

Freedom's

SUPPLEMENT TO issue 29 March, 1975

ANARCHIST REVIEW

CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

THERE HAVE been those, particularly among social democrats, who have argued during the last thirty years that a slump similar to that of the 'thirties would never happen again. They are beginning to have second thoughts.

Despite Keynesian, neo-Keynesian and other "dirigist" and statist economic policies, disorganisation of the capitalist system has been growing apace over the last two years. The era of the "Permanent Boom" is over. In almost all the developed capitalist states economic expansion had largely stopped by the early summer of 1973. And 1974 witnessed not only a slowing down of economic expansion, or even a cessation, but a reversal - a downturn of economic activity. At present, there is, in many countries, industrial inertia.

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DURING the first eight months of 1974, the total volume of industrial production in the United States fell by around three per cent, which has inevitably resulted in a fall in the Gross National product. The AFL-CIO News has reported an unemployment rate of over eight per cent. There are "officially" at least seven million unemployed in America. Industrial production is also declining elsewhere at a similar pace.

Unemployment in France at the beginning of last year was under 300,000. By September, it had risen to 630,000; by November, it was 800,000. It is now more than one million. In Italy, unemployment is running at about one million; in Western Germany, it is probably 800,000, and in Britain it is very much the same. And tiny Denmark reports that over ten per cent of its working population is now unemployed. Official statistics are not kept in the so-called Communist (i.e. state capitalist) countries of Eastern Europe, though, unofficially, unemployment has been reported to be on the increase in Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia. Again, the Soviet authorities deny that unemployment is even a possibility in the Soviet Union (Russian friends of this writer - who was actually threatened with violence by dubious "friends of the Soviet Union" - were, in 1965, in correspondence with unemployed Russian farm workers).

Politicians and "economists" try to explain the ever-deepening depression as an "energy crisis" caused by the Arabs' increase of the price of oil. This has, of course, had its effect on what was already happening before that increase. But the real cause of the crisis, with the decline in production and the inevitable increase in unemployment, stems from the nature of the existing capitalist system. Production is geared, not for the satisfaction of social and individual needs, but for the "market", for profit. Put simply and somewhat crudely: no profit, no production! The means of producing and distributing the things necessary to human sustenance are owned, not by society as a whole, but by a small minority (less than five per cent of the population) who monopolise them for their own private profit. The vast majority neither own nor control the means of life in which they toil. Their mental and physical energies are merely bought by the employers, most of whom do not themselves produce or have to produce in order to live. They - the capitalists - are, in the main always, "unemployed", but they do not suffer from it - except when a crisis deepens so much that even they find it better to throw themselves from skyscrapers rather than queue up for relief!

It is, therefore, the chaotic (not anarchic) nature of capitalism, with its multi-national monopolies, which every few decades inevitably gives rise to the kind of crisis we are witnessing today. Capitalism is merely a crisis-ridden society. It is also very wasteful, but that is not the subject of this article.

ONE important feature of the present crisis, absent from previous ones, is the chronic and, at the moment in Britain at least, worsening inflation. The increase in the price of oil has also been blamed for much of the inflation in recent years. The workers' wage claims ("wage-push") have been blamed by governments and "economists" alike for causing or exacerbating price increases.

Both claims are, in the main, wide of the mark. Inflation was spreading well before the Arabs started increasing the price of their crude oil in 1973-74. The present inflationary spiral became apparent, at least, by 1970. According to the OECD, the price of oil (up to the beginning of 1975) was responsible for only 1.5 per cent of the average of 14 per cent inflation. The workers' continual struggles are largely a rearguard action to retain their existing standard of living, though some workers, in some industries, in some countries, have managed - through their struggles - to marginally improve their position; more often than not, this has only been temporary. Some sections of the British working class have, because of their class-consciousness and solidarity, been more successful than workers elsewhere and in other countries.

Some capitalist concerns, particularly multi-national monopolies, have been able to put up prices and, thereby, increase inflation. But, again, they are not the cause of inflation. What, then, is the basic cause of inflation?

In the main, higher prices are caused by an over-issue of inconvertible paper money. Inflation is caused by a steady (and, in many instances, not-so-steady) increase in the circulation of currency relative to the increase (or lack of) in the Gross National Product. Put simply: if production does not increase while more money goes into circulation, then those commodities which find their way on to the market will cost more. The value of the money will, however, have depreciated. Who, then, "creates" this depreciated currency? Some have argued that it is the banks. Others, such as the neo-Douglasites of the National Front, blame the "International Financiers". Actually, inflation in this and most countries, is caused by the government, through the Bank of England. The government is an enormous debtor; and, by and large, increased, but steady, inflation serves its interest. In Britain, before the war, the amount of notes in circulation was about £500,000,000. Today, it is more than ten times that. Translated into real terms, one can say that take-home pay in 1939 was about £4 a week; today it is £40. A cheap Ford car cost £120; today it costs £1,200. In 1939, a bicycle cost about £3.50; today, one costs £35. And so on. . .

One of the reasons that governments have deliberately caused inflation is because, by increasing the money supply, they hope to increase investment and capitalisation, thereby reducing the risks of economic crises and subsequent unemployment. This worked to some extent - but only because of the dislocations and disruptions caused by the Second World War, the "Cold War", resulting in such "minor" conflagrations as the war in Korea and Viet Nam. They are now behind us. Truly has it been said that capitalism "needs" a war, or wars! Perhaps a new conflict in, say, the Middle East might "solve" the present crisis. Capitalism, at least at the present time, also appears to "need" inflation. And the workers can always be blamed for causing it.

* * *

CRISES and inflation are, therefore, merely aspects of a society which is, economically-speaking, based upon wage-labour and capital, production for profit and the subsequent enslavement of the vast property-less majority, the working class.

Capitalism can be - and is continually being - reformed.

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HERE AND THERE

NATIONALISATION

WITH MONOTONOUS regularity, most of the "left" have been extolling nationalisation and state ownership as being in the workers' interests as well as having something in common with socialism and/or communism. To some, nationalisation is socialism.

Surprisingly, however, some do not agree. Read this:

"Nationalisation is the cure-all held out to workers by the Labour Party... Workers learned long ago what this cure-all really is... If nationalisation does not serve the people, then who does it serve? Not only does it not serve the working class, but it is an actual burden to us, it serves the capitalist class at the expense of the working class. When an industry essential to capitalism is losing money and would close down under private enterprise, or is inefficient, it is nationalised in order to service the rest of capitalism. The railways were nationalised at a time when capitalism needed faster and cheaper transport. The railway companies were unwilling to pay for the standardisation, investment and integration necessary for efficiency..."

And who says this? The Worker (7.3.74), published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), a pro China group. Anarchists and libertarian communists have always said that nationalisation is against the interests of the workers. But what does Mao say? The Worker does not tell us that. After all, most of China's industry is nationalised!

THE "DEMOCRATS" (1)

Mr. Max Morris, a leading Communist Party member and past president of the National Union of Teachers, accuses the Trotskyists (IS, WRP and IMG) in the NUT of being undemocratic, and of "working to overthrow democracy in the union". (The Guardian, 14.3.75)

Those in glasshouses. . .

THE DEMOCRATS (2)

In an unsigned article ("How to Deal with Red Tyrants") in the March, 1975 issue of Spearhead, the writer claims that three NF members in Preston, who were giving out leaflets, "were set upon and beaten up by a large gang of International Socialists and International Marxists". According to Spearhead, their members, which included a 19-year-old girl, were kicked and punched.

So what did the law-abiding defenders of law-and-order of the National Front do about this? Call the police?

No, they waited to the following Saturday; then sent the three youngsters to leaflet the same place. The "red gang" again appeared, and, again according to Spearhead, "charged into what

they thought was going to be another easy smash-up". Thereupon, reports the Spearhead writer gleefully, "They should have looked before they leaped, however, for as they moved in, a large number of tough Preston members who had hidden themselves, moved in behind them and gave the cowardly Reds (who still had the numerical advantage) the thrashing of their lives. A specially good pounding and kicking was given to the IMG organiser and he had to be carted off to hospital."

Shades of the 30s. . .

MILITARY "INTELLIGENCE"

Though the information has been published before, the Socialist Worker (15.3.75) gives its readers the addresses of MI5's three (main?) headquarters. It says that "Leconfield House in Curzon Street in Mayfair is believed to be the

MI5 filing centre. The files are known to run into millions..." Then the "operations centre is in Barnard Road, Battersea, a quiet suburban street - but there, at the bottom of the street is a ramshackle three storey building". And, lastly, there is Floor 16 of Euston Tower, at the top of Tottenham Court Road,

No doubt, a polite enquiry at Leconfield House, Barnard Road or Floor 16 of Euston Tower should confirm the truth of these allegations...

WHO IS IVOR BENSON?

ACCORDING to The Observer (16.3.75), the South African government and a number of pro-government newspapers are apparently losing patience with Rhodesia's Ian Smith for dragging his feet over a "constitutional settlement" with Britain.

Three pro-government Afrikaans newspapers have complained that Rhodesian organisations, such as the Genootskap van Rhodesiese Afrikaners (the neo-

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FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

The old adage about Kronstadt - "tell me where you stand on Kronstadt that I may know who you are and what you are", could as well be applied to the Spanish Revolution (even terminology - "Revolution" rather than "Civil War" is sufficient to label one); therefore I make no apologies for the blatant sectarianism of these "notes".

First of all - of course - lest I be accused of bias, our own publication, Vernon Richards' "Lessons of the Spanish Revolution" (hardback £1.50 + 24p post; paperback £0.75 + 18p post), which both narrates and analyses the path of the Revolution from 1936 to 1939 and draws important conclusions and parallels not only to later developments in Spain but also to what has happened or may still happen elsewhere.

Franz Borkenau's "Spanish Cockpit" (£1.50 + 17p post) is an eye-witness account of the political and social conflicts of the Spanish Revolution in its earlier years, 1936-1937, as well as an extensive historical background to it; Borkenau was one of the few writers who managed accurately to discern the very complex web of intrigue surrounding the events in Spain both inside and outside Spain at the time of the events themselves rather than with the aid of hindsight. Another such was, of course, George Orwell whose "Homage to Catalonia" (£0.45 + 10p post) is still available - a beautifully written book - vivid, accurate and dispassionate, a memorable achievement for one so close to the events of which he writes.

Gerald Brenan's "The Spanish Labyrinth" has just been reissued for the umpteenth time (£2.40 + 18p post) and though written as long ago as 1943, it is still probably the best book on the historical background to the Revolution.

More recently, Sam Dolgoff's "The Anarchist Collectives" (£2.00 + 17p post) contains extracts from the writings of Gaston Leval, Augustin Souchy, Jose Peirats, and others as well as Dolgoff himself on the complex and vitally important issues involved in the collectives in Spain, and the progress of workers' self-management at that time.

Pierre Broué and Emile Témime's mammoth work of scholarship, "The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain" (£6.00 + 46p post) provides important insights into the growth of the working class movement in Spain immediately prior to the revolution, as well as a perceptive analysis of the events of 1936-1939 and the respective parts played by the multitude of groupings involved in those events. There is also a clear and concise account of the military history of the Civil War and its outcome.

Two pamphlets:- José Peirats' "What is the CNT?" (10p. + 5½p. post), a concise and clear statement of the nature and role of the CNT in Spain from its inception in 1911 to the Revolution; and George Woodcock's "The Spanish Collectives" (5p. + 5½p. post), originally published in his "The Basis of Communal Living" and later reprinted in "Collectives in Spain"; a very limited number of this are available as a duplicated pamphlet.

Perhaps one may be forgiven, in conclusion, a slight digression to include Miguel Garcia's memorable book, "Franco's Prisoner" (£2.25 + 17p post) a very moving and inspiring account of twenty years in Franco's jails, as well as Miguel's two short pamphlets, "Looking back after twenty years of jail", (10p. + 5½p. post) and "Spanish Political Prisoners" (10p. + 5½p. post); and also Cienfuegos Press's new Book Club edition of Stuart Christie's translation of Sabate: Guerilla Extraordinary, by Antonio Tellez (£2.35 + 17p post), an important work on the resistance to Franco in Spain in the 40s and 50s.

J.H.

(All the titles in this article are available from Freedom Bookshop, at the prices - plus postage - mentioned.)

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'AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'

FILMS SHOULD be related to a particular cinema. The ancient for the Everyman, the avant garde for the Academy and the solid pornography for the Soho fifty seater. Just as beer, wine and spirits demand their own vessel a film must be savoured in its own cultural environment if one is to absorb the pure intellectual or emotional value (and if that is not worth a £1 in Private Eye's Pseudo Corner then one can only assume that the thing is a private racket worked by the Greek St. boys for the benefit of their associates in the Scotch pub). The Curzon cinema squatting like a broody concrete hen in Michael Arlen's fashionable Mayfair is the only cinema wherein one can believe that one is struggling for ownership of the armrest with a female relation of the Royal Family distaff side and the manager hands out the tickets with the solemn dignity of a Harley Street specialist dishing out sick certificates to Belfast brigadiers who have overstayed their leave, while within the lavatory English sporting prints take the place of the standard graffiti. I pay my 90 pence and join the female baton sinister in the struggle for the armrest and we are ready for Bunuel's 31st film, Phantom of Liberty.

Phantom of Liberty, Curzon Cinema : Ain't Misbehavin',
Focus Cinema : The Great McGonagall, General Release :
The Prisoner of 2nd Avenue, Warner Cinema : Flesh for
Frankenstein : Casino Cinema.

THE TITLE Le Fantome de la Liberté is taken from the opening of Karl Marx's Communist Manifesto - "A spectre is haunting Europe" - and Luis Bunuel offers us the illusions of liberty in a loosely connected series of Lewis Carroll logical inversions. They are foolish who try to read too much into Bunuel's film for it is not particularly profound. It is a good example of well tailored surrealism in which the rational is inverted as in Magritte's paintings. There is a greater distance than time between the Fantome de la Liberté and Un Chien Andalou of 1928 or L'Age d'Or for Bunuel has been accepted into the very establishment that with Dali he once sought to shock, but as with Orson Welles his work demands respect and Le Fantome de la Liberté is a well made, vastly entertaining film that has less shock or social or political protest than at least six nameable American films of the last two years. Bunuel said, while shooting the film, that "it is no longer possible to scandalise people as we did in 1930. Today, you have to do it with sweet subversion. The idea of Le Fantome here is to make people laugh and, when they leave, apprehensive". As the world now knows, the opening scene is of a group of Spanish guerrilleros being lined up to be executed by Napoleon's French soldiers and before the guerrilleros die they chant 'Long live chains' while in the police station scene a copy of Goya's 'Fusillade du 3 Mai' hangs on the wall behind the commissioner. It would be wrong, Alexander Walker of the Standard take note, to reveal too much of the film but a scene wherein a fashionable group of people having first dropped their trousers and panties sit down at table on lavatory seats and talk of the world problem of human shit until one man politely leaves the table to sit in a small room, and having eaten a meal in private rejoins the dining table. This is Bunuel's scatological inversion of normal human behaviour but in 1975 the old shock treatment no longer works. Bunuel has said that "There are those who say I'm cruel and per se. I'm exactly the opposite. I'm ridiculing the fetishes that cause cruelty and perversion. I hate violence and pornography." If you wish to have a heady explanation of Le Fantome de la Liberté then I offer you Serge Silberman's version, and as the producer of Bunuel's last four films he states that Le Fantome is about "le hasard des rencontres - chance meetings", while Jean Claude Carriere who co-scriptwrote Bunuel's last five films says that Le Fantome is "about improvised connections, about escaping the freedom of choice". My advice is simply to enjoy the film as a series of good solid surrealist gags using the same idea but in a different context and then to surrender the armrest to the baton sinister.

Yet for pleasure I joined the dirty mac brigade in Brewer Street in the Soho back streets to enjoy Ain't Misbehavin'. At £1.20 a bucket seat one was conned but in that beautiful sleazy atmosphere it was worth it with an all male audience of heavy breathers. The film itself is a cheap commercial job of old film extracts strung together for a collective mental wank but it was good to see and hear Sophie Tucker, Elsie Carlisle and Fats Waller and all those sad people posturing for the

early camera. What makes the film worthwhile is a few genuine pieces of solid hard core pornography from the days of the early cinema, and these must be genuine film rarities. The golden days of good clean honest filth are gone forever for in those days a youth stumbling into manhood could take a simple honest pride in owning a filthy postcard or of being able to produce a tatty stencilled copy of an obscene ballad, but the middle class have for commercial reasons destroyed this working class folk culture in their mass production of technically efficient erotic magazines. It is for this reason that Bunuel fails and Ain't Misbehavin' succeeds. For brief moments we can watch these ancient examples of the lewd and the filthy in all their primitive splendour as we watch a flickering image of a girl masturbating with a banana, a nun being mounted by a randy priest and all at running speed before the film ran out. Pornography must contain a guilt complex to separate it from the erotic and Mary Whitehouse has done more for this only genuine underground art form than all the directors of all the state art galleries, for like the politics of protest it can only survive on the defensive.

The lights went up and I counted sixty men in the small theatre, there in the tiny foyer a well dressed Soho boy leaned against a wall that carried a sticker advertising a George Melly record of "Ain't Misbehavin'" and against the other wall were three coin-in-the-slot sex film machines and the rain drizzled onto Soho's streets. The Great McGonagall has now one hopes disappeared into that limbo of vulgar snobbish bad taste where it deserves to lie.

William McGonagall was born in 1830 and he was a poet. He churned his doggerel out literally by the yard but he believed he was a poet of talent and in the working men's clubs he was accepted as such. They for their part collected their pennies and McGonagall honoured their gifts. His poetry was bad because he believed that every following line should end in a rhyming word and he lacked the pedant's small craft to make his monumentally bad poetry fifth rate acceptable poetry. The middle class mode of communication has always been the printed word or the public address, and the working class when practising this method of communication always fell into the error of aping the language or the style of the middle class writer or speaker. And this was McGonagall's fault and crime, and for this he has always been held up to public ridicule by his social superiors but visionary inferiors. If he had painted primitive paintings as 'Grandma' Moses, Alfred Wallis the junkman or Henri Rousseau those who jeered would have patronised and accepted him but his crime was to move into their kultural pigsty and they have never let us forget this, from the students of Glasgow University who in 1891 sent McGonagall a nasty, pistaking letter, to this mean and vicious film directed in the worst possible taste by McGrath and with Spike Milligan the Court Clown as McGonagall. In Christ's name McGonagall wrote much bad poetry but lost within the man was a working class poet of some small talent, as one verse among so much rhyming rubbish shows - for his "The Rattling Boy from Dublin" begins "I'm a rattling boy from Dublin town, / I courted a girl called Biddy Brown, / Her eyes they were as black as sloes, / She had black hair and an aquiline nose." If McGonagall had stopped using words like aquiline and simply fallen

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RUNNING OUR OWN ESTATES

TENANTS TAKE OVER, by Colin Ward. (The Architectural Press Ltd., £ 3.95)

HOUSING IN THIS country is divided into three main groups, public, private, and owner-occupier. The third group has, in recent years, expanded while the number of houses owned by the private landlord has been decreasing. Public ownership has also increased. If we compare figures for the year 1914 to those of 1974 we find that the owner-occupier has increased from 9 per cent of the housing stock to 53 per cent, publicly rented housing has increased from 1 per cent to 33 per cent, while the privately rented has decreased from 90 per cent to 14 per cent.

These figures come from Colin Ward's very informative book, *Tenants Take Over*. Under the chapter heading of "The Three Estates" it is shown that in Britain we have a very limited choice of ways of seeking a home. The three listed above are your lot, whereas in other parts of Europe and in America other means of tenancy and ownership are available. These three groups roughly reflect the class and social divisions which we have in this country. As such it divided people: "each category feels that he is subsidising another".

Certainly nowadays it is the owner occupier who receives the tax advantages, while families and single people living in privately rented homes get the worst of all possible worlds. As Colin Ward points out, one of the purposes of the Housing Finance Act was, by increasing council tenants' rents, to get the better off families to become owner-occupiers. After all, who could blame them. Considering the enormous increases under the Act, the same monthly rent could be paid out on a mortgage, and when it was paid off the bricks and mortar would be your own. However, the Act came into force just as house prices went up "far beyond the mortgage-eligibility of the most affluent council tenants. Inflation, which benefits the owner-occupier, penalises the man who rents his home".

So families, whether private or council tenants, are caught up in a trap of ever increasing rents without any chance of ownership and in most cases with no say in the management of their estates or streets. This with the added indignity of no security of tenure. This equally

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back on his native working class speech: "She had black hair and a bonny nose" then he might have made it as a working class ballad maker and there would have been no supercilious laughter in the suburbs. But Milligan, the poetry and you, comrade, are no longer funny.

But we must learn to live with life's small evils and in *The Prisoner of 2nd Avenue* Jack Lemmon and Anne Bancroft fail to come to terms with life in the Big City. It is a film that we can all enjoy for the wit of the writing and the acting of the two leads. It is storywise the old cliché of people failing to come to terms with all the alleged horrors of city life but I believe that there are neurotic cows in this world and the brooding peasantry have provided half the world's literature, so I hold that when you flip it can be the Concorde flying over the high-rise or the buttercups banging together in the field down the road. I respect actors all the more since they have become a common sight in the Town standing in small lonely isolation waiting to kove in for their tiny film role in the TV commercials, and Anne Bancroft and Jack Lemmon gave a good workmanlike comedy performance as the husband and wife breaking up in the complex libing unit that they called home. The film is pure and happy escapism with a happy ending of the two waiting for a snowfall so that they can shovel it onto the neighbour's roof, and the only danger is that it might degenerate into a TV comedy series. But to hell with Bunuel and culture and see the *Prisoner of 2nd Avenue*. As for *Flesh for Frankenstein* directed by Paul Morrissey as an Andy Warhol presentation, it is definitely not for the vegetarians with all those guts in 3-D and all those corpses so. . .

Arthur Moyse.

applies to those tenants who rent from the old charity associations whose paternal attitude towards their tenants is a source of frustration, fear and annoyance equally with that of the remote and bureaucratic approach of the borough councils.

An example of this frustration and the stupid approach by the Lewisham council was recently given to me. A woman told me of the experience of her daughter who wanted to adopt another baby. The adoption society had agreed, except that their present council flat was too small, and the council wouldn't give them a larger flat because they didn't have enough children.

It is this crazy bureaucratic world that people have to deal with that gives tenants an incentive to take over their estates. Such a take-over would give the necessary control which could very easily sort out the problem I have mentioned.

It could, as Colin Ward shows, improve the services and maintenance ("the most bitter complaints from tenants arise over matters of maintenance, repair and renovation. In rented housing, maintenance is the landlord's responsibility, in owner-occupied housing it is, of course, that of the occupier"). As a maintenance worker on a local authority I know from experience that tenants have to wait a long time to have their complaints rectified. The councils just cannot cope and no amount of work-studied schemes on organisation and bonus will put this right. More workers and better quality materials are what is needed.

The book gives a number of examples abroad where tenants have successfully taken over the management of their estates. While in this country, with its high proportion of municipal housing, there are no estates where the "tenants have any control over and any responsibility for the administration of their estate". However in Oslo tenants did take over their estate. This was done with a holding company which secured favourable terms from the municipality and the banks. Tenants became shareholders "in the formation of a tenants' co-operative society". A lot of suspicion was encountered from tenants as many thought the Oslo council just wanted to get the estate off its hands.

In the United States the government is the biggest slum landlord. However, America also provides "an immensely rich variety of housing experiments and experiences. Co-operative, co-ownership or 'condominium' housing projects are successful and important and one remarkable and little publicised fact about American housing is that owner-builders are responsible for 20 per cent of new single-family dwellings constructed annually in the United States and for 12 per cent of all housing begun each year".

This is done in a number of ways from actually doing the building themselves, or acting as general contractors, seeing to the design and financing. Others work alongside hired builders, while some just supervise. Obviously these people would fall within the "middle-income" bracket. Those less well off have taken over on a co-operative basis properties which their landlords have abandoned, or were "unable or unwilling to carry out their maintenance obligations or meet their tax liabilities".

In this country we have a basis for organisation for similar schemes of self-management of estates, namely the tenants' associations. These organisations could carry out these take-overs to give their members the ownership and self management of their homes and estates. Of course these solutions are not revolutionary but they do give tenants control of their environment. It could bring self confidence and a co-operative spirit, instead of the isolation and frustration one encounters today.

Colin Ward in his introduction claims just this for his book when he writes: "This book is not about a radical solution to the class division of property. It proposes a much more modest and more easily obtainable reform, but one which would enhance the real value of one third of the nation's stock of housing by arresting the cycle of instant decline which is the predictable fate of most council housing."

To prevent this, tenants' self management is an answer within our present society. This reform is a worthwhile one which should be considered by tenants. It is a do-it-yourself reform which anarchists should welcome.

It is a pity this book is so expensive, but certainly every tenants' association should have copies which could either be passed around their members or its contents summarised in their bulletins.

Letters in Exile

NOWHERE AT HOME : Letters from Exile of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, edited by Anna Maria and Richard Drinnon, 273 pp. plus index. Schocken Books, New York, \$12.95.

THESE LETTERS should best be read as a supplement to Richard Drinnon's excellent biography of Emma Goldman, *Rebel in Paradise*. The story of these two anarchist rebels is too rich and full to be compressed into any one book, and reading the selection of letters alone leaves one feeling that much seems to be lacking. Whether or not any book of selected letters can or should be more than a supplement, perhaps an appendix, to previously published biographical works is a question to be considered. *Nowhere at Home* presents a wealth of information, intelligently categorized, that is very, very welcome. But I can't escape the feeling that it doesn't quite make it completely on its own.

Perhaps I'm at a disadvantage, having just read through all the letters in the Berkman and Goldman archives at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam (from which all the letters in the book were culled). It would be good if someone else, not working so intimately with the same material, were also to write a review of this book. My perspective may be a bit distorted.

To the book itself: I had hoped that a book on their life in exile would correct the weighting of *Rebel in Paradise*, which I felt skipped too quickly over their personal lives in those latter years. To some extent, that was due to the structure of Drinnon's dissertation which had focused on Emma's life up until her deportation from America. Yet in *Nowhere At Home* I don't find the same desperate sense of being smothered by tragedies, both the personal and the "political", which I felt so acutely in going through the IISH archives. To be sure, there exist in the archives over 500 letters which Berkman had written to various officials, lawyers and friends relative to his three expulsions from France in a 15-month period, and one can't expect to see them all reproduced in any book. Nor would one expect the hundreds of letters on the severe financial plight, the hopes to eke out a fee for translation, typing, or ghostwriting. Maybe these letters just begin to oppress due to their very bulk, the repetitive monotony of them all. A fuller narrative account could have tried to get some of this insistent, nagging misery across better than any selection of letters could. The pure physical agony which seems to have been a constant in the existence of both Berkman and Emma Eckstein is covered better, but the letter of Berkman to Stella Cominsky of June 10, 1936 digs deeper in one way than any of those included: "During ten days I was in convulsion and kept shouting almost continuously. I don't remember any previous occasion when I had yelled with pain, but those ten days I certainly did, and it seemed that the whole ward, patients and visitors alike, were hushed in awe..." It is characteristic of Berkman that in this same letter he immediately goes on to enthusiastically discuss the then-current strike wave in France. Two weeks later he shot himself because of a recurrence of the pain.

Longer introductions to each of the major sections of the book -- "Communism and the Intellectuals", "Anarchism and Violence", "Women and Men", "Living the Revolution" -- could have helped flesh out the book better. The numerous, well-informed footnotes provided do just that. It is disappointing that much more narrative is not provided. The Drinnons know so much but give us frustratingly little of their own knowledge here. The love Drinnon felt for Emma and Sasha and which was manifest in *Rebel in Paradise* is not to evident here. I think allowing the letters to "speak for themselves" was an unwise decision.

In the book's treatment of political themes I also find some shortcomings. The "Anarchism and Violence" chapter I feel was mislabelled. Some of their strongest statements against Communism are not included; they consistently held that Bolshevism was more disastrous than fascism or nazism, though both sprang from the same roots. Along this line, an interesting item can be offered from one of Berkman's letters to "H.W.G." in March, 1933:

One wonders how Hitlerism is possible in a land containing millions of alleged revolutionists. Could there be a more convincing demonstration of the reactionary character and spirit of the German Social Democracy--the Party that has for more than 50 years 'trained German generations' in Marxism? Could there be a better proof of the effect of Marxism itself that has disciplined its followers in blind obedience and worship of the State, of legality, of Law and Order?

since the Revolution of 1918 it has been preparing the way for Hitlerism and a bloody dictatorship.

As to the Communists, poor mouthpieces and dupes of Moscow that they are, they have helped to destroy the initiative and independent activity of the workers, and now they must reap the bitter fruit of their own planting. They have helped create disunity and chaos among the labor elements, they have disorganized the masses, they have trained their followers in the spirit and practice of suppression and taught them to rely implicitly on their Communist leaders, and now their leaders have betrayed and deserted them, as "leaders" usually do in the hour of test and peril.

The greatest tragedy of their lives was not just in seeing the "progressive forces" succumb to the Bolshevik "myth" (this has been well covered by the Drinnons with regard to the intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s). The greater tragedy was in being unable to even begin to do anything about it. Berkman in exile in France was not permitted to engage in any political work, and was even forced to give up his non-partisan relief work for political prisoners in Russia as a condition for his stay in France, which itself was so shaky that as late as 1934 he had had to ask comrades in Belgium not to issue a French translation of his 1922 pamphlet on Kronstadt (in French, Cronstadt). Internal squabbles within the anarchist movement itself (the Arshinov "Platform" group's behaviour, the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* vs. *The Road to Freedom* controversy, and other unpleasant incidents) did not help. The seamy side of the "movement" isn't really dealt with in the letters chosen, but certainly added heavily to the discouraging futility which Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman felt oppressing them.

Some previously unpublished photographs do add a good deal to our appreciation of their lives, and the printing for the first time of Berkman's own aut biographical synopsis is of prime importance. The very brief, 3-paragraph, "Emma Goldman Chronology", intended to bring her life up to 1919, indicates that the Drinnons may well have intended *Nowhere At Home* to serve only as a supplement to the earlier biography of Emma. It is invaluable as such, and constitutes an important addition to our knowledge of two very important anarchists.

Bill Nowlin.

CRISIS OF CAPITALISM. . . Continued from Page 1

But, generally speaking, it cannot be reformed in the interests of the majority. Most reforms enacted by Parliament do not benefit the workers. Some are harmful; most are irrelevant. Social democrats (of the "leftist" variety), as well as a motley crew of Stalinists and Trotskyists, argue that state ownership and control will solve, or help solve, the crisis of capitalism. History should have taught them that it will not. State ownership leaves the workers in the same position as they were previously - still propertyless wage-slaves and, in many ways, virtual slaves of an all-powerful state. State ownership is merely another "reform", though it may be an inevitable trend within capitalism.

Is there, therefore, no solution to the crises of capitalism?

In the long, and short, term there is but one solution: the overthrow of the present "system" of society, and its replacement by a new classless, stateless society based upon free access, and common ownership and control of the world's resources. Whether such a society is brought about sooner or later depends, not on any working-class "leaders" or political "vanguards", but upon the mass of the people themselves. "The emancipation of the working class must be the task of the working class itself". Nevertheless, reliance on some mystique of spontaneity will, in my view, achieve very little - except a reactionary, or "fascist" backlash. If the workers are to achieve their freedom, they will have to prepare for it; they will have to organise themselves, otherwise they will most certainly fail. The word "organisation" seems, for some inexplicable reason, to upset some "libertarians" or "anarchists", possibly because, in fact, they are not really libertarians at all, but merely anarcho-rebels or inverted authoritarians. But to achieve a successful revolution (if that is what they want), libertarians will have to organise for the abolition of our present crisis-ridden society. And the sooner the better. There is no evidence that capitalism will, of itself, collapse, as has been claimed by Bolsheviks and others in the past. It will merely stagger from one crisis to another.

Peter E. Newell.

This article is reprinted from the January, 1975 issue of THE MATCH! where it originally appeared.

IN THE FALL of 1971 Schocken Books of New York reissued Peter Kropotkin's In Russian and French Prisons for the first time since its original publication in 1887, and I contributed an introduction. A few months later, Schocken called me to say that a television network, impressed by Kropotkin's ideas, wanted to invite him to a round-table discussion on prison reform. How delighted Kropotkin would have been, and how amused! I volunteered to put on my false beard and Russian accent, but too late -- they had already gone on the air.

What this incident reveals, apart from the appalling ignorance of the press, is the continued vitality of Kropotkin's ideas almost a century after he expressed them and more than fifty years after his death. Nearly all of his major works - Memoirs of a Revolutionist, Mutual Aid, The Conquest of Bread, Fields, Factories and Workshops, The Great French Revolution, Ethics - have been recently reprinted in several languages. Beyond this, Schocken has reissued the 1950 biography of "the Anarchist prince" by George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic; Dover has reissued Roger Baldwin's useful collection of Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets; Nicolas Walter is preparing the first full English edition of Kropotkin's first collection of anarchist essays, the Words of a Rebel; and Marti Martin Miller, an American historian who has had access to Kropotkin's archives in Moscow and who put together a new Kropotkin anthology in 1970, has completed a new full-length biography which is likely to appear in print before long.

More surprising, however, has been the Kropotkin revival in the Soviet Union, with scholarly articles on his geographical discoveries, his views on economics and revolution, and his history of the French Revolution. A scholarly (though abridged) version of his memoirs has been edited by Valentina Tvardovskaya (is she related to the late courageous editor of Novy Mir?), with a number of fascinating photographs - Kropotkin as a young officer in Siberia, Kropotkin in Clairvaux Prison (taken by the famous French photographer Nadar), Kropotkin in England, Kropotkin and his daughter Sasha - that were previously unpublished. Tvardovskaya, who praises Kropotkin for his "vast almost encyclopedic erudition", reveals that his archives in Moscow (largely appropriated from the Kropotkin Museum, closed on Stalin's orders in 1939) contains not only the childhood journals of Kropotkin and his brother, but but also his English translations of Tolstoy, Pushkin, Ryleev, and Griboedov, and of the famous mediaeval epic, The Song of Igor's Campaign (of which there is a remarkable modern translation by Vladimir Nabokov), as well as other important materials.

One is struck by Tvardovskaya's frank appraisal of Emelian Yaroslavsky's Stalinist history of Russian anarchism as "an accusatory rather than a scholarly" work. Most startling of all, however, is her remark that Kropotkin,

KROPOTKIN LIVES!

from his house in Dmitrov, wrote "many letters to the highest organs of Soviet authority, some twenty of them addressed to Lenin personally". Hitherto we knew of only three letters from Kropotkin to Lenin; one of March 4, 1920, which criticized (among other things) the subjugation of the local soviets by the Bolshevik party; a second (the date is not to hand) which protested against state censorship of literature; and a third, of December 21, 1920, which condemned the taking of hostages. Now, however, it is revealed that he wrote some twenty letters to Lenin, not to mention those to other government officials. These letters were written between the summer of 1918, when Kropotkin moved from Moscow to Dmitrov, and January 1921, when he suffered his fatal illness and his strength finally gave out. That means a letter every two or three weeks (how one would like to see them!). No wonder, according to some reports, this unceasing barrage caused Lenin to ask impatiently when the "old fool" would stop pestering him. (To Kropotkin's criticisms during their meeting in May 1919 Lenin replied: "You can't make a revolution wearing white gloves.").

Natalian Pirumova also mentions these letters in her new biography of Kropotkin, but tells us little else about them. Kropotkin, she says, wrote to Lenin "several times", criticizing the use of terror by the Bolsheviks and calling for greater independence for the local soviets and for the encouragement of a mass cooperative movement. She refers to a previously unknown letter of September 17, 1918, without, however, divulging its contents. She also cites the famous letter of March 4, 1920, but without going into the details of Kropotkin's arguments. Some of these are worth quoting at length (the emphasis is Kropotkin's):

"One thing is certain. Even if a party dictatorship were the proper means to strike a blow at the capitalist system, (which I strongly doubt) it is positively harmful for the building of a new socialist system. What is needed is local construction by local forces. Yet this is absent. It exists nowhere. Instead, wherever one turns there are people who have never known anything of real life committing the most flagrant errors, errors paid for in thousands of lives and in the devastation of whole regions

"... Such construction from below, it would seem, would be best undertaken by the soviets. But Russia has already become a Soviet Republic only in name. The influx and bossism of party men, predominantly fledgling Communists (the ideological old timers are mainly in the large centres), have already destroyed the influence and creative strength of these much-vaunted institutions, the soviets. At present it is not the soviets which rule in Russia but the party com-

mittees. And their constructive ability suffers from all the inefficiencies of bureaucratic organization.

"To escape from the existing dislocation, Russia must rely on the creativity of local forces, which, as I see it, can become a factor in the building of a new life. The sooner this is understood the better, and the more will people be inclined to adopt social forms of life.

"If, however, the present situation is allowed to continue, the very word 'socialism' will become a curse, as happened in France with the idea of equality for forty years after the rule of the Jacobins."

Not a word of this in Pirumova's book. Nor is this an isolated example of her failure to tell the whole story. She relates for instance how Lenin sent a team of doctors to Dmitrov when Kropotkin fell ill with pneumonia in January, 1921, but makes no mention of Dr. Atabekian, Kropotkin's faithful disciple, who stayed by his bedside until the end and was afterwards imprisoned by the Cheka. Similarly, she dwells on Lenin's admiration for the history of the French Revolution that Kropotkin had written (a subject previously dealt with in Soviet academic journals by E. V. Starostin and V. G. Revunenko). In February of 1919, we are told, Lenin sent an emissary to Dmitrov to propose the republication of the great anarchist's works - Memoirs of a Revolutionist, Mutual Aid, and especially The Great French Revolution, "excellent books", Lenin called them - in an edition of 60,000 copies. At their meeting in the Moscow apartment of Vladimir Bonch-Bruевич alluded to above (which, as Starostin has established, took place on May 3, 1919 and not between May 8 and 10, as Bonch-Bruевич wrote) Lenin again broached the subject. (On yet another occasion, according to Woodcock and Avakumovic, the Commissar of Education, A. V. Lunacharsky, offered to pay a sum of 250,000 rubles to publish Kropotkin's collected works.) But Pirumova does not tell us Kropotkin's reply: that he had not taken a copeck from the state in the past and did not intend to do so now. His works were reissued instead by the anarchist publishing house of Golos Truda (The Voice of Labour), with The Great French Revolution appearing in 1922, the year after Kropotkin's death.

Pirumova, the author of previous biographies of Herzen and Bakunin, adds little to our knowledge of Kropotkin's life. She completely ignores Western scholarship on Kropotkin and on the anarchist movement as a whole. She has, however, examined Kropotkin's papers in the Soviet state archives, citing his Canadian diary of 1897, his Russian diary of the revolutionary period, his correspondence with Georgi and Lydia Gogelia, Jean Grave, Christian Cornelissen, and others, much

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of which is unavailable in the West. She also quotes extensively from his letters to Maria Goldsmith (the originals, she should have pointed out, are in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris). Among the illustrations in her book are three previously unpublished photographs of considerable interest: Kropotkin's wife Sophie as a young woman, Kropotkin and Sophie seated on a bench in a Dmitrov garden, and Kropotkin standing with the staff of the Dmitrov museum, which shows him to have been neither short nor stocky (as he is often described) but of medium height and build.

More significant is Pirumova's generally sympathetic attitude to her subject. She quotes Bonch-Bruévich's statement that Kropotkin's heart "beat for all humanity". She praises his research on ethics and natural science as well as on the French Revolution. She has further praise for Sergei Kravchinsky (Stepniak) and Dmitri Klements, Kropotkin's closest associates in the Chaikovsky Circle, as well as for Mark Natanson and Dr. Orest Weimar, who organized his sensational escape from the Saint Petersburg Military Hospital in 1876. She describes the French anarchist Elisee Reclus as "a philosopher and encyclopedist, geographer and biologist, traveller and thinker, a man of rare spiritual purity and great moral stature", and she calls his brother Elie "a man of great courage and lofty ethical principles". Again, she praises the Swiss anarchist James Guillaume as "a man of broad and diverse education", while criticizing Marx's supporter Nicholas Utin for being "prone to use intrigue and falsification" against his political opponents.

How refreshing this is coming from a Soviet historian! She tells us that the famous Populist Vera Figner corresponded regularly with Kropotkin after the Bolshevik Revolution, often visited his house at Dmitrov, once sending him, as a present, a hen. (After his death, it might be added, Figner attended Kropotkin's funeral and served on the committee of the Kropotkin Museum.) Pirumova even mentions that several anarchists were released from prison to attend Kropotkin's funeral "on their word of honour to return" (which none of them violated, incidentally).

Not that she is without criticism of Kropotkin's anarchist philosophy. She takes him to task for his "exaggeration of mediaeval liberties" and for adopting a utopian approach to society that was remote from the framework of "scientific socialism". She criticizes the vagueness of anarchist economic and political theory, quoting the following passage from Lenin's essay on "Anarchism and Socialism": "Anarchism for the 35 or 40 years of its existence has offered nothing but general phrases against exploitation." In doing so she commits a number of errors of fact and especially of interpretation, while employing her familiar device of distortion by omission. Yet her attitude throughout remains respectful and without the slander and vituperation of Stalinist historiography. In short, this is probably the most objective biography of Kropotkin that contemporary Soviet scholarship would allow and as such we must be grateful for its appearance.

To conclude, as I began, with an odd and amusing story -- in 1973, about a year after the television invitation men-

-tioned above, I received a card from the British publishers of *Mutual Aid* and *The Conquest of Bread*. It announced their removal to new offices in London and was addressed to "Mr. Peter Kropotkin".

Kropotkin lives!

Paul Avrich.

INTERROGATIONS

NUMBER 2 of the "international review of anarchist research" has come out on time. (Available from Freedom Bookshop 90p + 11p post.)

It contains articles by Jean Barroué (in French) on the revival of Saint-Simon's ideas of continual increase in production by modern "capitalist" and "socialist" technocrats, and an anarchist opposition to such ideas; by Fernando Gomez-Pelaez (in Spanish) on the falsification of history by Santiago Carillo, the leader of the Spanish Communists, in a recent book-length "interview" with two servile historians, Régis Debray and Max Gallo; by Carlos Semprun-Maura on the May '68 revolt in France, which he sees as "the best example of a revolutionary crisis in our modern world"; and by Nico Berti (in Italian) on how to understand anarchism historically. The magazine is again 132 pages long, and well worth buying if you're handy with a dictionary. Its editor is Luis Mercier Vega, son of a French father and a Chilean mother, two of whose books, *Roads to Power in Latin America* and *Guerrillas in Latin America* have been published in this country and should be available from your public library.

D. L. M.

Postscript to 'Tenants Take Over'

R A D I O

THE POSSIBILITIES put forward in *Tenants Take Over* have received some wider coverage than dissemination to the buyers of a book of this price. The BBC's new "This Island Now" series (Radio 4, Sundays, 10.15 p.m.) began with *Housing - Service with a stigma*. One of the least successful council estates, in Southwark, south-east London, was chosen, and some of the tenants voiced their unhappiness. Aylesbury Estate, is the outcome of an effort of heroic proportions by Southwark council to overcome a gigantic need. The size of it was the foremost cause of the tenants' depression - plainly aesthetically offensive to these ordinary working-class people - and one after another the few voices recorded from among the ten thousand people housed in this estate indicated the mass anonymity of their population. "It cuts you off from people - neighbourliness is non-existent. You don't hear and you don't see people" (the flats are virtually sound-proof). "I feel sorry for old people who cannot get out, but the flats are very nice. . . If I had a nice house and garden - not that I could do much gardening, but you could go out and even see the next door neighbour in a garden." A man did not agree that the flats were all that nice. "We have got central heating but it's not always working, neither are the lifts. I find it impossible to clean my bedroom windows... you have either got to be a monkey or an acrobat" (hear, hear, from other tenants). "(The estate would not be too big) if they had built somewhere where you could go walking in the park. I am glad to get away from here for a weekend with my daughter in

Dartford... but I would feel sorry for the people whose daughters are in Australia."

Colin Ward defined the distinction between a house and a home as the home being a house which is loved by the people who are in it - a sign of the house which is loved is that it is not like the one next door. It was Colin Ward and the two architects on the programme who diagnosed the cause of the depressive symptoms as the fact that people do not house themselves, they are housed; they referred to the restriction on the freedom of even the planning local authority imposed by Whitehall cost limitations (and Colin Ward pinpointed the falsity of the economy in the case of the particular estate they were talking about, with a costly repair bill less than three years after its completion); one commented that some of the drawbacks and dissatisfactions specified by these council tenants were accepted by people buying their houses, having made their own choice and value judgement within the existing circumstances.

A cold draught was blown in by a Nottingham councillor who feared that handing over the management of estates to their tenants might not result in the lowering of cost of maintenance and repairs envisaged by the other speakers: the better tenants would carry out repairs but less able and 'problem' families would never do this. He also feared the exclusion of, say, coloured families and single-parent families from estates run by tenants' co-operatives. Possibly. There will be people with problems in any society and the working class is not necessarily freer from prejudice than the middle-class owner occupiers they might become. But it's a thin excuse for blocking the way to the very co-operation and self direction that could lead to release from prejudice through a measure of joy in living and a deeper understanding of problems in the sharing of resolving them.

M. C.

LETTER

OF MAN AND REVOLUTION
(The Nation State)

Comrades!

When I began reading in 8 February issue of your journal the comments of your correspondent, H. B., on my recent FREEDOM article on the Nation State, my reaction was one of surprise that such criticism could come from a fellow anarchist and I wondered what possible corn of H. B.'s I had trodden on. Then came the answer at the end of the letter. For to my even greater surprise I discovered that H. B. was not an anarchist at all but a statist and an "unrepentant workers republican" to boot.

The aim of a workers republic is indeed a praiseworthy one and if built by the masses in Ireland or England would indeed make these two nation-states far more progressive than they are at this moment in time. But, however praiseworthy the standpoint of H. B. is, it is at the same time a very limited one. And its inherent limitations are shown in the kind of criticisms made of my article.

For instance, H. B. says that "the nation state as we know it is a comparatively recent development", and then he flips back the pages of history to show how very different France, Germany and Italy were several hundred years ago. Leaving aside the fact that the European nation-states of today are technologically-advanced ones and are thus very different from their counterparts of the past, what H. B. fails to comprehend is that the nation-state is not a mechanical structure built like a skyscraper but is a bio-cultural organism which develops gradually over a long period of time. The France, Germany and Italy of several hundred years ago were undeveloped nation-states whose integrating bonds of mind, on the one hand, and national socio-economic systems, on the other, were at an embryonic stage of development. The nation-state belongs to an entirely different temporal dimension from ourselves. While the life of a man can be measured in a few score years, at most, that of a nation-state may endure for thousands of years. Old China and Ancient Egypt are two good examples of the longevity of such bio-cultural organisms. Furthermore, in spite of what H. B. seems to think, these latter societies were well-developed pre-industrial nation-states. While the technologically-developed nation-state is indeed a modern phenomenon and differs from the traditional state societies - particularly in its industrial capitalist (and state capitalist) socio-economic system and in its tightly organised and highly centralised structures, it is essentially the same kind of bio-cultural organism as former city-states and nation-states, and is even more of a social dinosaur because its capacity for destruction and repression is so much greater.

Contrary also to what H. B. asserts, I

have not "seriously underestimated the importance of the economic factor in history". But I do not exaggerate its importance as Marxists do to the neglect of other vital factors such as the psychological ones

World government organisations do exist. I was once an official of one called The Mondcivitan Republic (Mondcivitan is the Esperanto term for world-citizen) which has branches in some eighty countries. While no organisations of this kind have what could be considered anarchist aims, the mere fact that they are seeking to transcend the anachronistic political divisions on our planet give them a libertarian character. Their internationalism may be that of the liberal-bourgeois variety (and indicates the gradual formation of a world consciousness), but isn't this something to be encouraged since there is so little proletarian internationalism visible nowadays. (I am still waiting to hear the news of mass strikes of English workers showing their solidarity with Omani and Irish workers and peasants struggling against British Imperialism, in general, and the imperialistic policies of the present British Labour Government, in particular).

As for my view of the "class struggle being utterly simplistic", perhaps it is. But then my revolutionary ideas were not got from detailed academic analysis but were born of the experience of real life struggles I and my fellow workers took part in over many years. And from the point of view of a manual worker, as I still am, the nature of our present social system can be described in very simple terms, and so being a practical person I tend to see the main outlines

HERE and THERE... Cont'd from P. 2

whites support them. One such person is Mr. Ivor Benson. In a recent television programme on Rhodesian TV, Benson interviewed a Mr. Mees Neethling, a leading member of the South African Verkrampste, the extreme right-wing, neo-Nazi Herstigste Nasionale Party.

Who, then, is Ivor Benson?

The Observer writer, Stanley Uys, says that he writes for the extreme right-wing newspaper, the Afrikaner, and is a "soul mate" of the American "John Birch Society". But he does more than that.

Ivor Benson, who lives in Durban, but has also lived in Britain as well as in Rhodesia, has written a number of books and booklets (such as The Opinion Makers and A Message from Southern Africa), has broadcast on South African and Rhodesian radio, and was employed, during Nazi Broederbond which has connections with the South African BOSS (secret police), have been inviting well-known South African right-wingers to Rhodesia to tell the Rhodesian whites that South African the 60s following UDI, by the Rhodesian government as Information Adviser. Mr. Benson also edits and publishes a

and am rightly indifferent to the irrelevant details which armchair radicals are so prone to discuss at length.

So far as a workers republic is concerned, what else would an Irish Workers Republic or an English Workers Republic be but another nation-state. While a libertarian socialist might use the image or notion of a workers republic as a propaganda tactic, it should never be seen as an actual goal. A truly libertarian (anarchist) revolution just cannot take place in one country. It must be both transnational in nature and multi-national in scope if it is to succeed.

Finally, we are much closer to a libertarian planetary civilization than H. B. realises. The economic and technological basis for a planetary society has already been created. The next step is for the working masses of the world to demolish the existing social superstructure and to build a new (anarchist) one in its place, a social superstructure suited to the requirements of our times. But before we can begin to even do this we must first get rid of our mental cobwebs (of which H. B. appears to have more than his fair share). And this is one reason why I wrote "Of Man and Revolution". Judging by the amount of comment it has already received, I think it is going to succeed in its aim of jerking socialists out of the ideological rut they have been in for far too long. (As a matter of interest, the full text of "Of Man and Revolution" with certain additions to the parts already published in FREEDOM is now being produced in (duplicated) pamphlet form and copies are available free from P. O. Box 10368, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.)
Fraternally,
Michael Tobin.

monthly newsletter entitled Behind the News. His newsletter is virulently anti-communist, anti-Zionist, anti-"international finance", and pro-Apartheid. It is a neo-Nazi newsheet.

Besides writing and appearing on Rhodesian TV, Mr. Benson also visits other countries outside Africa. He has travelled to Australia, the United States and Britain, where he has lectured to invited audiences.

And, in Britain, who arranged for Mr. Benson to speak?

When he lectured last in this country, in December 1972, the meeting was held at Conway Hall, and was organised and sponsored by Albion Press. And Albion Press? They are the publishers of Spearhead, who are, in fact, John Tyndall and Martin Webster of National Front notoriety.

Indeed, Tyndall and Webster appear to think very well of Mr. Benson and his views. His diatribes are regularly featured in the columns of Spearhead. One wonders whether readers of Spearhead and the ordinary rank-and-file members of the NF know about Mr. Benson's dubious connections in Southern Africa - or care, for that matter.