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On the evening of Sunday August 25th the hall of the Patriotic Club, Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C., was well-filled by Socialists anxious to bear the debate between our comrade John Turner, Anarchist Communist, and HERBERT Burrows, the Social Democrat.

MORRISON DAVIDSON, who occupied the chair, said he sympathized with both Anarchists and Social Democrats. Anything that taught the English people to revolt against authority was, in his opinion, good. Anarchy was not as the ignorant imagined a synonym for disorder. Those who advocated it regarded it as the highest form of order. They regarded Law as an evil in itself. They regarded the government of the majority as little better than the government of the oligarchy. He believed, however, that they would have to go through the stage which his old friend Herbert Burrows advocated. Yet he thought that the ultimate result would be what Mr. Turner advocated. It was simply a question of precedence.

JOHN TURNER said: The first thing I have to do is to meet one or two of the objections which are constantly put forward by the So-

cial Democrats in opposing the Anarchist position. Take the question of economic rent. It is contended by Social Democrat, that Anarchism would be wrong because it would allow people living on a fertile soil to confiscate this advantage to the disadvantage of the rest of the community. And they say it would be no more right for the people living on a fertile tract of country, say in Yorkshire, to take the difference of fertility between that particular district and any other in England, than it is for the landlord to take the rent of any piece of land today. It is contended by other Social Democrats that shops having an advantage in position have just the same advantage as the fertile soil. They say it would be just as wrong for the shopkeeper to take it as it is for the private landlord. I contend that immediately Socialism is established the conditions would be changed and this economic rent would adjust itself. Take, for instance, the advantageous position of a shop in Cheapside over a shop in a back street, and the contention that the difference in the value of the position should be taken by the community. But immediately you have organized a system of social cooperation you will find many advantages of position disappear. You will find that the people will just as soon go into Wood Street as into Cheapside and it is only because of advertising and the special show of the windows that Cheapside is preferred today. Look at the Cooperative Stores. Many of them have been started in quiet back streets and they have turned those streets into busy thoroughfares. Advantages of position are constantly changing also. The driving of costermongers into a side street will raise the value of the positions in that street immensely. As to land agriculture, if there is free access to the soil you will have a constant migration of people towards the advantageous land. You will find they will crowd there until the advantages disappear. The absence of the restrictions of the private landlord in the society of the future will almost entirely alter the conditions of agriculture. You will only be able to find out the real economic rent of the country when the laborers have free access to the soil. How are the Social Democrats going to assess the

not give a central body the power to make absolute laws binding the whole community. I would have them discussed in that body. Then I would have the discussion widely known, and if it is something to be done nationally, I would put it to the national vote. I believe people will manage their telegraphs, their post-office, their railways, nationally. To every community, to every municipality, locality, or anything else, I would leave entirely the management of their own affairs." But he believed that either the majority or the minority must be the recognized authority or there would be a continual quarrel between the two, chaos and disorder.

The CHAIRMAN wound up the meeting by a speech in which he sided with both parties and eulogized liberty.

A collection was made for the Dockers' Strike.

might want the land to grow corn on. If I object what are you going to do? If you turn me off it is compulsion.

It comes to this. If Turner is in a minority and he thinks people are acting against his interest, he will get the majority to put things right. Supposing there are a hundred people in a factory, all of whom helped to build it and make the machines, and some of them turn rusty—say forty—what is to happen? Are the forty to leave or the sixty? and if so, why?

TURNER in conclusion, pointed out that Burrows had said be didn't believe in prisons. But if so, how was he going to carry his system of compulsion in to effect, how would be force people to accept the majority rule? Unless the Social Democrats are going to use prisons they may find people object. There may be some fighting and chaos and disorder under the Social Democratic State. As to his contention about the materials and land for the bridge, we say we all have an equal right to the clay, land, etc. If there is an objection at some particular spot to building the bridge, there the builders would go further. Take an instance of today. When the Great Eastern Railway wanted to run a line through Saffron Walden some of the townspeople made so much objection and held out for so much compensation that the railway company preferred to go around. Now the people of Saffrom Walden have to put up with a little loop line to connect them with the main line and bitterly regret their obstinacy. As regards the Socialist League, Turner pointed out that the people who were expelled were not punished. They were an independent body of people free to go and do whatever they wished. The point is that the Social Democrats do believe that the people should elect certain representatives who should be the supreme power. The referendum is no remedy, it leaves things to the majority again.

BURROWS said he would not have the referendum for local affairs. He was not a centralizer "I look to France; what has centralizing done for France? ruined it. What has bureaucracy done for this country? ruined it. I know that as an historical student, I would

economic rent? Are they going to leave it to the people on the soil or are they going to keep an army of assessors? And if the people on the fertile soil refuse to give up the difference how are they going to take it? Are we going to have Irish evictions ad lib? are they going to take it by force?

The Social Democrats are constantly asking the Anarchists how they are going to organize labor? Will you have rules? Yes. Then how are you going to enforce them? We believe in coming to agreements to do certain things, but if people object we do not believe in forcing them. The Social Democrats or rather a portion of them believe in a national parliament organizing labor. Sometimes they talk of it as an assembly of servants, but parliament is an assembly of persons elected by the people, holding supreme power, and servants do not hold supreme power. Others believe that this is impossible and advocate local administration. The Social Democrats in their program say that Ireland and other parts should have legislative independence. Why should this principle not he driven right home and why should not each group of persons who wish for it regulate and manage their own affairs as they like. It is often put forward that the commune should be the unit having this particular power, but we as Anarchists no more admit the right of a majority in a commune to dictate to others in the commune than we admit the right of a majority in a nation to dictate to others in the nation. Some Social Democrats consider that the national assembly should be only an assembly of delegates who would bring back their decisions to the different communes to be rejected or accepted by them. This is simply federalism. We Anarchists, however, say that groups of workmen inside the commune should have the right to make their own regulations. We believe that groups in a particular town should be perfectly at liberty to do what they like without asking the permission of the Commune or the Parliament in any way. We say this is the logical outcome of the federalistic system which entirely knocks upon the head the idea of a supreme parliament. The essence of the parliamentary system is that equal geographi-

cal areas or equal populations elect representatives, and these pass laws which have to be accepted by the whole community. And this brings up the question of majority and minority. It is said and with truth that an effective number of people will always have its way. But in your parliamentary system you are giving supreme power to the majority, acknowledging by that fact the right of the majority which we as Anarchists entirely repudiate.

The Social Democrats say they have a plan and a line of action. They have their palliatives, but they are continually writing and speaking to the effect that these palliatives if put into operation tomorrow would be of little use. They should either drop them or stick by them firmer. We Anarchists have a line to work upon, to teach the people to urge them to take part in nonpolitical movements directly started by themselves for themselves. We are nonpolitical. Politics is the science of civil government. We do not believe in the government or the science.

It is said that we Anarchists do not believe in coercion. Coercion is restraint, compulsion, and especially it is penal restraint. Laws are the expression of this coercion, and today we are always being told that we must get this law passed or that law altered. But all this is little good to the workers. The law which is passed today nominally for their good way turn out all against them in a very short while. Take, for example, the Court of Appeal to settle rents in Ireland. At first it worked well, but the government gradually got their men in and it happened that the courts were actually raising rents because they thought them unfairly low. That should prove at least that even where laws are passed for the benefit of the people the government will find a way eventually to use them as instruments against the people. Look at the strike now in progress. When the Anarchists have said that as soon as the people learn to rely upon themselves they will act for themselves without waiting for parliament to help them, it has been disregarded. But their words have come true. We have an example of this truth in London now. Had the strike began upon the old trade union lines, not had

will disagree on certain points that we are Anarchists and leave them free to make their arrangements among themselves.

BURROWS: I believe that some things will have to be managed nationally and others locally—that is my idea of the future organization. As to the assessment of land values, either the people of each municipality must assess it themselves or there must be a body of experts. As to getting it if the people on the fertile land did not pay the difference to the community they would be acting against my interest and I should be justified in taking it by force. Here Turner and I agree for he justifies the use of force against those who act against his interest. No man has a right, under any system of society, if our houses are joined together, to burn down his house and thus endanger mine. Therefore, if that be so, there must be somebody to decide as to when any one's interest is infringed upon. It must be either the majority or the minority. I admit, that Anarchism is the best state of society, but before you get that state of society what are you going to do? Turner has admitted that under some circumstances he would employ coercion, and the gist of his opposition to Social Democracy is that Social Democrats would under certain circumstances employ coercion. He has therefore accepted our position and we are on the same lines. What is law? He seems to suppose that there cannot be a law without it is passed by an Act of Parliament. The philosophical definition of a law is a certain rule made by a certain set of men for their own guidance. This club has got rules and if a member breaks one of those rules you boycott him or expel him. Turner is a member of the Socialist League and some members of the Socialist League (the Bloomsbury Society) have been expelled for breaking it's rules. Turner, by remaining in the League, gives his consent to those rules. Returning to the bridge, you must have land to build it upon, but if land is common property why should you be allowed to build the bridge and use land which is as much mine as yours. The material of which the bridge is built is common property too—bricks, iron girders, etc., what right have you to use my bricks and my iron. I

which have been passed and which might do some good, have been put in force in very few instances. Acts of Parliament are no good, unless the people are educated to enforce the very laws themselves which they want to put into force, and if this is so why cannot they put what they desire into effect without a law? It is true that the Government might pass any bill but to put it into effect is quite another matter. Referring to economic rent, one form of it is the rent of ability in which some Social Democrats believe. A man who is a good organizer, for instance, would be able to get more than other men in a factory, and Social Democrats admit that no law could prevent this. Burrows doesn't believe in prisons, but how is be going to get his economic rent. If he leaves it to the people themselves to assess it there might be a few discrepancies, and if a large body of men is kept up to assess it would not the cost of maintaining them reduce the surplus of economic rent. Babeuf has suggested that the men on the least productive land should be given a recompense to prevent their crowding on to the more productive. If this is voluntary I think it a good plan.

I do not believe in a hard and fast law to suit all cases alike. I believe that each case has to be acted upon according to the circumstances of the case, and that is a matter for the persons concerned. As to compulsory education, I do not believe in it. I know plenty of boys today who went to school with me and had as good an education who could not write a letter to me now. The education gained in school is practically lost, when the worker goes into the world, in a few years. But in a free society children will receive every encouragement to learn and compulsion will be unnecessary. As to the difficulty about the bridge, suggested in the quotation from William Morris's letter, those who want it will build it. True enough those who did not build will walk over it afterwards, but there must be such sacrifices, just as today the work of the trade unionists has benefited those who would not take part in their struggles. I do not believe that people will agree on everything—that is not my idea of Anarchism. And it is because we Anarchists believe they

it started on the lines of expropriation, who knows how rapidly it might have spread. When we teach the people to place their faith in themselves, we go on the line of self-help. To teach them to form their own committee of management, to repudiate their masters, to despise the laws of the country—these are the lines which we Anarchists intend to work along. Let them, if they will, commence by claiming the right to appoint their own foremen. This very day I have suggested to the men on strike that the trade unions should take over the work instead of the contractors. They might follow this up until they gradually get control of the whole concern, and then they would find the capitalists as unnecessary as monarchs have been found to be.

HERBERT BURROWS: We are absolutely agreed that the present state of society is rotten, that the present system of private property in the means of production, transit and exchange, should be abolished and that in some form or other the Social Revolution must come. And we agree on the definition of Anarchism. We also agree that if it were possible tomorrow to get this perfect Anarchist system it would be the highest ideal society and the best thing for which we could strive. I take it that Turner speaks here tonight as the representative of a particular school of Anarchism.

The speaker then went on to read extracts from Albert R. Persons' book on "Anarchism," by which he endeavored to show that Anarchy was largely composed of Social Democracy, contending for example that the use of the word "organization," implied Social Democratic organization. He also claimed that Social Democrats had laid the foundation of the strike then in progress and had caused the Sweating Commission to be held, although how this proved the truth of State Socialist theories he did not condescend to explain. Continuing his quotations, he extracted from Freedom and William Morris's letters in the Commonweal. It is to be hoped that he will take up the challenge thrown out by Freedom some time ago and send in his objections to Freedom in writing.

He went on to say: There is no more divine right in a majority than a minority, but how are matters to be settled if not by the majority. Supposing there are a hundred people carrying on a certain system of production. At the end of a certain time they disagree as to how that production is to be carried on, I believe they must argue the matter out. But how is it to be decided? Supposing sixty want one thing done and forty want another, what is to be done? Turner would say they can go and build another factory or go and work on land. But supposing that factory is the product of the labor of the hundred. I want to know why either the forty or the sixty should give up the result of their labor and go? I disagree from Turner entirely that compulsion consists in shutting people up in prison. I have pointed out at the meeting today that the strikers have a perfect right to treat the blacklegs as moral lepers, but that is compulsion. Boycotting, too, is compulsion. I want to know if Turner is going to lay down the position that moral boycotting is not as bad as imprisonment. I have here an Anarchist pamphlet by Andrade of Australia, in which there are laid down certain rules for an Anarchist society, and one of those rules is that if a member does certain things you can expel him; is not that compulsion? As to what Turner has said about Parliament, he knows we condemn the present parliamentary system. We would not have the same parliamentary system as they have now, we would have delegates. I am strongly in favor of the Referendum. I am a Municipal Socialist, too. A Communal Socialist if you like to say so, in this respect. I would have things that can be managed locally managed by the Commune and national affairs by the National Assembly. I am going to ask Turner how be can carry on the Post Office by groups? how he can carry on the railway system by groups? Supposing you have got your post-office, there must be some sort of authority, there must be a certain set of rules drawn up as to how it is to be carried on. The letters must catch certain trains, they must be sampled in a proper manner, and so on. Supposing a man persists day after day in being late with his letters, I want to ask

Turner what he is going to do. Is he going to have some system of compulsion for that man or not? Complete Anarchism, I believe, is when everybody agrees on everything. I want to ask Turner if he is going to have any sort of compulsion for people who do not do their duty.

With regard to education. Supposing there are people in the country who will not send their children to school, supposing there are people who bring their children up in a state which would not make them good intelligent citizens, would Turner use compulsion with them? I hold that a child who is brought up in these conditions is an enemy to society. What is to be done with that child? If I can drive Turner to one position where he would use compulsion his Anarchism breaks down. As to economic rent I want to know why I am not to turn out a man who is on a better piece of land than I am? Supposing there is a public park in a place or a free library, the people who are nearest the park or the library will have an advantage. Why should they? The common answer of the Anarchist is I believe that the people who live say three miles off should put up another library or park; but why should they be driven to this expenditure of labor? If there is a fertile spot in Yorkshire on which with two hours' labor I can produce a bushel of potatoes, but in Surrey where I am the land is poor and it takes four hours to get the same amount of wealth, where is the justice of that? The position is that the land is not the property of the commune, it is just as much mine as it is his, and yet I am told all I can do is to move my goods and chattels to the other side of the country to where the fertile land is. Surely it is better that a certain amount should be paid in order to equalize the values of the land. I don't advocate shutting people up in jail. I would have a law passed, for instance, with regard to insanitary dwelling, by which notice should be given to the owner of every such dwelling that if he did not put it into sanitary condition within a month it would be confiscated.

TURNER: Whilst I am equally in favor of the intended effect of these sanitary laws of which Burrows speaks. I know that those law,