

SOCIAL BONDAGE

LARGE-SCALE PRIVATE enterprise and its wife the State, are the main support of its prostitute, the Unions' bureaucracy. The mass media, however, constantly tells us such obvious "truths" as the "facts" that the unions are too powerful; that unless unions moderate their wage demands we will "sink into an even deeper crisis situation"; that the unions are "holding the country to ransom" regardless of the consequences; that communists, anarchists, international socialists, troskyists and so forth are using the unions to achieve their own ends, under orders from the Kremlin, etc., etc. ...

As regard the first of these assertions we agree that the unions are too powerful. Our objection stems from the fact that the union bureaucracy is using this power to support an excuse for a poor man's socialist government and the directorships which await these cabinet ministers when their time in office ends. If this power had belonged to the workers who sweat to provide themselves with food and shelter, and the union bureaucrats with plush offices, then we would have no objection. Self-control of work and the workplace is essential in order to achieve freedom from the parasites ruling us now.

For well over a year now Len Murray has been using his influence to try and persuade union leaders to, in turn, persuade the workers they represent not to rock the boat and thus ruin the beautiful relationship between the State and union bureaucrats which only a Labour government can give a semblance of respectability to. People being employed and earning a living wage seems to turn the stomachs of the CBI and the government alike, as does any form of meagre compensatory assistance which is grudgingly doled out. Hence as soon as a "crisis" (for whom?) starts to ap-

pear, the multinationals threaten to withdraw to the womb of mother America, attempts are made to keep wages down, deflationary policies are put into effect thus causing unemployment, social services are cut, etc., etc. ...

Nevertheless we are told that these sacrifices have to be made in order to help the old, the weak, the unemployed, etc. ... Therefore, in a period of national crisis a government of sound mind will invariably advocate putting the slim on a slimming diet, kicking the patient in the National Health bed, making housing more difficult to obtain for the homeless.

The union bureaucrats masochistically support these policies in the name of the social contract. Len Murray, Joe Gormley, Jack Jones, Tom Jackson, Sidney Greene, Geoffrey Drain, etc. all wish to be seen to be doing the "sensible" thing since they are all on a good screw and don't wish to lose their place in the bed. It was pitiful to hear Joe Gormley at the Miners' conference in Scarborough telling miners' delegates that they were "drunk with power". It was good, however, to hear Scargill referring to the Social Con-Trick by its proper name.

The parasites who haunt the conference halls with their "sensible" bleatings help to perpetuate the myth that rising wages are the main cause of inflation. Even a brief look at any country where unions either do not exist or are controlled strictly will show that inflation in these countries is at an unheard of level compared with that in Britain. The role of private enterprise is hardly ever mentioned. The only comment that a "sensible" minister is allowed is allowed is to refer to some form of price control. Tony Benn (Viscount Stansgate) has found that any substantial criticism of the way in which private enterprise functions will result in removal to a less explosive position. Eric Varley was promptly called in to water down the provisions of the Industry Bill as soon as the old ways of private enterprise were substantially threatened. Of course, when workers decide to take over these industries (i.e. "steal" it back from the original thieves) switching the appropriate puppets round to provide the right sort of legislation will be to no avail.

Evidence exists to suggest that a firm like Unilevers were telling blatant lies during the 1930s depression when they made many people redundant, cut workers' wages, etc. because of the economic crisis. Their profits were later seen to be actually rising during that time. The reason was that the Depression was being used as a front to hide the nastier side of rationalisation. They rationalised their production not because they were suffering economic difficulties but because they desired even greater profits. We were told lies during the depression by private enterprise and the

DOES MONEY MATTER?

"PROVIDED THERE is unemployed labour and plant available, it can be argued that money can be 'created' to hire this labour and plant and put it into production without leading to any general rise in the price of commodities, because the output of the newly-employed labour and plant will, when it comes into the market, be bought with just that money which has been called into existence to get the plant and labour into production."

These words come from a volume of essays (permeated with nostalgia) by Oscar R. Hobson in *The News Chronicle* during 1941 and 1942, gathered under the significant title "Does Money Matter?"

During the last weeks, months, years or perhaps decades and centuries, we have been perplexed, menaced, battered and sometimes amused by the problem of the existence or non-existence of money. There is corny sentiment about money -- money doesn't bring happiness -- money isn't everything -- you can't buy good health. These platitudes have sufficient truth about them to allow them to pass for wisdom. Indeed, the prevalent denunciation of "materialism" mainly launched by the well-off, bases itself upon the old folk myths.

But faced with the sordid materialism of landlords, shopkeepers, gas, water and electricity authorities, rates and tax officials, we must necessarily think that money matters, and go to work in order to get enough money (in the words of Jack London) "to keep up our strength enough to go to work". Sometimes, about three o'clock in the morning, we feel that this is not good enough, and lives of quiet desperation can get a little noisy.

As Hobson shows, it was demonstrated during the war that, given financial controls, a colossal inflation can be kept within bounds. It was not necessary during the war to pay in money for any of the continuous stream of goods given away; including food, clothing and shelter for the Forces and the various fiendish and expensive mechanical devices dropped free of charge upon our current enemies. Indeed such devices as war savings, Spitfire funds were more for the purpose of morale-boosting.

In view of this the current preoccupation with inflation and the emphasis by some on the necessity of cutting back on social services rings hollow. If we can 'pay' for a war by inflation why cannot we 'pay' for constructive schemes by the same method?

It would be wearisome and unprofitable to go through the proposed 'cures' for



"CHARGE! But only six paces."

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government. How do we know we are not being told lies again?

The Confederation of British Industry in their advice to Chancellor Denis Healey last week proposed that there should be a maximum limit on pay rises of £ 5 or 15 per cent, whichever was the lower. The reason given for this proposal was that a rise of a flat £ 6 per week would cause difficulty to firms with a large lowly-paid labour force. At the same time however they suggested that the upper limit at which pay rises should stop should be raised to £ 15,000 per annum. The TUC in their worst hour of treachery suggested to Denis Healey that pay rises should be limited to £ 6 per week for everyone earning less than £ 7000 per annum, and that rises in deals already agreed but not yet paid should be pruned in line with the £ 6 limit. Both the CBI and the TUC were agreed that a special CBI-TUC panel should be set up to vet cases for arbitration. The government has, therefore, been given the go-ahead to increase our economic crisis in the name of solving the nation's economic problems.

It is painfully noticeable that the CBI and the TUC proposals were not different in substance. They merely differed in terms of amounts to be paid whilst agreeing that an attack on our living standards is essential in order to increase theirs.

The TUC has shown itself quite capable and willing to "hold the country to ransom", and they are being backed in the attempt by the CBI and the Government.

Unlike an ordinary prostitute, the TUC has given itself to the State and private enterprise not in order to earn some material benefit but in order not to lose the privileged position which these bureaucrats already have. If they take too militant a stance they fear that they will be labelled Commies, Trots, anarchists, Maoists, etc. —and thus lose their power after a vicious press campaign.

Was it "fear" that was the motivation for the growth of the labour movement in the first place? Of course not, because the labour movement was actually campaigning for the rights of the workers it claimed to represent. For a long time now the TUC has been sleeping in the same bed as the CBI and the Government. It finds that it is nice and warm between the sheets and fears being relegated to the position of "red under the bed". They are on a better "screw" with the "blues in the bed" ! N. S.

does money matter?

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inflation. It is significant that the Irish Free State (now also a member of the E. E. C.) has taken opposite measures to those generally commended, viz. increased social services, subsidised employment and increased income tax, to deal with inflation. In Argentina it is apparently thought that a 100% increase in wages is not harmful. It is probable that there is no known cure for inflation, it is probably endemic and co-existent with capital, profit and interest, which are all cost inflationary.

But what has been demonstrated is that the preoccupation of the trade unions, in the present set-up, with the wage-structure is futile, since whatever wage gains are forced out of un-

willing bosses are absorbed by increases in prices which inevitably follow (or precede) by some mystic economic law or sheer capitalistic cunning.

The emphasis by syndicalists and anarcho-syndicalists on workers' control was and is obviously right. That this doctrine has been taken over and watered down by various other political groupings is a testimony to their opportunism and the basic truth of the idea.

The revolutionary idea of the 40-hour week has been distorted into a basis for overtime which is a further extension of the gilded chains which the monetary system has welded about us. The hope centered on mass production and increased leisure has merely served to hasten the accumulation of stockpiles, and the invention of these machines has not saved one minute of man's time.

Given the sordid practicality of the Trade Union movement it is obvious that the only thing they could do is to come to a practical arrangement with the government of the day to try and keep the boys in line. But practicality is far removed from idealism, which was the foundation of the Trade Union movement. Paraphrasing what Oscar Wilde said, The practical is what exists in society today. It is just this society we oppose. Therefore we must be impractical.

It was impractical, by all standards, to run a war. We must demand the impossible. Not just £100 a week or even £100 a day but the abolition of the wage system, the profit system, the money system. Money does not matter. Real wealth is life.

Jack Robinson.

PRETEXT FOR REPRESSION

BAADER-MEINHOF TRIAL

SO FAR all the requests of the defence lawyers at the Baader-Meinhof trial have been systematically refused. The one exception is that the accused are no longer brought before their judges in the concrete hall in chains. Since the start of the trial the defence has tried to get "neutral" doctors to examine Baader, Esslin, Meinhof and Raspe, but in vain. And this despite the statement of the prison doctors at Stammheim, according to which he had never seen harsher conditions of detention than those imposed on the four members of the Red Army Fraction.

The court has also refused Heldmann's request for a ten-day postponement to study the fifty thousand pages of dossier.

So that the prosecution could find out the strategy of the defence, the lawyers Croissant and Stroebele were arrested and their papers confiscated. Now the

new lawyers are having to face the same threats. The plan is evidently to rob the trial of all political substance, taming the defence into an instrument of the state.

It has been noted that, under cover of the fight against terrorism, the Federal authorities and the Länder are preparing to change the law with consequences that go well beyond the "Baader-Meinhof law". Following alterations of the penal and penal procedure codes, considerably cutting down on the rights of the defence, the Länder are now formulating a law permitting the police to use weapons far more quickly and far more often; and the minister of the interior of Baden-Württemberg has just presented a bill which would allow the police to search without a warrant and to make arrests "within certain sectors" where, for example, they feel a hostage may be found there.

Now thirty professors of law have written in protest to the Chancellor.

IN BRIEF

BILL DWYER (former contributor of 'This World' in FREEDOM) was jailed for two years (in fact: six months for offences connected with Windsor Pop Festival plus implementation of a suspended two-year sentence for a drug conviction). The six months was the 'maximum possible' on the Windsor charges of assault, damaging a fire-tender and police-cell windows and 'assaulting a Detective Superintendent'. The judge said in passing sentence that he had to implement the previous drug sentence because at Windsor Bill Dwyer has encouraged young people to break the law 'by smoking cannabis in quantities when they could not possibly be stopped'. Bill Dwyer is already serving a sentence for contempt in breaking a High Court order not to publicize the alleged holding of a putative festival this year ostensibly at Windsor on 23 August possibly. Bill Dwyer is appealing. The appeal of Sid Rawle against a similar sentence for contempt was dismissed.

A NIGERIAN freelance journalist who claimed he brought 7,560 grams of cannabis from Pakistan to get background for a book about the drug traffic was sentenced to three years' imprisonment at Middlesex Crown Court. The leader of Italy's Radical Party smoked hashish in public to protest against the drug laws. He was jailed, and later given 'provisional liberty'.

FIFTY LAWYERS demonstrated with placards outside the West German Embassy in London, in protest against the arrest of two defence lawyers acting in the Baader Meinhof trial. A deputation from the Haldane Society and the Solicitors' Human Rights Group presented a letter to the Ambassador.

1926 AND NOW

EXCEPT - FOR a small minority of trade unions it looks as though the Labour Government has succeeded in its bid to hold down wages to a £6 a week increase for the forthcoming year. In this they had had the very active support of a number of trade union dignitaries. We have seen the usual retreats, from not only the right wing in the unions but also the left. Indeed one such union leader, Mr. Jack Jones, has probably used up more energy and time than most to gain support for a 'voluntary' acceptance of a limit on wages.

Len Murray, the general secretary of the TUC, has also shifted his position from one where wages should keep in step with inflation to his present position of support for the government.

The history of the working class is peppered with episodes of leaders shifting or completely changing their position on issues. The same class is constantly being urged to fight these 'betrayals' but the whole point is to organise so that one does not have leaders to be betrayed by. It is the like of Jack Jones who pose as the champions of the working class (and the old age pensioners) who can best pull off the type of collaboration we are now witnessing between the government, the trade union leaders and the employers.

But the lessons of such collaboration are to be learned from putting faith in leaders. In 1926 the working class suffered one of its worst defeats in its history. One of the main reasons was the faith in leadership. The then leadership of the trade unions called off the general strike because they were afraid of the consequences of their action. Even at the start, it was the unofficial action of print workers at the Daily Mail, who refused to print an anti-strike article, that struck first. Although the TUC had voted in favour of a general strike in support of the locked-out miners, those leaders still went back to Downing Street to beg the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, for some way to find a compromise. To the end they grovelled before the Tory Prime Minister to try and avoid a confrontation with the state.

While the state had been preparing for such a battle for the previous nine months, the TUC had done little or nothing. When the strike did commence, they tried to restrict it. At no time did the TUC want to take on the state. But the situation soon developed where the control of the strike was passing from the leadership to the rank and file. It was this situation that the broadcast of May 7 was made to help prevent: "All ranks of the Armed Forces of the Crown are hereby notified that any action which they may find it necessary to take in an honest endeavour

to aid the Civil Power will receive, both now and afterwards, the full support of His Majesty's Government."

The strike did have revolutionary potential, but the leadership of the trade unions had enough control over their members to prevent this potential building up to a social revolution. Many of the establishment outside the government were alarmed at the way things were going. Some wanted the miners' lock-out notices withdrawn and a renewal of the coal subsidy. Even King George was, according to J. R. Clynes, "gravely disturbed" and said to J. H. Thomas, the railwaymen's leader, "If the worst happens, I suppose all this--" (with a gesture indicating his surroundings) "will vanish?" Clynes concludes: "Fortunately for Britain and the world, it did not come to the worst. The Trade Unions saw to that."

The trade union leaders of 1926 were prepared to allow the miners to continue their struggle on their own. They allowed thousands of returning workers to be victimised, others to face wage cuts and the sack. The miners

when they were finally forced back to work because they were starving, faced wage cuts, daily hours increased from seven to eight and the national agreement replaced by district agreements.

The 1926 general strike has been the trade union leaders' nightmare. Since then the trade unions have become more integrated into the establishment of the employers and the state. Tom Brown's pamphlet, The British General Strike, said the workers were "Lions led by Rats". Today their leaders are the willing allies of the state seeking to curb and restrict the demands of the working class. They are the policemen without a uniform, with their suits and smooth talk as weapons. But the outcome remains the same. As in 1926 it will be the producers of wealth and their families who will suffer in order to pull capitalism out of its present crisis.

The present leadership of the TUC had no option but to collaborate with the government because they knew their opposition could have led to another general strike. Not one of them has the stomach for that.

P. T.

Industrial Co-operatives

WHEN TOM MANN called upon the miners' union to invest their funds in a co-operative coal mine he may have been doing so more in hope than in confidence, aware as he must have been that the union's funds were invested in capitalist enterprises -- today the same union has shares in ICI, Unilever, Barclays, Shell, to name only a few. Similarly, whether the railroad workers who struck in 1911 knew it or not, the conservatism of their union bosses owed much to the fact, disclosed in the Daily Herald for December 11, 1912, that a large part of their reserve fund was invested in shares in the railroad companies they were in dispute with, several of these companies being bitter opponents of trade unionism. It is not surprising, therefore, that the initial capital required to start an industrial co-operative was not forthcoming from the unions, and the political atmosphere of the period ruled out the possibility of the government authorising the banks to grant credit for the purpose.

Between then and now we have had the ill-fated Building Guilds in the 1920s, but only within this past couple of years has a small start been made in a sphere of activity which has received scant attention from the left-wing press, principally because too many left-wing sects are interested only in situations which they themselves can control.

At least two industrial co-ops are functioning in these islands at present, one of them in the small Ulster town of Dungannon and the others at Triumph Meriden at Coventry, in both cases the initial capital having been supplied by the government. The Dungannon co-op involves not more than thirteen men originally taken from the dole queue and trained in basic engineering skills. Today, they have repaid the government loan, manage their own factory, and are already planning to recruit new members. The co-op at Triumph is, of course, on a much larger scale

but both enterprises have much in common apart from the fact that they were originally government aided; for one thing all who are engaged in both enterprises are paid the same wage and it seems that one of the most sacred cows of craft unionism -- that wage differentials must always be maintained regardless -- has been put to the death.

The smaller scale co-op in Dungannon has already surmounted the difficulties involved in self-management but, understandably, Coventry has still some way to go but they too will help prove that management is just another practical function that can be learned. In fact, to judge from past experience elsewhere, the worker-directors in Coventry are likely to prove better managers than the old. This happened in Italy where industrial co-ops were functioning before the first world war and where, incidentally, the leading anarcho-syndicalists, Labriola and Leone, were quick to note their potential and refrained from indulging in purely negative and destructive criticism but encouraged them to put to good use the credit extended by the banks.

It would be very simple indeed to point out the limitations of such enterprises functioning within a capitalist system, but such limitations ought to be well enough known to others apart from ourselves. It is very easy to say that workers' self-management is possible; it is quite another thing to prove it and unless you have a few factories at your disposal it is impossible to provide practical demonstrations.

Whatever the ultimate fate of these industrial co-ops it will be to our own benefit to emphasise the positive lessons they provide, and in the process to forget for the moment about future utopias, bearing in mind the advice of Albert Camus that we ought to reject ideologies which sacrifice present human happiness to doctrinaire promises of its future fulfilment.

H. B.

PART ONE

THE KINGSNORTH POWER STATION STORY

IF ONE TAKES a bus or a car from Chatham (England) and travels along the northern end of the Hoo Peninsula one cannot miss seeing the great 700-foot chimney of Kingsnorth Power Station. Like some gigantic prehistoric monster made of concrete and steel, this massive product of Machine Age Man rises from the dank marshes that border the northern edge of the Medway Estuary.

Today this power station produces sufficient electricity to light and heat a large town complete with shops and factories. Every twenty-four hours its hungry boilers gobble up hundreds of tons of heavy fuel oil; thousands of gallons of its waste water are pumped into the Medway and permanently keep that part of the river several degrees above the area norm; and when the wind blows from the south-west the sulphur laden fumes forever belching from its multi-flue smoke-stack are blown right across the North Sea - to drop their tiny particles of poison on the lichen and mosses of the Scandinavian countryside.

This is the way things are today. But when I first laid eyes on the place there was no chimney to be seen, no boiler houses, no oil tanks, no jetties, no switch houses, no pylons, no coal conveyor. In those far-off days the power station-to-be could boast only of a few roads and a big fence topped by barbed wire.

I remember the first day I started work on the Kingsnorth construction site very well. It was a fine sunny morning in the early summer of 1964. I had never been on a construction site before. Up to that time I had worked mostly in factories and as a dustman in South London. So a job on this big site was an altogether new experience for me. I marvelled at the great size and complexity of the undertaking. The great piling cranes with their ear-shattering hammers had an especial fascination for me. Whenever I got the opportunity I also loved to watch the huge bulldozer-like machines carving out a big basin that was later to become a reservoir. Another thing I enjoyed looking at was the dredging operations in the river to the south of the site where today ships from distant places unload their cargoes of coal and oil.

But what I liked best about the Kingsnorth site were the men who worked there. Within a short while of getting a job as a pipe-laying labourer I began to find out that my workmates were from a very different mould than those I had been acquainted with in factories and warehouses. The Kingsnorth workers struck me almost immediately as being well removed from the tin soldier type of human being who is regarded as the ideal worker by employers. These new workmates of mine were a wild bunch and quite a number of them seemed to be possessed of every failing and moral weakness in the book. But at the same time they were fully three-dimensional human beings.

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When the construction of Kingsnorth Power Station was first started it was estimated that it would be completed before 1970 at a cost of £82 million. As things turned out, its four great turbines were not generating their maximum power until some three years later when the costs of the project had soared to over £120 million.

As in all cases like this when plans go badly wrong and costs rocket, a scapegoat had to be found. So far as Kingsnorth was concerned, the blame for all the shortcomings and delays was put on the workers there. Piled on the Kingsnorth workers would be more apt a term; because at every opportunity the local press and the bosses, both on and off the site, would charge the men with being troublemakers when they would not meekly accept the kind of working conditions and wages which the various managements sought to impose on them.

It was very easy for the reactionary local press and the Kingsnorth managers to find scapegoats in "irresponsible militants" and "agitators". For, after all, this has long been the fashion in Britain as a whole. Whenever a bureau-

cratic muddle or a case of faulty planning or organization or costing occurs on the industrial front the thing to do is to heap the blame onto a scapegoat, and if there is none ready to hand then one has to be created. In the case of Kingsnorth Power Station so great were the muddles arising out of the sheer incompetence of the construction managements that scapegoats had literally to be created daily. It was no wonder that Kingsnorth got such a notorious name and why so many who worked there have been branded as troublemakers and even as arsonists and saboteurs.

All the while I was at Kingsnorth I was very conscious of the marked contrast between the picture painted of the place by the press and the real situation there. Because the press, including the national papers, only highlighted stories of the many industrial struggles at the power station and then usually have just the management's side of the dispute, the average member of the public just had no idea of the actual conditions on the site. Indeed over the years I met quite a number of people living close to Kingsnorth whose scant knowledge of the place had been gleaned from the ravings of the local press.

So far as I myself was concerned I don't think that I ever entered the Kingsnorth site without getting the impression that I had come into some sort of labour camp. This impres-

BIG BROTHER'S

sion was first got from the solidly built high fence topped by barbed wire which met one's eyes when approaching the site from the landward side. Later on I was to learn that this particular fence was put up around the same time and by the very same company which built the high security fence inside the walls of Chelmsford Prison where I was later to spend some sixteen months of my life. Then at the only entrance to the site one had to pass through a security checkpoint manned by black-uniformed Securicor guards. As the power station began to take shape and the number of workers employed there rose to a maximum of three thousand three hundred, these guards and their dogs also rapidly multiplied. I can see them now in my mind's eye strutting about the site in pairs wearing black shiny helmets and with coshes sticking prominently out of their pockets. But while the Securicor guards looked ominous, it was their Alsations which were really dangerous. These near-wolves were housed in a small compound at the entrance to the site. Over the course of the years several Kingsnorth men were attacked by these animals when they broke loose from their controller's grip; and after one or two serious cases of mauling the dogs were withdrawn temporarily from the site.

Having passed through the security checkpoint one's day was very much determined by the firm one worked for. Altogether there were several scores of firms of various kinds on the site. There were, first of all, the civil engineering firms headed by Kiers, which were responsible for the groundwork, including access roads, and for all brick and concrete structures. Then there were the mechanical engineering firms, prime among which was International Combustion Limited (ICL for short), whose job it was to build the giant boilers and many other contraptions. Lastly, but no less important, were the electrical engineering and electronics firms whose contracts involved such things as the installation of turbines (Parsons), computer control systems (Honeywell), and the main electrical cables (B. I. C. C.).

Of these the men employed by the civil engineering firms were by far the worst off - both so far as working conditions and wages were concerned. The civil engineering workers were truly human donkeys in every sense of the word. These were the ones who dug the raw earth in all kinds of weather, who shovelled concrete all day long as fast as the pumps or the Readymix lorries and dumpers fed it to them, who

worked on the building of the multi-flue chimney in conditions which would be absolutely terrifying to the average factory employee.

The worst off of these workers were those labourers working on the 'lump'. These were mostly down-and-outs who were driven to the site in open lorries from London every morning. Few of them had rubber boots, since their employers would not supply them, and I used to often see them digging away in a long trench sometimes up to their knees in muck and water - with their going-home shoes and trousers on. For this they were paid the princely sum of £3 per day in the hand. After a wet day they would look positively pathetic as cold and wet they queued up for their three greenbacks in the evening time.

The 'lump' system was not a significant factor at Kingsnorth. But it did exist and there were many scores of 'lump' workers employed there at one time. It was a system which was used by the more unscrupulous employers who were usually up to their necks in all kinds of fiddles and corruption. A 'lump' employer, for instance, would employ a gang or several gangs of muck diggers. For each man he would be paid fifteen shillings to a pound per hour

WAGE-SLAVES

from C. E. G. B. (Central Electricity Generating Board) funds. This was supposed to cover all the normal costs of employing a man while giving the 'lump' employer a certain limited profit for himself. In practice, however, the vast proportion of the money given to the employer was pure profit. He would pay each of his men six shillings per hour. And, since he did not have to contribute anything in the form of National Insurance premiums and the like, he pocketed all the rest. Not alone this, but every such employer had several 'dead men' on his books. They did not actually exist - except on paper. But, nevertheless, he got paid for them just the same. And if anyone in authority became a little too nose-y he was bought off immediately by either a single down payment or a percentage of the 'dead man's' takings.

All of this, of course, was highly illegal. It involved bribery and the misuse of public funds, not to speak of the non-payment of tax and National Insurance. However, though these malpractices were carried on for years and were known to those in authority on the site, never once was there even a hint of an investigation into the matter, let alone a prosecution. Yet during the whole of this time individual workers who ran a little betting business on the quiet or who sold black-market goods on the site did so at great risk. I remember on one particular occasion a well-known Kingsnorth 'bookie' was taking bets during the dinner hour when two 'workers' in overalls suddenly stepped forward and arrested the man, who soon found out that they were customs and excise officials. And not long after the man in question was brought to court and fined heavily.

Another line of activity which involved great risk to anyone rash enough or with sufficient nerve to engage in it was the 'copper business'. This involved getting hold of pieces of copper cable, stripping or burning off the insulation, and then smuggling out the stuff to a metal dealer. At Kingsnorth there was much copper thrown away in the form of scraps of cables which were buried daily with masses of other waste material in huge rubbish tips on the eastern end of the site. Since the scrap copper from these bits of cables could be transformed readily into hard cash it was only natural that some of the more capitalist-minded workers should try and salvage it. In many ways these scavengers were doing a good job in view of the limited supply of copper

in the world. But this was not the view taken by the authorities; and it was woe betide any worker found with pieces of copper by the Securicor guards. It usually meant a heavy fine in court followed immediately by the sack.

From the point of view of the Establishment 'law and order' brigade in Britain such men were doing wrong and were justly punished. Okay! So far so good. But all the time I was at Kingsnorth men were continually being sacked for thieving, going out to the pub, or for even breaking some minor rule, while their managers were getting away with large scale bribery and malfeasances of all kinds. Even the local police authorities were involved though only in a marginal way with these malpractices. On one occasion I know that some police officers were bribed to the tune of a thousand pounds. Later on when I was at Chelmsford Prison I found out that this is a far from uncommon practice in the ranks of the 'law-enforcers' in modern Britain.

Much of the bribery at Kingsnorth arose out of the existence of numerous sub-contractors or 'subbies', as they were called, on the site. In order to get a contract these 'subbies' would give cash or presents to individual managers on the staff of the main contractors. The cash payments might amount to several hundreds of pounds and the presents could consist of a new or secondhand car, washing machine, or gas cooker. Or, then again, a manager might have a garage built by a subbie beside his house or he might have his house completely renovated. Or, on the other hand, a manager might use his own firm's materials and 'trusted' employees for carrying out improvements on his own home - and by so doing ensure a lot of extra cash for it when he left the Kingsnorth contract.

I remember well the case of two managers who immediately after sacking several men for leaving their allotted place of work before time had several lorry-loads of scrap iron and other materials dumped in a stockyard outside the site entrance. From here it was taken by a Medway Towns metal dealer whose greenbacks in exchange provided some very substantial holiday money for the two managers concerned. Then there was the case of a general foreman and the site agent of a well-known civil engineering firm who one Saturday morning sent a lorry load of scrap to a metal dealer and got £40 for it. This they pocketed and everything seemed all right until the following Monday when the clerk of works on their particular section heard of it. The man went blue in the face at the news - not because the foreman and the agent had been guilty of a crime but for the reason that they had not given him a cut of their ill-gotten gains. However, they quickly pacified the clerk of works when they had a lorry loaded with new and usable metal and the full £40 got for this particular load handed over to him.

For reasons which will become clear later I knew more about what was going on behind the scenes than anybody else working at Kingsnorth. Perhaps one of the most satisfying cases I came across was that of an ordinary clerk who diddled his employer over a period of time to the tune of £800. However, being wise as well as dishonest, he made it his business over the years to take note of every bribe given by his employer to other contractors and managers on the site. It so happened that his far-sightedness paid off; because when his fiddling of the cash books was discovered he told his boss that he would reveal all if brought to court. He certainly fared better than the unfortunate clerk who developed a guilt complex after it became known that he had diddled several hundreds of pounds. He ended up taking his own life; but at least he had the sense to spend the money first.

It was because I knew all about the background of bribery and corruption which managements were usually up to their necks in that it seemed particularly biting when I saw men sacked without even a moment's notice for very often the most trivial of 'offences'. There were quite obviously two sets of laws in operation, one set for the controllers and another set for the controlled.

Michael Tobin

(To be continued...)

FREE ENTERPRISE WEAK

WITH A FLASH the ultra Tories of the former Aims of Industry have launched a Free Enterprise week; which might make it worth noting how little difference there is between the monopoly capitalism practised by the sponsors of Aims of Industry and the state capitalism they exorcise.

We know and have frequently remarked upon the fact that the jobs at the top of both brands are given to the same sort of people. It is not in the least uncommon for a "captain of industry" to be given a major job running "socialist" enterprise concern or another of the same sort. Indeed there is evidence that state-owned firms have given money to Aims of Industry at the behest of such businessmen, and so contributed to the frenetic attacks it mounts on the principle of state enterprise.

We know that the worker in such firms does not suddenly find his pay and conditions improved because the state runs his firm, does not find that he has a share in the control of the firm. We know that state enterprises are just as liable to throw workers out of a job; that they rely on the same techniques for selling, that there is the same element of built-in obsolescence, and so forth.

We have frequently therefore remarked on the Tweedledee-Tweedledum aspect of the debate on the issue. Pointed out that if the believers in "free enterprise" or "social democracy" were in the least sincere one would not see ex-Labour ministers passing through nationalised boards to the boards of free enterprise; one would not see jobs in nationalised industry handed to members of the Institute of Management. The difficulty has always been to convince others of this. Particularly to convince the little street corner shop keeper who has been sold the idea that big capital is defending his interest; for though we have no interest in a Poujadeist attempt to promote return to a society of petit bourgeoisie, we need to neutralise a milieu which has always been a forcing ground of fascist movements.

This may make an experience I had the other day relevant. I was in the local ironmonger's seeking wire mesh to extend a rabbit run and remarked on the fact that there was

no mesh of the sort I'd had previously; the shopkeeper laughed and it turned out that the salesman he had been talking to when I was in was the rep. for it and had just shewn the order book - which I was then shewn.

More than half (nearly two thirds) of all the sorts of wire netting made by one of the larger firms had been discontinued within the last twelve months and several lines had been discontinued in previous years.

I asked why. "Well, we don't sell all that many of them, and as none of our competitors still make them the directors could afford to cut them out; before they couldn't risk it, we'd have lost a customer looking to another firm to get what he wanted; now as he can't get it anyway we can force him to buy what we want to sell and so the firm concentrates on the most profitable lines."

A frank enough admission of what we have always said about the workings of production for profit rather than use, from someone who certainly had no socialist views! Interesting that while competitors made minority lines they'd had so to do.

We talked a bit about the growing "nationalisation" of industry; and after a time I asked if the centralisation of firms, with small companies being taken over by larger, meant that there was now a vacuum at the bottom of the market, where a small firm, concentrating on less popular lines, perhaps finding a specialised clientele, on the understanding that it was supplying a need where none of the larger firms were interested in doing business.

"No", I was told. The first difficulty is that modern machinery in wire-fence making is so much faster than old that nothing like a competitive price could be reached by a small firm; but even then when a small Macclesfield firm had tried to get into the

.....
ACCORDING to the Sunday Times Dennis Hills, recently reprieved from death and released from Amin's prison, is identified by Nicholas Bethell in research for his book The Last Secret, as the British officer responsible for screening for repatriation Russian pro-German Cossack prisoners back (to probable death) in Russia.
.....

GILBERT ROTH, a taxi driver, was kept in detention for four months in France, simply for being a non-violent anarchist, said he defence counsel at the correctional tribunal of Portoise the other day.

Roth was arrested in December, 1972 on on a charge of robbery at a lawyer's, after the owners of a dance hall opposite said they saw two men get into a taxi with a number plate corresponding to Roth's. Despite the lack of real evidence it was decided to go ahead with the charge. Now the "affair" has been suddenly resurrected. Since Roth's release he has been working as a bookseller at "Le Jargon Libre" in Paris, which was kept under surveillance by the police, especially following anarchist activity in support of the GARI hunger strikers last January. This no doubt explains the renewed interest in his case.

..... Sancho Panza!

market, & had - after finding itself unable to buy the necessary machinery in England as none of the suppliers would let them have it - imported the machinery from the United States, it had been refused the necessary wire supplies.

It had ended by the firm importing, from Germany, steel sold to Germany by the British Steel Corporation, paying double the theoretical market price for steel in Britain; and having that steel made up into wire in Belgium before they could then turn it into wire-mesh. The result of course is that their costs are far higher than anyone else's. (It is a measure of the fantastic profits that must be being made by the larger firms, that the small firm still survives and sells its stuff at something approaching the same price as its larger rivals.)

He then told me that certain wires can be bought cheaper - even by big firms - in Belgium or Germany; and that his own firm, which though it might not be the biggest is not far from it, had in the past bought stocks in Europe. This had obviously offended the wire makers, who had been able to put pressure on the British Steel Corporation, who had warned his firm that if it continued to buy abroad, its British quota would be cut by half and that would have driven it out of business.

It doesn't tell us anything new - except as a particular example of a principle we already know - but there may be in that a message which might just convince some of the believers in free enterprise.

Laurens Otter.

...IN SWANSEA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT corruption in Swansea finally got on the small screen (July 10). BBC 2's "Man Alive" did a programme on five local businessmen and the city council. Probably everyone in Swansea watched it.

It exposed the tip of an iceberg, but in doing so hinted that the other five-sixths would soon be surfacing. Chatting next day at work, it seemed everyone knew of them and had some little ditty to retail concerning inflated property sales to the council, disregarded planning limits later altered, council workmen clearing ground outside private developments so ensuring a good sea view, etc., etc.

Gossip and fact intermixed, mostly widespread knowledge. The investigation now being carried out, by an outside police force, has taken 2 years to come about. Most people gleaned the shady deeds from local 'grape vines' even longer ago than this.

In conclusion, people are tending to distrust the 'bigwigs', but only with a wink and a chuckle; no anger, no sense of betrayal. After all, if Nixon can cause the destruction of whole nations and hide it, then deals of £150,000 of ratepayers' money puts them in the 'small-fry' tub.

But as large oaks from acorns grow, perhaps a more urgent popular and active criticism from revelations till to come, may too.

Tim Mitchell.

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FOOD

Dear Freedom,

Farmer Giles' comments (5.7.75) on my review (21.6.75) of Mellanby's *Can Britain Feed Itself?* are of course to some extent true.

However, Mellanby's main argument that with change of diet it is possible to adequately feed people on the products of British soil was in my opinion correct.

As a believer in basic organic agriculture I have of course referred from time to time to the Soil Association, with whom I had some connection many years ago. Having established my basic sympathy with the methods I would like to offer some criticisms of the approach, which are as follows:

- 1) The acceptance of the majority of those connected with the Soil Association of the property and financial basis of society which leads directly to an exploitive attitude to agriculture as in other fields of human activity.
- 2) The higher basic cost of organic agriculture in present circumstances places its products beyond the reach of the underprivileged.
- 3) A rigid quasi-religious attitude which as in orthodox research tends to obscure the search for truth.

To think that one can create a rational, non-exploitive agriculture within the structure of an exploitive and irrational financial system is misleading.

Yours faithfully,
Alan Albon.

BEE S

Dear Comrades,

I was interested to see your item in the last issue of *FREEDOM* concerning the spread of dangerous "African" bees into North America. For what it's worth, the story began some twenty years ago with the work of Warwick Kerr who attempted to cross breed the African bee with the Surrey Buzzer. The Surrey Buzzer is a good honey gatherer but is rather lazy. It was hoped that crossing it with the active but hostile African bee would produce a hyperactive honey gatherer. Unfortunately the experiment backfired and produced an incredibly lazy bee which, when eventually roused, was implacably hostile, attacking almost anything that moved with a poison more deadly than a coral snake's. It is this strain that is migrating into the US.

The US Government is now attempting to produce a new strain of bee which will mate with the hybrid and genetically 'dilute' its characteristics. In charge of this operation, you may or may not be reassured to know, is a Mr. Warwick Kerr.

Yours fraternally,
Larry Law.

CLASS

Dear Comrades,

It was interesting to read some of Jack Robinson's views on class expressed in the *FREEDOM* supplement of 21st June since I believe there are readers of *FREEDOM* who are unclear of the paper's position on this question (not that there is or should be one).

Jack seems to be saying that Marx's class analysis of society is outdated, confusing and irrelevant, partly because nowadays there is much disagreement on who constitutes the working class. But is he actually denying that society has a class nature? I think the crucial issue is brought to bear at the end of Jack's article where he says that "... the outdated concepts of class must go before a revolution can happen..." This is hard to understand since I have always believed that the State must go before classes can, and there can't be classes without concepts of them. But then that is because I believe that

LETTERS

GANDHI

Dear Freedom,

I read with interest the article called "Gandhi and the Alternative Society" in your issues of 7 and 21 June. Please may I make the following comments:

- 1) I would like to believe that Gandhi was indeed the man the article portrays him to be
- 2) I am not able to believe that, because in my view the article was more a reflection of the typically romantic view that the West takes of Gandhi (and other Indian matters) than of the real Gandhi.
- 3) Basically the article says that Gandhi was an anarchist, but I maintain that Gandhi was not an anarchist. Gandhi believed in 'Authority'. I maintain that he believed in Authority because he did not help to END the caste system of India. Whatever he did for the uplift of the outcastes actually helped to retain the caste system. REAL uplifting of the lowest strata of a society is possible only by the ABOLITION of ALL "strata", and that ABSOLUTE ABOLITION Gandhi seemed to have resisted.
- 4) While pointing that out, I hasten to add that I acknowledge his constructive contribution to other aspects of Indian and international affairs.

Yours fraternally,
(Ms) A. Banerjee

classes exist, moreover that there is a constant state of conflict between them. The purpose of the State is to preserve the conditions from which this conflict arises at the same time containing this conflict (and being seen to contain it, i.e. keep law and order) thus perpetuating and strengthening itself.

However I do not go along with rigid economic definitions of classes nor do I think that the only purpose of capitalism is profit. A lot has to do with consciousness and the interests, real and illusory, of different groups of people. Those who actively believe in maintaining the status quo are in effect supporting the bourgeoisie and may for convenience be labelled 'bourgeois'. It is not true that practically everybody denies being middle class, except perhaps amongst revolutionaries, though I do not do it myself. Similarly, it is only a few of (those whom I call) the working class who deny being that.

I see the fundamental difference between Marxism and anarchism being the question of the causal and temporal relationship between class and State. Whereas Marxists believe that the working class can use State power to transform society into classlessness thus allowing the State to 'wither away', anarchists see that the only way of abolishing class is to destroy the State outright, not the other way round. There do seem to be anarchist circles who are tending to the former attitude, but to pretend that classes don't even exist is, I think, rather unrealistic.

A. F.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I cannot help thinking that our movement has stagnated in the last few years, and that it needs an injection of new blood. This new blood will be forthcoming in the next year.

Not having been in touch with your regular contributors, I cannot say with absolute certainty that they have not been active in the furtherance of the working class cause; but from reading your magazine regularly I can say from the correspondence you receive, they seem to be dwelling on the past and in danger of being 're-cuperated'.

We are being subjected to an obscene type of violence every day in the media, transport, education, in fact in almost everything we do, or at least conditioned to do. Before this violence can be counteracted it must first be recognised. Our job must firstly be not to strike back but to help our brother workers to see that they are being exploited, not to lead the working classes but to help them fight with us. The struggle ahead is a massive one; but one that cannot be put to one side in the form of producing meaningless literature. Our strength must be the rank and file, ourselves. Enough of this elitist jargon, let us get back to the real world, defeat the spectacular world. Our victory is inevitable, but it cannot succeed without our work and our dedication.

Harry James.

SEARCHLIGHT ON FASCISM

ANARCHISTS and libertarians are opposed to all authoritarian and reformist political groups and parties, whether of the "left" or "right". But, generally, most libertarians are particularly hostile towards those on the "extreme right" who can be called or termed racists, Fascists or Nazis. And, of course, others on the political left, for various reasons, also oppose the racists, the Fascists and the Nazis.

Hence the demand for information and "dirt" on such people as John Tyndall, Martin Webster or Colin Jordan, or such parties and groups as the British Movement, the Action Party (Mosleyites) and, above all, the National Front.

Searchlight attempts to provide such information. But in this writer's view, it only partially succeeds, though it does provide quite a lot of mainly accurate (despite what Tyndall says in *Spearhead*) background material and quotations from various right, racist and Fascist publications. From that standpoint, this writer finds Searchlight of interest. For example, the "What Their Papers Say" is of particular interest; and I suppose it is always useful to know which members of, say, the National Front have been picked up for carrying "offensive weapons", or even to see

actual photographs of Fascists carrying guns. At least, it is an advantage to know what one's enemies are up to! But whether items such as "Caught with their Knickers Down" (referring mainly to Colin Jordan's fine for stealing three pairs of red ladies' knickers from a Tesco store) is desirable, in a supposedly serious journal dedicated to exposing Fascism, depends upon one's sense of humour.

But the basic fault of Searchlight, from an anarchist viewpoint, is its political content. Searchlight is vaguely leftist, pro-"socialist" and pro-Trade Union; but it tends to lack a clear line against racism, and Fascism, and the editorial in the latest (June, 1975) to reach Freedom Press uses sloppy phrases like "all decent people..." One will never destroy Fascism with that sort of line!

Many Fascists are poor, humourless, pathetic and inadequate creatures; most are primarily masochists and would not hurt a fly, though a few are sadists and, no doubt, dangerous. Both Eric Fromm and Wilhelm Reich have analysed such types. Searchlight does not appear - at least from the issues that this writer has seen - to deal seriously with such character-analysis; but, perhaps more importantly, Searchlight does not sufficiently emphasise the divisive, anti-working class atti-

ties of the racists and Fascist organisations. This writer feels that these points should be pressed home in such a paper, rather than reporting some of the more perverse antics of many members of groups like the National Front or the British Movement.

J. P. D.

Searchlight is published by A. F. & R. Publications Ltd., 21 Great Western Buildings, 6 Livery Street, Birmingham 3, at 25p or £2 for twelve issues.

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MEETINGS

SCOTLAND July 2 - Aug 23. "Connections" - live, work, play, learn together write, think, at Laurieston Hall, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire. SAE for details. Alternate Sundays, Hyde Park Anarchist Forum. 1 pm. Speakers Corner. Speakers, listeners & hecklers welcome.

Every Sat. & Sun. Centro Iberico/International Libertarian Centre, 83A Haverstock Hill, NW3. (entrance Steele's Rd. 2nd door), tube Belsize Pk/Chalk Fm. From 7.30 p.m., discussion, refreshments, etc.

MANCHESTER. SWF weekly mtgs. Enquire Secretary, c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester M1 7DU.

FRANCE. International Camp organised by French CNT, near Perpignan. 1 July-30 Aug. 3F per day per person. All comrades from IWMA welcome. For details write CNTF, 9 rue Duchalmeau, 66000 PERPIGNAN. Discussion, events.

WOMEN (only) welcome to come help perpetuate the Wage System. "Wages for Housework" Campaign meeting Friday, 25 July, 7 p.m. at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Women from Canada, USA, Italy & Britain will speak.

PEOPLE/ORGANIZATIONS

Single parent - 3 young children, involved in alternative education, would like to share home one bedroom (poss. double) & room for another child with others, share kitchen, bath; & living rooms. S. Durrani, 25 Wiverton Rd. S.E.26.

LIBRARY workers contact Martin Everett, 11 Gibson Gdns., Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1AW
POEMS & SONGS (anarcho-pacifist, antimilitarist, antiracial, COs tribunal statements etc.) any lang. wtd for Abolish War Anthology. Mark Wm. Kramrisch, 55 Camberwell Church St. London S.E.5.

GROUPS

ABERGAFENNI - anyone interested in forming libertarian group contact 31 Monmouth Rd. Libertarian POSTAL WORKERS - how can we spread the ideas of anarchism re organisation in the Post Office? Contact Dave Morris, 56 Mitford Road, London, N.19

Anarchists in HARROW interested in forming group please write Chris Rosner, 20 Trescoe Gardens, Rayners Lane, Harrow, HA2 9TB

CORBY anarchists. For activities write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants.

Anarchist bookstall, Corporation St., Corby, every Saturday 1-3 p.m. Come and help us take over the street!

CONTACT

COVENTRY. Peter Corne, c/o Union of Students, Univ. of Warwick, Coventry

DUNDEE. Brian Fleming, c/o Anarchist Society, Students Union, Univ. of Dundee, Ang Angus

EDINBURGH. Bob Gibson, 7 Union St. Edinburgh (tel. 031 226 3073)

GLASGOW. Gerry Cranwell, 163 Gt. George St. Hillhead, Glasgow

PORTSMOUTH. Rob Atkinson, 23 Havelock Rd. Southsea, Hants.

NEW ZEALAND. Steve Hey, 34 Buchanans Road, Christchurch 4 (tel. 496 793).

PUBLICATIONS

DIRECT ACTION no. 8 now out 5p + 5½ p post c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester M1 7DU or Freedom Bookshop
THE MATCH 1. U.S. Anarchist Monthly. News, reviews, history, theory, polemic. \$3.00 per year from P.O. Box 3480, Tucson, Arizona 85722, or try Freedom Bookshop for specimen copy 13 p including postage.

PRISONERS

PAUL PAWLOWSKI, 219089, H.M. Prison Heathfield Rd., London SW18. Letters, pc's
DUBLIN ANARCHISTS Bob Cullen, Des Keane, Columba Longmore. Address for letters & papers: Military Detention Centre, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Eire.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE Welfare Committee, Box 252, 240 Camden High St., London NW1, still needs funds for books.

GIOVANNI MARINI Defence Committee, Paolo Braschi CP 4263, 2100 MILANO, Italy Postcard ready addressed to Marini in prison & with greeting in Italian still available from Freedom Press for 5 p (our postage to you) plus donation to the Defence Fund.

RALF STEIN awaiting trial, postcards to Ralf Stein, JVA, 5 KOLN 30, Rochusstr. 350, Germany (see FREEDOM 28 June)

NEXT DESPATCHING DATE for FREEDOM is Thursday 31 July. Come and help from 2pm onwards. You are welcome every Thursday, afternoon to early evening, for informal get-together and folding session

WE WELCOME news, reviews, articles, letters. Latest date for receipt of copy for inclusion in next review section is Monday 21 July. All other news/feature items must reach us by Monday 28 July.

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FREEDOM'S Anarchist Review

SUPPLEMENT TO Vol. 36 nos. 27-28. 19 July 1975

HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN BRITAIN TO 1919

John Quail, who will shortly publish a book on this subject, recently gave a talk, based on his conclusions and researches into the material contained in his book, at a meeting organised by Solidarity group at Centro Iberico. The following is the substance of the talk.

A WARNING should be given, immediately, about people like George Woodcock who wrote a useful, very general handbook on every anarchist movement that ever existed in the world up to 1939. He was the only one that did it and in a sense he deserves praise and a pat on the head for that. But in his assessment of the English anarchist movement he was wildly wrong. He talks about personalities. He talks about William Morris who was nearly an anarchist but not quite, so he counts as a sort of anarchist. There is a slight skirmish around the 'Nineties when the major importance of the anarchists was their influence on literary figures - Oscar Wilde and so on. Then we have the syndicalist revolt, and we have Tom Mann; now he wasn't an anarchist but he was nearly an anarchist. . .

This kind of history is like 'the personality of the week'. It's not the anarchist history that I intend to talk about. Because if you talk of a history of working class movements, particularly of one with a decentralised, federalist philosophy, you are talking about a movement which in terms of personalities presents a low profile. People working in local areas, ferreting away on their own patch, become figures of some note in their area, but they don't become 'superstars'. Ideas seep through, spread, have a direct and immediate relevance to the situation in which people find themselves, and as a result they get converts. And when situations seem not favourable to those ideas, they become sectarian, they retreat back into a version of a personal religion, they atrophy.

But let's start at the beginning.

In the late 1870's there were the remnants of the old British federation of the International. Some of them had become radical opportunists. They had taken up a stance to the left of the Liberal Party, the way we understand "left". They had become vote getters. They were also linked to what is known as the Radical Party. The Radical Party represented the traditions of English working-class radical activity; these were people who believed in Home Rule for Ireland, they were against the privilege of the aristocracy, they were secularists, and so on. They stood on a platform which roughly divided society into two classes: there were the productive classes, represented by the bourgeoisie and the artisans; and there were the unproductive classes, the aristocracy or clergy who just ponced off the productive classes by virtue of rents or tithes. At the same time, there was a semi-socialist strain, people who inherited the physical force beliefs of the Chartists. They wanted to destroy the aristocracy and ancient privilege. They believed that Parliament couldn't do it so well, or that it could only be done by revolution. And occasionally people popped up like Joe Lane who, for example, would go round with a group of supporters to various radical meetings (about 1880) and would closely question candidates about what they intended to do about the House of Lords. On one of these occasions Joe Lane was challenged: did he mean that he wanted to abolish the House of Lords? And he shouted "Yes, and the House of Commons, too!" The result was a riot and they all got thrown out after a huge fight in the hall. Socialist ideas were discussed among such small groups of malcontents. They became influenced by more theoretically coherent foreign exiles. In Germany, anti-socialist laws closely

followed on two attempts to assassinate the Kaiser (which probably had the German Anarchist Federation of The Jura behind them). A wave of refugees came in to London, and for a while London became the centre of German anarchist propaganda which was smuggled back into Germany. There were older German socialist exiles in London who spoke English and had become involved with the English labour movement, who provided a link. When Johann Most, the editor of the *Freiheit*, was imprisoned in 1881 for writing an article praising the assassination of the Czar, there was an agitation on his behalf by a number of radical clubs, which included people who were later to take a great part in the Socialist League.

At the same time (i.e. 1880-81) we can see the beginnings of attempts by Tories, by dissident Liberals and by other people to form an independent labour party. They saw this in various ways. The Tories were convinced that if they could split the liberal vote by getting labour supporters off to one side they would be able to divide and rule. The Liberals were fed up with Gladstone who was pursuing what they thought was a reactionary policy. And there were also people - a small number of people - who had been influenced by German Social Democratic ideologies of one sort or another, understanding social democratic ideology at this point to mean a democratic socialism which had temporarily had to take the road of elections to achieve its ends. It should not just be understood as parliamentary reformism. Out of this melting pot came several organisations. One was called the Labour Emancipation League, and started operating in the East End, speaking in the streets and so on, and really represented a major breakthrough in terms of working-class agitation. Another, called the Democratic Federation, was an independent labour ramp, manipulated initially by a man called Hyndman. Hyndman was a jingoist, a chauvinist. He poached material from Marx, for example, and refused to say that he got his ideas from him because Marx was a German, you see, and the English working class weren't going to take no shit from a German! The man was a rat-bag. Yet there was no doubt of his general role in the developing socialist movement. He himself went through a change of heart and developed from a Tory into some kind of social democrat with astonishing rapidity, but how convinced he was by his own rapidity is another question altogether.

But the Democratic Federation, through its various trials and tribulations, did provide an umbrella organisation. Hyndman himself was ambitious, and wanted to bring together all the dissident elements of the radical clubs of London. He was thereby instrumental in bringing together a large number of very different sorts of people. In so doing he provided quite a service for socialists, of the kind Marx has described capitalism as providing for the workers: bringing them together produces a counter-consciousness. Again and again in the history of the Democratic Federation (later the Social Democratic Federation) the bringing together of a number of socialists leads to an anti-Hyndman, anti-reformist, counter movement. Its first split in 1884 led to the formation of the Socialist League in 1885. This came about over the question of political candidature, the anti-Hyndman faction being opposed to it. This opposition came from people like William Morris and working class activists who had seen the various forms that opportunism had taken among Radicals. There are incredible stories - one, for example, of a certain alderman who employed the Mottershead party as his election committee. They charged highly for their services because they had influence in the radical clubs. At one time the alderman decided he wasn't going to use these

people any more, and, as Frank Kitz puts it in his memoirs, consternation was rife in the ranks of the boodlers - they were all great piss artists, apparently. And visions of empty pockets and dry throats rose before them and they thought they'd better do something. They went to a pharmacist who had ambitions and they waited on him as a delegation of electors and asked him to stand as councillor. He readily agreed and shelled out. And so the alderman found that his bills had been plastered over with the new man's name. And he took a chew at it and he invited the Mottershead party back and they dropped the pharmacist. The point is, Mottershead had been a member of the General Council of the First International!

So you can realise this kind of filthy goings-on was enough to put people off electoral politics at a pragmatic level. And new ideas were coming in. Rather than FREEDOM being the Year One of anarchist influence in the British working class, I would suggest that Tucker's Liberty, from the United States, has that honour. It was coming in from about 1880-81, and printed all sorts of things from the French anarchist-communists. At this time of the split the whole thing is a mixture, with very confused threads of who believed what at what time. Kitz, for example, who was very important in the Socialist League, continually harked back to the land question, which progressively, of course, became more and more of a hobby-horse, because industrial capital represented a far more powerful enemy to the working class.

But connected with the antiparliamentarian revolutionaries was a section of German anarchist refugees -- Victor Dave, a man called Trunk who had been an editor of Most's paper, and others. When the Socialist League was formed they joined it. So the result was a very 'jumping' little organisation. The development of the ideas within the Socialist League, however, took on a dialectic form, because with the split had come a number of people who had left the SDF for personal reasons. Among them were Eleanor Marx Aveling and Edward Aveling -- I think a couple of opportunists, clever opportunists and people who provided a service for the working class, but it was a service with a price tag. They were anti-Hyndman largely because of Hyndman's appalling relations with Marx and Engels, and tried continuously to switch the Socialist League back to parliamentary action. The result was that within the Socialist League a debate of increasing bitterness took place, over tactics, which developed a wider theoretical understanding and underpinned the anti-parliamentarian tendency of the League. Simultaneously, as the 1880s proceeded class confrontation began to get far more dynamic.

First of all there were the West End riots in 1886, sparked off by a meeting in Trafalgar Square, called by some tariff reformers and Tory working men from the East End. The SDF called a meeting to oppose their policies. There was a minor riot and the tariff reformers' platform was smashed and people in top hats were thrown into the fountains. Attempts were made to clear the Square by marching the demonstrators off to Hyde Park. The result was, however, that they went through St. James's where assorted bourgeois were jeering at them from the clubs. Unfortunately for the club members, the roads were being dug up and there were lots of lumps of building material around. The crowd proceeded to do in the windows of the clubs, then looted shops and finally went to Hyde Park and ripped the livery off servants and wrecked carriages. They finally dispersed to the East End, it is worth noting, with sections of them singing 'Rule, Britannia' (laughter). The point is, that the movement was a mixed one at that time, without precise theoretical formulations. (Much and prolonged laughter.) It was nevertheless a movement of some dynamism, and resulted in increasing panic on the part of the ruling class. The unemployed made Trafalgar Square an area of regular meetings; you would find up to about 10-15 meetings a day taking place in Trafalgar Square as 1887 went on. The unemployed and the homeless were camping out in Trafalgar Square to keep together. It represents an interesting example of a communal consciousness developing, through shared misery at this time. The socialists were very active there, too. The unemployed were eventually swept from the Square by police. In protest, the Radicals of London marched to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square - they were very much for the Civil Liberties of Old England together with the roast beef and all the rest. They were met and attacked by massive police forces, backed up by the army. A few marchers

managed to get through but it was an incident of appalling savagery on the part of the forces of law and order. The total score was three dead, many people badly battered about, many people jailed. The day is remembered as Bloody Sunday. The result was that the Socialist League, having increasingly bitter internecine battles over the parliamentary question and with ruling class savagery and the example of working class self-activity and readiness to revolt before it, started to develop an English version of anarchism.

ARTICULATING IDEAS

This was given a formulation, a set of words if you like, by something which I would hold way, way back in terms of influence on the movement. This was the arrival of Kropotkin in England, and the formation of the Freedom group. The news of Kropotkin's arrest in France and his imprisonment in 1883 had reached England via Tucker's Liberty. It was much talked of and he was an international revolutionary star. (I don't want to put him down -- they did have stars in those days; people who would address meetings and thousands would come to them.) And when he came to London in 1886 he was greeted by a certain amount of publicity. He set up a small propagandist newspaper called FREEDOM. It did not intend, it announced, to become involved in the day-to-day activities that went on outside, but would draw general conclusions from these and comment on the passing events of the time, as well as providing theoretical expositions of the theory of anarchism. The result was of course that they had no great influence. The essence of being an agitator is that what you say has immediate practical relevance to the situation and generalises it. As far as the Freedom group was concerned, they were trying only to work out ideas. The English members of the group were led at this time by a woman called Charlotte Wilson, who lived in a place called Wildwood Farm, later renamed 'Wylde's', in Hampstead. She was a member of the Fabian Society, she was a clever lady in many respects, she did her best, but she was by no means an agitator. The whole Freedom group was basically a front organisation for Kropotkin, whose English was appalling -- he could speak French because it was the court language in Russia. He needed people to sub-edit his work and present it to an English public or to translate it from the French. The Freedom group used the Socialist League as a means of distributing their propaganda. In this way for example FREEDOM was passed on to Glasgow, Norwich, Manchester and Leeds, and so on. Inevitably it had some influence. Further, the execution in Chicago of the anarchists in 1887 and the subsequent visit to England of Lucy Parsons, the wife of Albert Parsons, one of the men hanged in Chicago, gave a great boost to a kind of furious 'socialism by riot' philosophy. All this built up to a final point in 1889.

BOMBING RHETORIC

By this time the anarchist faction in the Socialist League (now a majority) was becoming increasingly fascinated by the use of propaganda by deed, by bombing. Morris was tired, battered by faction fights against the politicians and probably suffering from the onset of the diabetes which was later to kill him. Morris withdrew from the League in 1880 because of his distaste for bombing rhetoric. The Socialist League fell apart. This was not basically to do with his departure or because of the machinations or 'tomfoolery' of vile anarchists, which is what you would understand from E. P. Thompson, but because in 1889 there was a wave of strikes, the like of which England had never seen before. The workers threw themselves into organising unions, which were often quite shortlived. The Socialist League just disappeared as people rushed off in every direction in their own particular trade, organising unions and agitations of one sort or another. The wave didn't come down until about 1890-91, and the formal organisation of the Socialist League had disappeared. There were a number of networks of anarchist militants who had kept in touch as they were engaged in their various struggles. The Commonweal, the Socialist League paper, was now firmly anarchist. The anarchists proceeded to reorganise, this time in specifically anarchist groups. This was the first time that the anarchists in England separated themselves off from the socialist movement as a whole. Up to this point they had taken part in every

activity that working class socialists were involved in; it might be trade unions, it might be co-operatives, they fought for free speech on the street corners of London and the provincial towns. Within the Socialist League they had been content with anti-parliamentary revolutionary socialism. It was circumstances that forced their more formal separation from other socialists -- the more so because of the increasingly parliamentary inclinations of the rest of the socialist movement. In 1890-91 a change had taken place inside the movement. After the heady days of 1889-90, unemployment increased. There was a reaction, the employers started chipping away at wages and conditions, militants lost their jobs.

At this time, too, the French anarchists had started their policy of revenge bombings. Ravachol was not a looney, Ravachol was bombing the homes of the judge and the prosecutor of the trial of some anarchists who, after being shot and wounded and then beaten about in the police station, had been sentenced to long jail sentences. It was social revenge. Ravachol had also murdered a recluse -- who did not seem to have been a very useful human being but nevertheless was a human being -- for money which he said he used for the propaganda. Ravachol was not the sort of cosmic destroying god he has been made out to be. He was a militant doing things in his own way, in a social context. The influence in England was there. French exiles, who now formed the most 'advanced' sections of the exiles in London, were heavily involved with the propaganda by deed, the bombing ideology that had begun to spread in a period of reaction after its temporary disappearance during the strikes of 1889-90. Stuart Christie has rightly said that this kind of action does not represent the vanguard of the proletariat, it represents the rearguard; it is an attempt to hold back a reaction. And I think that is correct. England too began to produce its own martyrs. There was a plot discovered at Walsall in 1892 -- and set up, in fact -- by a police agent who was employed both by Scotland Yard and the French police. The trial was a travesty. Three men were jailed for ten years, one for five. And it was obvious that only the most minor preparations had been made -- they had been less efficient than the agent provocateur had expected them to be. Nevertheless, as a result of this trial, the movement grew in influence. Because now, it appeared, its rhetoric could be taken seriously.

There were a number of bombs in post offices in London in 1894, a bomb went off in front of a MP's house in Mayfair, but this was generally reckoned to be a cock-up on account of the fact that the judge in the Walsall Anarchists trial lived two doors down in the same street. There were a number of cases where people were arrested for having counterfeiting equipment and for having bomb-making materials. Farnara and Polit, two Italians, were sent down for 20 years and 10 years for trying to buy an iron pipe with which they intended to make a bomb. The result was a great wave of panic -- you have no idea of the hysteria that was built up at this time. First there was the news from France and Spain where bombs were a fairly regular feature of political life. The first examples in England seemed to indicate that nasty foreign practices were being imported into England's green and pleasant land, and the result was bound to be, the newspapers felt, a social plague equivalent to a mental version of syphilis! So they were very, very upset indeed. And the anti-anarchist hysteria did communicate itself to the labour movement as a whole. The anarchists in England were largely living by the reputation made for them by others, unfortunately, and although the anarchist movement had reached a high peak of membership at this time they were not able to stave off attacks. There was a black propaganda in the press -- a piece in Tit-Bits suggested that the anarchists were intending to open up the gas mains and introduce air so that there would be massive explosions; they were supposed to be bringing in cholera-infected clothes to distribute in the East End so that there would be a libertarian cholera epidemic; they were going to poison the water supply -- the most appalling black propaganda. It worked. A man called Martial Bourdin went to test out an explosive device at Blackheath, and walking through Greenwich Park to get there -- he had carried it on a tram, incidentally, all the way from somewhere near Charing Cross -- it exploded in his pocket and killed him. The anarchists in London tried to make him a martyr for their

cause. They took as their example Vaillant, who had thrown a bomb into the French Chamber of Deputies and had been executed although he killed no-one. His grave at Ivry Cemetery had been made into a sort of shrine, heaped with flowers to a height of ten feet, put there by people in no way organised. . . . It seemed to the anarchists in England that it would be a good idea to have one of those occasions in England, too, so they declared a public funeral for Bourdin. This was no new thing for respected members of the socialist community. (Question from the floor as to whether anybody else had been killed by Bourdin's device. Answer; no-one else.) But there was a riot on the day of the funeral. Mobs tried to tear the hearse to pieces, they tried to get at coffin, which presumably they would have smashed to bits; anarchists who tried to get through were attacked, there were many free fights in Fitzroy Square and the surrounding Soho area, the Autonomy Club had all its windows smashed by a mob of medical students, and so on. The fact that medical students were involved seems to indicate that there had been some reactionary mobilisation. But the significant fact, and everybody understood it, was that a mass of people, just local working people, had gathered to attack the anarchists. It was a melancholy moment.

It did not mean that their numbers immediately diminished, but rethinking was forced upon them. The results of this were only to be manifested later. Initially what it meant was that they came back to a social revolutionary position and began to re-emphasise all those things which they had perhaps ignored too much in their pursuit of the millenium through dynamite. There were other areas within which they had been continually active, however. The anarchists in the East End of London had an Anti-Broker Brigade which used to go round attacking bailiffs who were sent to seize people's furniture for not paying rent. There was also an Anti-Rent League, which refused to pay rent, which saw it as a point of honour that no working man or woman should pay rent, and they ran this campaign with some fierceness, the Anti-Broker Brigade being involved. In the trade unions the anarchists espoused direct action. They advised the miners in the coal strike of 1893 to burn the coal stocks, to sabotage the pit machinery, to loot the food stores, and so on. (All these, incidentally, were done in one way or another in the same period. The anarchists were appealing to practice in one area and applying it in another. It is not known whether it was the result of anarchist propaganda, but in the Hull dock strike the docks were set on fire in an attempt to drive out the blacklegs imported into the docks during the strike.) It was a period of increasing unemployment and there were massive defensive actions by the working class. As this period faded away into apathy, however, the anarchist movement faded with it. And it seemed by 1897-98 that the anarchists had had it.

At the same time the ILP boosted its membership, the SDF went up in membership -- they were both beginning to get a base in local government, John Burns from the dock strike had become a Liberal MP for Battersea, Kier Hardie had held a seat at West Ham. The parliamentarians seemed to have won.

The period of the Boer War (1899-1901) represents an all-time low, with anarchist meetings getting broken up and just the smallest manifestations of revolt getting squashed. For example, anarchists were active in a body called the Legitimation League, which espoused sexual freedom of one sort or another. They were selling Havelock Ellis's Sexual Inversion, and they were prosecuted for selling a pornographic book. And the Legitimation League was smashed to pieces. Burtzeft, a Russian exile who had been organising a Russian language periodical, made some general statements that perhaps assassinating the Czar was a good idea, and he was arrested and deported after serving a sentence in jail. Nobody seemed able to prevent these attacks. The whole movement sank away. . . . And yet at the same time a new thing had started. The French syndicalist movement filtered into England, through a number of sources. It gently appeared through FREEDOM, by now the only anarchist newspaper, all the others having been closed down either by prosecutions, internecine strife or feelings of hopelessness. * You have to realise that FREEDOM had

really failed the anarchist movement as an agitational paper - it had never intended to be, but as the only surviving paper it was looked to to provide some kind of agitational centre and it didn't. The result was that when the anarchist movement began to grow again after the Boer War, it grew in an extremely decentralised fashion, and this time the provincial groups were much more involved. The various ideas connected with industrial unionism and syndicalism began to mix in the local areas. The Jewish anarchist movement was also important here because the Jewish anarchist movement had reorganised in London and was beginning to have increasing influence. The anarchist editor of a Yiddish paper published in New York did a speaking tour during the Boer War and spoke to huge audiences -- for example in Leeds, two meetings, two thousand people at each meeting. He was virtually stopped from getting on the boat so he could do a few more meetings, in London. In numbers the Jewish anarchist movement was on the way up before the English movement. But these people were becoming integrated, too. They were beginning to move into the English movement. In 1903-1904 the number of Jewish names that appeared as secretaries of groups is significant. Propaganda began to reappear, occasional attempts were made to establish new papers, occasional attempts were made to form industrial unions. The anarchists tried to form unions - very brave-sounding titles they had - in Dundee, in Leeds, in Paisley. In 1907 Guy Aldred formed the Industrial Union of Direct Actionists which had six London branches, a branch in Leeds, in Liverpool - and one in Weston-super-Mare! But the thing is that something had happened by this time. The decentralised growth of the movement meant that it interacted more with other socialist groups. It makes it very difficult to locate people, to know what they were doing at this particular time -- the reports are usually about meetings that took place, and yet it is very clear from other sources, memoirs and so on, that a counter-milieu was beginning to erupt again inside the organised bodies like the SDF and the ILP. The Paisley anarchist groups, for example, formed out of a mob of people expelled from the ILP in 1902 for having been tainted with anarchist ideas.

SYNDICALIST REVOLT

In 1906 a large number of Labour Members were at last elected to Parliament. It was what the parliamentarians had been praying for all those years. If they had people in parliament WHERE THE POWER WAS, then they would be able to introduce socialism by legislative means, because everybody knows that when you make laws in parliament a policeman can tell people what to do and the whole thing's going to be all right-- They got there, and such a bunch of wankers you have not seen in your life. Even their supporters said their cowardice had been appalling, their half-measures had satisfied no-one. This sort of thing in the Reformer's Handbook, by god! The result was that very rapidly over a few years people became really pissed off with their Labour representatives and suddenly realised that what the anarchists had been saying, what the industrial unionists and the syndicalists had been saying, was true. If you wanted something you had to take it yourself. This was compounded by the fact that after 1905 prices were rising very rapidly (shades of today!), wages were lagging behind, and the result of a moderate labour-union-oriented parliamentarianism and a moderate parliamentary-oriented labour unionism meant that a real horizontal split developed very rapidly in the unions. Because at this point too there was high employment, that is to say low unemployment, the result was a boost, as always happens in times of low unemployment, a boost in the union membership. This union membership would sort of rush in and say, 'Right! Let's get going,' and they would find that their leaders said: 'Hey, no, heh-heh, we'll do it officially - we'll get an 8-hour Bill through Parliament, we'll legislate that everybody has got to be paid a minimum wage, we'll get some unemployment insurance through...', and so it went on.

The result of this and the various syndicalist ideas led to what has been called the 'syndicalist revolt'. This was the period, 1910-1914, when the number of man days lost per year in strikes never went below ten million. The strikes were conducted with an astonishing bitterness. For example, I opened up a Memoirs of a docks policeman about the 1911 dock strike. The employers had brought scabs in.

The scabs were still in the docks when they opened the dock gates to let the people come back to work after the strike. Now, the result was obviously a massive battle on the waterfront. They were using hooks - the baling hooks that dockers use - and some were using guns! The dockers were armed with guns. And they were shooting down the scabs. Is this not astounding in democratic England? The picketing was violent, people were shot down by the troops, troops were very badly wounded by being ambushed by people throwing cobblestones at them, the docks were fired in Hull (again). The strikes in Manchester, in Dundee, in Liverpool and in a number of other places reached the level of local general strikes. The strike committees controlled the movement of all traffic in the streets. The troops were being steadily subverted by anarchist and syndicalist anti-militarist propaganda and could not be, in certain cases, relied upon to act. The situation was as near to revolution as England has ever been without having a revolution. Now, in this time, the membership of the ILP dropped like a stone, the membership of the SDP (it changed its name some time, but this was the Social Democratic Federation) plummeted like a stone. The only - you couldn't really call it a membership organisation, it wasn't - but the only 'political' movement that grew as a result of all this was the anarchist movement. Its policy was quite clearly laid out by Joe Lane, the old Labour Emancipation League, the Socialist League man, who pooped back out of retirement as an old man. (Lots of these old rebels kept popping out of the woodwork and flooding back into this movement.) Joe Lane quite precisely gave the anarchist role in that whole social upsurge. He said, "I like the syndicalists, I like their fighting policy of taking direct action to fight for immediate demands. And I also like the way in which the anarchists, deeply involved in this movement, are educating, widening and generalising these demands into a higher conception of what is possible in society, and what the workers can do." And that was the role of the anarchists. That was the reason for their success. They were a part of a movement; here there was no sense of "the anarchist party" that existed in the early 1890s because of its origins in one organisation, that is to say the Socialist League. The anarchists here were able to act in a very nourishing environment, operating in a conscious minority. And you have to remember what was being worked out at this time; a socialism which represented an autonomous working class in the making, able to transcend its position as subject class and become society, as Morris had said. And they were really taking positive steps to get to the stage where out of their own struggles, organisation would emerge which was not the one-dimensional formulation of the industrial unionists but a richer thing, approaching the form of workers' councils.

When the First World War started, the anarchists, with the exception of Kropotkin and one or two of the 'anarchist superstars', rapidly took a very anti-war stand. If anyone wants confirmation of this, the anarchist conference of 1915 totally supported Tom Keell who was the editor of FREEDOM at that time and who had opposed Kropotkin and had said that he would not print pro-war propaganda. Many people went to prison and many people were involved in hunger strikes and many people emerged from that experience very much battered.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Russian Revolution and its influence on the English labour movement has been written up in a very detailed book, The Revolutionary Movement in Britain 1900-1921, by Walter Kendall. As the war-weariness and the developing working-class activity within the war and against the war by implication began to grow, the appeal of the Russian Revolution, perceived as a "councillist" revolution, a soviet revolution, was very strong. It was, after all, the first successful revolution which had taken place in, speaking loosely, the European sphere for over a century. It survived attack from 1917 through to 1918, through to 1919... Obviously, the sympathies of the working-class militants in England were very much drawn to the Russian Revolution. They defended it even before they knew precisely what it was about. All sorts of people jumped on the bandwagon, too - the British Convention of Workers and Soldiers Councils which met in Leeds in 1917 included such worthy bolsheviks as Ramsay Mac Donald -- everybody was in favour of the

Russian Revolution. As a bit of preaching by example and as an inspirer of hope the Russian Revolution had a positive effect. Furthermore, the Bolsheviks pumped money into the various propaganda organs of the left that were sympathetic to the Revolution. With this money, however, came increasing pressure to form a united Communist Party out of the warring factions, a Communist Party that conformed to the narrow conditions laid down by the Comintern. Now the British movement at this point variously was anarcho-sindicalist and left communist in form. More particularly it was overwhelmingly anti-parliamentarian. Many of the people who were to form the Communist Party had at one time or another been members of anarchist groups - Willie Gallacher, for example. The political influence of a successful revolutionary party with an entirely different conception of the relationship between them and the working class, plus the increasing dependence of left-wing groups on Russian money, plus some astute manoeuvrings, rapidly changed the orientation of a significant number of militants. The Communist Party was formed in 1921.

It should not be thought that this represented an immediate, huge bolshevik influence in England - it didn't. Many people were in the Communist Party for a year or so and left it again. But the point was that the demands of the Comintern about the shape that the revolutionary party should take in relation to the working class movement gradually began to work their way in. This was accompanied, be it said, by some things that can be seen as characteristic -- astounding character assassination attempts on John MacLean in Scotland, for example. The anarchists got shoved off to one side; the few of them that said 'The Bolsheviks aren't true socialists, they're doing this that and the other...' were asked, 'Don't you support a revolution when you see one?' -- a very powerful argument when the aims of that revolution are not clearly apparent to the mass of people. The anarchist movement went into a decline, because of this example of a successful revolution worked out by another set of principles entirely. In an atmosphere of increasing difficulties and increasing industrial depression, the Communist Party was born, shed many of its members within two years of its formation, but survived. The anarchist movement did not do so well.

CONCLUSION

The anarchist movement, when it grew, grew as a result of the massive self-activity of the working class. When that self-activity declined the movement declined. And this brings us full circuit. It is a fact that the anarchist movement represents an accurate barometer of working class

self-activity. Yet it is not that self-activity itself. Now, in this circumstance, what are we interested in? Are we interested in working class self-activity and self-management? Or are we interested in what has been described as the Jewish Chronicle style of writing history? The Jewish Chronicle assessed day to day events on the basis of whether people are Jews or not. And depending on how successful they are, you give them a bigger or a lesser headline. There is a great temptation to write about anarchists in the Jewish Chronicle style. For example - 'He's an anarchist, he did quite well - 7 out of 10!' There is another anarchist: 'He didn't do too well but he deserves a mention - 2 out of 10.' And so on, and you tot it all up with no relevance to the wider situation at all. I am very much opposed to that. So the question remains: Should anarchists only write about anarchists? I think the answer is clearly not. But then, if you are to write about theories of working-class self-activity, what do you write about? These movements are so huge, there is so much going on, how do you clarify it all? How to start, for example, if you have a situation in one town. You have got street committees, block committees, area/ward committees, and then a town committee. And with these you have shop committees, factory committees, and whole areas where both are intertwined. You have got a distribution commissariat which works on a crazy kind of basis that you can hardly sort out... In immediate terms, you can go to Northern Ireland and find out how that Ulster Workers' Council strike was actually organised. About these events, years later, though, how do you find out the details? I've approached this history through the anarchist movement itself. It has been enlightening enough, I think my book will be useful enough, but this is where we start to to sharpen our teeth, our claws, and ask: How do we sort out the kind of history we want to read and we want to write? Because we are also talking about the way we describe events now. We're talking about our ideas for the future. The way in which we intervene in the situation -- because we do intervene, we have an actual positive effect on certain situations. This leads to further difficulties. If you assess anarchist success in the past how do you assess that success? What do you mean? Do you mean that all the anarchists rose to the top of the labour unions in a couple of minutes? Not really, no. The extent to which anarchist papers got a huge readership and if they said 'Everybody out now!' they all came out? Not really, no. We begin to talk, when we talk about this kind of history, about our kind of politics. And even if perhaps the facts of the history of the English anarchist movement might be a little archane, mandarin and recondite, the question that surrounds the writing of this sort of history are important now.

BOOK REVIEW

Short and Sour

ITALIAN FASCISM, by Giampiero Carocci, translated by Isabel Quigly. (Penguin, 1975. 50p).

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THIS HIGHLY boring little book has many faults. Firstly, the translator obviously did not bother to interpret various sections of the book into decent English. Literal translations from Italian to English very seldom read well, thus making this small book difficult to read.

Secondly, the book is badly written. The author continually starts to discuss interesting aspects of fascism (e.g. the philosophy, cultural figures, peculiar traits of Mussolini, and so forth) which is very soon overwhelmed by economic and historical accounts which have been covered in a much better manner by

other authors.

Thirdly, the author (obviously writing for a thoroughly Italian audience) assumes that the reader knows who Giolitti, De Stefani, Mosconi, Rocco, Grandi, Volpe, Ciano and so forth, are. Hence the reader to benefit fully (if at all) from this book would really have to be well-read on the subject in the first place. However, if the reader is well-read on Italian fascism, she or he will hardly be in need of such a pathetic, half-hearted attempt.

Fascism, and its various characteristics, is a highly interesting area to study. It is, at the same time, the ultimate stage of authoritarian socialism, and the last resort of the capitalist and bourgeoisie. This is why in the Italy of today the M. S. I. (neo-fasc-

ist party) has within its ranks monarchists and right-wing capitalists, together with revolutionary idealists (e.g. the Avanguardia Nazionale group). That is also why Palmiro Togliatti (first post-war secretary of the Italian Communists) was interested in fascism for the way in which Mussolini could arouse and control the masses. The book only briefly mentions these aspects.

Therefore, even in "these inflationary days" the book is a waste of money at 50p.

Nino Staffa.

EVERY EXPLOITATION of public economy by small minorities leads inevitably to political oppression, just as, on the other hand, every sort of political predominance must lead to the creation of new economic monopolies and hence to increased exploitation of the weakest sections of society. The two phenomena always go hand in hand. The will to power is always the will to exploitation of the weakest.

--Rudolf Rocker (Nationalism & Culture)

HARD TIMES

IN TIMES OF CRISIS, the rich, the powerful, the protected - all those who rightly believe they have most to lose - search round for a scapegoat. As anthropologists have shown, he or she enables the dominant groups to purge themselves vicariously. Society may be more complex nowadays but the same emotions of fear, guilt, greed and lust for power persist and so do their inescapable corollaries - anxiety and the need to strike out at any force that seems to threaten the status quo.

We're clearly in the midst of such a crisis. The state and its apparatus of repression aren't to blame. It can't be 'our' fault. Whose is it, then? Why 'theirs' of course, they being a miscellaneous collection of 'wreckers' (as Stalin called them in the thirties), among whom are - there can be no doubt of it - the new generation of teachers. Look how the children are growing up. Who are responsible for it? The teachers, naturally. It's time we went back to the good old days when children were seen and not heard; when the little brats did what they were told, otherwise they got a good caning; when there was none of this damn nonsense about children enjoying themselves at school; when we had proper standards (by which is meant a small-meshed filter through which just a few of the poor and underprivileged squeezed to escape and join their betters. As for the rest, what are they fit for but to be hewers of wood and drawers of water?).

Consider the new Black Paper. It opens with its 'basics', ten points. Point No. 1 "Children are not naturally good. They need firm, tactful discipline from parents and teachers with clear standards. Too much freedom for children breeds selfishness, vandalism and personal unhappiness." Point No. 1 "If the non-competitive ethos of progressive education is allowed to dominate our schools, we shall produce a generation unable to maintain our standards of living when opposed by fierce rivalry from overseas competitors." I'll spare readers the other 8 points.

The contributions that follow are, in the purest sense, reactionary. They favour a hierarchical and stratified society. They seek to return to a golden age when the sheep and goats were differentiated according to 'standards'. (The concept of 'standards' pervades all the articles like a leit-motif.) G. H. Bantock carries this argument ludicrously far. In turgid prose he delivers a blistering attack on those two recklessly modern innovators and heretics, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Dewey. Rhodes Boyson doesn't go back quite so far as Rousseau but he does state, "it could be argued that the introduction of state-controlled provided education from 1870 onwards was all a mistake". It is sad to see

Iris Murdoch in such company. She claims to be a socialist and yet her article is a plea for selection at its most brutally logical, i.e. the special training of an intellectual élite exactly as proposed by Plato.

Unlike the first three Black Papers, this one claims to offer constructive proposals, though it is hard to believe some of them are meant to be taken seriously. For example they reject the plans for a growth in nursery education and instead favour income tax concessions to encourage mothers to stay at home with their under-5 children. (Naturally it is two men, one an M.P. and the other a Professor, who suggest this.) They claim that "reducing the pupil-teacher ratio has brought little or no advantage", which is rubbish. They suggest an educational voucher scheme whereby popular schools (like Highbury Grove) would continue and expand and unpopular schools would decline and close.

Finally, insisting that "inability to read arises from bad teaching and bad classroom discipline, not from deprived home backgrounds", they advocate a 7+ exam to cover literacy and numeracy. (The next Black Paper will presumably propose a 2+ test on talking, a 1+ test on walking and a 6-months+ test on crawling.)

This idea of a 7+ test is something that the Black Paper and the Bullock Report have in common. Surprisingly, disturbingly, they share other things too. It is indeed arguable that the Bullock Report is much more ominous and alarming than the Black Paper. After all, one knows what to expect from H. J. Eysenck, C. B. Cox, Rhodes Boyson and the egregious Kingsley Amis. But the Bullock Committee, that is another matter. Admittedly of its 18 members, only five are in schools and they are all, of course, heads. So that none of the committee are in direct and constant touch with children. But that is only to be expected. What was perhaps less predictable was the nature of the report itself.

It was meant to confine itself to all aspects of teaching the use of English but it often goes much further than that and in this sense it may be legitimately compared, I think, with the Plowden Report of 1966. Whereas the Plowden Report was essentially 'child-centred', the Bullock Report isn't. What it doesn't say but clearly implies seems to me more or less this. The emphasis on children has gone too far. It is time adults asserted themselves more. After all, they know best. Children have been allowed too much freedom, too much scope, too much opportunity to express themselves. An experiment along the lines of open prisons has been tried but we (that is the ruling body of educational opinion whose views and at-

titudes 'we' the committee in the final analysis must and wish to articulate) consider that it hasn't worked. We must revert to traditional values and standards.

Over and over again the report stresses the need for adults to impose themselves. For example, "We advocate planned intervention in the child's language development" and "there is no question of waiting for [reading] readiness to occur. For with many children it does not come naturally and must be brought about by the teacher's positive measures to introduce it."

The crucial point is this. The committee leaves open the question of whether or not standards have fallen but it acts as though they have. And the standards they mean are middle-class élitist standards. (I emphatically don't share the views of those people who deny the value of literacy in this age; on the contrary it seems to me more valuable than ever. But I do reject the imposition of alien standards which lead to working-class children being forced to compete on unfamiliar ground not of their choosing so that most of them are bound to lose.)

Their remedy is yet more testing. Where the 11+ has been abolished, it should be revived in an even more stringent form. Autobiographical, narrative, explanatory and descriptive writing would be needed for testing purposes, which would assess "spelling, punctuation, grammar and other features that might be specified". The ideal is, one can't help suspecting, well-presented nullity. (Indeed the report says somewhere "too much emphasis on spontaneity can inhibit development".)

Not content with this, they advocate an extra test at seven to determine literacy. 'Screening' is the word they use but that is merely a euphemism. Many schools do test children at this age but merely as a rough-and-ready confirmation of what they already know. A standardised series of diagnostic tests would be another matter altogether - a further refinement of the classification of even younger children into two fundamental categories - the successes and the failures.

Naturally the Bullock Report has some sensible things to say - about the importance of drama, for example, and the need to break down the barriers between home and school. But reading between its mellow, bland, liberal lines, it is not hard to detect a shifting of ground, a retreat from the comparatively enlightened attitude of Plowden.

The Black Paper adopts the same posture, in a cruder and more blatant way. Together they portend troublous times ahead for those of us who are on the children's side.

D. B.

BECAUSE revolution is evolution at its boiling point you cannot "make" a real revolution any more than you can hasten the boiling of a tea kettle. It is the fire underneath that makes it boil...

--Alexander Berkman

THE RETURN OF THE KINGS

--A TRIBUTE TO GISCARD'S FIRST YEAR IN POWER

ONE OF THE most curious ideas ever to excite the western world has been the idea of republicanism. In its time it has fooled (and continues to fool) a lot of the most idealistic and the least perceptive of people. For never has any political creed meant less in real terms.

Gerrard Winstanley realised this when he called Cromwell's republican government just another "monarchy". But he was ingenuous enough to believe for a while that the new rulers were simply "men in a mist", sincerely seeking freedom and not knowing where to find it. He wasted a lot of time and trouble trying to show them. Gracchus Babeuf made a similar mistake with the Jacobins. But while Winstanley's cows got beaten up the Equals were suppressed and Babeuf guillotined. This marked the end of the One and Ignominious Republic. From time to time between strange empires and uncertain monarchies its spectre returned to bask in the blood of the Communards, to smile mockingly upon the early days of capitalism and imperialism or the later bungled bombings, kidnappings and assassinations of colonial war. Today it haunts the political scene in a new form.

"Republican Monarchy (or how democracies give themselves kings)" is the

A DECLARATION OF INTENT

WE ARE LIVING at the close of an era during which the marvellous increase of knowledge left social feeling behind, and enabled the few who monopolised the newly acquired power over nature to create an artificial civilisation, based upon their exclusive claim to retain private, personal possession of the increased wealth produced. . . Such a wrong once realised is not to be borne. . . Our age is on the eve of a revolt against property, in the name of the common claim of all to a common share in the results of the common labour of all. Therefore we are socialists. . . We claim for each and all the personal right and social obligation to be free. We hold the complete social recognition and acknowledgement of such a claim to be the goal of human progress in the future, as its growth has been the gauge of development of Society in the past, of the advance of man from the blind social impulse of the gregarious animal to the conscious social feeling of the free human being. . . Such in rough outline is the general aspect of the Anarchist-Socialism our paper is intended to set forth, and by the touchstone of this belief we purpose to try the current ideas and modes of action of existing Society.

--FREEDOM, Vol. 1 no. 1 October, 1886

title of a book published last year by the French jurist and political commentator Maurice Duverger. Apologist for the post-liberal "strong, organised, dynamic" State, Duverger traces the process of the accumulation of power in the hands of the new republican monarchs. He concedes - it was 1974 - that "No one believes any more in the restoration of the Bourbons". A year later such a statement may seem already ironically old fashioned. As the new war of Succession breaks over Spain and the prince of Barcelona and Juan Carlos contest the throne of their ancestors, France has just celebrated Giscard's first year upon the throne of his.

For as everyone who is someone knows, Giscard d'Estaing of the Château de Varvasse is a descendant of Louis XV and his wife, Anne Aymone Sauvage de Brantes, no less, is Louis le Bien Aimé's descendant twice over. Thus, while the Orléanist pretender to the throne has finally persuaded himself into becoming a good republican, that crafty Bourbon leader of the Independent Republicans has got himself crowned king!

The most fervent royalists must still await the actual Coronation at Reims, but in every other respect Giscard is a true King, and a better, a real prince of the blood. He emanates broad mindedness on social matters. He disappears at night into the wilds of Paris while, in the "cell of work" into which the Elysee palace has been apparently converted, the gracious Anne-Aymone studies "painful cases" of social hardship and acts as intercessor (or so she says) between the people and her husband. The cosy fireside television chats each month, the touching confessions of human weakness, the regular dinners at the homes of faithful subjects, the wining and dining of the most loyal parts of the presidential electorate (like the Lower Rhine villagers of Ringeldorf who, before his arrival, hastily renamed one of their roads avenue Valéry Giscard d'Estaing), the general relaxation of protocol, all contribute towards the new and very old "common touch" of true kings.

The British too, you will be glad to hear, have played their part in fulfilling Giscard's desire to restore the dolce vita of the old regime to the streets of Paris. Last week Schiller's "Ode to Joy" sallied forth in bursts of wind and rain from the bedraggled but heroic ranks of the Edinburgh Festival Choir, and our own dear old Household Cavalry tossed their wet plumes along the Champs Elysées.

All this cauffle is connected with a quite successful cosmetics job on the already much wrinkled face of the Fifth Republic, and as such is probably more pernicious than the most blatant authoritarianism of Napoleonic De Gaulle, or plain dull capitalist Pompidou.

Reams have been printed about Giscard's predecessors. Just as the Am-

erican presidency, it is said, increased its powers through the war in Vietnam, so the return of personal monarchy to France was accelerated by the Fourth Republic's massive indulgence in terrorism and delinquency, in Vietnam, Algeria and Tunisia. Eventually dying of fright, it gave De Gaulle his long-awaited chance to starve the parties of their "soupe" and install a new absolutism through plebiscitic referenda, universal presidential elections and spectacular declarations to the people. Offended, confused and hopelessly divided, the Parliament went into a decline from which it has never recovered, though occasionally it may lift a feeble voice in protest against the tyranny of the executive and the mafia of the "grandes écoles".

But De Gaulle was a candid soldier who upset everyone with his deliberate indiscretions and did not attempt to hide his dictatorial views. Under De Gaulle opposition (at least outside Parliament) was relatively straightforward and it thrived. On the other hand, Giscard's royal bonhomie and his cautious but charming advocacy of "change in continuity" has thrown the opposition into a real tizwoz and managed to drown criticism of prince Ponia's new police methods and Chirac's bullying diplomacy in a "liberal" celebration of wine, women and song.

Yet the sinister undercurrent of state oppression in the new republican monarchy is not so dangerous as its benevolence and apparent generosity of reform, deluding with promises of greater freedom; while in so doing, the state itself increases its prestige and real power.

This is the trick of France's new king, but it is something he has learnt from that far subtler republican monarchy across the water. [Indeed Duverger quickly points out that it is Britain, not France, who was the avant-garde of republican monarchy in the west and that, constitutionally, Kings Harold and Ted or Queen Mag, have greater powers than that arch ogre the American president himself.

It is under this relatively new and cosy kingship, plundering with its left hand to extend its right in highly publicised acts of charity, that anarchists must reconsider their main targets of attack. In other words, police and armies, capitalists and bureaucrats, like the poor, will be with us as long as our kings exist. But if, as anarchists and workers, we really wish to send our kings back into exile, we must first of all attack their false generosity by proclaiming, and explaining, our opposition to every form of parasitism. For, contrary to general belief, this is their lifeblood, not ours! Only after we have begun to reject their gifts and establish a sound basis of economic independence, will revolution, as we want it, be possible.

G. F.

THROUGH THE ANARCHIST PRESS

"HISTORY TELLS US history tells us" is one of Gertrude Stein's more gnomic expansions/explosions of cliché, and is open to various interpretations, but basically it's warning us that all history is a subjective selection and interpretation of events, and that we should be wary of anybody who tries to impose a single viewpoint on us. This is especially true of those who write monumental histories which explain everything. Their single-handed efforts usually turn out like those fantastic edifices, the Watts Towers. Aesthetic analysis is as much in order as refutations and differing interpretations of single points.

In one of his early works, an annotated selection from the work of the nineteenth century historian Michelet, the French semiologist Roland Barthes uncovered a poetic structure of recurring obsessional images which Michelet imposed on all the "history" he wrote; and it has been said that Marx's "Kapital" is the greatest vampire-novel in the Gothick tradition.

The root of the word "history" is a Greek verb "historiō", meaning "to find out", (Women's Liberation's attempt to rewrite "history" as "her-story" shows a painful ignorance of etymology which can itself be a useful historical instrument), and finding out for oneself is probably the only really illuminating history. But merely to rely on one's own investigations would be very limiting, which is why we listen to newsbroadcasts, read newspapers and magazines, history books, etc. In reading other people's works, however, we should guard against excessive credulity, even if they are written by "good comrades".

HISTORY OF ANARCHISM

Which is the long way round to the centre pages of June's Le Monde Libertaire (monthly paper of the French Anarchist Federation). Jean Maitron is the acknowledged historian of French anarchism. This year his classic study of the movement in the years 1880-1914 was reissued, together with a second volume bringing the story up to the present day. It's this second volume which comes in for criticism from Maurice Laisant in Le Monde Libertaire. Although it's about the same length as the first, half of it is taken up with a very valuable bibliography of the French anarchist movement, leaving 200 pages to cover 60 years of history. Laisant cites all of what he considers Maitron's serious omissions, but he sees the reason for these gaps not so much as lack of space but as a choice on Maitron's part, because he has turned from writing history to advancing theses on the French anarchist movement, which centre on two questions: Has there been a regression in the anarchist movement? and Are anarchism and organisation compatible?

Maitron's answer to the first question is yes, and he bases it on statistics of the distribution and publishing of the anarchist press (derived from his bibliographical researches). Laisant's refutation of this argument turns on a different interpretation of the same statistics. Disraeli was right! The second question revolves around -guess what. That's right - the Arshinov platform. Laisant points out the falseness of seeing the argument in a simplistic pro-organisation or anti-organisation way, when the real question is, what form of organisation?

One would have thought that the essence of any anarchist organisation would be its non-authoritarian nature, its ability to allow the free expression of diverse tendencies, and to promote discussion of practical and theoretical points. The latest Black Flag seems to be against this kind of openness, which it brands "infighting". "Yet one never sees infighting in Black Flag as one does in Freedom (where one sees people of the same viewpoint

disagreeing)."

Does this mean that all people of the same viewpoint have to be so rigid that they don't disagree about anything? Are we supposed to be putting up the same façade of monolithic correctness as the Workers' Press? Admittedly if you have one editor and a single editorial line, it makes life easier for the kind of reader who doesn't want to think for himself, who wants to be fed a party line on everything. But how many readers of FREEDOM really want to live in the dream-world of propaganda, with the revolution always just round the next corner, comrade, the ineluctable final product of the dialectic?

Journalism can be contemporary history (it's taking over a larger slice of the publishing trade every year), lots of history is on no higher a level than journalism, both can tend towards fiction. A little real information is worth ten tons of propaganda, and it's much harder to come across.

D. L. M.

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