

# Something Rotten in the State of England

What we have seen is England taking a giant step in the direction of 1984; what we have seen is the Secret Police exerting influence in a secret court; what we have seen is the Thought Police condemning a man for his opinions; what we have seen is a man condemned for undeclared intentions in advance of any action in contravention of any law; what we have seen is victimisation on account of guilt by association.

**WE DON'T GIVE A DAMN** for Rudi Dutschke's politics; what we have is this sinking feeling in the pit of our stomach. For much more important than any detail concerned with this individual case are the basic principles involved.

One of these principles has been the separation of the executive from the judiciary. In other words, although the Government makes the laws, it is the prerogative of the judiciary to interpret them, as it is of the police (though under the control of the Home Office) to operate them.

Undoubtedly, in a class-divided society like ours, the executive and the judiciary tend to be of the same class, operating the laws against the rest of us. Similarly, although we have a Press which is 'independent' of the Government, it almost unanimously supports the status quo, although having quibbles with details of a particular government's policy.

But, in principle, the Press is independent. In principle the judiciary is independent. And while we have people jealous of their prerogatives, as Judges and Judges are, some

divergence of opinion exists and thus some objectivity with regard to class interests can exist.

When, however, the establishment merges into one controlling monolith; when, as in South Africa, Russia or Spain, the judiciary is in the pocket of the government and the Press is gagged unless it toes the government line, then it is fair to say that this is a totalitarian state and that freedom for the individual does not exist. Incidentally, always—always—such a merging is accompanied by the abolition of the rights of free association for working people and abolition of the right to strike, or to take any industrial direct action.

## NO COINCIDENCE

It is, in our opinion, most sinister that the Government of Great Britain has been able to hold its secret tribunal on Rudi Dutschke, to be its own prosecutor, judge and jury and to condemn him in his absence without any opportunity to answer the 'evidence' against him; without, in fact, any access to the basic principles of 'British Justice' as it proclaims itself, at the same

time as that same Government is bringing in a Bill to abolish the right to strike by British workers. It is not a coincidence. Nor is it either coincidence or excuse that the Tories are carrying on where the Labour Party left off.

Not only in the realm of the Labour Relations Act is this the case (remember 'In Place of Strife'?), but the provisions under which Rudi Dutschke was tried in secret were laid down by the Labour Government in their last year in office. All the Tories have had to do is to pick them up and use them as they think fit.

The Labour Party is, of course, the party of the state. It believes in more and more state power and control over every aspect of our lives; it distrusts individual liberty. Every time we have had a Labour Government it has managed to leave the state more powerful than before. Attlee's Government, for example, left us in 1951 with the Bomb, conscription in peacetime and telephone-

tapping acceptable as court evidence, to mention but three items.

And the Tories—those lovers of individual liberty—are always very happy to carry on where Labour left off.

There is ample evidence that totalitarianism is no longer creeping in Britain, but is beginning to gallop. In immigration and race relations; in the control of aliens like Dutschke, Jerry Rubin, Paul Hoch; in labour relations; in the growing campaign about 'bias' on the BBC; in the use of 'D' notices and other means of gagging the Press (and the dwindling number of papers to gag!); in the increased powers given to the police, like the powers of search on suspicion under the Drugs Act of 1966 and the consistent readiness of magistrates to accept police recommendations against bail; the extensions of 'bugging'; the growth of government use of computers for the pigeon-holing of each one of us; the ever-increasing influence of the 'planners' on our environment; the

consciously-organised unemployment and the ever more stringent attempts to control the economy (which fail because of the lunatic nature of the capitalist economy, not because of any conscious human opposition)—and so on and so on and so on.

It's all there: the march on to 1984!

**It's there for you!**

But perhaps we should not dwell too much on the power-hungry nature of governments, but more on the servile nature of their subjects.

How is it that there is not more awareness of what is happening to freedom in Britain? How is it that the opposition to the Labour Relations Act can be contained by the official trades unions instead of being the signal for a massive and angry uprising by the whole working class against the Government? How is it that millions of ordinary people do not see that the state apparatus which makes the Dutschke tribunal possible is there to control them?

How is it that a nation which believes itself to be free—and indeed, is much freer than most other nations—can allow basic freedoms, basic principles of governmental 'checks and balances' and long-established and hard-won rights to be pulled away from under our very noses?

It's only thirteen years to 1984. Unless a libertarian movement emerges within the next few years powerful and influential enough to reverse all the trends, Britain will beat the clock. And once the total state is established, it's bloody difficult to dislodge!

JUSTIN.

## THE GOOD G.I. SCHWEIK

*Young men: The lowest aim in your life is to become a soldier. The good soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong. He never thinks, never reasons, he only obeys.*

*If he is ordered to fire on his fellow citizens, on his friends, on his neighbours and on his relatives, he obeys without hesitation. If he is ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor are clamouring for bread, he obeys and sees the grey hairs of age stained with red and the life tide gushing from the breasts of women, feeling neither remorse nor sympathy. If he is ordered off as firing squad to execute a hero or benefactor, he fires without hesitation. A good soldier is not a man... he is not a brute, for brutes only kill in self-defence. All that is human in him... has been sworn away when he took the enlistment roll. His mind, his conscience, aye, his very soul are in keeping of his officer.*

*Keep the boys out of the army. It is hell. Down with the army and navy. We don't need killing institutions. We need life-giving institutions.*

**THESE WORDS** were written by Jack London, the American writer about sixty years ago. Recently they appeared in *Act*, the newsletter for Resisters inside the Army, published in Paris by 'Rita Act' for American Servicemen. They were reprinted from *OM*, a naval serviceman's newspaper published by Roger Priest (stationed in the Pentagon). *OM* has apparently been suspended because Roger Priest was put on trial, now it has been succeeded by a paper with the evocative name of *Potemkin* (this was the battleship which mutinied in the Russian Fleet in 1905). There is also said to be a paper called *SACRIFIED* for circulation in the Air Force. There are an estimated fifty papers of this type written and published by GIs serving in Europe and other stations. They bear such titles as *We've Got the Brass, Fed Up, Where It's At, Shakedown, Bragg Briefs, Up Against the Wall and Graffiti*. The appearance

of these papers, openly distributed and openly read, is indicative of the attitude to war and the services of the GI.

It is possible that the circulation figures are insignificant but it has been stated that in 1969 500 soldiers per day went 'absent without leave', the figure for deserters in the Vietnam war was 57,000 in 1969, and it is claimed that the figures have doubled for 1970. One of the accepted anarchist attitudes to war is that of Schweik-ism, that is allowing oneself eventually to be conscripted into the army but once in there to try every possible way to get a discharge (honourable or otherwise) and at the same time sabotage as much of the military effort as possible.

The number of men following this course are probably few but this is only the tip of the iceberg and the military have no way of knowing how big the iceberg really is and whether or not it will sink their ship of war. As it is, the American Army seems to have a very practical approach to the subject; if they detect any man with radical views they try (a) to break his spirit by petty harassments, (b) frame him on a non-radical charge, or (c) discharge him from the forces after a trial. This is widely known and doubtless used by GIs wishing to get out of the army.

When conscription ended in Britain a tribute to conscientious objectors appeared in *FREEDOM* under the title 'Salute the Cowards' which was completely misunderstood by some. One would stress that taking up such a position as Schweik-ism or as a conscientious objector one may be motivated by cowardice, indeed allowing oneself to be called up may simply be in order to avoid the shame, disgrace and almost certain imprisonment of an American non-religious objector. On the other hand cowardice is a self-preserving instinct which governments would do well to cultivate for their own survival. An army of heroes would be wiped out in a week. But once such a stand as desertion or non-co-operation with the army has been taken there is no time for cowardice.

For example, Terry Klug was a deserter in 1967, came to Europe, contacted other war resisters and worked with the American Serviceman's Union. In January 1969 he decided to give himself up and in April 1969 was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Whilst in the stockade at Fort Dix, Klug took part in the rebellion of 150 prisoners against cruel and dehumanizing conditions. Thirty-eight prisoners, including Terry Klug, were sent to trial for their part in the rebellion. Word of conditions in Fort Dix spread and 10,000 people (including GIs) demonstrated against prison conditions. The military were forced to use military police from outside the area to keep order, they were unwise enough to use tear gas thus the demonstration got more publicity.

When Terry Klug came to trial, it would seem that such was the publicity gained by Terry and the general awareness of conditions in Fort Dix stockade that he was acquitted on all charges. However, Jeff Russell, who was involved in the same riot, got three years and other cases are pending.

Terry Klug is only one case among many Good GI Schweiks. GIs have sup-

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have various finished sending out all the new types of renewal notices, but use this instead to ask subscriptions which expired with the last issue of 'Freedom' of 1970.

As these constitute the bulk of our list, we'll not be sending separate notice, with the exception of those you to try and renew as soon as possible, if you have not already done so.

1971 rates are published in this issue.

## Boycott Citroen!

**IN PREVENTING** and breaking strikes, and in using methods unfair even by bourgeois standards, the record of Citroen is amongst the worst in Europe. Their refusal to recognise even reformist unions and their insistence that workers join the staff associations set up by the management have caused French unions to organise a boycott of their products for some time now.

One tactic is to set up a factory in an area of low wages and high unemployment such as Brittany. Not content with these advantages, the management then refuse to offer a job to the wife of any worker known as a militant or even as a union member. With the cost of sheer existence in France being as high as it is, most families need two wage-earners to make ends meet or at least approach each other. Another advantage to the management in setting up a factory in a sparsely populated rural area is that often the worker will have to spend four or five hours each day in travelling to and from work, often in inadequate transport organised by Citroen. To exhaust the workers both physically and mentally is obviously a very good way of stopping them from thinking too much.

Another tactic is the one that the management tried to use in Brussels, a tactic that has been quite successful in big towns that have a fair number of immigrant workers amongst their population (Italians, Algerians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Greeks, Africans and many others), this is to try and divide the workers by language (and this makes organisation difficult) but what is far worse, to try and divide the workers by

appealing to and creating a sense of nationalism and racialism. In the Brussels assembly plant (parts are sent here for assembly for the Belgian market), the 700 production line workers (mainly immigrant) have been in dispute with the management for a year over piece work rates. The union bureaucracy was of little help, its 'solution' solved nothing. It didn't really want to know about immigrants.

An unofficial strike then started, much to the surprise of the management. Except to point out that the solidarity of the workers was exemplary, the main interest lies in the management tactics. 'Strike leaders' were dismissed, the police were encouraged to use brutality with the pickets and new workers were brought in from France, over 100 miles away. Some of these were police in disguise—soon unmasked due to their total ignorance of factory life. The shabbiest effort of the management was to try and propose deals to each national group, e.g. if all the Greeks went back, then only the Turks would be sacked, etc.

To date, the unions have refused to recognise the strike citing the ingratitude of the workers in turning down the agreement made in their names but over their heads by the union bureaucracy. The workers see their main chance in solidarity action by factories making the components sent to Brussels. We in this country can do little except to become aware of the problem and symbolically show where we stand by making the facts known and by refusing to buy any Citroen cars.

TONY LEVENE.





