

# FREEDOM ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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## LAW AND JUSTICE

APARTHEID AND HER MAJESTY'S mail were issues quickly lost from sight in the struggle that has developed over the limits of parliamentary sovereignty. It is a dry but impassioned judicial war over political territory that has quite overshadowed the other, as yet not fully developed struggle between labour unions and those white knights, riding out of the ruins of empire to the cry of "Freedom."

Most people like to see the mighty fall. There was no question of the amount of instinctive sympathy felt for the prickly trio of appeal judges while they were playing the role cast for them as the upholders of "right" against might - especially when it turns up in the disagreeably flabby form of the present Attorney General for England and Wales. On occasions like this the multiplicity of questions that have given rise to the combat in the first place, inevitably evaporate leaving only the scent of "history in the making". Those who dislike apartheid and union bureaucracies as much as government, the legal system and ex-army officers, may still warm to the smell of drawn blood. For this, and in a lesser degree Tameside, Laker Sky-train and television licences are all battles of the same order - less a matter of supporting shady pressure groups, elite schools and buccaneering businessmen than of feeling that some direct conflict can still exist. It is to preserve those possibilities for conflict against the magnetic "black hole" of political power that the bill of rights campaign has begun, supported by a number of the still small nucleus of reforming judges.

The arguments and analyses that have gone into the bill of rights campaign are worth looking at. (Ironically, Samuel Silkin himself advanced the cause with his attempt to set up a human rights commission that would, however, have had no enforcing powers against cabinet opposition). For the appeal judge Leslie Scarman, such a bill is needed to help the law face five new "challenges". These, as defined in his Hamlyn lectures of 1974, *English Law - New Dimensions*, were the international human rights movement and legislation, social matters involving family life and social security, the environment (where he believes the law has to transcend its traditional preoccupation with property), industrial relations (where he, like Denning and others has been worried by the failure to incorporate union activity within the law) and devolution. These challenges, he

maintains, have to be dealt with in a codified form if the English legal system is not to stifle in its own triffid-like vegetable juices, and under the weight of parliament's legislative sovereignty.

Hailsham uses the idea of a bill of rights within a new written constitution (the old one being "no longer wind and weather proof") directly to attack the "elective dictatorship" of modern government. His is an essentially conservative critique in unequivocal sympathy with the new judicial moves to place limits on the swelling powers of government through its rubber-stamp parliament. Like Scarman he is appalled at the sheer volume and indigest-

### living in cities

ST AGNES PLACE, Lambeth, stands between the 36 acre Kennington Park and the 12½ acre Kennington Park East. At the Camberwell New Road end of the street an adventure playground and the boarded up Queens Arms pub are signs of a once thriving community.

The Lambeth Council has other plans and want to turn this 2.3 acre St Agnes Place into an open space and thereby link up the two parks. While one can agree that the people of Lambeth need open space and greenery, to demolish and flatten 49 houses which are virtually surrounded by open space is an act of folly to put it mildly.

It becomes criminal when the Council itself admits that it has no money available until the eighties to lay out the area as a park. And as the open spaces budget takes low priority, especially with the current spending cuts, the scheme would be delayed indefinitely. Lambeth Council still hasn't even applied for the necessary GLC permission to close the road. This is obviously necessary for a proper link up of open space, but the chances are that the GLC will not give permission because the street gives access to both fire and ambulance services. And the police have expressed reservations about the closure as at the moment it diverts traffic from two large intersections.

The people of Lambeth have also shown where they stand on the open space issue. When consulted in each ward about the Council's development

ability of the modern legislative burden and - from his less exalted seat in the Lords - alarmed at the crystallisation of power around the government front bench, armed with whips, guillotines and privileged access to a civil service that is rapidly transforming itself into the Napoleonic-technocratic model of its French counterpart. Hailsham's solution is to give the judiciary a clear mandate in limiting parliamentary dictatorship and to call for a convention to set the new constitutional process in motion.

Confining himself more narrowly to a bill of rights, the legal specialist Michael Zander argues, among other



"TELL ME COUNCILLOR, WHY ARE YOU KNOCKING DOWN THOSE HOUSES?"  
"TO STOP PEOPLE LIVING IN THEM OF COURSE."

"BOOM BOOM"

plan the result of participation was as follows:

"It was generally agreed at all the public meetings that there is a need for more open space, but that this should be provided in a small rather than a large area. It would be better to provide a network of small local parks."

So the council has chosen to ignore the people it is supposed to represent. It has also ignored a petition from local people which called for:

1. The continued rehousing of those council tenants who wish to be rehoused, and no eviction for tenants who refuse offers of undesirable alternative accommodation.

## LAW AND JUSTICE

things, that "Government, of whatever political complexion, is usually moved to change things only when the pressure to do so becomes greater than the convenience of leaving things as they are." Or, as Amalrik has put it, "Every governmental institution and position is sustained by no other force than the realisation that it is an essential part of the existing system." A bill of rights would push through the natural inertia of the governmental system towards a more active litigation that could defend political grievances and become a "major educative force." (Exploitation by a nightmarish series of mini-Whitehouses or by a wealthy and resourceful pressure group like the NAF, nibbling away at the law like so many fat maggots in smelly cheese, is an already part-proven danger of such litigation; and in no region of the world have written constitutions ever obstructed the use of very different penal codes).

While the NCCL has yet to reach a decision on which side of the fence to come down, the position of the anarchist is both clearer and more complex. In major constitutional battles we simply can't take sides - neither the side of the labour union nor the right wing pressure group, nor yet of judiciary's struggle against state and unions to recover shifting ground. One may of course argue that an easily accessible and understandable codification of human rights is a better campaigning tool than the esoteric "common law" as it now stands, but also, such a code only defines the limitations of legality - nor does it recognise the many "illegal" struggles that have gone into the making of what is now accepted law. What I personally think anarchists need to do is analyse in far greater depth than hitherto the whole concept of "rule of law" and the possibilities of elaborating an alternative concept of "natural justice." At first sight this may seem a far cry from the latest combat between crown and courts (the outcome of which is still pending as we go to press). Yet the preoccupation of Lord Denning, in particular, with the concept of the rule of law in this debate naturally leads one on to deeper arguments about the foundations of his belief - one, of course, upon which no attorney general differs save in degree.

\* \* \*

As with the question of the state, what must distinguish the anarchist from the Marxist approach to the rule of law is not the view of it as, in practice, a partial class instrument of repression and of actual perpetuation of crime that must disappear with the state (thus, at least, the purist view) but the idea of the way it can, in practice, be destroyed. Lenin believed that "excesses" would wither away with the state, but if anything has been proved since the appearance of State and Revolution it is the abysmal failure of the political power mechanism, however idealistic in original intent, to wither. Indeed, if one is to believe some Soviet writers today the so-called revolutionary state has, on the contrary, bred a

vast area of violence and criminality that is yet untapped.

Thus, against the ideological jurists like Denning, the sly Sam Silkins, the variously motivated bill of rights campaigners, the (usually middle class) dissidents in some countries organising campaigns for the "rule of law" against government "illegality", against the Marxist critique of capitalist law, the anarchist advocates the deliberate dismantling of the whole political/legal apparatus in conjunction with a revolutionary change in environmental, social and economic structures.

Natural justice can be interpreted in this context, very roughly, as the contrary of rule of law - a system of values in direct opposition to the "positive" legal systems in any country, and to those human rights clauses (like articles 1. c. and 15 of the European Convention on Human Rights or article 1. 2 of the First Protocol) designed specifically to uphold the given power structure against insurrection, failure to pay taxes and so on. Such a concept of natural justice stresses the classic notion of individual freedom and dignity combined with the economic and social equality which has been described as the "first and essential" tenet of natural law as well as communist philosophy. At the same time, and in order to do so, it aims at a radical restructuring of the environment in such a way that the temptation to exploitative and brute violence is pared down together with the rule of law on which it breeds.

This is, of course, an extremely vague formulation that could be elaborated further some other time. But from this it can be seen as an active and positive force in marked contrast to a defensive, basically parasitic "positive law" dependent on the crime it condemns - and consequently ever ready to prize open fresh areas of criminality.

Meanwhile the reforming actions of judges and civil rights campaigners may help to block the path to monolithic state control. They do not, and within the present system they cannot, touch upon this area of natural justice. In the end they will only have reclaimed a natural breeding ground for crime-infested law both in and outside Westminster and the courts.

Gaia

## LIVING IN CITIES

2. The offer of renovation of existing houses by Lambeth Self-Help at no financial risk to the council.
3. The use of these renovated houses by the council as short term housing for the homeless.
4. Such use must take priority over extension of open space in view of the present financial situation and the housing crisis in Lambeth and elsewhere.

The council in its wisdom has also ignored a report by two independent architects who say that most of the houses could have a 30 year life. But with all local opinion and facts against them the council still seemed determin-

ed to go ahead. The fact that squatters had moved in and were adding their weight to the campaign against demolition only appeared to make the council more adamant in carrying out a plan it admitted it could not complete. They became more interested in evicting squatters and vandalising the housing than in providing homes for the 17, 600 people they have on their official housing waiting list. The council is also paying out £½ million for bed and breakfast hotel accommodation for homeless families.

While the council was destroying homes, using its own labour force, in October last year, it invited tenders for the demolition contract. The contract was awarded to Gorst and Co. in December and priced at £13, 660.

Even if there had been some case for more open space in this area demolition could have been delayed until the money was available to complete the scheme. Directives from the Department of the Environment have over the last two years recommended "Maximum use should be made of short life property... decanting should be delayed until the shortest possible time before the properties are demolished... Housing authorities in areas of need should be ready to work with local housing associations or voluntary bodies including reliable squatting organisations."

Even the council's own housing officers have on two occasions in November 1974 and in February 1976, recommended rehabilitation of the houses as short life accommodation. Local neighbourhood councils, although never consulted by the council, have said they think demolition "a tragedy and a reversal of the slow but steady progress towards better use of the housing stock."

When Gorst finally moved in 200 police were there to protect them. On the same morning an injunction was obtained preventing further demolition, but only after more homes had been made uninhabitable. This injunction has been renewed but now the council is trying to fight the court order on the grounds that the houses they have destroyed are now dangerous and should be flattened.

When I spoke to one of the squatters he told me that those still living in St Agnes Place consist of one original family and 90 squatters. Fourteen houses had already been destroyed. He felt very bitter, pointing out that these large houses could have provided homes for two families each. The people left have a number of options left to them. The council says it might reconsider their plans and the houses could be taken over by the Lambeth Self Help Association. If this happens the people could be involved in the repairs and decorations of their own homes and pay rent to the Association. He favoured this scheme.

Another scheme would come under the Emergency Housing Office Housing Association whose chairman is Lambeth councillor Blau. This would repair 20 of the 26 empty houses, providing 40 flats. Half would be used for homeless families and half for people

# THE BATTLE FOR FLEET STREET

IN A WORLD full of economic stress, racial tension, potential civil, imperialist and liberatory wars; and constant threats to individual liberty, the Monday morning headline of one of Fleet Street's popular newspaper's was 'Panther in Murder Quiz'. This did not mean that a jungle feline was taking part in or was a subject of a "Quiz" on the subject of murder. It did not even mean that a member of the SLA was taking part in such an intellectual exercise. Aficianados of the popular press (and who is not?) will instantly recognise that the 'Panther' named is not even pink—he is the 'Black Panther', a sobriquet given by the Press to one Donalf Neilson, a robber of post offices and accused kidnapper and murderer—and it is he who is being quizzed with regard to 'four unsolved murders'.

This newspeak headline is typical of the Fleet Street appeal-formula of crime, sex, money; a combination of words and situations which produces the immediate reflex action of buying the paper—and continuing to buy the paper! The New Statesman invention of 'Negro Clergyman slays titled woman in Love-nest' is an attempt to combine all the factors in one title. The Monday attempt to revive the dead past of a 'popular' murder was a brave try in an epoch-making venture.

The venture (for nothing is ordinary in Fleet Street) was the remoulding of The Daily Express into a tabloid. Once upon a time the expression "tabloid" was a dirty word tantamount to "yellow press"; now it is looked upon as the salvation of the free press.

However such is the nature of Fleet Street that immediately the three other Fleet Street giants, the Mail, the Mirror and the Sun howled imitation! Mail impersonator! the real one!—and for once there was truth in the allegation. Like cigarettes and soap powders, the wares the manufacturers need to sell are so depressingly similar that the customers find it hard to distinguish between the different brands so that only the presentation and the advertising can vary. After all, what they, like the manufactures of tobacco and soap powder, have to sell is dreams, and the dream of Everyman of being the 'Black Panther' or Howard Hughes was stirred by the new tabloid Daily Express.

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It used to be said in Fleet Street that "dog does not eat dog" but such is the situation now in Fleet Street that canine cannibalism is a possibility. On that Monday the Mail acidly commented that the police said the Neilson story was a 'load of rubbish'. "The End column" carried a story 'Famous Paper tries again' (worthy of Jack Spratt at his worst) aimed at the Express but discussing the Peking People's Daily.

The Howard Hughes story which is one of the main shots in the Express's locker seems a possible miscalculation for what appeal has this eccentric Mormon

millionaire to the younger generation. It is possible that the negotiations for the story of the Tyler family (kidnapped in Ethiopia) broke down with the Express because of their sexist sensational headline 'HAPPINESS IS A NEW BRA' indicating Mrs. Tyler's first purchase on return to "civilization". The Mail "scooped" them with the story—timed to start on Thursday after the novelty of the Express has worn off. This embroilment in chequebook journalism (is there any other sort—with the exception of FREEDOM, Peace News and one or two others?) is a growing feature of Fleet Street; indeed a feature in the life of anybody who has done anything worthy of note in the newspapers impinging on the areas of crime, sport and sex to which the newspapers are so cordially devoted. The one thing to do after sailing alone across the Serpentine, murdering one's mother or avoiding being the victim of a mass murderer is to wait for the bids to come in from Fleet Street. One should be careful to make it seem that one is not profiting from one's crime; only Fleet Street should profit.

The Guardian recently protested in a leader about the ghoulish interest taken in Gary Gilmore's execution. A reader pointed out the Guardian's discretion in printing the execution story on the front page. Alas, this is a liberal dilemma. Newspapers have for many years played both sides of the street. Newspapers convey their disapproval of criminal activities by a description so realistic and detailed of the activities of criminals that the public is both shocked and intrigued with the journalist skill. Consequently the public attitude to crime (and are we not all members of the public?) is ambivalent. There is always a hidden pleasure in the horrors of the popular press and circulations have been built up on it.

\*

But the world of Fleet Street is changing and the Express, too late perhaps, has changed with it. The daily newspaper, largely due to television, no longer is an indispensable for the family breakfast table. Rising costs, especially in the present decline in advertising, have further eaten into circulation. The technical changes in production are being forced through at great cost to the union members with consequent skirmishes of frequent strikes; a blood-letting for an already anaemic industry. Meanwhile the future of the printing industry is threatened with automatic redundancies, pensioned-off printers and unions fighting rearguard actions in an already lost battle.

But with all these swooning declines of circulation there are no casualties. None, that is, since the suicide of the News Chronicle in the early 'sixties. and the mutation (or mutilation?) of the Daily Herald into the Sun. One is impelled to the thought that even a declining newspaper provides managing directors with sufficient income—and expenses—to suffer in comfort. Or an ailing

newspaper is a good taxloss to offset against a prosperous television franchise. Or the power and prestige of ownership of a newspaper (no matter how dog-eared) is worth the financial drain, or (more sinisterly) the ownership of a newspaper with its captive audience ('who sway in the wind like a field of ripe corn') is a useful possible weapon for the capture of political power and the imposition of political opinions in the case of future stress.

It is only the unremitting umbilical cord with commerce that makes the popular press to unhesitatingly, on the side of reaction. Whatever is commercially profitable is right—the editor of the transmogrified Express confessed that they would not emphasize their previous super-patriotism and chauvinism since this was not fashionable with the generation they were trying to reach. Older readers will remember Rothermere of the Daily Mail abandoning his sponsorship of Sir Oswald Mosley in the 'thirties on the combined pressures of shopkeeper-advertisers.

The freedom of the press to which so much lip service is paid is an illusion. The press is as free as the proprietor's prejudices, the advertisers' preferences and the public's illusions make it. The occasional spasmodic interruptions by the unions—whose social responsibility swallows much more in the press than they should—make no difference to the right to hire and fire nor to the proprietor's right to close down the paper at his merest whim. Nor to the State's ability to close down the paper when it feels that the largely self-imposed censorship of the existing laws has failed. If the paper is not actionably obscene, blasphemous, libellous, seditious or treasonable it can exercise all the freedom its money can purchase for it.

It seems unlikely that the Express will succumb to pressure either from the Unions or the State but its chances of survival are faint. The dogs of Fleet Street will eat dog if necessary.

Jack Robinson.

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# STOP THE DEPORTATIONS

THE RACIALIST policies of the Home Office are creating fear and hardship in the heart of the Cypriot Community in Britain, which is not prepared to put up anymore with the harassment dispensed by Home Office officials and by the Police, in the form of intimidating letters, anonymous phone calls, unsolicited "visits" etc...! They just have had enough!

The Cypriot Community is not prepared to tolerate the deportations back to Cyprus of war refugees Metin and Hulya Salik, brother and sister of Turkish Cypriot origin, where they have no home to go to, nor the deportation of Caterina Stylianou, widowed mother of six, where she would be homeless and would have to be separated from her children.

The Cypriot Community is also fighting back the proposed deportation of 10 other war refugees who are at present being held in Pentonville prison awaiting the final decision to

deport them back to Cyprus where they will also be homeless and forced to live in refugee camps.

According to The Cypriot Defence Campaign organisers, more than 3000 Greek/Turkish Cypriot refugees now living in Britain could be the next victims of this Labour Government's racist policies to deport unwanted immigrant workers or refugees and their families, inhuman policies which could in the future be turned against immigrant workers of other nationalities and races.

The Cypriot Community in Britain is in a militant mood and ask those in London who are opposed to such deportations to join them in a protest march, which will be held on **SATURDAY 5th of Feb. at 2.00PM** (Assemble opposite Haringay Civic Centre, Wood Green, High Road, London N 22, tube Wood Green Station.)

For further information and advice on this Campaign please contact:

CYPRIOT DEFENCE CAMPAIGN  
90 - Mountview Road  
LONDON N4

CLAUDE

# SHIELDING THE RULING CLASS

THERE IS SOME justification in the claim that the British ruling class is not only the oldest but also the cleverest. As one writer has put it, "The British bourgeoisie (produced) a brilliantly sophisticated organisation of social control enshrined within a masterly and deeply mystifying ideology which for so long has succeeded in masking the hidden reality of the police for all classes most of the time." † Not the bold, harsh measures to deal with discontent and massive increases in prices as we have seen in Egypt but instead the repression creeps up on us by way of the back door.

That back door is our democratic parliament and last week Mr Rees, the Home Secretary informed the House that he had agreed with the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police that protective shields should be used by his men when the occasion warranted it. In the same week we are reminded by the Balcombe Street trial just how well the police are armed when the occasion demands it.

Mr Rees was speaking during a debate on crime prevention when he let us, the general public, know of the new departure in police tactics. Perhaps the lessons of the Notting Hill Gate Carnival haven't been lost on them. And of course nowadays during any discussion on crime and law and order the hated and much maligned "football hooligan" was spoken of. These fans, we are told, get "steamed up" on anything from "Nigerian Riesling to vodka". As a

football fan myself I would dearly like to try some Nigerian Riesling as I was under the impression that Riesling wine was only produced in the Baltic countries. But as a football fan I have also witnessed the police charging down on horseback wielding riot sticks, hitting out in all directions for no reason whatsoever while they have been well protected by crash helmets. The popular view of the police as the friendly "copper" helping old ladies and children across busy streets is far from reality.

Perhaps the ruling class does feel threatened? Certainly it has always stuck by the boy scouts' motto "Be Prepared" and the use of riot shields should be seen as another weapon in the state's armoury to ensure its continuing subjection of the people of this country. With the continuing economic crisis and the increasing number of people who are questioning or not accepting authority, the state's kind glove will be removed to reveal its true self, the iron fist.

F.F.

† Mike Hayes, The Police and Industrial Capital

cont. from page 2

## Living in Cities

on the housing waiting list.

Throughout, the council, or at least the members involved in the various committees, have been secretive about the plans and dates for demolition.

"It is the deception of our own people that sickens me," said Jock Quinn, councillor for the St Agnes Place area. But council leader Stimpson says "My only regret is that the houses were not down long ago and that the injunction

prevented the completion of Wednesday's job."

It seems that the council never anticipated resistance to its plans. For their part the squatters have not only prevented the plans going ahead but have shown the council members up as vandals with little or no concern for real housing needs. Like all in authority, even those elected, they show utter contempt for any organised opposition. But the squatters have shown that council vandals can be defeated and show that ordinary people can determine and fight for their needs.

PT

# THE COMMON LAND

WE THE PEOPLE have few communal heritages that we can claim to be our own and those that we have must be jealously guarded not only in our own self interest but as the inherited treasures that we hold in solemn trust for those who follow us. If we allow ourselves to betray that trust then we also betray those unborn generations who will rightly question why we failed ourselves when challenged. In this overcrowded area of Hammersmith and Shepherd's Bush we have but one small open space of green grass whereon men, women and children can walk, play or sit and lay in the grey winter months and beneath the summer sun.

It is Shepherd's Bush Green, a single small green oasis (allowing for the tiny Brook Green) in our overbuilt world of High Rise flats, streets, roads, factories, shops and crowded markets. Our accepted but unprotected claimed right to this our single open green space is now endangered by the actions of our local ward politicians from the warm privacy of the committee meeting rooms and the Town Hall bureaucracy who, one feels, wish to rid themselves of what they probably believe is an unnecessary administrative burden. For the ward politicians it is circuses and a LOCKED AND CHAINED CHILDREN'S PLAY PEN for we the people and they will, in our name, destroy our right to a small, uncluttered, free and open space of green grass.

This, as always, will be claimed to be in the interest of we the people, and all we shall know of it will, probably, be a news item in the local paper and the sight and sound of a bulldozer ripping up our open space. Already almost half this green and communal land has been ruined by a commercial concern who used it for private profit and then moved on leaving us the people with a greasy quagmire of stinking mud and stagnant pools of water that will not drain away. By all means let our local ward politicians play out their political games but not at the expense of we the people! If our communal land can be used and ruined by one commercial company



## THE BULLOCK REPORT

# hide the sherry!

THE recommendations published in the Bullock Report about so-called industrial democracy are another attempt by the establishment (TUC, government and CBI) to promote workers into a situation of self-exploitation by allowing trade unionists to sit in the boardrooms of companies with more than 2000 employees.

Of course these reformist recommendations will not basically solve the existing contradictions between labour and capital, for the Bullock report does not ideologically question the present ownership of the means of production - the economic control of British industry by either a few private shareholders or by the State. The present system is taken for granted.

### Companies prepare for battle



"FOR GOD SAKE HIDE THE SHERRY, THEY'VE BROKEN DOWN THE DOOR."

The Bullock report simply proposes a "modernisation" of archaic and inhuman economic values by inviting workers to share in the responsibility of managing companies which do not belong to them, but which are instead owned by unproductive shareholders. Many of them do not even live in this country and have invested their capital into industry, finance, banking and commerce not because the goods and services produced are **SOCIALLY NEEDED** but because lots of money is to be made in the manufacture of, for example, weapons and war material and other unnecessary goods related to the technological expansion created by the system itself.

As a revolutionary alternative to the Bullock report we think that only under workers' self-management of **socialised industries** (not to be confused with nationalised industries) will society be able to satisfy the social needs of both manual and intellectual workers (i.e. housing, health, educat-

ion, public transport, energy, leisure, communal property etc).

Instead, what is being proposed is that workers help in the management and exploitation of their own kind on the shop floor, with the corporate assistance of government, trade union, bureaucrats and the CBI. In practical terms this means another step towards the consolidation of **STATE CAPITALISM** and corporate control of the working population in this country, as it exists in fascist and bolshevik regimes. So much for our freedom!

Not surprisingly the CBI is creating a commotion about the proposals contained in the Bullock report. But were socially conscious workers to push their union bureaucrats into demanding **total control** of the factories and places of work in Britain the CBI would immediately concede to the present supporters of the report what is now being hotly disputed. The right of workers to sit in boardrooms in order to give a peaceful continuity to the existing social and economic order called capitalism.

CLAUDE

## ONE OF US? cont.

*Trybuna Ludu*, the Polish newspaper recently published an interview about Workers' Defence Committee member and novelist Jerzy Andrzejewski with a certain illustrious professor. The professor referred to Andrzejewski's "improper attitude to the state" while on a visit to West Germany. One could understand a citizen voicing his grudges against the state at home, but when he enters the international arena to do so he supplies "an example of anarchical attitudes."

## ON THE DOLE

**DURING THE LAST SIX WEEKS** the present writer has frequented three self-service job centres in East London almost every day. These are in Stratford, Canning Town and Freemasons Road.

The prospect of getting even a half decent job in one of these centres is very bleak. When you go into any of these places looking for a job, the chances are you will come out again quite depressed.

The system in the job centres works like this. There are about a dozen large boards with hundreds of little cards offering horrible jobs at starvation wages. Anyone who, through no fault of theirs, has been unemployed for a long period will have a very hard task getting a job...

E.g. **WANTED, TOILET CLEANER.** Must have 5 years experience. References essential.

As well as that wages are usually under £35 gross.

E.g. **WANTED, LABOURER.** Must be strong. £20 per wk.

E.g. **WANTED, SPRAY PAINTER.** £31 per wk.

We are also confronted with the dead end jobs:

E.g. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR WANTED** for funeral parlour. Must be steady type.

Then there are the trick jobs:

E.g. **HANDY MAN WANTED.** Must be able to drive, paint. Must be literate. Will be expected to do some glazing, plumbing and bricklaying. Wages £45 gross. Some overtime.

Even if you pick out one of these jobs and apply it will probably be gone.

This week has been the worst yet, with the government's announcement of almost one and a half million unemployed. It was an encouragement to the exploiting class (large, medium and small, male and female) to offer the lowest of wages along with the worst conditions.

Can anarchists stand aloof from the need for employment? My own experience suggests to me that unemployment is depressing, soul destroying and most violent. It must be opposed as much as **bad housing conditions, imprisonment** and any other wrong in present society.

Unemployed of the world unite!  
We have nothing to lose. Nothing at all.

W. MC DERMOTT

## THE COMMON LAND

then it must be accepted that at some future time a future political and bureaucratic establishment can hawk off our communal land as, dare we suggest it, a lorry park? We the people are by our very name and title never an organised whole, but just men and women and children accepting our communal heritage as a natural right bequeathed to us by past generations.

We can only halt the bureaucrats and the ward politicians if we as individuals protest by word of mouth and by letter, for if we do nothing we shall be traitors to the future and our betrayal will be to deny to men, women and children, yea even in our own life time, the right to walk upon green, free and untrammelled land.

ARTHUR MOYSE

# FREEDOM



Dear Comrades,  
Concerning the nature of Freedom:

It would be a shame if Freedom were to abandon its present format for a more agitational one. Freedom's present format puts it a cut above the average left wing paper, a species of paper that seems to specialise in the spouting of rhetoric to the exclusion of all else. Too many articles in Freedom already seem to tend this way. You know the type; I have written them myself elsewhere, where every article must end with the phrase (or its paraphrase) "... but all this will be ended only by one thing, the social revolution and the establishment of a stateless society." Sounds too much like the endless stream of Maoist leaflets that I used to read when I was a Marxist.

The answer is not to abandon your present format, but to improve it, an improvement that is probably the responsibility of, not the editors but the individual contributors. Agitational work is done much better elsewhere than in the pages of a paper like FREEDOM. Most people who become anarchists have their first contact with the ideas of anarchism through such things as leaflets, books or personal contact. The same goes for most left wing ideologies. The function of the "agitational" papers of most left wing sects is not to introduce ideas or groups to totally uninitiated people but to "bolster the faith" of the already converted but ignorant. I've spent a lot of time hanging around left wing circles, and I really can't remember any example of a person whose first contact with an idea or movement came through an "agitational" paper. After all, how many magazines do you pick off a newsstand or street vendor from random curiosity? Back when I was a Marxist I spent an entire year as a street vendor of the local alternative paper. Aside from it being an excuse for being out there meeting people, I can't remember that the paper served any function in introducing people to its ideas (it was also a pretty shitty paper - like most "agitational" papers).

As for FREEDOM taking a "line". Well, considering the complexity of our modern world I'm afraid that any line will be open to debate for some time still. I'm gratified that recent articles in your paper and others show that more people are coming around to the idea of the "managerial revolution" (or the new class or whatever you want to call it), an idea that I personally favor. Yet I am not about to claim that others might not

be able to offer "good" evidence against this idea. I'd be interested in hearing it, if for nothing else than to sharpen the theory of this revolution in contest with other theories. I'm not about to ask an editorial board of a paper like FREEDOM, that is supposed to be printed for a wide variety of anarchists, to impose my particular "line" upon the paper. As with the class nature of the modern world, so too with the idea of revolution in that world. I, for one, flinch every time I see the old battle between the pacifists and the insurrectionists rear its head on your pages. Both are totally outmoded ideas. And totally at variance with the facts of modern life, or in the case of pacifism, with any life. The one is an ideology of the 19th century and the days of cavalry charges and cannonballs. The other is stuck with the dreams of the Children's Crusade. It is hard enough to be able to define what revolution means in an age of atomic overkill without having to fight off the ghost of Christianity on one hand and the romance of making some barricade your funeral pyre on the other. This is one almost totally neglected debate that I would like to see opened in the pages of FREEDOM.

Anyhow, before I offend my own injunction against incoherence too much I close this letter. To sum up the above ramblings I am against any change in the overall format of FREEDOM. I do, however, believe that there is considerable room for improvement within that format, including improvements that may satisfy (partially) the desires of those people who wish a change of format. I think that those people will find such a change will not serve their purpose in drawing new people into the anarchist movement. Finally, I am opposed to the taking of an editorial "line" by FREEDOM because I think that such an action is premature considering the state of anarchist theory today.

In solidarity

P. Murtagh

## AUSTRALIAN NEWSLETTER

IN AUSTRALIA we are subject to many crisis themes, social maturation is beginning to take place! At last the complacency about the decadent British empire has been stirred - not by radicals so much as by the untimely and outlandish action of the current and now much disfavoured (by his peers) Governor General. This fool has, by his absurd use of power, exposed the vulnerability of the populace of Australia to the whims of the Queen's appointed Head of State here - previously considered a nostalgic redundancy by most, now understood to be a threat to regional autonomy.

Sadly, of course, republicanism is the principle cry of the Australian Independence Movement (AIM) who use the Eureka flag as their symbol. (Oddly, a Canberra anarchist group

is attempting to synthesise nationalism with anarchism - it has a populist appeal).

Again, uranium is a source of great agitation and to thwart the popular rejection of uranium mining the Australian Labour Party and the Australian Council of Trade Unions are showing complicity with the transnational investors.

To indicate the pervasive contempt for public opinion the US have recently sent part of their nuclear fleet to Australian ports. In New South Wales the government refused them access, although other troop ships landed, spilling their service men all over the clip joint. In Victoria, whilst the government gave permission to let a nuclear ship in, the workers refused to attend to it and it could not berth.

Meanwhile, the reactionary federal Queensland governments have colluded to ship "yellow cake" (crude uranium oxide) from Brisbane to West Germany. This required an enormous rail shift in which the uranium ore was shipped in unmarked containers amongst other stock and with a police guard. Although protests have been loud and continuous the ABC is consistently silent.

The dole is now subject to taxation - unless a declaration of income is made. This new move is a further attempt to harrass and eliminate dolees who are perpetually subject to government abuse along with effective union activists.

Whilst professing neutrality on the Indonesian invasion of East Timor the Australian secret police still attempt to block radio connections to the Timorese resistance. They are also eager to suppress representation of the Timorese in Australia. Meanwhile Australian banks and insurance companies send large investment capital to Indonesia.

In December a rebel Australian Labour Party member, plus a large number of Australian residents, organised a "Down to Earth" Alternative Festival in Canberra. It was quite a spectacle with a surfeit of domes and displays, but there were lots of healthy ideas too. Dr Eva Reich was a guest and spoke on William Reich and contemporary activities at the Orgonone Institute in the United States. 7,500 registered and there were about 4000 present at

the peak of the festival. Another is planned for this year.

Brisbane Anarchist Jamboree has just been held and was a particularly social occasion with about 40 people attending. Brisbane Friends of the Earth staged an anti-uranium demo whilst the Festival was on.

Col Pollard

# Release

RELEASE has been asked by the Home Office (Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs) to give evidence about the current use of police stop and search powers, particularly in relation to drugs.

RELEASE POINTS out that:

"As it often happens that the police do not tell the person why he or she is being stopped and searched it is not always easy to know if the police are frisking someone under the powers of the Misuse of Drugs Act (which authorises personal searches without the necessity of a formal arrest) or under some other statute. We therefore think it necessary to collect evidence both about harassment which is clearly related to drug offences and harassment for unspecified reasons. We would be very grateful if you could either write or telephone us with any complaint or case histories which have come to you over the last 18 months, or failing that your general impression of the way the police are using these powers and the reaction of the people you are in contact with."

"The last time the Home Office reviewed this issue was seven years ago and it is very unlikely that a similar opportunity will occur for a long time. It is therefore very important, since Release and NCCL are the only organisations so far invited to give evidence, for us to draw on the experience of as many agencies and individuals as possible."

"As we have not been given much time to prepare our report it would help to hear from you by 31st January."

That date has passed but as this is an important matter we hope any readers who have relevant facts or observations to pass to Release will do so as soon after reading this as they can. The address is: 1 Elgin Avenue, London W.9 (tel. 01-289 1123).

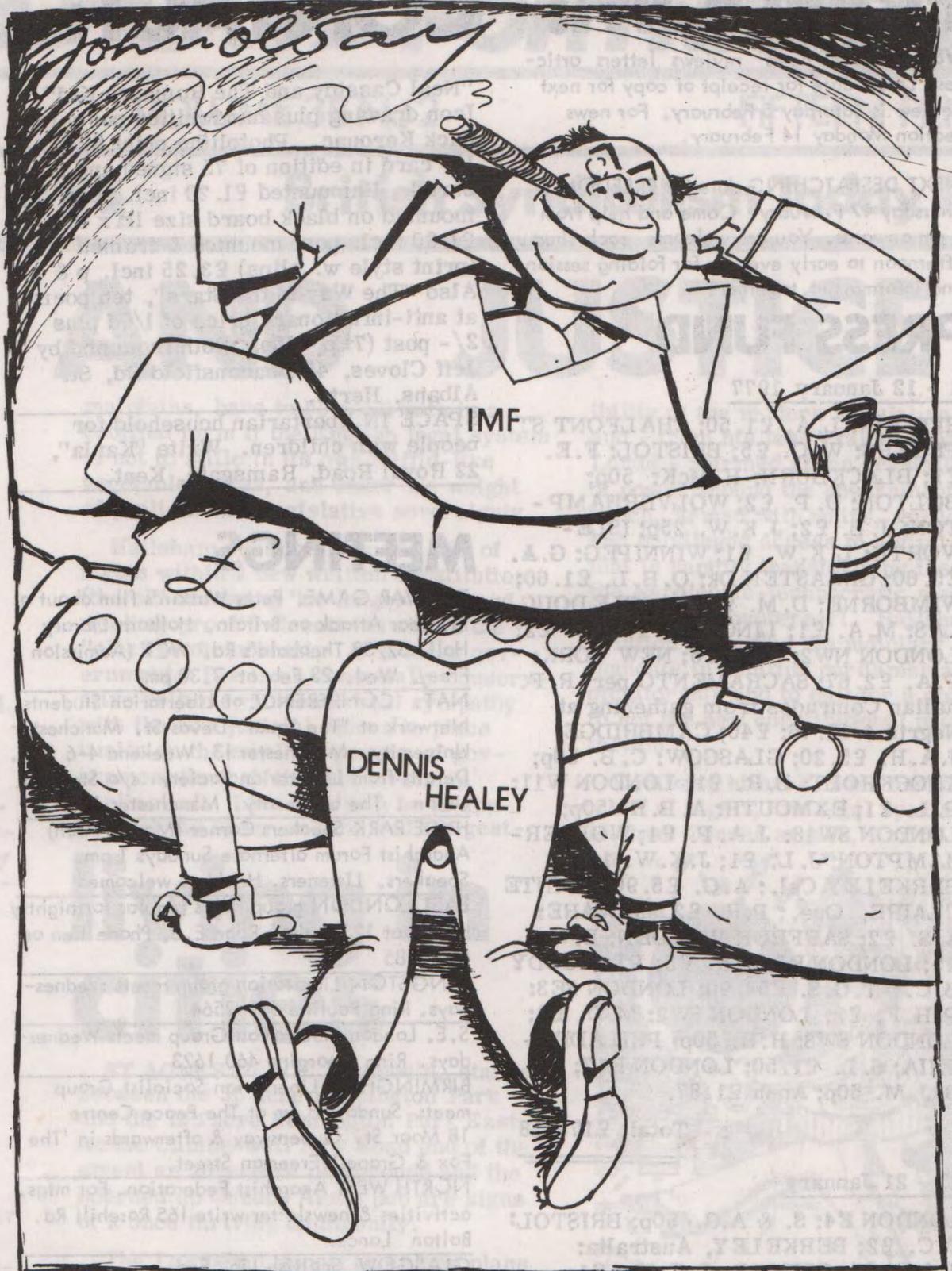
## C.N.T. annual meeting

The first national meeting of the CNT since the war is taking place on Sunday, 6 February at the bullring of San Sebastian de los Reyes, 12 kilometres from Madrid. Speakers are taking part from all the regional federations of the CNT and also from the IWA.

**Cioblanco**  
EL PODER guía verano ecología



FROM  
FREEDOM  
BOOKSHOP.



"ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND Mr POWELL THAT YOU ARE OFFERING HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS £1,000 TO SOD OFF BACK TO SAUDI ARABIA?"



## MEETING

COVENTRY. All anarchists in Coventry area wishing to meet regularly, please contact John England, 48 Spencer Avenue, Earlsdon, Coventry.

## CONTACT

THE LIBERTARIAN Student Network is now functioning. Contact is Peter Baker AO6 Allesley House, Rhodes Residences, Univ. of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.

PEOPLE with DISABILITY Liberation Front. Box 1976 c/o Rising Free, 142 Drummond St. LONDON NW1.

CORBY LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION GROUP. Contact Susan & Terry Phillips. 7 Cresswell Walk. CORBY. Notts.

# FREEDOM: CONTACT:

WE WELCOME news reviews letters articles. Latest date for receipt of copy for next Review is Saturday 5 February. For news section Monday 14 February.

NEXT DESPATCHING date for FREEDOM is Thursday 17 February. Come and help from 4 pm onwards. You are welcome each Thurs. afternoon to early evening for folding session and informal get together.

## PRESS FUND

1 - 12 January 1977

HITCHIN: L. A. £1.50; CHALFONT ST. PETERS: W. C. £5; BRISTOL: F. E. £1; BLACKBURN: H. McK: 50p; BOLTON: D. P. £2; WOLVERHAMPTON: J. L. £2; J. K. W. 25p; ISLEWORTH: L. K. W. £1; WINNIPEG: G. A. £5.60; GRAASTEN Dk: O. B. L. £1.66; WIMBORNE: D. M. £5; CASTLE DOUGLAS: M. A. £1; LINCOLN: T. A. G. £2; LONDON NW2: D. S. £5; NEW YORK: P. A. £2.67; SACRAMENTO per R. F. Italian Comrades from gathering at Negris 4.12.76: £40; CAMBRIDGE: J. A. H. £5.20; GLASGOW: C. B. 50p; KNOCKHOLT: B. R. £1; LONDON W11: P. L. £1; EXMOUTH: A. B. H. 50p; LONDON SW18: J. A. P. £1; WOLVERHAMPTON: J. L. £1; J. K. W. 10p; BERKELEY Cal.: A. G. £5.90; POINTE CLAIRE, Qué.: P. R. £2.53; WARE: A. S. £2; SAFFRON WALDEN: B. W. £5; LONDON E7: J. R. £5; PT. MOODY B. C.: T. G. S. £58.90; LONDON SE3: P. H. F. £2; LONDON SW2: M. D. £3; LONDON SW8: H. H. 50p; PHILADELPHIA: S. L. £1.50; LONDON E17: B. J. M. 50p; Anon £1.87.

Total: £175.18

13 - 21 January

LONDON E4: S. & A. G. 50p; BRISTOL: C. C. £2; BERKELEY, Australia: H. P. £4; OXFORD: B. E. H.: £1; BIRMINGHAM: G. N. O.: £5; LONDON SW7: D. L. L. £5; EDINBURGH: D. B. £2.50; LOS GATOS, Calif.: L. M. £2.35; WOLVERHAMPTON: J. L. £2; J. K. W. 20p; ST. CLOUD, Minn.: M. G. A. £38.50; LONDON NW6: B. S. £1; MORECAMBE: R. A. D. £1; CAMBRIDGE: A. G. £6; HAMPTON HILL: B. P. B. 50p; ENFIELD: R. D. £1; LONDON N3: A. C. £1; SHEFFIELD: P. L. £1; WOLVERHAMPTON: B. L. £5.15; VANCOUVER, B. C.: N. D. £4; COLD MEECE: S. G. 50p; THE HAGUE: R. L. £3; LLANWRST: M. B. £1; LONDON SE25: C. H. £1; CAMBRIDGE: C. M. £5; BLACKBURN: D. C. 50p; BANGOR Co. Down: J. T. £10; ABINGDON: P. B. £1; LONDON E16: W. M. £1; HAWAII: D. W. £9.70; LONDON W5: M. M. £1; NEW YORK: R. P. £2.90.

TOTAL £131.95

Previously acknowledged 175.18

TOTAL to DATE £307.13

**CORRECTION:** Christian Anarchists in London - House number wrongly given. Note: Contact Doug Truman, 169 Cleveland Street, LONDON W1 Flat 18.

# CONTACT:

"Neal Cassidy and The Romance Kid". Icon drawing plus handwritten poem for Jack Kerouac. Photolitho print 8" x 10" card in edition of 75 signed and numbered. Unmounted £1.20 incl. post, mounted on black board size 11½ x 16" £1.30 incl. post mounted & framed (print style w. clips) £3.25 incl. p & p. Also "The Way to the Stars", ten poems at anti-inflationary price of 1/6d plus 2/- post (7½ p + 10p. Both from and by Jeff Cloves, 40 Beaconsfield Rd, St. Albans, Herts.

SPACE IN libertarian household for people with children. Write "Karla", 22 Royal Road, Ramsgate, Kent.

## MEETINGS

THE WAR GAME. Peter Watkin's film about a Nuclear Attack on Britain. Holborn Library Hall 32/38 Theobald's Rd. WC1 (Admission Free). Wed. 23 Feb at 7.30 pm

NAT. CONFERENCE of Libertarian Students Network at "The Squat" Devas St. Manchester University. Manchester 13. Weekend 4-6 Feb. Details from Libertarian Society c/o Students Union. The University. Manchester 13.

HYDE PARK Speakers Corner (Marble Arch) Anarchist Forum alternate Sundays 1 pm. Speakers. Listeners. Hecklers welcomed

EAST LONDON group holds regular fortnightly mtgs. at 123 Latham Road E.6. Phone Ken on 552 3985

KINGSTON Libertarian group meets Wednesdays. Ring Pauline 549 2564

S.E. London Libertarian Group meets Wednesdays. Ring Georgina 460 1623

BIRMINGHAM Libertarian Socialist Group meets Sundays 8 pm at The Peace Centre 18 Moor St. Queensway & afterwards in 'The Fox & Grapes' Freeman Street.

NORTH WEST Anarchist Federation. For mtgs. activities & newsletter write 165 Rosehill Rd. Bolton Lancs.

GLASGOW Scottish Lib. Fed. "extraordinary" public mtgs. St. Brides Centre Rosevale St. Partick. From 7 Feb at 7.30 (Mondays)

NEW YORK Libertarian Book Club Lectures 7.30 pm at Workmen's Circle Center 8th Ave. and 29th Street (SW cnr). Free admission. coffee & cookies

Feb 10 Paul Avrich: Voltairine De Cleyre  
Mar 10 Dwight Macdonald: Recollections of an Anarchist

Apr 14 Sam Dolgoff: Anarchism in the Cultural Revolution

May 17: Murray Bookchin: Environment and Anarchism

## GROUPS

ABERYSTWYTH Mike Sheehan. 59 North Parade Aberystwyth. Dyfed. Anarchists in other parts of Wales also please contact.

BIRMINGHAM. Bob Prew 40c Trafalgar Rd Mosley. Birmingham 13

BOLTON anarchists contact 6 Stockley Ave. Harwood Bolton (tel. 387516)

CAMBRIDGE anarchists contact Ron Stephan 41 York St. Cambridge

CORBY anarchists write 7 Cresswell Walk Corby

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

DURHAM. Martin Spence. 11 Front Street

Sherburn Village. Durham

EAST ANGLIAN Libertarians. Martyn Everett 11 Gibson Gardens. Saffron Walden. Essex.

LEEDS c/o Cahal McLaughlin. 15 Winston Gardens Leeds 8

LEICESTER Peter and Jean Miller 41 Norman Road

MANCHESTER Anarchist Group contact Al on 061 224 3028 for info. & mtgs.

PORTSMOUTH Caroline Cahm. 2 Chadderton Gardens. Pembroke Park Old Portsmouth.

THAMES VALLEY anarchists contact Adele Dawson. Maymeade. 6 Congress Rd. Maidenhead SL6 3EE (tel 0626 2974)

SWANSEA. The anarchists here need sorting out. Are you dynamic enough, authoritative enough to stop what is tantamount to anarchy. If so we don't want you and advise you not to contact Keith Sowerby House 35 Student Village. Landrefoilan. Swansea. Possibility soon of Welsh Federation with Aberystwyth Gp  
SCOTTISH Libertarian Federation

Aberdeen. Blake c/o APP. 67 King Street Dundee. Mike Malet 1 Lynnewood Place Edinburgh. Gibson. 7 Union St. (557-1532) Glasgow. Baird. 122 Benneray St. G22 (336-7895)

Stirling. D. Tymes. 99 Rosebank. Sauchie. Clacks.

(also contacts in Dumfries Fife West Lothian Port Glasgow Highlands)

## INTERNATIONAL

AUSTRALIA

Canberra. Alternative Canberra Group. 10 Beltana Rd. Pialligo. ACT 2609

Melbourne. Martin Giles Peters. c/o Dept. of Philosophy. Monash University. Melbourne. New South Wales. P. Stones. P.O. Box 26. Warrawong. N.S.W.

Sydney. Fed. of Aust. Anarchists. Box 92. Broadway. 2007 Australia.

NEW ZEALAND

Anarchists resident in or visiting New Zealand contact Christchurch Anarchists. P.O. Box 22-607 New Zealand

## PUBLICATIONS

What is Makhaevism? by Paul Avrich. Makhaevski was a Polish revolutionary who, using a critique based on the division of mental and manual labour, analysed Marxism as the false consciousness of a rising bureaucratic elite consisting of déclassé intellectuals and ex-workers. Copies of Avrich's essay available free. Send s.a.e. to News From Nowhere 48 Manchester St. Liverpool 1 (or available from Freedom Bookshop)  
Scottish Libertarian bi-monthly SLF mag. £1 for year's sub incl. post. No 1 now out (art.'s on elections & anarchism; subversion of records; Fight to Live; libertarian organisation & strategy; sexism & SLF. From Glasgow group. Also Pocketsedition cartoon-based sit-comik 20p incl. post

## PRISONERS

Change of address Mike Murphy (C01039) now HM Prison Ashwell Oakham Leics. John Nightingale (338645) H.M. Prison Parkhurst nr. Newport Isle of Wight wd. like to hear from friends old and new.  
DUBLIN anarchists Bob Cullen, Des Keane & Columba Longmore. Military Detention Centre Curragh Camp Co. Kildare Eire.

Marie Murray and Noel Murray. Protest letters to the Justice Minister 72-76 St. Stephens Green Dublin 2; the Irish Ambassador 17 Grosvenor Place London SW1X 7HR

Tired as usual, despite Meredith's help last week, so a reprint of something I first saw in a certain Union Newsletter we print (Editorial Vol 1 No 4... "However to specific points of criticism...")  
 On the other hand, and I appreciate the fears of the cover sensitive and image...  
 like "Underground and Alternative Press" shades of the ir paranoias (and they all work in a psychiatric...)  
 of us we still print their Newsletter). No, this isn't the item... it now follows and it first appeared in Vol 1 No 3... FACT OR FICTION? Once upon a time there... non-conforming...  
 swallow who decided not to fly south for the winter, however, soon the weather turned so cold that he reluctantly began to fly south. In a short time ice began to form on his wings and he fell to earth in a farmyard almost frozen. A cow passed by and defecated on the little swallow. The swallow thought it was the end, but the manure warmed him and defrosted his wings. Warm and happy, able to breathe, he started to sing. Just then a large cat passed by and he promptly ate it. What three logical conclusions can be arrived at? The editorial suggests following: "... (answers in next issue - I'm running out of space this week - Jan the Printer)"

# FREEDOM'S Anarchist Review

February 5'77

Work, Culture, Language, Class.

## THE LUMPEN EGO

WE ARE THE great unwashed, the many headed, Disraeli's Two Nations, Roosevelt's Third of a Nation. Bankers and property speculators, society flash brain surgeons and government consulted Trade Union leaders claim that they are one with us. Stupid, idle and feckless, we play football when the assembly line is in motion, strike without provocation, fly to Spain for our holidays, watch the ITV gormless shows on our coloured television sets and drive cars. We earn hundreds of pounds a week and draw more off the State when we are unemployed, eat like pigs and live like lords. In short comrades we are the working class, the bane of history. We vote Tory and refuse to accept the Labour Party's Social Contract and are too lazy to attend our union branch meeting to keep the Right Wing goodies in and the Left Wing baddies out. For we are the massive reject of a middle class society, creatures of myth and legend who would appear to exist as no more than a literary abstract for the pens of Fabians and Right-wing press leader writers.

Ask the overtime kings when the going is good to which class they belong and they will, and did, claim that they were of the middle class, ask the middle class to what class they belong and they will say the middle class—but mention the noun worker as no more than the title of a single individual and grand-daddy's old Trade Union card is held aloft from Hampstead to high toned St. Ives and way, way up north to prove that wombwise one is of the earth earthy even if that soil came from the gardens department of Harrods while wan-faced millionaires fleeing to some sunny tax evasion haven will lean out of the window of their Rolls Royce to display their horny handed palms, peekaboo, to the passing Bond Street mob but never tell whether it was the fruit of Mc Alpine's spade handles or the rough edge of their cheque books.

Prisoners are people in prison, rich men are men with wealth that allows them to live in comfortable idleness and a worker is the hireling of another man, a labourer who exists from meal to meal. It is said that class is but a state of mind and there is a slight truth in this except that your class is not dictated by the way you think but by the way others think in regard to you. Own oil and have millions but speak, as I do, with a gutter accent and no matter what the company you will be catalogued as soon as you speak as working class. Be the family shit, betray the maid, flog the heirlooms and end up on skid row all tatty beard and stinking rags but as soon as you speak, magistrates, social workers, police and your fellow sufferers will inform the world that you are a 'gentleman' for it is our fellow men who decide in which class we belong. We are the working class because, except for the Christlike efforts of Littlewood Pools, we cannot contract out into that higher income bracket and therefore as generation after generation before we will eat our supermarket bread by the sweat of our brow and be hated by those who exploit us yet who claim to share our labour as a justification to their claim to manhood.

### SELF-INTERESTED SACRIFICE

We have been ill served by the arts for the writer, the poet and the painter have either ignored us or patronised us as the noble savage or comic grotesque and left-wing literature has portrayed us as the muscle-headed vanguard forever raising the red flag and marching, god all that marching. But we are individuals united only by economic chains and as individuals we have divided loyalties, talents, loves and hates. Therefore, Hampstead, start the revolution without us for as workers we will choose our own time. Governments, do not

demand that we make the sacrifices to patch up your ill-judged policies for in the end we and only we will make that sacrifice for the most selfish of reasons, and that is our physical survival. And to the church we say you must learn from us for only the working class can claim to practise the morality that Church and State preach for wealth and power is not in our keeping so from dire necessity we walk in the steps of the great religious teachers, complaining all the way but by god we care for the old, the sick and the infirm in our fashion in our fashion. It is impossible to communicate by paint or pen the feeling of pain just as the experience of the sexual act, drugs or a mystical oneness with the fashionable Supreme Being is a personal thing that in the telling becomes no more than a mess of high-faluting wordage so it would seem to me that it is impossible to communicate in print the life of a working man, nay any man, for the physical and the emotional cannot be communicate for we can only share in the actual, never in the abstract.

### REVOLUTIONARY RIDE

Yet many have tried and I wish them well for with the exception of Tressel's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* it is an open field. So one welcomes the *Solidarity Pamphlet 53, (10p) On The Buses* for 'Penny Fair's' account of the training of a London bus conductor. It is a good, simple, honest and straightforward account of the brief training period and could be related to almost any type of job training. In the chapter on 'Invisible Problems' the matter of the Old Age Pensioners' 'free' bus passes is touched on and it is true that many conductors/drivers are biased against them. Human greed because, mistakenly, they believe they get no bonus off those tickets, bloody minded working class toryism that automatically condemns lesser breeds within our law and a dislike of wealthy people travelling for nowt. It is a foolish attitude and as one who has written over the long years for a 'free' transport system as the only viable and efficient way to run a social, integrated system I hold that the old people's passes are a means to that end. But our State owned industries are in the end no more than the political mirror of the day and to believe that top ranking bureaucrats who have reached the top of their particular ladder will develop a social conscience is strictly pie in the sky. Where I would part company with *Solidarity* is in their Postscript—December 1976. Everything they say about the deterioration of our transport system is correct but in thirty years I have witnessed too many balls of fire, too many ginger groups trying to use the rank and file for their own particular ends. I do not doubt the honesty and the sincerity of those involved but great emotional phrases have never solved the dreary day to day working problems.

When the rank and file are called upon to strike against the bus cuts they are right in asking why and saying that as employed labourers it is not their problem but the problem of the general travelling public who would not support them. When the workers are called upon to risk their jobs because they refuse to collect an increase in fares they are correct to refuse, for just as I do not expect the girl at the cash desk to fight my battle by taking less than is demanded by management so in their turn the workers of any industry should not be called upon to fight a lone battle to please an uncommitted passing throng. In the fourth paragraph mention is made of the Continental Fare Strike in which the conductor refuses to collect the fares—'very popular with passengers'. Comrades, it can work in Italy with a warm sun, marvellous mass strikes, a left wing middle class involved in every social and transport service and therefore getting political capital out of the action but in the end the Italian fares still

creep up and up. Why will it not work in cold Britain, comrades? Because our nationalised industries are in theory divorced from the political arm and if the passenger does not pay or the conductor collect that fare then both are guilty of a criminal act. Ten well publicised arrests in one day would kill that scheme cold dead. Not to collect the fares must be that the whole fleet must be informed and within hours the Transport's industrial spies would have reported that decision; for not to collect fares means not to collect the fare machines and, comrades, an official would be standing at the gate of every garage so that not one single bus went into service. Comrades, to state it is to declare strike action, to advocate it is criminal conspiracy to defraud and to act in conjunction with a passenger in not taking the fare is criminal fraud and some poor inoffensive factory labourer would get his collar felt for what he thought was no more than a happy-

time free revolutionary bus ride.

By all means let us make common cause with the Underground workers (para 2) but which union takes over? Who loses the perks? Wonderful emotional phrases solve nothing comrades. Votes of no confidence in the local branch to put another collection of dead beats in solve nothing. One-day strikes solve nothing. Pensions, pay, working conditions are the problem of the rank and file, all else we do in the company of outside interest, but you cannot call upon any rank and file to sacrifice for your political dreams. There are but two weapons for us. The complete ban on overtime and the long hard strike, and for that pay-packet breaking exercise comrades one needs more than emotional phrases no matter how noble the sentiment or altruistic the advice.

ARTHUR MOYSE

# BRITISH SYNDICALISM TODAY

**SYNDICALISM IS A MEANS.** By this we don't mean that the potentially syndicalist structures in British society - the workers' rank and file movements, the labour unions, tenants' associations, shop stewards' committees and all the various voluntary associations - are a "means" in the sense that a hammer is a means of knocking a nail in a piece of wood.

This is the standard Marxist approach to workers' organisations. That is of trying to inject the appropriate political complexion into each social issue, movement or struggle which comes along.

The syndicalist does not see the workers' organisations or the movements people generate to capture some kind of control over their own lives as mere vehicles to be driven down the road to revolution. The bandwagon strategies of the Marxists are not just morally repugnant, they stem from a fundamental misunderstanding of how human action proceeds in the real world. The conscious syndicalist would argue that syndicalism rejects totally the party political insistence on intellectual experts as an essential requirement of the workers' movement. We dismiss, therefore, the whole Marxist framework which sees man as economically determined, and incapable of controlling his own life and destiny without the help of a revolutionary party.

We dispute the Marxist model, for both practical and theoretical reasons. Our theoretical approach considers syndicalism to be a "means" not in the mechanical sense, but rather in a generative sense. It seems to us that people produce organisations and methods to capture control of their workplaces etc. in much the same way as they use language. Just as people can talk without having intensively studied the grammatical rules beforehand, so people can organise and create practices which effectively give them more control over their own lives without the benefit of Marxist dogma or the revolutionary party.

Syndicalism is rooted, in all its manifestations, in the practical activities of workers, and develops its theory out of everyday struggle. Or, as F. F. Ridley (1) has defined it, "... syndicalism derived from action, drawing its principles from the lessons of life rather than ivory tower speculation.."

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Practical experience acquired in the midst of social struggle is more important to the syndicalist than the theorising of intellectuals. This point was made by Pouget (2) when he argued that the revolutionary could learn the most useful lessons from a study of the way tactics were worked out within the proletariat; when they did not allow themselves to be diverted by outsiders. Consequently the job of the syndicalist militant is to study the existing practices of working people, and to clarify, formulate and explain these activities. As a propagandist the anarcho-syndicalist doesn't attempt to impose

a preconceived theory onto the various workers' struggles, but instead tries to make the workers aware of the nature of their hitherto spontaneous action, and the significance of their hitherto unexpressed feelings. We, as militant syndicalists, are the amplifiers, the interpreters of the activities of working people.



Cover photo from SYNDICALISTS IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION by G. P. Maximoff, published as a SWF Direct Action pamphlet.

In a sense then syndicalism is a "doctrine evolved by men immersed in action in order to render their action more effective." (3) Syndicalists are much less concerned with elaborating a closed social philosophy, an internally consistent doctrine, even a programme consistent over time, than with relevant solutions to the immediate practical question facing them in their everyday struggle with the state and the employers - questions of strategy and tactics. Freed from the deadweight of dogma, the generative capacity of syndicalism permits it to tackle each newly emerging situation on its merits according to practical requirements.

Griffuelhes (4) expresses this most clearly when he says that syndicalist action was the result of practical experience reflecting the needs of the moment rather than the expression of a previously worked out theory or even a previously defined plan. He also added that as syndicalism sprang from practice and as this practice was created by events, by life that changed every day, so, for that reason, it was incoherent and full of contradictions.

## SYNDICALISM IN HISTORY

At the same time syndicalism rejects the economic determinism and "inevitable" historical laws of vulgar Marxism, favouring an approach which recognises the integrity of human action. Vouloir, c'est pouvoir was a favourite slogan of the French syndicalists, meaning given the will to act, all can be achieved. The revolutionary task of the proletariat was far greater, and far nobler, than the mere widowery ascribed to it by Marx and Engels. The syndicalist looks to workers themselves collaborating within their associations, unions and rank and file movements to create the revolution by their own power and free will. This voluntarist approach, according to Lagardelle (5), taught the workers that there was no fatality, that man made his own history.

Because syndicalism as we understand it is seen as a direct product of the creative activities of workers it can be treated as an ongoing historical phenomenon. In Britain syndicalism has been a force in a whole variety of radical social movements - in the medieval guilds, the Luddite movement, the period leading up to the formation of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, in some respects in the chartist movement, in the New Unionism and the industrial militancy before World War I, the Wartime Workers' Committees and the shop stewards' movement, the General Strike and the recent sit ins and factory occupations. As a tradition its importance has been underestimated out of sheer neglect or inability on the part of British anarchists and militant syndicalists to make these major movements and the many minor manifestations of syndicalism meaningful.

It was this failure of perception on the part of the British anarchists and syndicalists that, at the time of the decline of the peace movement in the late 1960s, left them ill prepared to cope with the newly emerging social and industrial activism which occurred in the 1970s. Awareness of the defects in the standard approach of libertarian organisations in this country led the Syndicalist Workers' Federation to produce a discussion document - The SWF and the British Labour Movement - in which some of the problems outlined in this essay were discussed.

The result of the discussion was that it was agreed that sectarianism should be avoided in favour of an approach which recognises the integrity of the workers' movement and other social movements. It was decided that as syndicalists we should place ourselves and our organisations at the service of workers in dispute and should try to form a libertarian opposition within the various unions so as to combat authoritarianism on the inside, corruption and rule breaches by officials and to ensure that shopfloor arguments are forcefully presented.

We realised that while socialist theory is a result of reflection in the abstract about life, and that vulgar Marxism tries to treat people as abstract categories, syndicalism as a "philosophy of action" develops its concepts out of experience of life. Experience, according to Lagardelle (6) is the school of syndicalism, and practice shapes our ideas.

## RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR SYNDICALISM

Now if it is accepted that syndicalism as a "philosophy of action" is concerned to elaborate and expose the practical methods people use every day to seize control of their own lives, it could easily exploit the work of the influential school in social science, deriving from H. Garfinkel (7) and H. Sacks (8) which attempts to study the practical activities people are involved in.

The commitment of this school is to study human action by taking part in every day life. Much of the research both informs and reinforces the syndicalist concepts. The work of Havey Sacks and others on conversational strategies in closing conversations, affecting snubs, asking questions or taking control of conversations (9) could be valuable to the syndicalist militant in negotiations with the bosses. Discoveries in their study of conversations also seem to support the syndicalist idea of context based meanings, in the sense, for instance, of the word "baby" used in one context - the baby cried, the mommy picked it up - being different from the use

of the word "baby" in a Dylan song. Other researches support the syndicalist concept of the inadequacy of formally based rules and instructions as expressed in the syndicalist "work to rule":



March in protest to Pentonville Prison, where the dockers were jailed.  
July 25th 1972

"Researchers are instructed to learn a new activity from a set of written rules. Hoyle's book of games, cookbooks and sewing manuals provide a large set of possible activities. Researchers are directed to only what the instructions say. They are neither to improvise nor make allowances."

"Researchers discovered that the activities cannot be done. In following a recipe, for example, instructions are given for preparing the food and for preheating the oven. Sometimes the instructions indicate that eggs still in their shells are to be placed in mixing bowls or beaten with a stick, or whipped with a belt. Researchers search in vain for behavioural representations of 'cook until tender', 'saute', 'blanch', 'fold'.

"Card games and sewing rarely even begin" (10)

The consequence of all this rule inadequacy for the syndicalist is that those union officials, bureaucrats, employers who claim to be following an official formalised rule book can be defeated by detecting the discrepancy between the rule book and their actual individual practices.

For British libertarians the significance of this work is that it emphasises the need for a radical syndicalist solution which can only arise from a close study of the actual activities of workers on the shopfloor, in the trade unions and other social organisations, based on direct involvement. If we are to attempt to develop a militant syndicalist movement in the British tradition we could develop a theory of syndicalism within the experience of the British working people so that our ideas, policies, arguments are closely geared to the workers' understanding of every day life.

Brian Bamford

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SINCE THE EARLY 1920s "language" has been the preoccupation of "professional philosophers." Thousands of books have been written analysing and discussing "language systems" as though they existed independently of mankind.

For all its failings, "Language and Social Behaviour" breaks with this tradition and begins to examine language as a function of human society.

Incredibly the author tells us that "we may not find it useful to attempt to discern what functions it originally served." It is this failure to recognise language as a social skill, originating from the need for communication in early societies, that has led so many researchers down blind alleys - like investigating the possibilities of there being "private" language or using computers to create "artificial" language systems.

The relationship of language to society is apparent from a study of surviving primitive language. Frequently common English words and concepts, like "brother" or "father", are untranslatable. Australian aborigines, and American Indians for example had an entirely different social structure; their tribes were subdivided into totem groups rather than families. A male would have free access to all females of another totem. An aboriginal unaware that pregnancy results from sexual intercourse had no need for a word "father" as distinct from "brother."

Language signifies existing social relationships, and an investigator who is not fully conversant with the society cannot hope to understand the language.

All societies are class societies. The great social division is between the order giver and the order taker. In historical times extreme social divisions, such as those in ancient Greece or feudal England, resulted in order giver and order taker speaking entirely different languages.

Advanced industrial society is much more a "total society." As people are dragged into the cities, housed in giant estates, employed in gigantic factory complexes, and subjected to the daily bombardment of the mass media, traditional local peculiarities and dialects are eradicated in favour of an artificially manufactured "universal" speech.

Yet there are fundamental differences in the language behaviour of different classes. This is a relatively new field of enquiry, and it is here that Dr Robinson's book is most interesting.

At the simplest level, the style of address between two people can be analysed into simple behavioural rules, reflecting the rules of social behaviour. Generally the social superior will be the first to speak, he will determine the terms of address, whether titles or first names will be used, and by

## THE GREAT DIVIDE

LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR  
by W. P. Robinson,  
Penguin 80p.

whom. The style of address tells us how the speaker rates himself in the social situation.

Most of the research done has been contrasting "middle" class (i.e. non-manual workers) with "working" class language. The findings are hardly startling - the middle class are more articulate, use more instructions, have a greater vocabulary and are better able to cope with abstract thought.

Some interesting ideas about social development can follow from these rather elementary findings.

Language skills do not develop in a vacuum. Social organisms develop capacities according to their needs - by defining different classes in society we are led to specify different functions for those classes. Historically speaking, the language skills required by the "upper groupings", the professionals, the technicians and administrators, are greater than those required by the factory worker on the assembly line. As language behaviour is learned primarily in the family, "socialisation" in the family must be seen as preparing the offspring to occupy a particular position in society. Linguistic behaviour becomes a reinforcement and perpetuation of the class structure of society.

Robinson recognises that a difficulty to be overcome (in language research) is that "people who have no first hand experience of differences in life styles of different social groups are unlikely to come to understand the nature of the problems involved."

Linguistic research is not just a matter of wandering into a social grouping armed with a tape recorder. With the best will in the world an "outsider" can only evaluate what he hears in terms of his own class ideology.

This is the problem of social research in a class society. There can be no "objective" social science, for we cannot avoid the situation where all the researchers come from the middle class - even if they originate from the ranks of the lower working class, the "education", the newly implanted life styles associated with and necessary for social research alienate them from their origins.

In a class society there can be no solution to this problem - a problem which, in spite of his positive contributions - Dr. Robinson doesn't seem to notice.

Bob Potter

## WORK AND CULTURE

The following article by George Gardstein was published in *Anarchy* 118 (Vol. 10 No 12) in December 1970. We are reproducing it here in a slightly cut down version.



A CONCERN WITH "the working class" or with "workers" is not a humanistic concern, not a concern with real human beings. The term "worker" denotes not a full person, but a component in production, a part-person, a role. To be concerned with "the workers" is not to be concerned with men, but with abstractions. Industrialism treats men and women as mere functions, and is concerned with them only insofar as they play their roles properly. Socialism reveals its bourgeois basis by swallowing industrial jargon and the attitude to men that it denotes. When "workers" stopped playing the role allotted to them by the Bolsheviks, and marched through St. Petersburg in 1921, Lenin said they were acting

against the interests of "the working class" (which they were: they were acting in their own interests as people) and had them shot. Socialist workerism is bourgeois ideology and viciously anti-human.

When we meet a person, we habitually ask him, "What do you do?" and he replies with information about that part of his life that he hates most: "I'm a drill grinder". But not only does he not say, "I go out to the country with my wife and kids, now and again, and play the trombone", he says, "I am a drill grinder", not "I grind drills in return for money." His work, his bondage, his alienation become what he is, not what he does. Instead of a man he becomes a worker.

To take an example of this kind of thinking from literature:

"I saw what he was then, and I felt a kind of mild shock go through me. He was a clean-up boy for the park. He carried a stick with a sharp end, and there beside him on the ground was a bucket with old candy wrappers and trash in it, stuff he'd picked up with the stick!" ("Secret Heartbreak", in *True Story*, February 1969).

One's being is defined by one's doing.

What is work? There are so many things people call work that have little in common, just as there are so many games that have little in common - eg. solitaire and professional football. What does working on an article in one's spare time

have in common with the work a lifeguard does. It is widely thought that only hatred, prolonged, concentrated, paid physical activity done for another and essential for livelihood is work. Is this so?

It is difficult to arrive at a comprehensive definition of work, and equally difficult to list necessary and sufficient conditions for the identification of anything as work. But isn't it a necessary condition for the identification of something as work that it must be an activity? Even this is contentious: aren't there people whose work does not involve any particular activity at all? We can accept activity as a necessary condition only if we make a distinction between work and occupation.

Proceeding from here, we can take, one by one, all the characteristics of that activity which is widely thought to be the only real work:

Hated  
Prolonged  
Concentrated  
Paid  
Physical  
For another  
Essential for livelihood

None of these provides a necessary condition, and only the last one provides a sufficient condition with any certainty. Moreover, all of them taken in combination do not provide a comprehensive definition.

Then we can make a list of characteristics opposite to these:

Enjoyed  
Brief  
Unpaid  
Mental  
For oneself  
Inessential for Livelihood

Although these connote leisure, if anything, rather than work, and although none of them provides either necessary or sufficient conditions, activities which partake of any or some of these characteristics - not to mention combinations of characteristics from the first and second lists - can still be classed as work.

At this moment, the development of automated technology is changing the nature of work and our attitudes towards it. In the deployment of manpower, there is a continual shift away from agricultural, extractive and industrial work (primary and secondary work) towards service, human-care and human-training work (tertiary and quaternary work) - ...

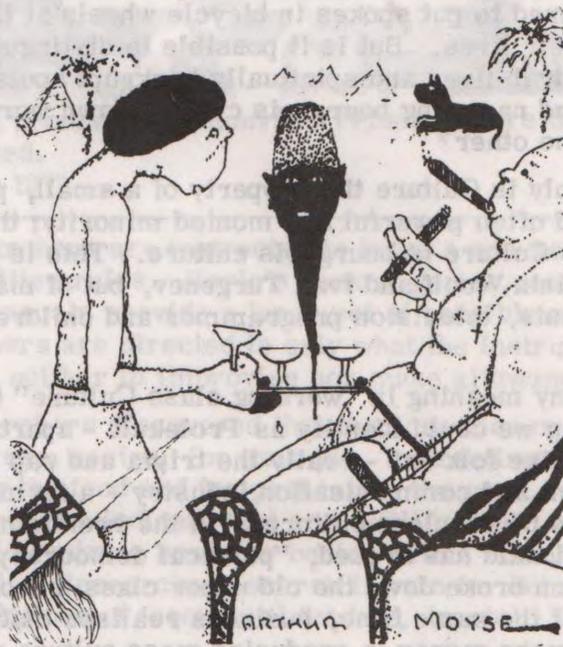
Since the war the greatest increase in manpower has occurred in public service: 300,000 per annum. In private service employment there has been a recent increase of 250,000 per annum. Between 1957 and 1963 wage and salary employment in secondary occupations dropped by 300,000. Computerisation means the elimination of thousands of clerical and middle-level management jobs. ...

Although computerisation creates jobs which previously did not exist, it displaces many more. The rate of development in data-processing industries is remarkable: the projected development in Britain of computer hardware between 1970 and 1980 is 12 per cent per annum, and in software it is 29 per cent per annum. The result of automation and computerisation is unemployment of a new type. The relevant heckle at the hustings is now, "Since you've been in power, unemployment has reached half a million. This isn't good enough: if you are re-elected can you guarantee two million unemployed?" US developments give rise to recommendations for prolonged education, shorter working day and earlier retirement.

The effect this is having is explosive. As early as 1857 Marx foresaw the transformation of work from production to supervision of production (in *The Outline of the Critique of Political Economy*). With remarkable insight, he analysed trends within capitalism that have become more marked with the cybernetic watershed. As a producer, Marx wrote, the capitalist needs to reduce the labour-time required in production. He increases profitability by increasing productive efficiency and cutting his work-force and wage-bill. As a seller, however, the capitalist needs an increase in the total work-force, so that the market expands alongside production.

As long as consumption is tied to earnings and earnings are tied to work this must be so. The contradiction is obvious. Automation undermines the cycle: work-wages-consumption-profit-production-work. A story relates that Henry Ford III was showing Walter Reuther, the auto-workers union boss, round a completely automated plant. Ford to Reuther: "How will you organise the workers here?" Reuther to Ford: "Which of them will buy your cars?"

Although the dream of a totally workless society is hardly worth serious consideration, we are approaching a situation in the west where work ceases to have the same significance as hitherto. Unemployment becomes essential. The Protestant Ethic of work, delayed gratifications, sobriety and mediocrity has less and less rationale. It becomes more difficult to keep people in their place because it is less clear where their place is. The importance of the rock-revolution and the hip-culture is that it is the most rational reaction to the conditions of advanced capitalism, where the classical Marxist precondition of communism begins to obtain. The vilification of the work-shy springs from an outdated maintenance of the Protestant work-ethic. Hip non-work is more in tune with the times than socialist job-protection.



"THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO STOP THE WORKERS' WINTER HOLIDAY. IT'S RUINING THE COUNTRY".

What we usually refer to as "the working class" is not a class at all in the sense of a social group playing a constant economic role. This may sound strange, but a class is identified by its relation to the means of production, and we in fact identify the working class by a system of cultural signs. The "working class" is more a status and cultural group than a class group. A proletarian is identified by his job; a member of the working class by his style. There is no one-to-one relation between proletarian and working-class man. Some proletarians aren't working class; some working class people aren't proletarians.

We can make similar observations about the bourgeoisie in a society where everyone tries to be middle class. "Bourgeois" denotes a pattern of culture, ethics and ideology rather than a relationship to the means of production. (I use "culture" with a small c to denote style of life, and "Culture" with a capital C to denote art.)

The word "bourgeois" used indiscriminately and as a term of abuse certainly refers to culture rather than class. Used by revolutionaries it means simply "not revolutionary." This indiscriminate use crudely lumps stuffed-shirt entrepreneurs together with dropouts. Although hippies, say, are not working class, and are rarely proletarians it is ridiculous to class them as bourgeois. A better word for all those groups which the socialist indiscriminately and completely wrongly labels bourgeois might be "transbourgeois", meaning: the characteristics of a person or group whose cultural style, ethics and ideology stand in marked contrast to the bourgeois values of work, repression, delayed gratification, sobriety, conformity and mediocrity; but whose background, or experience and points of reference or relation to the means of production are bourgeois. The transbourgeois hip style is embraced by a whole spectrum from prole dropouts to trendy young execs.

Like the beat, some hippies are transworking class. All are declassé.

In a society where the great majority do work which is uncreative and stultifying, a new invention is made: art. Art is the symbol of a sick and sad society. Art never existed before capitalism; people used to call it "work". "We have no art", say the Balinese. "We do everything as well as we can!" Art galleries are an apologia for insipid surroundings and the grotesqueness of the industrial city; paintings are an attempt to justify the despoliation of the countryside and the pollution of the biosphere. The Design Centre and the Craft Centre are agents of a system that forces millions to do deadening work and to consume badly made and ugly objects. The Institute of Contemporary Arts and the National Film Theatre have the function of prolonging and deepening the spiritual deprivation of the working class.

It would be unwise in a capitalist society, which requires millions of obedient and unimaginative epsilons, to make any effort to bring education and Culture to everyone, to bring Culture and creativity out of everyone. It would subvert capitalism. People who could see the possibility of work which was satisfying and which contributed to their growth, would not be prepared to put spokes in bicycle wheels at the Raleigh works all their lives. But is it possible to distinguish between beautifying drab lives and spiritually bankrupt souls on the one hand, and ramming bourgeois culture down working class throats on the other?

For not only is Culture the property of a small, privileged, educated and often powerful and monied minority: the content of bourgeois Culture is bourgeois culture. This is true not only of Virginia Woolf and Ivan Turgenev, but of magazines, advertisements, television programmes and children's reading books...

Is there any meaning in "working class Culture" (Prolekult)? Isn't anything we could identify as Prolekult - apart from defunct forms like folk art - really the trivia and pap of the entertainment and communication industry - a form of Culture that prolongs Cultureless cultures. In the twentieth century, Dwight Macdonald has argued, "political democracy and popular education broke down the old upper class monopoly of culture." At the same time, business realised that it was possible to make money in producing mass culture products. Communications technology - the movies, radio and television - gave this development an unprecedented scope and tempo. The commodities of the new cultural assembly line flooded the society. Serious art fled to the margin, folk art was all but abolished in the city, and entire way of life became committed to machine tool mediocrity. And finally, Macdonald theorises, this process took on the aspect of a vicious circle: "The masses, debauched by several generations of this sort of thing, in turn came to demand trivial and comfortable cultural products". (Harrington, op cit. For his small c in culture read my capital C.)

There is a split, a gulf among men more deadly than the split between proletarian and exploiter, and more deadly even than the split between working class and middle class. It is the split between those who have been able to develop their spiritual, creative and intellectual potential and choose the sort of life they lead, and those with bludgeoned souls and narrow horizons for whom "something is happening, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mr Jones". It is a split which is encouraged by the Culture fiends: "The masses must ever remain the masses. There could be no Culture without kitchen maids" (Treitschke). "A high Culture can only develop where there are different castes in society, the workers and the leisured, the caste of forced work and of free work" (Nietzsche). Art, it seems, is a form of social violence.

The answer to this is not workers' control: that is the answer to a different question. Workers who had the choice would not do the work that the proposed control is over. Neither does automation provide a pat answer. Firstly, it is being developed by an elite of systems analysts who require a corresponding army of card-punching proles: secondly, it will never eliminate all drudgery; thirdly, it is going to be quite a while before it eliminates a fraction of the global drudgery done now; and fourthly, it provides us, at the possible worst, with the prospect of a vast pool of unemployed, half-educated people, maintained on a diet of bread and circ-

uses by the state. (One consolation is that such a situation would be incredibly unstable: something's got to give).

As automation sharpens the contradictions of capitalist society, it creates a situation where people have access neither to work nor to Culture, and whose culture is breaking down. What gives



"WHEN YOU'RE A WORKER AND HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH TO LIVE ON, THE PROBLEMS OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE PEANUTS."

We must have a Cultural Revolution. Art must cease to be a commodity and an investment. Artists must put a maximum price on their work, and if it is ever sold at a higher price, destroy it. Marcel Duchamp introduced Readymades: common objects like urinals and hat stands made into art simply by being exhibited. He postulate, "A Readymade in reverse: use a Rembrandt for an ironing board." But no art movement, not even (far less?) an anti-art movement like Dada escapes from the limited audience of the bourgeois and transbourgeois consumer, aesthetic or intellectual. Does then the Chinese example of Cultural Revolution-as-philistine-destruction-of-Culture-movement provide a challenge rather than a warning (Apart from the fact that it was about inner-Party dissent, not Culture).

Understandably, given the position and role of art, there are signs of the rise of the kitchen maids against Culture. There are indications that this is not just a gloss put on events by pundits. Ray Gosling wrote on "The Rise of the Lumpen" in the Guardian (6 December 1969):

"The Kingfisher is my local fish and chip shop... Towards midnight it collects a motley and amiable crew - yours truly and behind me one night in 1969 a youth of about 16 years of age. He was my first captive skinhead..."

"You a skinhead?" I asked him.

"Oh yeah," he replied, pouting his thick lips. The youth had a fleshy, peasant face. He wore a purple unisex vest and thick standard overall-blue jeans a size too big for him. I found him instantly revolting... He told me he'd bought his big black boots that very day. He worked washing cars in a garage. Lived with his Mum and Dad and three brothers and sisters in a council house on a big estate.

"Why the boots?"

"It's for aggo." He couldn't pronounce 'agro', not properly. "... for when you get in a punch-up."

"What is it about, this skinhead thing?"

"Well," and I noticed the stubble of his head was the colour of straw and his eyes a clear and pleasant blue. "Er", and he holds his head up and screws his eyes a little to say ever so proudly - "you see what we are is we're the rise of the lumpen."

cont. on page 16

# A FEELING ABOUT THE WORLD

MAX STIRNER'S EGOISM, by John P. Clark (Freedom Press, 1976, 112pp. £1.50 (\$3.00).)

ONE OF THE LEAST attractive features of the present bloodstained decade is the revival of interest in what is politely called "the Radical Right". Some supporters of this movement claim Stirner as their inspiration. He has points in common with them, but does not really belong to their party.

In this beautifully produced pamphlet John P. Clark analyses Stirner's philosophy. The author describes himself as a "social anarchist", accepts Stirner as an anarchist too, but considers his anarchism as flawed. To begin with he claims that Stirner's concept of "the ego" is not well established. It too is a sort of "spook"—Stirner's favourite expression for abstract ideas. The ego is not influenced by outside events, social customs, practices, beliefs, upbringing, environment or the passage of time. It is almost a "soul". It reacts against the world around it, but is a self-sufficient entity.

Stirner believes that all human actions are egoistic, but most people, who believe their actions are altruistic, are really ignorant egoists. If they could be freed from their ignorance their characters would be stronger, their actions more logical and more favourable to themselves. John Clark argues that there is a real distinction between egoistic and altruistic actions. The latter are possible. Furthermore a person who acts, as he thinks, altruistically is not necessarily the weaker for that. Stirner himself points out that people may be swept away by political or religious beliefs, and possessed by them carry all before them.

Stirner's concept of the state is simplistic, the author claims. He does not see that the state is used by some groups against other groups. This is a reverse, mirror image of the impartial, liberal state, which protects the citizens of a commercial society against each other. One of Stirner's early literary works was a translation into German of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. Evidently he was influenced by this book, but whereas Smith's state impartially protects, Stirner's impartially exploits.

Stirner appears to wish to base human relationships on cold self-interest. "In one of the most pathetic passages of *The Ego and His Own* he explains why," writes John Clark, "and he no doubt tells us something about the experience which underlies his own egoism." :

"I would rather be referred to men's selfishness than to their 'kindness', their mercy, pity, etc. The former demands reciprocity (as thou to me, so I to Thee), does nothing 'gratis', and may be won—and bought. But with what shall I obtain the kindness? It is a matter of chance whether I am at the time having to do with a 'loving' person. The affectionate one's service can be had only by begging, be it by my lamentable appearance, by my need of help, my misery, my suffering. What can I offer for his assistance? Nothing! I must accept it as a—present." Stirner feels helpless when faced with the uncertainties of relying on human social instincts. He therefore looks instead (ironically) to the security found in the contractual relationship of the egoistic union. (p. 82).

Stirner seems to have had a naive or over-optimistic view of what would actually happen when egoists come together, each seeking his or her own interests. The stronger, those with more advantages, will get the better of the weaker, those with less, since no one is to act altruistically, seek the good of others or of society.

Yet it would be a mistake to see Stirner as a champion of capitalist competition. He wants egoistic competition. All the same, what is to prevent a group of successfully competitive egoists banding together to ensure that they remain on the top and the less successful never get a chance to dislodge them?

Although Stirner, in the main, does not favour force, he is capable of proposing "the replacement of punishment entirely by 'satisfaction', or blatant retaliation against those who act in ways disapproved by the egoist. 'If one does to us what we will not put up with, we break his power and bring our own to bear: we satisfy ourselves one him, and do not fall into the folly of wanting to satisfy right (the spook).' This passage presents Stirner's egoism at its ugliest, and reveals the authoritarian consciousness on which it is based (in spite of his efforts at times to present a libertarian political position)." (p. 84).

John Clark concludes, "I contend that if the full implications of the concepts of domination, exploitation and coercion are understood, the individualist acceptance of competition and self-interest as the basis for social organisation must be rejected. A view of anarchism which seeks to eliminate coercion and the state, but which overlooks other ways in which people dominate other people, is a very incomplete and quite contradictory type of anarchism." (p. 92). And he ends his pamphlet by saying, "Such views as Mumford's 'organic ideology' and Whitehead's 'philosophy of organism' are obviously much more adequate accounts of reality. Hegel's contention that 'the truth is the whole' (albeit a whole to which each part makes a necessary and enduring contribution) appears to be justified. It is not such a standpoint, but rather metaphysical egoism, which must be dismissed as groundless superstition." (p. 100).

The reviewer agrees with the views of John Clarke, as summarised above, to a large extent, but would add that Stirner expresses a feeling about the world that, logical or not, is shared by many. A sense of individual isolation in a world where there is "much good, but much less good than ill" is a common thing. Sometimes people practice mutual aid, but often they do not. So a Stirnerite might well say that the philosophy of egoism is a picture of things as they are, whether it's regrettable or not. Most people feel themselves to be a permanent, hard, unchanging entity from childhood in its earliest days to extreme old age. The discovery of old letters or diaries in a drawer sometimes breaks the illusion, and one exclaims, "Could I have written that? It seems like another person." Again, the influence from one's upbringing, surroundings, society and so forth changes the personality, modifying it by infinitesimal degrees throughout life, but the individual is largely unaware of it.

John Brent

## Silver Jubilee

"The outbreak in Cairo over the weekend is something not unexpected; indeed it is the ever-present theme behind Egyptian politics ... whatever the outcome of the present unrest, however, one cannot see in them revolutionary possibilities ..."

FREEDOM, February 2, 1952

## Work and Culture

This skinhead thing is an aggressive Prolekt. They are, as Jeremy Bugler called them, Puritans in boots - last-ditch defenders of Protestant morality. They stand for cleanliness, hard work and sobriety. (They say so themselves). They hate hippies more than they hate greasers. Their uniform is larger-than-life factory garb. They used to be ashamed of being workers. Now they wear loose denims for play as well as work, hitch them up to show off their industrial footwear, and cut their hair even shorter than safety regulations demand.

This skinhead thing doesn't point a direct way out of the dilemma, because its values are the obverse of bourgeois values. Working class culture will (or should) vanish when middle class culture vanishes. But the dialectical outcome of this pride and philistinism may be of value.

George Gardstein, 1970

## Note

The original article in *Anarchy* was accompanied by a footnote which we are also reproducing here:

Isaac Deutscher was highly critical of the whole idea of cultural revolution. "You may use the term in a metaphorical sense to indicate the cultural rise of a formerly oppressed and illiterate people ... But how can you make a cultural revolution in a single act? Can you transfer at a stroke the knowledge and skills accumulated in the head of one class into the head of another? Revolutionaries who would do this would indeed perform a feat which the philosophers, including the philosophers of Marxism, have not dreamt. One can, of course, kill or reduce to silence or send to concentration camps a whole generation of an intelligentsia and in this way deprive society of a certain fund of knowledge, civilised habits and skills that have accumulated over generations, but this will not turn those who destroy the old intelligentsia into the possessors of the knowledge, the skills and arts of those they have annihilated .... Not in Lenin's time .... And so much was and is vital (in this cultural heritage), because in science and the arts the old dominant classes had in a sense transcended their own limitations .... Only savages, or petty-bourgeois, half-baked ultra-radicals, or bureaucratic upstarts can make bonfires of the works of the great thinkers and artists of the past."

Ernst Fischer suggests we cannot speak of either bourgeois or working class Culture. "There is no such thing as bourgeois or proletarian, capitalist or socialist means of expression in art. There is such a thing as a socialist way of thinking.

This way determines the artist's attitude in crucial situations: but it does not prejudice his adherence to this or that movement in art, nor saddle him with a view of reality laid down by a sacred ideology."

Fischer relates a conversation he had with Togliatti about a comrade whom neither of them liked. "How can he call himself a Marxist?" asked Togliatti. "He isn't even abreast of bourgeois culture."

## What Is a Boss?

### an IWW parable

WHEN THE BODY was first created, there was a row among the different parts as to who was going to be the boss.

The brain said: "Since I am the nerve centre that controls everything and does all the thinking, I should be the boss."

The feet said: "Since I carry all the bleeding weight, I should be the boss."

The hands said: "Since I've got to do all the manual labour and earn the money to keep the rest of you going, I should be the boss."

The eyes said: "Well I have to look out for you all and let you know when danger lurks, so I should be the boss."

And so it went on with the heart, the lungs and all the other parts putting their claim in, till there was nothing left but the arse. All the others laughed when it made its bid for boss, for whoever heard of an arse being boss of anything. But this reaction upset the arse so much that with an angry sound it cut itself off completely, and refused to work anymore.

Soon the brain was feverish; the eyes ached and crossed; the feet felt too weak to carry the load; the hands hung limply at their sides, and the heart, the lungs, and all the other parts struggled to try and keep going. Finally they all gave in to the arse, and it became the boss.

And while they all did the work, the arse just sat back and let out a lot of hot air.

And the point of this take is that if we can all learn to work together in harmony, we don't need to make arses of ourselves!

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