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THE AGITATOR

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Contributions for the next issue are welcome and should be handed into the Socialist Society by Friday, Nov 24

FREEDOM FOR
RHODESIA
student picket at
Rhodesia House on
Tuesday Nov. 14
5:30 - 7:30
meeting to follow at
Central Hall,

EditorialsSubstitutionism, Union and Overseas Student Fees

At a recent meeting of the Student's Union (27.10.67) a motion was passed stating:

Union affirms its total opposition to the increase in overseas student fees and insists that they be reduced to the level of home students. In the light of this and the commitment of the director to equality of fees, Union instructs council to meet the Standing Committee of the Court of Governors to negotiate the sources from which the School may pay the difference demanded by the Government, following the significant examples of Oxford, Cambridge and Bradford.

Two immediate objections can be raised. One, the motion lacks content and is not the product of militant consciousness formed in struggle and prepared to struggle, but the pressure of biro on paper alone. Militant consciousness did exist earlier in the year when a resolution instructed the Administration to refrain from raising fees. But that resolution emerged from a general militancy- it did not create it- and when that militancy faded so did the content of the resolution. Words without action or the intention of action mean nothing. Since then Adams and the Administration have shown us where to put our egalitarian principles!

Secondly, its form betrays the motion's arse-licking liberal origins: it first accepts the right of that particular segment of the British ruling class which constitutes the Standing Committee to take these decisions: a right that has been challenged in the past; and then imagines that a closer analysis of accounts might not persuade them to revoke their earlier decision. In 1867 Marx said of John Stuart Mill: "On the level plain, simple mounds look like hills; and the imbecile flatness of the present bourgeoisie is to be measured by the altitude of its present great intellects." This motion is not even the product of any 'present great intellects'.

A more fundamental objection must also be raised. Polite use of the liberal tongue (Persuasion) will not induce the Standing Committee to revoke its earlier decision. No one believes it will, so why did Adlestein and Atkinson bring up this motion now? The answer seems obvious. Their politics exclude a broad-based agitation out of which a confrontation on terms decided by the majority might emerge. They therefore anticipate and hope to provoke a conflict over the machinery of government of the School before any final consideration of the issue arises. If student militancy did still exist the real issue could have been brought up on the basis of the rejection of that earlier resolution. Since it doesn't and Messrs Adlestein and Atkinson are not interested in the long term agitation and propaganda necessary to stimulate it, they resign themselves to Union manipulation.

Manipulation, 'Socialism from above'- call it what you will- has a long debasing history, passing through Utilitarianism, Fabianism and Stalinism. It has, however, nothing to do with Socialism conceived as that form of society which will end the division between the oppressors and the oppressed. As socialists we know on what side we stand in the class struggle, and as student socialists we attempt to act upon that knowledge. In the university we are obliged to support and strengthen student opposition to the directives of the ruling class. We also have to introduce socialist propoganda into the university and attempt to raise consciousness in genuine discussion and activity. The Agitator therefore rejects opportunism and manipulation and the actions of so-called militants in attempting to substitute themselves for the self activity of the majority.

Anti-worker Winter:

This winter Britain is to have a degree of unemployment in the 6% range. At the same time - due to rising prices (even such basics as gas and electricity) without rising wages - there will be a reduction in the real wages of the employed working class. This is no news. The important thing about this present attack on living standards, however, is the alliance of a large segment of the Trade Union bureacracy with the Government and the Employers. At one time productivity agreements were anathema to the Union movement - they would not sign away hard-won conditions of work for wage rises. Now these are the only form of wage agreements being signed. Each rise is being paid for by the men on the shop-floor. The ETU signed away bad working conditions bonus for an extra shilling an hour, and now is prepared to accept the condition of transferability of employment throughout the country. The story is the same throughout - the docks, railway agreements etc.

The working class is being attacked not only by its traditional enemies the employers, but also by the government with its wage freeze and pool of **unemployment** policies, and by the Union leadership with their incorporation into the State machinery. Though the Unions long ago refused to take an active political stance they now also attempt to ignore their industrial responsibilities. It is for this reason that the existence of the Joint Sites Liason Committee in the London building trade and the unofficial Strike Committees in the Docks, the Shop Stewards Defence Committee and other similar bodies are so important. These appear to be the only bodies capable of representing the interests of the working class.

Marx

Theses on Feuerbach

I

The chief defect of all materialism up to now (including Feuerbach's) is, that the object, reality, whar we apprehend through our senses, is understood only in the form of the object or contemplation; but not as sensuous human activity, as practice; not subjectively. Hence in opposition to materialism the active side was developed abstractly by idealism - which of course does not know real sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinguished from the objects of thought: but he does not understand human activity itself as objective activity. Hence, in 'the Essence of Christianity', he sees only the theoretical attitude as the true human attitude, while practice is understood and established, only in its 'dirty jew' appearance. He therefore does not comprehend the significance of 'revolutionary' or 'practical-critical' activity.

II

The question whether objective truth is an attribute of human thought, - is not a theoretical but a practical question. Man must prove the truth i.e. the reality and power, the 'this-sidedness' of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question.

III

The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are changed by man and that the educator himself must be educated. This doctrine has therefore to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be comprehended and rationally understood as revolutionary practice.

IV

Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-estrangement, of the duplication of the world into a religious and secular one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. But that the secular basis raises itself above itself and established for itself an independent realm in the clouds can be explained only through the cleavage and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must therefore in itself be both understood in its contradiction and revolutionised in practice. Therefore after, e.g. the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the heavenly family, one must proceed to destroy the former both in theory and in practice.

V

Feuerbach, not satisfied with abstract thought, wants contemplation: but he does not understand our sensuous nature as practical, human-sensuous activity.

VI

Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man. But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each separate individual. In its reality it is the ensemble (aggregate) of social relations.

Feuerbach, who does not enter more deeply into the criticism of this real essence, is thereby forced:

1. To abstract from the process of history and to establish the religious temperament as something independent, and to postulate an abstract - isolated - human individual.
2. The essence of man can therefore be understood only as 'genus', the inward, dumb generality which naturally unites the many individuals.

VII

Feuerbach therefore does not see that the 'religious temperament' itself is a social product and that the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs to a particular form of society.

VIII

All social life is essentially practical. All the mysteries which urge theory into mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.

IX

The highest point to which contemplative materialism can attain i.e. that materialism which does not comprehend our sensuous nature as practical activity, is the contemplation of separate individuals and of civil society.

X

The standpoint of the old type of materialism is civil society, the standpoint of the new materialism is human society or social humanity.

XI

The philosophers have only interpreted the world differently, the point is, to change it.

the feuerbach theses

augustin cornu

The purpose of the Theses on Feuerbach (1845) was to give the reasons for this second break. (Of Marx from Feuerbach and Hess) The Holy Family had set out, in a rather disconnected form to be sure, the result of the development of Marx's thought during his stay in Paris, a particularly fruitful period for him. His task was now to clear up, put in order and group his new ideas. This he did in clear and striking terms in his eleven theses on Feuerbach, in which by a parallel critique of idealism and mechanical materialism he established the general outlines of historical and dialectical materialism. The basic idea of this double critique is the notion of action, which Marx understands in the sense of practical activity, work. The chief defects of idealism and mechanical materialism stem from their ignoring the nature and revolutionary role of action, so that neither of these theories is able to explain the evolution of the world and both come down to utopian conceptions.

Unlike idealism, which reduces concrete reality to the idea, mechanical materialism is careful to distinguish the sense-object from thought, but it considers the external world only as an object of perception, not as an object of action, and takes a contemplative and merely passive attitude toward it, failing to realise that the development of the world is the product of human activity, which makes man at one with the environment he transforms.

Idealism has the opposite weakness. It stresses the paramount role of human activity, which it takes as the essential reality. However, since it does away with concrete reality as such by reducing it to mind, it limits man's activity to spiritual activity, and thus makes human life, robbed of its concrete element, an illusion (First Thesis)

The unity of thought and concrete reality, of man and the external world, can only be realised by granting the external world its own reality while still regarding the environment in its concrete reality as the product of man's concrete practical activity. That is what historical and dialectical materialism does; on the basis of this notion of action as practical activity it alone is able to explain man's integration into the world and the course of history.

Like any materialism, this comes up against the fundamental idealist objection that it cannot be proved that the ideas we have of things correspond to real objects distinct of ourselves. Idealism denies the objective reality of the external world and asserts the impossibility of man's attaining concrete

reality and objective truth. To this Marx replies that man knows the world only as an object of his experience, and that therefore the question of the reality of the objective world is not a theoretical question, as the idealists assert but a practical one. It is not abstract thought by itself that can prove the reality and truth of knowledge. To look for a transcendental existence outside of the knowledge that comes from practical activity is to look for something that does not exist, or at least has no reality for us (Second Thesis).

The practical activity that is the basis of the certitude we have of the reality of the external world is also the factor, the revolutionary instrument, that enables man to change the world. It is Feuerbach's disregard of the nature and the role of action that leads him to pose the religious problem and the social problem on the ideological level and explains his inability to solve them. Feuerbach blames religion and idealism for failing to take into consideration the concrete sensuous nature of man; he argues that men must always stay in contact with concrete reality, which alone makes him aware of his true nature. But since, in keeping with mechanical materialism he sees this contact with the external world in the form of perception or contemplation, and not in the form of practical activity, he deprives it of all efficacy (Fifth Thesis)

Hence the inadequacy of Feuerbach's critique of religion and society. His analysis of religion assimilates the religious being to human being, the essence of religion to human nature; but he does not see the social reality of human nature, and conceives it abstractly, in itself, outside of society and history; he reduces humanity to the vague concept of a species, i.e. a totality of undifferentiated individuals bound together by natural ties, whereas humanity is actually constituted by the ensemble of social relationships (Sixth Thesis)

Because Feuerbach has an abstract conception of the individual and of society, he sets the problem of religious alienation and of the dualisation of the world on an abstract level too, and gives a psychological explanation of this dualism instead of looking for its social causes. Since he fails to see that the religious illusion is but the deep rift in existing society ideologically transposed, he thinks that all that is necessary to dispel that illusion is to show its human basis; whereas actually it is the social contradictions from which it arises that must be destroyed; that can only be the work of revolutionary activity (Fourth Thesis)

Having placed the religious problem on the psychological level, Feuerbach resorts essentially to education to dispel the religious illusion and transform society. He thus divides

society into two classes: the educators, charged with reforming men, and the masses of ignorant men, the passive crowd they have to educate. This reactionary notion, which justifies the existence of a dominant class, neglects the fact that the educator must himself be educated by his environment, and that the environment is constantly transformed by human activity (Third Thesis).

The religious phenomenon is really a social phenomenon, and the abstract individual to which Feuerbach reduces man is himself the product of a particular form of society. (Seventh Thesis).

To solve the religious problem, or any of the problems man faces, we have to take a social view point and analyze the social relations that arise between men, and their real conditions of life. Then we understand the ideologies that express those conditions and relations on the spiritual plane; and then the mysteries of religion clear up (Eight Thesis).

It is because he considers man's relations with the external world in the form of perception and not in the form of practical activity that Feuerbach, and with him mechanical materialism do not get beyond the notion of man as an isolated individual, and can therefore give no explanation of man's place in the world and its action on him (Ninth Thesis)

This individualistic conception of man, the mechanical materialist conception, is typical of bourgeois society, whose reflection this materialism is. Historical and dialectical materialism goes beyond this individualistic point of view; it reflects a new type of society in which man's true nature is realised. This new type of materialism shows how man humanises nature by adapting it to his needs, and makes society human (Tenth Thesis)

Thereby this materialism rises not only above mechanical materialism but above all philosophy in general. For philosophy being concerned essentially with understanding the world, holds that it is thought that is the primordial link between man and concrete reality; it reduces the world to the various attitudes that consciousness or thought may take toward the world, and gives various interpretations of it. Historical and dialectical materialism rejects this contemplative point of view and gives the first place to action, which alone permits man's effective entry into the external world; the new materialism holds that practical activity, and not abstract thought, is the true bond between man and concrete reality; therefore man's activity should not be a merely spiritual activity limited to knowledge: it should essentially aim at linking knowledge to action in order to transform the world. 'Philosophers have thus far only

interpreted the world in various ways; the task is to change it'
(Eleventh Thesis)

In these theses Marx clarified and solidified the basic elements of his new conception of materialism, by means of which he arrived at a new conception of communism as well, a communism based not on an ideal vision of the future society but on analysis of the historical and dialectical development of economic and social organisation. Marx studied concrete man, not as seen in his relations with a metaphysical idea, as in Hegel and Bruno Bauer, or with a vague concept of humanity, as in Feuerbach and Hess, but in his economic and social relations; the entire point of Marx's ideas was the notion of action, as practical concrete activity, as work, which is thus the bond between man and the external world and the means of changing that world. Marx combined with this idea of work the idea of eliminating the alienated work which is typical of capitalism; thus he united historical and dialectical materialism with communism in a single conception, and rejected idealism and mechanical materialism, as well as utopian socialism, regarding all of them as incapable of explaining either man's integration into the world or the course of history.

Once action was regarded as essential reality, and not reduced to spiritual action, not put on the level of the opposition between the ideal and the real, but taken as practical activity, which unites subject and object and effectively integrates man into the world, and aims at changing the world: after doing this Marx now had to study the causes and manner of that change. This he did in the second large work he wrote with Engels, the German Ideology.

Reprinted from The Origins of Marxian Thought.

A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST MANIFESTO

— written in a Polish
prison

available on Tuesdays
third floor bookstall

marx and cologne, 1848

phil koslow

Marx was directly involved in a revolutionary situation only once, in 1848. His role in the German revolution, as editor of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung and as one of the leaders of the worker's movement in Cologne, has not been discussed in any detail in English. The two leading German works on the subject are scholarly and informative enough but far from satisfactory on the question of the direction of the movement which hinges on dispute between Marx and Andreas Gottschalk. Hans Stein, in his monograph on Der Kölner Arbeiterverein (1921), is carried away by a sentimental attachment to Gottschalk, and Gerhard Becker's more recent work, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in Köln (1963), is seriously marred by his determination to demolish Gottschalk's reputation and to apotheosize Marx.

The Germany of the 1840's was considerably behind England and France in industrial development and consequently in the formation of an industrial working class. The basic feature of the period leading up to the revolution was the struggle of the liberal bourgeoisie for a system of unrestricted industrial capitalism, which would presuppose some form of unification. The struggle was conducted principally against the policies of the Prussian monarchy and the nobility as a whole, but there was also tension between the aspiring entrepreneurs and the large group of independent artisans, who, at the outbreak of the revolution, accounted for some 14% of the population as opposed to only 4% for industrial workers. The artisans were dependant on an essentially pre-capitalist economic system in which the guild rather than the market was the ruling power, and in which the worker sold his product rather than his labour. The entire existence of the artisan was threatened by the rise of industry, and the bourgeoisie, for its part, did all it could to break the monopolistic and restrictive power of the guilds, this being accomplished by 1845. The artisans were on the decline, while the factory workers, although they had much to complain of by any reasonable standard, were relatively well-off owing to the expansion of industry and the greater opportunity of steady employment.

The crunch came with the depression of 1846-48, and although many factories were forced to cut back or cease production, it was again the artisans and the rural workers who suffered most severely from unemployment and the rising price of staple foods. There were numerous hunger riots and considerable destruction of machinery and factories, the most famous being the Silesian weavers' revolt, but these were the expression of localised bitterness and desperation rather than organised uprising. As most of the genuine radicals were in exile in the west, it was the bourgeoisie alone that could provide the leadership for a popular revolutionary movement. It declined to do this until

the 'March Days' of 1848, when it finally allied itself with the masses and forced Friedrich Wilhelm IV to withdraw the Prussian army from Berlin and recognise the newly-constituted Frankfurt Assembly as the legislative power of Germany. Such statistics as we have indicate that the great majority of those who fell on the Berlin barricades on 18-19th March were artisans; they had come to Berlin by the thousands hoping in vain for work and food, and despite their differences with the bourgeoisie they were ready to fight for any alternative that presented itself.

II

While events in Berlin and Frankfurt attracted the most attention during the year of revolution, the Rheinland was the most highly industrialised area of Germany and it was here that the working class as a whole suffered most. In Cologne itself, some 25,000 people, almost 30% of the population were on the official poor list and in receipt of some form of public assistance. Although there had been demonstrations and a certain amount of organisation in individual workshops, there was no general workers' organisation before the revolution. On 6th April Gottschalk publicly proposed the establishment of a 'democratic-socialist club'. The first meeting was attended by 300 artisans and workers and a few intellectuals, and Gottschalk was elected President; a month later the membership was reported as 5000.

It was also during the first week of April that the members of the Communist League in Brussels were returning to Germany: Marx, Engels, Schapper, Moll and the rest. Despite Gottschalk's official connection with the Communist League, his real ideological correspondence was with the 'true socialists', principally Moses Hess and Karl Grun, whose doctrines were anathema to Marx. Gottschalk's 'Demands of the People', put forward in a demonstration on March 3rd (he was subsequently put in gaol for two weeks for his activities), and the 'Manifesto of the Communist Party in Germany' published on 5th April, seem to contain significant differences. Whereas Gottschalk's petition confined itself to universal suffrage, freedom of speech and the press, and arming of the general populace, the Manifesto went on to the nationalisation of railways and canals, a progressive income tax, and other more radical measures.

There soon developed a conflict over the editorship of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung which ended with Marx's victory over Gottschalk and Hess, and the split was aggravated during the period preceding Gottschalk's second arrest, in July. It was clear that Gottschalk's appeal was directed more to the interests of the artisan than the industrial worker. He favoured organisation along occupational lines, proposed a system of arbitration between various grades of craftsmen and shop-owners, and generally spoke more of philanthropy and reconciliation than of the class-struggle, all this being contrary to the line taken by the Neue Rheinische Zeitung.

Gottschalk still maintained that the ultimate goal of the Arbeiterverein was the victory of the working class, but he did not believe that the proletariat had the physical or ideological strength to carry through a revolution at the moment. The bloody suppression of the June insurrection in Paris suggested to both Marx and Gottschalk the grave dangers inherent in any forcible action.

Gottschalk's imprisonment and six-month absence from the political scene resulted in the leadership of the Arbeiterverein shifting to Marx's group, and the change was significant. Although Gottschalk had been firm about the need to politically educate the working class through the Verein, it was under Marx that the first systematic ideological discussions took place. The appeal of the Verein began to shift away from the artisan; in the first discussion, for example, it was maintained that not machinery as such but only its wrongful use was injurious to mankind. Even more important, organisation was now sought along territorial rather than occupational lines and greater efforts were made, albeit without great success, in the direction of uniting the workers' groups throughout Germany. And with the triumph of reaction in Vienna and its growing threat to the German revolution, Marx was all the more firm that the only path for the workers was a united front with the bourgeoisie in the hope of securing a bourgeois republic.

III

It was the last point which became the final and most important bone of contention between Marx and Gottschalk. The latter was tried and acquitted just before Christmas, travelled to Paris and Bonn, and then returned to Cologne. While in Paris he observed at first-hand the fruits of the February revolution and this seems to have turned him completely against the leadership of the bourgeoisie. Gottschalk maintained in a speech in March 1849 that if Louis Blanc had split the provisional government at the right time, he could have saved the revolution in France and perhaps in all of Europe. He called upon the French working class to follow men like Blanqui, Proudhon and Raspail in the struggle against the Reaction, and to rely on their own resources, "which alone can lead an oppressed class to victory".

Gottschalk now sought to dislodge Marx's support for the united front and the latter's insistence that the proletarian revolution could only come when the development of the capitalist system created the proper conditions. Gottschalk claimed that Marx's viewpoint was entirely 'scientific' and 'doctrinaire', and that no one with any real sympathy for the oppressed classes could suggest the rule of the bourgeoisie as a result justifying the possible spilling of proletarian blood. Neither did Gottschalk have any liking for the return of 'medieval conditions', which was what Marx feared most. His prescription was an "enduring rising of the people,

"weapons in hand", although there is no evidence that he had any organisational or tactical plans on this level.

In any case, Marx's adherents won the day, and Gottschalk retreated to Ems, retiring completely from public life. Marx himself had to leave Cologne with the victory of the Reaction in June. Gottschalk, returning in August, resumed practicing medicine without remuneration, in the working class district, as he had done before the revolution; he contracted cholera from his patients during the epidemic of 1849, and died in September at the age of thirty-four.

IV

It hardly needs to be said, I hope, that there is little benefit to be gained from impugning the personal motives of either Marx or Gottschalk. But there can be no denying that Marx was far ahead in terms of analytical power, and that his policies were thought out more profoundly than Gottschalk's ever were. Gottschalk was perhaps more personally involved with the situation of the Cologne working class due to long familiarity as a result of his medical practice, and saw the problem in terms of the moral necessity of immediately relieving suffering by what ever means were at hand. He had no noticeable historical or sociological perspective on these issues, and it would seem to me that this, rather than any putative evil character traits was the main factor in the frequent inconsistency and vagueness of his political position. Gottschalk's criticism and his call to arms were not a serious alternative to Marx's position, but the only statement that would have seemed to him compatible with heart-felt support for the common people, when faced with the defeat of the revolution. He was a populist, not a social revolutionary.

Marx, for his part, certainly was the last man to have any illusions about the intentions of the bourgeoisie, who, after the "March Days" had been quick to suppress proletarian "anarchy" with the civil guard and made quite sure that the "mob" did not get its hands on any meaningful quantity of weapons. In fact, Marx and many other socialists were in a blind alley, as the monarchy still held the loyalty of many of the common people, and the bourgeoisies held the reins of power, political and military. In general, the level of political education and consciousness among the masses was extraordinarily low. In 1848, they wanted relief of their misery, and as the revolution went its way they got well articulated arguments, from the liberals and the radicals alike, which very few of them could even begin to make sense of. They were more than ripe for the appeal to traditional loyalties that facilitated the acceptance of the Reaction. Both Gottschalk and Marx recognised the situation by the emphasis they placed on the educative role of the Arbeitverein. It would not be unfair to summarise Marx's policy as the gradual education of the proletariat under conditions of advancing industrialisation, as the foundation and concomitant

of a mass political movement, resulting at the right moment in the establishment of a workers' republic in Germany.

In light of the severely limited possibilities at hand, it is difficult to question the intelligence of such a position, and as we have indicated, there is no cause to suppose that Gottschalk's leadership would have been any more successful under the circumstances. But it would not be invalid to ask whether there existed guidelines for action ignored by both men. I would suggest for consideration Blanqui's conception of a conspiratorial revolutionary elite, ready and trained to seize power in a disorganised situation, to impose the dictatorship of the proletariat and begin the education of the masses. Whether this would have been successful in Germany (presupposing of course that the Brussels and Cologne groups had been organised along these lines at the outset in 1847) is impossible to judge, in the absence of a long and detailed discussion of contingent factors. As it was, Blanqui himself supported the Provisional Government initially and had tried to discourage the June uprising, which was spontaneous and barely organised. But in Germany, no one at all seems to have entertained the idea of using the explosiveness of the artisans and peasants, reactionary though their interests were, as the springboard for a social revolutionary coup. Gottschalk, although a great admirer of Blanqui, seems to have adopted only his policy of boycotting elections; if he was actually thinking seriously along Blanquist lines in 1849, his conversion came long after the situation was lost. And Marx was hostile to the very notion of a revolutionary elite, as to Blanqui's school of thought in general. But then Marx, with his readiness to learn from the flow of events, was the first to praise Blanquist tactics of the Paris Commune in 1871 and later was to become more interested in the possibility of revolution in Russia despite the low level of industrialisation. And it was Lenin, after all, who succeeded by way of combining the conspiratorial principle with the dominant goal of the mass party. It would be unfair to claim that Marx 'failed' as a revolutionary but equally unfortunate not to notice in the frustration of the 'classical' approach the foundation of later departures from 'orthodoxy'.

the general strike

by alan fowler

The following few comments arise out of the marxist seminar on the General Strike. They in no sense form a consistent position and are offered in the hope that they may lead to further discussion about the General Strike.

Any discussion of the British General Strike of 1926 must attempt to answer a number of points:

- (1) Where do the events of 1926 lie in relation to the past history of the British Labour Movement and in particular the Reformist and Revolutionary traditions which exist within the movement?
- (2) To what extent was 1926 a revolutionary situation? Despite attempts during the General Strike itself to label the strikers revolutionaries, for purely opportunist reasons, most bourgeois historians have taken the view that Britain was not on the brink of revolution in 1926. How far are they wrong?
- (3) What lessons can be learnt in particular for a revolutionary party, from the events of 1926.

The impression is given by most bourgeois writers on the British labour movement that its history is one of striving for practical reforms eschewing all thoughts of violence, a supposedly continental habit anyway. This view falls very much into the larger picture of Britain being a country where political conflict is settled round a conference table by men of goodwill as opposed to other parts of the world where due to the hot weather, Latin temperament etc. it is settled on the battlefield. Thus most explanations of the failure of the British Communist Party link it with the Englishman's dislike of extremes.

This pacific view of the British does not correspond with reality. In the period 1400-1800 Britain was the most violent country in Europe, it was no accident that in the 1640's it declared a Republic and executed its King as well as abolishing the House of Lords. Out of this tradition of violence and conflict the Labour movement grew, it was in no way the mechanical product of the industrial revolution nor inspired by the French Revolution. Rather, in its first traditions were those of the Diggers and the Levellers of the 1640s and the popular disturbances of the 18th Century.

Throughout the first half of the 19th Century there existed within the Labour Movement a revolutionary wing or physical force as it was often described by contemporaries. At times it lies dormant but in no sense is it a tradition of minor importance. It lacked the sophistication of later movements,

it was often the cause of its own failure. It is not a Bourgeois revolutionary tradition but very much working class. This wing of the movement reached its peak in the 1840s when it became the dominant stream within the Chartist movement. To its credit it did not remain static but changed the Chartists into the first ever social democratic party. The defeat of this party was part of a general tragedy - the destruction of revolutionary movements throughout Europe post 1850.

Why did it happen? Certainly as far as England went the period sees a rising standard of living for the working class, though the lion's share went to the Labour aristocracy. It is too crude to suggest the working class were bought off. Throughout Western Europe the economy was changing, deepening and particularly in Britain, maturing but quite why and how still remains a mystery. We can only see the changes reflected as the politics of Europe change.

During the period 1950-90 Reformism became dominant in the Labour movement and for the moment unchallenged. With the major exception of the mining and cotton industries trade unionism remained a phenomenon of a particular section of the working class i.e. the labour aristocracy - the most backward section politically. It is important in understanding the modern labour movement to realise that the formative years of its development 1850-90 were the very years of the dominance of the Labour aristocracy. It has never succeeded in overthrowing this heritage. The lessons of 200 years of struggle were lost in a mere four decades.

With the unionisation of the unskilled, the rise of Britain's second social democratic party (the S.D.F.), the revolutionary tradition within the Labour Movement came alive once more. It never, however, achieved the success of the pre 1850 period. At the same time a completely new development occurred with the second expansion of new unionism amongst the unskilled, the rise of the unofficial movement. Ever since the end of the 19th century there had been a movement towards the integration of full-time Trade Union officials into the State - a movement that is now, in the 1960s, coming to full fruition. Many of the strikes in the period of industrial unrest prior to 1914 in fact started as unofficial disputes. Thus the conflict that has dominated the Labour movement in recent years between official and unofficial movements first came to a head in the years before World War I. It is usual to date the unofficial shop stewards movement from 1910-22 but the emergence of the Communist Party as an industrial force and with it the rise of the minority movement (1923-27) must lead to a revision and extension of the dates into the mid 20s i.e. up to the General Strike. The minority movement for all its faults was a rank and file movement seeking not only the election of their own candidates to union office but also the creation of a genuine

movement at the shop floor. There is in fact a direct link between the emergence of the unofficial movements and the General Strike and it is this link most bourgeois historians have ignored.

This brings us to the question of how far the General Strike occurred within a revolutionary situation. There is no doubt that such a situation had existed earlier i.e. in 1919 when neither the police nor the army could be relied upon by the Government in a year of major industrial strife including a general stoppage in Glasgow. A coal strike which would have crippled the economy was narrowly averted by Lloyd George. Probably the absence of a revolutionary party was a major handicap, though this would not account in whole for the missed opportunity.

The aims of the Government in 1926 were quite clear - they sought generally to force down wages. But previous events had taught them that this required the defeat of the Trade Union movement on a broad front and not just in a particular industry. As a result the whole weight of the State was thrown against the Trade Union movement. Some bourgeois historians claim that this is a myth, not all the full emergency powers were used by the Government. This is to miss the whole point, the Government and the employers had been stocking up for many months previous to the strike and as a result the strike itself did not have any real economic impact before it was called off. Had it continued much longer these powers would certainly have been used to the full.

Was in fact 1926 a revolutionary situation? The ruling class were in many respects united, especially in its desire to cut wages, after the war (1914-1918). Britain had been unable to regain her position as the dominant world economic power. It was hoped that by cutting wages, returning to the Gold Standard Britain would be able to compete on favourable terms with the U.S.A. The General Strike stemmed from the crisis of British Capitalism. By the mid 20s most capitalist countries it seemed had recovered from the war and were enjoying a period of prosperity. Not so Britain whose economy remained depressed. She had been forced out of her traditional markets particularly in the two staple export industries coal and cotton.

In contrast to this the working class movement had emerged from the war stronger than ever before. Militancy had been on the increase since the end of the war nor had the tide turned if the election of A.J. Cook as S. Wales miners' leader is anything to go by. His election was a major victory for the minority movement.

But does all this add up to a revolutionary situation? If it does the role of the communist party is inexcusable, if it does not it becomes explainable. The communist party policy was to treat the whole affair as a purely industrial fight, i.e. in the same manner as the leadership treated it.

The communist party made a major change in 1925 when it changed from a position of support for the rank and file movement to one of relying on certain (left) trade union leaders on the TUC General Council. This is one of the earliest policy changes of the British communist party to occur at the direct instigation of Moscow. The policy changes came with the formation of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee. Too often when the General Strike is discussed the betrayal of the mass of strikers by the leadership is dealt with solely in terms of right wing trade unionists such as Thomas, very rarely is the role of so called 'lefts' on the TUC council exposed. They were just as responsible for calling off the strike as Thomas, yet right up to then the communist party gave them support. Throughout this period of the strike the communist party failed to point out the political lessons to be learnt or attempted to put the strikers on their guard against possible betrayal. Afterwards the damage was done.

Would the strikers have responded to an attempt to politicise the dispute? There is no doubt that their response to the strike was magnificent, it surprised the TUC leaders and probably made them even more prepared to end the dispute at all costs. Nor is it true that as the TUC leaders suggested afterwards, that the men were returning before the strike was ended. The strike, save for one or two white collar unions was almost 100% successful; in fact the strike continued after being called off when employers attempted to victimise the returning men.

In a sense reformist leaders such as Thomas had a more consistent position for they knew that the general strike did not present a challenge to the status quo and so deliberately sabotaged it. The communist party is attempting to fight the general strike as a purely industrial dispute merely played into the hands of the reformist leadership.

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of a broad attempt to regenerate British Capitalism. But this three-pronged policy of 'rationalisation', 'increased productivity and 'incomes policy' has nothing to do with socialism! The first means rising unemployment (the highest since the war); the second means more deaths and maiming in industry; and the last prong is the point aimed at the pockets and living standards of the entire working class. Because it is the Labour Party that now carries the pitchfork some socialists find it difficult to continue the struggle. But now, with the smears and the threatened State action against workers who continue to fight, all those socialists whose socialism is to do with a genuine opposition to capitalism must themselves enter the struggle in whatever way is open to them.

the rising trend of industrial accidents

by steve jefferys

"... where we have labour, not carried on by fits and starts, but repeated day after day with unvarying uniformity, a point must inevitably be reached, where extension of the working-day and intensity of the labour mutually exclude one another ... (Marx. Capital. Vol 1 Chap 15)

The Ministry of Labour Gazette contains many carefully selected statistics on a wide variety of subjects. Occasionally some idea of what is actually happening in industry today seeps through. (This is the best that can be expected; after all, within a capitalist society the state has no intention of voluntarily providing any ammunition for the working class). Marx suggested that at a certain stage in the development of modern industry capitalists realised that their attempt to increase the hours of exploitation of their labourers as well as to increase the intensity of the labour process led to diminishing returns. When this point was reached they had to choose either to attempt to increase the duration of work or to increase its intensity. Two tendencies operated in favour of the second possibility: firstly, the fact that technology itself was continually allowing machines to be worked faster and faster (and within capitalism the worker is subordinated to the machine and not the other way round), and secondly, the workers were better situated to resist an actual extension of the hours they contracted to give to the employer than to interfere with the character of orders they received during the period of each day 'sold' to the employer.

In the August 1967 Ministry of Labour Gazette some figures were published which raise a whole series of questions concerning the extent and direction of exploitation in British industry today, and the particular role of recent government economic policy. Thus we find that the average number of hours worked by men (over 21) in what the Gazette calls "representative industries and services" in the U.K. (i.e. excluding among other industries, agriculture, coal mining, railway service, London transport, dock labour and the distributive and catering trades) in April 1957 was 48.5 hours; in April 1967 the equivalent figure was 46.1. Since the economy has continued to expand over this decade we can only conclude that productivity per man-hour in industry has also increased. But where did this increase in productivity come from? Undoubtedly technology played some part, but on another page of the same issue of the Gazette a summary of some other indicative statistics is provided. These are the statistics relating to industrial accidents, one of the most crucial tests of the intensity of work. (The figures come from the Annual Report for

1966 of the Chief Inspector of Factories, and as he points out, surveys of the notifiable accidents not reported indicate that between 17 and 32% are not recorded).

The summary states:

"The total of 296,610 accidents reported during the year shows an overall increase of 1% over the 1965 figure, which was itself an increase of 9.3% over 1964... There were 701 fatalities in 1966 - an overall increase of 74 compared with 1965."

The number of industrial accidents has been increasing over the past decade, and the presence of a 'Labour' Government over the past three years has not halted this trend. The reduction in hours worked necessitates work of greater intensity and hence of greater psychological and social risk. The summary describes the attitude of the State,

"On reported industrial accidents in general, the Chief Inspector maintains that because of the rising trend during the past decade, increased attention needs to be directed to a better understanding of their underlying causes. For this, it will be necessary to develop improved means of measuring the safety performance of industry."

The State is not obviously going to oppose the speed-up. It is, as Wilson would put it, 'in the National Interest' - or more precisely in the interests of those who control the State, the ruling class. What does it matter to them (provided always that productivity is increased) that one in every thirty-five workers engaged in industry in 1966 was involved in an accident at his place of work? Or to put the question somewhat more explicitly, if the object of the capitalist is to profit as much as is possible from the commodity labour which he purchases in the same way as other inputs, why should the State, the embodiment of his interests, intervene in the manner in which he treats these inputs. But why then someone interjects, does the State even bother with an inspectorate, if it is not going to intervene in one way or another in the processes of production? The answer to that leads us to the only solution of the whole problem: the working class compels the state to make a show of industrial intervention. The input labour is not something passive like coal, steel or a machine tool. It is active, alive: it is the agent of change in the process of production, the means by which isolated bricks become whole buildings, by which molten steel is transformed into a motor car. And, most critically it is in permanent (though not always conscious) antagonism with the class which appropriates the produce of its labour, and hence in permanent antagonism to the State which maintains the capitalist system.

In 'Capital' Marx made the following comment on a mid-19th century piece of social-engineering similar in its lack of application but dissimilar in its breadth of scope to the

current Factories Act under which the above-cited report was commissioned:

"What strikes us, then, in the English legislation of 1867, is, on the one hand, the necessity imposed on the parliament of the ruling classes, of adopting in principle measures so extraordinary, and on so great a scale, against the excesses of capitalist exploitation; and on the other hand, the hesitation, the repugnance, and the bad faith, with which it lent itself to the task of carrying those measures into practice".

Thus where the State makes a show of intervention it does so because the working class has imposed some sort of activity upon it and made that legislation necessary. But this activity can only remain limited since any wide-scale intervention in the interests of the working class in its place of work inevitably raises questions of ownership and control which a capitalist state cannot do. One paragraph in the Gazette's summary illustrates the importance of these limits:

"The report also contains details of prosecutions during the year under the Factories Act and associated legislation. Altogether 2,275 informations were laid against 1,471 firms or persons and 2,145 convictions were obtained. The corresponding figures for 1965 were 2,409; 1,503 and 2,301 respectively. The total amount of fines for all offences rose to £62,277, compared with £56,878 last year; the average fine also increased from £23 10s to £28 10s."

That is, for every hundred accidents which were reported, just under one information was laid against a firm or individual. And the Chief Inspector himself quite openly gives the game away,

"There is very little evidence to suggest that industry is inadequately equipped to deal with the hazards which technological changes may involve; there is, however, abundant evidence to show that in some factories the most obvious dangers continue to be ignored!"

Industrial accidents are not something the capitalists have to personally cope with; it is not therefore surprising that State action remains so limited despite recognition that these accidents can be considerably reduced. This action, as Marx pointed out conflicts with increasing intensity of Labour and its instigator - a reduction in the average number of hours worked a week. What is being won on the one hand is being taken away on the other.

The failure on the part of the Labour Government to protect the interests of those who elected it to power has to be considered politically. The 'speed-up' and its consequences - a rising trend in industrial accidents - are part and parcel

THE C.B.R. LOCKOUT

From a statement issued by the Joint CBR Action Committee.
Secretary:- Mike Taylor, 7 Sillwood Place Brighton.

CBR Jersey Mills, of Shanklin Road, Brighton, are involved in an official dispute with the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers. The facts are almost unbelievable.

The minimum working week is 72 hours - six 12 hour shifts. Operatives are not supposed to sit down during these shifts. There is no canteen, no sick pay, no pension scheme. Saturday working is 8a.m. to 8 p.m. Men start at 5/6d an hour, and graduate to 6/- an hour. Women are engaged at 2/9 an hour, plus a small bonus. The machines making jersey fabrics are running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Extra pay is given only for Sundays and Saturday and Sunday nights. Week nights are not paid extra. Normally there are 14 operators. Total employment is about 40. In the year to October 1967 pre-tax profits were 397,000.

In 1964, 1965, and 1966 the NUHKW was refused organising facilities by CBR Mills. On April 3rd 1967, invitations to a meeting outside the factory were given to employees. That was the first time that any interest in the Union had become generally known. The following day, management sent round a letter saying, "This is a small family firm and a trade union has no place or position in it". Despite this intimidation, the meeting of 5th April was attended by most of the operatives. A director of the firm stood outside the meeting place to take note of those who attended. The next day, April 6th two employees who had helped organise the meeting were dismissed, no reason given.

The NUHKW requested reinstatement, and recognition of the Union. 16 further employees had now joined the Union.

Then, on April 17th, operatives were taken one by one into the office and handed a document that stated, 'I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I am not a member of a Trade Union'. They were asked to sign it over a sixpenny stamp. They refused to sign and were dismissed on the spot. They were told that if they produced a letter from the Union saying that they were no longer Union members, their reemployment might be considered. On the 18th, three others admitted they were Union members and were dismissed. In the next few days, five other Union members were dismissed, also without reason given. The only woman Union member, one of the three deaf and dumb union members, was dismissed. Another Union member was dismissed after talking to BBC '24 Hours'. The firm thus dismissed all 19 Union members, including all operatives.

On May 2nd, the firm said that to discuss reinstatement would be a waste of time. At further negotiations on May 11th, no progress was made. The NUHKW officially notified the T.U.C. and affiliated unions, and asked for help in blacking work for CBR.

At the TUC in September, the Chairman of Brighton Trades Council said, "We have to fight in 1967 a boss that uses the same rules that were used a hundred years ago, 72 hours a week and if you join a Union you are out". Dennis Hobden, M.P. has said, "The management has views about Trade Unionism that are about 100 years out of date". Evidence on the CBR lockout has been submitted to the Royal Commission on Trade Unions. Brighton Trades Council launched an Appeal Fund. Support has come from throughout the country, from Union branches, Trades Councils, and Labour Parties.

CBR has recruited some scab-labour through advertisements, and at present there are about 10 trainees. The Factory Manager and the Chief Clerk have left. Mr. Clive Roffe an owner has said "No dismissals took place because of trade union membership". In the Interim Statement for the six months to April 30th 1967, the firm alleges 'disruptive activity', requiring that certain of the labour force be dismissed. In fact, the only actions taken by the men had been to join the Union; no demands had been made. The Statement said that due partly to 'disruptive activity' there had been a loss of £37,364, but that improved results for the second half of the year were expected. The Statement was not audited.

How can wages and conditions such as at CBR be improved unless workers join a Trade Union? Yet when the CBR workers joined a Union, they were locked out! If the CBR management can get away with it, unions elsewhere are threatened!

"These two cases - the one in Brighton and the other in Stockport (Roberts-Arundel) - can be the test cases for the future of Trades Unionism in this country!" (Secretary York Trades Council)

SUPPORT THE CBR LOCKOUT! TRADE UNION FREEDOM IS AT STAKE!

BLACK CBR. LONDON FIRMS DOING BUSINESS WITH CBR JERSEY MILLS.
Sketchley Cleaners, London Regional Office, Times House Ruislip.
Blick Time Recorders Ltd., 44 Sekforde St. E.C.1.
Klinger Manufacturing Co., Silver St Edmonton N18, Edmonton Rd
Khan Textiles, 9 Brandon Rd, N.7. 315 Regent St W.1
Gilford Modes, 34 Commercial Rd E.1. 67 Mortimer St W.1
Henrietta Modes, 119 Hoe St E.17
Evelyn Gowns, 198 High St. E.17. Paulette Fabrics, 38, Commercial Rd.
The Cunart Co. Ltd 231 Oxford St. W.1 (customers' agency)
New Look (Fashions) Ltd, 7 Manningtree St. Bishopsgate
Leonitsa Fashions Ltd 10 Frith St W1. Stewart Goldfarb.
Queen St Warehouse Ltd, 750 Barking Rd E.13. (mail order firm)
Samuels Fabrics Ltd, 135 Whitechapel Rd E1.
Samuels W., 142 Minorities EC3. S. Sherman Ltd 506 Old Kent Road.
Universal Gowns Ltd, 2 Charterhouse Sq EC1.
Zeffert Heard and Morley Lawson, 42 Sun St. E.C.2.

'Irrational' theory of imperialism? by Alan Geik

Two weeks before the Oct. 21-22 demonstrations, Sean Gervasi, an economics lecturer at Oxford, spoke to a meeting of 60-70 members of the 'Stop-It' committee (Americans in England for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam) about the nature of American involvement in South East Asia. An indication of his level of analysis should have been obvious from the notices that he had just returned from Washington with six Labour M.P.s, after 'discussing the war' with middle and upper echelon members of the Johnson administration. Gervasi began by stating several premises, all of which are by now painfully obvious, e.g. the U.S. is violating international law, engaging in widespread anti-personnel bombing, etc... Granting the validity of these premises, we were asked "Why then, is the U.S. in Vietnam?" Gervasi replied that since the Chinese mainland fell to the People's Army in 1949, U.S. foreign policy makers have been entirely 'irrational'. The engineers of the military containment were characterised as 'toads and pigs'. We were then informed that only for reasons of protocol was he not allowed to speak to the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk. (One must cringe at the thought of a 'dialogue' between liberal and bureaucrat somewhere in the labyrinth of a vast government establishment) No doubt Gervasi thought that if he could only convince Sec. Rusk that the foreign policy was irrational then General Westmoreland would be receiving the orders to send the troops home while Gervasi was still finding his way out of the building.

Throughout the discussion Gervasi continually referred to the 'box' that Washington is in as a result of their S.E. Asian policy. In a final burst of indignation he stated that he would not allow these people (U.S. government officials) into one of his tutorials. Remember that these are the same people who with incredible success have engineered a world wide basis of U.S. economic and political domination.

The object of this article is not to dwell on the poverty of Gervasi's analysis but rather to draw some of the more obvious implications. There is no attempt to relate the military action in Vietnam with U.S. policy throughout the world. Therefore Vietnam is viewed as an aberration and not as a development generated by a definable phase of capitalism. It is irresponsible to give an analysis which lacks any historical perspective to people engaged in anti-war activities and with very different levels of commitment. Gervasi's analysis implies that there is no inherent class basis of imperialism: all that we can do is try to set the policy maker's straight. Furthermore, the official decision making apparatus is simply befuddled and 'irrational' and revolutionaries should ignore their socialist education and become psychotherapists.

The identification of natural interest as synonymous with economic and political stability for private foreign investment has been explicitly stated by both financiers and politicians for over one hundred years. More recently, the Vice-President of Chase Manhattan Bank who supervises Far Eastern operations stated:

"In the past foreign investors have been somewhat wary of the over all political prospect for the (South East Asia) region. I must say, though, that the U.S. actions in Vietnam this year (1965) - which have demonstrated that the U.S. will continue to give effective protection to the free nations of the region - have considerably reassured both Asian and Western investors. In fact, I see some reason for hope that the same part of economic growth may take place in the free economies of Asia that took place in Europe after the Truman Doctrine and after NATO provided a protective shield. The same thing also took place in Japan after the U.S. intervention in Korea removed investor doubts." (1)

In From Yalta to Vietnam David Horowitz undertakes an excellent study of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War. The huge increase in the 'defence' budget and the universal opposition to social reform by post World War II U.S. administrations are related to, in varying degrees, the concurrent growth of the threat of 'communist aggression' and increases in private foreign investment. Horowitz also offers a factual account of the immediate domestic political responses to the vastly expanding weaponry technology. Although he does not provide a dialectic analysis of modern capitalism some of the more observable manifestations are documented in his descriptions of the size and range of U.S. intervention in such diverse examples as Korea and Guatemala.

The changing picture of the international economy since Lenin and Hobson also underline the need for a general theory of imperialism. Tom Kemp, in Theories of Imperialism, notes that such a theory would have to explain the "dominant characteristics of the most recent epoch of capitalist development." Kemp attempts to abstract several features which have greater generality and give the broad outlines of monopoly capitalism. Consideration is given to the role and not the absolute amount as Lenin emphasises, that capital exportation plays in the extraction and realisation of surplus value. It is crucial that 'imperialist exploitation' be based on the Marxist theory of value. Within this context the changes in post World War II investment plans and the world wide pattern of investment can be further analysed. This also allows for proper political perspective, i.e. foreign exploitation expresses a relationship between the large international corporations and the industrial proletariat of the 'recipient' country. Therefore exploitation is not carried out by 'one people against another'.

(continued on page 25)

(1) Economic considerations in Foreign Relations - An Interview with A. Wentworth in Political, July 1965, pps. 45-6.

a reply to 'student socialism'

David Adelstein

Richard Kuper's article entitled "Student Socialism" stresses many valuable points but it also, I believe, displays a harmful confession over some questions which descend at root to a destructive sectarianism. No socialist would dispute that a narrow trade union approach (economism as Lenin called it) is a conservative tendency. It is equally clear that only when demands of particular sectors of society transcend their limited bases and integrate with demands of other sections into one total demand that militancy becomes socialist militancy. Similarly, I fully endorse the emphasis upon active above intellectual participation. Nor do I disagree with the view that if R.S.A. were to merely strive for power within the N.U.S. the result would be a meaningless, self-defeating exercise.

What then are the issues of contention? The fulcrum is revealed in Kuper's closing sentence:

"To build a socialist movement is a worthy objective unfortunately it requires socialists first."

This represents a paradigm of sectarianism. Its fundamental fault is in failing to conceive the possibility of people becoming socialist through what might initially be non-socialist political action. Moreover, the statement begs the question of what a real socialist is thereby opening the door to in-bickering over socialist purity. Genuine socialism is revealed through practice; to insist upon its prerecognition is to foster sectarian impotence. Such sectarianism has severe shortcomings. At its worst it involves an all-or-nothing approach e.g. unless we achieve total socialism all efforts are wasted; unless we aim strictly for the 'real thing' our energies are worthless; unless we insist upon everything it is futile to demand anything. One result of such an approach is that the finer the disagreements the greater is the animosity. How often have we witnessed the spleen of various sects being showered upon those closest to them rather than upon the real enemy.

With this underlying limitation Kuper enunciates a number of arguments in support of his position. Of the student-worker concept he says:

"In so far as it does not correspond to reality the concept is utopian; in so far as it is utopian it is compatible with a wide variety of strategies and tactics, most of them alarmingly reformist".

But social reality is the status quo. Does this mean that any social postulate which goes beyond the existant state of affairs is utopian? - surely not. Rather, utopianism results from a neglect of any potential social base, not from a disregard of

present day social . To criticise the student worker concept as-utopian therefore requires reasons why it is necessarily unlikely to conform to a future reality.

I accept that prima facie the concept is difficult to understand and that it certainly needs elaboration. Nevertheless it is quite obvious that productive mental work is assuming an increasing role in the country's economy. Previously student existence consisted of mere apprenticeship for the social elite; nowadays it is much more - it is an economic necessity. In addition, more and more non-students are being required to perform student work. The expansion of part-time higher education, adult education and industrial retraining bears witness to this. There are now over three million working students in various areas of part-time education. It is from this development common to all industrial societies, that the student worker concept mirrors an embryonic reality. Thus we have seen UNEF (the French national union of students), S.D.S. (the German Socialist students organisation) and S.D.S (Students for a Democratic Society in America) all adopt positions close to that of the student worker.

Later in Kuper's article we read:

"Student struggles more than any other form of struggle are less able to bring meaningful advances unless we really believe in the nonsensical view of islands of university libertarian communities in a sea of corporate organisations".

It is precisely because colleges are not libertarian communities, precisely because students are faced with economic and social necessities that student struggles are in fact meaningful. Such a parallogism yields Kuper no credit.

Finally the role of students as intellectuals is criticised. Whilst I feel that here the criticism is valid it is nevertheless again carried too far. Social change will not emanate from the L.S.E. Library, true, but libraries are not likely to be insignificant. An individual's practical experience is not of itself sufficient for him to adopt an adequate political perspective. A large bulk of one's knowledge is second-hand experience derived through intellectual practice. The object then is, presumably, to unite intellectual and practical activity into a meaningful whole. To castigate so thoroughly the role of intellectual and theoretical work is to extend the valid argument - that intellectual activity is irrelevant when divorced from practical activity - into sectarian unreason.

Again, to say that because of the social composition and destinies of students (both middle class) they are therefore irretrievably reactionary is to blind oneself to actual experience. I'm sorry Richard but Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Mao Tse-Tung to mention but a handful, all came from middle-class backgrounds and similarly the social base of all student movements has been middle-class. There is more to it than a simple mechanistic deduction relating student attitudes to student class positions. There is

knowledge, especially social knowledge, its meaning and ideological role, and these are the contradictions that exist within the objective framework of student existence.

The following is a schematic statement of the nascent contradictions within higher education. It is based on a model outlined by Andre Gorz in relation to the Fauchet Plan in France (very similar to the Binary System here). Although not yet appreciably recognised by the student body there was, I feel, been enough change already in student consciousness, paralleling the actual developments, to make such an analysis a future feasibility. The contradictions, closely interrelated, are:

- 1) The contradiction between the economically necessary expenditure to ensure the requisite output of trained personnel and the Government's persistent failure to meet its responsibility for this investment.
- 2) The contradiction between the stratifying functions of education and the need for democratisation involving the real equalisation of opportunity.
- 3) The contradiction between the collective and autonomous nature of productive work and the authoritarian and individualistic structures of present education corresponding to most work situations.

The important question is how far these contradictions will be recognised, for this recognition implies a student-worker consciousness and a demand for student power. Student power, whilst stressing the educational aspects, is, of course a demand for control over one's life situation. As such it is necessarily linked to other power struggles. Nor is it likely that student power, so long as it highlights its ideological implications of education, can be achieved without the realisation of other power struggles.

I have dwelt solely upon the structural contradictions within higher education, without explaining the corresponding ideological implications of the various disciplines. Nevertheless I hope that this gives Kuper and those adhering to his viewpoint adequate food for thought. Let me end with a Kuperian aphorism: narrow sectionalism is undoubtedly a grave fault, and so, surely, is narrow sectarianism.

(Continued from page 22)

Also, with the growing complexity of the system the state objective is to ensure the conditions for preserving the "essential capitalist relationships, between the purchasers and sellers of labour power." With this perspective the realisation that at times state actions conflict with individual capitalist interests is not in itself a refutation of the Marxist theory of the state. As there are significant differentiations within each class, the essential capitalist relationships need not coincide with the short term interest of every grouping. Another important aspect of Kemp's work is the evaluation of the 'refutations'

offered by bourgeois social scientists. Often the most vulgar Marxist theory will be abstracted and then found to be too mechanical, or perhaps a concept will be redefined and then refuted. This approach, besides being totally bankrupt, ignores the need for a theoretical framework in which new empirical evidence can be properly evaluated.

Both Kemp and Horowitzs' contributions provide a useful basis for further and more integrated analyses of monopoly capitalism.

Pentagon by Rand Rosenblatt

The experience of Washington is still with us, and very difficult to assimilate or write about. We were at the Pentagon from 4p.m. Saturday to 3.30 a.m. Sunday. Sometime after 4p.m. with about 10,000 people standing in an illegal area in front of the Pentagon, the paratroopers, military police, and federal marshalls became very tense - they were afraid of losing control. I breathed tear gas for the first time (it's like breathing pepper), and saw young gentle men viciously clubbed by the soldiers. The girls were fantastic; at one point the MPs cleared a wall on one side of the Pentagon by hitting people's feet with their clubs. But at the end of the line one girl refused to move, a thin girl, standing very straight and calm. The MP near her didn't know what to do; he did not want to just hit her so threatened her with his club and tried to push her off the wall. She stood there very straight, regained her balance, and refused to move; her dignity drove the soldier berserk, but before he could really hurt her he was dragged off by his sergeant. Then all the men climbed back on the wall, were clubbed down, and kept on coming back for more. All this was in the afternoon, with 10,000 people around including reporters. At mid-night the demonstrators had diminished to 500, and the reporters had left. The troops then really started swinging with clubs and rifle-butts. It was frightening and melodramatic: the students would be sitting quietly, arms linked, singing 'We Shall Overcome' or 'I Ain't Gonna Study War No more' in the dark, in front of the awesome Pentagon, while our leaders talked nervously over electric bullhorns, and then the troops would pick someone from the front line and start clubbing him, and the television camera lights would go on, and we'd see a soldier, brilliantly caught as if by a flashbulb, with his rifle upraised, and then he'd bring it down, again and again, on the head and arms of one of us, and the students would scream, and the cries would come over our loudspeakers, "medical person needed, medical person needed," and then the

lights would go out, and it would be quiet for a few more minutes, except for the soldiers marching and the student bonfires crackling. After a while this wasn't 'news' any more and the television lights wouldn't go on; it diminished our power to witness. Ken and I were about 5 rows behind the front line; we were not beaten or arrested. We retreated slowly as they pushed, and by 2 a.m. new lines were established - that is, the troops decided not to push us any more. Total arrested: 450.

I do not know what kind of picture you've gotten from the press; as you might expect the U.S. press was more or less straight lies; (e.g. the Washington Post reported the next day that only tear gas was used by the demonstrators!) As far as I know, the press did not report that we were never addressed as a group by anyone in authority, never told what law we were breaking, never even told to 'move on'. The soldiers would stand nervously, chewing their gum and then start kicking and swinging. We were treated as outlaws, as a guerilla mob who 'understood' only a club or a boot in the face. For the predominantly white, well-educated demonstrators, it was a new lesson in brutality and inhumanity. There were mistakes on our side also, bad ones, which probably contributed to the unnecessary violence. There seemed to be little overall organisation and a great lack of experienced, older leaders who could have directed the demonstrators and influenced troops. (This actually did happen somewhat after 2 a.m., when finally one of the national organisers appeared where he was needed and began to calm everyone down, asking the military to talk to us, to tell us at least what they wanted from us, so we could discuss it. They never spoke to us, but they stopped attacking.) The medical and legal support groups were pitifully inadequate. My guess at the way the hard-core will react: not discouragement, but more directed and better-organised anger. Do you remember Roger Gottlieb, the blond bearded American hippie who was at LSE, who talked to us one evening in the George IV about what the hippes could teach the politicals? I met him on the steps of the Pentagon around 2.30 a.m. after the worst violence, and he was shaking his head very disturbed: 'I've got to get a gun'. I'm not sure what it means but it gives you an idea of what's happening.

socialist society meetings

NOVEMBER

<u>Wedn esday</u>	<u>8</u>	Marxist Seminar :	S401	2.00
		Labour Theory of Value.		
		Reading: Marx Capital Vol I, Chap I		
		Wages, Prices, Profits		
		Wage, Labour and Capital		
		Meek Studies in the Labour		
		Theory of Value		
<u>Thursday</u>	<u>9</u>	Film :	O.T.	7.30
		The 1905 Revolution		
<u>Friday</u>	<u>10</u>	Open Committee Meeting :	S.421	1.00
		Agitation on Vietnam		
<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>15</u>	Marxist Seminar :	S.401	2.00
<u>Thursday</u>	<u>16</u>	Nigel Harris :	S.300	7.30
		The Cultural Revolution		
<u>Friday</u>	<u>17</u>	Open Committee Meeting :	S.421	1.00
<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>22</u>	Marxist Seminar :	S.401	2.00
<u>Thursday</u>	<u>23</u>	Chris Harman :		7.30
		The Hungarian Revolution, 1956		
<u>Friday</u>	<u>24</u>	Open Committee Meeting :	S.421	1.00

F.L.N. Meeting : Every Thursday : S.100 : 1.00
