

anarchist fortnightly

Freedom

WE WELCOME news, reviews, articles, letters. Copy deadline for next issue (No. 15) is MONDAY 31 JULY.

NEXT DESPATCHING DATE is THURSDAY 3 AUGUST. Come and help from 5 p.m. (Help also welcomed the previous Thursday, 27 July for folding Review section).

International

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Black Ram, P.O. Box 238, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010.
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Sydney Anarcho-Syndicalists, Jura Books Collective, 417 King Street, Newtown, NSW 2042
Sydney Libertarians, P.O. Box 24, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010.

Queensland

Libertarian Socialist Organization, P.O. Box 268, Mt. Gravatt, Central 4122.
Self-Management Organisation, P.O. Box 332, NORTH QUAY, Queensland.

Victoria

La Trobe Libertarian Socialists, c/o SRC, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic. 3083.
Monash Anarchist Society, c/o Monash University, Clayton, 3168 Melbourne.

South Australia

Adelaide Anarchists, P.O. Box 67, North Adelaide, 5006.

Western Australia

Freedom Collective, P.O. Box 14, Mount Hawthorn, 6018.

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P.O. Box 22-607 Christchurch
Daybreak Bookshop, P.O. Box 5424 Dunedin.

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Open Road, Box 6135, Station G. Vancouver, B.C. Write for information on activities.

U. S. A.

Minnesota: Soil of Liberty, Box 7056, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, Minn. 55407.
Missouri: Columbia, MO 65201
New York: Libertarian Book Club, Box 842, GPO, New York, N.Y. 10012 .

SRAF/Freespace Alternate U, 339 Lafayette St., NYC, N.Y. 10012 .
San Francisco: Free Socialist, PO Box 1751, San Francisco, CA 94101.
Texas: Houston SRAF, South Post Oak Station, P.O. Box 35253, Houston, TX. 77035.

DENMARK

Aarhus: Regnbuen Anarkist Bogcafe, Mejlsgade 48, 8000 Aarhus.
Copenhagen: Anarkist-Synd. Bogcafe, Studiestraede 18, 1455 Copenhagen
Christiana: Write Stot Christiana, Dronningensgade 14, 1420 Copenhagen.

SWEDEN

Frifetlige Forum, Landsvagsgatan 19 , 41304 04 GÖTEBORG.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Baden: ABF Infoburo, Postfach 161, 761 Schwabisch Hall.
Berlin: Anarkistische Bund. Publishers of 'Anarkistische Texte ', c/o Libertad Verlag, Postfach 153, 1000 Berlin 44.

'Gewaltfreie Aktion' (non-violent action) groups, throughout FDR, associated WRI, For information write Karl-Heinz Song, Methfesselstr. 69, 2000 Hamburg 19.

Groups in other places: tell us if you want to be listed.

Meetings

LONDON. United Anarcho-Mystics conservative orgy. Sat 5 Aug. 421A Harrow Rd. W.9.
LIVERPOOL. Sun. July 30. : 'Italy 1977-78' PNS correspondent and 'Red Notes' editor speak on recent and current situation. 'Liberty Hall' lecture. 8 pm at the Everyman Bistro, Hope Street, Liverpool. All welcome (non-members 40p admission).

MANCHESTER. Wed. 30 Aug. 'The Patriarchal Society : sexism in our midst.' Discussion org. by Manchester An. Group & S.W.F. 8 p.m. in back room of Castle Pub, Oldham St., off Piccadilly Gardens.

Group Meetings

London
Anarchist Women's groups. For contacts tel. 555 5248.
Brixton Anarchist-Situationists every Sunday 2 pm. Tel. 675 6402.
Centro Iberico. Saturdays & Sundays 3-11 pm at 425 Harrow Rd. W.9.
London Workers' Group. Tel. 249 7042 for details.
Birmingham. Libertarian Socialists meet Suns. 8 pm in The Fox & Grapes Freeman St. (nr. Moor St. station).
Edinburgh. Informal chat and read or buy anarchist, socialist and feminist lit. at First of May bookshop; 45 Niddry St. (off High St.) Edinburgh 1 12noon-6 pm (tel. 557 1344)
Huddersfield anarchist group meets fortnightly in the 'Zetland'; Queensgate at 8 pm. For further details tel. Polytechnic Students Union 0484 41288.

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29 June - 12 July 1978

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Total : £ 20.25
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Desires

Anarchists in the North-East set up a federation at the conference held in Leeds on 22 June. More than 40 people attended, coming from Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Sunderland and Wakefield. There was even a fraternal delegation from Reading! The next conference will be held on 23 rd September, and from August the federation will be issuing a monthly newsletter. This, and other information about the federation, can be obtained from Leeds group: Box 101, 'Leeds Other Paper', 30 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds 2.

Anyone interested in forming group in the Chester/North Cheshire area contact J. P. Simcock, c/o Daisy Cottage, Old Moss, Tarvin, Chester.
S.E. London. Mixed non-sexist + anarchist group forming, concentrating on study/action/anarchist consciousness-raising. New Cross/Lewisham area. Contact Rosanne 692 1970.

AoUoM anarchist united misfits for revolution and self realisation meet every Monday, 7.30 pm in Clements Building. L.S.E., Houghton Street, London WC2. New members welcome.

VERY BRIEFS

Spain is tidying up its new "democratic" constitution, intends to abolish the death penalty and wants to improve the image of the police. As a first step they are taking this literally and giving them new uniforms. This must be very convincing to the inhabitants of San Sebastian.

The government and the TUC have reached agreement on what is intended to be a permanent incomes policy.

A new book, "The British Tax System" demonstrates that 13 out of Britain's 20 largest firms pay only nominal profit tax or none at all. The rate of corporation tax is theoretically 52 per cent, but this is, in practice, offset as "deferred tax"

ACAS has announced that it can "make no further progress" in gaining trade union recognition at Grunwicks. We hadn't noticed that they had made any at all.

We note that in order to protect visiting Middle Eastern diplomats, the Anti-Terrorist Squad have had to resort to using an old castle complete with moat.

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PAWNS IN THEIR GAME

THE Russian trials against 'dissidents', coming more than 40 years after the infamous Moscow Trials of the 30s, when the megalomaniac Stalin crucified in court and then murdered the old guard of the Bolshevik party still remaining from 1917, shows only too well how little the Russian dictatorship has changed its character over the years.

It is now over 22 years since Khrushchev made his 'astounding' denunciation of Stalin's tyranny and cut down to size the man who had been regarded almost as a god by millions of faithful and servile communists all over the world - who denounced as fascists, counter-revolutionaries and agents of imperialism all those who had drawn the obvious conclusions - that the dictatorship begun by Lenin, aided by Trotsky, had led in a straight line to the lunacy of Stalin.

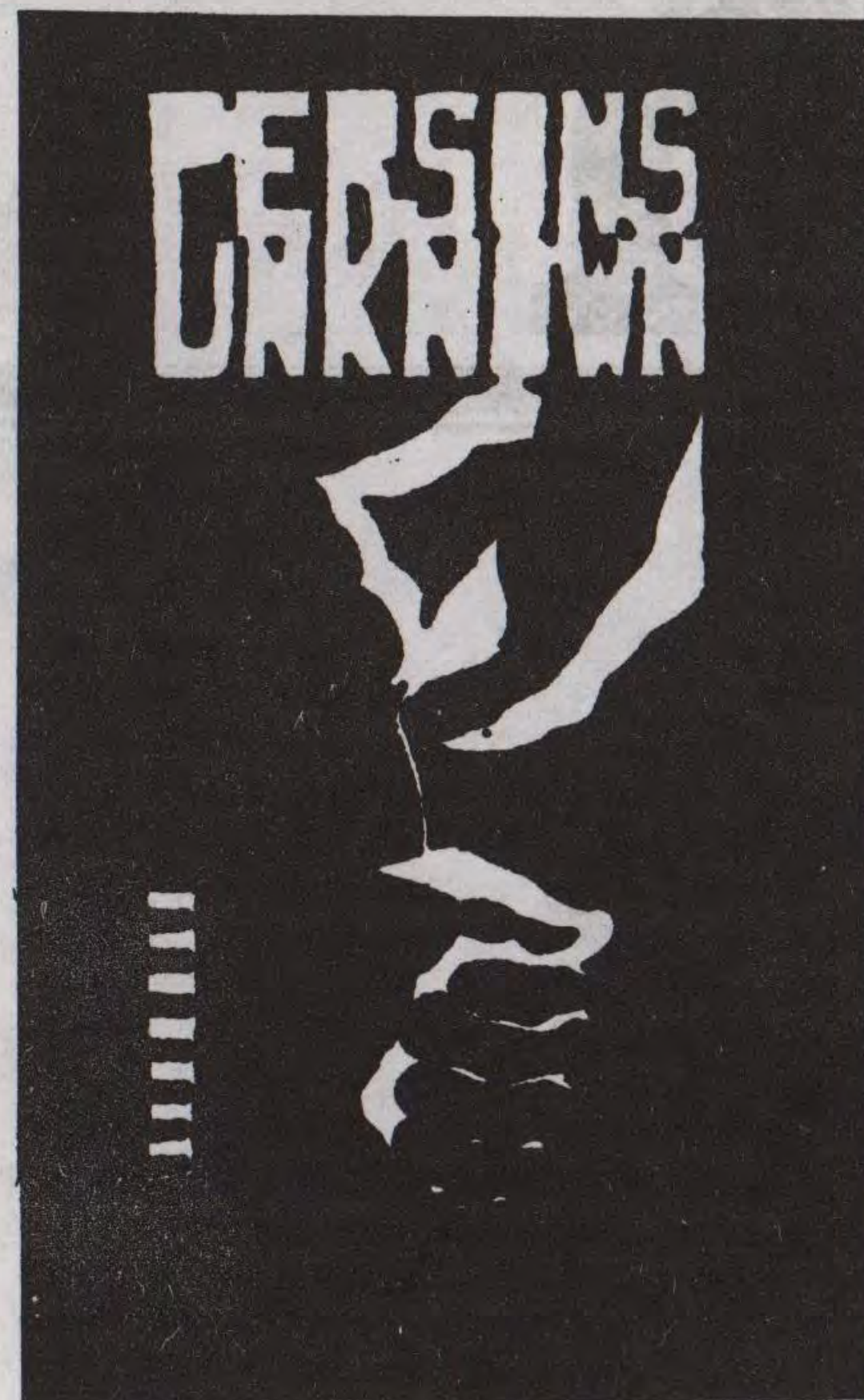
To this day, Marxists will not accept the built-in fallacy of their creed - the concept of using the State as an engine of revolution.

Exactly the same fallacy corrupted the earlier, non-Marxist democratic revolutions. The French Revolution and the American Revolution have equally fallen into the authoritarian trap. 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity', no less than the principles of the Gettysburg Address, have been corrupted by power in the hands of a minority.

This is what makes a total hypocrisy of the West's moral indignation about the dissidents' trial in the Soviet Union. The American Constitution provided no defence for Sacco and Vanzetti any more than for the victims of the McCarthy witch-hunts. The USSR's 1936 Constitution, dreamed up by Stalin himself (no joke!) has, predictably, provided no more than the framework for punishing those who oppose the Soviet State.

All those who blindly support a State become pawns in the power game. The Soviet dissidents - mostly, no revolutionaries - refuse to play that game any longer.

We don't have to agree with their motives to admire their courage. We, too, are proud to be - dissidents!



"YOUR DISSIDENTS"

AS the British press registers, in no uncertain terms, its attitude to the murky atmosphere of state conspiracy and the denial and selective redefinition of rights in the case of the Russian dissidents currently on trial, conditions and events at remand hearings in Lambeth magistrates court for the six anarchists charged with conspiracy to cause explosions give ground for equal concern, while receiving not a fraction of the coverage. As the press concerns itself with the closed Russian hearings, at Lambeth the deliberately restricted numbers of press and public, having penetrated the absurd security ring of armed police and having been searched and questioned, are locked into the courtroom by the police and not allowed to leave until the hearing terminates. And the case presented by the police in resisting bail applications remains a shadowy web of innuendo and engineered rumour.

In the deliberately oppressive atmosphere of the court, at the hearing this morning (July 13), the prisoners for the first time demonstrated vociferously against the conditions in which they are held. Their efforts were violently quelled by the police. The security net outside was noticeably heavier - involving the astonishing sight of ordinary uniformed police officers wearing guns - as the six defendants currently charged appeared together for the first time. From the moment of their entrance into the court together it was clear that they were tense and indignantly concerned about conditions in court. They reacted vocally as their names were read out. Dafydd

Ladd loudly corrected the mispronunciation of his name. The minute the hearing began Ronan Bennett began to stamp his feet and the police attempted to physically stop him. This provoked a struggle in the dock which spread in seconds as the defendants reacted to police efforts to subdue them. Finally they were all dragged struggling from the court and back to the cells. Ronan Bennett shouted out "We are your dissidents".

Iris Mills, whose conditions at Brixton prison have put her under the greatest strain, was observed in tears after this treatment.

After some time the six defendants were brought back to the dock individually. Most of them turned their backs on the court. Vincent Stevenson, who on his return was observed to be white-faced and with a swollen mouth, shouted out that the hearing was a circus. Ronan Bennett again began stamping his feet as the magistrate started to speak. Trevor Dalton addressed the court throughout his appearance. He began, "I protest against the treatment of Iris Mills, being kept in virtual solitary confinement. It is obviously an attempt by the state to politically break her." He went on to say that he was sick of the treatment they had all received. "I want to protest about the disgusting treatment. I am fed up with being surrounded by this scum." He demanded to be allowed to see a doctor.

All six were remanded in custody at Brixton for another week.

After the court broke up, spectators were again followed from it for some distance. It is clear, from the intensification of the atmosphere of suppressed violence in which the prisoners are held, into actual physical conflict, that the state has prepared for a protracted and violent struggle within the legal process, which it is now estimated will last over a year.

The events in court take place against a background of Category 'A' confinement at Brixton - which for Iris Mills, Brixton's only woman prisoner, effectively means solitary confinement. All six are still denied association with one another for purposes of defence, and persons wishing to visit them are still experiencing grave difficulty in obtaining clearance - where they are not refused outright. It is becoming increasingly likely that these difficulties are due to objections by the Anti-Terrorist Squad. The activities of the ATS provoke the greatest number of questions in this campaign of inexplicably determined victimisation against our comrades. Outside of their prominent involvement in the events in court, the details of ATS actions during raids and arrests throw an extraordinary light on their activities in general. The circumstances of the detention after arrest of Vincent Stevenson from Tuesday, July 4th to his being charged the following Sunday illustrate this. After the arrest, under conditions more appropriate to a KGB kidnap, he was held for six days without charges, and thus

apparently under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, Yet Dept. -Supt. Bradbury of the Anti-Terrorist Squad has reportedly denied that he was held under the PTA. This can only mean that he was held illegally.

The extraordinary lengths the police are going to in unravelling the 'anarchist conspiracy' they purport to have uncovered, contrast with their failure to apprehend those responsible for the letter bomb that exploded at the Peace News London office on the same date that Vince Stevenson was arrested.

Increased harassment of those in prison and the obstruction of their defence can only make our demands on their behalf more urgent. We demand an end to this victimisation by the police, the release on bail or transfer to a woman's prison of Iris Mills, and that all the prisoners be allowed to associate for purposes of defence.

Persons Unknown Support Group,
Box 123, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street,
London N.1. England



EVENTS - July

- Tues 4th. Housmans bookshop, London office of Peace News bombed, apparently by Column 83. Two members of Persons Unknown picked up on way to meeting. One later released, Vince Stevenson charged.
- Thurs 6th. Police raid flat in north London and claim to discover suitcase containing 8 guns, neatly enough the ones they mentioned a few weeks ago.

- Trevor Dalton charged.
- Sat 15th. Demonstration outside Paddington Green police station. Benefit at Conway Hall. Both successful.

BADGES
FOUR DIFFERENT DESIGNS; 20p each
from PERSONS UNKNOWN

CONSPIRACY

AT A TIME when 6 people are being held in Brixton prison, charged with 'conspiracy with persons known and unknown', it may be useful to provide a reminder of what 'conspiracy' means.

The offence first appeared in law during the reign of Edward I. It was used extensively against strikers and pickets during the nineteenth century. In 1875 the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act was passed, in theory to clarify the situation and to distinguish between peaceful and violent picketing. During this century the use of the law in political cases lapsed for a while. However, since the 1960s its usefulness has been recognised again and it has been increasingly invoked as a political weapon.

The point of the law is that it is vague to the point of non-existence. This means that it can signify whatever the police and courts choose it to. A conspiracy is an agreement between two or more people to do something illegal, or to do something legal by illegal means. In other words, the act that is agreed on does not have to be criminal in itself. One of the first of the recent political cases where the law has been applied, occurred in 1967 following an occupation of the Greek embassy. Forty two people were eventually arrested on a shifting series of charges. When they reached the court these included 'conspiracy to trespass.' So one has the interesting situation whereby one can receive an indefinite prison sentence (another useful aspect of the conspiracy laws) for an offence which, in itself, is trivial.

The same charge was used after an occupation of the Sierra Leone High Commission in 1972. On the appeal against conviction Lord Justice Lawton said, "an agreement to trespass is an indictable conspiracy, no matter what absurd results can be envisaged if prosecutors and judges do not use common sense." As so much of British law is 'case law', i.e. ad hoc decisions made by judges and then quoted as precedents, this statement now represents the law. Judge Lawton may hope for common sense in its application; other members of the law enforcement business are more cynical.

The laws have been used on a number of occasions since, including one in which, due to the pattern of charges, convictions and acquittals, a defendant was effectively found guilty of conspiring with himself.

This kind of paradox can be dealt with by use of the phrase 'with persons unknown', as in the present cases. Particularly noteworthy political cases have included the imprisonment of three people during the 1972 building workers' strike and the 'Angry Brigade' trials of 1972. Here a total of 12 people were arrested and charged on a variety of counts, including possession of explosives and conspiracy. Two had the charges against them withdrawn. Two were

tried in late 1971, Ian Purdie was acquitted, Jake Prescott was sentenced to 15 years on conspiracy but acquitted on actual bombings. (He is still in prison). The following year saw the trial of the Stoke Newington 8. Four were acquitted on all counts and the other four were imprisoned on conspiracy charges. (All have since been released). Not a single person was ever convicted for actually committing any of the 27 bombings and shootings attributed to the 'conspiracy.'

* * * *

IT IS often proudly stated that there are no political trials in Britain. The advantages of having 'political prisoner' status have often been debated. At the moment Irish prisoners are trying to achieve it. Apparently, according to one who is in a position to know, a certain Andrew Young, the USA have thousands of political prisoners. However, we are assured that such is not the case in Britain. Let us examine the claim by reference to a conspiracy trial.

During the trial of Prescott and Purdie, Justice Melford Stevenson pointed out "conspiracies are always hatched in whispers... it is, or nearly always is, a matter of inference." He proceeded to draw several inferences. He commented that politics were relevant insofar as they may be seen to provide evidence of motive. This, apparently, included such hard facts as that an Angry Brigade communiqué ended with the words 'Solidarity, revolution and love', and there was a letter from Prescott in prison signed 'Love, solidarity and revolution.'

The Stoke Newington 8 trial followed similar lines. It was asserted that it was not a political trial; yet the basis of the prosecution was that the defendants were anarchists who "sought to attack the democratic structures of this society with whose politics they disagreed." More tenuous connections were produced; Hilary Creek was refused bail on the grounds that the address she gave was in NI and "there are many people of a similar ideology living in Islington." Justice James further clarified the definition of conspiracy as "a wink or a nod, without a word being spoken."

So this gives an idea of how a conspiracy trial works. The pattern is being repeated now. The defendants are held under rigid conditions. The police carry out a series of raids and seize, in particular, address books. The evidence then largely consists of a range of 'inferences', i.e. insinuations amounting to little more than that the defendants know each other and are radical. An

atmosphere of tension is created. In addition, some 'hard' evidence is produced - guns, weedkiller, wiring or whatever. (But remember that despite the arsenal produced in the Stoke Newington trial, in the end the convictions were for conspiracy).

It can be seen that the conspiracy laws are very useful for the state. They can be used against almost anybody. Together with other neat pieces of legislation, such as the Official Secrets Act, the Prevention of Terrorism Acts, the Criminal Law Act, etc., they provide the British state with a particularly impressive battery of catchall laws. No other European country, either on the continent or in Scandinavia, has a conspiracy law. D.P.

FROM RONAN

Friends

Thanks for the write-up in FREEDOM nos. 12 and 13 and for sending them to us. There is however just one point I'd like to bring up. In your article in no. 13 regarding Iris* you say "She is forced to exercise in full view of male prisoners." I imagine Iris will write to you concerning that point but in case she can't or has been refused permission to receive FREEDOM (she got no. 12) I feel I must comment on it. Knowing Iris as I do, I know that this does not 'humiliate' her as you suggest. What Iris (and the rest of us) have been demanding is that she be allowed more association with the prison population, rather than less.

I know you didn't intend it, but that same point could be interpreted as an attack on the male prisoners, implying they somehow abuse her as she exercises. This is not the case, as Iris is well aware, because there has been a tremendous amount of solidarity shown towards Iris on the part of all the prisoners we have come in contact with.

I'm not trying to speak for her of course, it's just that her mail (and correspondence generally) are more severely treated than my own. I hope she'll be able to write to you herself.

Not much new here. There are five of us in the security unit on the conspiracy charge. All in good spirits. Iris and I have been allowed one 'social' visit a week with each other which lasts 15 minutes and is held in the presence of three guards in a tiny room.

There was a lot of trouble at court today at our remand hearing. We got pretty rough treatment at the hands of the ATS as a result. But you'll get better reports of it from those who attended the hearing than I'm allowed to give.

Thanks again,
Solidarity - Ronan

Incidentally attempts to send in political or even historical or sociological literature to us have so far been unsuccessful. We're having to turn to Micky Spillane and Agatha Christie. As if the prison food wasn't punishment enough!

* The leaflet of the all women's picket published in FREEDOM no. 13 (8 July).



"As each dissident is hounded into a dock, will s/he name the country of birth and inform the judges which state s/he is being prosecuted by and which state is seeking to exploit her/him"

NATIONALITY? 'PRISONER!'

IT IS REPORTED that one of the Soviet dissidents imprisoned last week made the above response to a question from his judges. At the same time the American ambassador to the United Nations; Andrew Young —considered by some to be a 'token Black'—commented in response to a French newspaper interviewer that the United States has 'hundreds, perhaps even thousands; of people in prison whom I would call political prisoners'.

Mr. Young, who probably owes his position more to his value in demonstrating Carter's racial tolerance and erstwhile progressivism than to his own discretion and diplomacy, has some truth on his side even from a conventional point of view. From an anarchist viewpoint he is wholly correct.

It is something of an embarrassment to find President Carter stealing planks from Amnesty, civil libertarians and anarchists to make his platform of civil rights but Andrew Young, who served his political apprenticeship with Martin Luther King and knows, or knew, more of the realities of imprisonment, would endorse H. D. Thoreau's dictum: 'Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also prison.' So it was no secret to Mr. Young that numerous Black Panthers, not to mention several prisoners framed on grounds which can be interpreted as political—for example the nine blacks and one white sentenced to a total of 272 years in North Carolina, are political prisoners in the United States. It was however a State secret to many patriotic Americans—and a senator from Georgia thought Young should be impeached for; one supposes, giving away State secrets.

It suits the American book to take a lofty stand against the Soviet Union on the question of civil rights. No doubt it is safer, with Vietnam still in mind, to lay off Soviet imperialism, or, with Chile and other places in mind to lay off Soviet subversion or, indeed, with America's unemployment and economic situation to lay off the Soviets' economic failures. On the high diplomatic plane of 'sucks boo—you're another' politics between nations it is easy for

the Soviet Union to point to the shortcomings of its rivals. Particularly since the Soviet system believes that its so-called economic freedom from capitalism is preferable to the bourgeois freedoms which exist (partly on paper only) in the West. But Mr. Young's truthful gaffe is another thing.

*

Basically it is true that all prisoners are political prisoners; that is to say that imprisonment (whether guilty or not guilty) is the result of failure to comply with laws which are the product of particular social and political systems and circumstances. Given modern social and political circumstances it is obvious that given a change in those circumstances certain laws and offences would no longer exist. It can no longer be considered as absolutely true that economic poverty is a main cause of crime but other forms of deprivation and poverty exist which are endemic in the Western social orders. Obviously in a totalitarian state such as Soviet Russia: the number of possible offences or crimes increases, when the Orwellian crime-think is construed into an indictable offence punished by prison or, worse; by psychiatric treatment. The totalitarian states evolve toward the proposition that 'everything which is not forbidden is compulsory'.

As the State becomes more embracing; even in this country, to protect us against our own excesses, it is obvious that prisoners become more and more numerous and offences become more and more common.

The category of 'political prisoner' was originally created (like the right of asylum) to preserve some democratic semblance and to observe 'fair play'. After all, if the opposition, by the fortune of politics, loses and finds itself in prison; it was once necessary to treat it honourably because next time it might by your party which loses out. This year's political prisoner may be the next decade's prime minister. A truism borne out by the history of the former British Empire.

The abuse of civil rights and the existence of diplomatic 'political prisoners' has become (for the West; notably) a species of football and the sincerity of the West is in question, hence Mr. Young's embarrassing open-mouthed diplomacy.

It is not possible to question the methods—apart from a certain naivety—of Amnesty International which is a voluntary association of neutral observers who get together in decentralized groups to make contact with and exert pressure on behalf of 'people all round the world; who think differently from their governments'. There is a harsh saying, 'nothing fails like success' and the adoption by governments; for their own purposes; of the fact of the existence of more prisoners in one country than in another undermines some of Amnesty's credibility. The chairman of an Oslo Amnesty committee, Thomas Hammarberg, said 'In a way, Amnesty has become a prisoner of its own success. The more successful the organization has been in pressuring governments into releasing

political prisoners; or at least putting them on trial; the more devious and sinister governments have become in their repression of dissenters—and the less they are prepared to reveal to the world outside. . . . Hammarberg concluded; 'But in the end; what matters is the pain and suffering the individual endures in police station or cell. And we can never give up the fight against that.'

Against the painful backdrop of the repressive Soviet state the struggle of the individual for freedom goes on regardless of the Western interpretations, and such struggles are being enacted in all countries at all times. It is possible; as has happened; that individual prisoners will be used as exchange-pawns in the game of power politics but the struggle will still go on.

Such is the nature of the state that the status (indeed they could be considered a separate nationality) of prisoner is an honourable one. In certain situations 'the true place for a just man is prison'.

JACK ROBINSON.

AMNESTY & UNCLE SAM

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL; the liberal London-based prisoners' support group, has finally gotten around to taking on the United States 'justice' system. Eighteen individuals—most of them Third World or women—have been designated political prisoners by AI.

Among these is Eva Kutas; a Portland (Oregon) feminist who was convicted of harboring a fugitive and is now serving a two-year sentence at the Pleasanton (Calif.) Federal Correctional Institution. Kutas; a staff member at a successful transition house for female offenders, was framed by a grand jury on perjured evidence because of her political activities.

Her companion; Ray Englin; a long-time activist in anti-war, Black Panther and Wounded Knee support work; got four years; but is now out on appeal. The two were victimized in a witch hunt atmosphere promoted by the authorities over their embarrassment for having let the fugitive out of prison on a 'social pass' in the first place.

(For more info, check with the Kutas-Englin Support Committee; 436 36th Ave., Santa Cruz; Calif. 95062, or write directly to Kutas c/o No. 3070; P.O. Box 1000, Pleasanton; Calif. 94566; U.S.A.)

Another of those listed by AI is Gary Tyler; a 19-year-old black from Louisiana, who was railroaded into prison on a phoney charge of murder in connection with an attack by a white mob on a school bus. AI says rather tentatively that Tyler "may have been wrongly convicted... and that the reason for this miscarriage of justice may have been ethnic in origin".

Others on the list are Lee Otis Johnson; civil rights worker imprisoned on a drug charge; the Wilmington 10; more civil rights workers; sent to prison on arson charges following a white raid on the black community; Paul Mohawk and Richard Skyhorse; American Indian Movement militants facing a murder frame-up in California; Imari Obadele, serving seven years for 'assaulting' police during a raid on the Republic of New Africa headquarters in Jackson (Mississippi) and David Rice and T. J. Reddy.

—Open Road (Canada) winter 77/78.

ANARCHY & ORDURE

THE DEMONSTRATION in the House of Commons on July 6 by two people who pelted Members of Parliament with horse-shit brings to mind passages from two of the great political satires of English literature.

In the last of Jonathan Swift's *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, better known as *Gulliver's Travels* (the first edition of which appeared in 1726 and the first unexpurgated edition in 1735), Lemuel Gulliver travels to a country where the dominant animals are rational horses (Houyhnhnms) and the brute beasts are degenerate men (Yahoos). On his first encounter with a herd of the latter, the narrator takes refuge under a tree and keeps them away with his sword:

Several of this cursed breed, getting hold of the branches behind, leaped up into the tree, from whence they began to discharge their excrements on my head: however, I escaped pretty well, by sticking close to the stem of the tree, but was almost stifled with the filth, which fell about me on every side.

In William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (first published in 1890), the narrator is transported in a dream from the socialist movement of the nineteenth century into the socialist utopia of the twenty-second century. As he travels through a beautified London he is surprised to see among some 'silly old buildings' the Houses of Parliament, and asked his guide: "Do you still use them?" The guide's answer is as follows:

Use them! Well, yes, they are used for a sort of subsidiary market, and a storage place for manure, and they are handy for that.

Later the narrator sees down Whitehall 'the high tower of the Parliament House, or Dung Market'. The man who explains the workings of the future society to the narrator comments:

Dung is not the worst kind of corruption; fertility may come of that, whereas mere dearth came from the other kind, of which these walls once held the great supporters.

Seen in this perspective, we may wonder whether the two demonstrators who attacked the House of Commons with such appropriate material this month were successors of the Swiftian Yahoos or predecessors of the Morrisian utopians. At least our gentler readers may consider, they hurt no one—unlike Auguste Vaillant, who threw a bomb into the French Chamber of Deputies in 1893 and was guillotined for his gesture. On the other hand, our fiercer readers may consider, they gave MPs a good dose of their own medicine like the CS gas thrown into the House of Commons in 1970.

It is interesting that the latest outrage, like the one eight years ago, is propaganda by deed against the British regime in Northern Ireland. John

McSherry is a member of the Troops Out Movement, Yana Mintoff of the Socialist Workers Party, and they were protesting against prison conditions for Irish Republicans in Ulster. As a result they seem likely to experience prison conditions in England, but they have concentrated attention on a continuing scandal in the way a relatively liberal tyranny is perpetuated in the United Kingdom.

It is also interesting that those responsible for the latest outrage are not themselves British—rather like the people who suffer in the prisons of Northern Ireland, and indeed like so many people at all levels of British society, right up (or down) to Prince Philip. The press has revealed that Yana Mintoff is the daughter of Mr. Mintoff; we are able to reveal that John McSherry is the son of Mr. McSherry. Whatever their national or personal origins, though, they will now be remembered in the honoured list of the struggle of people against Parliament.

What is the anarchist reaction to this demonstration? The only honest one is that we wish we had done it ourselves! We look forward to the time when Parliament is no more than a historical monument, at best a dung market. In the meantime we welcome any action which brings home to people in Parliament and in society at large what a farce—and what kind of a farce—the place is. We wouldn't want to drive MPs out of the Chamber by force, like Cromwell's or Lenin's soldiers, because we see Parliament as something to be grown out of rather than fought against. But a bit of direct action which raises the right kind of stink is no bad thing.

It is incidentally good to see that, like the Angry Brigade bombs, the horse-shit damaged property rather than people. And there is something neatly symbolic in the fact that the two demonstrators are being charged not with contempt of Parliament but with criminal damage to the carpet!

It is also good to see that, with only a few exceptions, MPs themselves took the demonstration in good part. There have been remarks that such things are just not dung or are out of order, and that the two shit-throwers were simply trying to place a new motion on the floor of the House. But although it was a trivial enough incident on its own, it did disturb the insulated atmosphere of the place, with all its honourable gentlemen and honourable ladies, its bizarre procedure and vocabulary, by bringing the real world into an unreal world for a few moments, by confronting a spectacle with a situation. If only it had been on television!

But in the end it all reminds us that rather more serious action must be taken against Parliament sooner or later, and rather more than shit will be flying when the time comes. N.W.

LETTERS

SICKERT

Dear FREEDOM

After the Great War, when Walter Sickert became the newly self-styled Richard, with the change of persona it appears there came the later style of painting too.

'All the messes we made we made in the Whistlerian days of the reprises of black and brown and all dark colours which never dry etc. are avoided. These blond shadows like some Empire dinner service being nearly all white dry ... and the more you repaint them the better. Then when the whole thing is absolutely complete in light and shade and drawing you just slip the last skin of colour on.' Also, 'I adore something camaïeuse. Light and shade the shade very fair and coloured,' he commented of that subsequent, dry approach.

In that other recent show of his work - the one so poorly displayed and lighted at Plymouth City Art Gallery - there was, for example, the later, raw version of Hugh Walpole (1929) which, dear Arthur, was as good a portrait, I'd suggest, as one might ever expect to see; particularly so when it happens to be a wet and windy day with the fishing being off, yet again.

Regards,
Tony Adams

Eastwick

ARMY

Dear Colonel

I would love to agree with you if only for the honour of the regiment but. You say it was Brigadier P.E. Hutchins FRSA. MBIM the Society's chairman who gave the Duke the bird and not you the vice chairman but one should realise that an answer to a reporter's question is a public statement. Tell the Brigadier to expect an early far east posting and whether it was the Colonel or the Brigadier who blew the whistle on the Duke in relation to which one of his three small paintings I accept your version my Colonel. The Society was formed in 1925 as an Officers Art Society and it was not until 1964 that it was opened to all three services on an equal footing and "Anyone of any rank ect." Yesterday I went along and rechecked and in the full page of the Top Brass admin. I cannot find one 'other rank' but a roll call of senior officers each with his full rank before his name. There is not a single Sergeant, Corporal or Private in that drum roll in front of any name only high ranking officers and "was" or "who had served" in relation to ancient wars evades the issue. Of the names of published members in the catalogue ... they range from a Major General to a Vice Admiral with enough senior officers among them to form a private army but no where could I find a Sergeant, Corporal or Private Soldier by rank only high ranking officers.

If such serving members of the armed forces are there then they should be so recorded ... if an officer then so with other ranks. As for Rich-

ard Walker and Robert Hill. Their major display was in the side gallery to the right within the Mall Gallery and I am informed that they paid for that private exhibition in the side gallery as their own private exhibition. Thank you for the invitation to your exhibition which, as always, I enjoyed and may I offer my congratulations to any Colonel who can spell bourgeois.

Sincerely

Arthur Moyse
(Private - retd)



CIENFUEGOS

Dear Comrades,

Since something I wrote in the Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review is singled out by your reviewer ("are we expected to take this kind of thing seriously?") * may I briefly reply?

I didn't write that "sexual problems are pre-occupations of the middle class". I wrote that so-called "sexual politics" are. "Sexual politics" are simply the adjustment of authoritarian morality. The middle class must have this morality both to produce its repressed and highly structured members (no pun intended) and to attack the working class on behalf of its bourgeois masters.

I didn't say, either, that sexual problems "can be solved only by joining the working class". Because of lack of time and money, because of the infliction of authoritarian morality by the middle class, the working class has more than its share of sexual misery; the point is that, not being a social elite, it doesn't need it.

Best wishes,
Fraternally yours,
Mark Hendy.

*Vol. 39 no. 13.

MORALS

Dear FREEDOM

I am grateful for Philip Sansom's letter and for his concern.

At least he agrees with me in denouncing the barbaric distinction contained in 'Legacy of Empire' (FREEDOM May 27). However, he goes on to assume certain aspects of my outlook and his assumptions are not quite correct. I am with him completely in his appreciation of the objectivity, or lack of it, in 'our Press.' I am with

him when he describes the horrific legacy of imperialism. The other points which he raises do not invalidate my basic point (which perhaps I didn't make very well) which is, that I find it appalling that we should be asked to shed our tears for one horror and to spare them for another, shuffling around 'responsibility' like a pack of cards. We are here talking about the horrific deaths of human beings. I believe in a capacity inherent in humanity which strives for 'good', otherwise I would not be able to see any hope of creating a more just and peaceful community for my fellows. Therefore, I will regret (weep for), and aim to reveal in truth, any act which belies that humanity in which I believe. I do not claim that this task is easy. It is one which has concerned anarchists for decades. I am not expecting an easy or expedient solution - I am seeking a just one. Once this question is established, then we can move on to consider his most valuable question: "what the hell are they doing there in the first place?" This question develops, rather than invalidates, my basic point.

Sincerely

Ann W Gleave

Barnstable

ECOLOGY

I read with great interest the essay by Brian Morris 'Ecology and Mysticism' appearing in FREEDOM (13 May) and I wish to offer a few comments and criticisms concerning some. On the whole the essay was well prepared and thoughtful and I am in agreement with the thesis that religious mysticism does not represent a true or sound ecological perspective.

The argument, however, was limited to the question of vegetarianism which, while certainly an aspect of ecology, cannot be regarded as the whole of ecology. To distinguish vegetarianism from ecology (as the part from the whole) will not alter the fact that religious mysticism is not ecology, but the importance of making this distinction lies in the simple fact that not all vegetarians are religious mystics. You have at best proved that particular manifestations of vegetarianism are not ecological but you avoided the question of whether or not, under other circumstances, vegetarianism can in fact be ecological. You cannot conclude, therefore, that all forms of vegetarianism are not ecological.

Brian Morris did state that it was not his intention to 'put down' vegetarianism and acknowledged that vegetarians are indeed within the ecology movement, but it is terribly misleading to impose the narrow limitations of mysticism upon all vegetarians. Not all vegetarians consume food by exploitative and non-ecological means (agribusiness); or consume commodities made from animals (clothing, cosmetics etc); or condone animal vivisection,

SOWETO IS IN S. AFRICA

IT'S difficult to know quite where to start writing about the situation in South Africa. The battle lines have been drawn for a long time now and anyone who wants to find out about the structures and mechanisms of one of the most successful machines of oppression this century has seen need only drop into any local library in most U.N. member nations.

Face to face contact with the day to day existence of this monstrosity exerts, at first, a numbing fit of paranoia. Then, after a while among the people who have spent generations learning how to survive, the week by week combination of social, economic, political and military events takes on a certain fascination. The overriding thought one keeps coming back to is about how they can continue. How can the 5 million continue to believe their own propaganda and live out the lie. How can the 25 million continue to endure.

In a country fraught with a plethora of sad memorials yet one more has passed. Two years ago this month Soweto exploded. The human wreckage of that powerful confrontation has spread out over the last 24 months and there has surely been no shortage of reports in the dailies focusing on the tense exchange between state and people revolving in a dance of remembrance.

The message flashed across the front pages of the world will have been that the day 'passed off in relative peace'. But the overwhelming evidence shows that Soweto lives on as just one amongst many areas of the country where the forces of oppression and resistance continue to meet in an undeclared civil war. Rather than centre on the flash point of Soweto in mourning it might be useful to chart the events of one week to see how the terrible interlocking process continues.

This was the week that contained the memory of the 'Soweto riots'. But to the people of South Africa it was just another week where the development of events as they affect everybody could not be distinguished from any other.

Starting with the courts and prisons, the government chose this week to announce that 440 people were serving sentences under the security laws. Some of these prisoners, it was disclosed, are as young as 14. A further 36 are serving life sentences. This of course does not account for the thousands that are held 'for investigation'. These detainees have no right to appeal their plight, and may be kept for up to a year in solitary confinement without knowledge of their whereabouts disclosed to relatives or friends.

In Pretoria two men were accused of recruiting 'freedom fighters' for training in Botswana and elsewhere.

In Cape Town two British university lecturers were given 12 and 8 years for writing and trying to distribute pamphlets. Since they sought to disperse them by blowing them into the air through a funnel attached to a crude explosive device they were charged and convicted under the terrorism act.

At Bethel 18 men were charged with 'furthering the aims and objectives of the banned Pan African Congress'. Witnesses, young students who have been held for up to a year in solitary confinement, are testifying to the allegations that the 18 encouraged protest during the Soweto revolt.

At Dundee 16 young people, 7 under 18, were given 5 year suspended sentences. The students were allowed to plead guilty to 'public violence' rather than face trial on the original charge of 'sabotage.' However three of the students have been singled out to face a murder charge. The 'case' arises from a demonstration in 1976 when a local high school was stormed and burned. A teacher died in the fire.

In Johannesburg police arrested Molahlehi Ntloko. He is the tenth victim (so far) of government action against the Young Christian Workers movement which is supported by the Catholic church.

And in this week Mary Magcina learned that her son Joseph had been shot in the stomach. She was told this by a recently released patient of the Baragwanath hospital. Neither Mrs Magcina nor any other member of her family has seen the 19 year old since he was picked up by police along with other Soweto students nine months ago. When she went to the central police station Mrs Magcina was told that her son was suffering from appendicitis. Officials would not let her see him or even admit where he was being treated.

In western Coloured Township a woman squatter was found frozen to death. She was the second squatter to die of exposure in the same yard in that township this week. The victim's employer, a Mrs. Goodman, was quoted as saying "the police have tried in vain to get rid of the squatters."

Indeed the police are doing their utmost. In the western Cape peninsula the tin and cardboard squatter shacks are still being demolished. There are an estimated 230,000 squatters in the peninsula. 21,000 in the townships Modderdam, Unibell and Werkgenat have so far lost their hovels. Another 20,000 are due to be made homeless at a place called Crossroads. Yet the buses still come every morning to take these people to work in and around Cape Town.

Within the confines of 'European politics' the issue of the week was no exception - apartheid. As usual the class nature of economic exploitation via police/military repression is by-passed. The 'European' media focused on the 'opening' of Johannesburg and Durban for 'African' business. The relaxation of the 'colour bar' at public theatres was highly touted. And the main financial weekly featured the 'black consumer market' reporting that "in 12 years blacks will make up 50% of the buying power courted by retailers." A powerful reason, the magazine concluded, to start advertising research and push for an end to apartheid in business.

However the government is not easily swayed. Almost in reaction to its own

'weakness' over theatre openings the week drew to a close with the banning of the ecumenical weekly The Voice, and a highly successful play called 'Lord Why' which documents life inside South African prisons.

The overriding impression, in the midst of the racial perversion, police murder, prison horror, social suffering and cultural repression is that business is booming. The economy is coming back to full strength after the recession. The rule of the minority buoyed up by its recovery is broadcasting its unassailability.

In this week the price of gold on the world market began to rise again after a two year slump. Other minerals, particularly coal, are beginning to receive a world market.

Wool sales were up to 98 million kilograms representing earnings of more than £97 million. The biggest buyers were Britain, France and West Germany.

It was announced this week that 200 small and medium sized Belgian companies are eager to get involved in South Africa. They include manufacturers of nails, brushes, textiles, plastics and polyurethane upholstery. Last year South African imports from Belgium stood at £60 million, while exports amounted to £11.8 million.

Makers of bicycles, Raleigh, Peugeot and Le Jeune, are disappointed. They reported this week that rising unemployment throughout southern Africa has meant a fall in their sales. But there is a silver lining. With labour costs lower than almost everywhere except Taiwan, the cycle men say they can now sell cheap forks and frames in Europe.

And so it was reported each day. Car sales up 24% with Volkswagen and Ford in the lead. A report on the steel and engineering industries said output is increasing particularly in the fields of structural steelwork, reinforcing steelwork and shipbuilding. Major markets are in Europe and the United States. The giant Anglo-American company declared a 20% dividend increase based on profits from its Orange Free State mines while migrant labourers from Lesotho and Transkei rioted over rotten food at the company's Welkom mine.

Just another week in South Africa. South African industry, supported by European and US interests remains the backbone of the power structure that keeps Africans in their role of wage slaves by direct and indirect coercion.

One interview with a young Soweto student sums up this week and Soweto in South Africa: 'What is the future of South Africa? The silence that followed as Hindi shifted uncomfortably and searched for words to reply was finally broken by her mother's smothered laugh. 'There is your answer' Mbela said."

The facts speak for themselves. Soweto speaks for Azania.

BRIAN MURPHY

BOOKSHOP NOTES

THE BOOKSHOP IS OPEN: Tuesday - Friday 2-6 p.m.
(Thursdays until 8 p.m.)
Saturdays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

(Aldgate East underground station, Angel Alley is a few yards from Whitechapel Art Gallery). Full address: Freedom Press, in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E.1. Tel: 01-247-9249.

When ordering by mail please add postage as in brackets. Items marked * are published in the USA or Canada.

*Robert W. Kern: Red Years, Black Years. A Political History of Spanish Anarchism 1911-1937. £7.95p (54p).

*Voline: The Unknown Revolution (complete) £4.50p (66p)

Guy Debord: Society of the Spectacle £0.75p (12p)

*Open Road Collective: Anarchist Trade Unions in Spain Today £0.15p (7p)

*Henry D. Thoreau: The Illustrated Walden £3.50p (54p)

*Henry D. Thoreau: The Illustrated Maine Woods £4.95p (54p)

Alexander Herzen: My Past and Thoughts: Edited and Abridged by Dwight MacDonald £4.75p (86p)

Isaiah Berlin: Russian Thinkers (on Herzen, Bakunin and Tolstoy) £6.95p (54p)

*Eugene Pyziur: The Doctrine of Anarchism of Michael A. Bakunin £2.25 (22p)

*Michael Albert: What is to be Undone: A Modern Revolutionary Discussion of Classical Left Ideologies £2.50 (54p)

Ricardo Flores Magon: Land and Liberty: Anarchist Influences in the Mexican Revolution £2.35p (22p)

Albert Meltzer: The Anarchists in London 1935-1955 £1.00 (19p)

BLACKTHORN

Blackthorn Theater is an avantgarde, experimental theater company in Duluth, Minnesota, USA. We perform at the Heritage and Arts Center. We are sponsored by the Duluth Art Institute. (Most of us are Anarchists, but the theater group is not an explicit political grouping).

We need help. The Duluth Playhouse (establishment theater in Duluth) and T. Stepan (manager of the theater building, Heritage and Arts Center) have been trying to obstruct and exclude us from performing space. They frequently have wrecked our legitimate rehearsal situations. And have locked our audiences out of the building. You could help us, if you would, by sending letters to the two addresses I will give below.

Letters should be from individuals (please ask others to write ... if they can identify a connection with a theater, arts or cultural organization it would be helpful).

Obstruction of art is the issue.

Letters to:

Shirley Swain, director, the Heritage and Arts Center
506 West Michigan Street, Duluth, Minnesota, 55802, USA.

The Board, Duluth Art Institute, 506 West Michigan Street
Duluth, Minnesota, 55802, USA.

- Séamas Cain

Blackthorn Theater
presents

The Assassination of
Mick Jagger

written and directed by Séamas Cain

ANARCHIST TRADE UNIONS IN SPAIN TODAY



CNT militants give traditional Spanish anarchist salute at mass rally in Madrid.

Newsjournal available on request
Box 6135, Station G
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

OpenRoad

Anarchist Review Freedom

22 JULY '78

THE TERRIBLE FEDERALIST

Following Bob Potter's article 'Anarchists, Freedom and Parties' in FREEDOM's Anarchist Review of 24 June (no. 12) and the letter from Neil in issue no. 13, we publish an extract from a pamphlet by the anarchist scholar and revolutionist G. Maximov on the way in which anarchist ideas were exploited by Lenin, to his own ends, on the eve of the October Revolution. The pamphlet, entitled 'Bolshevism - Promises and Reality' was originally published by the Free Society Group of Chicago in 1935 with the sub-title 'An Appraisal of the Results of the Marxist Dictatorship over Russia,' and with an introduction by Dr Gregory Heiner. We reprint it - or rather part of it - not just to add to historical debate but above all because what it says is still true! - EDS.

IN HIS WORK, 'On the Problems of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution', (pp. 17-18, vol. 14, Part I) Lenin stated as follows: 'Not a parliamentary republic - a return to it from the S.W.D. would constitute a step backward - but a Republic of Soviets of workers, agricultural labourers, and peasant deputies throughout the land from below upward.'

Lenin and the Bolsheviks, as we see, aimed at organising a republic of the Soviets. All power to the Soviets! This means said Lenin when addressing the soldiers, that 'all the power in the state, from below up, from the remotest village to every city block in Petrograd must belong to the Soviets of the Workers, Soldiers, Agricultural Labourers, etc., Deputies.' (Address to the Soldiers - Vol. 14, Part I, p. 75).

But what in essence is a republic of Soviets? According to the opinion of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, it is a Paris Commune, extending over the whole of Russia. It is, defines Lenin in 'The Problems of the Proletariat in Our Revolution,' - 'the highest type of democratic state - a state which in some respects already ceases to be a State and which, to quote Engels, is no more a state in the true sense of the word. It is a state of the type of the Paris Commune, a state which replaces the standing army and police by the direct army of the people itself. The Russian Revolutions in 1905 and 1917 created just such a government, a Republic of the Worker's Soviets, etc.' (Vol. 14, Part 1, pp. 48-49).

One of the characteristics of the new state of the type of the Paris Commune is the arming not only of the proletariat or of the toiling masses, but the arming of the people as a whole. The army is the entire people: as such the army cannot be separated from the people and thus cannot be placed without and over the people. The same is true of the police: The entire people carry the responsibility of maintaining quiet and order.

The second basic characteristic of such a new state constitutes the complete elimination of bureaucracy. 'The state authorities and the bureaucracy again are either replaced by the direct power of the people, or to a lesser degree are placed under special control, thus becoming subject not only to election, but to recall upon the first demand of the people. This reduces them to a position of simple delegates. Instead of a privileged group of highly paid bourgeois position-holders, they become workers specially 'equipped' whose compensation is NO HIGHER than that of the average worker.' (Lenin, Vol. 14, Part 1, pp. 24-25).

Continuously and persistently Lenin affirmed his above defined stand. At all times, everywhere and in every manner he shouted, 'Prevent the establishment of a standing army separated from the people, which constitutes a most certain generator of all manner of attempts to take away freedom.' (The Assembly of the Peasant Deputies, Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 90).

To the question, why the organisation of a standing army, a



ТОВ. ЛЕНИН ОЧИЩАЕТ
ЗЕМЛЮ ОТ НЕЧИСТИ.

'COMRADE LENIN SWEEPS THE WORLD OF ITS RUBBISH'

police and a bureaucracy should not be permitted, Lenin gave answer, because, 'a bureaucracy appointed 'from above' for the guidance of local populations always has been and forever will remain one of the surest means for the re-establishment of the monarchy, - as will the standing army and the police.'

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(Where the Counter-revolutionary Steps of the Provisional Government Lead To, Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 129. Also, The One Question of Principles, p. 226).

What in fact is the power of the state? What are its basic elements, and what is generally meant by the state apparatus? From the viewpoint of the preoctober Lenin "by the state apparatus is meant first of all a standing army, police and bureaucracy." (Will the Bolsheviks Retain the Government Power? Vol. 14, Part 2, p. 227).

Thus, as the preoctober Lenin pictured to himself, and impressed upon the minds of the working masses, the peasants and the soldiers, the Republic of the Soviets was nothing else but an anarchist federation of many thousands of Soviet-Communes scattered over the vast spaces of Russia. This, in fact, is a complete democracy which has reached its logical state of development, Anarchism. The bourgeois socialists cried, "Lenin has ascended the vacant throne of Bakunin". Is it really true Is Lenin an anarchist? The answer is both "yes" and "no".

Preoctober Lenin followed the example of the founder of Christianity, who spoke to the people in parables whose hidden meaning he disclosed only to his disciples. All of preoctober Lenin's agitational essays which are appeals to the masses, have a predominant anarchistic tone. However, all his more or less theoretical essays, intended only for a narrow circle of readers, are permeated with the musty odour of Marxism.

Until October, Lenin was guided by the example of the Marx who was forced by the events of 1870-1, for reasons of tactics, to lean in the direction of anarchism and to write "The Civil War in France", which stands apart from all his works and has almost no connection with his general conception of socialism. Similarly, the events of 1917 forced Lenin to deviate from his dogma in order to further it. But postoctober Lenin shows his true face, and thus discloses the insincerity of the preoctober Lenin. The desire to develop his insignificant faction of the social democratic party into a party of significance and his peculiar desire for power pointed out to Lenin the path he was to follow in order to secure domination over the masses. This same will for power led him to adopt the methods by which he became the idol of this party and of the toiling population. Thus, the heretofore outspoken centralist, who writing in "Iskra" stated that "it was not the business of the proletariat to occupy itself with federalism", decided in the name of centralism to become a terrible federalist.

That this is a factual appraisal of Lenin's tactics is confirmed in a statement made at the time by the present dictator, Stalin. In 1919, while still Commissar of National Affairs, Stalin with his native blunt stupidity publicly declared that the Communists "are moving via federalisation towards centralisation". This statement frankly discloses the reason which prompted Lenin to stand for "a republic without a police force, a standing army, officers subject to recall instead of a bureaucracy enjoying the privilege of bourgeois compensation for their work. We stand for the broadest election, for replacement of any and all the clerks at any time, and for a proletarian wage for work performed". (Our Views, Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 92).

In line with this same policy, Lenin had overfilled the Republic of the Soviets with democratic liberties to the limit. These liberties, it must be stated, constitute in essence the very aspiration of the downtrodden masses. Lenin told the masses what they had known all along from their own experience. - what they felt but were unable to express. But long ago all this was expressed and formulated by the Anarchists. Lenin had merely borrowed these formulations from the anarchists despite the fact that a short time previous he so irreconcilably fought against the principles upon which they were based. He had merely used anarchism for his ultimate purposes.

"The introduction of 'appointed' bureaucracy must not be tolerated. Only 'bodies' created by the people themselves should be recognised." To this the workers and peasants replied: "Verily, 'tis the holy truth!"

"The idea of the need for leadership by a bureaucracy 'appointed' from above is in its essence a fallacious one. It is non-democratic, Cesaristic, a Blanquist Adventure." (Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 129). The masses overwhelmed with enthusiasm shouted: "'Tis the holy truth, Illich! Hail, the Bolsheviks! Hail, the Republic of the Soviets!"

"In a free land," said Lenin, "only those govern the people who are elected by the people themselves for this purpose. . . That is why the governing of the people in free countries is

brought about by means of open party contests and free agreement among them." (Lessons of the Revolution, Vol. 14, Part 2, p. 33). And the masses shouted "Bravo", returned to their abodes with the slogan, "Hail Free Russia!"

"By establishing the institutions of democracy and freedom which were maimed and crippled by Kerensky, the bolsheviks will form a government which NONE will be able to overthrow." (The Bolsheviks Must Secure the Power, Vol. 14, Part 2, (134). And the masses shouted, "Down with the social traitor, the lackey of the bourgeoisie, Lerensky! Hail, the bolsheviks! Hail, the Republic of the Soviets!"

"The freedom of the press," said Lenin to the workers and the peasants, "means this: all the opinions of all the citizens may be freely proclaimed. The power of the state in the form of the soviets take possession of ALL the printing establishments, ALL the paper, and distributes them EQUITABLY, - in the first place, to the state; in the second place to the big parties of significance; in the third place to smaller parties; then comes any group of citizens which has attained a definite number of members and has gathered sufficient signatures. . . This would constitute a real freedom FOR ALL, and not for the rich." (How to Secure the Successful Election of the Constituent Assembly, Vol. 14, Part 2, pp. 112-113).

"Hail the freedom of the press!" replies the masses. "All power to the local soviets!"

"In every constitutional country the right to organise demonstrations remains inalienable to the citizens. . . Any party in a free land has the right to organise demonstrations." (The Sacred and the Entangled, Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 254). "A government aware of the principle that its ENTIRE structure rests upon the will of the majority of the people cannot fear demonstrations previously announced. It will not prohibit them." (Hints p. 255).

"All peaceful manifestations are MERELY political agitations. There must be no forbidding of political agitations, nor should agitations be monopolised. The constitution of a free republic CANNOT forbid peaceful manifestations or any mass demonstrations of any party or any group." (Contradictory Positions, Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 259). "Hail, Lenin!" replied the masses to this. "Let us go forward in the fight for freedom!"

"The basic rule, the first commandment of any true revolutionary movement, should be: Do not depend upon the 'state'; depend only upon the power of your class", spoke Lenin to the workers. "No state is able to be of help to the worker in the village, to the agricultural worker, the daily worker or to the poorest peasant, to the semi-proletarian, IF THEY ARE UNABLE TO HELP THEMSELVES." (The Necessity to Organise a Union of Rural Workers in Russia, Vol. 14, Part 1, pp. 290-1). "Verily, verily!" shouted the workers in reply.

"All the land of the landlords must be confiscated. Nationalisation of all the land in the country and the management of the same must be given to the local soviets of the Deputies of the agricultural workers and peasants." (Vol. 14, Part 1, pp. 17-18).

"The objective difficulty of socialism is intimately bound up with small-husbandry. We do not even pretend to subject it to expropriation or regulation, in fact not even to control." (The Destruction and the Proletarian Fight Against It, Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 243). And the peasant howled in reply, "That's the idea! Truthfully stated!"

"Fear not the initiative and self-expression of the masses; have confidence in their revolutionary organisations, and you will see in all departments of the state functions the same power, greatness, and determination of the workers and peasants which they had demonstrated in their united efforts against Korniloffchina."

Lenin did not fear such initiative and self-expression of the masses because they led him to power. And, indeed, supported by all the toilers of Russia, he finally came to power. Using their initiative and self-expression, the people commenced to bring into realisation what Lenin daily impressed upon them in simple and popular language. While the masses had been absorbed by the struggle and their creative work upon which they fell as the starved do upon food, Lenin diplomatically persuaded the people and forced the Party to organise not a simple army, but a "red army of the workers and peasants", to protect the conquests of the revolution, and to repulse the imperialists. Thus was created a huge strictly disciplined army, separated from the people and in juxtaposition to the people. Under the pretext of protecting and maintaining order and the fight against criminals was organised a most

(CONT PG 12)

A LIFETIME OF FIGHTING



WHEN WILL HE WAKE UP?

Harry McShane: No Mean Fighter, by Harry McShane and Joan Smith. (Pluto Press, paper £2.95).

THIS BOOK was written over a period of five years, half of that time being spent in weekly tape-recording sessions. It portrays a man who devoted his whole life to political thought and action.

Harry McShane was born in 1891 to a Catholic family in Glasgow, where bitter rivalry existed between Catholics and Protestants. He soon became involved in these arguments, but later questioned the faith itself and embraced socialism.

Glasgow at that time was a place where fierce arguments were taking place between the different sections and parties in the socialist movement. All the different varieties were represented, The Independent Labour Party, Social Democratic Federation, Socialist Party of Great Britain, Regular Sunday meetings by these parties attracted large audiences. Indoor meetings were also well attended and there were always heated debates between them.

Harry McShane mentions at that time an anarchist speaker from Edinburgh, called McCara, but says he 'had no influence on me'. McShane joined the British Socialist Party in 1911 when it was formed under the leadership of Victor Grayson. Grayson had earlier been elected to Parliament as an independent socialist after a bye-election. His speeches in parliament on unemployment not only upset the Tories and Liberals, but also Keir Hardie and Philip Snowden. Unlike these two labour leaders, Grayson saw parliament as the camp of the enemy. To be used as a sounding board for socialist ideas.

McShane held the same view. His definition of socialism was one where people were in control of their own lives. His socialism was about doing something here and now, by agitating, organising, and direct action. When he became a member of the Communist Party, he was often opposed to their methods and to the frequent changes in the Party line.

McShane, along with the majority of socialists, thought that the Second International would call for international working-class action to prevent the First World War. When it didn't, the socialist movement was in complete confusion. The ILP leadership said one thing to the membership but when Hardie and Ramsey MacDonald spoke in their constituencies they said another. In 1915, Keir Hardie declared himself in favour of an allied victory, to a gathering of socialists in London.

Harry McShane volunteered for the army, thinking he could agitate against the war among soldiers. He admits it was a 'silly thing to have done' and says it was impossible

to convince volunteers that the war was against their own interests. When he deserted, an anarchist barber called David Baxter hid him away until things became quiet.

After the war McShane worked with John Maclean. They organised propaganda tours and held classes. They agitated in Glasgow among the shipyard workers and made industrial demands of £1 a day, a six-hour day, rationing of work, full wages if unemployed and a reduction in prices. Later, as the short post-war boom ended they started to organise the unemployed.

McShane joined the Communist Party in July 1922. Like a lot of militants and revolutionaries he was attracted by the degree of activity of the Party. The Russian revolution was then a shining example for all socialists. The Bolsheviks had made the revolution against all odds. Kronstadt or the purging of any opposition was either accepted as necessary or for some the information about what was really going on was lacking.

Once in the Communist Party, McShane mainly worked among the unemployed. The National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement had been set up in 1921. Along with Wal Hannington, Harry McShane was very active not only organising the national hunger marches, but agitating and demonstrating for benefits for the unemployed. Many of these struggles concerned evictions of unemployed families. Quite rightly, Harry McShane and the N.U.C.W.C.M. said that what money the unemployed did get should first be spent on food and provisions for the family. The landlord could wait.

All through his life Harry McShane was an active revolutionary. Much of his life was devoted to working full time for the Party. It is strange that throughout the book there is only a brief mention of his marriage, of his wife, and their separation. He does say that she came with him to some meetings, but she does not seem to have been much involved. There is no mention of any further relationships. In fact there is nothing about women and their unequal position in society. He does mention how women assisted the hunger marchers in some towns and in some instances prevented the police from charging the marchers, but there is no analysis of their status and no mention of any socialist position on the matter. It's as though he thought everything would come right after the revolution, meanwhile the capitalist system of exploitation must be ended.

I would have thought Joan Smith would have questioned Harry McShane further about his relationship with his wife and her relationship to the movement. But then one has the feeling that this would have taken the reader's attention away from McShane's political activities which the publishers regarded as more important.

(OVER)

LENIN

(CONT FROM PG 10)

common garden variety of police force; under the pretext of fighting against speculators and counter-revolutionists was created a political secret police; while the promise was made that bureaucracy and its privileged clerks would be abolished, there had been created a bureaucracy the equal of which the world had never seen before. In fact, the new bureaucracy had come to be a new class of lords. Capital punishment, it was promised, would be abolished. Instead, wholesale shootings became an everyday occurrence.

The people were called to freedom, but were led into a stable of state slavery under which human life became less than worthless. The people were called to the banner with the promise of the abolition of piece-work remuneration and other sweat-shop methods of exploitation. Yet, no sooner had they secured the power, than, in the name of the good of the toiling masses and of socialism, it was found expedient "to apply in practice, and to investigate the value of piece work, and the application of any progressive and scientific points of the system of Taylor." (The Soviet Government Problems of the Day, Vol. 15, p. 209). Now after many years of communist over-lordship, Russia has become a country of terrible exploitation, and miserable compensation for the work.

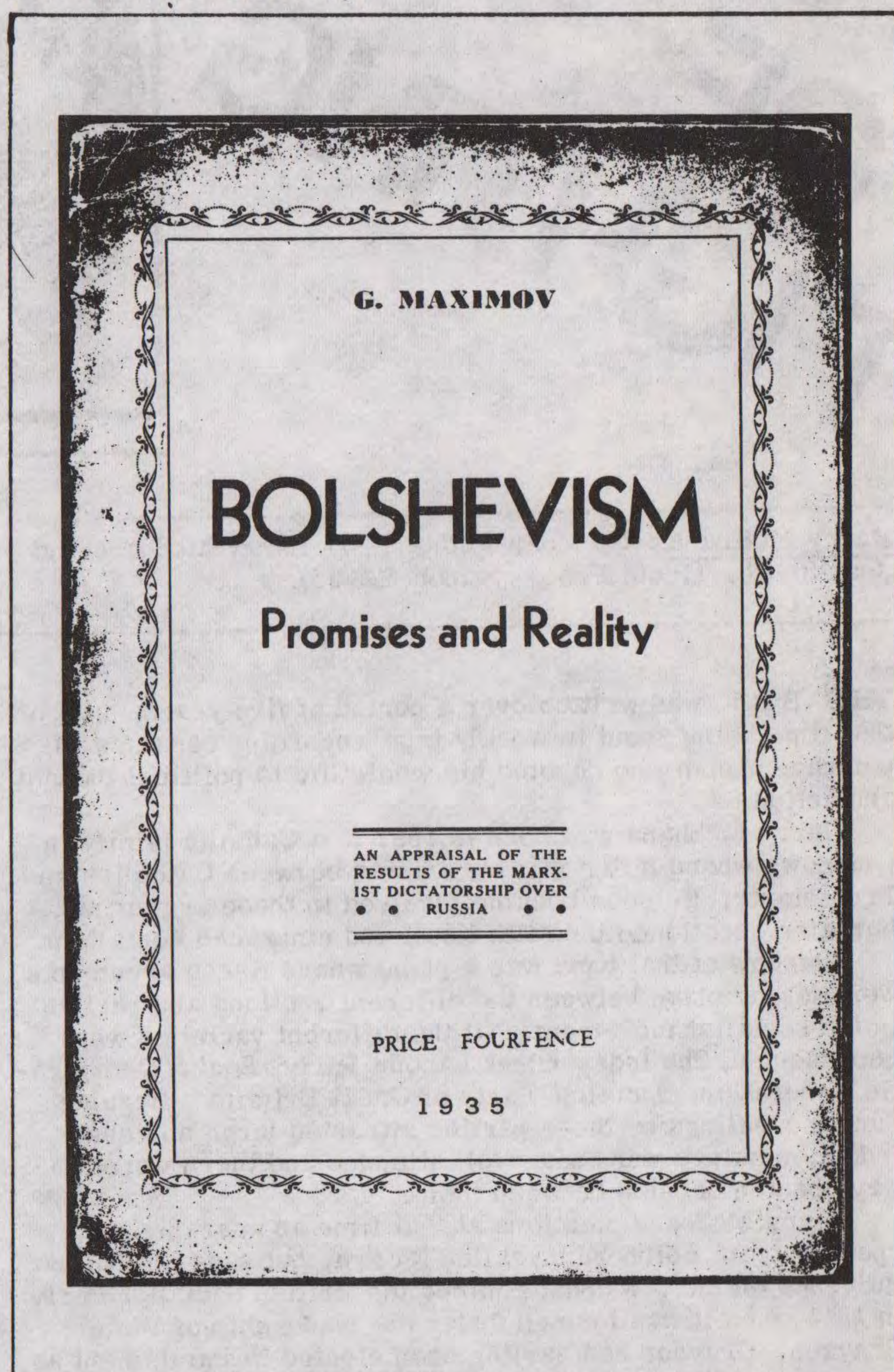
Prior to usurpation of the government powers, Lenin and the bolsheviks maintained that every female-cook must take part in the affairs of the government. Yet, no sooner had they gathered the power to themselves, than Lenin declared to these cooks, "In order to govern you must know how." Do not shove your swinish snouts among the privileged. Where the goat is tied, there she must browse, and cooks must cook, not govern.

Only a while before, initiative and self-expression had been lauded. But no sooner had the usurpation of power been accomplished, than initiative and creative will of the workers were denounced as "petty bourgeois laxity." They were no longer praised as virtues and were replaced by a call for "discipline to the point of compulsion and dictatorship." (Vol. 15, p. 213). Lenin began to talk of the need to introduce "unopposed obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the soviet powers during working hours", (Vol. 15, p.

Harry McShane left the Party in 1951 with the advent of 'The British Road to Socialism'. As he says, 'overnight we all became democratic' and amazingly interested in Acts of Parliament'. After remaining in the Party throughout all the changes of policy in the 'twenties, 'thirties and the Second World War, the change to a parliamentary road to socialism was too much. His leaving then was consistent, because McShane's socialism was based on the working class gaining power through their own organisations and workers controlling their own lives. This could not be won through a capitalist parliament.

Although the book is basically an account of Harry McShane's political activities, he does give some very interesting insights on the political leaders of the time. The leaders who followed every change in the Party line from Moscow. People who said one thing one day with the fullest conviction and said the opposite the next with the same conviction. The pressures put on people to make them toe the line, and how very ordinary people without any record of activity could rise in the party bureaucracy.

220), and of the 'beginning of a period of 'merciless' tightening up, and of a prolonged and insistent fight for a strict proletarian discipline as against the threatening wave of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchy." The slogan of Lenin had now become "to mercilessly tighten up, to discipline severely, to ruthlessly destroy laxity." (Vol. 15, p. 224). And this policy has been and is being followed to this day with all the mercilessness prescribed. And the tightening up and the disciplining has been carried out over the land of Russia with such zeal and fervour, that it has ceased to be a land and has become instead a huge prison, a vast correction institution, from which Mussolini and Hitler are learning their lessons in discipline, and upon which the body of international reactionaries look with concealed envy.



McSHANE

(CONT FROM PG 11)

Like other people who finally leave the Communist Party, Harry McShane had very little to turn to. He had to find work again and being over sixty, and with his excellent record, this wasn't easy. At sixty-two he was back at his trade as an engineer working at Harland and Wolffs. Although McShane had worked full-time for the Party he remained at heart a rank-&-file craftsman. A man who had a pride in doing a job and doing it well. However, from an anarchist point of view the book shows how some people whose ideas are so close to ours can spend years in an authoritarian party, working away only to be finally disillusioned.

P. T.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO RASKOLNIKOV ?

WE LIVE, as ever, in a time of double standards when in our mind we bear allegiance to come morality and in our heart for reasons of fear, loyalty or blind emotionalism we give public or private support to a morality that is the obverse of the pious platitudes that we mouth when serving out our time as summer soldiers. Dostoyevsky in *Crime and Punishment* spelt out the problem when his character the student Raskolnikov murdered an allegedly evil old woman for her money, arguing that a small evil can be justified when the result is the greater good. The great good being Raskolnikov being able to spend the 'evil' old woman's hoarded money. In calm reflection in school, cafe, pub or debating room we know that Dostoyevsky was right when he assigned Raskolnikov to the literary chop, for a lesser evil does not justify a greater good. But in 1978 too many rest their weight onto their other moral leg, arguing that to kill some unfortunate Italian politician or some German entrepreneur is a minor evil that can be justified by the moral, social or political good that will come from it. If they are correct then Raskolnikov was right for the greater good is not a Platonic absolute but a Pavlovian reflex action dictated by the temper of the day. Violence is no more than an extension of the political dialogue, and all human activities are political, comrades, and once we give it a moral aura in its own right then we cannot stand in judgement when the State, the muggers and all the political rip-off factions Right, Left or Lunatic Centre kick some unfortunate in the balls, for each and all are doing it for the greater good. But Raskolnikov was wrong.

I know that Raskolnikov was wrong but of my human frailty I will commit minor evils for my own personal wellbeing but I will excuse them by staying silent about them, enjoying the fruits with the guilt until time absorbs both. On July 4th the Home Office sent out invitations to the members of the Fourth Estate to take their seats in Westminster Abbey to join in the homage, 4.45 p.m., to the Prison Service's centenary. I, through laziness, indifference and the knowledge that there would be no free drinks did not attend but with hand on heart I cannot understand why I or anyone else should be called upon to attend 'an ecumenical service of thanksgiving and dedication' to a 'Central government (who) first became involved in prison affairs in 1779 when it took over the cost of maintaining prisons in the hulks set up as a temporary expedient after transportation to the American colonies was halted in 1776 because of the War of Independence'. And I am quoting from Amy Edwards' introduction to the official H.M. Prisons pamphlet on the Prison System. The State and its society would argue in moments of mental aberration that the prison system is a grim necessity that all men of good will, numbering off from the left, hope will wither away, but to kneel and pray for any system that has over the years incorporated killing, torture, force feeding, solitary confinement, in the House of the Lord Forever seems to me the ultimate blasphemy. Every man or woman prisoner is incarcerated because of Murphy's Law 'if a thing can go wrong it will' and the State operates the principle of Parkinson's Law 'where ever there is vacant time or space fill it', which means if there is an empty cell fill it and if prisons are too overcrowded to be administerable then go crazy liberal with a

small l and reduce sentences.

Some weeks ago the Advisory Council on the Penal System recommended a reduction in various sentences and every saloon bar roared its rage in protest yet the simple fact is that with lack of staff and cell space the Prison Department is unable to cope with the numbers of people that the State is shovelling into its overcrowded prisons. I will give my own figures, and not from a Home Office handout, of the prison population serving Life Sentences; and Life is handed out for offences ranging from rape, grievous bodily harm, buggery and armed robbery. In 1957 there were 122 'lifers' and in 1978 there are now 1,300 and it is expected that by 1980 there will be 1,500, for while ten people were given life sentences in 1958, 21 drew the short straw from the State in 1976. And now the physical arm of the State has warned the legal arm of the State that it cannot honour its end of the bargain.

I do not grow maudling over Raskolnikov for, clear-eyed and intelligent he destroyed a fellow human for the most logical and sensible of reasons—pure naked self interest, and if Raskolnikov ran into a brick wall on the way out I would wait at least ten minutes before giving the kiss of life.

It is so very easy to hand out pious platitudes and I do not doubt that the Auxiliary Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool did that at the Westminster Abbey Prison Service made notable by my non-attendance, but we can always fall into that same trap with vague noble statements that many among us would fear to put into operation. We propagate the virtues of a free society and despite our human frailties we should in our small way attempt to demonstrate its values to our fellow men and women but within the society of the day with all its manifest human imperfections we must not stand aside.

The abolition of the death penalty was a thing to be applauded, whatever the reason for it the Advisory Council's recommendation for reducing massive prison sentences should be welcomed yet what can I say of the Home Office's Report of the Parole Board 1977. Table 1 of Appendix 3 gives the statistics of Parole Recommendations and the offences range from Manslaughter to Drug Trafficking but I am at a genuine loss to understand why 'Heterosexual' and 'Homosexual' should be classified without any other explanation, as offences. But here are human tragedies enshrined in virginal figures. 10,989 prisoners in 1977 seeking parole, 5,218 getting and, the great statistical mystery, 645 refusing to apply. And in the end, in 1977, 538 prisoners were sent back to prison for fouling up their parole release, an increase of 2.4 per cent in human tragedy.

While deploring and decrying a society that believes it has a necessity to imprison its fellow citizens I can still offer advice to the State and that is to free that great number of prisoners serving small sentences, for their punishment was the traumatic horror of being arrested, tried and imprisoned, and having freed them do not let the legal branch refill those empty but once overcrowded prison cells merely to fulfil Parkinson's Law.

ARTHUR MOYSE

Report of the Parole Board 1977 (H.M.S.O. £1.15).
The Prison System in England & Wales 1878-1978, by Amy Edwards (H.M.S.O.)

AN INTERVIEW WITH

'MEISHKA'

Recorded by PAUL AVRICH

ON FRIDAY, June 9 1978 Morris ('Meishka') Schulmesiter, one of the few anarchist survivors of both the 1905 and 1917 revolutions, died in a Bronx nursing home in his ninetieth year. An opponent of all governments, Communist as well as monarchist, Meishka had the distinction of taking part in 'expropriations' against tsarists and bolsheviks alike. A year ago he fell ill with cancer, for which until recently he was receiving treatment. But there was a time to live, he felt, and a time to die. The time to die had come. And Meishka died as courageously as he had lived. First he refused further medication, and then he stopped eating. While strapped to his bed to be fed intravenously, he was visited by an old comrade, Hannah Spivak. "Get me a knife", he pleaded, "so I can cut these bonds." Hannah replied that she had no knife. "Then give me a match and I'll burn them away." Only in death did Meishka obtain the freedom that he craved, and his comrades and friends mourn his passing. Three years ago, on April 8 1975, I visited Meishka with Ahrne Thorne, editor of the now defunct *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*. For three hours he reminisced, speaking in Yiddish and Russian. He spoke with intense excitement, as if reliving the whole experience. The following is what he told us.

I was born in a village near the town of Kleschel', Grodno province, on April 10 1889. When I was about four years old I went to live with my grandmother in Brest-Litovsk and remained there till the age of nine or ten. At that time my father went to work for a wholesalesugar distributor in Bialystok, and he took me to live with him. I began to study in the seventh grade of a Talmud-Torah and completed the eleventh grade at the age of thirteen, when I was Bar-Mitzvahed. I then attended a Yeshiva for one year, during which I started losing my religious faith. So I quit the Yeshiva - I was fourteen then - and my cousin, my father's brother's son, gave me a job as a weaver in his small factory. I was there for about three years, until the age of seventeen, and began attending radical meetings, held mostly in the woods outside of town.

That was during the great period of social ferment that culminated in the 1905 revolution, and Bialystok was a center of radical activity of every sort. In 1906 I witnessed a pogrom in the city. By then I had read Kropotkin's *Appeal to the Young and Conquest of Bread* and other anarchist works and was a member of the Anarchistische Veberische Federatsie (Anarchist Weavers' Federation). Yuda Grossman (Roshchin) came from western Europe and debated with Bundists and Social Revolutionaries. Nobody could beat him in debate, and he confirmed me in my anarchist faith. He walked the streets of Bialystok with his pockets full of leaflets and papers, absent minded reading some revolutionary brochure. I met him later in Moscow, in 1918, well dressed in a suit and with a well groomed beard, a totally different man. He was ten or twelve years older than me, one of three brothers who were anarchists; one of them - Avram - was killed by the police. Yuda himself never

took part in 'ex's' or other militant activities. His specialty was speaking and debating, in which he was an undefeated champion. He made a great impression. Zeydl and also Yasha 'Schlumper' - who knew his revolutionary Talmud - were other anarchists who debated effectively against Bundists and SRs, as well as maximalists like Lippe Katz, winning many new adherents to the movement.

The anarchists in Bialystok were known as the Chornoye Znamya (Black Flag) group, composed of members of the Weavers' Federation (like myself), the Bakers' Federation, the Tanners' Federation, the Cabinetmakers' Federation, the Tailors' Federation and other trade federations, each of which had an anarchist group or contingent, that of the weavers being the largest. There were about sixty or seventy active anarchists in all. Most of us - especially those like myself with common first names - had nicknames. I was Meishka 'Polzhidok', another was Meishka 'Konke', still another Meishka 'Dampf'. This last was a reflection of the introduction in 1905-1906 of new weaving machines, powered by electricity (though called 'dampf' - steam), in place of our old hand machines. Many of the bosses - even Jewish bosses - preferred to hire Polish weavers because the Jews wouldn't work on Saturday. Jewish and Polish workers armed themselves and sometimes fought over the right to work. That is how we won the right to do a job.

We were armed also for our revolutionary activities. Among the anarchists we all had Brownings (I once had an accident with mine) and engaged in gun battles with the police. Aron Elin ('Gelinker') was particularly active, and also Yudi, who was a good speaker. Grossman used to call them 'Vort un Tat' (Word and Deed). - Yudi and Elin. Yudi later emigrated to America and became the manager of Camp Tamiment. Striga and Meier 'Babe' and another comrade were blown up by their own bomb in a drozhki in Bialystok. Yankl 'Presser', a tanner, and his comrade Meishl, were surrounded by police who raided their house. Yankl threw a bomb down from the roof, and when the police cornered them Meishl shot Presser and then himself. He killed himself but Presser survived. We once made an 'ex' against a liquor store collector (a government employee, as liquor was a state monopoly) and took money at gunpoint from private manufacturers, and sometimes killed them if they didn't pay. The money was used mostly for propaganda - to hold conferences, buy paper and print for literature, and so on. Now I look at all this with different eyes. It wasn't necessary.

The following year, 1907, I went to Minsk, as the police in Bialystok were looking for me and things were getting hot there. The anarchist group in Minsk had a printing press and a bomb laboratory and carried out propaganda both of word and deed. The printing press (Anarkhiia) was run by Boris Engelson with a girl who afterwards went to London and is mentioned by Rudolf Rucker in his autobiography. Mikhail Kukuts-Kovetsky,

a Latvian, made the bombs. In 1904, in a convoy of political prisoners en route to Siberia, he was liberated by anarchists in the town of Slonim who gave him a loaf of bread with a Browning inside. Other members of our group, besides myself, were a girl named Lisa and a young man Savitsky.

On April 1 1907, Feliks and one of his comrades went to a little park to try out the bombs. Feliks spotted a detective and winked to his comrade to warn him, but they were surrounded and caught, Feliks having wounded a few detectives. The rest of the group (including myself) were arrested soon after and locked up in Minsk prison. Under pressure from the police, Kukuts-Kovetsky had turned informer and was responsible for the arrests. Knives were smuggled to three other anarchists in the prison - Fomin, Stakh and Solovyov - who got out of their cell, went to the special tower where Kukuts-Kovetsky was being held, killed the guard, then killed Kukuts-Kovetsky. The alarm was sounded and they were caught. After a trial they were sentenced to be hanged. Boris tried to organize their escape but was himself captured, taken to Vilna and shot by a firing squad. His three comrades in Minsk had meanwhile been hanged.

I had almost evaded arrest, but was seized by two gendarmes in the railroad station at Vilna. They found on me revolutionary proclamations to peasants produced by our printing press in Minsk, as well as a false passport in the name of 'Zakhar Nefidov'. Henceforth my police dossier would read 'Zakhar Nefidov, alias Schulmeister'. I asked if I could buy an apple as I had not eaten in some time. They said all right, and I made a break for it, only to run smack into the arms of military police. Returned to Minsk prison, I was sentenced to four years of hard labor. I spent the first eight months in chains, day and night, never taken off. Our trustee was an anarchist named Kirill Pavlovich Grodetsky, who had been a fellow university student with the district procurator, who recognised him when he visited his comrades in prison. Leivik the poet, a Bundist, shared my cell with me. During our three years together he wrote numerous poems and plays, while the others talked or played chess.

In 1910 I, Savitsky and a few other comrades were transferred to Moscow, where I spent the next two years in prison at hard labor. From there, in 1912, I was taken on my next etape to Minsk, Slonim and Bialystok, where I had been falsely accused of shooting a policeman. I was made to stand in a line-up but my accuser picked out a different man. Nevertheless, I was sentenced to eternal banishment in Siberia. But first I was returned to Moscow, to my same old cell, to await transportation. Finally, in 1913, I was deported to the village of Mukhtin, Kerensk district, Irkutsk province, near the city of Yakutsk, with the Lena on one side and the taiga - where I once got lost overnight but met a hunter who led me out - on the other. There were eight of us politicals in that village, and we lived communally, three anarchists and five maximalists, all very nice fellows. I remained there one year, until the outbreak of the First World War. During that period we built a local school as part of our labor sentence.

Three weeks after the war broke out I received \$100 from the Anarchist Red Cross. I was overjoyed. In my high spirits I thought I would take a chance. I left the village on foot and walked for 63 hours to a small city, from which I made my way to Irkutsk. There men were being mustered for the army, so I bought a military outfit and joined them. The station was packed, so I paid a conductor ten gold pieces for his cap and lantern and boarded a train bound for Brest-Litovsk, where I had lived as a child. My grandparents had since died, but their family still lived there, and I went to the house of an aunt. At first she didn't recognize me - she took me for another of the many soldiers who were on their way to the front - but I called her name and she embraced me and gave me fresh civilian clothes.

From Brest-Litovsk I took a train to Bialystok and went to the sugar store where father worked. He brought me home and mother kissed me and cried, kissed me and cried. I managed to get another false passport - not 'Zakhar Nefidov' this time, but 'Moishe Kaplan' - and took a train to Odessa, where my younger brother worked in a factory that made epaulettes. At the last station before the city - Razdel'nie it was called, and famous for its thieves - I returned to my car to find that my money and passport had been stolen. I was left with only 80 kopecks and the ticket in my vest pocket. But I soon got a job in a pen-point factory and remained in Odessa more than two

years, until the outbreak of the Revolution. One day in 1916 I was stopped by a policeman who asked me, "Why aren't you at the front fighting? Come with me to the station house." I gave him my watch as collateral till pay day, when I gave him three roubles and got the watch back. The pen point factory failed, but I found a new job in a factory that made canvas sacks. I didn't like it - it made sacks for the war, which I opposed, and I soon quit. I then taught Russian and Yiddish to the children of a Bialystok baker who had come to Odessa, until the Revolution erupted.

The sailors of the Black Sea Fleet had numerous revolutionaries - SRs, anarchists, bolsheviks - and when one of them asked me why I wasn't in uniform, I told him my story, and they telegraphed to Sasha Taratuta - Olga's husband and a 'Sovietky anarkhist' - in Petrograd and he vouched for me. I was told about the amnesty for revolutionaries and that I was excused from military service. But I went anyway, and served in a watchtower by a bridge in Bessarabia. One day a comrade came to fetch me. He told me that anarchists were returning from London, from America, and to come home to join the Revolution, so I returned with him to Odessa.

From Odessa I went to Yalta, then north to Moscow and Petrograd, meeting with comrades in each city, including Sasha Taratuta, Bill Shatov and Sanya Shapiro. I settled down with the Moscow anarchists and plunged into active work. A group of us went to the front to spread propaganda among Krasnov's troops, who were seeking to crush the Revolution. Trotsky arrived, and one of the first things he said was, "There are too many anarchists here." We were sent back, and I worked in the transport department of the Union of Cities, and was active in the Moscow anarchist group which carried out expropriations, as we had previously done against the tsarist government. The largest took place in 1918 against a state bank and insurance company, and 40 anarchists (myself among them) took part. One comrade, Stokozov, gained entrance through a guarded iron door by wearing the uniform of a Red Army officer. The guard opened the door a crack and we pushed our way in. There were 25 Bolshevik soldiers there, but one of our men displayed a bomb and ordered them not to move. "Who are you?" one asked. But we did not answer. And they did as they were told. As clients entered they were rounded up and put under guard. We opened the safe with a blow-torch and removed several million roubles. I stood at the switchboard and made sure that the operator did not sound the alarm. It took four hours to open that safe! It was our last successful 'ex'. We tried once more—at the Textile Union—but that failed. I gave Abba Gordin some of the money to be used for *Anarkhiia*, and he took it, though he knew where it came from. Part of the rest was used to buy food and goods which were brought to Dimitrov and given to Kropotkin, who would not have accepted them had he known their origin.

After that the Bolsheviks began to raid anarchist clubs and many comrades were arrested. Three Chekists came around and asked for me. My host told them I had been there but already left, and they apparently believed him. But they might return, so I had to move on. I went to Kharkov for a while, and saw Mratchny, Moshka and Becky Greenshner, and other comrades of the Nabat Confederation. From Kharkov I returned to Bialystok. The Poles were there at the time - it was in 1919. Mother had died. Father was in Kleschel'. All of his relatives were later to be killed by Hitler, except one, who is now in Israel.

In 1920 the Red Army came through town on their way into Poland—then back again when the Poles drove them out. While there they made me head of the *revkom* for a while. In 1922 I smuggled myself across the border and made my way to France, where I boarded a ship for Argentina. I lived in Buenos Aires a year, met Moshke and Becky again, and worked at my old trade as a weaver. I came to New York in 1923, but could not take part in the movement any more. Many of my old comrades had become Bolsheviks, ready to do anything 'for the Revolution', worse than the Bolsheviks themselves! I had lost my faith in anarchism, in the working people, in mankind as a whole, and could be close only to individuals whom I knew and who appealed to me without regard to their ideology. What possibility was there for the realization of a free society if men could behave so badly? Men should be more humanitarian. But they aren't. They haven't progressed—they've regressed!