

# WHY ANARCHISTS DONT VOTE

EVERYTHING THAT can be said about the suffrage may be summed up in one sentence--To vote is to give up your power.

To elect a master of many, for a long or short time, is to resign one's liberty. Call it an absolute monarch, a constitutional king, or a simple M.P., the candidate that you raise to the throne, to the seat, or to the easy chair, he will always be your master. They are persons that you put 'above' the law, since they have the power of making the laws, and because it is their mission to see that they are obeyed.

To vote is befitting of idiots. It is as foolish as believing that men, of the same make as ourselves, will acquire in a moment, at the ringing of a bell, the knowledge and the understanding of everything. Of course, it is so. Your elected person shall have to legislate on every subject under the moon; how a box of matches should or should not be made, or how to make war, how to improve the agriculture, or how best to kill a tribe of Arabs or a few Negroes. Probably you believe that their intelligence will grow in proportion to the variety of subjects they have to give their minds to, but history and experience teaches otherwise.

The possession of power has a maddening influence -- parliaments have always wrought unhappiness.

In ruling assemblies, in a fatal manner, the will prevails of those below the average, morally and intellectually. To vote is to prepare shameful treachery and traitors. Electors do certainly believe in the honesty of the candidates, and this is to a certain extent existing while the fervour and the heat of the contest remain. But every day has its tomorrow. As soon as the conditions alter, likewise do men change. Today your candidate bows humbly before your presence: tomorrow he will say 'pish' to you. From a cadger of votes he has turned to be a master of yours. The atmosphere of the legislatures is not for deep breathing; it is corrupt. If you send one of yourselves in a foul place, you must not be surprised afterwards if he comes back in a rotten condition.

Therefore: Do not part with your freedom. Don't vote!

Instead of trusting the defence of your interests to others, see to the matter by yourselves. Instead of trying to choose advisers that will guide you in future actions, do the thing yourselves, and do it now! Men of good will shall not have to look long in vain for the opportunity.

To put on others' shoulders the responsibility of one's actions is cowardice.

**D O N ' T V O T E !**

Elisee Reclus.

## MOZAMBIQUE

# END OF EMPIRE?

IT IS IRONIC that one of the first countries to stretch out into an Empire (Portugal) should seem to be one of the last to cling to the old-fashioned concept of domination through colonialism.

When one was young and naive the name of Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese navigator, had a romantic sound; one was never told that one of the chief activities of such adventurers was in the slave trade. Portugal's first contribution from Africa was slaves exported to Lisbon and the Portuguese sugar estates.

In later years Portugal became more sophisticated in the adoption of forced, indentured labour, anticipating South Africa in the use of this device.

The abhorrence of slavery which affects every humane person was linked with the capitalist discovery that slavery was also uneconomic. (The historical coincidence of Lincoln's 'liberation' of the black slaves with the Czar's ruling against serfdom is not just a coincidence.)

The latter-day refinements of capitalist economic slavery through mortgages, hire-purchase and continuous expansion of demand is a refinement which, if a more stable economy can be introduced into newly-liberated states, still awaits Africa.

Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola are gradually drifting away from Portuguese old-style colonial administration and



ARTHUR MOYSE

"...AND FINALLY THIS PERVERT WANTED ME TO JOIN HIM IN A COALITION GOVERNMENT AND IT WAS THEN THAT I KNEW I HAD FINALLY DRUNK THE ULTIMATE DREGS OF DEGRADATION."

last week's events in Lourenço Marques vividly illustrate the death-pangs of old-style colonialism. The so-called 'liberation' of a people can only be truly achieved by the people themselves. If, as the Portuguese colonial people have seen, their masters are losing their grip they are obviously going to increase their demands. In revolution nothing succeeds like success. If they can proceed from A to B, there is no reason why they should not proceed to the X, Y and Z of full freedom.

Continued on Back Page.

**BUILDING WORKERS!**

**Where's your**

## **SOCIAL CONSCIENCE?**

ONE OF THE Unions who voted at the T.U.C's annual conference at Brighton for the Social Contract was the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians. However this same union is committed to wage claims that will exceed those laid down in the Social Contract. The wage claim voted on and passed at this year's union conference stands at £52.50 for craftsmen and £49.00 for labourers with a 35 hour week. This represents something near the sort of wages being earned by those on the "Lump". It isn't a case that the industry cannot afford such an increase but they they would rather see the divide-and-rule methods of the "Lump" and bonus schemes.

There seems no doubt that most of the workers in the industry would prefer a straight basic wage rather than their pay packets being made up with bonus earnings. After nearly 30 years there is still bitter resentment, especially by some of the "old boys", that the members voted for such schemes after the war. A similar position could occur in the coal-mines under the new proposals for productivity deals. Wages will vary from pit to pit and from area to area and the divisions thus created will be expertly exploited by the National Coal Board.

But while building workers are quite rightly concerned with their wages and conditions, not enough attention is paid to the actual housing situation. I write 'situation' or problem rather than shortage, because properties are left empty and allowed to deteriorate. This applies to both the council and private sectors.

On the whole the majority of militants take little interest in the wider aspect of their industry. They see the social injustice in housing first and foremost as a political question with a political answer. But to those suffering from bad housing, successive governments have failed to deal with the property speculators and the loans and interest rates charged to local authorities who want to improve and increase their housing stock. The equally reactionary and callous disregard by many of these same local authorities also needs con-

demning. But if building workers who profess a social conscience would concern themselves with the wider problems in the industry and see their industry as a socially useful occupation for the needs of the people, then perhaps they might not smash up accommodation being used by families at Sumner House in Tower Hamlets. After the damage was done, it was called a "mistake" by the Labour Council's leader, Paul Beasley (see Time Out, 14 Sep.)

In Kingston, Higgs & Hill sent in a demolition gang at seven in the morning while squatters were unprepared and sleeping. Higgs & Hill have their fingers in many pies, which naturally include property. This destruction of accommodation at 30 Kingston Hill was described by their company secretary, Derek Ridout, as "an accident in the normal course of development". What he did not say was that they still need planning permission to build on the site. (Time Out)

With squatters' rights being threatened by proposed legislation, local councils, private owners and property developers will use the full force of the law to remove people taking direct action to solve their own housing problems. The real "criminals" are those who keep places empty while families are without homes. But under a system which places property before people's real needs, people will be sacrificed to profits.

If this proposed legislation is made law, squatters will need all the support they can get. Building workers and tenants associations can give vital support and aid. Wages and conditions on sites are important, but for far too long building workers have built for the rich. Ugly buildings erected in the name of Mammon have brought huge profits for the rich and powerful while housing has been neglected. We should build to satisfy basic needs. If those concerned in this united at last the destruction at Tower Hamlets and Kingston might have been avoided. From this beginning we might be able to build and destroy the power of the property owners and speculators.

P. T.

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RECENTLY YOU'VE probably read about how millions of pounds have been slashed off the value of British industry by the stock market decline. This often puzzles people who reason that the workers are still turning up at the factories and the production lines are still running - so how can the value of industry have fallen? Their error lies in confusing the "value" of industry with the price its shares fetch. As Berkman pointed out when commenting on Marx's theory of labour value, "value" is impossible to determine. What can be determined, however, is the price of something since all you have to do is go and see how much it is selling for. Price and value are quite separate, as two examples will show. The first is asset-stripping. What happens here is that someone buys control of a company; sells it off in little bits and ends up with a profit. The whole point is that what you would consider to be the value of a company is worth more than the price of its shares. The second example is the Australian mining company, Poseidon. Poseidon shares started off at five shillings each and were changing hands at over £ 100 until the crash came. And this was before any actual mining had taken place! What was the "value" of the shares supposed to be here?

Forget this useless idea of value and look at price. This is determined by supply and demand -- in this case by the supply of and demand for shares. Demand is based on how much of a return the investors think they will get for their money. So if the general opinion is that it isn't worth investing in shares then demand will fall and so will price. This becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. People who've left their money in shares find that the price has fallen and consequently sell them. Thus the price goes down again, with the consequence that... The downward spiral stops only when enough people think that shares won't go any lower and that it's now worth buying them. The last time we had a real slump was in the 1930s

and it took the Second World War to produce the boom that took us out of it. Of course the government can spend money and stimulate industry and thus the confidence of the investors. Unfortunately the government hasn't got this money and thus inflation (currently running at 20 per cent) is increased.

Meanwhile a minority is wrecking the industry that we all depend on and there's nothing we can do about it. Obviously the entire system is mad but those who benefit from it disagree. The solution must lie in organising society so that economic and industrial power belong to all and not to a minority (as at present) or even a majority.

P.S. You might like to know that some people benefit from the stock market de-

cline, namely the mysterious sounding "bears". A bear is someone who believes that the price of a share will fall and consequently sells them, buying them back when the price has fallen and thus collecting, as profit, the difference between the price he sold at and the price he re-bought at. Obviously it doesn't take much for a bear to engineer a price fall. All he has to do is sell rather more shares than is usual and stampede a few other people into selling. A fortnight ago bears successfully raided Mercantile Credit, Britain's third largest HP company, and forced its shares to an all-time low.

Lots of complaints from City people but there's nothing they can do about it without tearing the Stock Exchange down. MO.

# WATERGATE

NOW THAT Nixon has resigned, there seems to be a general feeling of well being in the U.S., with the possible exception of the continuing economic dislocation. Connected with it seems to be a feeling that Watergate was a one time affair, and now that we've got the "clown" out of office, we can go back to "business as usual".

Few people, however, realize that Watergate is not unusual. The only novel thing here is that the tricks were exposed so early in the running. Many of the things that the politicians so self-righteously accused Nixon of have occurred many times before. In the early 60s widespread domestic spying was instituted for a variety of purposes, not to mention Johnson's "checks" on radical groups. The loopholes that permit "questionable" campaign financing have been there for years, and probably are aided by liberal contributions to the appropriate officials' re-election campaigns. It is not even unusual for the rich and powerful (are they different?) to seek special "audiences" with the executive branch when they get into trouble with it. The Du Ponts did it with the Kennedys as did ITT with Nixon. This is not to exonerate Mr. Nixon, for I feel he should be tried for his crimes, even if he is not imprisoned, for I can see no benefit being derived from imprisonment, especially in the

"country clubs" where his associates have ended up.

It is interesting to inquire where the Watergate reform legislation is. None of it has surfaced as yet. This aspect of "The Affair" at least begins to look like a large police corruption investigation as handled by many cities. A few people are sacrificed, but nothing is done to change the system that permits the continuation of the corruption. Treat the symptoms not the disease! Yet even with this our commentators herald how marvelously the system works, as well as the triumph of the will of the people and their representatives. Indeed, it only took us two years to get through what should have taken one week at most. Somehow they manage to overlook Nixon's repeatedly low level of favourable responses in public opinion polls throughout the period.

The whole sordid affair, if it shows nothing else, demonstrates how little power the people have. It is about time we admitted that the common man has no power, nor does he possess the influence, contacts, money, time, etc. to attain it or even enforce his desires on his "representatives". Elections every four years do nothing when government is run every day. It is time we admitted that our "democracy" is a farce and begin immediately to eliminate this disease before it grows more powerful and larger and totally overwhelms the host it lives parasitically upon. W.C.H.

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WHEN Peter Spence, writing in the New Humanist, heads his two-page adoration of the Tapiés and Louis exhibition at the Hayward 'No Marx for Beauty', writes of "those 'robot-like' art critics whose judgement of beauty" in his opinion "has been clouded by political dogma" and that the Art Page Editor of the Guardian, if I read Peter aright, is "himself an occasional dab hand at the clenched fist stuff", then one could be justified in visualising the Hayward as an embattled enclave with a barricade manned by a few brave pale aesthetics defying the red hordes and the brandy-soaked barbarians of the Carlton Club in defence of your actual art.

What the Hayward presented, and as with all their major exhibitions it will tour the sticks, was an exhibition of monumental trivia, and it is not a justification or a defence but an excuse that the writer in the New Humanist should have offered we of the Carlton and the red hordes for this amusing trivia. This type of minor art no longer needs defending for it is the accepted wall paper of every city board room, for devoid of any emotional or intellectual content it offers an amoral backcloth for the party boss and the usurer and it can only be judged within its own trivial context.

MORRIS LOUIS BERNSTEIN died in 1962 and in his working life he was one of that group of minor artists of the Clement Greenberg circus for Greenberg was in the tradition of the great popularisers, the writer who manipulates the minor talents of others to realise his own vested interest. There was a period in post-war art known as action painting, or to the cynics as drip dry art, in which it was rightly held that the act of creation was of greater importance than the finished work. The small boy making his father a piperack, a man painting a wall, an artist of little talent literally throwing pots of coloured paints over huge sheets of hardboard produced nothing of any worth beyond the satisfaction of the hour. And I would hold that this applies to the works of Louis and Tapiés and to state, as John Elderfield does in his Louis introduction, that "Louis is one of the

## A LITTLE OF

very few artists of our century whose work has really changed the course of painting" makes a sad joke for a century given over to sick humour. What saves this trivia from oblivion is the courage of these non artists to act out their obsessions on a monumental scale and one would state that reduced to a few inches in size they would be worthless. A Dresden figurine lifesize would be an object of appalling vulgarity, a Louis or a Tapiés, a Riopelle, a Gottlieb or an Appel reduced to postcard size worthless; a Henry Moore or an Elizabeth Frink sculpture whether life size or hand size is a thing of monumental beauty for they command their landscape as Michelangelo's Pieta or a William Blake drawing do. What does Louis offer from the grave beyond a collection of bedsheet sized canvases stained with blending acrylic paint, pale pap for yesterday's beautiful people, while Tapiés seems at a loss what to do with the rubbish he has collected beyond heaping them in numbered piles on the gallery floor so that "Desk and straw 1970" is no more than that; "Big bed door 1972" just that. Disembowel the gut of an old alarm clock and take the untidy heap to a hardfaced commercial gallery dealer and they would not give it gallery space. Do the same to a ten ton lorry and the sheer and applauded audacity of the act could grant it a place in the grand tradition of non art. The dadaists were relevant only as long as they were the cultural arm of a nihilistic revolt but Tapiés is no revolutionary and Louis has produced no Guernica for the avant garde, so Peter Spence is not defending the godhead but only acting as doorman to keep the riffraff out of his third-rate heaven.

### THE REVIEW

One can admire the third rate failure who has

# KROPOTKIN SPEAKS

## THE ORIGIN OF THE MORAL SENTIMENT.

IN A FINE WORK, ("The theory of moral sentiment") left to slumber in silence by religious prejudice, and indeed but little known even amongst anti-religious thinkers, Adam Smith has laid his finger on the true origin of the moral sentiment. He does not seek it in mystic religious feelings; he finds it simply in the feeling of sympathy.

You see a man beat a child. You know that the beaten child suffers. Your imagination causes you yourself to suffer the pain inflicted upon the child; or perhaps its tears, its little suffering face tell you. And, if you are not a coward, you rush at the brute who is beating it and rescue it from him.

This example by itself explains almost all the moral sentiments. The more powerful your imagination, the better you can picture to yourself what any being feels when it is made to suffer, and the more intense and delicate will your moral sense be. The more you are drawn to put yourself in the place of the other person, the more you feel the pain inflicted upon him, the insult offered him, the injustice of which he is a victim, the more you will be urged to act so that you may prevent the pain, insult or injustice. And the more you are accustomed by circumstances, by those surrounding you, or by the intensity of your own thought and your own imagination, to act as your thought and imagination urge, the more will the moral sentiment grow in you, the more will it become habitual.

This is what Adam Smith develops with a wealth of examples. He was young when he wrote this book, which is far superior to the work of his old age upon Political Economy. Free from religious prejudice, he sought the explanation of morality in a physical fact of human nature, and this is why official and non-official theological prejudice has put the treatise on the Black List for a century.

\* \* \* \* \*

ADAM SMITH'S only mistake was not to have understood that this same feeling of sympathy, in its habitual stage, exists among animals as well as amongst men.

Pace the popularisers of Darwin, who ignore in him all he did not borrow from Malthus, the feeling of solidarity is the leading characteristic of all animals living in society. The eagle devours the sparrow, the wolf devours the marmot; but the eagles and the wolves respectively aid each other in hunting, the sparrow and the marmot unite among themselves against the beasts and birds of prey so effectually that only the very clumsy ones are caught. In all animal societies, solidarity is a natural law of far greater importance than that struggle for existence, the virtue whereof is sung by the ruling classes in every strain that may best serve to stultify us.

When we study the animal world and try to explain to ourselves that struggle for existence maintained by each living being against adverse circumstances and against its enemies, we realise that the more the principles of solidarity and equality are developed in an animal society and have become habitual to it, the more chance has it of surviving and coming triumphantly out of the struggle against hardships and foes. The more thoroughly each member of the society feels his solidarity with each other member of the society, the more completely are developed in all of them those two qualities which are the main factors of all progress: courage, on the one hand, and, on the other, free individual initiative. And, on the contrary, the more any animal society, or little groups of animals, loses this feeling of solidarity - which may chance as the result of exceptional scarcity or else of exceptional plenty - the more do the two other factors of progress, courage and individual initiative, diminish; in the end they disappear, and the society falls into decay and sinks before its foes. Without mutual confidence no struggle is possible; there is no courage, no solidarity - and no victory! Defeat is certain.

# WHAT YOU FANCY

the courage to put his small talent to the test by attempting to produce a work of art that can be faulted by the masters of the chosen craft, and for this one must applaud Clive James' *pasquinade* in the *New Review*. Clive James took up the wet bladder of the studied insult from the waving hand of Bernard Levin and one was amused though ill informed on the week's television, for James like Levin was culture's heckler amusing the rabble with a witty phrase to destroy the banal and the beautiful. And James has put his small talent to the test with over twelve pages of pastiche in the manner of a 19th Century conceit. It was meant to be an attack on London's literary world in heroic couplets, but not only does it lack the wit and panache of the Byronic couplets or Browning's gift for creating characters within an acceptable situation but the rhymes jar on the mind -- "Lover of the cutest girl in Girton/(Which put him on a par with Richard Burton" : "And here he was, as bold as brass, the sod,/Rubbishing their stuff like he was God!" -- but all the name droppings of the current literary scene cannot turn fifth rate work into an acceptable work of art. But, and I repeat, one must admire James for having the courage to test his small talent for men such as Tapies and Louis have produced nothing by which their claim to be artists of any worth can be judged, only non art on a large scale.

## THE PORTRAIT-PHOTOGRAPH

But for the Town and his sugar short frau there is the Mediaeval Face at the National Portrait Gallery on the left flank of the National Gallery (entrance now free!). The exhibition will run for another four months and consists of a series of enlarged photographs of mediaeval portraits drawn not only from tomb and crypt but from ancient manuscripts. One learns that the faces bore little relation to the subject matter, for the

craftsmen were left to create their own images until by the end of the 15th Century it was demanded that the cost should include a recognisable likeness of the dead flesh beneath the stone. So locked in time the carved stone masks of ancient majesties play host to generations of unremembered dead and we are left not with the images of those in past authority but with the work of skilled craftsmen, and it is their work that almost a thousand years later the Town and his frau are brought to heel to admire.

## THE PLAY

And what can one say of the Black Box Theatre's production of *Narcissus*. Should one play traitor to the wine and dismiss it out of hand after having drunk too many a glass of wine and having spoken to Toni del Renzio who was young when the ICA was the fledgling rebel and not the kultural whorehouse of the State. We are told that "the play 'Narcissus' brings visual art and music into the theatre. The audience is transported through a thin veil of gauze into another place both rural and imaginary" which means in brute reality coloured lights and electronic music. I would suggest, in full humility, that the discotheques were working this scene without being profound. But my objection to what is no more than a pleasant evening is that it took three years to produce from a £7,100 handout from the Arts Council to the whole group going to Greece for background atmosphere. I applaud the pleasure of those three years but I will not accept that the charming display of coloured lights and electronic music is a worthwhile end product. Stanislavsky, who wrote more rubbish about the theatre than most men, rightly condemned, without realising it,

Nemirovich-Danchenko for taking a Moscow Art Theatre expedition to Rome to lap up background material. History condemns the Moscow Art Theatre for their wasted journey. For Louis's and Tapies's wasted gallery space and the waste of time and money for the Black Box Theatre's "Narcissus" I in my turn condemn.

Arthur Moyses.

# International Socialists ?

AT THE END of this month the International Socialists will be holding their annual conference.

According to the I.S. internal Conference Bulletin, the membership of I.S. is 3,310, an increase of about 1,000 over the last two years. The number of factory branches, however, has declined during the last 18 months from almost 60 to 38. I.S. has 1,155 manual worker members compared with 613 a year ago, and almost 2,000 "white collar" workers compared with 725. Most of the remaining members are students.

Union membership is patchy. The International Socialists have 275 members of the engineering section of the AUEW, 70 in TASS, 90 in the ETUP; in the NUM they now have 70 members, 30 in the UPW and 15 in the POEU. They are relatively stronger in the "white collar" unions, with 160 members in the ASTMS, 150 in ATTI, 230 in the NUT, 160 in NALGO, 48 in the NUJ and 56 Civil Servants.

I.S. are also very active in developing "action groups" within the National Rank-and-File

Movement. Like the C.P.'s Liaison Committee, this is supposed to be a "non-Party" organisation. There are, it is true, members of other groups, or of none at all, in these action groups. In fact, there are numbers of anarchists active in such groups (the writer of these lines is a member of a NALGO action group). But libertarians, and others, should always remember that I.S. only accept them on sufferance. The internal Conference Bulletin states that "The National Rank-and-File is in effect I.S. members organised in the Trade Union Movement. . . most important the N.R. and F. M. is the conductor of the main industrial initiatives of I.S." There are at present, says the bulletin, 12 to 15 rank-and-file papers. All are controlled by the I.S. leadership.

And what of I.S. policy? Are they, in fact, "revolutionary socialists"? Or are they merely yet another aspiring, reformist, Trotskyist Party? Alas, they are. Indeed, stripped of the "revolutionary"

rhetoric, they are as reformist as the Labour Party, which, with very minor reservations, they support. Their aim is to reform the present system. At the forthcoming conference they will most certainly adopt an eleven-point programme, which will include the very unrevolutionary demand of: a minimum wage of £35 a week (for years it was £25 until they rather belatedly noticed that most workers were earning more than £25!), five days' work or five days' pay, a 35-hour week for 40 hours' wages, nationalisation under workers' control and "get the army out of industrial disputes". Socialism to I.S. means a "socialist state".

According to the bulletin, "I.S. is Democratic Centralist, because the revolutionary party must be a disciplined, activist, combat organisation. . ."

Despite the obvious charisma of such an organisation to many young people, I.S. is just as "old hat" as the previous "Marxist-Leninist" parties like the C.P. or the old Trotskyist R.C.P.. They are not organised for the bringing about of a free, classless, stateless system of common ownership of the means of production, with real workers' councils, and grassroots "democracy". P. E. N.

# LETTER

## WORKER'S CONTROL OR WORKERS' CONTROL

Dear Comrades,

One of the advantages of going on holiday for a few weeks is that one has the joy (sic) of reading back numbers of papers like FREEDOM. To read a string of articles and letters on a theme does give one a certain sense of perspective.

Kathy Perlo's article (Aug. 10) curiously entitled "Anarchist Academics" is a case in point. I say curiously entitled because to me the article did not seem to be about academics, or more properly researchers, but about workers' control. I think the article is important because consciously or unconsciously Kathy Perlo actually does something that few writers have done before. She gets into the teeth of the argument on just what workers' control is about. The usual kind of thing, and I've done it myself, is to simply discuss whether we agree, or disagree, with syndicalism, which is a rather different question.

I have felt for some time that what was lacking in the anarchist movement was to get down to a serious discussion about what we are about, not merely in historical terms, but in terms of present day English society. Most writers merely discuss pros and cons. If they call for a theoretical discussion what they really mean is they want to delve out a few leftist terms, put these end to end, drop in a few hints about the Jura Federation (for the uninitiated, this was a guild of craftsman shopkeepers that ran a co-op union and had about as much resemblance to anarchism or present day society as a medieval guild). What we do have is a number of discordant souls

who believe, with an almost religious and heresy-hating fervour, in their particular 'ism' to such an extent that we know that as soon as somebody stands up and calls for 'unity' another split is on the way, usually led by the speaker.

Before we can seriously get down to discussing workers' control we must decide whether we are discussing worker's control or workers' control. Worker's control is basically job control. Workers' control is group decision-taking. There is a great deal of difference between them and it depends on the good or service being produced or the scale of the process being operated as to whether both types of control are actually possible at one and the same time.

Most people consciously try to gain worker's control and even within a work group doing a routine job this is usually allowable. At least it is allowable once the worker has learned the job to the satisfaction of an instructor and indicated a knowledge of the accepted 'form'. There are doctrinaire supervisors just as there are rigid workers -- there is also working to rule, but that is another matter. There is nothing to prevent Kathy Perlo deciding, within the physical limitations of her habitation or the demands of her co-partner (if any) and her medial agreements, just when she wishes to do her typing, where place the typewriter or how to type within the generally accepted limitations she imposes upon herself when she sets up as a freelance typewriter.

Worker's control however presupposes producing a product acceptable to the consumer. To use an analogy, if one cooks an egg, though there seem to be a myriad ways eggs can be cooked, the egg itself imposes its own structure upon what one may do with it. If one decided to cook it for eighteen hours on full power the egg might not

end up in a very edible form. Though I haven't said so already, I assumed you all took it as read that the egg was for eating either by the cook or another consumer.

In the society we live in, in fact in any kind of society we can conjecture, some people act at some time during every day as consumer and producer. If you produce a product or give a service the product or service imposes its own structure and so does the demand of the consumer. Anyone who tries to run worker's control outside the wishes of his market will soon be in for a shock. One does not usually work for fun and I feel that in any future society however idealistic there will be jobs which are irksome and unpleasant, difficult and a strain. One may even find this under workers' control too.

As I said, workers' control may, or may not, involve job control. A railway can be operated on workers' control but if an individual driver did not operate in accordance with the signalman's instructions, operating worker's control instead, his decision could well be fatal for himself and his customer.

Workers' control simply means that decisions should be taken by the whole group of workers in one industry on a workshop and delegate basis. It appears to be highly cumbersome, very conservative, extremely slow, and generally unwieldy. It also presupposes a very high amount of political commitment and well-developed educational perspective concerning both the process you are involved in and the needs of the economy as a whole. Its main defect appears to be that it is intended primarily for the producer. In operation, and in fact in the literature about workers' control, little mention is made about the interests and wishes of the consumer. It presupposes that society stops at the moment of 'revolution' and gives no indication of any ability to go further. It also seems to imply that after workers' control has been achieved we shall all live in plenty, have shorter hours, less work and spend all our working hours boozing as a well-known Manchester syndicalist put it, I've forgotten his name.

I feel that workers' control can exist in some short-term ventures where people agree both to exist by majority vote and not cop out merely when everybody refuses to accept their new wonderful idea. I also feel that anyone who starts an anarchist venture on the proverbial shoestring with uncertain aims and little

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# WOMEN CLEANERS' STRIKE

FOR OVER a week 38 women cleaners, employees of South Midlands Maintenance & Cleaning Contractors, have been on strike and picketing the gates of Vauxhalls, Luton. The women clean Vauxhall's engineering and styling block. They joined the Transport & General Workers Union in March this year after their employer scrapped their weekly bonus of £1 for 'good work and attendance'. (The employers later ensured that this good work bonus was not earned by adopting a policy of not replacing women who left the job. The contract allows for 45 cleaners as against the present 38.) Soon afterwards the Union district officer, Reg. Thomas, approached SMMCC with a proposed agreement on wages, conditions and negotiation procedures, which, he calimed, SMMCC verbally agreed to.

Two weeks ago the company turned down a claim by the women to increase their pay by 13p

an hour for a 20 hr. week. Instead the company wanted to reduce the working hours to 15, at the same time giving the women increases of 5p or 10p per hour, meaning that some of them would be losing up to £3 a week. The women immediately walked out. Reg Thomas reports that the contractors have told the women that they will be paid £9 a week for 15 hours, irrespective of what the Union thinks. Further talks were held on 9th September between the Union and SMCC without reaching any agreement. Meanwhile the contractors met Vauxhall bosses to press for more money so that they could pay the women higher wages, but without success.

The women see the struggle as not solely for higher wages but for better conditions on a par with directly employed labour, since contract employment, as in the case of the 'Lump', offers none of the so-called 'gringe' benefits of safety, accident insurance, holiday pay and sick pay, &c. The women have eben had to provide their own dusters and clean their overalls. Vauxhalls have been steadily increasing their use of contracted cleaners whilst phasing out their own directly employed cleaning sections. The use of contracted labour saves Vauxhalls

money since they have no obligations to the workers, who if they were directly employed would have to be paid pro rata to other car workers. These rates are much higher than those paid to cleaners outside the car industry. The women are also demanding 100% trade unionism for all contracted cleaners.

The strike became official after almost a week, with a strong possibility that if scab labour is brought in to do the women's work, both office and shop floor workers will walk out in sympathy. There are strong feelings from Vauxhall workers about crossing picket lines, and they have been giving added support and solidarity by throwing their rubbish on the floor. The women are also receiving solid support from their husbands, some of whom are Vauxhall workers.

Apart from confrontations with the manageress (attempting to bring in scab labour) the picket has been relatively peaceful, although the police have warned the women against 'communist agitators' there 'just to stir up trouble'. An attempt is being made to divide the women from the active support given by socialist groups in the area. Support initially promised by Luton Trades Council failed to materialise.

The women have still not received strike pay. They need money URGENTLY. Contributions to strike fund to Mrs. McGuinness, 213 Park Street, Luton, Beds.

## Letter *(Cont. from P.6)*

awareness of day-to-day practicalities and expects textbook workers control is in for a shock, especially if you try to insist on every decision being made unanimously.

The main difficulty about worker's control is that whereas it might have had some messianic value as a rallying call to the oppressed in the late nineteenth century, with the complexities of modern society any attempt to impose it nowadays is merely asking for 'big brother' to appear, without the democratic checks and balances. It is the easiest thing in the world to manoeuvre a meeting of committed politicians once you know the language, especially when there is so much religious fervour around.

What we should be doing as anarchists is getting rid of all these old-fashioned shibboleths be they worker's control or workers' control and working out what each of us, and others, need as people in society. I can think of several needs. None of these would be helped in the slightest by a brand of workers control. Then we can emerge and work out a new blueprint for future decision-taking; a blueprint I said, I feel the future will look after itself. There is however nothing to prevent us having a few ideas around.

Peter Neville.

### GERMAN EMBASSY

#### — PRISON PROTEST PICKET

We have received the following:

"A protest picket has been organised in support of an ultimatum that has been served, by a Dutch prisoners' group, on two West German Government officials who are directly responsible for the maltreatment of a Dutch 'political prisoner' who has been held in prison, under conditions of total isolation since his arrest in July 1973.

"Ronald Augustin (25), a printer from Amsterdam, was arrested in July 1973 by the German police who accuse him, among other things, of being a member of the outlawed "Red Army Fraction". Like other prisoners whom the German police have identified with the R.A.F., Augustin is held alone in a completely soundproof isolation cell. It is notorious that other R.A.F. prisoners who have been held under the same conditions for long periods awaiting

trial have had to be released without trial because of the psychological and physical damage that has been done to them while held under these conditions.

"In its ultimatum, issued on August 29, the Dutch "Anti-German Terror Committee" (Kommittee Anti-Duitse Terreur - KADT), which includes members of Augustin's family, it is stated that unless Augustin is removed from the isolation cells at Hannover prison by 2 pm on 27th September, they will put into effect other planned actions which will bring 'economic' pressure to bear upon Dutch-based German business interests.

"In London a picket outside the German Embassy, 23 Belgrave Sq. from 2 p.m. on Sept. 27 will take place in support of the KADT demands and in protest at the use of isolation cells, especially on people who are unconvicted of any offence and who, on past experience, may not be well enough to stand trial. If you can spare an hour or two on the afternoon of the 27th your support would be most welcome."

# Contact

HELP fold and despatch  
FREEDOM on Thursdays  
from 2 p.m. at Freedom  
Press, followed by get together with re-  
freshments.

COMRADE seeks flat Belsize Park. Can  
pay up to £8 a week rent. Replies to  
Box No. 68, Freedom.

Anarchist Documentation. An informal  
meeting to talk about the possibilities/  
practicalities of setting up an anarchist  
documentation centre/system in this  
country, will be held at Freedom Book-  
shop on Sunday 22nd September at 2 pm  
All interested are invited to attend -  
tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided

COMRADE here from Tokyo until Decem-  
ber needs accommodation low rent (& job  
suggestions). Mikio Wakayama, c/o  
Freedom.

MANCHESTER. One-day Anarcho-Syn-  
dicalist conference 28 September. All  
sympathisers in the North are invited to  
write for details to J. Moorhouse, sec.  
SWF Manchester, c/o Grass Roots, 178  
Oxford Rd. M/cr 13. (061-442-0434)

LONDON. Emotion & understanding in  
Music; People and Politics; London's  
Environment: three of the nine subjects  
of Workers' Education Assn. (Central  
London) 1974/5 session. Sidney Billson,  
33 Compton Rd., N.1 will send all  
details of classes on request.

THE POLICE and SAXON - two new plays  
at Unity Theatre, 1 Goldington St. NW1  
(tel. 387 8647) showing nightly Thurs.-  
Sun. incl. until Sat. Sept. 21. "The  
Police" 7.45; "Saxon" 9.45 pm. Tickets  
whole perf. 50p or 35p for one play only

NEW YORK. LIBERTARIAN BOOKCLUB  
FALL LECTURES, Thurs. evenings 7,30  
pm at Workmen's Circle Center, 369 8th  
Ave., (SW corner 29 St.). Admission free.  
Oct. 10: Merrill Moss, Anarchism, Syn-  
dicalism & the Counterculture; Oct. 24:  
Samuel H. Friedmann, The Middle East  
Problem - can it be solved?; Nov. 14:  
Irving Levitas, Anarchism in New Eng-  
land; Dec. 12: Dan Georgakas and  
Leonard Rubenstein, Art and Anarchy.

ALTERNATE SUNDAYS Hyde Park Anarch-  
ist Forum, Speakers' Corner 1 p.m.  
Speakers, listeners and hecklers welcome.

ANARCHIST WOMEN's group meets  
Mondays. Tel. 01-883-2457.

BLACKBURN ANARCHIST GROUP. Con-  
tact Keith Sowerby, 150 Shorrock Lane,  
Blackburn BB2 5TT. (tel. 28380).

INTERNATIONAL LIBERTARIAN CENTRE/  
CENTRO IBERICO. Sats. & Suns. from  
7,30. Disco &c. 83A Haverstock Hill,  
London NW3 (entrance in Steele's Rd.,  
second door). Tube Chalk Farm or  
Belsize Park.

Some London Anarchists meet socially at  
Finch's The One Tun, Goodge St. W.1  
(Tube Goodge St.) Suns. 7.30 (Don't ask  
at bar.)

## END OF EMPIRE?

Cont. from P.1

One of the claims of Portu-  
guese colonialists is that  
they practise assimilation as  
opposed to apartheid. However,  
there were (in 1956) in Angola  
only 140,000 Africans out of a  
population of 4,000,000. Also,  
in order to become a citizen  
one must be a Roman Catholic,  
be able to read and write, and  
have a high standard of living.  
(An official publication on the  
question says, "The raw native  
has to be looked at as an ad-  
ult with a child's mentality."  
"After four hundred years the  
number of assimilados only am-  
ounts to one per cent in Angola,  
one in a thousand in Mozam-  
bique. Theoretically," says  
the British Council of Church-  
es, "there is equality for  
black and white in Portuguese  
territories, but this must be  
seen against a social and eco-  
nomic system which keeps all  
the economic and political po-  
wer in white hands, and restr-  
icts African educational oppor-  
tunities."

This nominal policy is more  
useful to colonialism than is

PORTUGUESE Libertarian Movement needs  
books, pamphlets, free copies of anarchist  
publications, money & ideological sup-  
port. Movimento Libertario Portugues,  
Rua Angelina Vidal 17-2<sup>o</sup>-E, LISBOA I.

CLASS WAR COMIX No. 1 New Times  
25p (post 7p) Epic Publications, 76 Peck-  
ham Rd. S.E.5. (or Freedom Bookshop).

SWF PAMPHLET Workers' Control 10p  
from Nat. Sec. Box SWF London WC1V  
6XX or SWF c/o Grass Roots, 178 Oxford  
Rd. Manchester 13. Direct Action No.3  
(Sept) 5p + 3p post from Manchester (or  
Freedom Bookshop)

### Prisoners

PAUL PAWLOWSKI, doing two years.  
Postcards to Paul Pawlowski, 219089,  
H.M. Prison, Heathfield Rd. London  
SW18 3HS

GIOVANNI MARINI DEFENCE COMMIT-  
TEE. Paolo Braschi, C.P. 4263,  
2100 MILANO, Italy.

DUBLIN ANARCHISTS Bob Cullen (7 yrs)  
Des Keane (5 yrs), Columba Longmore (4  
yrs). Address for letters & papers:  
Military Detention Centre, Curragh Camp,  
Co. Kildare, Eire.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE SOLIDARITY  
Committee, 54 Harcombe Rd. N.15.  
Needs donations to supply study books for  
these long-term prisoners.

7 held re kidnapping of Spanish banker:  
postcards to Octavio Alberola Sunilach,  
Georges Riviere, Lucio Urtubia Gimenez  
and Arnaud Chastel at Prison de Fresnes,  
1 av. de la Division Leclerc, 94261  
FRESNES, France; and to Ariane Gransac-  
Sadori, Jane Helen Weir and Chantal  
Chastel at Prison de Femmes, Fleury Mergo-  
gis, 9 av. des Peupliers, 91700 ST. GENE-  
VIEVE DES BOIS, France

apartheid, since it not only  
sets up a new ruling class of  
Africans but also does not  
close channels of communication  
and it gives the ruling class  
time to hand over to the new  
nominees.

The situation in Mozambique  
last week had some sinister  
resemblances to the situation  
in the Congo (now Zaire) and  
Algeria. Both have now at-  
tained national status and re-  
spectability (a world boxing  
title fight is being held in  
Zaire -- how respectable can  
you get?).

Events in Mozambique last  
week were precipitated by white  
colonialists who could not  
(like their predecessors in Al-  
geria and the Congo) see the  
necessity for change. They were  
of course outnumbered and their  
action only triggered off riots  
in which many more blacks were  
killed than whites. The whole  
affair was launched by the pro-  
vocative broadcasts of the ret-  
reating whites and the right-  
wing press is now claiming it  
as an African rising, whereas  
much of the African action was  
self-defensive.

It is said that the white re-  
fugees have been received in  
South Africa with remarks of  
'I told you so' and the hints  
are that South Africans find  
in the affair a justification  
for apartheid. Not that South  
Africa and Rhodesia are unin-  
terested in the future of the  
ex-Portuguese territories. A  
weakened Angola and Mozambique  
will give Rhodesia hope to im-  
prove its outlet to the sea,  
and South Africa to improve its  
position. They both wait like  
poised vultures. . .

In a week which set the seal  
on the end of Empire in Africa,  
the Ethiopian emperor was fin-  
ally deposed by the Army. If  
so sacred an institution can  
be obliterated with so little  
outray, might not Ethiopia pro-  
gress from A to B?

But behind all the talk of  
Mozambique-Angola liberation  
lie the realities of power. The  
workers at a sugar plantation  
in Portuguese territory were  
shot at by the police for prot-  
esting (who owns the plantation  
but Tate and Lyle?). Now the  
progressive, enlightened Dr.  
Soares has stated that Frelimo  
does not, for the sake of its  
economic future, propose to in-  
stitute sanctions against  
Rhodesia.

Jack Robinson

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