

FREEDOM

anarchist fortnightly

Vol. 37 No. 9

1 MAY 1976

TWELVE PENCE

1926: SUCCESSFUL FAILURE

ON MAY 3rd, 1926 The Daily Mail night compositors (members of NATSO-PA) declined to set a leader denouncing the coal miners' rejection of the Government's terms and the probability of a "general stike" which the Mail (promoters of the 'Red Letter' and always prone to see Reds under the bed) denounced in advance as "not an industrial dispute. It is a revolutionary movement". This was the spark that ignited the trail of coal-dust to the damp squib of the nine-day General Strike of 1926.

Fifty years later we can see that it was never, except in potential, revolutionary and was only a "general" strike in the distorted vocabulary of Fleet Street and history.

Of a general strike in the 'mythic' sense of Sorel - as a signal to spark off social change - there was never an inkling: save in the selfless action or non-action of thousands of workers it was a non-starter. As a general strike in the sense of being widespread it was not even that -- the shipbuilding and engineering trades were never called out at all, though they would have been out on May 14 had not the strike been called off. Vast numbers of trade unionists awaited instructions to strike. Partial strikes were accepted: for example, the ETU cut off power but not light; many humanitarian services were maintained by the T.U.C. As a general strike in the quasi-legal sense; that is, a strike spreading beyond the industry concerned, it existed for its

CELEBRATE

MAY DAY IN HYDE PARK with the anarchists, in a self-managed picnic, with your own and other people's music, entertainments, speeches, etc. From 2 pm to 5 pm. (If you want to help leaflet the official TUC march, get there at 12, because they're all going home to watch the Cup Final on TV - we hope to have our own portable telly for the addicts). At 5pm there'll be a PUBLIC MEETING with INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS, and this will mark the beginning of the National Speaking tour on THE LIBERTARIAN ALTERNATIVES IN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN TODAY, being organised by the Libertarian Iberia Committee. For further details see page 8. The tour will end up in London on May 8th, with a teach-in on Portugal and Spain at the London School of Economics, from 10.30 am to 5pm. COME ALL YE!

nine-day life and its repetition was duly rendered illegal in 1927 (an act repealed by the Labour government of 1946). The T.U.C. of the time called it a "National strike", which was a little more accurate, and - like the TUC - more patriotic.

1926 was only nine years after the bloody, stupid and useless battles of the First World War, of which it was said that the betrayed and exploited soldiers were 'lions led by donkeys'. Lord Birkenhead (no revolutionary), writing of the strike, said "It would be possible to say without exaggeration of the miners' leaders that they were the stupidest men in England, if we had not frequent occasion to meet the owners". L. S. Amery commented "He omitted the prior claim of the Government itself, whose financial policy was largely responsible for creating the situation in which both sides found themselves, and whose inhibitions and internal divisions forebode the obvious remedies that might have eased it." Similarly with the strike itself, of which the miners were the cause for which it was fought, and the victim at whose expense it was settled (not without some wounding of the unions

themselves). The workers were, again, lions led by donkeys.

The troubles of the coal industry and the miners were long and complex. By 1925 the German mines in the Ruhr were resuming operation after the French occupation and the subsequent

German non-co-operation. Consequently the mine-owners demanded a subsidy in order to keep going in the face of competition. This was granted by the Conservative government to expire in April 1926. The terms offered by the coal-owners to the miners were harsh and unacceptable, the T.U.C. was drawn in, in support of the miners.

It has been alleged by some historians that the nine months' subsidy to the mine-owners was to give the Government breathing space to create the O.M.S. (Organization for the Maintenance of Supplies), an emergency government set-up to mitigate the effects of a likely strike. However, John Scanlon points out that the Labour government of 1924 had tried to set up the same machinery to circumvent the dockers when they went on strike. Joynson-Hicks, Home Secretary in 1925, said, "When I came into office I found that this organization [O.M.S.] had always been treated by previous Governments, including the last one [Labour] as secret, as one which should not be talked about. From the first I decided that it was only right that as soon as possible information should be given. . ."

(Cont on P.2)

RUSHING THE PAY HURDLE

IT IS NOW apparent, at least to all whose who want to see, that rather it is the trade unions who are bailing out the contry than holding it to ransom. It is as though a lie had been repeated so many times that, in fact, the trade unions came to believe it themselves and are now rushing in to assure everyone that they will help the country and the Labour government out of the present crisis.

Both the government and the trade unions are being forced to rush their hurdles by the continuing fall in the value of the Pound. The present £6 limit on pay increases expires at the end of July but a new agreement will be reached very shortly. After the new run on sterling Mr. Murray, general secretary of the TUC, said it was "very worrying both to us and the government. We find it incomprehensible." But Mr. Murray's message to foreign investors was, "Cheer up. This is a great country. We are determined to get this country back on its feet and lay the foundation for its economic success. We are going to beat inflation and unemployment. I am absolutely sure of this."

It remains to be seen whether these reassurances have the desired effect. But the meaning to the working class of this statement is that the TUC are going to do everything in their power to get their own members to help capitalism in this country back to a profitable basis. Unless investors both here and abroad see that they are going to get an adequate return on their money, they will not invest in this country. Capitalism is operating an investors' strike at the moment until it can see a more profitable period ahead. Employers and their investors want to keep up a high level of profit even during the present inflationary period. The system's answer to this is to keep down costs, by laying off workers and making sure that those who remain in jobs increase production while at the same time receiving little or no extra money in return.

To achieve this the employers have an ally in the government. In the present Labour government they have a better ally in the sense that they have a better chance of obtaining trade union agreement than with the Tories. Mr.

(Cont. on P.2)

1926

(cont. from P.1)

Scanlon comments that Clynes "kept it secret, while Mr. Joynson Hicks boasted of it". The post-1945 Labour governments were never reluctant to use strike-breaking methods.

It has been said that the organisers of the strike made a mistake in halting the production of the Labour-sympathetic Daily Herald and issuing The British Worker which could seemingly scarcely compete with the British Broadcasting Corporation and the British Gazette edited by Winston Churchill. Churchill was a bravura choice for editor. Baldwin, it is said, gave him the job to restrain him and some members of the Cabinet from extremism. Baldwin said: "the cleverest thing I ever did, otherwise he would have wanted to shoot someone". The newly-fledged B.B.C. showed its talons and distorted and suppressed items of news. The fact was that those who supported the strike believed the British Worker and those who didn't believed Churchill, the B.B.C. and the Gazette. People mainly believe what they want to believe.

By their very nature and their financial precariousness the unions were unprepared for a strike of any length or scope. Psychologically (being conservative by nature as ever) they were completely unprepared for a strike so broad in its implications, and as for revolution, nothing was further from their actions. The subsequent careers of the leading lights of the union, Jimmy Thomas and Ernest Bevin, were foreshadowed in their 1926 activity.

RUSHING THE PAY HURDLES

(cont. from P.1)

Callaghan, the new Prime Minister, did not stress his forty years' trade union membership for nothing when speaking at the Shopworkers' union conference at Blackpool. He sees the need for an alliance, but the point is that that alliance is between one set of leaders and another, agreed to over the heads of the rank and file members. But it doesn't end there. Constantly we are being told that it is the workers and their industrial disputes over wages that have placed the country in its present plight. With such a barrage of propaganda from the mass media most people have come to believe it. People feel trapped by the never-ending spiral of price and wage increases. This is a continual treadmill which at certain periods gives the impression that all is well, but all too soon around the corner a crisis appears.

This is a crisis of the system brought about by its structure and its creed of profits from the labour of others. Those foreign investors have little confidence in the economy of this country and so have taken the Pound down to its lowest level to the dollar. So our whole living standards, public services, etcetera are at the mercy of a minority who act at their own discretion in order

Thomas, to become a Cabinet Minister in the National Government, advised the miners to settle on the vaguest of terms dreamed up by Sir Herbert Samuel (Liberal, later National-Liberal in the National Government with Jimmy Thomas) who had been chairman of the Royal Commission investigating the mining industry. Thomas introduced Samuel as mediator with the words, "If you don't trust me, will you trust a gentleman who has been governor of Palestine?" Samuel's negotiations were private and unofficial and consequently the Government whilst accepting the proffered ending of the strike would make no promise of terms or conditions - even for the miners on whose behalf the strike was waged.

Thomas (of the N.U.M.) was never whole-heartedly behind the strike. Indeed he was quoted in the British Gazette of May 12 as saying in a speech at Hammersmith, "I have never disguised; and I do not disguise now, that I have never been in favour of the principle of the General Strike.

Whatever vestiges of revolutionary ardour the T.U.C. (as distinct from its members) had were quenched by a speech in the House of Commons by Sir John Simon (Liberal, later Nat-Liberal with Herbert Samuel) attempting to prove that the General Strike was not a strike and therefore all participation was an illegal act. This casuistry did not impress the government, since they found it necessary to make such strikes illegal in 1927. It obviously impressed the Trade Unions who, then as now, were concerned more with legality than with militancy. It is worthy of note that Simon when he, along with the rest of this political Rogues' Gallery, joined the National Govern-

ment, was Foreign Secretary and defended the Japanese aggression in China so well that the Japanese said they couldn't have put it better themselves. Simon believed in creeping up the right backsides.

* * *

The fears of the T.U.C. were fears of the success of the strike. It was not revolutionary in its inception but its continuation would have been. The government were not overtly oppressive; such powers as they took were those taken by all governments in such circumstances. There is evidence that they were, in a modern phrase, playing it cool; perhaps they had rightly assessed the lack of stamina of the leading 'donkeys' Thomas, MacDonald, Bevin, Clynes and Co., and were prepared to wait. However it was, the workers went back and the miners carried on their grim hopeless struggle for six months, when hunger forced them back.

Cole and Postgate in The Common People write of the strike, "Initiative returned to the localities and the local Trade Union and Labour officers rose splendidly to the occasion. It was for many a dazzling revelation of the workers' real power." They go on to praise the organizational ability, the "remarkable elaborateness and efficiency" of local organizations for "food, workers defence, intelligence, communications, prisoners' aid, mass picketing" etc. "As far as can be judged (reports are fallible)", they say later, "there is no reasonable doubt that the efficiency and effectiveness of the strike were steadily increasing up to the very end." In fact, the second line of workers was only called out on May 11th and an attempt by employers to jump the gun by imposing harsh return conditions was countered by a refusal of workers to return until victimization was forsworn.

Cole and Postgate add, "It is certain that when news of the calling-off came it was received with universal anger, as from an army which knew itself to be victorious. For the enthusiasm of the rank and file had no reflection at headquarters. Muddle and fear reigned there." Hutt in his Post-War History of the British Working Class (although less reliable) comes to similar conclusions.

The 'ifs' or imponderables of history are many and unprofitable to speculate upon. The General Strike taught many lessons. Francis Williams (late editor of the Daily Herald, director of news and censorship at the Ministry of Information 1940-45, Press Adviser to the British delegation at UNO, Adviser on public relations to Mr. Attlee, etc.) in 1954 spoke of the strike as demonstrating "a new recognition of the power of organized labour". Yet in a part-work, History of the 20th Century, when he had become Lord Francis-Williams, he concludes that "for a time at least it helped to make all sides of industry realize that conflict was out of date". Conflict is never out of date, and it is pointed out by Stephen Fay in the Sunday Times (25.4.76)

to satisfy an urge for profits. That is the crazy system of profit motive under which we live.

Despite the TUC leadership falling over backwards to assure investors, they will not be satisfied until a 3 per cent deal has been agreed. It shows just how far the trade union leadership is tied to the profit motive system and its willingness to limit the wages of their members for the benefit and survival of capitalism. Let no one mistake the role of the trade union leadership. They serve the interests of capital and keep their members under firm control.

Of course the trade union leaders aid the system greatly, for if they can keep control then profits can start to increase. But if workers do revolt and take direct action, once again it will be shown who makes society work. It will show that no matter what agreements are made across the polished tables, it is at the point of production where things really matter. Once that lesson has been learned and people realise how important they really are and overcome the disunity and weakness we now suffer, then we might start to organise and really struggle against the capitalist system and all those who serve its interests.

P. T.

that in contrast to 1926 the miners' strike of 1972 (which brought down Heath) was successful because of the technological dependence on coal for fuelling centralized electric grid power. The power of the workers is more than ever in their hands and therefore should, more than ever, be in their heads, not in the hands of leaders.

Jack Robinson.

THE PARA-MILITARY JOBLESS

The Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, Mr. J. Alderson, advocates street patrols by specially trained volunteers who should be drawn from the ranks of the unemployed. He says: "The will to protect one's own community or neighbourhood, carried into effect through police leadership of selected and trained voluntary or special constabulary, is the superior answer. Under a professional police team leader, ideally the neighbourhood constable, active men and women who are prepared to give a little time to the limited function of preventive patrol in uniform, with professional resources on call, would go a long way towards reducing the incidence of street crime."

Furthermore Mr. Alderson wants the TUC to get involved, and he argues: "The great authority of the voice of the TUC might be encouraged to speak out against lawlessness, and in doing so help to provide the moral climate in which the weak and vulnerable members of the community may see hope of improvement."

What Mr. Alderson dreams of is the perfect "democratic" police-state to which we object. And as long as the police commits the crime to protect the ruling classes' laws and regulations the "crimes" of violence will continue. And as long as the disorder of the ruling class continues to exist the resistance against the police & co. will continue.

Because : who protects us from the violence and "lawlessness" of the police force?

Mr. Alderson, we don't want any para-military police unit drawn from the increasing number of unemployed women and men. We don't want any police at all to achieve the natural organic order in which crime will be a word of the past.

Abraham.

RELIGION AND SEX

A HUNDRED years ago Charles Bradlaugh was prosecuted for publishing a pamphlet on birth control. Last month a Roman Catholic peer declared in the House of Lords: "I am one of those who believe that the Family Planning Association should be abolished forthwith."

Next week the National Secular Society commemorates both events with a public meeting about Religious Opposition to Sexual Freedom (see Contact Column). Pointing to the campaign being waged by a number of groups against liberal reforms the N.S.S. says

"It is time for everyone who believes in planned families, legal and safe abortion, sex education and further liberalising of the laws concerning homosexuality to stand out against the religious opponents of sexual freedom."

MC

HALF ENGLISH

ONE OF the penalties for being around so long is that one gets news of old friends and acquaintances only through the obituary column : life is a permanent necrologie. One is jolted into the present day by the question, "Colin who?"

Colin MacInnes has died. Those of us who were around during the period of the Notting Hill race riot and the anarchist ball at Fulham Town Hall will recall Colin MacInnes' contributions to Queen (!), The New Statesman and New Society expounding with enthusiasm on his discovery of anarchism. We are not now, as a movement, given to the 'star' system but Colin MacInnes was a talent and a voice which would be listened to (his New Statesman piece was even anthologized) and while we welcomed his contributing to Freedom and Anarchy his advocacy in other papers was doubly welcome.

His best novels were Absolute Beginners, City of Spades and Mr. Love and Justice, all with a background of the London he loved and understood and of the youth which he understood. He was no sociologist but his social understanding and depth of observation made him one of the liveliest writers in New Society.

He was always a looker-on, as his half joking "Half English" title suggested with his background of colonialism and extraordinary family tree with Angela Thirkell and Rudyard Kipling somewhere in the branches.

He apparently suffered from ill-health for some time and his literary work was latterly in historical fields which did not attract such acclaim. Melly, in a tribute to him bore witness to the fact that he was a difficult man to maintain friendship with and it took great patience to sustain his marathon conversation sessions into the small hours.

However, we shall miss him.

J. R.

DON'T ROCK THE BOAT !

"This is the ship's captain speaking. Due to the retirement, without much explanation of your previous captain, Captain Wilson, I have been chosen as Captain. I have had some experience in the Navy, police, prisons, money and foreign affairs which makes me suitable to take the helm.

There has been some debate as to whether we should proceed to port or starboard. Members of the crew who differ on this viewpoint are stationed at their respective posts to port and star-

board.

Our Purser and Engineer has been considering our liquidity problem. He has decided to bore a hole in the steerage section in order that the water accumulated there shall pour out. At the same time it has been decided to bore a hole elsewhere so that the water may enter in order to provide an even keel. Lifebelts will be distributed throughout the ship whilst this operation continues. Passengers are asked not to panic.

Some of the older and more expendable members of the crew have been dropped overboard; there was no question of their walking the plank but their lives, as were the lives of all the crew, were placed at my disposal.

Stormy waters lie ahead. Some of you may be seasick. But we have survived rougher weather than this. If we all pull together -- when necessary oars will be provided -- we shall emerge with flying colours. Our present troubles are only the tip of the iceberg. All we demand of passengers and crew is that they should not rock the boat. Stormy years lie ahead, the ship of state will sail on. H.M.S. Titanic will and must survive."

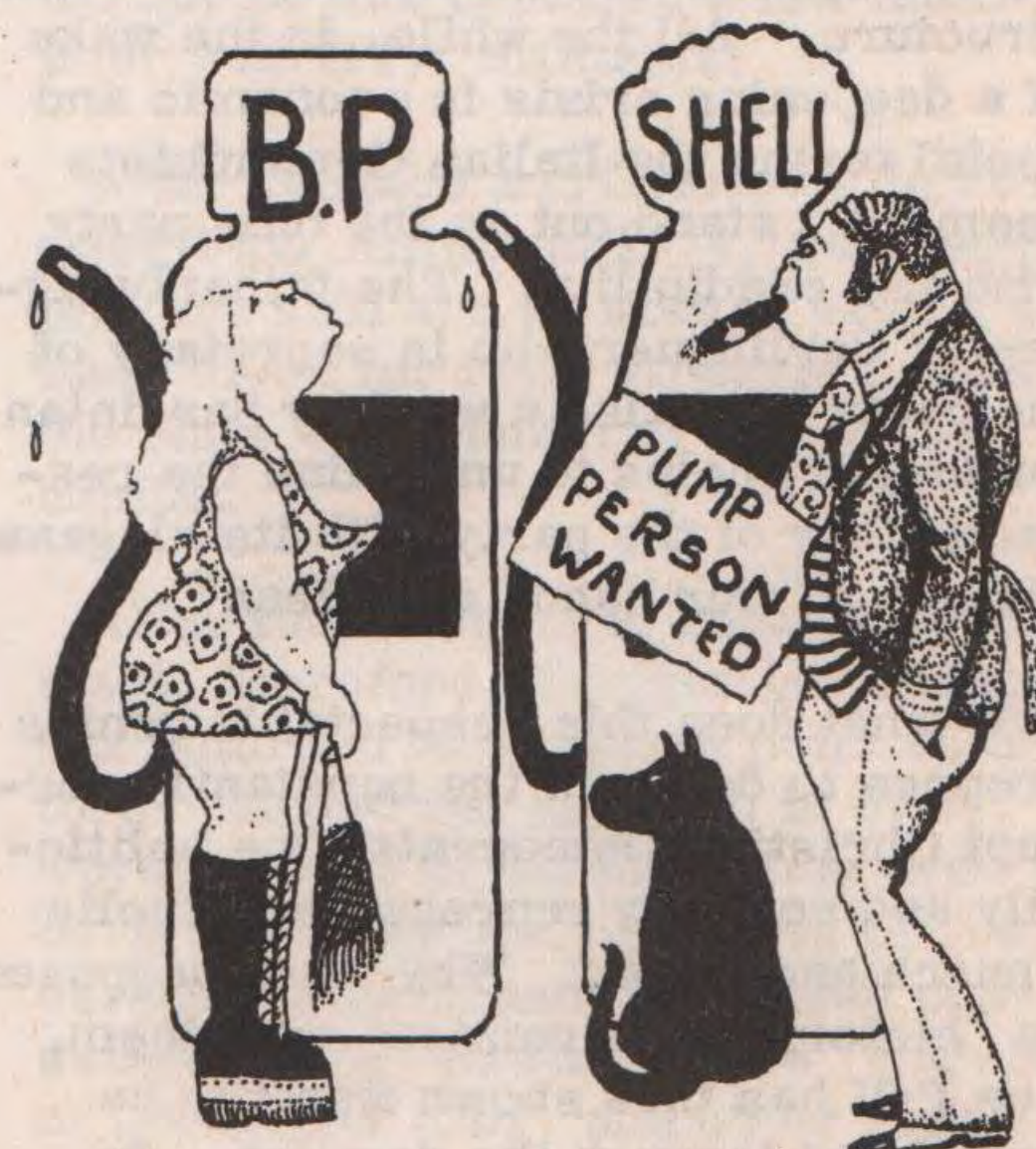
Jack Spratt.

STERILE INDIA

LAST WEEK the Indian government approved compulsory sterilisation with imprisonment of up to two years for husbands refusing the operation (vasectomy) within a certain period of after the birth of a third child. The government of Uttar Pradesh, Mrs. Gandhi's home state, will be the first Indian state to introduce the law. And "recalcitrant" husbands would be sterilised in prison if they resist to maintain their freedom of sex-life.

ANARCHY IN SCHOOLS

At the annual conference of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers in Blackpool Mr. Alan Poole, headmaster of Western Middle School, Mitcham, Surrey, sounded the prophecy that the behaviour among schoolchildren could lead to anarchy in our society, i.e., a society without any form of ruling and authority. That's just what we want!



"THE WAGES ARE AWFUL BUT THE BRIBES ARE MARVELLOUS"

RED ITALY

THESE PAST few years have been a period of considerable change for all the European Mediterranean countries. Portugal's fascist dictators were overthrown, the colonels of Greece fell after the Cyprus fiasco, and now the death of Franco has sparked off a period of intense popular struggle in Spain. In Italy, whilst the same dramatic changes witnessed in Portugal, Greece and Spain have not taken place, there have also been great changes and, indeed, a whole way of political life seems to be on the wane (or is it?).

The years 1968-69 were a period of great motivation in the universities and the factories. Much of this was spontaneous and several autonomous libertarian unions were formed. These movements virtually withered away as they became "politicized" into distinct parties with all the boring ideological arguments that this entailed. It was also the period of the State's "creation of tension" campaign probably masterminded by the ruling conservatives in the Christian Democrats and also involved the fascists, the secret service and the CIA. One notable victim of this era is Valpreda who was accused for the Piazza Fontana bomb for which fascists are now being tried, not to mention the high-ranking military men accused of protecting the perpetrators.

It was an excellent time for the confederated unions and the Italian Communist Party to present themselves as the organisations in favour of public order and their seeming respectability when compared to the Christian Democrat alternative (still in power for over 30 years) provided a useful vehicle for the recuperation of the spontaneity shown in 1968-69 by the workers and students.

Then the Watergate hearings in America led to investigations into the CIA activities in the USA and abroad, and this put the spotlight on CIA support for the Christian Democrats, the fascists, the liberals, the social-democrats and the socialists. Later the Lockheed payments to political leaders abroad again highlighted the corruption of the whole Christian Democratic structure. All the while, in the wake of a deepening crisis in economic and social terms the Italian Communists seemingly stand out as the only party with any credibility. The fatherly figure of Berlinguer who is secretary of the party (and also a wealthy Sardinian landowner) helps to underline the respectability of the party with its slogans claiming "Our hands are clean".

So what does this respectable genius propose to do about the constantly corrupt Christian Democrats, the politically and sexually repressive Catholic Church and so on? Why -- it proposes an "historic compromise" with them. The PCI has thus shown itself to be consistent through the decades. In 1936, exactly 14 years after the fascist takeover of power, Togliatti, the then secretary of the party, wrote an art-

icle entitled, "Appeal to the fascists".

In this he went to great lengths to explain the common interests of Communists and Fascists (appealing to the fascists to let the party join forces with them to obtain their common objectives. Immediately after the Second World War the question of the monarchy was a great issue between left and right and Togliatti announced prior to the referendum on the monarchy that his party was prepared to collaborate with the monarchy. Berlinguer is now, therefore, consistently following the party line.

Henry Kissinger, of course, has constantly threatened to destabilise the Italian economy (I don't think he needs to bother - it's already happened) if the Communists enter the Governmental arena. For a while the press in North West Europe has made hysterical claims about the nature of the PCI. Now, however, Berlinguer is an interesting man to interview (e.g. last Sunday's Observer interview) and comments are now made about how Berlinguer goes to church each Sunday, how nice the party officials are, and how moderate the party's policies are.

In Italy itself everyone is a "democratic anti-fascist" now. But then in Italy, when it was time to don a black shirt and shoot the partisans everybody did so. When it was time to vote for the Christian Democrats so as to keep out the Communists everyone did so, and now that it is time to vote Communist (or Socialist if they so wish) everyone will do so again. Indeed even the Christian Democrats who are noted for their honesty (or lack of it) are now a "democratic anti-fascist party with

roots in the Resistance". Critics of the State are referred to in the columns of Unità (the party's daily paper) and in other papers where PCI journalists write the articles, as "anarcho-fascist provocateurs" against whom "we must maintain constant democratic vigilance".

In the new Red Italy which will probably come about after the elections likely to take place this year a new Red "duce" will hold power. Instead of black shirts giving the raised arm salute we will see red handkerchiefs and flags held by people giving the raised fist salute (when the Party allows such extreme manifestations). Instead of the Duce Mussolini appealing to the image of Italy and the glories of the Ancient Roman Empire we will see Duce Berlinguer appealing to the image of the Italian People and the "Italian Republic Born in the Resistance". Our anarchist comrades will be safely locked up as being "fascist provocateurs" and hardly anyone abroad wants to be seen calling for the release of so-called "fascists". Quite how long it lasts will depend on whether the USA physically intervenes and if so on how the PCI will react. If American intervention takes place and is successful the likely result is an Italian equivalent of Pinochet at the very worst. In any case the losers will always be those people who have constantly struggled for a better, much freer life in Italy, and especially the 'lumpenproletariat' who are present in Italian cities in great numbers and who have always suffered from the inefficiency and repression of the Italian State.

So, is Italy really changing? When answering that question it must be borne in mind that Italy has always had two national religions -- one is the Roman Catholic Church and the other is the Italian Communist Party. The only change taking place is that the two religions are merging. Francesco.

.... PINK PORTUGAL

THE LATEST results in the Portuguese general election, as we go to press (26.4.76) indicate a small majority for Mario Soares' Socialist Party but no overall majority for any party. Whilst these last touches of make-up are being applied to the democratic face of the Portuguese State, we here publish some extracts from the editorial of the latest issue of Combate (a revolutionary syndicalist paper) which indicate what is happening in the rest of the Portuguese body politic:

BEHIND THE DEMOCRATIC MASK

ALL THROUGH February and March, there was a great upsurge in the demands being made by the workers in Portugal. What can this be attributed to?

With certain isolated exceptions, the workers were almost indifferent to the events of November 25th... but the repercussions of November 25th affected the workers' struggles. The attempted uprising fortified the State ap-

paratus by allowing it to implement more uniform control and more general planning of the economy, and by facilitating purges in various ministries, especially in the centres of communication. The various programmes of State capitalism were clarified, and the more "radical" programmes lost ground.

The course taken by the new State apparatus was not immediately obvious and when later, along with the freezing of collective bargaining in various sectors, there came the decrees allowing price rises (especially in food and transport), these measures did not provoke the immediate opposition of the workers.

Such a victory by one sector of the State apparatus requires two basic conditions. In the first place it requires that the other programmes of State capitalism be controlled (or at least modified) and that's why we have seen the purging in various ministries (in particular, Agriculture) of technocrats who might question directives...

But more especially, this victory requires firm control of workers' organizations. The various searches made on co-operatives, factories and workers' organizations, as well as the continual display of strength by the GNR (Republican National Guard) and the PSP are meant to warn and frighten the workers, and are an attempt to get them to accept the new "democratic" direction.

The deficit on the balance of payments and external loans necessitate a controlled taxation by inflation. The State, in an attempt to anticipate workers' reactions, is advancing cautiously, decreeing many of the increases weeks in advance of the real raising of prices, so that workers only begin to feel the increase many weeks later. The wage increases which the workers succeeded in imposing in previous struggles have been reduced to nothing. Economically, for many workers, the situation is similar to, if not worse than, that which prevailed in April 1974.

Thus strengthened, the State apparatus finds itself in a better position to plan and control the economy. For one thing it can manipulate the means of communication against certain workers' struggles, highlighting divisions and trying to manipulate public opinion against these struggles. The nurses' struggle (in which the State appealed for a return to the "Florence Nightingale" spirit, conveniently forgetting the nurses' situation of being paid workers) is one case. A more striking example is Sanimar, where the GNR occupied the factory and sealed the gates when the workers rejected the new management committee nominated by the State. Similarly the prohibition of further occupations of land (when only 60% of the Latifundios [large estates] have been occupied) is more an attempt to control those estates that have already been occupied. The occupations carried out by reapers in Salvaterra near Benavente, which got little news coverage, were broken by the GNR in an attempt to turn the reapers against already occupied properties and thus control them. This is how the Government sets one section of workers against another to strengthen its own control.

This policy is intended to strengthen the State's control over self-managed factories and co-operatives and force them to accept central planning carried out by the State. It is an attempt to mark time whilst the State cannot increase its hegemony over these bodies.

The delay in the granting of State funds to certain sectors where the owners are not in a position to pay back wages, or the 13th month that workers had managed to impose, has in its turn forced the workers to struggle against the State, since they understand that the planning of the economy finally rests with the State.

In those sectors of the economy which the State intends to reorganize or to plan on a larger scale, we are witnessing its intervention, firstly in the acceptance or non-acceptance of administrations (private bosses or workers' management), and secondly in the con-

cession of loans and the payment of arrears of wages. This is particularly obvious in sectors like Tourism (in the loans to Torrala, and in the international agreements about entry into Portugal of foreign tourists) as well as in the sectors it needs to control like Energy (Petrocal) or Transport (Estafania). The sectors which the government does not intend to develop for the moment, are consigned to almost total indifference.

In the present strike wave, we can see the State making a selection, rejecting certain demands and accepting others. Why? Because the task of planning and reorganization of the economy is in the hands of the State, and it is the State which can play one sector against another, ignoring the less important sectors according to the immediate needs of planning.

Thus, in the offensive unleashed by private firms, we note that the government has shelved 128 enquiries, to be decided within the general structure of the economy. . . The decisions taken have nothing, in general, to do with the political past of the private bosses, but with the immediate needs of planning and management. It is this, essentially, which is not understood by some of the leftist parties, when they pose the alternative, "fascism or socialism". The State is pragmatic and certain cases are considered in terms of the economy as a whole and not as a "conspiracy to facilitate the return of

the bosses" or in terms of reprivatizations.

The State has been forced to intervene in certain businesses where foreign control is strong (Timex, Firestone, Conlus, etc.) to maintain good external relations and to secure foreign loans. In these cases State planning is subordinated to the more pressing need to secure loans.

The reply of the workers to this strengthening of State capitalism has spread and intensified. New forms of struggle have developed and the workers have felt the necessity to develop new forms of solidarity and unity. Thus in many of the struggles which are now being blocked the workers go out into the streets to distribute communiques, whilst also reinforcing their links with other workplace struggles in the same region or the same industry, and strengthening their ties with the local population.

Neither the political parties, nor the unions, nor the Inter-commissions controlled by the various parties will succeed in controlling these diverse struggles, if the workers succeed in uniting and organizing themselves in a wider front. The need for this broader organizational base becomes more and more urgent as the State bureaucracy in its turn becomes stronger.

(Combate 39, 2nd-15th April, 1976).

POST-FRANCO REPRESSION

IN THE FIRST few days of March, the police opened fire on a crowd of strikers in Vitoria with tear-gas bombs, and killed four people. Following this three other workers were killed during demonstrations and strikes in Basauri (Biscay), Elda (Alicante), and Tarragona, bringing the total of people killed by police repression to seven in three weeks.

The government then started on a new round of arrests on both political and union activists. Meanwhile, the position of political prisoners in Spain was made clear by the events surrounding the mass break-out from Segovia prison. Whilst the Fraga-Arias government talks about its wonderful plans for democracy, no real amnesty has been granted. All the detainees who were in prison under Franco are still there.

The prisoners of Segovia who already had many years of imprisonment behind them, took their chance. But beyond taking their chance, their escape demonstrated to international opinion that the post-Franco regime, whilst it may be momentarily tolerant to opposition, still retains the repressive system intact.

The Groupe de Jeunesse Cenetistes reports in the latest issue of Le Combate Syndicaliste the manhunt organised after the escape is a good demonstration of the Spanish government's

determination to reduce "politicos" to silence.

There were many injured in the shoot-outs and one death: that of Oriol Sole Sugranyes, an anarchist militant arrested with Pons Llobet at Bellver de la Cerdanya on 11 September 1973 after a shoot-out with the Guardia Civil. They were tried in the summer of 1974 and Oriol Sole was sentenced to 48 years in prison. Detained until recently in the "Model" prison of Barcelona, he was transferred to Segovia prison where Pons Llobet was already incarcerated. Pons Llobet escaped too but he was captured a few hours later with ETA militants.

After Delgado and Granados in 1963, after Puig Antich in 1974, the anarchists are still and as always paying with their blood for their struggle against the State - Francoist or not - and capital.

After four months of regal government, therefore, the Spanish situation has returned to the same point as before; indeed the situation is even worse, since in the meantime even the derisory hopes and promises of "democratic" government have been consumed and frustrated. The "Warriors of Christ the King" and other right-wing extremist groups have returned to making threats, carrying out beat-

(cont on p.6)

GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST ZIONISM

THE MIDDLE East Research and Action Group (MERAG), which was established in London in 1973, describes itself as a "non-violent libertarian organisation".* Its aim is to present a libertarian focus on Middle East issues in general and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. This means, according to Merag, a rejection of the "continued existence of exclusive nation-states" and therefore of both Jewish Zionism and Arab nationalism, and support of a "joint Jewish-Arab struggle for equal distribution of available resources and equality of human, civil and political rights to all individuals and communities".

The MERAG group, many of whom are of Jewish origin, are currently involved in a campaign to urge other people of Jewish origin to renounce their right to automatic citizenship in Israel under the Law of Return passed by the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, in 1950. Although, Merag says, people should have the freedom to live where

they choose, a non-Israeli Jew who takes up Israeli citizenship under the present circumstances of Israeli occupation actively supports the dispossession of the Palestinians.

One of Merag's latest activities was participation in a 48-hour vigil in Kensington High Street, London between March 28-30, which also included apart from many Arab groups, the Israeli Socialist Revolutionary Action Committee. The vigil was timed to coincide with the "Day of the Land" (Yom Al-Ard), the general strike of Palestinian Arabs together with anti-Zionist Israeli Jews, which took place in Israel and the occupied territories on 30 March. The bulletin issued by the Ad-Hoc Committee in Support of the Popular Struggle in Palestine against Zionism, which organised the vigil, described the situation as follows:

"The strike is the latest manifestation of continuing resistance to Zion-

ism in Palestine, and comes in the wake of nearly two months of violent confrontations between demonstrating Palestinians and occupation forces. The Zionist state of Israel is built on the policy of the expropriation of Arab land for the purpose of exclusively Zionist settlement. In some cases, as in 1948 and 1967, this involved mass expulsions. Thus, as a result, more than half of the Palestinian people are forced to live in exile.

"Today, the remaining Palestinian population of Israel and the occupied territories are confronted with the prospect of further land-grabbing and displacement. The current target of the Israeli authorities within pre-1967 borders is Galilee, a fertile area of northern Palestine, with 50%-60% Arab population. In the occupied territories, in addition to the already existing 54 settlements, numerous new exclusively Jewish settlements are planned or are under construction on Arab land."

On 1 March the cabinet approved plans to take over 1500 acres of land used by Arabs in the north of Galilee; a further 100 acres in southern Galilee for an army training zone and another 375,000 acres of desert land in the Negev, used by the Bedouin tribes.

As we know, the general strike, first significant act of resistance of Arabs in Israel against the Israeli government, was brutally suppressed. Several people were killed, scores of Arabs were sacked from their factories and workplaces, and several hundred arrests were made, among those arrested being several anti-Zionist Jews. Since then the authorities have imported new riot gear from the USA, including teargas grenades and powerful teargas cannons.

But the strike has drawn attention to this one encouraging factor -- the growing if still very small movement among Israeli Jews of solidarity with the Arab population. The main elements of Jewish anti-Zionism would appear to be libertarian social revolutionary groups, members of Matzpen Marxist and members of the Israeli communist party, Rakali, as well as individuals -- writers, journalists, etc. and film producers like Simon Louvish and Uri Davis who made the film "To Live in Freedom--Israelis and Palestinians in Israel-Palestine", in 1972. There are also signs of growing disaffection among Israeli conscripts, like Daniel Peleg, who was brought to trial a few days after the strike for refusing to take part in the suppression of demonstrators in Ramallah. Other signs of solidarity between the two peoples were shown in declarations by the National Committee for the Defence of Arab Land, which called for the mutual respect of equal rights between Arab and Jew, and an anti-militarist, anti-police advertisement placed in one newspaper by the Regional Committee of Arab Students, and signed by 32 Jewish Israeli schoolchildren. The

POST-FRANCO REPRESSION

(cont from P.5)

ings and attempting to blow up journals and other organisations. Journalists who annoy them have been favourite targets of theirs lately. They have beaten up in the streets Carlos Sanchez Costa of the Diario de Barcelona, they have kidnapped and tortured Martinez Soler, editor of Doblón, and they have sent letter bombs to editorial offices (of Cambio 16). The police, as always, ignore these incidents, and the government also helps by placing a heavy hand on the press, by the dispensing of orders to arrest and giving out of fines, and by convicting journalists who refuse to reveal the sources of their articles. On 18th March journalists held demonstrations on the streets of Madrid and Barcelona to demand an authentic freedom of the press and the right of professional secrecy. On banners and boards they held aloft photographs of their colleague Martinez Soler with his face disfigured by blows and still blinded from the insecticide spray which his aggressors had sprayed into his eyes.

This blatantly repressive "about turn" has caused great embarrassment to minister for the interior Manuel Fraga Iribarne, who had entered the Arias Navarro government proudly claiming that he would qualify it in a reformist and "European" manner. Fraga had promised reforms and a hard hand against those who could not wait for them with patience. In the meantime Fraga deluded himself that he was giving a liberal veneer to the government with the substitution of the odd prefect here and there and the odd secret circular recommending the police to mistreat demonstrators a bit less and to close an eye to illegal meetings. What he had not accounted for was the double pressures of the struggles for higher pay and the mobilization of the people for amnesty and political freedoms. From January onwards,

with the strike of the tube drivers in Madrid, a season of conflicts has got under way which have become harder and larger, which has laid bare the grim face of repression of the regime, and has driven judges and police towards their old ways. With the conflicts between reformists and conservatives in the government it is not known how long Fraga will last as minister for the interior.

The army still remains the hub of a precarious equilibrium. Almost any move by the conservatives and the other right wing ultras in the government intended to fortify the pure and simple francoist system has firstly to receive the consent of the captain generals who control the regions and from others in the high military hierarchy. In such instances there is always the risk for the extreme right of dangerous reactions in the middle ranks of the military where many officers in charge of various sections are not insensitive to "democratic instances" (as the Communists love to say). However, to show whose hands the trigger still lies there was the sentence of 4 to 8 years on seven officers accused of taking part in the military democratic union at their "trial" on the 10th of March.

However, any real change for freedom in Spain will take place with the efforts of the people and not through "democratic instances" in the military nor through the futile struggles between reformists and conservatives in this or any government, nor through the taking of power by some "united democratic front". Whatever the colour of their banners their solutions always, always further repression. Anarchists and libertarians have never benefitted from Fraga's pretences of amnesties and this has never bothered the main beneficiaries who are the card-carrying Communists and other reformists.

N. S.

NUCLEAR OUTLAW

THE STOCKHOLM International Peace Research Institute has published a report: The Law of War and Dubious Weapons, stating that weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, must be outlawed as soon as possible. The report argues that what is urgently needed is clarification on an agreed international basis of what constitutes the "minimum standard of humanity applicable in war". And any weapon which is seen to violate that standard "should be officially prohibited".

Apart from nuclear weapons the report lists environmental weapons, e.g. those used during the Vietnam war to destroy crops and agricultural productivity, geophysical and biological weapons, delayed-action and chemical weapons, and high-velocity and incendiary fragmentation devices including flechettes.

To outlaw some weapons, obviously the most dangerous ones, and to allow others to be still existent in the line as embodied in the Geneva and Hague conventions, does not cover up the fact that war is still accepted as a "legitimate" means of "national security" and "military strategy" requires it.

It is sheer ridiculousness to issue a report demanding the prohibition of certain weapons in fear for the survival of humanity on the one hand while permitting smaller devices on the other.

The report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute clearly shows its reformist character. Instead of demanding the prohibition and abolition of all kinds of weapons, a certain category of weapons which might be useful to "defend" the ruling classes in power is not considered as a threat to the minimum standard of humanity. The liberal minded peace-maker does not want to give up the

(Cont. From P. 6)

schoolchildren's demonstrations in East Jerusalem, Nablus, Ramallah and other West Bank towns were suppressed by police truncheons, other children forcibly thrown out of the schools they were occupying, and some taken for interrogation.

The anti-Zionist movement is clearly made up of disparate elements politically, and many of them, to judge from the statements issued around the subject of the strike, show no anti-statist feelings as such. Nevertheless one hopes that the general strike of 30 March and its cruel sequence will prove significant in the building up of a revolutionary movement of solidarity between the two peoples.

*MERAG, 5 Caledonian Road,
London, N.1.

idea of having weapons. Because they still cling to the outdated belief that offensive aggression is an inborn instinct. And they back up their belief by all kinds of academic hypotheses. Offensive aggression is the result of education, learning from models and socio-economic environmental conditions, but definitely not inborn. As an anarchist I demand abolition of all weapons, nuclear ones and so-called "humanitarian" ones. I do not want to take part in oppression and violence.

And an anarchist society which demands weapons will not be an anarchist one.

ONLY. . . THE FRENCH PUBLIC ORDER

RAIDS BY French police carried out as in the dark days of the Algerian war and during the German occupation resulted in the arbitrary deportation of sixteen immigrant workers.

The raids took place in Northern Paris, Nanterre, St. Quex, and St. Denis. These are all areas where many immigrants have been rehoused in specially built flats. After recent rent increases most tenants have been refusing to pay. Therefore the raids were ordered by the French Interior Ministry because of "illegal acts against the public order".

It starts all over again. Racism and the "growing concern for law and order" by the ruling class, shared by much of the brainwashed public. In Germany the latent fascism celebrated a new spring and comes into the open again, backed up by "law and order". In France the oppression of the foreigner and the critical individual is becoming more and more brutal and vicious. In Britain fascism presents itself in the most subtle forms of all. Under the guise of tolerance the individual is pushed around to serve the king-pins of the United Kingdom of socio-economic oppression and exploitation.

Day by day we are confronted with more and more events indicating a reincarnation of fascism.

Where will it lead to? Again to "euthanasia", to concentration camps, to slaughter of minorities, to . . . ?

If we are to be anarchists we should raise our voices now to fight the reincarnation of fascism in France, Germany, India. . . and Britain.

Abraham.

LETTER

MUTUAL AID

Dear Editors,

Abraham (April 17) condemns "the egocentric thoughts of private- and state-capitalist systems". This is a common, but unsubstantiated, socialist criticism. Unfortunately for the socialists, however, the apologists for these systems do not put forward, in public at least, egoistic justifications for

them. (The followers of Ayn Rand are exceptions, but they are concerned to justify a future utopia of pure laissez-faire capitalism, not any particular present system.) Such apologists, even Enoch Powell, believe that at some point individual interests must give way before the "interest" of the "Nation", "State", "Community", or some other abstraction.

Mutual aid, as described by Kropotkin, is purportedly a biological phenomenon. If this is the case, then there is no need to turn it into a moral imperative. It will manifest itself in every type of human grouping, including capitalist ones, as Abraham himself point out. I do not see that anarchism has anything to do with "mutual aid" as such. Its purpose is to negate the legitimacy of any kind of authority over the individual. What the anarchist does after that, compete, co-operate, or isolate, is entirely up to him or her. Anarchism is an individualism, not a socialism!

S. E. Parker.

PRESS FUND

8 - 21 APRIL

JARROW: M.B. 70p; LONDON S. & A.G. 50p; BERKELEY, Calif.: A.G. £5.50; LONDON SW18: A.H. 85p; WOLVERHAMPTON: J.L. £2; J.K.W. 20p; CHAUMONT: M. & F.S. £1; STOCKHOLM: O.H. £1; COLCHESTER: T.O. £2.70; Calif. ITALIAN COMRADES per A.G. Sacramento: £42.50*; BANGOR, N.I.: J.T. £10; GLASGOW: A.J. 30p; Tom: 40p; Co. KERRY: L.C. £1,

TOTAL: £ 68.65

Previously acknowledged £ 391.03

TOTAL TO DATE: £ 459.68

*We are asked to add this information:

At a gathering at Negri's on April 10, a total of \$785 was collected and divided as follows: Rivista Anarchica \$100, L'Internazionale \$100, Volontsi \$100, Political Victims in Spain \$200, Vittime Politiche Italiane \$100, The Match \$100, Freedom \$35.

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WE WELCOME news, reviews, letters articles. Latest date for receipt of copy for next Review is Monday 3 May, news section Monday 10 May (and receipt by Thurs 6th is more helpful).

NEXT DESPATCHING date for FREEDOM is Thursday 13 May. Come and help from 2 pm onwards. You are welcome each Thursday afternoon to early evening for informal get-together and folding session.

CONTACT

MEETINGS

Tues. 4 May British Withdrawal from N. Ireland Campaign London meeting, 7.30 pm at 6 Endsleigh St. WC1.

Nottingham Sat. 22 May national mtg. at Int. Community Centre, 61B Mansfield Rd. (Creche). Details of both from BWNIC c/o 5 Caledonian Rd. London N.1.

EAST LONDON Libertarian Group next mtg. Wed. May 5 at 123 Lathom Rd. E.6. Start 8 pm. Discussion on organisation.

Fri. 7 May London SW1. "Religious opposition to sexual freedom". Diane Munday, Renée Short, Barbara Smoker and other. Caxton Hall (nearest tube St. James's Pk.) Details from National Secular Society, 698 Holloway Rd., N.19 (tel. 01-272 1266).

Wed. 12 May SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS (Drug Dependents Care Group) 7.30 pm at Housmans Bookshop basement (side door) 5 Caledonian Rd. N.1 Open to all.

BRISTOL Sat 19 June Campaign Against Arms Trade, national mtg. 11 am-6 pm at Friends Meeting House Hampton Road, (Creche) Details from CAAT, 5 Caledonian Rd. London N1. SOUTH-EAST London Libertarians Group meets Wednesdays. Contact Georgina Phone 852 6323

NORTH WEST ANARCHIST FEDERATION

ANARCHISM

Participation NOT Representation

a free public meeting at

REGENCY HALL BLACKBURN

SATURDAY 8th. MAY 7.30pm.

speakers, books, discussions and music from:
'inner space' (free jazz)

HYDE PARK Speakers Corner (Marble Arch). Anarchist Forum alternate Sundays 1 pm. Speakers, listeners & hecklers welcomed.

GROUPS

BATH anarchists & non-violent activists contact Banana, c/o Students Union, The University, Claverton Down, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM anarchists contact Bob Prew, 49C Trafalgar Rd. Moseley, Birmingham 19.

BOLTON anarchists contact 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton (tel. 387516)
CORBY anarchists write 7 Cresswell Walk, Corby, Northants NN1 2H
COVENTRY. Peter Corne c/o Students Union, Univ. of Warwick, Cov'y.
DUNDEE. Alistair Dempster, c/o Students Union, Airlie Place, Dundee.
DURHAM Martin Spence, 17 Avenue Road, High Shincliffe, Durham
EDINBURGH Bob Gibson, 7 Union Rd
FIFE - see West Fife

GLASGOW group c/o A. Ross, 17 Bute Gardens, Hillhead, Libertarian Circle last Tuesday of every month
HARROW write Chris Rosner, 20 Trescoe Gardens, Rayners Lane, Harrow HA2 9TB

IRELAND Libertarian Communists contact Alan MacSimoin, 4 Ard Lui Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

LEEDS anarchists contact Cahal Mc Laughlin, 12 Brudenell Grove, Leeds

LEICESTER anarchist group contact Peter & Jean Miller, 41 Norman St. Leicester (tel. 549 652).

LEICESTER Libertarian Circle meets Thursdays at Black Flag Bookshop, 1 Wilne St. Leicester.

OXFORD c/o Jude, 38 Hurst St.

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

STIRLING write Nick Sherington, 28 Churchill Drive, Bridge of Allan

WEST FIFE write John Denning, 164

RALF STEIN TRIAL

RALF STEIN, whose trial began on 30th March in Cologne, was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment, but for the moment has been released.

A full account will be given in our next issue.

Apin Crescent, Dunfermline
Overseas

AUSTRALIA. Canberra anarchist gp. 32/4 Condomine Court, Turner-Camil 2801. Melbourne Martin Jones Peters, c/o Dept. of Philosophy, Monash University, Melbourne.

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

PEOPLE/PUBLICATIONS &c.

WANTED original IWW posters from Canada, U.S.A., Cuba, Latin America, West Indies, Australia & New Zealand. State condition, size, black-&-white or colour, to Jack K. Masson, Dept. of Political Science, Univ. of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada Schooling

Anyone in Richmond/East Sheen/Putney areas got any ideas/information about educating at home/free schools etc. as an alternative to Secondary Schools for an 11-year-old girl. Please write Jill, c/o Joan Harmer, 6 Melbury House, Fentimans Road, London SW8.

We are a Swedish/English family with children 11, 7 and 1½ years old, living at present in Sweden, sick of Swedish state school authority and hoping to move to Britain. We need to find a school which believes in the right of children to decide, where they have the freedom to grow and learn together, and where work makes sense. Anybody willing to help us please write to: Edwards, Box 6, Vansbro, 78050 Sweden.

IS ANYBODY interested to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Bakunin's death? Any ideas? Contact Karl Cordell, 40 Elm Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1AW

SOLIDARITY WITH THE LIBERTARIANS OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

A series of meetings is being organised throughout Britain to present
THE LIBERTARIAN ALTERNATIVES IN SPAIN & PORTUGAL TODAY

Starting with AN INTERNATIONAL MAY DAY CELEBRATION IN HYDE PARK, with picnic, entertainment, music, etc. from 2pm to 5pm
At 5pm: PUBLIC MEETING at SPEAKERS' CORNER, with INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS

The SPAIN/PORTUGAL MEETINGS will be held (in English) as follows:

Sunday, 2 May OXFORD	8pm at The Cape of Good Hope, The Plain, Oxford Contact: Ian Gallagher, 38 Hurst Street, Oxford
Monday, 3 May WARWICK university	7.30pm at The Students' Union, Warwick University Contact: Pete Corne, 48 Spencer Ave., Earlsdon Coventry
Tuesday, 4 May KEELE university	12.30 noon at The Students' Union, Keele University Contact: Mark Treece, 31 Shaw Street, Newcastle under Lyme
Tuesday, 4 May MANCHESTER	8pm at The Lass o' Gourie, Charles St. (off Oxford Road) Contact: SWF, c/o Grassroots, 109 Oxford Road, M1 7DU
Wednesday, 5 May DURHAM	Room 147, Elvet Riverside 1, New Elvet, Durham City Contact: Martin Spence, 17 Avenue St., High Shincliffe, Durham
Thursday, 6 May SHEFFIELD	For details - Jenny Mock & Malcolm Dixon, 4 Havelock Square, Sheffield
Friday, 7 May LEICESTER	The Commonwealth Centre, Belgrave Gate, Leicester Contact: Peter Miller, 41 Norman St., Leicester
Saturday, 8 May LONDON	10.30am - 5pm. TEACH-IN at the LSE, Houghton St, WC2 Contact: CBA, 84b Whitechapel High St, E1 (247-9249)

Organised by the Libertarian Iberia Committee, with comrades from Black Flag, SWF, AWA, Solidarity and the CBA -- address above.

We desperately need FUNDS to pay travelling expenses of 4 comrades!
All kinds of help gratefully accepted.

WISDOM OF A MAD WOMAN

MASPERO's present edition of the memoirs of Louise Michel* is the first to be published since 1886 (her history of the Commune was republished for the Commune's centenary in 1971). Then, as the cover to the new edition points out, her editor presented her as follows: "For the vast majority of the public, Made-moiselle Louise Michel is a sort of bogey, an ogress, a monster with the face of a human being and with a disposition for fire, petrol and dynamite ..."

The description of her at the 1871 trial in the *Gazette des Tribunaux* depicts her as a woman dressed entirely in black, fanatic, exalted, with features that reveal an "extreme hardness" and whose answers from the dock are so rash and so uncompromising that they cause a "deep emotion in the auditorium." Since then, and perhaps even for her fellow anarchists, the image has remained predominantly that of the *Gazette*. One thinks of her above all as a great militant. One remembers especially her fiery challenge: "If you are not cowards, kill me."

This untidy and sometimes splendid book, spattered with verse, turning constantly back and forth on its tracks, does something to adjust the perspective. It reflects the ardour of the revolutionary but also her sense of humour, and proportion. Louise Michel mentions the advantages of prison quiet and solitude as well as its pains and humiliations. The cruel voyage of deportation inspires some of her best verse, and is superbly described. Her republican ideas are applied not only with fire and mortar, but with a playful malice and a wild fantasy. Indeed, though she writes Revolution near religiously, with a capital R, it grows increasingly difficult as one reads on, to confine the real woman to the image of the fanatical dynamitarde. Attempts to exalt the experience of oppression or to make myths of the efforts to overcome it, only irritate her. "There is," she claims, "no heroism, there is only revolutionary duty and passion, which should not be made a virtue of any more than one should make a virtue of love or fanaticism."

Louise Michel was born at the crumbling castle of Vroncourt in Lorraine, illegitimate child of a small landed proprietor and a servant. She had a relatively free childhood and was encouraged to read. Taking up the hard life of a schoolteacher in Lorraine, then in Paris, she taught the Marseillaise to her small poor classes with a missionary zeal. Her schoolteacher friends, often miserably poor and consumptive, often, like herself, gifted but with no hope of recognition, made her a firm supporter of women's liberation (as did her later experience of prostitutes in prison). The collapse of the Commune, in which she played such an active part, was



followed by jail and deportation to New Caledonia. There, unlike many of the deportees, she supported the revolt of the Canaques against their imperialist masters and made a thorough nuisance of herself with the prison authorities. There too, enchanted by the forests, she became something of a naturalist. By the time she was allowed to return to Europe she was also an anarchist. The years of exile and imprisonment, though enough to break anyone's spirit, seem only to have increased her militancy. In 1883 she was sentenced to 6 years' "réclusion criminelle" for her leading part in a small demonstration of unemployed during the Paris bread riots - and was portrayed by the witnesses for the prosecution, as little less than a woman possessed.

In a way she was. Louise Michel aspired to be a poet, a writer, a composer. She often sent her poems to Victor Hugo who, in his turn, dedicated to her *Vireo Major*. As a child she wrote to him "pompously" of the "sweet tones" of her lute - a "horrible" and "barbarous" instrument made out of a plank of fir wood and some old guitar strings. When, as a schoolteacher involved in the struggle for women's freedom of expression, her neighbours were astonished and appalled at the savage sounds that issued from her room, she had to explain that she was composing a diabolical opera called "Le rêve des sabbats". This, involving a monstrous orchestra made up of every conceivable instrument from canons and harmonicas to harps, guitars, trumpets and 20 violins for the devils' choir, portrayed a geological convulsion of the earth, followed by an infernal war between Satan and Don Juan ... Not long afterwards the bombardment of the Commune found her playing out on some half ruined organ the symphony of Revolution. For the Canaques in New Caledonia she tried her hand at composing a savage music for palms, shells and bamboo (though she does not make it clear how well this was received). There was also an autobiographical novel called "La sagesse d'une folle" (The wisdom of a madwoman).

In her memoirs Louise Michel sets out to discover the reason for those actions of her life that some, certainly, called madness, others sublime altruism, others fanaticism or black magic. Her dismissal of the heroic image stems from her knowledge of herself as a romantic. That wild imagination so evident in her experiments in music and literature, also takes an aesthetic and sensual satisfact-

ion in extreme danger. To follow the struggle of the Commune as described by Louise Michel is to see it as a canvas in which the bitter, bloody facts of war are offset by a perverse splendour. It is in the massacres and lion hunts that Delacroix best demonstrates what he calls "the power to express the beautiful." Similarly Michel recalls the beauty of the clear night at the cemetery of Montmartre while the shells tore through the air, missing her by inches. Nothing, she says, was more horribly beautiful than the ravine through which one moonlit night in 1871 a file of prisoners, herself included, were led on their way from Montmartre to possible execution at Satory. ("They say I'm brave: it is that in the idea, in the mise en scène of danger, my artist's senses are roused and charmed; pictures of it remain in my thoughts, the horrors of the battle, like the songs.")

But if, unlike the painter, Michel is actually involved in the lion hunts and massacres, her participation owes less to the aesthetics of violence and death than to an outraged and quixotic sense of justice that is with her from Vroncourt. Rural poverty and cruelty filled her with revulsion. Such memories as the shooting of a parricide in a nearby village, or the decapitated goose, still walking across the blood-drenched yard, had, she believed, "multiple consequences" for her future life as a revolutionary, and in particular for her way of seeing revolution.

"People have often accused me of more solicitude for animals than people ... Why pity animals when reasonable beings are so unhappy?" But for Michel [who knew animals, and seems always to have been accompanied by at least a few cats] as for the earlier feminist, Wollstonecraft, their women's "revolt against the strong" makes them more sensitive to oppression in all its forms; justice and liberation must be nothing if not total. If the aftermath of the Commune, and the pits filled with the still agonising bodies of those the tired solidiers had failed to kill properly, kindle within her that unquenchable hatred of power that is to make her an anarchist and to bring her from exile to the friendship, among others, of Kropotkin and Reclus, are there not also the albatrosses of the "Virginie"? Suspended from their beaks so that the blood will not soil the whiteness of their plumage, striving till the last moment to keep their heads raised, the "expression of horror in their great eyes with their black lashes" will leave no less of an impression on her mind. Why must it be like this? Revolution,

*Mémoires, Louise Michel, Maspero, £ 4.50

for Louise Michel, is a freeing of the human consciousness, a sharpening of the imagination above all ...

Revolution, breaking like a butterfly from a chrysalis, is the leitmotiv of these memoirs, and the principle image that she uses. Revolution as the splendid flowering of artistic sensibility and social justice for man, woman and beast, and as the pursuit of science (freed, she adds half prophetically, from all "useless" research). Michel's view is poetic, flamboyant, mystical; her belief in its coming will never leave her. If the defeat of the Commune put an end to the hopes of her day, Michel unhesitatingly transferred her faith to posterity. "Like green fruit we shall serve only to fatten the soil, but those who follow will bring the seeds of justice and liberty."

Even if one is always tempted to agree with her, it is this optimism, this somewhat blind trust in progress that one may now find naive, as one may find surprising her uncritical support of the stand of the Commune's "majority". When, in fact, she comes to write her history it is for the more libertarian and socialist "minority" that she reserves her few veiled words of reproach. In the Committee of Public Safety, formed through the crisis of the beginning of May and the imminent fall of the fort of Issy, the "minority" saw the threat of a supreme dictatorship along old jacobin lines. Courbet, the painter and friend of Proudhon, expressed the need for a new kind of revolution. "...The terms Public Safety, Montagnards,

Girondins, Jacobins cannot be applied to a republican socialist movement. What we represent is the period that has passed between '93 and '71, with our own genius corresponding to our own particular character. It would seem to me all the more obvious that we are behaving like plagiarists and re-establishing to our detriment a terror that is out of keeping with our time. Let us use the terms suggested to us by our own Revolution."

Had the Commune survived, the apprehensions of the "minority" might well have proved justified. But they were not considered by



Burning the Guillotine
in the 11th Arrondissement

Louise Michel, at least on paper. Her history glides over the whole business by describing the Commune as divided between an "ardently revolutionary majority, and a socialist minority reasoning excessively at times for the time we had ..." And that is all. In her memoirs too there is no attempt to analyse this important factor in the Commune's history - which from an anarchist one could expect.

Perhaps one may find one reason for the reticence in her great personal loyalty to her old comrades-in-arms - to such as Théophile Ferré. Blanquist and supporter of the majority, it was to Ferré that this magnificent woman proposed herself as the assassin of Thiers, Ferré whom she cherished with an unrecognised love and to whom she dedicated one of her finest and most haunting poems, "Les Oeillettes Rouges." The loss of Ferré and his sister, Marie, and the mother to whom she was so devoted, are a constantly recurring theme. Despite the gaiety, the optimism, the fire, these memoirs leave us in the end with a sense of melancholy and loneliness, the debris of dreams unfulfilled. The last pages are no less than an invocation of death, and a parting thrust at her enemies, those who, dangerous and wicked as she was, had somehow never got round to despatching her with the rest.

"Be reassured, I shall never again be happy ... Courage has its limits, one only surpasses them when duty demands it."

Gillian

RIFRAFF

"An astonished eye looks out of the air
—To see the Poet singing there."

-- Lawrence Ferlinghetti.

OPEN EYE, OPEN HEART, Lawrence Ferlinghetti.
New Directions (90p).

FOR ALL the claims of publishers and public-poets : for all the publicity and pop-artists of poetry -- it is a minority interest, in print. But on LPs and in the secret places of the heart we listen and read and write our own poems. Whether we call them Song : Ballads : Love Letters or Suicide-Notes. We are involved in some way with the music of our soul and spirit.

Records released each week contain some extraordinary love songs: some rare political songs : and give us some of our most free moments of joy, happiness and pleasure. Music, being free, requires no verbal explanation or critical force of destruction.

Listen to Pablo Casals playing Cello; an instrument from the gods if you like? Listen to Joni Mitchell singing Don't Interrupt the Sorrow. Listen to the long ballad about gangster Joey Gallo on Bob Dylan's new LP Desire.

If you do not see the connection between free music, songs and poems; and the creation of a more permanent resistance to all political forms of usury and authority, then what hope is there for a climate of opinion which weakens the hold of those always and forever seeking power?

It is a mistake for politically 'active' people to place poetry, painting, song, dance, theatre, film, etcetera as unimportant or secondary when their effects on a personal level are difficult to assess but may be much more important in helping to free the person from leaning on newspapers/friends/husband/wife or family.

After some long time now of reading, writing and enjoying poems, there are still few poems by few poets that I get a

kick from, whereas there are many singers, songwriters and groups of musicians whose best work is imaginative beyond the wildest dreams of most of our acknowledged 'poets'. It may be that music will not get rid of our longlived institutions --but its soul and spirit is mainly anarchic, sensual, and far beyond the superficial effect of political propaganda in helping to strengthen hope and create some little confidence in one's own ability to do things for oneself. I think those of us who have carved out a little bit of space and time for ourselves : whether to write poems, sing songs, sit still drinking coffee, write books, play chess, watch people passing by...embracing bloody poverty but freely...we know how hard it is to become what we are! And for most people it is a struggle of hopelessness against schooling and family? So that our aims should be lowered to those of education and entertainment rather than slogans of revolution.

Lawrence Ferlinghetti has a new and lovely paperback of poems out : Open Eye, Open Heart, which may interest those who have as yet ignored poets as political animals.

Ferlinghetti has been an important catalyst through his publishing of the Pocketpoet series from City Lights -- both bookshop and publishers, in San Francisco. (He has published Denise Levertov, William Carlos Williams, Allen Ginsberg, Kenneth Patchen, to name a few.)

He has also contributed a body of work-poems (influenced by French Surrealists probably?) which are among the most significant political poems published in the English language this century. Within this collection are several poems first printed as broadsides, or in magazines, way back. (For example, I received copies of two broadsides, Berlin and A Parable Tirade after writing to him (in 1964) and explaining I wanted biographical details for a reading being organized which included some of his poems.)

A Parade Tirade is one of his finest satires/prose poems on the psychotic state of Amerika even then (Cuban Crisis days). Take this sample from it:-

Goodnight Ladies and good night nuns and priests and monks, who never march in Peace Parades...Protestants shouldn't protest The Holy Wars are over... Good night great mute poets and professors who only stand and wait and good night grandpa Ezra and good night reverend Eliot who also fabricated and abdicated ... Good night Good night sweet dreams crazy Karl

Marx I too wish the state would wither away (into a world without countries and their great draggy governments which aren't our ideas of communities of love) so good night old old comrades The good old days are gone forever. . . (1962)

Lawrence Ferlinghetti has also published a most signal and occasional magazine --look it out!-- Journal for the Protection Of All Beings of which (I think) there have been only three issues so far. No. 1 on the Bomb and its opposing artists/poets/people; No. 2 on Paris 1968 and No. 3 (?).

A Coney Island Of The Mind is a fine collection of his earlier poems (New Directions). But handy is his own pocket poet issue: Pictures Of A Gone World. Essential & Ecstatic. Funny & Disturbing.

Open Eye Open Heart contains an elegy which might be for any of our very major poets who get ignored, trampled on, degraded, imprisoned, exiled or simply sent mad. It is in fact An Elegy On The Death Of Kenneth Patchen.

There are poems self-explanatory: Forty Odd Questions For the Greek Regime And One Cry For Freedom; Alaska Pipe Dream; Las Vegas Tilt; A World Awash with Fascism & Fear; Several Surrealist Litanies; Where is Vietnam. . . and so on. He has some real affinity to Paul Eluard and Jacques Prevert, is an anarchist of the Living Theatre approach -- is pacifist too: and would be happy to be considered a most fortunate man to have spent some time in Paris in his younger days. He seems very much a friend of Kenneth Rexroth and Gary Snyder, two poets and wisemen, who also share a buddhist-like approach to the affairs of this world... with its killers and bombers. . . its spies and its informers . . . its liars and its traitors.

You may find this collection in good bookshops which have New Directions books (publisher James Laughlan). Seek it out. And beware the ignorant intellect who may tell you this is American jazz-poetry. It is; and all the better for coming from a committed anarchist. A Poet of the People indeed!

Dennis Gould

HAS ANARCHISM CHANGED ?

PART I (continued from last issue)

Woodcock describes "a modest revival of the anarchist movement along traditional lines" after the war, "but it was largely a reunion of veterans". He mentions the international congresses at Berne, Paris, and Carrara, but adds that they all "failed to produce a significant international cooperation among anarchists". He says that the 1950s was "a period of hibernation for anarchist ideas", and then comes to the point of dispute, the revival of the 1960s.

He sees two aspects of this revival. "First, there was a scholarly interest", as shown by the appearance of biographies of anarchists and histories of anarchism. He mentions the books by Alain Sergent and Claude Harmel in 1949, by Maitron in 1955 (the first edition actually appeared in 1951), by himself, by Joll, and by Guérin (the latter is described as "biased and restrictive but lively"). Secondly, "anarchism itself re-emerged -- in diluted as well as in neat forms -- as a rapidly growing political faith among young people, and especially among intellectuals and students, in many European and American countries".

He sees two origins of "the movement which one might call neo-anarchism" -- the American civil rights movement, and the British nuclear disarmament movement. He says little about the former, but quite a lot about the latter, presumably because it arouses echoes of his own experience twenty years before; and it is worth quoting what he says because it illus-

trates so well the weaknesses of his approach:

Some of the anarchist intellectuals and activists of the 1940s, like Herbert Read, Alex Comfort and Laurie Hislam, provided links between classic anarchism and the young people who flocked behind the banners of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and its more militant offshoot, the Committee of One Hundred. Within the Committee of One Hundred, as always happens when militant pacifism confronts a government irremediably set on warlike preparations, there was a spontaneous surge of anti-state feeling -- i.e. anarchist feeling still unnamed -- and of arguments for the direct action methods favoured by the anarchists. As a result, small groups of young people began to spring up all over Britain, without much consciousness of the traditions of the historic anarchist movement, and to ally themselves with its veterans who were still running Freedom.

He states that "the anarchists -- in the new sense as well as the old -- became a vocal and active element in British political life", though the only activities he mentions are the bombings of the Angry Brigade and the publication of the new magazine Anarchy, and the only contributors to the latter he mentions are Alan Sillitoe, Colin MacInnes and Maurice Cranston.

He then makes the extraordinary claim that, in the process which "made anarchism popular among the young", the "principal mediating figure was Aldous Huxley" as a precursor of the "counter-culture". He says that "the orthodox anarchists never accepted him", but doesn't say why; he says that his last novel Island "was the nearest any writer approached to an anarchist Utopia since William Morris wrote News from Nowhere", but doesn't say why Huxley's vision was so much inferior to Morris's.

He ends by saying that "where young British rebels in the 1930s joined the Communists, in the 1960s they were likely to become anarchists", but he makes no serious attempt to explain how this change came about. Nor is he very happy about the neo-anarchism of the 1960s:

At times, and particularly in the United States, the broadening appeal of libertarian ideas has also led to their adulteration, so that anarchism often appears as only one element in what can be described as a climate of rebellion, an insurrectionary frame of mind, rather than a new revolutionary ideology.

He goes on to say that neo-anarchism is "mingled with strains of Leninism and early Marxism, with traces of the unorthodox psychology not only of Reich but also of R. D. Laing, with memories of the communitarian movement of the American frontier days, and often with large ingredients of mysticism, neo-Buddhism and Tolstoyan Christianity". He decides that because of "this refusal to accept a definite theoretical line" none of the leaders of the libertarian movements of the 1960s "can in any complete sense be called an anarchist"; and he goes on:

In the rank and file of such movements there has been a spectrum of intellectual involvement that ranged from the rare convinced and knowledgeable anarchist to the many temporary adherents whose motivations were anarchic rather than anarchist, born of frustration rather than thought. It is significant that none of these movements produced a single theoretical work in the field of anarchist thought that is comparable to those produced in earlier periods by Proudhon, Kropotkin or even Herbert Read.

As if determined at least to convince himself, Woodcock pursues this line of argument further:

Such movements cannot in fact be called anarchist, since they do not fulfil the criteria we have already seen are necessary; those of presenting a consistent libertarian criticism of society as it is, a counter-vision of a possible just society, and a means to advance from one to the other.

And yet he agrees that "in all these movements, which reject

the old parties of the Left as strongly as the existing political structure, the appeal of anarchism was strong and comprehensible", and that "the anarchist rejection of the state, and the insistence on decentralism and grassroots responsibilities, have found a strong echo in a contemporary movement which demands that its democracy be not representative but participatory and that its action be direct".

At last he comes to 1968, and again it is worth quoting what he says because it illustrates so well the weakness of his approach:

The events of 1968 in France can indeed be regarded as typical of the spontaneous emergence of anarchist ideas and anarchist tactics in a situation where the actors for the most part do not regard themselves as anarchists and have little knowledge of anarchist history or of the classic libertarian writings. The ageing intellectuals who publicly represented anarchism in France played no part in inspiring the event. Certain dissident groups of anarchists were active, and there were anarchist elements among the Situationists and the leaders of the March 22 Movement.... The spectacle of the black flag of anarchism flying beside the red flag of socialism over the Sorbonne and the Bourse was in fact truly symbolic of the eclectic attitude towards revolutionary doctrines that inspired most of the student and worker rebels.

Revealingly, the only individual he mentions is Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who he has repeatedly attacked ever since 1968:

Cohn-Bendit betrayed the hollowness of his anarchist pretensions when he declared at the height of the Paris troubles: "We demand freedom of expression inside the faculty, but we refuse it to the pro-Americans." In other words, liberty for some, but for others a refusal of freedom.

Nevertheless he suggests that "it was among the uncelebrated rank and file of the movement of May 1968 that the anarchist spirit often appeared in its purest forms".

He then describes the Provos and Kabouters of Holland, mentioning without comment that the latter won five seats on the Amsterdam city council in 1970; and the Gandhian movement in India, as represented by Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan, concluding that the gramdam campaign is "perhaps the most extensive commitment to basic anarchist ideas in the contemporary world".

He repeats the argument of 1968 about the new age and class composition of anarchism:

One of the striking aspects of contemporary neo-anarchism -- and even of traditional anarchism in so far as the old movement has expanded (which it has certainly done in Britain) as a result of current trends -- is that it has become, like so many modern protest movements, a trend of the young and especially of the middle-class young.

He adds that "this tendency was evident even at the beginning of the 1960s", and he quotes the evidence of the FREEDOM readership survey. But here he makes a highly significant mistake -- he dates the survey in 1962, when he had finished his book, but its correct date is 1960, before he had begun his book. No doubt anarchism changed as it revived, but both the change and the revival had begun before he claimed that the surviving anarchist movement was "only the ghost of the historical anarchist movement". Far from being "true when it was written in 1960", his claim was already untrue in 1960 and it has become more untrue ever since. In my next article I shall argue that both the old and the new thesis are wrong, and that the best-known historian of anarchism has misunderstood both the fate of the historical movement and the rise of the contemporary movement.

[to be continued] N. W.

AROUND THE GALLERIES

D.O.A.

THE ARTS OF ISLAM. Hayward Gallery
GIORGIO DI CHIRICO. Wildenstein Gallery
ALLEN JONES and DAVID HOCKNEY The Waddington

OIL IS MONEY, and as it spews out of the Middle East it carries with it all the comedy and corruption that made the lives of the American oil barons, and that of the reservations American Indians who struck oil every time they dug a hole for a shit, required reading for we the dispossessed. There will be those who would argue that I adopt a moral stand purely from jealousy, and comrades they are correct. All the bribery of political clerks in office, all the expensive accoutrements of wealth and bad taste, all the building of universities for the intellectual second rate, and all the mass buying of dead culture in paint, marble and wood has now, and is now, being acted out by the Middle East sheiks and the shereefs who can now afford to have their symbolic loaf of bread and jug of wine cast in gold while their hired muezzin now howls the hours of prayer from a penthouse on the roof of a Hilton Hotel.

But there comes a time when so much paper money is created that it is literally impossible for a single individual to spend it, for oil cannot be translated into food or human labour merely by signing a cheque, and a £ 1,000,000,000 is in the end no more than an entry in a ledger. Therefore, as with the American oil barons, we now have in place of America the Beautiful by courtesy of United States Oil, The Arts of Islam at the Hayward Gallery. It is claimed, and probably correctly, that this is the greatest Islamic exhibition held in the West since the Munich exhibition of 1910, and the Art Establishment has fallen flat on its face, facing East, to prove the point. Yet, for my part, I found it tawdry, uninspired and unworthy of the high cost of viewing: £ 4.00 for a catalogue, 60 p. for admission, plus travelling fare (all day Monday, and 6-8 Tuesday to Friday, admission is 10 p.)

What cannot be ignored is the magnificent PR job that has managed to fill every private, public and commercial building with Middle Eastern artifacts, with the result that no man is safe. In Sothebys in Bond Street one stood among the dealers and watched as a 14th century Persian manuscript of Firdausi's "Shamnama" was knocked down for £ 26,000, a leaf from a copy of the Akbarnama by Fazl painted for the Emperor Akbar 300 years ago for £ 22,000 and £ 40,000 paid by Talasazan of Teheran for a

Qajar copper rose water set painted in polychrome enamel, and all within minutes of being offered for sale. And all this, comrades, at a time when the politicians are demanding that a £ 30.00 a week worker shall ask for no more than 90 pence increase on his or her gross weekly wage.

From "Science and Technology in Islam" at the Science Museum, and to the sound of Mahmud Mirza strumming the sitar with a backing by Latif Ahmed Khan in the Purcell Room oasis within the desert of the Festival Hall, it is back to the Hayward for the official opening by Brenda, Queen Elizabeth II. In the context of this exhibition it should be recorded that Shah an Shar Arya Mehr of Iran and the Iran Bastan Museum have failed to contribute at least 33 advertised goodies, and that of the 552 or so exhibits, 65 came from private and public collections within Britain, and the point that I am making, comrades, is this that if you cannot afford £ 5.00, then wait until this exhibition is over and your own contributions have been returned to our public collections, and you can view it freely and at leisure.

Islamic culture as offered by all the exhibitions touted around London is purely hedonistic, and the acres of carpets that hang or hung from the walls of the Hayward Gallery or top people's auction houses is as with the decorations on every bowl, basin or dagger handle, a reiteration of a single motif, twisting and curling on and on into a mind deadening infinity. Islam, so the scholars tell me, literally means submission to the will of one God, Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, and the followers of Muhammad the Prophet carried the creed of faith, prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage with fire and sword into Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Spain and Northern India as did the card carrying followers of Christ. It is true that in the wake of the killing hordes of Islamic warriors came the camp followers hawking justice, toleration, learning and the arts, but this is not because of Islam but in spite of it, for these things always flourish whenever any power has established brute control over a populace, and the Crusaders may have been gangster saints killing and looting in the name of Christ, yet they in their turn acted as muscle men for an age that produced poetry and prose that ranks among the world's great literature.

Our understanding of Islam may be one of love or dislike ranging from Marlowe's Tamburlaine, the Arabian Nights, to the union trouble with the worker halting the conveyor belt to pray, to the magic sounds of The Golden Road to Samarkand but the Hayward exhibition does little to add flame or water to those attitudes. It has been said of this exhibition that it contains no masterpieces and one is asked to feast one's eyes on the Word as it appears and disappears in a snakelike scrawl of decorations so that the intellectual content becomes secondary. Of the 15th century

Mathnavi-ye Mathnavi the catalogue states that, "The title of many Arabic and Persian books, as here, are not intended to give any clear idea of the contents" and this, I think, sums up the Hayward Exhibition.

What we have is a culture dominated by priests and politicians, and as with the Egyptian culture, within that prison it conformed into no more than a repetition of decorative clichés. View a State exhibition by the Russian Government of official Socialist Realist paintings and this Islamic exhibition and the rubbish is almost interchangeable. It was in the building of mosques and tombs that the Islamic artist found a certain freedom and created buildings of great external beauty placed by still waters in ordered gardens, yet one must remember that the mausoleum to Timur the Lame at Samarkand and the magnificent Taj Mahal are for the dead. One must make one final point before passing on in western materialistic sorrow, and that is that there has been much talk of the use of "light" by the Islamic artists. They had no use of light in painting or in the interiors of their buildings, for their light was imprisoned, chained and filtered into their cultural prisons.

The Alhambra, the palace of the last Muslim rulers of Spain, is a closed forest of columns in which light breaks through as through cell bars, and in their illustrated manuscripts there is no feeling of men and buildings in an open infinity as in western medieval manuscripts. In Chinese paintings men and mountains float in a sea of pure light, and the work of the Chinese artist may be slight and superficial, but it has a freedom unknown to the Islamic artists forever bound in walled conclaves, closed gardens wherein women and words become a meaningless decorative background, and a hedonist hell is offered as an Islamic paradise.

Yet we of the West have our problems with three reputations crashing into the gutters of Bond Street, though the Town and his frau continue to dig deep into the nylon sock to pay the galleries' rent. No one can deny Giorgio di Chirico's major contribution to our age. A surrealist painter who dominated that particular school by giving a visual background to the creation of the surrealist world of disunited things. A world of empty silent squares and darkling arcades wherein only a conventional sculpture or a haunting mannequin peopled that silent mysterious world of the surrealists. Flat muted colours, black shadows and a knowing sexual symb-

olism were Chirico's gift to us, and for that we owe him a debt. But as with so many other painters it was the subject matter and the vision that won and held our imagination, and when that was lost or rejected, as with Chirico, we are left with paintings that are simply awful paintings.

The Wildenstein Gallery in Bond Street have an exhibition of the later work of Giorgio di Chirico, and in this latter phase the elderly artist has chosen to reject his past subject matter and we are given sadly self portraits of Chirico in armour, Chirico as a Roman warrior galloping along the edge of a badly painted timeless sea. So badly painted, so crudely worked on. I do not do the artist ill, for there was a time when the Town would have flocked to view a single canvas by Chirico, but this exhibition within a major Bond Street gallery is ignored. But the money is still flowing free in this year of 37, for a sculptured figure modelled from a Chirico canvas is on offer for £ 40,000, and a small figure Chirico style can be purchased for £ 10,000. Giorgio di Chirico will be remembered for his contribution to the art of our age, but not by the works within this exhibition.

And that leaves Allen Jones and David Hockney at the Waddington. Hockney is a happy extrovert who knows his own limitations and one takes pleasure in witnessing him as he scoops in the loot, but his prints at the Waddington appear to me to be so abysmal that one feels that his happytown reputation must be ended, for new golden boys are clambering for gallery space and the easy dirty money.

So too with Allen Jones. All the spray guns and the erotic legs filling the canvases must in the end pall, and the latest offerings fail on three counts: they are bad art, not particularly erotic and, saving grace, not very amusing. All these three galleries are offering painted baubles for the monied philistines for, for their money, they can claim to have a Hockney, a Chirico or an Allen Jones, yet what the Town and his glassy eyed frau will be staggering along Bond Street with is three inferior works by minor artists who have exhausted their small talent, when for a fraction of that loot those foolish people could buy a Jack Smith painting at the Redfern Gallery. A brilliant artist who moved from the Kitchen Sink School of painting to his own style of geometrical abstraction. A working class artist who has always been his own man.

Arthur Moyse.

WHY WORK ?

FACED WITH A growing unemployment, especially among school-leavers, the government has launched a mini-programme to reduce the number of unemployed. Since the jobless total is cumulative this is unlikely (and not seriously meant to have) much effect. The government's primary reason for its hesitancy in creating employment (let alone keeping a promise of full employment) is that such action - of major public works schemes for example - would be inflationary; thus admitting what has been denied, that deflation demands unemployment.

The primary reason given for such work incentives as training schemes, local work projects, and employment-subsidies to employers is that when inflation has been conquered and the economic boom is on its way we do not wish to be caught with untrained, unskilled young men or unmanned or derelict factories.

Thus is the sacred cow of the work-ethic sustained. It is reported by C. Woodham-Smith in her book about the Irish potato famine that in order that no harmful effects on the character should ensue from the meagre distribution of largesse from England to ameliorate the effects of the famine, work-schemes were launched so that idleness should not be rewarded. It was decided that roads should be built in Ireland and the famine victims should be employed and

paid for such work. Ireland had no need for roads since commerce and communications were at a minimum. Nevertheless such roads were built, some of them going from nowhere to nowhere but honest work was paid for with charitable monies and the Victorian work-ethic was satisfied.

Further examples of this idea of salvation by work can be found in the histories of the Poor Law Institutions or work-houses as they were (and are) commonly called, or Houses of Industry: a later refinement of the brutal truth. Prisons were influenced by this make-work idea; oakum-picking and stone-breaking were part of the old curriculum. Up to thirty years ago the punishment of 'hard labour' was still nominally imposed (even on conscientious objectors). The idea of redemption through work runs like a hempen thread through the fabric of society.

In the slump of the thirties the National (coalition) government of the day was just as concerned with this work-ethic. Government training centres, Land Settlements and Social Service Centres were set up with the purpose of keeping up the morale of the unemployed. At the same time in the United States President Franklin Roosevelt set up the New Deal National Recovery Authority to promote schemes ("boondoggling" in American slang) to provide work. This had its economic justification, if not a verifiable basis, in the Keynesian theory of pump-priming -- on the analogy that if a water-pump ran dry it could be made to flow again by injecting large amounts of water, which inexplicably would set the flow of the original water going again - or maybe it was just the same water used over and over again.

At the same time Adolf Hitler in Germany was running work-schemes, using his unemployed to reclaim land and to build autobahns, with the same economic motives plus a belief in the value of work for work's sake. In this case it was possible to see and point out the militaristic significance of this pick-and-shovel army and the military value of the ribbons of autobahns that stretched from frontier to frontier. Did not the Romans build military roads throughout Britain for the same purpose?

Came the mid-thirties and every nation realised the ideal form of product to engage the unwanted skill of its manpower. A product, subsidized by the State, not immediately consumable, from time to time obsolete and replaceable; and, given the atmosphere of the time, it was an expanding demand. Yet, when it was consumed it was, as it were, not consumed by citizens and workers of the producing country but by people who were not expected to pay for it. Production of military supplies and armaments eventually eased the economic problems of National Britain, New Deal America and Nazi Germany.

The doctrine of work for work's sake, work for morale's sake, work for the nation's/economy's sake are easily seen to be false but it is too easy to throw out the baby with the bath water, or even to fail to distinguish baby from bathwater in tackling the subject of work. Even in a stateless, non-capitalistic society work will still be a necessity, perhaps a pleasure and probably a creative joy.

(Cont. on P. 14)

WHY WORK?

(cont from P.13)

Work can be very roughly divided into two divisions, the provision of services and the production and supply of goods. In this, as in most statist, capitalist societies, the provision of services approximates to slavery, distinguished only by the wage system. The production and supply of goods is overbalanced on the distribution side and has failed in the supply and distribution of necessities -- food, clothing and shelter -- but prides itself on the production of luxuries and on the creation of a mass of compulsory-induced 'wants'.

It has been calculated by Keith Paton (in *Anarchy* 118) that ten million people in Great Britain are employed in useless work (or strictly speaking not 'employed' at all) and in a free society they would be free for leisure or for production of man's real needs. Keith Paton also quotes Stuart Chase's 1920 estimate of 8 million manpower employed on 'illth' (useless or harmful production), 6 million idle manpower, 4 million waste of manpower on production methods, 2½ million waste on distribution methods; making 20½ million (in the United States).

These figures are only estimates and depend upon your concept of society and your concept of efficiency. Suffice it that much of the 'work' carried on today is useless and wasteful. Ralph Borsodi has pointed out that a large percentage of the 'saving' of labour in the introduction of mass-production methods is negated by the necessity to maintain distributive and marketing (mainly advertising) staffs which also wipes out any financial advantage in mass-production.

At the same time it is obvious that the growth of State intervention in production and marketing of commodities has led to a multiplication of bureaucracies. The E.E.C. itself is nothing but a super-international bureaucracy. The slightest attempt by governments to control distribution or prices inevitably leads to bureaucracy. The suspicion that encompasses worker-employer; employer-customer; state-employer; state-citizen relationships necessitates a constant strengthening and manning (and over-manning) of this bureaucratic web.

It is doubtful if the introduction of the machine has saved any human labour except in the case of the machine as a tool, where it has saved a great deal of human effort. At the same time it is open to the same abuses as the mass-production machine in that it is frequently used to do jobs that it would not be felt necessary to do were it not for the existence of the machine. In the words of Parkinson "work expands to fill the time necessary for its completion".

The mass-production machine is only capable (under the present system and, one suspects, under any system) of proliferation of articles for a mass market which must be created by deliberate adulteration of the product, a

built in obsolescence or creation of demand by mass-advertising.

The theory that the machine would create leisure that could be used creatively is unsound. Not only does it create unemployment by overproduction but leisure itself becomes mechanized (e.g. television) and debased. Increasing mechanization and specialization makes possible, and questionably necessary, overtime working which for many destroys leisure and home life.

We are sadly familiar with the by-products of mechanization -- the robotization of the worker, the loss of and lack of need for skill; the standardization of products, the decline in quality of workmanship and product, the general debasement of standards and exploitation of the consumer (who is ultimately the producer) and finally the creation of unemployment, which some regard as the worst feature of all.

There is some confusion between the functions of work and those of play. Supposedly the benefits of work are those of service to the community, the exercise of special skills and the fulfilment in creativity. In present-day society it is given to few of us to experience those benefits and consequently the mass of people tend to do what they want to do during their leisure and what they have to do in their work-

ing time.

Such is the mechanization and pointlessness of much work that it is common for more physical energy and skill to be utilized in leisure than in work. Even the socially-destructive practice of 'moonlighting' sometimes witnesses to that. The proliferation of hobbies and home-handicrafts witnesses to the unspoken desire of many for meaningful work.

The hackneyed stock response of work being a thing to be avoided in a free society is just not good enough. A re-evaluation of the function of work in society is overdue in the anarchist movement.

The machine has not been the benefit it claims and the machine mass production method is the product of a capitalist society and is only the agency of a further centralization of the state; therefore we must utilize the machine as a tool and technology towards a decentralized alternative society.

We need to restore to the worker the dignity, skill and usefulness of his labour and substantiate Coomaswamy's dictum, "An artist is not a special kind of man but every man is a special kind of artist."

Jack Robinson.

FAILURES OF POLITICALISM

THE QUINTESSENTIAL STATE

ACROSS the reputedly wide spectrum of ideologies supportive of the State, there is one common and recurrent idea that underlies all philosophizing about government and its role in human society. The recurrent idea is, of course, that it provides the only reliable protection against physical aggression by human beings on each other (some even go so far as to claim that government offers us our only hope against the possible predations of monsters from outer space as well).

The classic contrast of the presumed features of life in a state of nature versus life in a structured order of political dominion, was laid out by Thomas Hobbes some 300 years ago. It was Hobbes' theory that life in a state of nature constituted a case of the "war of all against all", a situation that Hobbes viewed critically, characterizing it with such epithets as nasty and brutish. It was to rescue mankind from such horrible circumstances that the species constructed the State. Revealingly, Hobbes calls this institution the leviathan, a name used for the imagined monsters that the superstitious believed to inhabit the oceans. The terminology was fitting, since the leviathan State was to rule absolutely, and cruelly if necessary, in order to stave off the chaos of the ungoverned state of nature.

While theories of government have been embellished and expounded upon in a seemingly endless stream of meaningless variations, all have retained the basic presumption that government, of some form or other, is necessary. The united front of ideologies behind

this concept does present a formidable obstacle to the enlightenment and liberation of mankind from the constraints of externally imposed authority. The pervasive influence of the theory of political protection can be seen in the prevalence of totalitarian regimes throughout the world, from the increasing proclivity of the more "democratic" regimes to expand their powers, from the adherence of so-called "libertarian" parties to programs of "limited government", and even in the crypto-governments envisaged in the absurd fantasies of the "anarcho-capitalists."

How can Anarchism stand alone against this vast accumulation of "human wisdom"?

THE INSTITUTION OF WAR

More destruction of life and property has been accomplished by governments than by any other human cause. This remarkable if unsavoury achievement is the product of organized warfare. In the 20th century alone, over 110 million persons have met their ends through these means.

Organized warfare is an institution uniquely suited to the task of government mastery over mankind. Each State engaged in its practice unilaterally suspends all moral codes. Psychopathic murderers become national heroes. Cruelty and torture become respected tools of trade. Reason is held to be treason. Humanitarian concern gives aid and comfort to the enemy. In such ways the masses of ordinary people are induced to hate and kill others of their kind - others who have done them no particular harm, whose sole crime is their place of birth.

The State, of course, does everything it can

to dehumanize its opponents. Men, women, children, their hopes, their dreams, their ambitions, are submerged and exterminated in the State's barrage of propaganda and bombs. Persons are turned into things, units of war material, to be manipulated or destroyed in the struggle for power.

Can war, the cornerstone of political protection, be said to have saved humanity from the horrors of the state of nature as visualized by Hobbes?

MEGA-DEATH

The wars and destruction wrought by States in the past is as nothing compared to the potential of the future. Governmental policymakers calmly assess casualty projections under various "scenarios" of global holocaust and try to decide how many millions of deaths would be acceptable. Theoreticians bandy about such terms as "massive retaliation", "assured destruction", "balance of terror," and similarly grim possibilities. In the U.S. alone, resources spent on missiles, bombs, bombers, biological, chemical, and space-age weapons, mount in the billions of dollars each month.

As if the major powers confronting each other, threatening each other (and, indirectly, the entire world) with total annihilation were not frightening enough, the phrase "nuclear proliferation" has crept into our consciousness. The logic of the governmental systems drives all States onwards to acquire the most potent means of destruction. To be left behind in the arms race is a fate no State would willingly accept. In the vicious world of governments, the inability to threaten other States is deemed a major liability. Advanced arms manufacturers, for reasons both political and economic, are eager to supply weapons to the have-nots. The purchase of sophisticated armaments by one State from another tends to increase the power of the seller over the buyer, since the seller will likely be the only source of maintenance materials and spare parts for the complex implements of modern warfare. On the economic front, weapons sales are seen as a boost to the economy of the supplier State. The monopoly position virtually guarantees sales, and the profits can ease balance of payment problems (in fiscal 1975, for instance, the U.S. sold over \$9,000,000,000 worth of arms to foreign governments).

Does this "game plan" chosen by governments bode well for the future security of the human race?

THE OBSTACLES TO SURVIVAL

Idealists may wonder how government can continue to persist in the face of such a dismal past record and such grim portents for the future. The State has tremendous advantages. Control over the educational system assures a proper indoctrination in the ideology of political protection for the younger generation. Establishment controlled media present romantic dramas of political protection on a regular basis, ranging from the lone marshall protecting the Old West, to the triumphs of winning armies in recent wars. Public holidays provide occasions in which to honour the heroic dead (millions died that we might get Memorial Day off from work).

To these propaganda techniques for use on the average citizen must be added certain

powerful incentives for the wielders of governmental authority. On the one hand, there are certain attentions of status bestowed on the holders of power. The litany of "great" U.S. presidents, for example, coincides rath-

er closely with the wars in which the country was involved. On the other hand, there are some gratifying returns to armaments contractors. "Cost over-run" has become a way of life in the weapons business, as has administered profit. High governmental officials find friendly berths in big business should they leave public employment. (Over 2000 retired military officers of the rank of colonel and above -- clearly career soldiers -- are currently employed by the 100 largest military contractors.) Conversely, big business serves as the recruiting ground for high government officials. Labour unions have become fanatical supporters of State power as a necessary ingredient to provide jobs in war-related industries.

Can these obstacles be overcome? Can reason arise triumphant? Can humankind be saved from destruction?

THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH

The point was made earlier that adherence to the idea of political protection was nearly universal, that Anarchists are the only dissenters. At this point it should not be difficult for the reader to see why Anarchists reject the theory of political protection. It has never worked. Much to the contrary, it has wrought incredible misery, more often than not destroying those it was ostensibly devised to protect. Unfortunately, the lessons of the past have, for the most part, fallen on deaf ears. Governments all over the world are preparing to do ever more damage in the name of defence.

It is clear that the only kind of protection that will ever be provided by the State is that of the classic "protection racket", a system most commonly portrayed as the tool of mobsters. The State as the primary perpetrator of mayhem upon the people may agree to forbear from certain depredations, for a time, in exchange for considerations: money, obedience, worship. Of course, the State does offer the final security of death: an inert condition that guarantees freedom from risks, freedom from fear.

What then is the alternative proffered by Anarchism?

UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE

Anarchism begins by offering certain principles of coexistence between beings. These principles eliminate the need for coercion and violence. Chief among these principles are the concepts of voluntarism and privacy.

Voluntarism and privacy are both dual-pronged concepts. They apply both to oneself and to others. The Anarchist realises that the only peaceful course of inter-human transactions is through voluntary agreement. Each individual possesses a self-governing will. Attempts to contravene this will can only lead to coercion and, in the case of resistance to this coercion, violence. Thus it is realistic to rely upon voluntary agreements for all human projects. The idea of privacy entails the belief that each person is entitled to his or her own mode of living. Every one of us has a right to this self-dominion. The watchword of the anarchistic society is "mind your own business".

It is hoped that each individual person's perception of the nature of the human condition, namely the existence of independent will and the inescapable personal vulnerability, will lead to circumstances of minimized viol-

ence and maximized personal safety. "But what if people are not rational? What if some persist in predatory habits?" say the Statists. Well, there is no guarantee that the anarchistic society will be invincible to all forms of threat. However, just because there is the possibility, or even the probability of some irrationality among some people, it should not be proper to institutionalize this irrationality in the form of the State, nor to place the chief practitioners of irrationality in a position to dictate behaviour patterns for everyone. Such a course would serve only to assure that slavery and death for all was the prevailing tendency in society.

This universe of ours is one of uncertainty. Unforeseen acts, misperceived consequences, random chance, all play an important and unavoidable part in determining events. Anarchism does not guarantee that all outcomes in a liberated society will be pleasant. It does offer the opportunities and challenges inherent in freedom. Anarchists believe that these opportunities hold forth more promise than those of political systems. Can the uncertainties of freedom be less desirable than the certain death and destruction offered by political regimes?

Jack Semmens

(This article first appeared in The Match! February 1976)

Anarchists

a poem by Francis Adams

'Tis not when I am here,
In these homeless homes,
Where sin and shame and disease
And foul death comes.

'Tis not when heart and brain
Would be still and forget
Men and women and children
Dragged down to the pit:

But when I hear them declaiming
Of 'liberty', 'order', and 'law',
The husk-hearted Gentleman
And the mud-hearted Bourgeois.

Then a sombre hateful desire
Burns up slow in my breast
To wreck the great guilty Temple
And give us rest!

SPAIN

COLLECTIVES IN THE SPANISH REVOLUTION, by Gaston Leval.

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LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION 1936-39, by Vernon Richards an examination of some of the ways we went wrong as well as of the achievements. A worthwhile study for the libertarian left today. 240pp. cloth £1.50 (post 48p) US \$4.00 paper £0.75 (post 42p) US \$2.00

Capitalist 'Obscenity'

THE POOR OF THE EARTH, by John Cole. 144pp. (Macmillan, paper, £2.95).

THIS INFORMATIVE and readable book by a former deputy editor of the *Guardian* nevertheless inevitably leaves one with a feeling of despair. For the overwhelming majority of the developing world's teeming millions the end of colonialism has resulted only in a change of flags, place-names, anthems. . . and of oppressors. Not that anarchists expected anything else at the time in spite of the professed socialism of many of the black leaders and the undoubted sacrifices many of them had made in the anti-colonial struggle.

But once in government, with a few notable exceptions, these same leaders were helping themselves and their chosen friends to the fruits of power just as their white "oppressors" before them.

This book deals in some detail with the corruption in high places which has resulted, to quote the author, in the "obscene contrast between the privileged groups in almost every developing nation -- and that often includes not only the conventionally rich, but many workers in their modern industries -- and the masses of the poor". He does not think, however, that the problem can be solved in isolation. It must be dealt with in conjunction with the other "obscene contrast", namely that between "poverty in the third world and the comparative wealth of the developed nations".

Throughout the capitalist world, with or without the welfare state, the rich get richer and the poor poorer, but with the significant difference that in the "affluent" industrial world (675 millions) only about 3% of the population is really poor and 3% disgustingly rich and the rest have more than enough of the material, useful and useless, goods of the consumer society, whereas in the developing world (1,725 millions) only about 3% of the population is rich in varying degrees, 40% are poor and 57% are really poor.

* * *

In Kenya, which has been described by an American economist resident there as "a capitalist success story" and where that old socialist phoney Kenyatta, surrounded in his old age by his wives and relatives and all the land they have managed to secure, reigning supreme like some 19th century colonialist, while in the cities "a quarter of the people do not earn enough to live on and in the country as many as two out of five are in the same position. Between a quarter and a half of Kenya's children suffer from malnutrition".

And this in spite of the fact that since "independence" Kenya has enjoyed one of the highest growth rates (7%-8% per annum) in the developing world. One can therefore imagine what must be the situation in those developing countries which are enjoying a much lower growth rate.

Neither does it surprise one to learn that: "the outstanding difference in a society like Kenya is the status of the wage earners in large-scale industry. They are part of a privileged class and when the issue of redistribution of incomes is raised, the conservative faction is always likely to include trade unions whose members stand to lose". One could say that under the skin human beings in the "civilised" world react more or less in the same way!

The price the poor in the developing countries have had to pay to have black masters instead of white master exploiting them, is a crippling financial indebtedness to the developed world from which they will never extricate themselves by purely conventional means. The accumulated debt of the non-oil developing countries had amounted to \$120,000 million (£62,000m) by 1975 and this means, among other things, that half of all future development aid will have to be spent simply in interest payments!

* * *

In 1970 the developed, industrial nations had pledged to transfer a miserable 0.7% of the G.N.P. in aid to the developing world. It has now been reduced to 0.33% and by 1980 will be a mere 0.28%. The percentage is derisory and will not by itself change the imbalance between the two worlds in a

thousand years. But even if it were 3.3% and not 0.33% and were continued to be used on useless mechanisation (which simply increases underemployment, mass migration to the city slums, and to the ever increasing financial indebtedness to the developed countries), grandiose building schemes and prestige airlines as well as to maintain a growing parasitic army of officials and "diplomats" in luxury, then all it would mean would be that the poor and hungry would sink deeper in their misery.

Throughout the developing world food is the key problem and the only effective aid is that which encourages labour intensive food production schemes and home industries. As organisations such as Oxfam have convincingly demonstrated, the ordinary people of the developing world need to be helped to help themselves; they need food to build up strength to work; they need simple tools to supplement their own physical efforts; they need advice and encouragement.

At the moment food production is not even keeping pace with population growth -- indeed it is now lower per head than between 1961 and 1965 and the present cereal gap estimated at 25 million tons will, according to the author, double or even treble in the next ten years if nothing is done. They haven't the money anyway (\$4,000m) to pay for it, assuming that the U.S.A. (the major grain exporter in the world) had such quantities for export. And starving people don't make revolutions, as some seem to think. At most they are used as fodder by others in their perennial struggle for power.

V. R.

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