

## THE LAWLESSNESS OF GOVERNMENT

IT WOULD seem by the papers that President Nixon has got himself into trouble. The Watergate affair, during which the Republicans 'bugged' the Democrats' election committee rooms (or was it the other way round? - it's so hard to tell the difference) has come to a head with everybody determined not to be the 'scapegoat'. The actual scapegoats have already been sentenced and bribed by someone to keep silent about who paid them to do what. One of the sentenced men has not played fair, he talked, so now what was called by the papers a 'caper' has progressed from 'an affair' to 'a scandal' which it is said will do untold harm to Nixon's reputation. (What reputation?)

After the unconstitutional war in Vietnam with its 'honourable', shifty and unstable peace and the unconstitutional bombing of Laos, to the cynical this 'scandal' will seem like straining at a gnat after swallowing a camel. But it may be - mixing the metaphor beyond unscrambling - the last straw that breaks the camel's back. In the same way the Winterhilfe scandal paved the way for Hitler, and, in the other direction, the Stavisky scandals paved the way for the French popular front government.

But to the detached observer it is obvious that governments are constantly involved in such scandals. We cannot even take pride in the untrue assertion that such things only happen in other countries, especially when the Poulson case has so recently been pushed under the table and would never have been exposed at all but for the necessary muck-raking activities of Private Eye.

Such incidents are only part of the common attitude of governments. Nixon and Poulson both broke the eleventh commandment - 'Thou shalt not be found out'. But this lawlessness of governments is not confined to individual members using public funds, facilities and prestige to further their personal advantage and ambitions but it is often clearly seen that since governments make the law it is their equal practice, indeed it would seem to be a prerogative, to break it.

## LISTEN TEACHER!

THE SILLY SEASON of union conferences is upon us once again as the grandest of our Grand Hotels echo to the occasional revolutionary phrase -- but more often to the clink of glasses seeking urgent replenishment. The few days of extravagant living which pass for union conferences are the rewards which the union leadership bestow on the loyal who maintain the first line of the union bureaucracy in the branches throughout the year. Most delegates in turn show a reluctance to bite the hand that generously feeds them out of the subscriptions of the people they are supposed to be representing.

One searches in vain for any demonstration of real concern beyond the narrow and sectional interests of a particular group of workers. So it was with the various teachers' unions in conference last week. The major happening at the National Union of Teachers (NUT) conference was an Executive Committee motion which banned branches from calling strike action without the Executive Committee's approval. This was supported by the Communists -- particularly by the union's new Communist president, Max Morris, who does not intend to have his rule disturbed by 'maverick ultra-leftists'. The first effect of the ban will be on members of five London branches and a Leicester branch who had planned to take the initiative over strike action on May Day.

Innumerable instances spring to mind, but it will serve to pick out recent cases, still fresh in mind despite the transience of fleeting radio and television impressions and even the impermanence of journalism.

Israel recently blatantly raided the Lebanon and murdered three Palestine guerilla leaders and five others. It is not claimed that this raid differs in substance from, say, the Palestinian raid on Cyprus in the same week or the Munich killings, but unlike the Israeli shooting-down of the Libyan airliner the Israelis are taking a patriotic pride in this national banditry and assassination. The Americans are said to have recoiled from a CIA plot to assassinate Castro, but the British were definitely responsible for the assassination of Heydrich, the 'protector' of Czechoslovakia; but that was during the war - a time when all crimes are condoned and compounded.

In Ireland we find the shooting of innocent bystanders a regular occurrence. In a recent episode in Londonderry there is an argument as to whose bullets pierced the back of a 13-year old boy riding in a car. The Army first made a statement that the bullet was from a Japanese Armolite rifle then they back-tracked and said they didn't know where the bullet came from; all this was prior to the post-mortem. Events are such in Ireland that no one thinks as to why a thirteen-year old boy was shot, only how and who, and the British Government is dodging the blame.

Last week the Czechoslovak government blatantly broke its own law by releasing from prison the Rev. David Hathaway who was imprisoned for 'incitement' involving the importation (smuggling) of Bibles and seditious literature. He had served ten months of a two-year prison sentence. The Telegraph of Tuesday, 17th April reported that 'A Prague District Court reviewed the case after Mr. Hathaway asked for 'remission' of his sentence. It developed afterwards that a Mr. Harold Wilson met

ative over strike action on May Day.

The support for the hard-line against "ultra-leftists" in the NUT is probably the result of a highly publicized punch-up at a pay protest meeting at the Central Hall in London in February when a few Trotskyists tried to seize the platform from the Communist leadership who were intent on having things entirely their own way. What the incident reveals is the futility of "revolutionary" politics - with its motion-rigging and packing of meetings, etc. - and the vanguardist view that a handful of militants can carry an essentially conservative membership with them merely by seizing the platform! As anarchists have always said the role of revolutionaries in the unions is not to gain power but to encourage independent rank and file action which makes all leadership superfluous.

While the NUT was playing politics the National Association of Schoolmasters (NAS) was confirming its ultra-reactionary nature and its authoritarianism. The "trouble-makers" who disrupt school life and challenge the authority of the teacher must be sent to "special centres" according to the anti-educationalists of the NAS. One speaker who advocated an end to caning and who blamed pupils' poor social background for violence received the

educational journalists touring Czechoslovakia and made a statement to them including the remark that the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia was 'best forgotten'. By another amazing coincidence the journalists, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hathaway were all on the same plane home and Mr. Wilson explained his godlike intervention in the case of Mr. Hathaway. It is just as 'unlawful' to release a prisoner before his term of imprisonment has expired as it is to condone, as is done frequently in Communist countries (and not infrequently elsewhere) irregularities in legal procedures. In this case not only has the Czech Government gained prestige from this act of clemency but Harold Wilson by adroit timing has gained some reflected glory for diplomacy.

It has recently become common for totalitarian countries not to go through the expensive and dangerous farce of a 'legal' trial but to take refuge in the ultimate refinement of penological principles and imprison the socially (or politically) deviant in asylums. These sentences have no legal limits and may, under nationalized health services, be prolonged as far as politically necessary. Even the socially democratic Israelis have been known to take this course with recalcitrant conscientious objectors.

The lynch pin of the Watergate affair appears to centre round 'bugging' which is not particularly un-American. In fact, it is a widely accepted part of police and secret service procedures throughout the world. Within recent months Italian society has been shaken by revelations of police bugging, of which the only thing in their favour was that the apparatus was British made. The co-existent scandal of a journalistic bugging of a confessional is sufficiently piquant to make it forgivable by anyone except the Catholic Church.

A British report on invasion of privacy deliberately excluded the activities of the police and government agencies, because it was

assumed by the Commission that the State had good reason for its activities, viz. its self-protection.

President Nixon will doubtless give the same excuses for the Watergate scandal's suppression. His faithful stooge Spiro Agnew has already given the same line. Behind all this world-wide State record of bribery, eavesdropping, murder, evasion of law, forcible detention, blackmail, fraud (for what else is inflation?) we hear the calm assumption that the State and its representatives, above certain ranks, are entitled to do anything they can get away with.

With the tabloid felicity that overtakes hardworked journalists the name 'Watergate' has stuck to the Nixon scandal, and parallels with the floods now deluging Ohio and the rising tide engulfing Nixon have been the subject of many cartoons. It is more apt to recollect sewers and sluice-gates and recall Ibsen's Dr. Stockmann who discovered the scandal of the spa-town's baths which drew their water from a polluted source - incidentally the source of Dr. Stockmann's wife's fortune. At the end of a stormy meeting at which he is deserted by his liberal allies (the compact majority) who see a complete exposure of their spa's pollution will lead to their financial ruin, he says, "I will impart to you a discovery of a far wider scope than the trifling matter that our water supply is poisoned and our medicinal baths are standing on pestiferous soil. . . the discovery that all the sources of our moral life are poisoned and that the whole fabric of our civic community is founded on the pestiferous soil of falsehood."

In such a climate of exposed falsehood one of the commentators on the Nixon scandal was driven to quote Lord Acton's hackneyed but still true dictum: "Power tends to corrupt. Absolute power corrupts absolutely." But the impeachment of Nixon or the replacement of any of the other hundred and one leaders will not halt the mechanism of corruption. Only the destruction of power structures will do that. Jack Robinson

kind of abusive response which the sadists were previously deploring in their pupils!

The teaching "profession" is a vast industry providing little but hierarchies for careerist teachers to climb, and in the process of churning out automatons suitably graded and certificated for their roles in society does its best to destroy the initiative and creativity of children. However, both within the formal education system and without there are individuals who are trying to create an environment of freedom where children can develop their natural thirst for knowledge and understanding and hence achieve happiness and satisfaction. The writings and practical efforts of people like A. S. Neill, John Holt and George Dennison, and the magazine Libertarian Education\* provide a much needed antidote to our "educated" society.

Terry Phillips

\*Libertarian Education (10p + 2p post) and various books by pioneers in libertarian education are available from Freedom Bookshop

### OILING THE MACHINE?

ON THE 9TH of April, the British Labour Party organisation Committee removed the British-Soviet, the British-Hungarian, the British-Rumanian Friendship Societies from the proscribed list. They had been on the list for nearly 30 years. Consideration is being given to redeem the British-China Friendship Association and the British-Czecho-

slovakia Friendship League in the similar manner.

This is good news for the "faithfuls" of the Old and the New Left, who have been campaigning very hard, through their papers (Morning Star, Workers Press, The Socialist Worker, Red Mole, The Militant, The Worker, etc.) for a return to power of a Labour Government "pledged to Socialist policies".

We can therefore observe another crafty move by the Labour Party (in our vocabulary, demagogy is not synonymous with political stupidity. . .) in order to turn to its electoral advantage, the voting "power" of the Communist Party and its "droppings". By removing these Friendship Associations from the proscribed list, Mr. Wilson's Party is buying off the tacit support of the Left militants, in order to neutralise them politically. SO MUCH FOR THE CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL WORKING CLASS STRUGGLE, BASED ON MARXISM-LENINISM, TROTSKYISM, MAOISM, SCIENTIFIC MATERIALISM, DIALECTICS, AND OTHER AUTHORITARIAN "PROPS".

As we do not know of any anarchist group or front organisation eligible to be removed from the "Red List", as anarchists, we are confident of not being conned into the alienating serfdom of the Labour Party and its red election machine.

By advising the working people of this country to abstain from voting at local and general elections, we are probably helping to upset the chances of a return

Continued on p. 3. . .

REVIEWS

# AN IMMORAL MORALIST

THE FOUNDATIONS OF MORALITY, by Henry Hazlitt, Nash Publishing (Los Angeles), \$12.00

THE AUTHOR quotes at the beginning of his work the saying of Schopenhauer, "To preach morality is easy, to give it a foundation is hard." Henry Hazlitt has made me wonder whether in fact it is not impossible. Written presumably some time in the late nineteen fifties, and first published in 1963, this edition is "sponsored by the Institute for Humane Studies, Inc., Menlo Park, California, which was founded in 1961 as an independent center to encourage basic research and advanced study for the strengthening of a free society....." In other words it's an institution to defend US capitalism. (I like that expression "humane"!)

What the author attempts to do is to adapt the creed of utilitarianism and rational hedonism to modern conditions, and to use it to defend American business interests. In this he in no wise does violence to the original creators of the doctrine, Hume, Adam Smith and Bentham, whom he quotes at length. They too wanted to defend the capitalist social order and property in their day.

It is a brutal doctrine. Logically applied, and there are signs that in the US today it is being applied by the Nixon administration, it would, and will, reduce society to barbarism. Mr. Hazlitt agrees with Thomas Huxley that it is immoral for a man to steal a loaf of bread even when he is starving, because we must have unalterable social rules and laws if society is not to fall into chaos, and he insists over and over again that the law must be applied with the utmost rigour, even if it means that money, a debt say, must be taken from a poor man and given to a rich, or a fortune (in this he quotes Hume) must be passed on to the legal legatee, even if this man is a "seditious bigot". Although this may appear harsh at the time in the long run it will be seen to be to the good of all. I wonder. Hitler was not making much progress till he received support from German big business, supposing he had received his money as a perfectly legitimate legacy, the whole ghastly history of the Third Reich might have been the product of following out the directions of this particular law to the letter.

Blake said, "One law for the lion and the ox is oppression." Mr. Hazlitt would dismiss this with contempt as "compassion", and would ask what Blake proposed in place of this "one law".

The author calls his philosophy Social Cooperation, and one is reminded of Voltaire's remark about the Jesuit republic in Paraguay. Social cooperation is the most perfect form of justice. The workers cooperate with the capitalists, and the capitalists exploit the workers, and all is for the best - in the long run! It may have to be a very long run in some cases, several generations in fact, but that is my own cynical judgement. Mr. Hazlitt is nothing if not positive, and dismisses cynicism along with compassion. How nice to be Mr. Hazlitt, with a good income and an assured social position.

Here and there are passages with which one can agree, as when he attacks John Stuart Mill's intellectual snobbery about "higher" and "lower" forms of satisfaction or happiness, and there are parts which read a bit like Bertrand Russell, but the trouble is that one is never really far away from what is in fact a defence of the interests of the strong against those of the weak in society.

As a point of view it is interesting. Usually the Right does not bother to work out its ideas so openly. He who has the power does not bother to write books defending his position. Books are written by the opponents of power. But it seems to me as fantastic as the point of view attributed to the ancient Mayans by James Leslie Mitchell, namely that life is so inherently evil that suicide is not merely a justifiable but even a meritorious action, since the wicked gods of life, who enjoy human suffering, are defeated by the escape into death. And I am left, since I assume that Mr. Hazlitt is totally sincere, with the thought that perhaps all ethical discussion is a waste of time. That is right which suits the individual (in his opinion) or the group to which he belongs. Is our author an immoral moralist, or is that term itself meaningless? Hence the title of this article.

Mr. Hazlitt takes care to distinguish himself from Kropotkin, and his creed of Mutual Aid. His dismissal, though courteous, is shallow, but demonstrates his philosophy most clearly.

"A similarity there surely is. But Social Cooperation seems to me not only a much more appropriate phrase than Mutual Aid, but a much more appropriate and precise concept. Typical instances of cooperation occur when two men row a boat or paddle a canoe from opposite sides, when four men move a piano or a crate by lifting opposite corners, when a carpenter hires a helper, when an orchestra plays a symphony. We would not hesitate to say that any of these were cooperative undertakings or acts of cooperation, but we should be surprised to find all of them called examples of 'mutual aid'. For 'aid' carries the implication of gratuitous help - the rich aiding the poor, the strong aiding the weak, the superior, out of compassion, aiding the inferior. It also seems to carry the implication of hazard and sporadic rather than of systematic and continuous cooperation. The phrase Social Cooperation, on the other hand, seems to cover not only everything that the phrase Mutual Aid implies but the very purpose and basis of life in society."

In fact the phrase is a fraud. Mr. Hazlitt believes that there is no inherent conflict between employer and worker. If he believes that he can believe the Virgin Birth. I wish I could be as polite to him as he is to Kropotkin, but it is beyond me.

The Wall Street Journal says, "The Foundations of Morality deserves a high rating among the many books that have been the fruits of Mr. Hazlitt's long and distinguished career as a publicist." I notice he is not referred to as a philosopher.

John Brent

NEITHER WEAK NOR WICKED

PSYCHIATRY AND THE HOMOSEXUAL, A Brief Analysis of Oppression, Gay Liberation Pamphlet No. 1, Gay Information, c/o 2 Thane Mansions, Thane Villas, London, N7, price 15p + 5p postage.

THE WRITERS of this pamphlet are convinced that homosexuality is not a disease, requiring treatment or tolerance, but a perfectly legitimate, natural, ordinary and harmless form of sexuality. I think they are right. The trouble is that pretty well everyone in our society regards it as a sickness, or as wicked, with the result that to be a homosexual in our society is about the worst thing to be. Blacks can get together and form nationalist groups, and have fun deriding their white oppressors and feeling vir-

tuous and persecuted. So can women. So can people with unorthodox political or religious views. But for the homosexual, taught from the beginning to regard heterosexuality as the norm, this solution is not so easy. He feels isolated, a weak man or a sick one. (This pamphlet deals with the matter from the male point of view mainly. Conditions are not much better for lesbians however, though they are not legally harassed in most countries). So, instead of looking around for others like himself, he heads for the doctor and the psychiatrist.

This pamphlet tells what happens to him, going through all the various forms of "therapy" from psychoanalysis to behaviourism. None of them are any good. Some are horrible, like the disgusting "aversion therapy". Some are lethal, injections of hormones play hell with the body. At best one may spend years having little chats with psychiatrists or psychoanalysts, which perhaps do little harm, except in so far as they make the homosexual believe that he is ill, when there is nothing wrong with him.

After reading this pamphlet I am convinced that to compare psychiatrists with witch doctors is monstrously unfair. Most witch doctors are enlightened and

# it could happen here

It Happened Here, shown on BBC 2 World Cinema series last Friday (28 April) was described in Time Out as a "highly enjoyable and scrupulously authentic story of what would happen if the Germans had conquered Britain in the last war". The film was made by Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo and after many difficulties in a ten-year struggle was completed in 1966. Since then very little has been seen of it.

However, this is hardly surprising since it shows how easily the majority of the population and the authorities were subjected to fascist rule. After the German invasion Britain is soon conquered. In a short time Britain is turned into a National Socialist state. People join up and enter the army. The police patrol the streets with the German army of occupation. Many join the Black Shirts and are recruited into the Labour Fronts. Communists, anarchists and Freemasons are attacked as anti-social elements and called scum. The main character, a nurse, is evacuated to London and while looking for her lodgings stumbles upon a Jewish ghetto. Later she finds out that the hospital she has been sent to is not caring for its patients, but exterminating them.

How easy would it have been for the German army and the Nazis to administrate and govern this country? Certainly the police would have thought more about law and order than who was giving the orders, than about freedom. There are plenty of authoritarian minded people who would love to put on a uniform and strut around barking out orders for other people to obey. On the other hand a lot of people like a quiet life and as long as they enjoy a reasonable standard of living they would accept the ordered existence of a fascist corporate state. Such a state requires complete obedience and loyalty to leadership and the state. A doctor in the film who supports the partisans who are fighting the German occupation says that you have to use fascist methods to fight fascism. The slaughter of German prisoners by the partisans at the end of the film showed their agreement with the doctor. The opposition to the fascists is a united front of communists, liberals and tory types.

The nurse, who has to join a Labour Front organisation to get a job, is torn between her liberal ideas and getting back to a normal ordered life. A lot of people would plump for an ordered life even though it might be fascist. Such people could be the "silent majority" and luckily they are silent and inactive. Although Britain is not a fascist state, there is a growing support for authoritarian methods. Recent Acts show that if the rule of capital is threatened authoritarian laws are passed to safeguard its interests. If democracy is threatened, elected representatives will not hesitate to enact fascist laws to "safeguard our democratic way of life". The limited freedom under a parliamentary democracy creates the right balance in which the profit motive best succeeds. The kid glove and carrot are better than the mailed fist and whip. But many who hold political and economic power today would use fascist methods if their power and privilege was at stake.

P. T.

progressive by comparison. Being homosexual is similar to being left-handed. It is natural, but less common than right-handedness. (Left-handed people are also persecuted sometimes. In many schools left-handed children are forced to do things right-handed, even when it causes psychological damage). The homosexuals are fewer in number than the heterosexuals. Not all that much fewer this pamphlet suggests. This is part of the reason why they are persecuted.

It is good that a pamphlet so courageous, straightforward and well written as this should be published. Let us hope that many more come from Gay Information, and that other groups with harmless "deviations", which are probably equally natural, will come forward. It may be possible to overcome the fear and guilt that has dominated our society in relation to all things sexual for so long.

Arthur Wardo



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# THE ANARCHIST HISTORIAN

# INDIAN IS A STATE OF MIND

MAX NETTLAU: *Histoire de l'anarchie*. Paris: Editions du Cercle/Éditions de la Tête de Feuilles, 1971. (Available from Freedom Bookshop, £3.)  
MAX NETTLAU: *Bibliographie de l'anarchie*. New York: Burt Franklin, 1968. (Available from Freedom Bookshop, £6.)

MAX NETTLAU (1865-1944) was far and away the greatest scholar in or of the anarchist movement. His vast work of rescuing the history of anarchism from oblivion began in his early twenties and continued until his death more than half a century later. Throughout that period he collected an enormous amount of primary material - manuscripts, documents, leaflets, pamphlets, periodicals, books - and also wrote an enormous amount of bibliographical, biographical, and historical material himself. It is scarcely too much to say that all serious students of anarchism should begin with Nettlau, simply because he was the earliest pioneer and remains the dominant figure in the field.

Nettlau compiled the first and still the only proper bibliography of anarchist literature in 1897. He wrote the first and still the best full-length biography of Bakunin; failing to find a publisher, he reproduced fifty copies of his manuscript himself, from 1896 to 1900, and distributed them to the main libraries of the world. After that he was mainly responsible for the collected editions of Bakunin's writings in several languages - French, Russian, German, and Spanish - and he later wrote monographs on various aspects of Bakunin's career. He also wrote full-length biographies of Errico Malatesta and Elisée Reclus, as well as shorter studies of many other important figures in the movement, most of whom he had known personally.

Above all, during the 1920s Nettlau wrote a massive history of anarchism as far as the First World War. The first three volumes, taking the story down to 1886, were published in German in 1925-1931; another four volumes, going on to 1914, were written, also in German, but have never been published. In 1933 a one-volume digest of the whole work was published in Spanish, with a few pages at the end summarising events since 1914.

A great deal of Nettlau's work has never been printed at all, and exists only in manuscript as part of the huge Nettlau Collection in the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. Almost none of his work has appeared in English, although he lived in England for many years before the First World War. Most of his books that were published appeared in German, and most of the translations so far have been into French, Spanish, or Italian. Even in the current wave of new editions of anarchist classics, he has been neglected, although he is pillaged by virtually every writer on the subject and is more worth reading than any of them. It is one of the private tragedies of anarchist history and one of the public scandals of international scholarship.

However, a few of Nettlau's books have been made available again, at least for those who read French. *Histoire de l'anarchie*, which has appeared in the "Archives Révolutionnaires" series, is the first French edition of the 1933 digest of his big history. The text has been translated by Martin-Zemliak, apparently from the Italian edition of 1964, and there is an introduction based on the Italian one and an appendix by Martin-Zemliak himself summarising events from 1934 to 1971. *Bibliographie de l'anarchie*, which has appeared in the "Bibliography and Reference" series, is a photographic reprint of the original Belgian edition of 1897, with no editorial additions of any kind. Both books are valuable - the former in the absence of the full history or a new history of anarchism, and the latter in the absence of an up-dated edition of the bibliography or a new bibliography of anarchism - but both have defects which seriously reduce their value.

The History is excellent for its length and date, but inevitably is summary in treatment and obsolete in many ways. Nettlau's "glance" at the period 1914-1933 in four pages and Martin-Zemliak's "brief notes" on the period 1934-1971 in twenty pages are both unsatisfactory, especially the latter. (Incidentally, the only reference to an-

the papers have continually reported that a) a settlement had been made, and b) that the truce had broken down and hostilities had been resumed.

Whatever the outcome there can be no doubt that this siege represents a turning point in American and perhaps world history. It is not the first Indian protest of its kind. I remember reading in the papers at the end of the 1940s, or the beginning of the 1950s, of an armed demonstration of Indians against the Ku-Klux-Klan, who were holding an open air meeting not far from an Indian village. The Indians dispersed the Klansmen.

More recently the former prison island of Alcatraz was occupied, in November 1969. The Indians claimed that it was theirs by the terms of a treaty long since forgotten and managed to hold on to it for a year, during which the number of occupants rose at times to about 800. The authorities managed to squeeze them out by cutting off essential supplies, but it was a step forward. Later there was the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, which brought the struggle into the capital of the nation.

The recent occupation of the village of Wounded Knee has drawn the attention of the whole world to the plight of the first colonists of America. Everyone knows the story of the massacre of defenceless Indians carried out there by the US cavalry in 1890. At the end of last February an armed party, in several cars, drove into the village, seized hostages (who were later released) broke into shops where there were guns for sale, and proclaimed that they would not surrender until the US government met their demands for the righting of their grievances.

The grievance of the Indians is that they are herded onto reservations, which consist of poor land no one else wants, and even there they are not safe from interference. If they leave to work in the outer world they are treated as second-class citizens.

The Drive to the West ends

From about 1900 BC onwards the Indo-European peoples, originating possibly somewhere in Western Asia, and speaking languages more or less based on Sanskrit, have pushed westwards. The peoples who occupied Europe before them were either exterminated or absorbed, their languages and cultures obliterated. Only the Basques succeeded in retaining their ancient, non-Sanskritian tongue.

The Atlantic however formed a barrier not easily to be crossed, and although probably Columbus (and even the much-admired Norsemen) had predecessors, it was not until the end of the Middle Ages that the westwards migration was able to continue. As the American continent filled up with white people it became clear that the next barrier was the Pacific. But things are changing. The Asian peoples are no longer living in a pre-industrial past, the Japanese, the Chinese and the Vietnamese have more or less successfully blocked the push towards the west. Possibly space travel will provide the alternative route for expansion, invasion and conquest. Be that as it may, the conquered are rising in the rear of their conquerors, and battles thought finished and done with years ago are being shown not to be anything like so decisive as they were supposed to have been.

In my childhood, 1930s-1940s, it was customary to say that "of course the Indians are a dying people. Those that are left are mere remnants. This is sad perhaps, but it is inevitable. It is the price of progress". Even the brush with the Klan was described by one writer as "probably the very last Indian uprising". But in fact the Indians are refusing to die. In spite of the terrible conditions on the reservations, with the consequent high infant mortality rate, their numbers are increasing. Encouraged by the resistance of the black Americans and the Third World peoples, the Indians are hitting back.

In any case the above report merely follows a tradition. Since the rising at Wounded Knee began anarchism in Britain during the past half-century is a single sentence in Martin-Zemliak's appendix: "In England a large movement against nuclear bombs was born, some militants took part in it and interested numerous people in anarchism."

Even the main text isn't entirely acceptable nowadays, since Nettlau's approach wasn't critical or truly historical so much as what the French call "bibliographical" - that is, he set out in a semi-antiquarian spirit to establish the basic facts of individuals' lives and writings in isolation from their social context, and much of the book reads rather like a series of encyclopedia entries. It is true that the basic facts are still little known, but even so the detailed narrative gets rather tedious - especially when it has been superseded by more recent research, as in the case of the French and Russian movements. Another problem is that Nettlau often breaks off to remark that he has already written about some person or episode in other works - which isn't much use to readers who don't happen to have access to them.

Nevertheless the account of at least the pre-1914 period is one of the most stimulating, if not satisfying, introductions to the subject. Even on his own terms, Nettlau's exposition has its defects - he is too indulgent towards his hero Bakunin, too evasive about the terrorism of the 1890s, too prone to turn from a group to an individual (like most writers on anarchism), but he is generally authoritative and reliable. A serious defect in this particular edition is that it is full of ludicrous misprints, so it can't be trusted for a single name or date. A less serious defect is that it is a rather expensive paperback, costing more than 1p a page.

The Bibliography is similarly excellent, covering thousands of publications in more than twenty languages, with a useful and interesting linking commentary and three indexes. But it is now seriously out of date, since it stops at 1896 and therefore excludes much of the work of Kropotkin, Malatesta, Grave, Faure, Cherkezov, Tolstoy, Tucker, Goldman, Berkman, and all of Rocker, Grossmann, Libertad, Armand, Maximov, Volin, and dozens of militants in Italy, Spain and Mexico, China, Japan and India over a period of three-quarters of a century. Moreover, Nettlau compiled the book in a great hurry, so it has many gaps (some of which are filled in ten pages of "Additions") and also many errors (a few of which are corrected in four pages of "Errata"). No one has ever known so much about this field as Nettlau, but he inevitably made mistakes, and since the book has never been revised they have been perpetuated ever since.

It is an astonishing achievement, but not a perfect one, and since the main point of bibliography is accuracy it really ought to be properly corrected and, if possible, brought up to date.

Bulletin 24 of the Centre International de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme contained "Seven Theses on Max Nettlau", in which Marianne Enckell summed up his greatness and weaknesses. She rightly emphasised his obsessional cataloguing, his armchair attitude, his fundamental intellectualism, his crucial value as a very specialised collector of reference material. We owe him a lot, but we must get beyond him; in these two books, unfortunately, we haven't even caught up with him. What is really needed is a complete edition of his History, and a revised edition of his Bibliography. Some hopes!

N. W.

## Their Fight is Ours

The Indians also are pioneers. Men crossed into America from Asia over the Bering Strait in prehistoric times, and continued to do so down to our own, frontier-closing totalitarian age. There is, or until recently used to be, a tribe who lived half of them in Siberia, half in Alaska. They came in small numbers, the vast spaces and relatively unpeopled lands of eastern Asia behind them, so that when they encountered the flood from densely populated, well-organised and industrially developed Europe, they were at a hopeless disadvantage.

In the long run however they may turn out not to be the losers. The Indian life-style, though it had its cruel features, and the civilisations of Mexico and Peru, with their wars and their politics, did not differ much from our own, was usually based on respect for the natural world. Some North American Indians believed that to plough the soil was wrong, it was cutting the flesh of the Earth Mother. Their concept of property was different from the European, which meant that sales treaties had a different sense to the Indians, they were only letting the Europeans use the communal, tribally owned lands. The Europeans believed they had bought the land outright.

Although there have always been plenty of European conservationists there can be no doubt that the progress-at-any-price people have generally had the upper hand, particularly in the last two or three hundred years, with the result that our planet is being plundered and polluted to such an extent that it is doubtful if human life can survive, even if there is not a nuclear war. We can certainly learn something from the Indians. Perhaps all those who oppose the threatening, technological nightmare are Indians in spirit. Dee Brown, author of the book, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, which tells the history of the North American Indians in their own words, was asked if he had Indian blood, and he replied, "Indian is a state of mind. I grew up in Oklahoma among Indians and came to prefer their view of the world: their kinship with nature, and their respect for their brothers' dreams."

John Brent

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Biographical Notes and  
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## Oiling the Machine, from p. 1

to power of a Labourite Government; but by so doing no one can accuse us of misplaced policies, opportunism or betrayals of the working class, as we are on record, since the very beginning of our movement, of consistently having stated in the past, as we will do so in the future, that:

IT DOES NOT MATTER WHO IS IN POWER - TORIES, LABOUR, LIBERALS, COMMUNISTS - NOTHING WILL DRASTICALLY CHANGE, UNLESS THE WORKING PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY, BY-PASSING ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT, TAKE POWER INTO THEIR OWN HANDS AND FREELY SHAPE THE SOCIETY IN WHICH THEY WANT TO LIVE.

Claudio

# BANNERS BRIGHT

The Whitechapel Art Gallery Exhibition of Trade Union Banners

Some anarchist reflections produced as a leaflet for visitors to the exhibition 24th April-11th May.

FOR THE PEOPLE who have carried them, Trades Union banners are most definitely not pretty decorations. Each of them is making statements of principles. These principles may be revolutionary, they may only gently praise the benefits of Friendly Societies, but whatever they say, they are the expression of a force made great through the men who believed in them. If these statements of principle can be treated as quaint art objects, militants have good cause to be worried. And while this exhibition shows that the working class have an art form of their own of which they can be proud, the exhibition also suggests that their message-content can be safely ignored.

How many workers will come to this exhibition? How many will see the exhibition of these banners as yet more history which is nothing to do with them? Workers can be excused for ignoring the standard histories of Trades Unions. They are the histories of Famous Men, of Great Leaders who have risen from the ranks, not with the ranks. The rank and file are treated either as a set of apathetic sods or as turbulent wreckers to be bought off, out-manoeuvred or kept under control.

It is no less true today. But how did this come about? The basis of modern mass Trades Unionism was the New Unionism of the 1880's and 1890's and the steady process of amalgamation from that time on. At that time many new Unions were formed and many new banners were painted. Anarchists and other Socialists were at the forefront of organising the New Unions. They fought in the streets, they went to jail, they suffered starvation and blacklist for their activities. But they

saw the Unions as a starting point for the emancipation of the working class by the workers themselves. The Unions were, they said, exclusively working class organisations, they provided a basic school for the workers where they could well learn the lessons of fraternity and solidarity and the egalitarian virtues that formed the foundations of a better world. All this could have been true. But the anarchists particularly made the grave mistake of taking their hopes for reality. They did not examine closely enough what they were building.

After twenty years had passed (around 1910) the anarchists and others had forced on them the reality they had ignored for so long. This period - the period known as the Syndicalist Revolt - is typified by its opposition to officialism and lack of democracy in the Unions, as much as it is typified by its hostility to capitalism. And they were talking about Unions that had been organised by anarchists and socialists. The struggle they fought for democracy in "their" Unions can only be said to have failed when we look at the situation today. Will Thorne was a prime mover in organisation of the Gas Workers Union, a Union known as a Socialist Union. And yet it formed one of the constituent parts of the wildly undemocratic General and Municipal Workers Union. John Turner, an anarchist, organised the United Shopworkers Union, which later became part of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers Union, an equally monolithic and undemocratic affair.

There is no present Union which is the expression of its rank and file. In every dispute, negotiations are three-cornered at least - the workers, the Union full-time officials and the bosses working it out between them. The Trade Unions today are middlemen in the labour market selling shop floor passivity (and as often as not, hard won shop floor control over production speed and other alleged-

mark us as the militant manifestation of working class anger and solidarity and their very fair-ground crudity and the naivety of their painted slogans and fraternal messages segregate us from the cultured and the gelled.

## Stand Up and Be Counted

IN the end one is always called upon to make a choice when faced with a human protest, be it great or small, dignified or ridiculous, and that is that one either stands upon the pavement or steps down into the gutter.

John Gorman, a young silk Screen printer, set himself the task of finding the lost or discarded battle flags of the working class movement, and 48 banners hang in solemn splendour within the Whitechapel Art Gallery from the 25th April until the 11th May. The image and the message of the banners changed with the time and the trade but for all that they are the regimental battle flags of the working class and should be so honoured.

Within the gallery, on entering, is Gorman's earliest find and it is the United Plate Workers Society banner of 1821, keeping company in place and history with the blue and white Friendly Society of Sawyers of 1838, and one walks by banner after banner until one reaches Gorman's final choice, the avant garde Electrical Trades Union, London Press Branch banner created in 1960 and taken for one day from the Whitechapel Gallery and carried in this year's May Day march. These banners were born of illegal unionism, craft tradition, primitive christianity, defiance, smug craft worker's servility and the pride of the militant working class that they had the courage to stand up and be counted, but in the final counting it was in the time of affliction and despair that the respectable and the weak sisters surrendered their claim to these banners; for it is on the streets that the banners of the working class have a reality and a meaning and a threat for those who hold authority.

Clancy Sigal has rightly written that "wind, rain, neglect and police batons (banners make excellent rallying points) have reduced some of these battle standards to the point where they can only survive

ly "managerial prerogatives") in return for cash increases and such arrangements to make Union administration easier (i.e., the deduction of Union dues at source by the Employers). Rank and file organisation and the official structures of Trades Unions are not two different aspects of the same thing but two very different matters. They have sufficient in common to maintain an, at times, uncomfortable alliance, but militants continually find that Union membership usually hinders rank and file organisation.

The examples are many. They vary from the GMWU's activity during the Pilkington Strike to every "productivity deal" signed over the heads of the shop floor. If the Miners had followed the Union official policy, could their great strike of 1972 have succeeded? In how many Unions are members of one Branch officially allowed to communicate with another Branch, except through a full-time official? There are too many Unions where none of the full-time paid officials are elected. The list could go on and on. . .

Anarchists would admit that a Union shop is an organised shop to some extent, while a non-Union shop is always unorganised. But whatever the roots of this present situation, rank and file organisation has its own interests which it has no option but to work for. The cards are heavily stacked against any attempt to "reform" the Trades Unions from below. The overwhelmingly important thing to aim for - inside and outside the Unions - is job control, equality and democracy on the shop floor, in the office or wherever. Get differentials reduced (by scaling upwards). Control as many aspects of production as you can. Discuss fully all the proposals (in the firm's time), make clear how decisions are made and make sure that it is the most democratic way possible. Develop new winning tactics of struggle. This is one foundation for a better world.

WE COULD EVEN PAINT SOME MORE BANNERS !! J.Q.

in museums", and in that splendid isolation they will be accepted into the State Galleries as but one aspect of a working class sub-culture. But as Clancy Sigal recalls: "Picketing miners during the recent strike said how their blood quickened to see the great, old fashioned banners appear over Saltley Rise at the head of relieving columns of engineers singing

'Hold the Fort'. Crude sentimentality, and one bows to the claim but feels honoured to take one's place within the ranks behind the regimental battle flags of a united militant working class.

## Where the battles are

For £5 one can buy John Gorman's book Banner Bright (Allen Lane)\* and for those who value their working class history it is worth a quarter of a week's pay as one's permanent record of the struggle of the British working class - for our banners are a peculiar native affair - and for 20 pence a magnificent and informed coloured trade union banner poster from Whitechapel Art Gallery, but, comrades, if you honour the cause and your class then your place is first in the streets behind your banners, for that is where and always the battle for human survival and human dignity will be fought.

Arthur Moyses

\*Obtainable from Freedom Bookshop (post 15p)

WRI AS MILITARY CONTRACTOR IN DENMARK

On 20 November 1972 the Ministry of Defence invited bids for the complete demolition of an unlawfully erected military shooting range wall. The wall and target range were located in a protected area near Copenhagen.

The work to be done included breaking up a heavily reinforced concrete foundation and excavating 40,000 cubic metres of soil. When bids were opened, the lowest was from the Danish section of the WRI. This was possible due to the many young people who had volunteered to attack the wall with shovels and pneumatic hammers.



THURSDAYS 2 p.m. onwards. Help fold and despatch FREEDOM at Freedom Press

CORBY ANARCHISTS. Discussion meetings first Friday in every month at 7 Cresswell Walk at 7.30 p.m. Phone Terry at Corby 66781 for details of other activities.

KIRKDALE ALTERNATIVE DAY SCHOOL, Sydenham, has a few vacancies, 3½ to 13 years. Phone 874 6212 (evenings)

PICKET at Home Office each Sunday at 2 p.m. "Belfast 10" Defence Committee. Further information from Maureen Maguire, 86 Roslyn Road, N.15. (tel. 01-800 9392)

STOP THE FRENCH TESTS. Regular picket, and London-Paris walk 14th May-3rd June. Information from Greenpeace, Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD AREA - anarchists/libertarians interested in forming group please contact Roderick Parkes, 90 Queensway, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

CARDIFF DWARFS are starting an anti-pollution campaign against the local steelworks, planning a street theatre and other activities and need help. Contact Ian Metheson, 45 Corporation Road, Grangetown, Cardiff.

HARLECH: Spain - The Forgotten Resistance, a filmshow and lecture by Miguel Garcia. May 10th in the Arts Theatre Centre, Coleg Harlech, Harlech, Merioneth, N. Wales. Further information from G. Briggs, c/o Coleg Harlech.

LIVERPOOL ASA, contact May Stone, C.52 Summerfield, Tower Hill, Kirkby, near Liverpool.

LONDON ASA meets every Wednesday 7.30 p.m. at 3 Grange House, Highbury Grange, N.5. Black & Red Outlook always available, by post 5p + 2½p

MENTAL PATIENTS UNION, S.E. London Meetings will be held at 170A Deptford High Street, S.E.8 each Tuesday at 8 p.m. Mental hospital patients and ex-patients welcome. Contact Andrew Dewar above address.

PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL - RENT STRIKE: The second free festival commences in Windsor Great Park on August 25. Work preparing for it now started. Details: Bill Dwyer, 26A Elmbourne Road, London SW17 8JR

BARNESLEY DWARFS starting Adventure Playground. Any help on this & possible other projects appreciated. Contact Charlie Robinson at BAGINS (Infor Service) 12 Regent Street South, Barnsley, Yorkshire.

New "Underground" paper being started in west of Holland, where none is published up to now. No defined political or ideological affiliations. Want advice and suggestions from groups publishing papers & would like specimens of mags. etc. Send to Hans Van Veluwen, Marktplaats 11, Appeldoorn (Gld) The Netherlands.

"Mental Patients and ex-patients - Mental Patients Union meets weekly Wednesday evenings 7 p.m. at 97 Prince of Wales Road, N.W.5 (tel. 01-267-2770)

MICHAEL TOBIN DEFENCE COMMITTEE 265 Dale Street, Chatham, Kent

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE SOLIDARITY Committee 54 Harcombe Road, London, N. 16

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Most press and radio commentators recommended that the pacifists' bid be accepted, as they would obviously do a thorough job. But after weeks of consideration the job was given to a contractor who, the government said, would dismantle the wall so it could be used to build another rifle range. (from WRI Newsletter. £1 p.a.)

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