

anarchist fortnightly **Freedom**

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DON'T FOLLOW

THE YEAR is only sixty days old and in that brief space of time the State has three victories under its belt to confirm its power over all our lives. It has:

IMPOSED a sweeping wage control system without even the pretence of legality. What Act of Parliament put the 10 per cent guideline on the Statute Book? None. How was it achieved? Through a conspiracy of Cabinet Ministers and trade union leaders.

BROKEN a strike - the firemen's - which had almost universal support throughout Britain by drafting in blackleg troops with little complaint and no hint of resistance.

BANNED all demonstrations in Britain's capital city, ostensibly as a sideswipe at the National Front but ultimately to dampen all open political argument.

BROODING DISCONTENT

All seems quiet. But beneath the surface, intuitively almost, we can sense the brooding discontent. Nothing seems to work anymore, all the old ideologies and standards, the framework of our lives, all the old desires even, are crumbling.

Everyone knows it is time for something new and it is that which everyone seems to fear. People have no confidence in anything about them

LEADERS



CALLAGHAN WRESTLES WITH THE REAL PROBLEM

or in themselves. It is at periods like this that the authoritarians thrive: "A strong leader, a firm hand, that's what we need."

It is to this sort of feeling that the National Front appeals. Racism, the most obvious and the most irrational part of its message, is the least of it. They are far enough out of the mainstream of the old politics to seem different. They promise: "We can march forwards into the past. Follow us and everything will be safe again."

People are afraid in a way they never were before. They dread, above all, what kind of world their children will live in. It's easy to sneer and imagine the family is dead but we can't forget that for most people the future is their children's lives.

They have seen so much change in their own lives, so much turning ugly day by day as the hearts of communities are ripped out, as work (if there is any) becomes more and more absurd. They know that the pace of ugliness goes faster and faster with - apparently - no way of halting it.

POLITICS OF THE SEWER

Some may imagine that, in these circumstances, the State's action against the National Front represents a flashing of its liberal credentials, a sign that the State does really abhor outright authoritarians and racists. We disagree.

The National Front has lost nothing. It can do without parades; the real work is being done in the council slums and the dole queues, their message seeps through society in the wake of despair and ignorance, hopelessness and frustration.

However much we despise and detest the politics of the sewer that the National Front epitomises we must recognise that the power of the State to ban any activity represents its strength, and the strength of the State is a measure of the weakness of each and every one of us.

The State outlaws marches, demonstrations and - eventually - strikes, because it fears above all the politics of reality. Politics is in factories, offices, shops, classrooms, homes even, where flesh and blood people struggle with solid facts. Not fumbling with ballot slips every few years, passing hour after hour at manipulated meetings and rigged conferences.

This is what terrifies the State. Reality of this kind is untidy, messy, hard to pin down in a neat file: it interferes with businesslike profit-making and bureaucratic order.

A NEW REALITY

We shouldn't think that the two month ban is the end of it. The MP for Lambeth Central died while it was being brought in. This constituency includes Brixton with the largest concentration of black people in London. A by-election will be held in the early summer and what else can the National Front do but stand?

The ban will - if it is necessary now - be as necessary then. Its currency will extend till the General Election in the autumn. Naturally, the ban must continue through that period, musn't it? We are reaching a situation in which all political demonstrations will be illegal. That seems the logical progression.

Possibly, some may say, that would be no bad thing. At least the State will know that when we choose our time and our issue to take to the streets **WE WILL MEAN BUSINESS.**

(cont pg 2)

BLASPHEMY

THERE HAVE been several recent developments in the Gay News blasphemy case. The appeal of the editor and publisher of Gay News against their conviction and sentence for blasphemous libel, following Mary Whitehouse's prosecution for the publication of James Kirkup's poem "The Love That Dares To Speak Its Name", was heard from 13 to 17 February; but judgement was reserved, and has not yet been given. Most of the dozens of grounds for appeal were dropped, and most of the legal arguments which lasted for nearly four days concerned two issues - whether the crime of blasphemy must involve an attack on Christianity and must include an element of intent. The lawyers discussed cases ranging from 1676 to 1922, the latter being the date of the most recent successful prosecution for this offence, of a militant secularist called J.W. Gott.

One ridiculous aspect of the discussion of Gott's case was that none of the judges had been able to find a full account of his trial at the end of 1921, so that they had to refer to the account printed in the secularist paper the Freethinker, copies of which were supplied to the court by Nicholas Walter, editor of the New Humanist, from the library at the Rationalist Press Association. As it happened, this material showed that in Gott's case the element of intent was assumed to be essential, so it is possible that this irregular example of anarchist-secularist assistance to the legal system may help to tip the balance in favour of Gay News. Whichever way the appeal goes, however, it is possible that the case will go to the House of Lords, which will keep the nonsense going for several months more.

After the appeal hearing, on 23 February, the House of Lords debated Lord Willis's Bill to abolish the common law offence of blasphemy. If the House of Commons resembles a school debating society, the House of Lords resembles a geriatric or psychiatric ward, and

never more than when it debates such an issue. The Earl of Halsbury talked about acts of violence to the mind and spirit, and sources of consolation being besmirched with ordure. Earl Ferrers attacked the gay free-thinking lobby. The Bishop of Durham talked about debasing the currency of reverence. Lord Nugent of Guildford talked about protecting the sacred. The Bishop of Leicester talked about things which are repellent to society. Baroness Macleod of Borve talked about lowering moral standards. Lord Robertson of Oakridge talked about protecting the common ho! polloi and having a long-stop of common sense. Lord Hampton said that enough is enough. The Earl of Lytton talked about cases of blasphemy at his Catholic public school, in his regiment, and among his workmen. The Bishop of Norwich talked about his experience when fighting in the Royal Marine Commandos and the need for Britain to recognise its Christian basis. The Earl of Longford said that when people have done wrong they must be punished, and that only religion can make freedom safe. Lord Ferrier talked about the silly-clevers and the outriders of anti-Christ. Lord Macleod of Fuinary talked about abortion, masturbation, paedophilia, fornication, and said that the law against blasphemy was necessary to preserve religion. The Earl of Cork and Orrery said that since there is a law against blasphemy it shouldn't be abolished. Viscount Barrington said that there has never been so much need for the law. Lord Kinnaid talked about defending all the good things that go to make life worthwhile. The Bishop of Truro said it took centuries for a tree to grow

but only minutes to cut it down. There were some good speeches from Viscount Norwich, Lord Soper, Lord Platt, Lord Gardiner, and Lord Ritchie-Calder, and some good heckling from Baroness Gaitskell, but the Bill was of

course thrown out. However, the Government announced that the subject is to be considered by the Law Commission, so this absurd law may in fact be abolished in the near future.

Meanwhile, it is still being broken. Before the appeal hearing, on 11 February, the National Gay News Defence Committee organised a march in London and a meeting in Trafalgar Square which were attended by thousands of people both inside and outside the gay movement, including several anarchists. At the meeting it was announced that a new edition of the Kirkup poem had been published by 111 writers, artists, academics, publishers and journalists as a facsimile leaflet. The signatories include such members and friends of the libertarian movement as John Arden and Margareta D'Arcy, Professors Stan Cohen and Laurie Taylor, Peter Fryer and Norma Meacock, Adrian Mitchell and Jeff Nuttall, Richard Boston, Barbara Smoker, Tony Smythe, Nicholas Walter and Colin Ward. This edition has been briefly mentioned in a few papers, but there has been no comment either from the unofficial Christian censors or the official legal authorities. The leaflet is produced by and available from the Free Speech Movement, 134, Northumberland Road, Harrow, Middlesex, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

The poem has also been reprinted in yet another political paper, the Oxford Red Herring, still without any reaction. It is clear that, whatever the result of the Gay News appeal, and whatever the fate of the blasphemy law, far too many people are determined to maintain the principle of free speech for this particular form of censorship to be successful. The question is not whether the Kirkup poem or any other blasphemous item is in good taste, but whether we can read and write what we want, and the answer is up to us.

M.H.

DON'T FOLLOW LEADERS cont'd.

But only if anarchists have done their work properly. As long as people cling to the hope of leaders there is no hope at all. If anarchists can persuade people to break through the squalor and the decay that is the State's gift to us with new dreams then they may reach with them a new reality.

1978 could be the turning point that 1968 was in its own way. In that year it seemed the idea of revolution was reborn in the West. In this year perhaps the act of revolution will be. Don't follow leaders. Follow yourself.

EDS



These are days of eroding civil liberties in many places. To most people the Isle of Man will be known as never having been in the forefront of liberalism. But at the end of 1977, without the occasion of the excuse of National Front marches, the island's legislators passed an unusually stupid law or regulation restricting demonstrations and leafletting and suchlike. This was challenged by a hastily formed group who, with previous notification of their intentions, gathered in the streets of Douglas on New Year's Eve handing out 'Happy New Year' cards. This resulted in court appearances and fines. As we go to press one of the group, Bob Corlett, who has refused to pay the fine, is waiting to be hauled off to the gaol.

My vicarious experience of the serving of a prison sentence is that it's a real loss of time and disproportionate disruption of life - but very good wishes, Bob.

MC

Interesting to note Dennis Healey's glee as the rate of inflation dropped below 10% (to a giddy 9.9% actually) for (and I quote the Chancellor) "the first time since October 1973" Wasn't the very same Dennis an object of ridicule in October 1974 for claiming a rate of 8.4%?

The National Association for Freedom, (whose letters sometimes arrive here!) has been getting in the news lately. Despite their title capitalists standard bearers believe in interfering in other folk's affairs. For example an M.P. is currently claiming that they are behind the inexplicably well-funded "moderate" campaigns in various local Labour Party organisations. However these sorts of tactics can be expensive in other ways. John Gouriot (one of their directors) is facing a bill of £90,000 for court costs incurred trying to get an injunction to stop Post Office workers from boycotting South African communications. To avert bankruptcy an immediate appeal has been launched. If any of those letters arrive here, we will be glad to look after them. Subsidisation of George Ward at Grunwicks must also have been expensive. Now Robert Moss has resigned his position of joint director. The "Evening Standard" carries his assurance that "he was not leaving a sinking ship" We can only assume that he represents a maverick even amongst rats.

A spokesperson at the Ministry of Defense has said that "Any messages from outer space are the responsibility of the BBC and the Post Office, as these are responsible for illegal broadcasts"

STUDENTS FIGHT

WITH both major political parties committed to cuts in public expenditure they are faced with the difficulty of convincing the electorate that services such as hospitals and educational establishments are things which we no longer need.

British colleges of further education have always had a fair number of overseas students studying for qualifications not available in their home countries. London has always had a higher proportion than other areas. Over the years the numbers have been rising, because it suited the authorities: similarly immigration was encouraged when it suited the labour market. Now immigrants and overseas students are picked on as scapegoats.

The Department of Education (DES) has decided that the system of entry on academic merit is to be abandoned; students are to gain entry on racial stock. This year the Labour controlled Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) is up for re-election, so they have indulged in cost-cutting exercises which will lead to a small increase in rates. To this end they have closed schools, sacked teachers and cut courses. Now they want to implement the racist QUOTA SYSTEM; that it contravened the Race Relations Act was admitted by Education Minister Shirley Williams who has ordered overseas students to be re-classified as 'specified students.' From next autumn no college may admit more than 25 per cent of its students from overseas. The reason given is to create more places for home students. THIS IS A LIE.

Since February 9th students at Thames Polytechnic have occupied their Woolwich site in opposition to education cuts, to the Quota System and ILEA's decision to lop £ 50,000 off next year's budget - this because the Court of Governors had already made plans to cut back on overseas students, hoping it would save them from worse, but which failed to comply with the quota. Now the governors have voted to implement the quota, although City of London Polytechnic, Warwick and Sheffield Universities and others have refused to submit to DES pressure. At Thames the quota cuts 126 places and threatens six courses: at technical colleges the quota will lead to run-downs and possible closures, especially SWLTEC and SELTEC.

We must recognise that Thames Polytechnic is a test case - if ILEA gets away with it here, DES will pressurise education authorities all over the country to implement the quotas.

The row blew up on February 6th when the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Court of Governors met to decide not whether, but how, to implement the quota system. The meeting was disrupted by a picket of 50 students who demanded that the Court reverse its decision.

At a stormy meeting of nearly 1,000 students - one of the biggest in the Poly's history - a decision was taken to occupy and to organise a national campaign. The Director ordered the sites closed. However students opened libraries and laboratories and mounted an alternative education programme.

Our main task now was to spread the action to other colleges, both in London and nationally. The National Union of Students (NUS) having been censored at the last National Conference for inactivity on the question, finally called for an 'activists' conference on overseas students. The Thames delegation arrived to find the usual talk-shop, completely ignoring the fact that the NUS strategy of negotiation has kept the student body passive in the face of government attacks on education.

We called a meeting of activists: our resolution to spread the campaign was overwhelmingly adopted, and as the result of a picket of County Hall we were promised an interview with Ellis Hillman of ILEA - the man who wields the axe. He would see as many of us as cared to turn up, we were told.

On February 16th the TV programme "Thames at Six" interviewed the Student President; a member of NATFHE, the lecturers' union; and the Director of the Poly, Dr. D E R Godfrey. All he could say was 'I am not a racist, but I am a democrat, and I am obliged to implement the quota system.'

On February 20th a further Union meeting voted to continue occupation. At this stage we received a tremendous boost to our morale when the local branch of the lecturers' union NATFHE who had already condemned the quota system, now voted to support our occupation, to provide a counselling service for students, and to call on the Court of Governors to resume a normal teaching programme; this despite the pressure put on them by the administration who had told them not to teach or come into the building.

Back at County Hall, Ellis Hillman had now decided that he would receive a delegation of ten people. He said that no courses or colleges would close because of the quotas. He immediately confirmed, however, that under-recruitment would certainly cause the termination of courses and the closure of colleges. Since most courses at most London colleges are undersubscribed at the moment we take that to mean that courses and colleges will close.

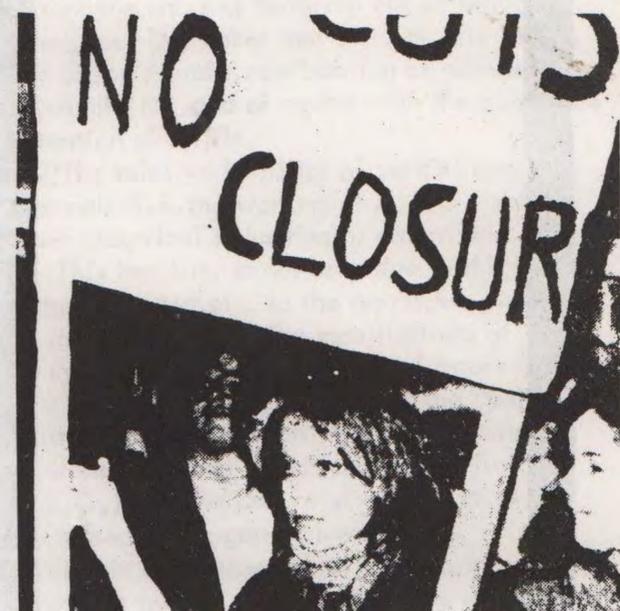
Eventually Hillman passed the buck by referring us to our 'democratically elected government.'

Two days later the NUS organised a demonstration in which Thames took the lead. We marched on County Hall to find a massive police cordon denying us our right to picket peacefully, and NUS stewards splitting the ranks.

Now some heads of departments have been sending letters to their students urging them to attend this Tuesday's Union meeting and vote the occupation out. When you read this the result will be known - either way we will continue to fight the RACIST QUOTAS.

Our campaign at Thames must not be isolated, for the issues are of vital importance to the future of education in Britain.

RACIST CUTS



We do not like living in a society in which teachers remain on the dole and children in oversized classes; in which parents are denied education because of the lack of nursery provision; in which students in further education colleges are denied the right to autonomous unions; in which foreign students are subjected to discriminatory fees and quotas, and their right to protest curtailed by the threat of deportation, which could mean death. Nor do we like a society in which our democratic government can impose decisions which affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of people without even consulting them.

The point anarchists must make is that all we can gain from all our marching, protesting and picketing is a few concessions granted to us by our masters, for which they have already very likely budgeted. We know that negotiations are doomed to failure, occupations are token gestures - what we must do is DISRUPT.

This campaign has shown us the bureaucrats stripped of their illusions of power. The real power lies in the State, and directors of educational establishments owe their positions to their willingness to carry out orders.

Support the Mass Picket of ILEA at County Hall, WEDNESDAY 8th MARCH, 2pm.

Contact: Thames Polytechnic Students' Union, Thomas Street, London, S.E.18. 01-855 0618

Charles Crute.

MURDER OF CHRIS

GREECE

FURTHER to our report on the demonstrations and arrests in Greece over the deaths of Gudrun Ensslin, Jan-Carl Raspe and Andreas Baader in Stuttgart-Stammheim (FREEDOM 12.11.77) we have received news that the following anarchists have been released from gaol: Michael Protopsaltis, Nikos Asimos, Kiriakos Basiliadis and Nikos Balis. Irodis Bakogianis of 'Socialisme ou Barbarie' has also been released.

But still in prison are: Christos Konstantinidis (sentenced to 3½ years), Michael Sirpos (28 months) and George Tsahsidis (2 years).

With this information we have received details of the events leading up to the murder by the police of Christos Kasimis. He was shot by the authorities during an attack on a German-owned factory in Piraeus and the police are now attempting to pin this killing on Yiannis Serifis, a worker who was picked up by the police 10 days later.

A revolutionary group under the name of "Internationalist Solidarity" attempted to place bombs at the A.E.G factory in Piraeus on the night of 19th/20th October 1977. This was part of a wave of attacks on German targets in Greece against the Stammheim murders.

The group sent out a news release explaining exactly what their motives were: "As the appropriate expression in the act of the internationalist revolutionary solidarity and within the programme and the prospects of the class struggle we took the decision to hit the German multinational corporation of A.E.G.

"Internationalist solidarity is our duty, it is an integral part of the very class struggle in our country, against international bosses, the State and their puppets."

POLICE MURDER KASIMIS

While three other members of the group prepared their action in the factory grounds, Kasimis went back to their car to fetch more equipment. Two policemen were passing, stopped him and disarmed him. This move was spotted by the other three who moved in, hoping to immobilise the police without having to use their weapons.

As the three drew closer Kasimis was able to break free, running in the opposite direction to his comrades. The police opened fire without warning - a common practice - and Kasimis was hit in the head. At this point his three comrades knocked the police down, without using weapons and the police turned their fire on them.

In the exchange of fire the two police were slightly wounded, as were two members of the group, but all three of Kasimis' comrades were able to escape.

POLICE CONCOCT THEIR STORY

The next day the chief of the Piraeus police, a well known torturer, Karathanasis, put out their version of events, "verified" by the testimonies of the two policemen involved.

The Solidarity Committee for the liberation of Yiannis Serifis, describe the police story in this way:

"The two policeman, while on patrol, spotted somebody (Kasimis) doing things they regarded as suspect. They approached him and asked for his papers. At first Kasimis pretended he would give them but then he tried to run away. The policeman struggled with him, disarmed him when at one instant he pulled out his gun, and immobilised him with a grip. At that instant they heard shots and turning round they saw 3-4 individuals approaching them shooting. One of these broke away from the others, approached to a distance of one meter and shot Kasimis at point blank range in the head 'so that he doesn't talk'. Just after that he wounded the two policemen. Then the group escaped."

WHO IS SERIFIS ?

He is a 39 year old milling machinist. "On the one hand," say the Committee, "certain aspects of his person gave fruitful grounds for the creation of false impressions by the professionals in lying, who would help bring the matter of the murder of Kasimis to a painless close for the police.

"On the other hand, through this plan of extermination, the police attacked something that had to be attacked in any case: the struggle for the class autonomy of the working people."

Serifis was one of the hundreds of thousands of Greek workers who are forced to labour in Germany. For 10 years he worked for A.E.G in that country and his activism soon found him a place on the employers' black list. Only the solidarity of his fellow workers prevented his dismissal or deportation.

During the Greek military dictatorship Serifis was a member of the "20th October" organisation, working actively against the regime. In October 1971 four members of the organisation were arrested and the names and photographs of two others the police were hunting appeared in the press - one of these was Serifis. He was not caught.

The prosecution of the "20th October" organisation was under the direction of Karathanasis who now - surprise, surprise - is the police chief leading the campaign for Serifis' death.

STRIKE ACTION

In July 1974 the dictatorship fell, to be replaced by what the Committee describes as "the democracy of capital". Serifis returned to Greece and got a job in the Greek outpost of A.E.G. In the spring of 1977 he was an active participant in a 70 day strike at the factory.

"He also," says the Committee, "actively contributed in the attempt at co-ordination of the autonomous factory unions and committees, which had been formed during the struggles, outside the realms of the official trade unionist apparatus."

STOS KASIMIS

For his activism he was fired from A.E.G. in April 1977 and blacklisted by the employers, which made it impossible for him to find work in any other large factory.

All this has been useful ammunition for the authorities who try to pin their case for his involvement in the attack on a desire for personal revenge. Serifis' work for autonomy obviously means he can expect little support from official union and political quarters.

from photographs two inspectors showed them while in the 401 Military Hospital, Athens. And yet, from other evidence, it is clear that these two inspectors were at those hours on duty in Piraeus. In addition, the head of interrogation states that he started looking for photographs of Serifis after 4pm on 20th October. He also testifies that he sent one photograph for identification - while the two policemen say there were two.

3. The statement by the two policemen

of the charges against Serifis.)

FOR THE LIBERATION OF YIANNIS SERIFIS.

Serifis has been held in detention in Kori-dallos Prison, Piraeus since his arrest (31/10/77) As his interrogation is not yet considered complete, we haven't been able to apply for his release. Such an application is expected to be made towards the end of february, without, of course any illusion as to its likely outcome.

The greatest obstacles met by the mobilisation for the release of Serifis are:-

1)The atmosphere of police terrorism that exists both as a general rule, and even more so in this specific case. Despite the release of the majority of those imprisoned and the favourable results of the appeals in the trials of the demonstrators, the wave of terrorism has continued throughout December and January, with house and office searches, confiscation of manuscripts, notebooks etc. and of course with the continued detention of serifis.

2)The relative inability of Serifis' normal channels (i.e. the workers of A.E.G. and other electrical industries) to effectively mobilise. This inability is not only due to this wave of terrorism but also to the repression exerted on them since the strike mobilisations of 1977 by the employers and the official trades unions. This resulted in the dispersion of the most militant elements (Mainly through dismissals; 43 workers, among them Serifis, were fired by A.E.G.) and the failure of certain attempts at workers self organisation.

Within the framework of the continuing campaign for the releases of Serifis we are asking for the following help:-

a)That publicity is given both to the murder of Kasimis and to the planned extermination of Serifis.

b)That, if possible, money is collected for financial support.

c)That letters of protest be sent, signatures collected etc. as part of the attempt to break the wave of terrorism around the affair. These letters should be sent to us and we will see that they are used in the best possible way.

d)URGENT. That you help if possible, to that a coroner and a ballistics expert come to Greece. In Greece these professions are under the full control of the State so it is impossible to find here such an expert who could be of any use. The presence of these experts is very important:-a)So that they can examine the wounded parts of Kasimis' skull and brain (which have been preserved), in order to work out, with as much precision as possible, the distance at which he was shot and the caliber if the gun; b)So that they can attend the re-enactment of the events, which the defence can demand, and out of which much more favourable information may emerge, both in relation to the above and to the situation in which Kasimis, the policeman and the alleged offended were in. This reconstruction cannot be of any use to the defence, unless it is helped by the presence of experts. If there is any prospect of help in this matter please contact us immediately, so that we can discuss it and send you all the necessary information.

(This has been edited from a script by;

Solidarity Committee for the Release of
Yiannis Serifis,

c/o Nikos Karamanlis
Akadimias 74
Athens, Greece.
Tel. 360-33-56)



Greek demonstrators outside the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, 1974. Apparently one-hundred and fifty years is long enough to forgive even a poetic rebel. An official descendent of the sort of Greek regime that Lord Byron died fighting did not mind attending the memorial concert held in commemoration of Byron's death. The Greek Ambassador was accompanied by his Byronic colleagues, the Portuguese and Spanish Ambassadors.

THE POLICE CONTRADICTIONS

On 30th November 1977 Serifis outlined his position against the story of the police and this was made public during a press conference organised by his defence in December. In addition the family of the murdered man have made their own charges against the police - though the authorities are doing their utmost to keep this quiet.

We shall detail some of the most obvious of the contradictions in the police version of events:

1. Probably the most notable contradiction in the account of the police is the logical absurdity which constitutes its basis: Why should Kasimis' companions choose to kill their comrade instead of trying to immobilise, overcome, or even kill if they wishes, the two policemen and thus liberate their companion? Even more so, since, according to the testimony of the two policemen, no obstacle was there to stop them from approaching and shooting at point blank range.

2. At 9.50am and 11.30am respectively on the morning of 20th October 1977, that is the morning following the event, the two policemen testify that they identified Serifis

that they and Kasimis were shot at point blank range is refuted by the official reports of two coroners - Poulos and Boukis - made on 22nd October. "Judging from the nature of the perforating wound (on Kasimis' head) one can exclude all probability that the firing took place at point blank range or at short or small distance, and hence to conclude that it took place from a long distance."

4. According to the official medical legal report there were no signs of injury other than the gunshot wound on Kasimis' body. And yet the police story, the point around which their case revolves, was that they got into a fight with him in which Kasimis was kicked in the hand, kneed in the face and suffered a "head tackle".

5. If, as the police say, Kasimis was being held when he was killed why wasn't the policeman holding him wounded by the shot? Why was there no sign at all in his clothes that this shot had been fired at such close range?

(N.B. Within this piece we cannot give a more detailed analysis of the police distortions. However we can supply more details if required. We also hope to complete translations of the statements made by Kasimi's group, as well as

LETTERS

lesbians

Dear FREEDOM

As an occasional reader who is not an anarchist, I find it somewhat difficult to understand the title of the article 'The Right To Be Ourselves' regarding lesbian mothers. Everyone, of course has the right to be themselves and one would not dispute Philip Sansom's right to be a lesbian or mother or both if it were biologically possible.

As it is not, I find it disturbing that he should appoint himself spokesman for a group of people whose problems he can never experience. I am not alone in this criticism as the Group to which I belong, some of whom are lesbians, agree with this.

I also feel Philip Sansom simplifies the problem of baby battering. This can occur for all manner of reasons and is not necessarily done by the 'type' of person he describes with his long list of adjectives.

Having said the above, I would like to say that Mr Sansom does make one or two very good points but I still feel the article would have been better written by someone more in touch with this issue.

Best wishes

Valerie de Max
(Ipswich Radical Feminists)

P.S. replies: I would not have the temerity to 'appoint myself spokesman' for anybody. I want to be free to be myself and I want all the people who are not like me (a heterosexual male) to be free to be themselves too. Collectively, don't we want the right to be ourselves?

I am not black, gay, female; I have never, personally, been pregnant (tho' I have been responsible for others' pregnancies). But in my time I have written and spoken about race, homosexuality, freedom for women to choose - e.g. abortion. Should I not have?

I find it astonishing that groups seeking 'liberation' seem to resent support from within the 'others' whom they blame for their own oppression. I don't have to be gay to want freedom for gays, it is enough that I am an anarchist - that means freedom for all.

Incidentally, I didn't even try to deal with the subject of baby battering. It was a 'throw-away' reference, in will all the adjectives, merely to dramatise the case with which heterosexual marriage gives without question some unsuitable persons the right to produce unloved children, while - the point of my article - withholding moralistically that right from caring and loving parents - because they happen to be lesbians.

L. Labadie

THE PAPERS of Laurance Labadie, renowned anarchist and writer who died August 12, 1975, have been donated to the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan by his niece, Mrs. Carlotta Anderson. The Labadie Col-

lection, part of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library, is named after Laurance's father, Joseph A. Labadie (1848(?) - 1933), "the gentle anarchist" whose gift of his own papers and private library to the University in 1911 forms the nucleus of the present Collection. Mrs. Anderson's donation of Laurance Labadie's papers and much of his private library is a very generous one and includes correspondence, notebooks, manuscripts, clippings, pamphlets and books of great interest to students of the reform movements of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The books and papers have received preliminary sorting but will not be made available for use by scholars and other interested persons until a full inventory is completed.

Edward C. Weber
(Head of the Labadie Collection)
711 Hatcher Library, University
of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mi 48109

no march

Dear Comrades,

I've just heard the news about the ban on the National Front march (and all other marches for two months, though no one's making much noise about that). Christ, I'm mad! The last thing we need right now is Social Democrat fascists protecting us from National Socialist fascists. The two months of course includes the big Anti-Nuke demo in March (coincidence?). Friends of the Earth have broken the all time record for backing down, they've already announced they'll put the march date back a month. Well, knowing F.O.E. that won't surprise anyone.

We mustn't let them get away with it - we must still get out on the streets, even more so in fact. This is only the beginning of something I'm afraid we're going to see more of; the state using the N.F. as an excuse to introduce more repressive measures. I bet we all feel safe from fascism now, don't we?

Love and solidarity,
Steve



97a Talbot Road,
London W11
01-229 8219

Now appearing with a new editorial group,
and a more anarchist line.

NEW

RULING

CLASS

THE COMRADES of the Centro Studi Libertari in conjunction with the international review of anarchist research, *Interrogations*, have organised an international study conference on the 'New Bosses' to be held in Venice on the 25th, 26th and 27th of March.

The following speakers have confirmed their participation in the conference (the titles of their papers are as yet only provisional):

Luciano Pellicani (from Naples): The Bureaucrats - From Slaves to Masters.

Alberto Argenton (Padua): The Meritocracy.
Bruno Bongiovanni (Turin): The Soviet Model and the Rise of Western Technobureaucracies.

Luciano Lanza (Milan): State Enterprises in Italy.

Amedeo Bertolo (Milan): A Typology of Technobureaucracies.

Nico Berti (Padua): Libertarian Anticipations of the New Bosses.

Albert Meister (Paris): The Multinationals
Mikail Agursky (Jerusalem): National Bolshevism as the Ideology of the New Class in the USSR.

Gabor Rittersporn (Paris): New Systems and New Bosses in USSR and China.

Marcel Gauchet (Paris): The French Intelligentsia and the New Bosses.

Eduardo Colombo (Paris): The New "Priests" of Technobureaucratic Ideology.

Convergences and Peculiarities in Latin America (paper from Louis Mercier Vega).

Mauricio Tragtenberg (Campinas): State and Society in Brazil.

Carlos Rama (Barcelona): Technobureaucratic Elements in the Spanish Economy.

Marianne Enckell (Geneva): Bureaucracy and International Organisations.

Yu Shuet (Hong Kong): The Red Mandarins.

Replies are still awaited from C. Castoriadis and P. Kende (Paris), L. Kolakowski (Oxford) and G. Galli (Milan). Yu Shuet is an ex Red Guard and after the conference she will be touring Italy to address public meetings and so on, and give a libertarian analysis of the situation in China based on her own experiences and subsequent events. A paper has also been received from Noam Chomsky.

Contributions are also being prepared (short papers to be handed round at the conference and perhaps discussed in workshops) on the National Enterprise Board here in Britain, and on the institutions which control access to housing in Britain. Further information is expected soon.

Any enquiries about the conference should be addressed to: Centro Studi Libertari, Viale Monza 255, Milano, Italy (tel: 02 - 2574073).

News in Brief ...

WIRES

BELFAST GROUP

AND WHERE is it more needed? Readers of our Contact Column will have noticed the fairly recent addition of a Belfast group and in our last issue notice of the first issue of Black Rag. The comrades involved, who have been active in Belfast for some time, now feel there is scope for expansion. They write:

"As you know, we've been running a bookstall for the last few months. Our paper Black Rag (No. 1) was also reasonably successful, as we sold out most of the available copies in less than a week, and the collective for the next one will include some more people. This 'interest' in anarchism could be for a lot of reasons (but the main reason I feel is that so many people are just so pissed off with the so-called 'Left', who have very little to offer) and we've decided to keep 'expanding' as it were! At the moment, we're still looking for the 'right' premises and in Belfast that's not easy. We've decided that it's a bad idea to open up in some community or other, firstly because we would not be 'from' that area, we would not be living in it full time and hence not experiencing the same hassles; secondly, to pick a 'community' means to pick a religion... it would have to be a 'Catholic' or a 'Prod' area and we want to avoid that at all costs. Two premises we have come across so far - one is a bit close to the university area, which is bad, and the other is next door to the City Centre British HQ, which also has its problems! - we haven't decided yet.

"The 'premises' will be run by a small collective, with two of us prepared to work full time. It will be run 'anarchically' - no wages, no profits etc. - and hopefully the premises will also be a sort of alternative centre, with access to propaganda facilities (duplicators etc.), possibly screenprinting, possibly a lending library, and - as soon as possible - some sort of centre for people busted for drugs (all this as well as the books/pamphlets etc. which we feel should reflect anarchism, feminism, gay politics BUT NOT MARXISM... "

The group needs help - books to sell, advice, to be informed of useful contact addresses and, inevitably, money. (They calculate they need £500 quickly). If all anarchist publishers send them their publications on (fairly long term) credit they will have stocks to sell on opening day, and if some well-heeled comrades can extend a loan... In either case we suggest writing in the first instance to say what help you can give and find out when it is needed. Address for correspondence is -
B.A.C., c/o 52 BROADWAY, BELFAST 12.

EDS.

"COULD you tell me where the nearest lesbian group is?"

"I'm doing a project on Sexism in Education. Could you refer me to relevant sources?"

"Could you tell me about the various feminist publications available in Britain, and how I can get hold of them?"

These are just a small sample of the queries that WIRES answers continuously. W.I.R.E.S. (Women's Information, Referral and Enquiry Service) is the national information service of the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain. It was set up by the National Conference of the Women's Liberation Movement in 1975, when it was evident that a fast-growing movement needed its own channel of communication, and dissemination of information on a national level.

Unlike most other forms of organised political groups, the Women's Liberation Movement has no central committee, no leadership. The unit of organisation is the group. A variety of groups are engaged in fighting women's oppression - consciousness-raising groups, women's Aid support groups, groups organised in and around women's centres, direct action groups, rape crisis groups, groups involved in ongoing campaigns, and so on.

It is therefore obvious that a movement as large and diverse as ours needs a national organ which would assimilate information, build the Women's Liberation Movement as a cohesive network which operates efficiently without hierarchical structures; and thus build up an accessible history of activities and information of the movement. This is one of the functions that WIRES performs.

The other is the national twice-monthly newsletter that WIRES produces. This concerns itself mainly with keeping women informed of what is going on nationally - conferences, meetings, WL publications, campaigns, etc. It also opens its pages to letters, opinions and debate, and carries reports of local actions, and passes on experience from different groups. The newsletter has a high readership, and is internal to the Women's Liberation Movement, and is therefore available to women only.

A collective of 5 women operates WIRES at the moment, which is now based in York after having spent its first 2½ years in Leeds. Sisters - subscribe to WIRES: Individual rates £6 a year (£4 if poor); groups £12 a year (£8 if poor) for 2 copies.

WIRES COLLECTIVE

32 Parliament St.
York

COMMUNITY ACTION

The international symposium on Community Action in Europe will take place this year at La Rochelle, France between 19-28 May.

Organised by the Community Action in Europe Network the symposium 'welcomes various action groups throughout Europe engaged in elaborating alternative lifestyles based on ecological balance, appropriate technology, conviviality and greater individual expression. The action groups 'function outside the traditional structure of governmental institutions, political parties and trade unions. They operate on the grassroots level and activate self-help organisation of the local neighbourhood. Actions relate both to environmental control (nature conservation, town and neighbourhood planning ...) and to conditions of our day-to-day life (housing, health, work, good food). Participants will represent various neighbour-

hood associations or more spontaneous community action groups'.

For all further information, contact:

COMMUNITY ACTION IN EUROPE 1978
8 rue du Puits de l'Hermite
75005 Paris, France. Tel: 535.5886 or
246.3594.



SATURDAY 4 MARCH is a day of transnational action against the British-Dutch-German "Urenco" uranium processing organisation. In support of the demo at the plant at Almelo in the Netherlands there will be a "No expansion of uranium processing" picket of the Dutch Embassy in London that day, noon till 2pm - 38 Hyde Park Gate, SW7, Organised by London Greenpeace Group.

Material in FREEDOM is freely available to all libertarians. We would appreciate an acknowledgement. However we must point out that while we extend a similar respect to comrades our attitude to others is somewhat more cavalier. For your own protection please be aware of this. It particularly applies to illustrations.

FREEDOMS CONTACTS PAGE

NEXT DESPATCHING DATE is THURSDAY 16 March. Come and help from 2 pm onwards.

Folding session for Supplement 5 is Thursday 9 March, 6-8 pm.

WE WELCOME NEWS, REVIEWS, LETTERS, ARTICLES. Latest date for Vol. 39 no. 5 (N.B. events to occur March 20-April 3 (in London Mar. 18...)) is Monday 13 March, and let us have items by Thursday 9 March if you can.

Articles for Review section no. 6 by Saturday March 18 (last date Monday the 20).

International

AUSTRALIA

Canberra: Alternative Canberra Group, 10 Beltana Road, Pialligo, ACT 2809

New South Wales: Sydney Anarcho-Syndicalists, Jura Books, 417 King Street, Newtown, NSW. (Library, meeting place).

Sydney Libertarians, P.O. Box 54, Darlinghurst, NSW 2-10.

Victoria: La Trobe Libertarian Socialists, c/o SRC, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic. 3083.

Libertarian Socialist Federation of Australia c/o 4 Roosevelt St. Reservoir, Vic. 3073.

NEW ZEALAND

The anarchist movement can be contacted at P.O. Box 2052 Auckland

P.O. Box 22-607 Christchurch

International Books, 123 Willis Street, Wellington

Daybreak Bookshop, P.O. Box 5424 Dunedin

CANADA

Open Road, Box 6135, Station G. Vancouver, B.C., branching out into activities outside the production of the paper. Write for information.

U.S.A.

CORRECTION of address: Missouri: Columbia Anarchist League, PO Box 380, Columbia, MO 65201 (not Box 370).

NEW ENTRY: Texas: Houston S.R.A.F., South Post Oak Station, P.O. Box 35253, Houston, TX 77035.

New York: Libertarian Book Club, Box 842, GPO, New York, 10012.

SRAF/Freespace Alternate U, 339 Lafayette St., NYC 10012.

Minnesota: Soil of Liberty, Box 7056, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, Minn 55407.

San Francisco: Free Socialist, PO Box 1751, San Francisco, CA 94101.

EUROPE

Denmark Aarhus: "Regnbuen" Anarkist Bogcafe, Mejlgade 48, 8000 Aarhus.

Copenhagen: Anarkist-Synd. Bogcafe, Studiestraede 18, 1455 Copenhagen.

Christiana: write Stot Christiania, Dronningensgade 14, 1420 Copenhagen.

Germany: Anarchist Federation of Baden; ABF Info-Büro, Postfach 161, 761 Schwabisch Hall.

'Gewaltfreie Aktion' (Non-violent action) groups, associated with WRI, libertarian. For further information write Karl-Heinz Sang, Methfesselstr. 69, 2000 Hamburg 19.

UK GROUPS & FEDERATIONS NEXT ISSUE

Meetings

LONDON. Anarcha-Feminist Conference. Sunday 12 March 11 am - 5 pm. At: Camden Womens Centre, Rosslyn Lodge, Lyndhurst Rd, N.W.3. Bring food & toys to share. There will be a creche— contact Anneke McCabe 467-0324 or leave message. 5 Workshops proposed: Childcare, Direct Action, 'Is separatism causing a rift in the women's liberation movement?', Anarchists & organisation, Working with hierarchical organisations. Bring other ideas.

NEW YORK. Libertarian Book Club lectures: at Wormmen's Circle Center, 369 8th Avenue, 29th Street, NYC (7.30 pm). Adm. free. March 9 Eric Gordon: Anarchist Movement in Brazil.

April 13 Dwight Macdonald: Confessions of a Literary Journalist.

Leicester. 14-25 March. Exhibition of prints by Peter Ford incorporating anarchist texts and references. At Blackthorn Books, 76 High Cross Street, Leicester.

REGULAR MEETINGS

London. Anarchist Women's group (North & E East) meets fortnightly. New women welcome. Tel. 555 5248 or write 26 Huddleston Road, N.7. Discussion/study/action.

Brixton Anarchist-Situationists meet every Sunday at 2 pm. Details from 674 6402

Centro Iberico Saturdays & Sundays 3-11 pm at 421 Harrow Road, W.9.

Love V Power every Sunday weather permitting 3-5.30 pm at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park (Marble Arch).

Anarcho-Utopian Mystics every Monday 7.30 pm in Concourse Area, St. Clements Bldgs., Houghton St., London WC2.

London Workers Group fortnightly (Sundays) 7.30 pm in Earl Russell pub, 2 Pancras Road NW1 (Kings Cross tube). Next mtg. 6 March (contact Dave 249 7042 or Adam 247 4829).

Birmingham Libertarian Socialists Suns. 8pm in The Fox & Grapes, Freeman St. (near Moor St. station. Contact Peter Le Mare, 2 Florence Place, Ombersley Rd. Birmingham 12.

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THE BOOKSHOP is normally open :

Tuesday - Friday 2-6 pm
(Thursdays until 8 pm)
Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm.

BUT NOTE : FRIDAY 24 & SAT 25 MARCH
THE BOOKSHOP WILL BE
CLOSED

Literature

'GOOD GOD! — a string of verses to tie up the deity'; a gift book by Barbara Smoker, illustrated by Joyce Harpur. 95p (or £ 1 post free) from B. Smoker, 6 Stanstead Grove, London S.E.6.

SOME FREEDOM PRESS PUBLICATIONS

MALATESTA : His Life and Ideas. Malatesta's thinking on Anarchism, on Revolution, Organisation, Working Class Movements, Crime and Punishment, Production and Distribution, Anarchism & Violence, Ends and Means, Propaganda, An Anarchist Programme, etc., translated and compiled from his writings by V. Richards, with biographical notes. 309pp. £ 2.00 (36p)

ABOUT ANARCHISM, What Anarchists Believe, What Anarchists Want, How Anarchists Differ. . . Nicolas Walter 25p (9p)

ABC OF ANARCHISM, Alexander Berkman 50p (12p)

ANARCHY, Errico Malatesta 35p (9p)

BAKUNIN & NECHAEV, Paul Avrich 20p(9p)

LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, V. Richards cloth £ 1.50 (54p)

COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, Gaston Leval cloth £ 4.00 (66p)
paper £ 2.00 (54p)

(postage on individual items in brackets)

Press Fund

9 February - 22 February

SUDBURY, ONTARIO, CANADA: A.O. £ 1;
BOCHEGGIANO, ITALY: S.S. £ 4.36;
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA: R.P. £ 10; NEW YORK, USA: N.M. £ 7.50; WOLVERHAMPTON, J.L. £ 1; JKW £ 0.10; COLCHESTER: T.O. £ 2; GLASGOW: R.M. £ 0.50; WAKEFIELD, B.W. £ 0.50; KEW: H.H.H. £ 1; HILLSBOROUGH, CALIF. USA: L.M. £ 2.50; WOLVERHAMPTON: J.L. £ 1; JKW £ 0.10; STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN: S.L. £ 1; VANCOUVER, CANADA, G.W. £ 2.50.

TOTAL: £ 35.06
Previously Acknowledged: £ 262.60

Total to Date: £ 297.66

Desires Group

PROPOSED NEW GROUP (UK) :
DERBY. Anyone interested in forming group contact Andrew Huckerby, 49 Westleigh Ave., Derby DE3 3BY (tel. 368678).

GAY Anarchists, Meetings in London, contacts round the country. Write c/o Rising Free, 182 Upper St., London N.1.

recruit libertarian support, he revives the Marxist myth of Communism leading to the 'withering away of the state'. Lenin eventually takes refuge in word-chopping such as "abolishes the state as state".

But elsewhere Lenin wrote: "We favour an immediate transfer of the land to the peasants, with the highest degree of organization possible. We are absolutely against anarchist seizures." (April 28, 1917). Trotsky, too, was always critical of anarchism. He wrote: "Anarchism is just an attempt to cleanse liberalism of the police. But just as pure oxygen is impossible to breathe, so is liberalism."

*

As early as May 1917 the Kronstadt Soviet repudiated the centralized power of the Provisional Government and proclaimed itself 'the sole power in the city'.

In 1920 during the second Congress of the Communist International, Victor Serge observed Lenin negotiating with anarchists, Sandomirsky and Schapiro, who were both working for the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, for co-operation with them. These two, like many anarchists who were working for the Soviets, gave them critical support.

Some time in early 1918 Kamenev, president of the Moscow Soviet at that time (later denounced and used in the Moscow Trotskyite trials) offered the anarchists the legalization of their movement, complete with its own press, clubs and bookshops (which then existed) on condition that they draw up a register of themselves and conduct a purge of their favourite haunts which (Serge says) "were crawling with malcontents, uncontrollables, semi-lunatics and a few ill-disguised genuine counter-revolutionaries". The majority of the anarchists have a horrified refusal to this suggestion of organization and enrolment: "What, are we to form a kind of party, even us?" was a comment. Serge adds, with ambivalent hindsight, "Rather than that, they would disappear, and have their press and premises taken off them." In April 1918 the Moscow Anarchist club was destroyed and its press suppressed.

"On September 25th, 1919 an underground group of Left Social Revolutionaries and Anarchists exploded a bomb in the Leontievsky Pereulok house in which the Moscow Committee of the Communist party was in session," writes Berkman in *The Bolshevik Myth*. Other writers refer to the deaths caused by this attentat, whilst some leave out the participation of LSR members. Whatever the truth of this, it was obvious that the provocation and pressure on groups fighting for their existence against a fully hostile State had been greater than they could bear without retaliation. Whether such attentats are justified is another question.

However, as is inevitable in such cases, the reprisals were swift and repressive. At least forty-five anarchists were in the Butirki prison months later, without charges being preferred, deprived of exercise and visitors and given insufficient food. According to Berkman they went on hunger strike to such effect that the entire prison population of 1,500 joined them. Berkman agreed to join a Committee which would lobby the Secretary of the Communist Party on this situation.

Berkman recalled previous efforts to bring about "a better understanding between the warring revolutionary factions". He had visited and talked with Lenin and Zinoviev but got no satisfaction. The matter was referred to the Central Committee of the Party who replied in a resolution in Lenin's words that "anarchists of ideas are not persecuted" but emphasized that "agitation against the Soviet government cannot be tolerated". Berkman relates that Maria Spiridonova (who had been imprisoned for 'life' by the Tsarist government for killing a peasant-flogging general, and released by the Revolution) being leader of the Left Social Revolutionary wing had been imprisoned again by the Bolsheviks. She was regarded as a dangerous enemy of the Revolution. Foreshadowing later techniques, the Government (says Berkman) "pretended to consider Maria insane and had placed her in a sanitarium, from which she had recently escaped".

The head of the Petrograd Tcheka (now KGB) was interviewed by Berkman on behalf of three arrested anarchists. Berkman pointed out that the arrests were unjustifiable because the men were 'true revolutionaries'. The Tcheka head said that they had found 'certain apparatus' in T's room.

Berkman points out that T is a chemist. The Tcheka man says, "We know it, but anti-Soviet handbills were found in the factories, and my men thought they might have some connection with T's laboratory. But he stubbornly refused to answer questions." Berkman reminded him that was an old practice of arrested revolutionaries. The Tcheka man was indignant. "That is why I am holding him," he said. "Such tactics were justified against the bourgeois regime, but it is an insult to treat us so. T acts as if we are gendarmes." Berkman replied, "Do you think it matters by whom one is kept in jail" (*The Bolshevik Myth*). Later, Berkman adds, "I heard that B (the Tcheka head) was suspended and exiled to the Caucasus for his too zealous use of summary execution."

In December 1919 the Russians received a new consignment of revolutionaries. The United States had decided to answer every reactionary's dream by sending a batch of assorted subversives back to Russia on the 'Soviet Ark' Buford. Among them were Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman.

Berkman eventually got work translating various Soviet resolutions and Losovsky's brochure on the history of Russian trade unionism when Radek (who disappeared in Stalin's purges) urgently summoned Berkman to the Communist International headquarters. Radek gave Berkman a manuscript by Lenin which he needed translating into English in three days. Berkman said it would take at least a week since he had other work on hand. However, Berkman knew the manuscript was "*Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disease*" which is an attack on Left revolutionary tendencies critical of Leninism - including anarchism, described as "a petty bourgeois ideology". He said to Radek who said this should take precedence and Berkman replied, "I will undertake it if I may add a preface." Radek said he must be joking, but Berkman assured him "I speak seriously. This pamphlet misrepresents and besmirches all my ideals. I cannot agree to translate it without adding a few words in defence." Berkman concludes; "Radek's manner lacked warmth as I took my departure." (*The Bolshevik Myth*).

The myth of the libertarian Lenin has persisted through the years, the implication being that he was betrayed by Stalin, who ousted the true heir (Trotsky) who, if he had had power, would have carried on Lenin's ideals. The Russian peasants used to have a similar myth about the Czar - all their troubles sprang from the fact that the 'false Dmitri' was on the throne, when the 'true' Dmitri returned things would be different.

As early as 1904 Rosa Luxemburg (not an anarchist) predicted that Lenin's organizational concepts would 'enslave a young labour movement to an intellectual elite hungry for power... and turn it into an automaton manipulated by a Central Committee.' Maximov sums it up as "the people were called to freedom, but were led into a stable of state slavery under which human life became less than worthless." Lenin had an absolute contempt for free speech. It was a "bourgeois notion" he told Emma Goldman. "There can be no free speech in a revolutionary period." He asked Emma Goldman, "When could the social revolution be expected in America?"

The Bolsheviks were restrained to some extent in their dealings with the anarchists by Makhno's successes against the Whites in the Civil War. Trotsky writes (in Stalin), "For example Lenin and I seriously considered at one time allotting certain territories to the Anarchists, naturally with the consent of the local population, and letting them carry on their experiment of a stateless social order there. That project died in the discussion stage through no fault of ours. The Anarchist movement itself failed to pass the test of actual events on the proving ground of the Russian Revolution. Many of the ablest and sanest of the Anarchists decided they could serve their cause best by joining the ranks of our Party." (Trotsky's emphasis - and he can keep it!)

Yaroslavsky, Soviet hack author of the most vicious attack on Russian anarchism (miscalled 'A History') has to admit reluctantly, "Let us say in advance that we do not consider the Makhno movement to have been hostile to the revolution at every point from its very beginning. There were times when Makhno and his followers helped the revolution. Nor can it be denied that many of them displayed great personal courage

and readiness to sacrifice their lives." Accusations are made by Yaroslavsky that Makhno and his guerillas committed rape, torture and anti-Semitic excesses. Yaroslavsky reprints sections from Makhno's mistress's diary supposedly substantiating these fabrications. Shades of "News of the World"!

In spite of Makhno's alleged shortcomings in December 1920 the Central Committee C. P. delegate initiated an agreement between the Makhnovists and the Soviet Government of the Ukraine to join in the fight against Wrangel's White armies who were causing the Soviets concern. Alongside the military agreement there were certain political clauses and promises, somewhat echoing Trotsky's 'utopian' hints. The Fourth Clause was 'In the region where the Makhnovist Army is operating, the worker and peasant population will create its own free institutions for economic and political self-administration; these institutions will be autonomous and joined federatively - by means of agreements - with the governmental organs of the Soviet Republics.'

Voline summarizes the position: "After all that had happened, no one among the Makhnovists believed in the revolutionary integrity of the Bolsheviks. They knew that only the danger of Wrangel's offensive had forced the latter to deal with Makhno. And they were certain to find some pretext for a new campaign against the Makhnovitchina. No one believed in either the solidarity or the continuation of the agreement. But in general the Makhnovists supposed that the alliance would last for three or four months, and they hoped to take advantage of this lapse of time to carry on energetic propaganda in favour of the Makhnovist and libertarian ideas and movements. This hope was illusory."

The threat of Wrangel being dissipated, the Bolsheviks, wrote Voline, "began the third and last war against the Makhnovists, the Anarchists and the labouring masses of the Ukraine, a war which ended, after nine months of unequal and implacable struggle, with the military destruction of the free movement. Once again, brute force, based on deception and imposture, triumphed." The Bolshevik Government "pretended that the Makhnovists and the Anarchists were in the proc-

ess of preparing a conspiracy and a vast insurrection against the Soviet Government; it accused Makhno of having refused to go to the Caucasian front and of having started to levy troops from among the peasants in order to form an army against the Soviet authorities; it stated that instead of fighting Wrangel in the Crimea, the Makhnovists had been sniping at the rearguard of the Red Army etc." Voline adds "All these excuses were entirely untrue."

Raids and arrests followed. For example, fifteen youths between 15-18 were imprisoned. A trap was set up at a Kharkov anarchist bookshop where anyone who came to buy a book was seized by the Tcheka, even those who stopped to read *Nabat* the anarchist newspaper - which was quite legal before the break. Frunze issued an order to Makhno for his partisan army to be assimilated into the Red Army - secretly Frunze had orders to act against the Makhnovists with all the means at his disposal in case they refused to obey.

Makhno's staff in the Crimea were summarily executed. Makhno fought a counter-attack against the Bolsheviks. He took thousands of prisoners but released them, telling them to go home, which many of them did. However, the Bolsheviks shot their Makhnovist prisoners.

Makhno and the remnants of his army fought a losing rearguard action against the Red Army from December 1920 to August 1921 when Makhno, severely wounded, was assisted to escape aboard. The Bolsheviks waged a repressive campaign in the Ukraine exterminating not only Makhnovists but also peasants who had been denounced by informers as pro-Makhno. This repression in the Ukraine, followed by the famines of the thirties, laid the way for the Ukrainian welcome to the German 'liberators' in 1941.

*

In March 1920 a Moscow anarchist Conference asked for release of prisoners and legalization of the anarchists' educational work. About this time Victor Serge translated *Terrorism and Communism*, by Trotsky (or, as it was originally titled: 'Defence of Terrorism'). In this Trotsky ex-



David Kohn, Olonetzki, Mark Mratchny, Olga Taratuta, Fanny Baron & Guyevski released from prison for one day to go to Kropotkin's funeral. Moscow 1921.

ANARCHY 81
TWO SHILLINGS OR THIRTY CENTS

plains the necessity of a long dictatorship "in the period of transition to socialism" for several decades at least. Even Serge, who justified much of Trotsky's and Lenin's actions, writes "Trotsky's rigid ideas. . . disturbed me a little". In his own memoirs Serge writes

"I am well aware that terror has been necessary up to now in all great revolutions, which do not happen according to the taste of well-intentioned men, but spontaneously, with the violence of tempests; and that it is our duty to employ the only weapons that history affords us if we are not to be overwhelmed though our own folly. But at the same time I saw that the perpetuation of terror, after the end of the Civil War and the transition to a period of economic freedom, was an immense and demoralizing blunder."

Later (September 1921) Serge reports the shooting by the Cheka of the anarchists Fanny Baron (whose husband Aaron disappeared in the 1937 purges) and Lev Chorny. He reports that a campaign for the release of prisoners had succeeded in the release of ten anarchists including Maximov and Voline, who took the opportunity to leave Russia. Berkman states that eight other anarchists were executed with Fanny Baron and Lev Chorny.

The glow of the false dawn of the Russian revolution attracted many veterans of the I.W.W. to Russia. Some voluntarily, like Bill Shatov who became in turn police chief of Petrograd and 'railroad czar' of the Turksib railway—claimed by Eugene Lyons to be the first enterprise concluded under the Five Year Plan. Other 'Wobblies', who went seeking political asylum, were Big Bill Haywood and Fred E. Beal. Haywood worked as manager in a coal mine but was reportedly disillusioned by the Soviet system. Beal writes that Hayward's memoirs are incomplete, the section on Russia having been suppressed. Fred E. Beal, returned to the United States, wrote his memoir Word from Nowhere.

The I.W.W. of that period was politically unstable, and the seeming success of the Russian Revolution had herded several stalwarts into the Communist camp. Tom Mann, the Syndicalist, for example went as a delegate in 1921 to the first Congress of the Red International of Labour Unions and there, according to Dona Torr, he decided to 'throw in his lot' with the Communist International. Touchingly, Dona Torr parallels Mann's anti-parliamentarianist dilemma with Willie Gallacher's similar outlook 'which Lenin had helped Gallacher to overcome in the previous year'. Mann said of the Bolsheviks: "When I saw what they were out for—what I had been out for all my life—I asked myself how I could want to stay outside in some cantakerous little clique." As M.-L. Berneri says, "the Trade Unions as organs of defence of workers' rights no longer exist in Russia". They are organs of the state.

Kropotkin, then 75, returned to Russia. He was welcomed by the Bolsheviks as a celebrity—a habit they have not abandoned. Berkman visited Kropotkin at Dmitrov and wrote of Kropotkin's frequent dispossession from his Moscow quarters, which were successively requisitioned by the government; of Kropotkin's isolation; material difficulties of heating and lighting. Kropotkin said to Berkman, "They [the Bolsheviks] have shown how the Revolution is not to be made."

Kropotkin's death in February 1921 provided, ironically enough, the last opportunity to Russian anarchists to meet legally in Russia. They met for the funeral, many released from prison for the event—this pitiful 'right' of one day's release having been secured only by the anarchists threatening to remove official wreaths from the funeral Hall. (It is reported, how truthfully is unknown, that two anarchists were refused readmittance to prison after the funeral. Faced with the prospect of no residence, no work permit and no ration-book the two insisted on their 'right' to return to prison (said to be the freest society in Russia). The bureaucratic error was admitted and they were let in.) The anarchists set about planning a Kropotkin museum. This was closed in 1938. However there is a Kropotkin Street in Moscow where the Frunze Military Academy has its headquarters! Promises to publish the works of Kropotkin have not so far been kept.

The Kronstadt revolt of 1921 took place in a setting which was just as historically significant as the revolt itself. The background was the launching of the New Economic Policy which 'temporarily allowed a limited amount of private capitalist enterprise for private profit', according to the Webbs. (Bukharin said of NEP: "The fact of the matter is that we are making economic concessions in order to avoid making political concessions.") When on March 18th the Kronstadt Commune perished, the Bolsheviks were celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Paris Commune.

Enough has been written, and is currently available, to make recapitulation of the Kronstadt betrayal unnecessary. Suffice it to summarize Paul Avrich (Kronstadt 1921): 'the Kronstadt uprising was a spontaneous and self-contained movement from beginning to end'. At present, with the revival of Trotskyism, it is important to refute Trotsky's lying denial (in 1938) of his involvement in the suppression of the Kronstadt revolt. Trotsky referred to the inevitability of revolutionary 'excesses' and of a 'tragic necessity'. Ironically, Trotsky himself was accused in a 1939 Soviet pamphlet of fomenting the Kronstadt revolt.

In July 1921, before the Soviet Trade Union Congress, delegates tried to get agreement for imprisoned anarchists (some of whom were on hunger-strike) to be deported from the Soviet Union. Berkman, who took part in the negotiations, declined to sign the petition of the delegates, but it nevertheless went through and some of the prisoners, expecting to be released, terminated their hunger strike. However, Bukharin secured a platform in the Trade Union Congress and used it to denounce anarchism as 'criminal banditism'. It is the awful logic of the failed revolution to destroy those whom it employs to destroy.

By September 1921, Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman had decided to leave Russia. Then, both felt free to criticize the Soviet Union and the 'revolution'. "I found it necessary to observe silence so long as the combined imperialist forces were at the throat of Russia", and "I am convinced that coming revolutions are doomed to failure should what Lenin himself called military Communism be imposed on the world." So wrote Emma Goldman in 1922. Articles followed in the New York World and the American Sunday Times. These preceded the books My Disillusionment in Russia (1923) My Further Disillusionment. . . (1924) and Berkman's The Bolshevik Myth (1925).

This criticism drew down upon the anarchists attacks from 'friends' on the left. Typical was that of Guy Aldred, whose spleen was notorious. In August 1924 he criticized Berkman and Goldman for their attacks on the Soviet Union. "The anarchists do not help", he said. After a period of trying to discover what had happened to some of his friends in Russia, Aldred admitted in a November 1925 headline in Commune: "Communism Suppressed in 'Soviet' Russia".

Bertrand Russell (who had visited Kropotkin) wrote about Berkman, "I would wish there were more men who, like Berkman, are opposed to tyranny as such and do not become friends of tyranny as soon as the tyranny is exercised by their friends."

The Berkman-Goldman attitude can be contrasted with that of Victor Serge who wrote, after Kronstadt

"After many hesitations and with unutterable anguish, my communist friends and I finally declared ourselves on the side of the Party."

and

"It is often said that 'the germ of all Stalinism was in Bolshevism at the beginning'. Well, I have no objection. Only, Bolshevism also contained many other germs—a mass of other germs—and those who lived through the enthusiasm of the first few years of the first victorious revolution ought not to forget it. To judge the living man by the death germs which the autopsy reveals in a corpse—and which he may have carried in him since his birth—is this very sensible?"

During all the persecutions, the anarchists set up their own 'Red' Cross—the original Black Cross—to assist anarchist prisoners of the Bolsheviks. The same group published The Guillotine at Work, a documentation of Soviet persecution.

News of anarchists in Russia since 1921 is hard to get. It is known that Aaron Baron was executed in 1937. As Nicolas Walter asks in *Anarchy* 81 (1st series) 1967: "Has there been any anarchist activity in Russia during the last thirty years, and is there any hope for Russian anarchism in the future?" He comments on the labelling of Russian dissidents as 'anarchists' and dismisses much of this as smear campaigns. It is true that Solzenyitsin and other Russian dissidents have given little evidence of libertarian opinions when released to the West, but freedom is heady and some of the dissidents have fallen into bad company.

There is some evidence of anarchist persecution and resistance. In Alex Weissberg's *Conspiracy of Silence* (1942) he whirles of meeting an old anarchist in a Kharkov GPU prison (about 1939) who had been a Tsarist prisoner in the Schlüsselberg fortress. The old man said 'In the old days we really had conspired against Tsarism, and now we've done nothing. We worked for the Soviet power like obedient children. Perhaps that was our mistake.'

Weissberg goes on "Prisoners who came back from the Brikhalovka told us a fantastic story about an anarchist named Eisenberg. The man hadn't carried on any counter-revolutionary or anarchist activity, of course, but he had openly clung to his old ideas. He was a Jewish tailor, and when still an apprentice he had accepted the ideas of Kropotkin and Bakunin. He upheld them now with Talmudic obstinacy... He was fifty-five but every day he did his physical exercises with great conscientiousness.

'So you're an anarchist, Eisenberg?' said the examiner at their first interview.

'That's right, Citizen Examiner.'

The examiner was surprised. Although they all confessed to their crimes in the end, they usually made some show of protesting their innocence.

'You're very wise to confess at once without making any trouble. That means you'll get a lighter sentence. Who recruited you?'

'Prince Kropotkin, Citizen Examiner.'

'Don't make jokes here, man. This is a very serious matter. Who recruited you? Who brought you into the organization?'

'I am an individual anarchist, Citizen Examiner.'

'Maybe you are, but I want to know all about your counter-revolutionary organization.'

'Citizen Examiner, you seem to be new, otherwise you'd know that individual anarchists haven't an organization. We don't believe in it. That's our whole point. It's in our programme. We form a community of like minded individuals. No one is subordinate to anyone else.'

'Go and ~~fuck~~ your grandmother with your community of like minded individuals,' said the Examiner irritably. 'If you don't tell me about your organization at once I'll break every bone in your body, you counter-revolutionary son of a bitch.'

Eisenberg rose and spoke slowly and solemnly. 'Citizen Examiner, you have insulted me. For that reason I shall answer no more of your questions.'

At this the Examiner lost his temper, punched Eisenberg and tried elementary tortures. He tried pleading and threats. Eisenberg said, 'Citizen Examiner, you may beat me up, as you say. That's your trade. You're a policeman and I'm a prisoner. I was seven years in the Katorga under the Tsar. They beat me up too, but they didn't insult me. I'm a human being, just as you are, and I have a soul just as you have. You have no right to humiliate my personality.'

The cross-examination went on with the Examiner being joined by two of his men, who belaboured Eisenberg for an hour with little effect. Weissberg writes, 'He survived an almost uninterrupted 'Conveyor' lasting for thirty-one days and thirty-one nights.' The Examiner made an appeal to him to confess. Eisenberg answered

'I am an anarchist, and I always have been, but I am not a counter-revolutionary, and I never have been. I have fought and worked for the Revolution all my life. But I am an enemy of the State. I am an enemy of all States, including your State. The State and its repressive system is the cause of all social evil. When the State disappears the people will be able to breathe freely for the first time in history.'

Weissberg concludes "They could do nothing with him. . .



Cartoon from *Golos Truda* (Petrograd, 27 October 1917) by Robert Minor: 'At last I have found the ideal soldier who will keep quiet and carry out orders without arguing.'

He was the only one among the 12,000 of us who fought for an idea. The rest of us were just unfortunate victims of oppression. . . 'Some day truth will triumph,' he would say again and again to his cell mates. 'Our sufferings will not be in vain.' It was he who won the unequal struggle. They broke off the examination and sent him to Moscow—it was said to a lunatic asylum."

In the literature of the camps traces are left of anarchists. Scholmer's *Vorkuta* mentions 'plat nois' or 'blat nois' as described by Roeder in *Katorga*; these are individuals who are in rebellion. Whether, in Camus's differentiation they are revolutionaries is another point. It is said that the post-Stalin strikes and revolts in the prison camps were the work of anarchistic prisoners.

Is anarchism dead in Russia? An old comrade, the late Boris Yelensky on his visit to Russia in the late 'fifties, said he met several young people who were 'anarchists'. Was this the wishful thinking of an old revolutionary or a testimony of the triumph of the Eisenbergs over the Examiners?

JACK ROBINSON.

CAMP PUNK

ALL ART is but a reflection of the society of the day. It hawks the indulgence and the agony of the hour to a sympathetic coterie and it justifies or stands in judgement on the popular morality of the minute. The pale poet penning his rhyming doggerel to his laced and corseted lady, the State protected eastern potter dunking his clay mugs into the coloured glaze, the western militant slapping his revolutionary red paint onto his hard-board, the actor mouthing the fashionable surrealist social dialogue and the punk group effing and blinding from the east end pub to the Old Grey Whistle Test via Chelsea and points west all have a ready made audience. There is a need and the artist fills it. From the graffiti on the walls of the factory lavatory to the plush rooms of the fashionable art galleries is but a bus ride and lavatory and art gallery serve a common purpose in that they are the visual expression of a private desire. We are in that period when there are no great social causes to bring the banners out onto the street.

Men and women as individuals or in small groups continue to aid the sick and the homeless but Rent-a-crowd is still in its winter hibernation and the National Front punch-ups have so far failed to produce a dead martyr for the Northern Ireland style political funeral so the small picket stands in lonely isolation outside Grunwick, the Gay Liberation chorus dance knees up outside the law courts and the battered wives have to continue to fight off their battering husbands, the politicians and the law. But my brief is poetry and once can do no more than mourn for the great golden day of ten or fifteen years ago when poetry was meaningful and public punch ups and denouncements were the order of the day.

Poetry appears to move forward in time in emotional waves and we can now bid farewell to the Victorians and the Georgians as they sink into that golden sunset of their own creation but we are still left with the corpses of the surrealists, the hungry thirties and the concrete and the blood and oil poetry of the nineteen fifties. Edward Germain has edited a collection of English and American surrealist poetry and he has included many a poet of the '30s and the '40s when the movement was no longer exciting merely fashionable and much of the poetry labelled surrealism reads like good pastiche from the competition page of the New Statesman. It is the critics who are now feeding well off the corpse and as they extend the pen they exhume such ancients as Lear and the Comte de Lautreamont to fill their private graveyard, but as Lambert says, in effect and in relation to Lautreamont, to hell with Penguin anthologies and buy your copy of Lykiard's excellent annotated translation of Lautreamont's Maldoror, for he is one of the Ur gods of a movement he joined cardwise but gravewise. If one needs a documented right to bash the National Front or the

Socialist Workers then Nietzsche's American Spiritual Voodoo from Shakopee Mn. should arm you mentally if not physically with its quotes from Martin Bormann, Genghis Khan, Spengler and of course Fred Nietzsche and it is the same sad tired old rubbish of superfly demanding power and the death of lesser mortals and my advice to the folks of Shakopee Mn. USA is to keep their windows closed when Nietzsche has been hitting the Coca Cola bottle. And from the States comes The Storm, an anarchist literary magazine given, this issue, to the Gay Liberation movement. In its visuals and its lay-out it has a dated air but one cannot fault it for it is an honest attempt to make a case using the words of Emma Goldman across the board to that of John Mackay. It reprints Young's claim that there could have been a homosexual attachment between Bakunin and Nechaev but in the reprinting of this I think they fall into the same trap as the latter day surrealist writers in trying to write in any socially acceptable name to help a case that needs no such help. Issue no. 7 will contain an article by S.E. Parker on European anarchism and should be worth the reading. Of the poetry of Richard Rudolf one can but say that I read it with pleasure but honesty compels me to find it a minor work. It is said that the poet spends much of his time rewriting revolutionary history from an anarchist point of view and to me that seems a certain way to make enemies among the anarchist movements for by God not only are we each and every one of us right as we clutch the original golden tablets to our sweat shirts, but we are sensitive to our own versions of the truth. It was the 'The realization kind machine' that gave me pleasure for it reminded me of Bob Cobbing and Better Books, Jeff Nuttall and all the happytime poetry magazines of that period. The '... kind machine' in drawing and poetry is the creation of Terence David Mylet and it is published by Rainbow Man. The poetry is of the ranting school, which is no crime, and the visuals are in the non fashionable style of the '50s but the '... machine' is pleasant to read, observe and handle. From the light and airy, not forgetting Shakopee Mn. USA we must move on to the lads who suffer for the cause and do no more than demand to know why Dave Cunliffe has taken 'years' to bring out no. 6 of his Global Tapestry.

When it would seem that the bottom has dropped out of the poetry market leaving the field to Sunday Times supplement posey fillers Global Tapestry, we pray, is a welcome scout for a new vanguard of exciting small magazines. Cunliffe is always workmanlike in his productions and he is a brilliant editor. The prose work and the cover leave a little to be desired but there is a magnificent round up of new, standard and fashionable poets ranging from MacSweeney, John Keys to Jeff Cloves, There is a full page display of the Zero One magazine no. 6 and fear is expressed that Zero One no. 7 is somewhere lurking in the pipeline. Much of the poetry in GT is the familiar introspective stuff of moody blues but Cloves and Cunliffe return with committed poetry. Cloves with his poem to Kevin Gately who died in 1974 from injuries received firing an anti-fascist demonstration and Cunliffe with his 'Our Lady of Strange Groceries' on the mindless and bitter evil of a bomb left to explode in a supermarket. Morality is not the final judgement on any work of art and I would hold that these two poems will stand the test of our time as works of art within their own narrow right. Keys' lovely 'Under Dresden Sky' and Jean Stevens' gentle 'Hunted' add highlights to this worthy host. I am all for the committed poet be it lavatory wall, public hoarding, leaflet or poster for there is a need to be heard in that writing.

Dennis Gould has produced a worthy selection of poster art and propaganda and here is living poetry to fill the wall of school, factory or union board. I unknowingly echoed him when he writes in his 'children's anarchist manifesto', "Go out into the street/On the citywalls are marked with slogans..". Roughly 11 inches by 16 inches he offers Ferlinghetti's 'Popular Manifesto (for poets, with love)' to the impressionistic 'Oxford Cafe Gossip.' There is a need for people to be heard

(cont pg 18)

'English and American Surrealist Poetry' edited by E. B. Germain, pub. Penguin, £1.75

Alexis Lykiard translation of Comte de Lautreamont's 'Maldoror', pub. Alison & Busby £2.50.

'Spiritual Voodoo' by Nietzsche, 123 E. 4th St. Shakopee, America. \$1.

'The Storm', no. 6. Sullivan/Kernochan, 2E-227, Columbus Av. New York, N.Y. USA 10023, 60 cents.

'The realization kind machine' by T.D. Mylet, 23 Courtfield Road, London S.W. 7. No price given.

'Global Tapestry' no. 6, edited by Dave Cunliffe. 1 Spring Bank, Salesbury, Blackburn, Lancs. BB1 9EU, 25 pence.

'Give me soil to fly in' by Richard Rudolf, pub. Baobab Books Publishers, 53 no. Main St. Voorheesville, New York, America, price ?

Dennis Gould, 'Poster poems', pub. 4, Warneford Road, Oxford, 25 pence each, 75p for three including post.

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KROPOTKIN

MESSAGE TO WESTERN WORKERS

I HAVE BEEN asked whether I have not some message to send to the working men of the Western world? Surely there is much to say about the current events in Russia, and much to learn from them. The message might be long. But I shall indicate only some main points.

First of all, the working men of the civilised world and their friends in the other classes ought to induce their Governments entirely to abandon the idea of armed intervention in the affairs of Russia - whether open or disguised, whether military or in the shape of subventions to different nations.

Russia is now living through a Revolution of the same depth and the same importance as the British nation underwent in 1639-1648, and France in 1789-1794; and every nation should refuse to play the shameful part that Great Britain, Prussia, Austria and Russia played during the French Revolution.

Moreover, it must be kept in view that the Russian Revolution - while it is trying to build up a society where the whole produce of the joint efforts of Labour, technical skill and scientific knowledge should go entirely to the Commonwealth itself - is not a mere accident in the struggle of Parties. It is something that has been prepared by nearly a century of Communist and Socialist propaganda, since the times of Robert Owen, Saint-Simon and Fourier; and although the attempt at introducing the new society by means of the dictatorship of one Party is apparently doomed to be a failure, it, nevertheless, must be recognised that the Revolution has already introduced into our everyday life new conceptions about the rights of Labour, its true position in Society, and the duties of every citizen, which have come to stay.

All concerned, not only the working men, but all the progressive elements of the civilised nations, ought to put a stop to the support hitherto given to the opponents of the Revolution. Not that there should be nothing to oppose in the methods of the Bolshevik Government! Far from that! But because every armed intervention of a Foreign Power necessarily results in a reinforcement of the dictatorial tendencies of the rulers and paralyses the efforts of those Russians who are ready to aid Russia, independently of the Government, in the reconstruction of its life on new lines.

The evils, naturally inherent in Party Dictatorship, have thus been increased by the war conditions under which the Party maintained itself. The state of war has been an excuse for strengthening the dictatorial methods of the Party, as well as its tendency to centralise every detail of life in the hands of the Government; with the result that immense branches of the usual activities of the nation have been brought to a standstill. The natural evils of State Communism are thus increased tenfold under the excuse that all the misfortunes of our life are due to the intervention of the foreigners...

One more word about the general question. A renewal of relations between the European and American nations and Russia certainly must not mean the admission of a supremacy of the Russian nation over those nationalities of which the Empire of the Russian Tsars was composed. Imperial Russia is dead and will not return to life. The future of the various Provinces of which the Empire was composed lies in the direction of a great Federation. The natural territories of the different parts of that Federation are quite distinct from those of us who are acquainted with the history of Russia, its ethnography and its economic life; and all attempts to bring the constituent parts of the Russian Empire - Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Siberia and so on - under one central rule are surely doomed to failure. The future of what was the Russian Empire is in the direction of a Federation of independent units.

It would therefore be in the interest of all that the Western nations should declare beforehand that they are recognising the right of self-government for every portion of what was once the Russian Empire.

As to my own views on the subject, they go still further. I see the coming in the near future of a time when every portion of that Federation will itself be a federation of free rural communes and free cities; and I still believe that portions of Western Europe will soon take the lead in that direction.

Now, as regards our present economical and political situation, the Russian Revolution being a continuation of the two great Revolutions, in England and in France, Russia is trying to make now a step in advance of

where France stopped, when it came to realise in life what was described then as real equality (*egalite de fait*), that is, economic equality.

Unfortunately, the attempt to make that step has been undertaken in Russia under the strongly centralised Dictatorship of one Party - the Social Democratic Maximalists (i.e. the Bolsheviks), and the attempt was made on the lines taken in the utterly Centralist and Jacobinist conspiracy of Babeuf. About this attempt I am bound frankly to tell you that, in my opinion, the attempt to build up a Communist Republic on the lines of the Dictatorship of a Party, is ending in a failure. We learn in Russia how Communism cannot be introduced, even though the populations, sick of the old regime, opposed no active resistance to the experiment made by the new rulers.

The idea of Soviets, that is, of Labour and Peasant Councils - first promoted during the attempted Revolution of 1905, and immediately realised by the Revolution of February 1917, as soon as the Tsar's regime broke down - the idea of such Councils controlling the political and economic life of the country is a grand idea. The more so as it leads necessarily to the idea of those Councils being composed of all those who take a real part in the production of national wealth by their own personal effort.

But so long as a country is governed by the Dictatorship of a Party, the Labour and Peasant Councils evidently lose all their significance. They are reduced to the passive role played in times past by States-General and Parliaments, when they were convoked by the King and had to oppose an all-powerful King's Council...

The ways to be followed in order to overthrow an already weakened Government and to take its place are well known from history, old and modern. But when it comes to the building up of quite new forms of life - especially new forms of production and exchange, without having any examples to imitate; when everything has to be worked out by men on the spot; then an all-powerful centralised government which undertakes to supply every inhabitant with every lamp-glass and every match to light the lamp proves absolutely incapable of doing that through its functionaries, no matter how countless they may be; it becomes a nuisance. It develops such a formidable bureaucracy that the French bureaucratic system, which requires the intervention of forty functionaries to sell a tree felled by a storm on a route nationale, becomes a trifle in comparison. This is what we are now learning in Russia. And this is what you, the working men of the West, can and must avoid by all means, since you care for the success of a social reconstruction, and have sent your delegates here to see how a Social Revolution works in real life.

The immense constructive work that is required from a Social Revolution cannot be accomplished by a central government; even if it had, to guide it in its work, something more substantial than a few Socialist and Anarchist booklets. It requires the knowledge, the brains, and the willing collaboration of a mass of local and specialised forces, which alone can cope with the diversity of economic problems in their local aspects. To sweep away that collaboration and to trust to the genius of Party Dictators is to destroy all the independent nuclei, such as Trade Unions (called in Russia 'Professional Unions') and the local Distributive Co-operative organisations - turning them into bureaucratic organs of the Party - as it is being done now. But this is the way not to accomplish the Revolution: the way to render its realisation impossible. And this is why it is my duty earnestly to warn you from taking such a line.

Imperialist conquerors of all nationalities may desire that the populations of the ex-Empire of Russia should remain in miserable economic conditions as long as possible, and thus be doomed to supply western and middle Europe with raw material; while the western manufacturers, producing manufactured goods, should cash all the benefits that the populations of Russia might otherwise obtain from their work. But the working classes of Europe and America, and the intellectual nuclei of these countries, surely understand that only by the force of conquest could they keep Russia in that subordinate condition. At the same time the sympathies with which our Revolution was met all over Europe and America show that you were happy to greet in Russia a new member of the international comradeship of nations. And you surely will soon see that it is in the interest of the workers of all the world that Russia should issue as soon as possible from the conditions that now paralyse her development

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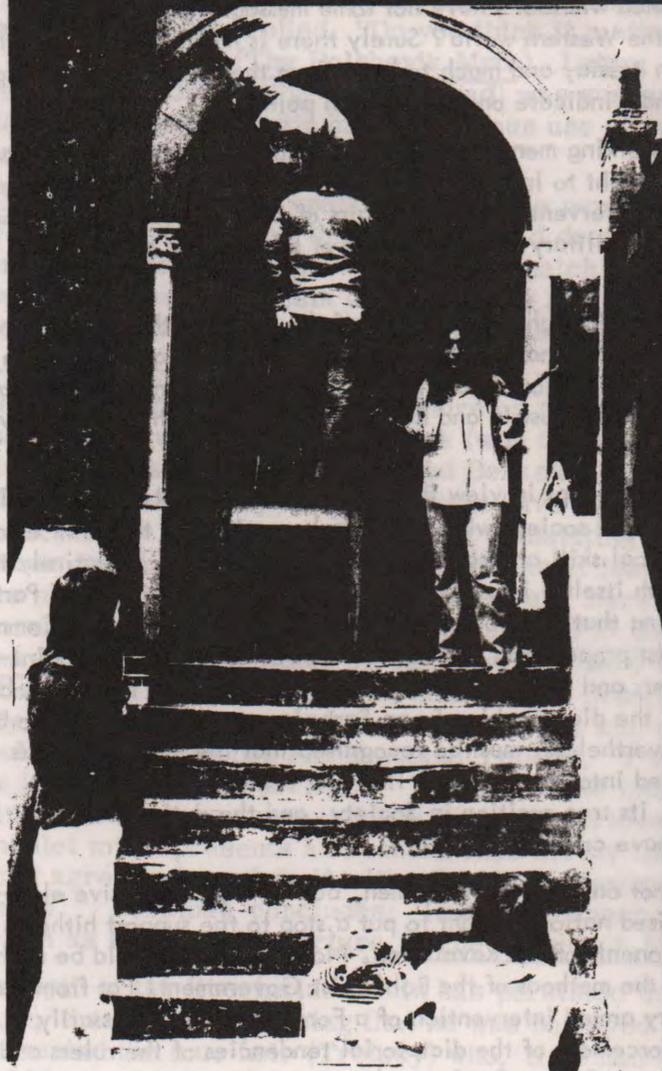
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- * *Pulp*, Canadian little magazine. £ 0.01. (7p) - plus 3 back issues available also at 1p. each or .11p. for the 4 incl. postage.
- Cienfuegos Press *Anarchist Review* no. 3. Autumn 1977. £ 2.00. (33p).

BARGAIN BASEMENT

- Michael Confino (ed): *Daughter of a Revolutionary: Natalie Herzen and the Bakunin/Nechaev Circle*. £ 2.00. (54p). Hardback. Reduced from £ 4.50p.

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1978

20p

CAMP PUNK (cont)

and Dennis Gould using his own committed poetry and the poetry of his choice demonstrates how it can and should be done. Your magazine comrades is the cheap commercial copying machine shop and your pages the public walls. 100 Dennis Gould size poetry posters and a large tube of glue and the public walls and the reading public are yours. While the poet of poesy and the sad image weeps in his flowered bedroom the pop groups in pubs and yards hammer out their harsh poetry to a receiving audience of the young and tough. If you must be heard then you must follow the crowd like it or nay.

In the *Radical Alternatives to Prison's* newsletter there are the lyrics from Peggy Seeger and Ewan MacColl's new album

PRISONS ARE POINTLESS

to aid RAP for RAP are in the red moneywise and at this moment in time due to be turfed out onto the street by the landlord (no names). 'It's illegal to kill off a landlord/Or to trespass upon his estate/ But to charge a high rent for a slum is O.K./ To condemn two adults and three children to stay/ In a hovel that's rotten with damp and decay/ Is a thing that is perfectly legal.' Here is the voice of the poet and of social protest and surely comrades one must query our own aesthetic values if that poetry is aimed at the working class young in the noisy beat of the disco or the young Tory's social club for somewhere along the line we are being by-passed as the noble dead.

ARTHUR MOYSE



The aim of Radical Alternatives to Prison (RAP) is the abolition of prison. Prison is a destructive and discriminating institution. The vast majority of prisoners come from a background of deprivation; low income, bad housing and poor education. Prison does nothing to help them to break out of this environment but rather confirms and traps them within it.

Although RAP began by advocating alternatives to prison we no longer see them as a complete solution. We have seen too many schemes being used as a form of control, based on the same values and punitive assumptions that underpin the prison system. The stated aim of prison is to deter people from breaking the law and to rehabilitate those who do so; neither aim ever has been, or ever will be, fulfilled. The prison population continues to rise, crime is increasing and recidivism rates remain high. Imprisonment can only increase rather than decrease the possibility of a person re-offending. By isolating the individual from family, friends and community, withholding basic human rights and denying him responsibility, prison degrades and stigmatises, inflicting wounds which seldom heal.