as against “Parents’ Rights”, so libertarians should melt and no latter demand the better to ensure that Parents’ Rights are not as against the right of the child to determine his or her own educational development.

The role of libertarian teachers in relation to parents’ associations is thus highly and very difficult. Different situations require different forms of praxis. Where reactionary and orthodoxly-brainwashed militancy is being acted, the role of the libertarian is simple: he should prepare to support the parents’ associations, even to the point of parental occupation against his own establishable in many years if it is seen one? Not many. In other situations where P.T.A.’s are wholly given over to fundraising, his role may rise who is going to control the premises/equipment bought with the direct help of the whole community (and also indirectly through taxes, of course.)

ADULT EDUCATION.

I believe that many people have a vague sense of having been swindled by the schooling system. “I’ve had years of being told, I should be doing more, tending,” or some such. The question then further and they’ll admit that this is the system discriminated against them is a pretty well.” How they want to “to the children.” This usually means pushing them up the ladder with all the thrust of their own (repressed) ambition. This vicious circle of “inability” in damaging both to their kids and to themselves: the problem is that it is a central aspect of their overall life-adjustment: threaten it at any expense, and you rage. Nevertheless anger is a sign that you’re on the right track, in many cases. (In many others it’s a sign that you’re supercilious, trying to be good-for-nothing, i.e. the anger is valid counter-praxis.)

The entire sphere of “adult education” is awash with contradictions and we shall see. Nevertheless, in conversing with the sort of person who says “I’ve had my chance,” I personally might like to contribute some of my thoughts to the well (two-sidedly developing) conversation:

(1) Yes you have been swindled, but we are all responsible for what we have made of. (2) Yes, you haven’t been educated much in some directions, but lots of so-called “highly educated people” don’t tend to agree and are much less adaptable than less “well-educated” people; the professor and the dustman are alike picking up information about their environment the whole time.

(3) Yes, you will certainly be barred from the Top Jobs without qualifications, but the Top Jobs are mostly concerned with Bovring someone else around; certificates don’t mean you’re more educated, in any case.

(4) Your children will be discriminated against just as you were probably. Don’t rely on them to develop for you - you’ll only drive them up the wall.

(5) Schools and Colleges and Universities and other institutions have their drawbacks - for instance having to study somebody else’s curriculum and productivity the essay like a battery here. The main advantage of being there is the opportunities for informal discussions (self-development, etc.)

(6) Meetings on educating ourselves, although there are some general difficulties (e.g. physical exhaustion at night, exclusive control of “educational institutions”, etc.)

(7) If we want to find out something about our education, we should never take no for an answer because the situation isn’t at present recognized as carrying its educational significance, that isn’t to say that we can’t get it redefined.

(8) If we want a job, we shouldn’t take no for an answer if the refusal is on the grounds of lack of schooling, qualifications, etc. If we really want to do it, we’d soon be able to pick it up. So we should make a stand. Take direct action. Break down the class barrier, the intellect. I.Q. is a load of crap to keep us in our place.

All this is rather vague about the actual education of adult self- group educative projects. The reader will see why in a moment.

Right now there is a widespread expansion of adult education. On the whole this expansion is probably making matters worse, since it caters unenthusiastically for a false orientation of “people” for even more “educating up.” (Keeping up with the latest cultural commodity, what the Experts define as being the in-subject this year). Adult education courses, I.E., W.E., classes etc., may all be useful and meaningful, enriching one’s everyday life and/or equipping one to fight to change it. But such courses may also be peddling commodity Culture, the Art instead of Life that is dead and turns you into a consumer, anyone who just signs on for evening classes and then has to “pick” a course from the menu to do is probably a culture snob, wanting to make himself a cut above the next man.

There is much to be said for Leary’s proposal to the University: Politicians of Easctacy p.202 relevant bit about the Library, ending up “you can still get very dangerous books without a prescription”.

The expansion of adult education is therefore profoundly ambiguous; it may be a case of “the man addiction to being taught, seeks security in compulsive teaching” (Illich); it may be substitute life colonising real life; it may be middle class values are invading working class communities; it may be that if we all become adult-education fens we would be too busy studying “Sociology” to actually want to change society.

One or two institutions have experimented with study-for-action courses, but they tend to channel the “action” into Labourite channels and hence the study is correspondingly trivialised. Of its nature (revolutionary practice) the transcending of philistinism on the one hand, and commodity culture or theory-fetishism on the other, is something that is hard to achieve. Of their nature, career-conscious college lecturers or P.E. tutors are unlikely to “provide” it, even the new socially conscious breed - indeed especially them, for they are blind to their own irrelevancy.

An example of their heavy-handed style of "involvement", in a series of courses run by Keele University’s Education Institute in Silverdale, a nearby mining village on the outskirts of the Potteries. It was billed as open to everyone, and no efforts were spared to ensure a good attendance.

“They’ll be above my head!”

Before you say that about these meetings and discussions, try one. You’ll lose nothing, and you’ll almost certainly be surprised.

The team of people who are coming from Keele to Silverdale are experts, but they know how to talk with people who are not—especially people who spend most of their lives at work, whether it be at the mine, in the potbank, in a shop or at the kitchen sink.

An interview with the Director of Adult Education revealed that, while culture was plentiful on the bill in Keele, down in Silverdale village there was a dearth, and it was the aim of those courses to even things up a bit. After the first introductory meeting the local paper had a photograph of a long table with a carafe of water on it and four distinguished speakers, the Rt Hon Lord Devizes of Leek, His Worship the Mayor of Newcastle, and two Keele Professors.

Still, we wasn’t sarp: for as “experts they know how to talk with people who are not.”
Double oak academic has done a paper proving that 4 Big Wigs and a Long Table was the class size of working class children's communication, before the bourgeoisified workers fell prey to all these adverts for pubs and clubs.

Students "going to" workers are often met with the irritable cry "get back to your books!" Yet in a different context (say in a pub) the same word is quite capable of discounting some theory (e.g. workers' self-management) on the grounds that "you've only had it right". It is irrelevant, incredible and utterly impossible to the experience of everyday, naive or simply a status-symbol commodity offered for consumption from a hot line or a sexual promise/Power "Expert".

Any movement for a realisation of Education is going to have to explore these ambiguities and the ambivalences. There is so much good sense as "opening" in choosing to watch "The Box" if the alternative is a High Culture game to see or Fabian study groups. Telly - we take it for granted. With or without a pile of supercilious "imaginative" snobbery. Yet who can deny the fantastic influence of the media? By the time children leave school they have probably spent more time watching television than they do in school. What social programmes are there to combat this? What are the effects of these programmes? What are the cultural levels of the masses in respect to the cultural standards of TV programmes?

What crass manipulative rubbish! So "we" know that factory workers should get more Jane Eyre and Ancient Temples of Egypt stuffed down their throats. Television, for all its faults, is the major educative medium for millions of people, who watch many more hours a week than they do in school. How does one combat this? What are the effects of these programmes in the real world? Compare this with other forms of communication, which however reproducible (or not) would be contently assimilated into "programme on the telly" (as opposed to "this is not me."

Current affairs programmes are obviously based on a feasible capitalist consensus (except for World in Action). Yet whatever construction the purists put on the film footage, telly means that the ordinary viewer can no longer believe that America is bombing Vietnam to hell. They might still agree with America, but compare this with the Russian media's gross over-representation. The Russian chaps in the street could only know of it through a little paragraph in L' Onde, under "other news". The Russian media never uses the word "imperialism" existed. Now, it cannot.

In other words, TV has its immensely positive aspects, as well as its negative aspects. The former derive from the technological possibilities for communication. The latter from the social relationships according to which the communications industry is controlled. Indeed, TV and radio do not properly speak from a communications industry at all. (Communication implies two-way. The most we have is a mass distribution system.)

Now, the exciting thing is that this does not reside in the technological facts themselves: for instance, every time we consider what a transmitter - radio - transmitter. Of course, if this happened all of a sudden, the air would be full of interference in the short wave. But the air is, in fact, the State gives to justify its monopoly of the air-waves. But such reasoning is invalidated by the increasing frequency-specialisation. What would be lots of radio stations?... So when Radio Caroline goes on the air, it is hounded off - the Government owns the air! Your radio, oh plebeian, is for ringing up the Police and the Police Service. In the other hand, get two way translators.

The same authoritarianism is revealed by the use of media technologies: radio-specialities, stereophony, tape-recorders, video-tapes, transmitters, computers, data-banks, teleprinter complexes xerox copying, lithography etc etc.

Television at present is one way, controlled, and State controlled. The new socialist culture could only come from the release of the fantastic potentials of TV: radical decentralisation, two-way into two-way communication, multi-channels etc etc. Given these conditions a mass self learning process would be unleashed that would make nearly all the "adult education" courses in this country totally irrelevant. Yet freedom of expression exists only for the most short-rage or minority-interest forms of communication (e.g. speech, theatre, poetry etc). The communicative power of the communications is controlled (and altered) by the Bureaucracy, with its tame English Robert Blyden and Richard Luck-Smith. (Many of these ideas on the media drawn from a marvellous article called "The Consciousness Industry" in New Left Review, 45. by Hans Magnus Enzensberger.)

WHAT KIND OF GROUP?
A CRITIQUE OF "TEACHERS RIGHTS".

Now, of course, as workers called Teachers there is no reason why F & F should want to concern themselves with adult self-education. As a group profiting to be concerned with "the general educational field", there is every reason. The demand for the recognition.

The way in which anything to teachers, does one see the case as being important? Our major concern in the short-term as teachers? Or kind of qualitative educational demands which threaten to destroy the connection between work and play, and do return a modest thoughtfulness and creativy to the everyday tasks from which it has been stolen by the institutionalised Monopoly of School?

Even if you choose (legitimately) to restrict one's concerns to the welfare of teachers, what does this mean? Can one set unreservedly apart one's concerns without ending a restricted view also of what constitutes the welfare of the teacher? Does one only measure the presence or absence of such aspects as work range and hours worked? Or does one count such presence or absence by other endless too - such as the turn over, mental illness rates, the quality of courses etc?

To one who is a teacher or a student, or a parent who is in touch with his child, it got everything to do with the exhausting everyday wear and tear of teaching which comes from being locked up in a classroom with kids who wouldn't necessarily choose to be there?

It follows that a major factor in improving teachers' welfare would be to abolish compulsory education. Item One on a Teachers' Charter: "No teacher shall have to teach children who are not interested". Even for teachers to be intelligently self-regarding, they are forced back to the issue of freedom, the qualitative politics of experience.

For example: a friend told me of how he had spoken with another left-wing teacher in the school where he worked about the run of the fantastic, which he felt should be under the control of the pupils. His colleague had disagreed vehemently and accused my friend of being anti-Union. Didn't he realize that there was a negotiated allowance for teachers in charge of junior classes? My friend was indeed anti-Union so long as the union was asserting Teachers' Rights over against the Rights of Children. An extreme example of this static quantitative politics might be the "right of Teacher to maintain "order" in "4th" class by Corporal Punishment. Instead my friend was looking to a vision of a satisfying communal life, where teachers true rights (the right to enjoy "work") could be established at the expense of children's rights. (Incidentally, both teachers describe themselves, as anarchists.)
In the University context, Tom Wollman has made the point that the demand by staff for "academic freedom" is synonymous with the corporate irresponsibility of academic staff, unless it is shared by the student. In other words the value of the notion of "teachers' rights" depends on whom those rights are being asserted over against. Nobody, I believe, is saying that teachers should be badly paid. I am however saying that senior teachers should be. Differential of any sort would be attacked, I believe. This is not to say that other industry should get the average wage (adjusted for size of family). But this is another story.

Nevertheless, unless R & F also confronts the qualitative issue of freedom to learn, there is a danger of their qualitative demands serving as a mere supplement to the basic anti-Democracy theme of their teacher's union. A teacher could be very militant in R & F on this sort of an (implicit) basis: "For such a "lousy" job as teaching one deserves a bit extra," Demand money in the Blackboard Jungle!

Let us by all means try to ensure that there is a well run, economically, but let us not put the case before the horses. Our everyday social exchanges must be perceiving or else a million pounds can compensate us for the loss of our minds.

So long as we and our pupils are enslaved to the logic of compulsory schooling, with us east as junior wanderers, will always need more pay. There is no ducking the issue of freedom to learn.

The logic of compulsory schooling can also capture R & F in the following way. Because opportunities for self-education have been so diminished and institutionalized in the wider society, simply the basic logic of compulsory schooling itself would not help matters much. Many teachers recognize this latter proposition, that there are no alternative, are prepared to accept the logic of compulsion in education.

At the height of their logic, R & F, having the control of the S.U.T., still retaining an anti-corporalitarian platform. In exchange for inferior pay, it might get fast to deal with a communist teachers, career Headmasters and other authoritarians.

An ever more realistic way would be to advocate NO COMPELARY SCHOOLING, together with measures to improve the educative impact of opportunities in the wider society. If R & F could propose specific alternatives to the school way of educating, and actually point to a few pilot experiments and relevant social trends, then the lack of persuading teachers to drop compulsory schooling would be greatly helped and its whole anti-Democratic programme would become realistic among teachers.

Thus the wages and conditions aspect interlink decisively with the question of no-compulsory schooling and the promotion of an educative environment.

Unless it puts the qualitative educational aspect of freedom to learn in an educative society at the very centre of its programme, R & F is condemned to be little more than a hotbed of anarcho-capitalist and authoritarianism.

SOMETIMES REALISM DEMANDS L'IMPOSSIBLE!

After making these, possibly overcritical remarks, one can conclude

Only that is the programme of R & F are being agitating for - Security of Tenure, Freedom from the arbitrary Authority of Headmasters. Any elbow room we can get by collective or individual means, is all to the good.

Herbert Kohl's "The Open Classroom" suggests more of opting out with the minimum of intervention from On High.

However he writes of American schools which are larger and less personal. In this country the Headmaster is generally felt to he one of the least unimportant type of the liberal type who "takes an active interest" who "tries to make you get it" etc.

One other way of expanding elbow room is to build a "School for Away From School itself for a reasonable proportion of one's time. Naturally there is a danger of "bad behaviour" being reported to the Head or "Amusing Subversion Attempt" to the readers of the News of the World, but in many situations away from school, it ought to be a friendly, informative, interested, interesting adult, rather than Teacher.

In general, libertarians should look to systematically blur the boundaries between the public and the private. Immediately the phrase "Education for Life" springs to mind. But this is a fusion of the two on the terms of Schooling; it can be bad only if we are bound by the idea that we need to be taught how to exist in it. (In America many schools even teach "social adjustment" to "needy people", including how to shake hands with Pepsi Business Associates!)

"Education for Life" is a bad joke. Education for Life in what libertarian education/living is all about. This may be helpful by much ideas as an educative environment, subjects requiring independent and/or group research; matching kids (kids matching themselves) with needy people or specially interesting people in the community; visits and work-exposure experiences; participation in voluntary organisations; foreign exchange; stays at various kinds of independent Centre; setting up various relationships with workers or professionals (e.g. a film crew).

Starting from a non-school context, there are many ways in which libertarians could make a difference, but they could all be grouped together under the head of "EXPLORATORY OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCIDENTAL EDUCATION."

SECURITY OF TENURE AND LIBERTARIAN PRAXIS.

There is a great danger that the cry of "community education" will be taken up in a way which is no better, whatsoever. Some years ago in psychiatry there was a great to-do about "community care" as opposed to institutional care in the mental hospitals. However there was no conscious effort to identify and combat those anti-therapeutic forces and powers which had driven people to need special care in the first place; the result was that a crucial insight (there is no mental illness without collectively therapeutic people or relationships) was simply served to legitimate skimming on mental health expenditures, without leading to a deeper penetration.

Thus when Goodman insists that "Inorganic education, taking part in the on-going activity of society, should be the chief means of learning" it is necessary to prevent this crucial realisation from becoming linked with cuts or education spending and providing a convenient rationale for those who believe that "one third of the nation's children are ineducable" (as the present Minister of Education does).

On the other hand there is a danger that community education will be incorporated by the power structure, e.g. through creating higher profits for an employer and "improved attitudes to authority" among the young. This latter danger is in my view real, but full of promise for any revolt of youth in such circumstances would be grounded in personal involvement in everyday reality, instead of operating itself in "revolutionary" wanderings on isolated campuses.

Goodman himself is well aware that "too much activity of society either corrupt or exploit the young" (but an does the schooling process) and therefore suggests that "the chief education of society should be freedom from authoritarian education, if necessary inventing new useful activities offering new social and personal opportunities."

("The Present Requests In Education", Anarchy 107). And we may add if necessary fighting against those anti-educational components such as "police" and "Department of Youth and Education" and the mass of capitalist enterprises such as "Youth Movement", "Youth in Action", "Little Boxes", "Youth in Action", "Little Boxes", etc.

To take only one area: exploitative and restrictive opportunities for work, as we have noted over four years what could easily be learnt in a few months by the average apprentice. For the teachers to worry over the time of their charges until they are fifteen and then without protest to watch them enter a four year course of stupifying and senseless Super Exploitation, is sheer hypocrisy. Teachers should be concerned to follow through with their pupils and to the point up to the public the educative (not-educative) opportunities of their later environments. At the national level, reaffiliation to the TUC should prove to lead to an all out challenge within the TUC against such opportunisties are treated. Members of the NUT should offer to make themselves
available to other unions in helping to redesign these courses with the full participation of the unions and the apprentices themselves.

Which brings us to the last area in which groups of conscious educationists (as opposed to simple school teachers) can start to operate links with the developing youth movement.

THE SINS OF REVOLT AGAINST SCHOOLING.

So far, we have failed seriously to do justice to the role of the pupil in their own liberation: "the emancipation of the proletariat must be the task of the proletariat itself" (Karl). As the proletariat of the school system, it seems clear to me that the need for positive rights and collective action must increasingly lead the way in destroying educational authoritarianism, and in de-institutionalizing the defining power of such an organ.

Illch speaks of schools becoming a sort of training ground for techniques of revolt against the Welfare State. This is almost the basis to me for the popular school of authority as developed by the Papacy may well be an appropriate weapon, especially if the school can be leading to the "the playful seeking of Authority as developed by the Papacy may well be an appropriate weapon, especially if the school can be leading to the..."

Raging teachers is, of course, an ancient school sport. Looked at from the standpoint of undergraduate education, it tends to be purely reactive and often does not discriminate; although in any particular situation it may induce a student to drop such and such a detested practice, raging can also lead to relatively human teachers becoming vicious bastards. However, discriminating raging in connection with the general growth of the pupils and the whole development of the school, it would seem to me a considerable advance.

The main thing is to recognize that a genuinely popular ides of revolt already exists and that this ideology, with all its faults, will and must be one element in an overall synthesis. (The other elements being the SAM-type approach to constructive self-education, e.g. in independent discussion groups). If the playful art of working-class primary school children can ever connect with the best ideas of sixth-formers - work that I have always admired - then the real hope is that the pupils, if they are themselves willing, will be able to influence the whole development of the school, and will play a more active part in it.

Perhaps there is such a thing as "responsible" extremism?"

It seems clear that libertarians are on the same side as ordinary people, and there is no reason why we should be afraid of being associated with them. But when a group of children revolt as if they were being in some sense murdered, then a thousand and one people are being harassed and all the old cliches about "senseless vandalism" are trotted out.

The vandalism is NOT senseless; nor of course, is it constructive or creative. It may be a bad tactic to use: this is why we should be worried. Whether we have the right to conduct an overall campaign in the school, vandalism makes a lot of sense.

Either way the job of libertarians is to relate to this anger and this willingness to fight back so that young people select outlets which they increasingly see will lead to real increases in their everyday freedom.

One way might be to write very simple explanations of the process of schooling and to distribute these to groups of children and youth, and in the meantime, by defining & grow, here an inarticulate understanding of what is being done to them - far from it. The aim would be to suggest the possibilities of revolt becoming revolution, of private hitting out becoming public and purposeful hitting-back. To see their own passions and their anger articulated in print (as the Janet and John/"Them" medium, remember) is the first step towards the formation of a political consciousness of their being a group for itself, and also free.

from isolated and sporadic revolutions in Spain. (Of course, it is even better if the deposed students that circulate clandestinely - as in Russia - are written by them, and pupils themselves, and not our own.)

However, the whole plan is hopelessly

delicate, and the low priority of anti-crushing rebellion for "corrupting minors" (e.g. the protection of the B.K. school kids issue, written by the school kids). Therefore any new generation would have to be some with the greatest care (e.g. use of non-burnable paper, duplicators and typewriters).

One of the key demands in any school must be the right of the kids to organise independently. The development of the Schools Action Unions is of the utmost importance here. Apart from leading, one hopes, to elementary rights being recognized, respect, dignity and decency, the school action unions should begin to challenge major educational practices, such as that of being efficient enough of themselves, (and only then) the kids should accept genuinely libertarian teachers as teachers, and if not, they should be free to be delegated by the group. No other basis for authority is satisfactory since willingness to ally themselves with their pupils is a basic touchstone for separating left-libertarians from left-authoritarians and liberals. Although the decision to admit the kids belongs to the pupils, students, libertarian "adults" could prove helpful in broadening the struggle. (Broadening the struggle is not here meant, as it often is, as a code word for manipulation by a revolutionary faction.)

In return for contracting certain duties toward the group, the libertarian "adult" would also enjoy certain benefits from his association with the kids. On the whole, the Security of Tenure for teachers might come to depend increasingly on the support of teachers; they could get from students and staff if they were asked. (Witness the statements of the authorities following student demonstrations at Holland Park Comprehensive School, Rutland Drayton Grove School, the L.S.E., and Romsey.)

Security of tenure would tend to take on a new dimension if the positive discrimination (solidarity) of pupils becomes as powerful as their negative discrimination (ragging, etc.)

In a similar way it is native for libertarians to expect to force reforms through the N.U.T. (let alone the Government), by sheer good arguing. Only when pressures exist from the outside and the few teachers for an exam boycott, would any impact be made to counter the tremendous pressures for examination standardization in teaching, the industry, and very definitely within teaching itself. The same holds good for compulsory attendance.
Creative vandalism

This old transformer chamber, belonging to the London Electricity Board, was a dirty green colour with the paint flaking off. Four boys, without asking anyone's permission, repaired it with black and white. The police arrived in large numbers and took names and addresses, but returned an hour later to say that the LEB had permitted painting to continue. ‘By the end of the day the structure resembled a Vegas middle-eastern mosque, its pinnacle of gold reflecting the setting sun.’

If the apprentices end up smashing exploitative dance-halls, or if a few managers or union officials get the boot put in, then this violence is not symptomatic we are entitled to marvel at: it is the violence of their whole socialisation process coming home to roost.

Like vandalism, all this is not very pretty, but violence of a sort (personal, uncoordinated, non-organised and short-term) is probably necessary for any people if they are ever to pass through to the constructive aspects of revolution. I wish I could think otherwise. (Also note that I do not see the revolution as two mechanically successive stages, construction following on from destruction.)

The youth movement in this country is still very fragmented. Perhaps it will never get going seriously until the lead up to an overall revolution by mass-movement. Either way, as it gets underway, we can expect that many of its demands will fall exactly into the category of encouraging incidental education. E.g.: (1) abolition of compulsory school; (2) a minimum youth wage; (3) youth centres under full youth control; (4) end to police harassment; (5) legalisation of non-addictive drugs; (6) free availability of contraception; (7) residential hostels for young people to live away from home for short or long periods; (8) equality with university students in standards of accommodation etc.; (9) more numerous facilities for outdoor sports, including adventure facilities in the mountains, and outdoor sports in general. (At present the main opportunity for working class kids to experience "adventure" is to join the Army.) (10) end to discrimination in cafés, dance halls etc. against young people; (11) youth radio stations, run by young people, etc. etc.

Libertarian teachers should be willing to help run summer free schools or anti-courses or skill and interest-taking schemes in conjunction with schools action units, or courses designed to be of use and of interest to working class kids. In addition to supporting the demands of youth (i.e. from Authority), they should encourage young people to dispense with authority, where possible, through constructive self-help, e.g. voluntary mutual aid with the drugs scene, co-operative libraries for records and pamphlets, co-operative discotheques, more free concerts etc.; these may well be vehicles for real education.

At present, adults attempt to contain youth through officially approved outlets such as boys clubs and Shelter weeks and Orfan walks, and school citizenship councils. Although in some schools such activities are better than nothing, in many schools libertarian teachers should avoid being associated with anything smacking of ‘the idealism of the youth today, blah blah’. After ten years of having thier civil liberties confiscated in school, most fifteen year olds are ready to assert themselves. A bit. After years of giving in and paying attention, a bit of old fashioned ‘selfish’ tactics in the precondition for the re-emergence, spontaneously, of a real, not manipulated idealism.

The youth movement is important in another way: aspects of its culture are a good as anything the School Music Dept has to offer, or the official school poetry text-books. Although much of youth culture is commercialised or trivial, there is much that - dare one say it - over E. S. Peters could profitably groove to. Here is an obvious basis for sharing, dialogue, two-way education, or else for campaigns to have one's culture recognised as valid in school itself. However, as with all worthwhile demands this could lead to a dangerous incorporation - A Level Music - the work of the Grateful Dead in their early and later phases. Compare and contrast!

I am young, my brother is black, we are angry.

God made the bees
The bees make honey
We eat the work
The teacher gets the money.

Thanks to teachers and exams, competitiveness starts at nine.
they free themselves from obligatory school.

We are all involved in schooling, from both the side of production and that of consumption. We are supposedly convinced that good learning can and should be produced in us—and that we can produce it in others. Our attempt to withdraw from the concept of the school will reveal the resistance we find in ourselves when we try to recognize limitless consumption and the pervasive presumption that others can be manipulated for their own good. No one is fully exempt from exploitation of others in the schooling process.

School is both the largest and the most anonymous employer of all. Indeed, the school is the best example of a new kind of enterprise, succeeding the guild, the factory and the corporation. The multi-national corporations which have dominated the economy are now being complemented, and may one day be replaced, by supranationally planned service agencies. These enterprises present their services in ways that make all men feel obliged to consume them. They are internationally standardized, redefining the value of their services periodically and everywhere at approximately the same rhythm.

"Transportation" relying on new cars and superhighways serves the same institutionally packaged need for comfort, prestige, speed and gadgetry, whether its components are produced by the state or not. The apparatus of "medical care" defines a peculiar kind of health, whether the service is paid for by the state or by the individual. Graded promotion in order to obtain diplomas fits the student for a place on the same international pyramid of qualified manpower, no matter who directs the school.

In all these cases, employment is a hidden benefit: the driver of a private automobile, the patient who submits to hospitalization, or the pupil in the schoolroom must now be seen as part of a new class of "employees". A libertarian movement which starts in school, and yet is grounded in the awareness of teachers and students as simultaneously exploiters and exploited, could foreshadow the revolutionary strategies of the future. For a radical programme of de-schooling could train youth in the new style of revolution needed to challenge a social system featuring "obligatory health", "wealth" and "security".

The risks of a revolt against school are unforeseeable, but they are not as horrible as those of a revolution starting in any other major institution. School is not yet organized for self-protection as effectively as a nation state, or even a large corporation. Liberation from the grip of schools could be bloodless. The weapons of the truant officer and his allies in the courts and employment agencies might take very cruel measures against the individual offender, especially if he or she were very poor, but they might turn out to be powerless against the surge of a mass movement.

School has become a social problem; it is being attacked on all sides, and citizens and their governments sponsor unconventional experiments all over the world. They resort to unusual statistical devices in order to test faith and save face. The mood among some educators is much like the mood among Catholic bishops after the Vatican Council. The curricula of so-called "free schools" resemble the liturgies of folk and rock masses. The demands of high-school students to have a say in choosing their teachers are as ardent as those of parishioners demanding to select their pastors. But the stakes for society are much higher if a significant minority loses its faith in schooling. This would not
only endanger the survival of the economic order built on the production of goods and demands, but equally the political order built on the nation-state into which students are delivered by the school.

Our options are clear enough. Either we continue to believe that institutionalized learning is a product which justifies unlimited investment or we rediscover that legislation and planning and investment, if they have any place in formal education, should be used mostly to tear down the barriers that now impede opportunities for learning which can only be a personal activity.

If we opt for more and better instruction, society will be increasingly dominated by sinister schools and totalitarian teachers. Doctors, generals and policemen will continue to serve as secular arms of the educator. There will be winners in this deadly game, but only exhausted frontrunners, a straining middle sector, and the mass of stragglers who must be bomed out of their fields into the rat race of urban life. Pedagogical therapists will drug their pupils more in order to teach them better, and students will drug themselves more to gain relief from the pressures of teachers and the race for certificates. Pedagogical warfare in the style of Vietnam will be increasingly justified as the only way of teaching people the value of unending progress.

Repression will be seen as a necessary effort to hasten the coming of the mechanical Messiah. More and more countries will resort to the pedagogical torture already implemented in Brazil and Greece. This pedagogical torture is not used to extract information or to satisfy the psychic needs of Hitlerian sadists. It relies on random terror to break the integrity of an entire population and make it plastic material for the teachings invented by technocrats. The totally destructive and constantly progressive nature of obligatory instruction will fulfill its ultimate logic: it will liberate ourselves right now from our pedagogical hubris, our belief that man can do whatever he wants because for his own salvation.

Many people are just awakening to the inexorable destruction which present production trends imply for the environment, but individuals have only very limited power to change these trends. The manipulation of men and women begun in school has also reached a point of no return, and most people are still unaware of it. They still encourage school reform, as Henry Ford III proposes less poisonious automobiles.

Daniel BELL says that our epoch is characterized by an extreme disjunction between cultural and social structures, the one devoted to apocalyptic attitudes, the other to technocratic decision making. This is certainly true for many educational reformers, who feel compelled to condemn almost everything which characterizes modern schools and at the same time propose new schools.

In his book "The Structure of Scientific Revolution", Thomas Kuhn argues that such dissonance inevitably precedes the emergence of a new cognitive paradigm. The facts reported by those who observed free fall by those who returned from the other side of the earth, and by those who used the new telescope did not fit into the Copernican world view. Quite suddenly, the Copernican paradigm was accepted. The dissonance which characterizes many of the young today is not so much cognitive but a matter of attitudes - a feeling about what a tolerable society cannot be like. What is surprising about this dissonance is the ability of a very large number of people to tolerate it.

The capacity to pursue incongruous goals requires an explanation. According to Max Gluckman, all societies have procedures to hide dissonances from their members. He suggests that this is the purpose of ritual. Rituals can be used by their participants even discrepancies and conflicts between social principle and social organization. As long as an individual is not explicitly conscious of the ritual character of the process through which he was initiated to the forces which shape his cosmos, he cannot break the spell and shape a new cosmos. As long as we are not aware of the ritual through which school shapes the progressive consumer - the economy's major resource - we cannot break the spell of this economy and shape a new one.

Riot, revolution and unrest are taking over from the three R's in Britain's schools as mini-agitators in blazers and gymshirts spell out what they think are their rights.

TIT-BITS 3 April 1970

REPEAT after me . . . A is for Anarchy, B is for Bebop, C is for Class. In a few years' time, this could be the new kind of teaching alphabet in schools. A dangerous new trend is developing in Bebop's classrooms and riot, revolution and unrest are taking over from the three R's. Mini-agitators in blazers and gymshirts are spewing their elders in all the old-familiar techniques of "civil disobedience."

From the First Form upwards, we are beginning to breed a new race of pint-sized troublemakers who resent any kind of discipline or social order. Every day, our children are exposed to the ideologies and catch-phrases of destruction. From demos in the streets. From radio and TV, Even from resentful parents or misguided "progressive" teachers.

It is not surprising that the weapons our schoolchildren have picked up are now being turned on everything from individual teachers to the educational system.

No discipline

One London headmaster told me: "The whole idea of school discipline and respect for authority is breaking down."

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One London headmaster told me: "The whole idea of school discipline and respect for authority is breaking down."
COLLEGES OF EDUCATION: Gropping suggestions from someone very much in the dark.

"The man addicted to being taught seeks his security in cumulative teaching." (Illich)

What can one do? Simply that many of the new education are unbelievably stupefying, pressuring and disillusioning places. Others are "liberal" and somehow more alive. But basically they are in the pineries of schooling twice over, for they are schools for schools.

(1) Recognise the basic Power set-up:
Recognise that you won't get anything fundamental just by asking politely and arguing by the light of the liberal reason. The Principal is top dog, together with the Governors. The attitude of the professors is as loath to be questioned as that of the students, and they are at the bottom. All authority is a usurpation of your right to determine your own existence/education.

(2) Try to realise a Community of Scholars:
Try to educate yourself, and to get education, not just schooling. Discuss, Criticise and challenge everything you disagree with. Choose your own essays and try to write towards the most interesting students and staff to learn with and from them; read only books you choose to read.

If you think (1) and (2) are contradictory you are dead right! So-

(3) Work out which situation you are in:
In any particular situation, eg tutorial, work out which is the dominant reality-- Communal, Academic, Intellectual Freedom, etc., or Academic Power Structure, Freedom for the Acquiscent, etc.

Unless the situation is clearly the former, in which case there is no problem--go ahead and do your thing, you will have to make a choice: (a) to flight the real issue openly, obstinately refusing to be silent until your point is answered, the petty form of restriction is removed, etc., etc., or (b) to lie, dodge, con, grease, fiddle, lie, cheat, copy, steal, or in other subterfuge appropriate to an underground existence in enemy-occupied territory. (Warning: too much of that latter course can be demoralising, when lying gets to be automatic and you don't even realize that the choice of saying what you really thought was open to you, then it's time for you to get out to a different milieu where you can be authentic.)

Above all, don't mix strategies: eg, don't lie to a member of staff who really is on your side (there aren't many in a crush); likewise, don't advance the abolition of schooling in an exam if you want to get past! This non-schooling strategy applies particularly to the T. which is fraught with difficulties for the libertarian.

(4) Don't be fooled by phony reforms:
eg, students on a disciplinary committee, continuous assessment, non-decision making, consultation committee which only acts as a buffer, etc. Also, don't put forward bureaucratic proposals a la N.U.S. for students on the body which decides the curriculum. Even 50% on this committee leaves it the body which dictates what you and your fellows shall or shall not study. Participation in one's own education is not what it is at! If one believes in the simple proposition of self-directive in study, it really doesn't need staff or students to tell anyone (however, a genuine widening of options could be a meaningful reform).

(5) Don't fall for "Student Power" promises:
These are often a substitute for real action and real self-education. Many "student power" demands are formalist in so far as they are too strongly concerned with organisational measures (forms) for more (formal schooling). They are rarely concerned with directly realising (or sketching forth) the substance of a free educational system. By all means argue hard and be prepared to really fight for college reforms that would make a real difference, eg, reduction of work load, abolition of mid-year class tests, right to design own syllabus, right to choose essays (if genuine), and you aren't really still obliged to censor yourselves in your choice, so as not to "upset your professors". Sit-ins, work-to-rule, laugh-ins, play-ins, and various of direct action may all be effective in winning these realistic goals. However, if there is no prospect of victory, or if the sit-in becomes an end in itself, or merely symbolic action, not directed action, then the action will be demoralising in the long run. This is not to say that where the action is realistic, direct and for real, it may not also be a valuable experience in itself providing a powerful common symbol of resistance to oppression, or taking on a creative cultural life of its own (à la Hornsey). It is to say that these come into the lexicon as it were, and not if the sit-in becomes an end in itself.

(6) Don't Confine your action to college issues:
Here is Paul Goodman talking about students who confine their demands to issues within their institutions:
"Among radical students I am not with a silent majority. They want Student Power and are unwilling to answer whether they are authentically students at all. That's where I'm at. (I think they're brain-washed). Instead of 'Student Power', however, what they should be demanding is a more open entry into society, spending the education nonsense more usefully, licensing and hiring without irrelevant diplomas, and so forth. And there is a authentic demand for young People's Power, their right to take part in initiating and deciding the functions of society that concern them as well, of course, as governing their own lives, which are nobody else's business.

Bear in mind that we are speaking of at least seventeen to twenty-five, when at all other times the young would already have been launched into the real world. The young have the right to power because they are numerous and are directly affected by what goes on, but..."
especially because their point of view is indispensable to cope with changing conditions, they themselves being part of the changing conditions.

Perhaps the chief advantage of incident education is that it takes the young person from their movement informed and programmatic, grounded in experience and competence, whereas "Student Power," grounded in a phony situation, is usually symbolized and often more spate." (Anarchy, 107)

[7] Don't get co-opted
Never join the power structure
except under direct mandate
from fellow students for
the most unambiguously short-
term objective. After that
pull out. Beware of getting
ensnared in NUS bureaucracy
Don't fool your Union
General Meetings as the only form of
"action" available to you.
(Beware the orator bugi!)

Research pacified by
friendly but liberal tutors
who will hardly ever risk
their security on a matter of
principle to you, no matter how
they seem to appreciate you and
your ideas. (You'll be the
same when you are a teacher-
will you?)

[8] Be prepared to get stuck
So whatever you get stuck out
for sitting in/smoking pot/
stealing the exam papers/
painting the college the night
before, or anything/saying what you
think/fomenting subversion/
selling left or libertarian
literature/failing an exam
because you chose to study
your own interests, etc., etc., etc.
Like I've just been saying for
the last 40,000 words-
education does not care,
no matter what you
are going to drop out,
go with a bang so they are
forced to kick you out for
some outrage, eg, sitting on
your own papers, eloping
with the principal's daughter.
Then shake the dust from
your feet and start educating
yourself, eg, live off the land
and study in the nearest
library, go and live in a
commune, hitch through
America, buy a copy of the
Whole Earth Catalogue, any-
thing for REAL is educational.

[9] Don't get disheartened;
You'll probably find 85% of
the college just doesn't seem
interested. Instead they put
all their energies into the
approved academic directions:
rogering; moaning about the
food; TV goggling; pinball,
rag, etc.

Keep at it! Remember how deeply
alienated most of them have
been in the schooling process,
how they've "learned the night-
mare" of failure so they are
frightened to think and discuss
for themselves. And don't
grow into a sort of scurrilous
schizoid state in which you end
up calling everyone a cabbage
because they aren't interested
in what you think is wisdom
consider the "worthwhile
activities" (shades of R.S.
Peters!). How do you know that
they aren't just being willing
to unhaw if you don't appear
so clever and threatening to
them? How do you know that
the reason they aren't interested
in your "activities" isn't that it's
too bureaucratic in the NUS
idiom, too remote and that
they would get interested if
you really cut loose with
past proposals— even if at
first they laughed? Calling
people cabbages is the mark
of the isolated, demoralized
militant. But of course people
are apathetic! That's what
you're in business to try to
change. APATHY IS NO EXCUSE!

[10] DO YOUR THING
On the other hand, if you really
can't make headway, no
matter, go ahead do your
thing with whoever you
can get together with who is
interested. "Your thing" might
be anything from making
love to yoko, to sending Paul
Goodman to encourage groups
to guerrilla theatre— any
interest which is FOR REAL
and not phony like most of the
things you learn in class.
If you want to be a teacher
remember that you will be of
far more use to your students
if you develop your interests
and personality to a maximum
than if you "sacrifice your
interests to authority" and
read books on education and
methodology to "prepare yourself!"
Remember too that in many ways
it is more subversive to
ignore authority than to do your
thing! Subversion is to fight au-
thority. (The problem being that
authority won't ignore you!)

community
Ordinary people are interesting
animals, much more so than the
stereotypes (not just right wing)
suggest. You can learn more
about society from a crook or
a dope or a so-called loon
or a shop steward or a house-
wife or a bingo-ball manager
or a priest than you can learn
from many a sociology
lecturer.

Learn how they learn, have an
eye for the informal arrange-
ments that people operate
screen out— such as one
neighbor teaching another
how to fish, inyrd drivers,
taking turns and on a contin-
ental run, etc.

By talking with people,
try to work out what the
biggest local problem is—
TO THEM. Tape record them as
they try to articulate their
worries, insights, hopes,
etc. Go into the factual
research side (agitprop?)

be able to help. Bring out
a pamphlet which welds the
real facts with stuff people's own articulations and
experience—formalized, the edited
transcript of the tapes. Try
to start on an action group
on the problem, but DON'T
SUBSTITUTE YOURSELVES
for local initiative. (2) (if
female) go into your own
social role, your personality
as a woman, why women rarely

TALK WITH US
UNDERSTANDING IS FREE
WE ARE PART OF ONE ANOTHER
NO MORE THEM AGAINST US
EACH ONE IS INESCAPEABLE

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 THE REVOLUTION

contribute in meaningful dis-
cussions, etc. Start a college
women's liberation group
(literature, agitprop?); (3)
leaflet a few local schools or
(better) get to know a couple
of friendship networks on
school kids and encourage
them to start projects (such
discussion groups they
invite speakers to) and
try to rely on the schooling
ratrace.

[13] Maybe do a pamphlet (or
film, etc) for your college or
for national distribution
eg, a film on Bantock or Bruner
(much needed) or the need to
abolish exams or the principle
of free communication.

[14] ANTHOLOGY
"Do not wish to be a student in con-
trast to being a man. Do not study
as a student, but as a man who
is alive and who can enter the
insolent world of ideological fantasy,
allow your ideas to become part of
your living, and your living to be
become part of your ideas." (Tom Haydon)
Books marked * I found especially valuable.
Books marked % are available from Freedom Press.

LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION

A.S. Neill:
++ "Summerhill" %; Penguin 7s.; or Gollancz 1962 edition with brilliant introduction by Eric Fromm
"Free Child"; Jenkins 1933; 10s. 6d.
"That Dreadful School"; Jenkins 1937; 10s. 6d.
"Talking of Summerhill"; Gollancz 25s.
"Neill and Summerhill- a pictorial study"; Penguin 7s.

John Holt:
++ "How Children Learn" %; Penguin 5s.
++ "How Children Fail %; Penguin 5s.
++ "The Underachieving School" %; Penguin 5s.
++ "What Do I Do Monday"? %

Paul Goodman:
++ "The Present Moment In Education"; Anarchy 1977; 3s. 6d.
++ "Compulsory Miseducation" and "The Community of Scholars"; Vintage Book, V325
++ "Growing Up Absurd"; Vintage Book, V32

Ivan Illich:
++ "Why We Must Abolish Schooling"; 2nd July 1970 issue of New Review of Books.
++ "School Evils"; 3rd December of ditto.
"The Celebration of Awareness- A call for Institutional Revolution"
"The Dehumanizing of Society"; Harper and Row, World Perspective Series; to be published May 1971- GET IT!

George Dennison:
haven't read his, but strongly recommended by John Holt.

Herbert Read:
"To Hell With Culture" %; Routledge; 30s.
+ Education Through Art; Faber 1958; 10s.

Carl Rogers:
"Freedom To Learn"; Merrill, Ohio (sometimes verges on the liberal)

Leo Tolstoy:
"On Education"; University of Chicago Press, 1969

W. David Willis:
"The Hawkspur Experiment" % 34s.
"The Barns Experiment" % 8s. 6d.
"Throw Away Thy Rod" % 18s.
"Biography of Homer Lane" % 40s.

Homer Lane:
"Talks to Parents and Teachers" % 10s. 6d.

R.F. McKenzie:
"A Question of Living" % Collins 18s.
"Escape From The Classroom"; Collins 1965
"The School of the Children"; Collins 1967
"State School" % Penguin 5s.

Simon Stuart:
"Say"; Nelson 42s.

Lelia Berg:
"At Steyning- Dean of a Comprehensive School" % Penguin 3s.

Herbert A. Kohli:
"The Open Classroom"; Methuen 12s.
"36 Children"; Gollancz 1968

Michael Burn:
"Mr. Lywards Answer"; Hamish Hamilton, 13s. 6d.
(a sort of Summerhill for maladjusted boys)

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION (Schooling)

Willard Waller:
++ "The Sociology of Teaching"; Wiley 35s.
++ Irving Glassman:
"Asylums" % Penguin 8s.
(Both the above are absolutely basic for understanding how unfree institutions work)
++ Jules Henry:
"Culture Against Man" (relevant chapter superb critique of "progressive" methods in the states)

Stanley Milgram:
"The Compulsion to do Evil"
"Obedience to Criminal Orders", Patterns of Prejudice, vol. I No. 6

Kosenski and Jacobson: "Pygmalion in the Classroom"


Jackson and Marxen: "Education and the Working Class"; Methuen.


Partridge: "Life In A Secondary Modern School"; Penguin, 5/.

Rubinstein and Storuman (eds): "Education for Democracy", Penguin Education Special 5s., some banal stuff, but excellent chapters by Bernstein (**) Albert Hunt (**), Michael Duane, and one or two others.

John and Margaret Roventree: "The Political Economy of Education Youth As a Class"
(available via Agitprop, first printed in Our Generation)

Frank Musgrove: "Youth and The Social Order"; Routledge 25s.

The Otes: "The Language and Lore of The Child"
"CHR"; Children's Games in School and Playground

STUDENTS:
++ "The Student As Nigger", Jerry Farber.
++ "The Days That Shocked the University", available from B.C.M./King Mob; London WC1, 3s.
++ "Student Power" (eds) Cockburn and Blackburn; Penguin 7s. (some gaseous posturing, but much good material)
++ "Student Power" (ed) Julian Nagel, Merlin Press (especially article by Dick Akenson on "The Academic Situation")
++ "On and Liberalism", by David Adelstein; 2s.
from the LSE Graduate Society, c/o LSE
++ "The Hornsey Affair": students and staff of Hornsey College of Art (Penguin Education Special

Tom Venner: "ON Transforming the social relations of Production-- the Student"
May Day Manifesto Bulletin No 16/5, May/June, 1968
BOOKS OF MORE GENERAL INTEREST WITH GREAT RELATION TO LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION.
+ Kriegerman and Perry (eds) "Patterns of Anarchy" with section on Education, including extracts from "R and R", "Ferron", Godwin and Tolstoy. Doubleday Anchor, 20s. 6d.
+ G.W. Article and Extracts on "The Peckham Experiment", "Anarchy", 60, 6d.
+ Martin Ruber: "Between Man and Man"; Fontana
+ Aldous Huxley: "Island"; Penguin, 4s. 6d.
+ William Morris: "News From Nowhere"; Monthly Review; 3x6 or sections in "Selected Writings" ed. A. Briggs, Penguin, 7s. 6d.

Jane Jacobs: "The Life and Death of Great American Cities"; Vintage Books, V2-41
+ Germaine Greer: "The Female Eunuch"; MacGibbon and Kee, 45s.
+ R.D. Laing: "The Divided Self"; Penguin 8s.
+ Marty Segal: "Notes Towards the Mathematical Foundations of a Non-Manipulative Social Psychology": Mind-blowing; duplicated sheets available; 10s. each; should cover costs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: "HUMAN RELATIONS", 22, pp 356-392
(on the concept of human nature from a personal point of view for a sociologist)

JOURNALS
(1) The Libertarian Teacher: Bulletin of the Libertarian Teacher's Association- excellent material, but infreqently published. 3s. per issue from 56 Devonshire Road, Mill Hill, London NW 7.
(2) The New York Review of Books: From which much of this pamphlet has been lifted. Worth ordering regularly from your bookseller.
(3) Anarchy: monthly anarchist magazine, generally spots the big issues and analyses them for five years before the Reith Lectures and the Sunday Times. Has had frequent articles on education, including: Comprehensive Schools (15, 22) Goodwin's "Community of Scholars" (24); After-School Youth (64); The Sociology of the School (71); The Free School Idea (73+); Brahead (82); A Tale of Two Schools: Raisinghill and Kilwinning (82); Abridged Report Schools and Detention Centres (101); The Rights of the Young (103+); The Present Moment in Education (107+); Programmed Instruction/Figlet (11); May 1971 issue: "Libertarian Education: An Introductory Anthology."
All at 2s. 6d. (including postage) except for issues after 107(3s) and the last issue (3s. 6d.)
Any 10 for £1 Please state preference if possible; otherwise Freedom Press will choose for you. They will also replace any that have just sold out with others on the list.

4. bookstall
Why not run a College Bookstall? Agitprop do a manual on Running a Bookstall; Freedom Press will send you £6 10s. worth (approx) of pamphlets and books, especially those that will be popular in your situation; if you write and ask them.
In addition you can order all the above with the mark from Freedom Press, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1.

UNIVERSITIES
BIT Information Service,
141 Westbourne Park Road, London W11. BIT deals in information and advice on a wide range of legal (and illegal) social and, above all, political questions and problems. Also has practical snippets and recommendations for books, tools, etc. BIT also distribute the Arts Lab Newsletter, Communities, Hapt, and other good things.

5. Agitprop Information: 160 North Gower Street, London NW 10, tel 01-367-5406. Agitprop publishes a monthly Red Notes to keep people informed of ventures, events and publications on the left. In its last five issues it published over sixty valuable Practical Manuals, eg "How to Start Street Theatre", A Bookstall, A Local Journal, Print Your Own Posters, Research Power-Structures, etc. They also stock a wide variety of left-wing pamphlets and magazines, including some on Education and a lot on Women's Liberation and Imperialism.

6. Whole Earth Catalogue: This gives an amazing insight into our potential for educating ourselves apart from Bureaucratic State Monopolies. It stands for self-education in anything from Learning How to Learn to Recycling Sage, to Yoga, to Weaving, to Scrap Technology, to Geodesic Domes, to Growing Your Own Food, etc. A crucial development by people who are really liberating themselves from diploma fetishes. And really useful.

(7) "Conversation" A. Erick, Jane London E1.
(8) "Egg"

Statement: "An item is listed in the catalogue if it is deemed: 1) Useful as a tool; 2) Relevant to independent education; 3) High quality or low cost; 4) Easily available by mail. PURPOSE: We see ourselves as gods and might as well get good at it. So far remotely done power and glory are given - via government, big business, formal education, church - has succeeded to the point where gross defects of human life, in response to this dilemma and to these gains a realm of intact, personal power is developing - the individual to conduct his own education, find his own inspiration, share his adventure with whoever is interested. Tools that aid this process are sought and promoted by the WHOLE EARTH CATALOGUE.

$5 per year from Portola Institute, 558 Santa Cruz Ave, Menlo Park, California 94025. Also publishes "Big Rock Candy" - a "Learning to Learn Catalog" about personal growth techniques and disciplines.

Seeds of The Counter-Culture
This pamphlet will obviously circulate among those involved in educational Institutions. In all other sectors of society pamphlets and magazines are being produced. It is good that we should recognize that seeds of anti-institutional revolt are germinating in different sectors and help to sow more of them. By helping these connections we are helping the revolution to take shape in a non-authoritarian manner.

EDUCATION:
The Libertarian Teacher (see bibliography) Vanguard and other School Acton Union papers. Rank and File, ed: C. Brooke St., London N16, subscription 6s. a year. Blackboard: Excellent progressive mag written by, and aimed at, colleges of students in America; special emphasis on the Pre-School Playgroup Association, a good example of self-help and mutual aid, albeit of a liberal cast. Their pamphlets would be of great use to anyone starting a playgroup or summer school project, etc. PPA 87 a Borough High St., London SE1
SOCIAL WORK:
"Case Con" for radicals/revolutionaries round social work, trying to escape from their containment functions. Send 1s. 6d. to 19 Lidfield Road, London N16 for a sample copy. Years sub, including duplicated newsheets: 7s.

PSYCHOLOGY:
Red Hat for people "in" and studying psychology: 50 Leamington Road Villas, London W1. 2s. copy

HEALTH/HOSPITALS
"Germ's Eye View" (London) is a magazine produced by hospital porters, technicians, nurses, student nurses and doctors at the Royal Free Hospital. Available price 8d from 10 Roderick Rd., London NW9. (There is also a Manchester based Germ's Eye View.)

SOCIAL SECURITY
"The Book of Murther" is the journal of the National Federation of Claimants' Unions. Available price 5s. or £1 a year from 84A Stratford Road, Birmingham.

WOMEN:
"Shrew" is a mag published by the Women's Liberation Workshop in London. Address: 27 Albany Mansions, Albert Bridge Road, London SW1. Send 1s. 6d. an issue, 2s. 6d. if male.

ARCHITECTURE:
Architects Revolutionary Socialists Enclave, Arse, or whatever you want to call it. Brilliantly produced magazine by the architects. Available 20 Chalcot Road, London NW1.

MEDIA:
"Open Secret!" is the journal of the Free Communications Group, a mishmash of soggy liberals some "radicals", militant journalists and the odd revolutionary or libertarian. Some excellent articles. Obtainable from 30 Craven St., London WC2.

COMPUTERS:
"Real Time" is a provocative and exciting mag dedicated to the gentle subversion of the country's top super-technologists. Available from 66 Hargrave Park, London N19.

LIVING:
"Communes", the magazine of the Communes Movement, available from BIT, 141 Westbourne Park Road, London W11.

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Publishing and distributing your own thing really works! Try it and see. Build alternative distribution networks!

Published by the author, Keith Paton, at 102 Newcastle St., Silverdale, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs, ST5 6FL, tel. Silverdale(Staffs) 255.

Comments welcome, and also advice on anyone you know who might be interested in serving as a distribution outlet.
mesas

MESAS

1. All over the world people are prey to a mass superstition: that education equals schooling.

2. Education is to be understood as openess to one’s environment, which is a continuing process in a healthy life.

3. Schooling is a ritual of bureaucratic initiation which has a powerful anti-educational effect on society.

4. The schooling process directs attention and opportunities away from the educational aspects of the ongoing activities of society and by attempting to monopolise people’s capacity to learn strikes at the root of people’s freedom.

5. Mesas stands for “Movement for an Educative Society and the Abolition of Schooling.”

6. As a conscious organisation it can only represent a small fraction of the overall movement which exists everywhere in thousands of everyday practices and unco-ordinated trends - in fact wherever people are learning freely, independently of the official state monopolies.

7. The most important contradictions of the present educational system bear on the pupils and students in institutions. It is these therefore who will be in the van in any revolution against schooling, with most teachers and lecturers in general playing a secondary role, together with those unconnected with any school or college.

8. Mesas is an expression of and contribution to a new politics - the politics of liberation. This politics sees in the qualitative, experiential and personal aspects of living the areas which hold most promise for the development of revolutionary movements in the Northern world. Such revolutionary movements could win liberation and simultaneously a degree of economic equality far greater than any which a politics of equality restricting itself to quantitative “issues” and egalitarian concerns could hope to win. The “issue” is not the issue - the whole quality of life is at stake.

9. Any proposals in the following manifestos are not “demands” off Big Daddy Government to “grant”, set up and enforce. Their realisation and elaboration depends on local initiative, community spirit, self-help and practical mutual aid, combined with the determined insurrection of groups, classes, occupational categories and communities.

MESAS MANIFESTO

1. FOR our own self-education and the time, space and resources to accomplish it.

2. AGAINST all Authority in Education, personal and bureaucratic, and FOR Freedom to learn at every stage in life.

3. AGAINST compulsory school attendance, and all compulsory participation within school (e.g., games, rituals, courses).

4. AGAINST all adult enforced divisions by class, age, sex, religion and so-called “intelligence”.

5. TOTAL OPPOSITION to all I.Q. Testing as a gross insult to the spirit of free children, men and women.

6. AGAINST all Exams and Grading as running completely contrary to the logic of intellectual enquiry and progress.

7. AGAINST all Homogenisation in education and FOR all titles in schools and colleges in the direction of good education (e.g., FOR diversity of approaches and freedom to experiment, AGAINST systematic class bias, FOR network organisation and co-operative learning, age-mixing, multi-media studies, wide extensions of environmental studies, etc.)

8. AGAINST all restrictive monopolisation of educational legitimacy in all aspects of society (e.g. BMA in medicine, apprenticeship systems in the unions etc.); and particularly AGAINST the fetishisation of “qualifications” in education itself; and FOR the free involvement in education of non-teachers such as concerned aides and housewives interested professional people and workers and students, etc.

9. AGAINST the monopolistic control of plant (e.g., school gym or swimming pool, library, university computer, etc.) and FOR a “Community centre function” in schools community centres or wherever they occur.

10. AGAINST the monopolistic appropriation of funds for education by the school system and FOR educational credits payable to learn-ers (all of us) as of right and regardless of whether the individual uses his educational credit in a “school”.

11. AGAINST all closed and segregated institutions of Higher Education (especially against the perpetuation of school ghettos for training for schooling) and FOR open and lively centres for intellectual and personal growth, scientific and cultural experimentation, discussion and research (including research into education considered in its true sense).

12. AGAINST all Culture as exclusive fetish or commodity (e.g., special Art Galleries and Museums) and FOR the decentralisation and de-institutionalisation of exhibitions, galleries, museums etc. in other words - FOR a beautiful and playful environment.

13. FOR freedom to gravitate on the part of the young and old alike (both escape from and attraction to)

14. FOR the right of children and young people to organise independently (S.A.U.S., union for apprentices, Arts lab, Reebok clubs, discussion groups, folk groups, pupil-created courses, Whole Earth Catalogues) and FOR their taking of this right, and using it, where it is not granted or readily established.

15. FOR the direct sharing of skills, the exchange of services (e.g., playgroups) and the matching of educational concerns independently of the market and the state certification system.
16. For the opening up of all work places and other public institutions to the workers/inhabitants themselves (e.g. job-swapping); to working parents with young children; to look after (e.g. creches needed); and to young people (e.g. non-packaged visits, short or medium term participation).

17. FOR time off work to be granted as of right for retraining, educational projects, foreign travel, etc. and FOR time IN work for debates, private study, befriending kids, answering questions, child-minding, etc.

3. FOR parental involvement in education—FIRST on THEIR OWN BEHALF, and also in the education of their children.

19. AGAINST all “child centred” self-denial on the part of all concerned with kids, and FOR all enjoyment and exploration of life for its own sake (which will also be infectious, educative, etc.)

20. AGAINST the destruction of organic communities by town-planning and “rationalisation”; and FOR a liveable environment and safe, playable streets.

21. AGAINST “little boxes” and the isolated nuclear family; and FOR all family systems extended, multi-generational, family of families.

and communes which can offer a variety of ways of living and bringing up happy kids.

22. AGAINST the present toy industry (50% of it) and the colonisation of free time; and FOR creative toys and a richly provided “unwake” environment with space.

23. FOR study and action groups on community problems as natural focus of concern; and FOR opportunities for worthwhile community service.

24. AGAINST all cultural homogenisation and FOR cultural differences.

25. FOR foreign exchanges and non-packaged foreign travel.

26. AGAINST all secret research closed meetings of public concern, and rigged Press Monopolies; and FOR open information, free communications, alternative media, etc.

27. FOR plentiful residential facilities in the country for adventure and outdoor activities (e.g. Gleneagles Lodge, WHA), farms schools, work camps, personal growth exercises, (e.g. Maleny), conferences, etc.

28. FOR a materials levy for educational projects exercisable by the community, on all factories, film and publishing concerns, etc.

COME TOGETHER!

Naturally, Masa has not exist. The above is one person’s ideas of how something might emerge. It is possible that you would like to participate in some similar venture, but disagree with some of the above. In that case write your own manifesto! Name your own organisation. The above is NOT meant to pre-empt co-operative formulation of our aims, it is simply a stimulus to all who are in sympathy with this pamphlet to think through the practical consequences of your having read this far (if there aren’t any, you might as well not have read it).

We need a discussion weekend (or week, or month) to which to think together and plan together. I am willing to act as a self-appointed secretary for this coming together. Relief is quite possible as I believe in the rotation of specific delegated functions and have no wish to preside over the event. I suggest that people interested in attending a conference should write in suggesting time, place, venue, duration and ideas for it. I will try to select the most popular date and arrange a venue, if one is offered. Then I will send out rough details of the conference in good time (at least two months) and if no-one else volunteers, will also be responsible for a pre-conference mailing composed entirely of letters, position papers, personal manifestos, etc. If you want anything to go in the pre-conference mailing please type it on (none) stencils—enlarge—enlarge—enlarge, and enclose money for about 300 (!) copies worth of duplicating paper plus postage. There will be NO selection or censorship of material so presented.

I would like to thank Eddie McWilliams for giving me the confidence to attack R.S. Peters and for many valuable conversations on “Ethics and Education”. Also Lorna for lots of discussions on education, even when we disagreed on details, and Vic, Robin and Jo for reading the manuscript. I would also like to thank the Vice-Chancellor of Keele University for kindly arranging for four term suspension of my studies in which to write this pamphlet. As an acknowledged expert on Progressive Education, I trust he will find his confidence repaid.
What LIBERTARIAN education is all about...

Detailed criticism of traditional theories, both conservative and 'progressive'...

Why R.S. Peters is a sterile bureaucrat...

Old Models of Education: What the Gardener said to the Potter

Why "child-centred" education is NOT the answer...

Why Tommy Really Isn't Reading...

Why schools may need to be abolished...

How schools socialise for a rotten society...

Detailed discussion of educational alternatives to schooling...

Numerous extracts from Paul Goodman, Ivan Illich, A.S. Neill, John Holt, Herbert Kohl, and other libertarians

The Rank and File approach - why it is insufficient....

Movement for an Educative Society and the Abolition of Schooling (MESAS)

The Politics of Liberation... 28 point programme for Free Education.

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