

# Tito-ing off the brink

After weeks of frantic medical intervention, following the amputation of his leg, President Tito of Yugoslavia has finally kicked the bucket (sorry about the pun!). Despite all the efforts of his team of 8 doctors to keep this symbol of Yugoslavian unity alive, medical technology failed in the end. As Tito's condition steadily deteriorated, the strain was so great on the medical team, that a psychiatrist was called in to treat the doctors! Why all the fuss, one might ask? After all, he'd had a good run

(sorry, another pun!). Even Carter, Thatcher and Brezhnev had to admit that he was in the forefront in the march of World Leadership. So, why not let him pass on in peace? Easy. He represented the illusory "unity" of Yugoslavia. Six republics, three religions and several languages. Home of Sarajevo. Ever since he came down from the hills and made everyone toe the line Dubrovnik has been safe for western tourists. Now, as a real Central Committee takes over, the press have a new CRISIS for ALL next week!



# CHARGES DROPPED

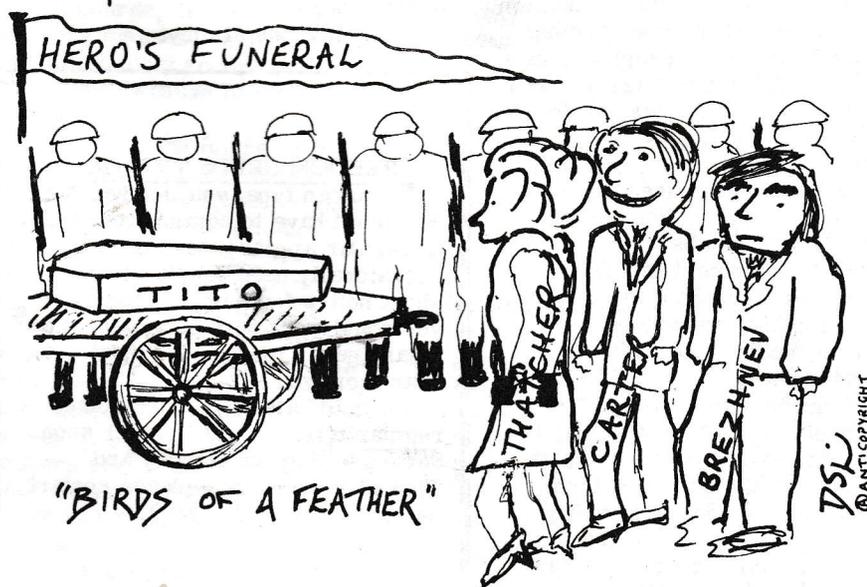
The main charges against Taff Ladd are to be dropped. Taff was the sixth defendant in the "Persons Unknown" case. He jumped bail at the start of the trial, at the beginning of September. Since then he has been in hiding, except for a brief emergence to hold a press conference. He has issued a number of statements to explain the reasons for his actions. Now, the DPP's office have written to his lawyers, saying that if he gives himself up the major charges (of conspiracy to rob and handling firearms) would be dropped. However, he would have to face charges of absconding from bail, which could carry up to a year in prison.

Taff has issued another statement, saying that he was justified in jumping bail, as his claim that jury vetting is unconstitutional has been upheld by Lord Denning's recent Appeal Court decision. He also demands the return of the money forfeited by his sureties. A further obstacle to his surrender is the position of others, named in the prosecution case but who never appeared. Taff has called on the DPP to clarify this.

# CNT Split

Up to a quarter of the membership of CNT in Spain has broken away to set up a rival organisation, in opposition to the decisions of the 5th. Congress. (see FREEDOM vol. 41 nos. 4&5). This opposition group includes Enrique Marcos, the former General Secretary. It appears to consist more of the "revolutionary syndicalists", rather than the "anarcho syndicalists". Our informant considers that they are 'reformists' who want to convert CNT into a "domestic union". This interpretation may well be an oversimplification.

SEE INSIDE "SPAIN TODAY"



# not so brief

Let's start with the forces of law and order, who have been on the front pages of all the newspapers since the 'siege' of the Iranian Embassy began. Where tourists can flock and have their photos taken by Special Branch, as happened to a certain comrade yesterday.

The government, we'll all be glad to hear, is to conduct a 'thorough and urgent' examination of police procedures for dealing with cases of spontaneous public disorder like the Bristol riot, ie. how to get reinforcements in quicker, rather than be forced to retreat, so as to ensure 'a speedy return to law and order' with a minimum of bloodshed! Then again, who started it? The same government is also considering making it easier for demonstrations to be banned or have restrictions imposed on them, after all, 'the freedom to demonstrate does not necessarily imply a liberty to do so whenever one wishes, regardless of the implications for public duty'. Some are more free than others no doubt. In case these recommendations are ignored by certain sections of the public the police have been carrying out riot drill training in an East London Dock for the last six months. There they can dress up as workers and play piggies vs. pickets, leap out of vans, run in flying wedges, use riot shields, and maybe even, go bang, bang, you're dead!

The inquiry into the killing of, Blair Peach, by the SPG in Southall a year ago, has just begun. The jury selected by a policeman, in a tiny coroners court in Hammersmith. The police report on the killing has only been seen by the coroner and the QC acting for Sir David McNeen so other lawyers have no idea what a witness is likely to say until s/he appears in court. This is because the report is the property of Scotland Yard, and we all know what property is. At the same time the police are having their own inquiry, with a view to possible prosecution, into the publishing of a poster that named the SPG men involved in the killing. They seem to think that this was an interference with the course of justice. The fact that the inquest has had a 12 month delay, and still no charges, does not seem to qualify as an interference in the course of justice.

Telephone tapping meets modern technology with the police's acquisition of an American comp-

uter that can transcribe the human voice. Specialists in computers think this capability is still four or five years away but our boys are getting in fast. They already have the ability to tap 1000 people at the same time; they admit 411 taps last year.

A couple of issues ago 'not so brief' noted that two defendants, policemen, were allowed to vet the jury trying them. You'll all be glad to know that they were found not guilty, the 14 year old boy slipped and banged his head on the wall. Not only was this the first time that a jury was vetted by accused policemen but it was also done behind the jurors back. The accused policeman thought that people who had convictions of any kind might be biased against the police. Or maybe people picked by the police know how easy it is to slip and bang your head.

But no, I go too far, the police can't be that bad! Why, out of 14,014 complaints made against them in the past year only three policemen have been found guilty of misconduct, my fears must be unfounded! However, on the same day that this report came out two other policemen pleaded guilty to kidnapping a Catholic priest in County Antrim. This took two years to come to court, and the trial must be put off further as one of the constables involved is a defendant in a murder trial that's just started.

Good news for the army. 17% pay increases and a 50% reduction in rail fares. There goes another £290 million of the peoples money. On entering service a private will now receive £72 a week, go to interesting new places, meet interesting new people, and learn how to kill them. Unless of course s/he dies in training, four so far in the last 12 months.

The Employment Bill is running through parliament, it attacks the right of women to resume work after pregnancy, the rights of people working for small firms to plead unfair dismissal and the rights of immigrants who may not understand some of the complex conditions attached to maternity provisions. The Social Security Bill will be helped by with a guillotine motion so that we may sooner reap the benefits of cuts in the welfare state.

Overseas in El Salvador, where a Christian Democrat/Military junta is fighting for its life by murdering workers, peasants and left-wingers in general, the government is trying to appease the people with a, too little, too late, land reform program and a cosmetic curb on the excesses of the army and right-wing paramilitary 'death-squads'. No doubt just in case this fails the Americans are getting a \$5.7 million military aid package through congress. Mr White, the American ambassador to El Salvador said this was "Not in order to move toward a military solution to a political problem, but toward a political solution backed by a competent, professional, and restrained military establishment." (very sic.)

In Germany opposing Franz Strauss of the Christian Social Union can get you into trouble. To mention but two cases, a 16 year old Munich schoolgirl was suspended for wearing a STOP STRAUSS button. ('a clear case of political propaganda') and a woman employee of the Building Workers Union was sacked for putting a STOP STRAUSS sticker on her perforator, (anti-Strauss stickers have no place in 'orderly working life') all this because of the the man who said of demonstrators, 'animals to whom the laws made for humans did not apply'

P.S. The International Anarchist Boxing Federation claimed responsibility last week for the restructuring of the faces of; Martin Webster, during a march through Corby. Lord Chalfont (ex-Labour Minister) in Chelsea and Lord Home (ex-PM) in Picadilly. Police declined to comment as to the validity of this claim.

PPS Nice one Jimmy!

## FREEDOM NEEDS TYPISTS

If you can type, you can help us! You don't have to commit yourself to regular appearances, but we do occasionally need people at very short notice for 1 or 2 evenings. If you could work with us on this basis, please get in touch. We're dying to hear from you !!

We would also like a (or some) regular typists - get in touch soon. Setting is done on Monday and Thursday evenings - please contact us then on 01 - 247 9249.

# THE TROUBLE WITH THE WORKING CLASS

Everything that Sid Parker writes about we the working class is true for we are indeed the disposal rubbish of history. Yet for all that everyone claims to belong to that alien class for "we are all workers" and though we are hated and idealised, loved and despised, in your heart Sid you know that you need us, for without us there is no struggle - only a world of nice people. We are the great unwashed, the labouring masses who toil in the vine-yards and in the factories, as Sid does, and we have all the human flaws and frailties of the human race and also its virtues. Yet we are the only class who are expected, nay demanded, to have a moral obligation to the society of the day. The middle class and the ultra wealthy exploit their fellow men and women in their own self interest and, apart from describing it as "the rat race", it is accepted as the human norm, yet let the milkman go on strike and the whole of the community scream morality at the unfortunate man. We do not choose to be among the down-trodden of the earth Sid, for every week we do our Pools to join those who hate us, but without us there is no revolutionary struggle, no libertarian debate and no late-night bus. Men and women are incarcerated in prisons in every country and in every society for the most noble and the most evil of motives, but without people in prisons there can be no prison reform, for every cause exists only by the fact that there is a

lower cast of people or animals to be guided, protested or saved.

Sid writes that because the worker is exploited it is assumed that s/he wants to be "free" and this may be true but the working class as a class make no such claim; it was Sid Parker who made that claim in their name. The old, the sick, the hungry and the homeless want whatever material security that their society can offer, but when they protest and fight for their material well-being they are condemned by those of the right and the left, the authoritarian and the libertarian for not conforming to a particular ideology. Sid writes that in every working class struggle there are workers ready and willing to shoot down their fellow workers on behalf of authority, and all that means is that the working class do not conform and obey the standards set for them by others, for only the millionaires do not shoot each other except for sexual reasons. Damn us as you will Sid but one thing cannot be denied and it is this: that the working class have never called upon another class to fight their battles. Our causes may be selfish, futile or noble but always we have fought them on our own battle grounds and others have joined them in pure economic or political or idealistic self interest, but only as guests to the struggle, and too often from the very class or areas against which the working class struggle. In every long and bitter strike the workers

have never appealed to the London School of Economics to show them how to mount the picket lines, and when Sid writes that the obverse of the coin, of the Paris Commune, the black flags over the Korean factories, the 1953 Berlin Uprising, the Hungarian revolt, Cuba and Paris 1968, is the working class policeman and prison warden he is simply weeping into his wine that the working class are not fighting his battles. It is the heart cry of every politician, every liberal and every libertarian such as Sid. The down-trodden and the exploited of the earth will decide in their own time, as individual men and women, what is the struggle of the day when they have first fed their children, Sid, when they have first fed their children and then they will fight for your cause.

Arthur Moyses.

## Sub. Rates

INLAND	£7
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# WORLD DISARMAMENT?



... "I have come to the conclusion that some of these people are so aggressive the only answer is to sedate them"...

I was sitting in a packed Westminster central hall waiting for a number of eminent men and women to tell me how to set about world disarmament. I turned, surprised to see that the speaker was a mild looking lady in wool coat and felt hat of the kind who stands up at friends meetings to tell us how beautiful daffodils are. I wondered who she had in mind; the idea of Mrs Thatcher or President Carter too doped up on chlorpromazine to press the button was certainly interesting....

To put you in the picture: in 1978 at a UN special assembly "all the governments of the world" adopted a "programme of action", aiming for complete disarmament through test bans, nuclear free zones, cessation of production of nuclear armaments and other weapons of mass destruction, disarmament of all stocks of such weapons, reduction of military budgets, forces and equipment, limitation of the world arms trade - this would lead to complete disarmament, except for internal security and a UN peace keeping force; and a transference of Arms expenditure to World Development. Fortyone countries including the nuclear powers were elected onto a special committee to make practical proposals to carry out the above. They are to report to a research assembly in 1982.

WDC aims to act as a coordinating body for existing peace organisations here and abroad, pressing for international action, demanding such things as (1) an all European conference of heads of state, (2) ratification of SALT 2, agreement on SALT 3; (3) strengthening of the Helsinki Accord at the Madrid Conference; (4) ultimately a decision by the UN Special Assembly to destroy all nuclear weapons. The practical suggestions for action included: setting up Joint Peace Councils at a local level, worldwide petitions and international conventions.

Whenever I'm faced with proposals such as these, my eyes have a terrible habit of glazing over, my ears ring or irrelevant questions like "where is Madrid" float through

my mind. No matter - perhaps the speakers would introduce a note of harsh and practical reality... I was gravely disappointed.

A large amount of time was spent in presenting reality to us as a series of horror statistics: there are enough nuclear weapons in the world to kill every person 10 times over; £1,000 a minute is spent on weapons; it takes 13,000 tons of TNT to kill 80,000 people; one nuclear warhead contains the equivalent of 25 million tons of TNT; each person in this country spends £3 a week from birth to death on arms expenditure; in 1978 25 million under 5 year olds died; one jet fighter costs the same as 40,000 pharmacies, and so on.

I am not denying the value of information. Elizabeth Sugden from the Ecology Party, after discussing the horrors of chemical warfare, emphasised the importance of gaining and disseminating accurate information, but it seemed to me that as the audience was a group of highly motivated, intelligent, well-meaning people who would not have been there if they were not aware of the kind of facts relayed above, time was wasted. Nobody told us how to gain access to accurate information, or how to assess the accuracy of the information we do receive.

There was no really sensible discussion of the economic question - Bill Fraser from Oxfam pointed out that two thirds of the world lived in poverty and that poverty led to political instability and instability to nuclear war and left it at that. There seemed to be an assumption that money saved by disarmament would be spent on development. But no discussion of how one turned a self-interested profit-making arms manufacturer into a benign, non-profit making producer of socially useful articles. Though Lord Soper did say that the only society capable of genuine disarmament was a socialist one. In which case why was there no discussion of how to achieve social revolution.

We also succeeded in avoiding any discussion of the fact that, while we were trying to prevent a third world war, there was a number of very real wars being waged right now, and that we were

colluding with the violence in N. Ireland and Southern Africa.

Cardinal Hume stated that "no amount of political activity would bring about the millenium", that he believed in the right to self defence and that the state has that right on behalf of its citizens. Also, that if it was possible to use deterrent weapons against military targets alone, he would approve, but he did not see that as a real possibility.

The one really practical suggestion for individual action came from Bruce Kent of the Peace Tax Campaign, who asked us to withhold tax as a form of conscientious objection. Even this was presented as the individual's right to a clear conscience, rather than as a form of mass action.

As a whole the feeling of the conference was that we should go away and "organise at the grass roots" to put "pressure on those in power".

Nobody suggested that considering how little "all governments of the world" had achieved in the last two years, one's faith in government and the UN itself might be slightly shaken, and when I politely asked Lord Gardiner for the opportunity to do so, he said that as I didn't represent any organisation there was no time for me to speak.

Well, by now many of you will be sitting back and saying - I told you so! But that's not really what it's about. The WDC is one step ahead of the Anarchist movement in that at least it is trying to do something. I personally feel that petitioning and sending delegates to conferences is yet another way of salving one's conscience and avoiding action. But something needs to be done.

For any anarchist who still questions this, may I recommend E. P. Thomson's very readable, short, clear analysis of the situation "Protest and Survive".<sup>(b)</sup> As he points out, an increasingly militarised economy requires an increasingly authoritarian regime, and an increasing loss of civil liberties. To justify this and make it acceptable, it is necessary to stir up the idea of political turbulence - a threat from within, as well as without, "to beat up an internal civil war by unmasking traitors, threatening journ-

alists under the official secrets act, tampering with juries, tapping telephones and generally closing up peoples' minds and mouths". Surely this is relevant to us as anarchists.

One of the reasons many of us involve ourselves in the anti-nuclear movement is because nuclear power leads to a restriction of liberty. I do not understand why so many of us are so actively involved in this movement and yet completely ignore what seems to me the greater threat. Mrs Thatcher plans to build more nuclear power stations in Britain in the 1980's. She plans to site 164 cruise missiles in Britain in 1982.

Radical direct action of some kind is called for - occupying, obstructing, withholding tax, the dissemination of accurate information are all effective weapons - but they require some coordination. To turn our backs on a campaign because it is centralised and attempts to work through conventional channels seems ludicrous unless we have a better and more effective approach - at the moment we have no approach at all.

Lynne Jones

(1) *Protest and Survive* by E.P. Thompson, published by the CND and the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

## A Happy Event



To what must be the great relief of all loyal citizens of these islands, it was officially announced today by a Palace official that Prince Charles has finally obtained a job.

The details of the nationwide search for a position that would fulfill the Prince's impressive range of talents are too well-known to need repetition in these columns. However, it is surely appropriate to pay tribute to the anonymous, but faithful, civil servants and Palace officials who searched out and solicited the help of every employment agency in the land - to them we must all say - 'Our grateful thanks.' And of course Prince Charles. This must have been a particularly trying time for him - it is, after all, approximately fifteen years since he left full-time education - but he has endured it with impressive stoicism. 'Well done Your Highness !'

... The job? - I am sorry; I nearly forgot to mention it - please

excuse me, I'm getting carried away; it's not every day that one has the pleasant duty of recording a fairy-tale-style ending of a story for FREEDOM. Prince Charles has been appointed Chief Event/Institution Visitor, Public Works Opener, Ship Launcher, V.I.P Marriage/Memorial Service Attender for the United Kingdom - a post to which I am sure you will agree he will bring the humility so typical of our beloved Royal Family.

Prince Charles has let it be known that he does not intend to be a mere figurehead in his important new role - therefore may I suggest that if any readers of FREEDOM are presently organizing events, they consider soliciting his attendance? I am sure he would consider an application carefully. Prince Charles is contactable at Buckingham Palace, London SW 1 or at any police station.

## Snuffin to do with me

I've noticed that sticker 'Don't Blame Me I Voted Labour.' and it strikes me that we need a different version: 'Don't Blame Me I Didn't Vote!' In fact I spend some proportion of my time congratulating myself on all the things which are not my responsibility. It's a long list so let me bore you with it.

I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR:

1. Threatening the destruction of millions of defenceless people if others annoy me or upset my plans.
2. Locking up 50,000 people in tombs called prisons (in Britain alone) where all their problems will worsen and cause greater difficulties for all of us.
3. Dividing the world and every country in it between a few with privileges and the many with major disadvantages.
4. Shutting people away in institutions supposedly for their

own good, whether they be children, the sick or the old.

5. Organising food distribution for the benefit of the overfed and to the detriment of the underfed.
6. Supporting a system that is draining the soul of our people of all decency and courage.
7. Creating a cultural wilderness where the values of the market become the sole criteria of any artistic achievement.
8. Building offices when homes are required.
9. Using and developing nuclear power when alternative means of energy are under-researched and under-financed.
10. Supporting a transport policy that kills and maims thousands, particularly children, annually. That poisons us with lead and brutalises our countryside with motorways.

My list goes on and on. I expect you could add your own

favourites. I'm not responsible for wage slavery, or destroying children's spirit or distracting people from their real problems towards escapist fantasy. Others might like to keep it short: I'm not responsible for the State or Capitalism.

This lack of responsibility means I can love better. It means that if I cannot sleep it is because of the problems they create for me not because of the guilt I feel. Anarchism may bring us all tough decisions about our personal lives that involve suffering and sacrifice - but anarchism leaves us with morality, perhaps our greatest strength.

Aren't you glad you don't support the system. Aren't you glad to be a vibrating part of the solution to all the problems of the world. Aren't you glad, if, like me you defy the system by remaining the enemy of the State. Aren't you glad that every minute of every date you are fighting all those miseries listed above. As Stirner said: For whose sake do you struggle. For MY sake.

E. G. O.

# Violence

Freedom,

I am not clear as to what was the original question open for debate at the beginning of the recent Violence/Non-Violence articles in Freedom, but I do believe that it is time to get our terms defined. It could be that we are setting ourselves questions which are impossible to answer at present, and setting tasks which are impossible to fulfil.

Supposing that the question was "Is the use of Violence ever Justified": we first have to indicate what our understanding is of the word 'violence' (and, presumably 'pacifism', if our answer to the question is "no"). This is not as easy as it sounds. Jim Huggon advocates 'non-violence' and envisages an anarchist society in which violence has no part. He advocates non-violence without, as he admits, having had his principle tested to any measurable degree. I respect his view, but would personally find it very hard to advocate anything which I had not first tested and found both effective and sure.

I have found that, like the word 'love' violence is a word for which it is almost impossible to find a one or two-word synonym. Similarly, we all have our own views as to what is 'kind', 'cruel' or 'unjust'. What may be a 'violent' experience to one person, may be merely irritating or inconvenient to another. It is not enough to say that violence is just a deprivation of freedom or to say that it involves weapons or stone walls. I believe that, sadly, it is a part of living and surviving and that to advocate its non-appearance makes about as much sense as saying 'there shall be no more tears'. I believe, also, that it is more than likely that it will manifest itself during the creation of an anarchist society and that, given an organic structure such a society will also contain violent acts - which is not to say that it cannot be made to work for us in a constructive way. We live in a corrupt state, in which the world lies each day in win or lose situations, where people assert their alleged superiority over all other living creatures to the point of their extinction,

where nations compete for territory and survival. We must recognise this and not blinker ourselves to the realities of conflict which face the greater part of the world's population hour by hour. We make no progress within our unassailable dreams - it is the pacifist, in my view, who is elitist, striving for a curious state of perfection, often unwilling or unable to come to terms with his or her own violence. For violence, as I have tried to imply, can take many forms and be understood as such in many different situations.

I know that I am capable of violent acts, I know that I would use violence as a last remaining effective measure and that I have supported, and will continue to do so, the violence used by others when all other means have failed. I have also been the victim of violence and have known the violence of the thief, the enemy and the friend. I have been more wounded by the coldness and mistrust of friends than I ever was by the strap that my father wielded when I was disobedient. Violence is found not only behind the riot shield, the barbed wire, in the city streets, at the doors of breeding kennels and in the milking shed, but in lovers' beds, in the cracking of an egg, in outrage, persuasion, frustration, in laughter and in silence.

To return to the question "Is the Use of Violence ever Justified". We have next to look at the word 'justified' - justified to whom, on what terms and to what effect, lasting or otherwise. For example, I can justify, to anyone who cares to listen, why I live as a Vegan (one who does not consume any animal product). I can also justify Veganism in universal, economic, social, political, moral and logical terms. Supposing that the kind person who has listened to my monologue then says (wearily) "but I just love eggs, I don't want to live without meat and am not prepared to..." - what have I then achieved. Do I tacitly allow that person to continue paying for the butchery of the abattoirs. I have not made progress. What use my justification. Similarly, if I advocate non-violence, how can I prevent, if all my non-violent means fail, to stop someone from torturing a child, if that person is determined to continue despite



all arguments, all educative attempts. I therein, in my view, set an impossible task given to-day's realities. We are not in the ideal state, nor yet have we the educative means to establish a loving anarchist society. We may wish to establish such means and ends, but I do not believe that it is either wise or effective to indulge in beautiful theory whilst we are still being blinkered by images of perfection.

This debate is vast, the questions and tasks before us immense. I can 'justify' both violence and non-violence. Can anyone justify that.

Ann.

## DAM

Dear Comrades,

Further to my letter which appeared in Freedom 26 April, at the recent DAM Conference it was decided that DAM should set up a support fund for our Chilean Comrades. We have set ourselves a target of £100 which we hope to obtain by the end of July. We have already made a start with a Collection of £16 at our Conference.

Can I take this opportunity to remind everyone that the Chilean Labour Movement is being reconstructed and if we want a significant anarchist influence within it we will have to pay for it. The Social-democrats and Moscow Communists receive millions, yet our Comrades receive nothing. It is time to see who are the real revolutionaries and who simply play intellectual games.

All donations should be sent to the address below. Everything we receive will be forwarded, via the Norwegian NSF, to Chile.

Yours in Solidarity  
Dave Thomson  
National Secretary

Direct Action Movement  
Box 20  
164/166 Corn Exchange Buildings  
Hanging Ditch  
Manchester  
M4 3BN

# Doletariat

Dear Freedom,

Whiling away some of my hours of unemployment with a worthy Marxist tome, the understandable tendency of my thoughts to wander led me to indulge in certain irreverent speculations, which I should like to share with you. I cannot answer for their originality, as it is far beyond both my capacity and desire to explore the whole corpus of Marxist heresies, revisions and blind alleys as it would be to examine the mountains of dogmatic quibbles excreted by Christianity.

I have always felt a sense of disappointment that the magnificent soap opera of thesis-antithesis-synthesis should be taken off the air so abruptly with the victory of the proletariat. Could we not induce the programme planners to bring it back in the autumn with some new characters to sustain our interest. The unemployed could take over the role of exploited class, as the proletariat, ever-reducing numerically, is incorporated into the amalgam of status quo class interests.

For, surely, the ultimate alienation from the productive process is not to be allowed to produce at all, and only to be allowed access to sufficient of the products of labour to keep one alive as a constant object-lesson reinforcing the work ethic. This last, of course, is the ideology of the ruling classes, including the proletariat, only accepted by the unemployed because of their mystification.

Now, as to the future of this open-ended model, my lack of dialectical training renders me unfit for making predictions. However, a possibility which occurs to me is that the next candidate for the position of exploited class - once the unemployed have come to power and their ideology of doing bugger-all is the ruling one - could be a population of domesticated ape-labourers (as popularised by rubber masks and Hollywood).

Although this analysis is offered with my tongue in the cavity dedicated to levity, it may be of some comfort to my fellow unemployed to consider themselves as really the revolutionary class

of the future, rather than the proletariat seemingly intent on blind consumerism to the exclusion of all so-called historical tasks. However, in the long run, it will mean acknowledging that the revolutionary initiative may pass even from so historically necessary a class as ourselves to Rowan Atkinson and his friends.

Yours in solidarity  
Nic Partos.

## labelism

Dear FREEDOM,

Whoever wrote 'Not so brief' in the last issue of Freedom (26 April 1980, Vol 41, No 8) may be interested to learn that 'experts' are not exactly sure what 'alcoholism' is - so suggestions that it is present in certain social groups - such as women in the case of the statement made by the Director of the Alcoholics studies centre in Paisley is, to say the least, problematic.

From 1941 to 1976 'alcoholism' was defined 'authoritatively' in the English-speaking world at least twenty times - but, by 1977, the search for the Holy Grail had, for some, lost its initial appeal. Thus, Clark (an American social researcher) stated that "What is meant by the term 'alcoholism' depends on who is using it, and the immediate purpose of the definition" - Keller (an editor of an influential American journal on 'alcoholism' and no mean definer in the past) referred to 'the loss in precision in usage of the term alcoholism' and the World Health Organisation noted that 'the term ('alcoholism') has come to be used so loosely that an attempt to restrict its meaning once more to a specific syndrome is likely to be futile.' One year later, Rohan was more emphatic: 'All attempts to identify and define 'alcoholism' have failed.'

Minor semantic problems such as conceptual vagueness do not deter people like directors of Alcoholics studies centres from making confident assertions about the extension of 'alcoholism'. But ask them a question such as 'What do you mean by 'alcoholism' ' and their confidence wavers. Of course this semantic weapon can also be used against anarchists - but anarchists don't set out to control people, which is what I think the authorities do when they suggest that certain groups of people are a social problem.

Yours, John (London).

Dear Sir,

Re John L. Broom's letter in March 29th issue, it is my personal opinion that it is a step in the right direction if we all a) asked stupid bloody questions b) answered them.

Try it John.

Yours etc.,  
(for reasons of paranoia I omit my name)

Stirling University

## Contributions

Has your group done anything interesting recently? - have you got anything interesting to say? If so, write in and tell us - remember FREEDOM depends on your contributions!



## Events

FREEDOM is hoping to run fuller listings of events taking place throughout the country - so if you are organising something - let us know as far as possible in advance so that we can publicize it for you.

## Deadlines

Contributors may like to note FREEDOM's publication deadlines: 1 news section - i.e. short, topical articles, letters, notices, etc. - Monday immediately preceding publication date 2 review section - i.e. longer, less immediate articles - Monday preceding the news section deadline.

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## The past cannot be lived again:

# SPAIN TODAY

"The past cannot be lived again, but you can, and will, remember it."

The Ghost of Christmas Past

This article is just one norteamericano's opinion about Spain today. Although i have visited Spain three times in the last ten years it only comes to little more than a year living in Spain (actually half that time in Cataluna). I speak some Spanish and read it better, but only the very, very kind would say i was fluent. As an active anarcho-feminist in the U.S. i have a certain perspective that should be apparent to the reader. Equally apparent, i hope, is my great love for the Iberian Peninsula and my companeros/as who live there.

"Una fe sin duda es una fe muerte" (A faith without doubt is a dead faith)

"Entre creer y crear hay una sol letra de deferencia."  
(Between believing and creating there is only one letter difference)

The anarchist/libertarian movement in Spain today is full of people with either faith without doubt - or without faith at all. The result of this is evident. Two years ago CNT (National Confederation of Workers, an anarcho-syndicalist union) claimed 200,000 'members', now it is 20,000 - if you count both the CNTs. The recent split, the expulsions and infighting promise to reduce that number further. Those anarchists, libertarians, acratas (against authority), ecologistas, or feministas who lack the pure conviction necessary to expel or wage ideological war with their companeras/os grow paralyzed by lack of hope. "Apocalypse Now" is a phrase used often in Spain, and not just in movie reviews. To many people it seems their fate will be decided in Moscow or Washington, or even in Bonn.

Such feelings are hard to analyze. Are they cause or effect. To know that Barcelona, as a sixth fleet port and a key city of a western ally, is targeted by the Soviet Union for destruction if there is a war between the superpowers could certainly lead many Catalans, having little if any influence on U.S. or Soviet policy, to feel helpless. Of course many people in the U.S. (and probably the Soviet Union) feel the same. So it is probably more complicated. Hope, like hopelessness, seems a bit contagious. After Franco's death many people thought things would change in Spain. They did but they also stayed the same. Hopes for easy change turned to quick disappointment, perhaps much as they did in the U.S. in the sixties where instant revolution failed to materialize after a few years of protest.

In Spain, especially for anarchists, there is also the lost revolution of the thirties to brood about. There is also the confusing impact of Spain's rapid industrialization and the so-called 'marginal' movements; women, gays, prisoners, invalids, gypsies, the young. What this all adds up to is hard times for those trying to make a revolution.

But even with CNT collapsing, the economy getting worse, inflation out of control, and police as brutal as ever and getting more efficient, there were still many places i felt i was among people who had decided to be free, and thought they had a chance.



That feeling was very strong one morning in the Barcelona neighborhood of Sants. My companera and i had been busted along with 14 Catalans when La Compana, the illegal radio station in Sants, had been closed by the National Police. It wasn't very heavy, the police brought typewriters with their machineguns, but it was a little tense and it was past three in the morning before we hit the streets. Our hosts politely took us to the bus stop and then ran off into the night, not to bed, but to organize.

That same feeling i found at the organic (pan integral) bakery in Madrid called "El Tigre" which is a center for anti-militarist organizing, and in Valencia at the offices of Bicicleta, which is perhaps the best anarchist/acrata magazine in the world. There is a lot of strong organizing going on, especially by ecologists, feminists etc. But the dominant feeling of the movement is reflected by the problems of CNT.

"CNT has a brilliant future.....behind it." title of an article in Nada

"A dogmatism and intolerance are provoking tensions and conflicts that threaten the very existence of CNT." Grupo de Afinidad Anarco-sindicalismo, December '79.

Last December, CNT held the 5th convention of its 69 years of life. Delegates representing over 50 local unions walked out criticising the lack of serious debate, as they saw it, and protesting "a progressive deterioration of freedom of expression" at the conference. A rival CNT has now formed (the "Zaragoza" CNT) and the expulsions have begun.

Behind all this (and much more that is too intricate and irrelevant to go into) are a number of deep divisions on several different levels within the CNTs. There are the exiles still living in Toulouse in France, who many people are convinced are sitting on a pile of money that they took out of Spain when the Republic fell. They expel people from CNT left and right (for example Bicicleta's collective) and have been out of touch for years. There are also many older members and young allies (often in one of the two FAI's - Anarchist Federation of Iberia) who are "puristas". They expel the less pure like the alleged "nationalistas" in the collective Askatasuna which publishes a magazine and books in Bilbao. Then there are the "reformistas" as well.

Actually there doesn't seem to be just one reformist tendency. There are several overlapping groups of people who are given this label by various friends and enemies. Some of them want to run CNT candidates in union elections and/or concentrate more on bread and butter issues that affect the factories and the working class. There are also militants who want to de-emphasize the factory organizing and concentrate more on the 'new' contradictions of modern Spain - ecology, centralism, feminism, nationalism, sexual liberation, the multinationals.

A loose coalition of "puristas" and far left "autonomistas" (who are actually quite anti-union all together) think there is also a communist attempt underway to take over CNT - led by the Anarcho-syndicalist affinity groups. The charge is hurled the other way of course, the ex-secretary of the Anarcho-syndicalist affinity group network accuses the Catalan, Valencian, and Madrid sections of CNT of being run by faistas of the following beliefs: "anarcho-leninist, anarcho-trotskyist, and anarcho-stalinist."

Not surprisingly droves of people have left CNT totally disillusioned and burnt out with the internal wars. Many women, especially those who consider themselves in the feminist movement, have left (or always refused to join) CNT. Mujeres Libres, which is very small these days, is not in CNT. It is easy to see why. Men dominate meetings and marches, sexist slogans fill the air at demos, and just basically CNT hasn't freed itself from 1936. It was very progressive in 1936 of course, but that's not enough for today. Many militants feel this in Spain. Some call themselves feminists or acratas, others just talk about "Revolution Integral". But they all share a belief that it is necessary to go beyond the inspiring, and sad, history of the old anarchist left. By now most of these people have long since left CNT.

Still, with all its troubles, CNT is a remarkable organization with many fine people struggling to keep it alive. The principles it adopted at its 5th conference (before the walk-out) were anti-statist, anti-militarist, internationalist, direct action, anti-hierarchy and libertarian communism. And, at least until the split, CNT was a small, if real network in almost every part of Spain's industrial economy. "At least" said one ex-Cenetista "it will be there when something happens like May '68."

#### THE WORKER'S MOVEMENT

All of the unions have lost members in the last two years, not just CNT. It is not surprising considering that the Communists (CCOO) and the Socialists (UGT) lose people almost every week; one or the other breaks some strike and the affected workers are all out at the gates of the factory burning their membership cards the next morning, if they still have them. But CNT has lost just as heavily as the others. To many workers apparently,

it seems like just another "party" with ambitious men and vicious infighting.

Lately the government, the businesses, and the unions (except CNT and some of the small arcane ones) have been trying to pass a law that would force union elections and obligatory membership on the workers to replace the open worker's assemblies that usually appear to run important strikes. These authorities are worried because only a small percentage of workers belong to any unions (some say it is less than 30% in most industries - one of the lowest percentages in an industrial country).

The Communists are holding out for some reforms to the bill. The Socialists support it already. Ever since the expiration of the Moncloa Pact (an agreement by the Socialists and Communists to keep worker demands for raises significantly below the rate of inflation) there have been a growing number of strikes. In '79 hours lost due to strikes was up 349% over '78, although it is still much lower than the level of '76. With the deepening economic crisis and the weakening unions things are expected to heat up. What ever does happen the unions will be there slowing it down. It will have to happen outside of them, even in spite of them, if it is going to be effective.

Since we've glanced already at CNT and staggered clumsily on to the labor situation, we might as well look at the traditional "left" - the Communists, Socialists and nationalists.

#### HUNGRY FOR POWER

Spain is crawling with "leftist" parties, unions and organizations. The Socialistas are the biggest (although they've lost ground in the recent elections in Cataluna and the Basque country). Few people, especially Socialists, think that the Socialists are in any real sense revolutionary. They are anxiously awaiting their turn to govern. Meanwhile they support nuclear power (their spokesman on the issue said: "The choice is between cold showers and nuclear power"), worry about the workers ("The problem is the Spanish worker is naturally an anarchist" one labour union organizer complained to a Danish anarcho-feminist), and spend their ample pesetas (often donated by 'socialists' in Germany) lavishly on slick election campaigns and big conferences where they debate whether or not they are marxists.

The Communists were recently judged fit for participation in Spain's government by no less an authority than the International Herald Tribune. So their campaign for respectability is doing fine too. Their position on nuclear power is very much like the Socialists. Ex-Stalinist Santiago Carillo, the Chairman, says: "To be against nuclear power is to be against progress." Both parties are dominated by middle-class intellectuals, both are gaining in middle-class respectability while the workers quit their unions and the young become acratas, autonomistas, feministas, pasotas, or fascistas. The angry young that is. If you want a good career the Communists or Socialists are considered a better bet than the moderates.

One of the biggest worries of both parties (and the government as well) is the declining interest in voting. Each election the turnout drops by roughly 10%. Along with the declining union membership this is a sign that the present "democracy" isn't as solid as many observers thought.

There is a raft full of trotskyists, "authentic" communists, and pseudo-maoist groups as well to flesh out the traditional left. Boring. More interesting are the various nationalist movements.

Almost every region has a movement. The Basque country, Cataluna, Galacia, Andalucia, the Canary Islands, Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Extremadura, even Aragon. Many of these movements are part marxist, but usually nationalism comes first. They range from ETA commandos to Catalan capitalists. In Cataluna, just on the far left (the "independistas"), there are those that

want an independent Cataluna including Valencia, the Catalan speaking region of France, and the Balearic Isles, and there are those who want Cataluna alone. And there is every combination of the above. It is the same in other regions.

What will come of this is beyond me. But several things are clear. Many (but certainly not the majority) of militants in the nationalist movements are anti-state basically, pushing for cultural, decentralized community. In all of the regions certain capitalists and middle-class types, have joined these movements, forming a right-wing that the government is now trying to buy off with limited autonomy. The limited autonomy isn't going to satisfy most nationalists in the long run. Finally, nationalist sentiment is still growing. It is going to play a major role in the peninsula's future.

"Machista. No Gracias" (Gay Slogan)

The left in Spain now recognizes that there are "women's" issues (divorce, abortion, etc....) and "gay" issues, but it is hard to see much grass roots activity outside of such centers as Barcelona, Madrid, and Bilbao.

Feminism has a "bad" image to many on the left - some active women strongly reject the label (especially outside of Barcelona) because a large segment of the "feminist" movement is middle-class and/or controlled by traditional left parties or the new Feminist Party; Lidea Falcon, an ex-communist militant, is the spokesperson for the Feminist Party. Her program: "In order to construct a feminist society nothing remains but for us to take power."

Of course the majority of feminists reject such a male-identified way of looking at social change, but the damage is done and many activists interested in an "integral" (complete social-political-personal) revolution reject feminism and look to the general libertarian movement. In this shuffle, the critique of patriarchy, feminist criticisms of the old/new left, feminist process, and women's culture usually get neglected.

In Barcelona the only women's bar has closed and the women's center (started by Mujeres Libres) is cutting back its hours. There is a network of collectives and neighborhood groups and a small magazine that publishes a wide range of views from Communist to anarcho-feminist. but the impact of feminism, while growing, is yet to be felt beyond certain circles in the left and the youth culture.

Women's issues on the other hand are taken up strongly - like the draconian laws against abortion that have sent a number of women, and even a few men, to jail. There is even a liberal campaign starting in Cataluna for more contraceptive information (illegal until 1976!). With new divorce legislation coming up and the continual struggle for the right for abortion growing the influence of women and feminist ideas will probably continue to grow in the Spanish left.



The vibrant gay culture in Barcelona (and i've heard it is strong in Madrid and Bilbao) has political expression in both a Communist controlled federation and a more libertarian network. Cataluna is very liberal and so gay rights are given lip service by the whole left. Job discrimination etc. . . has been met with protests, but basically things are pretty quiet.

Sexuality is different in Spain than in the U.S. of course. Exactly how is difficult to describe. Spanish sexual humor (even in many "leftish" magazines like *El Papis*) is incredibly violent and focused on cocks and tits. Men are always getting castrated (or worse) and women are always getting raped and loving it. Some friends argued that this level of popular violent pornography is a response to the years of sexual repression under Franco and soon it will start to disappear. But it is disquieting and, in my opinion, is actually a reflection of deeper parts of Iberian culture, like machismo is.

All is not machismo though. There is real change. Young men don't hassle women on the streets nearly as much as they used to, couples can live together openly now (at least in the big cities) and not be persecuted, and in Barcelona at night along the Ramblas, you can see beautiful drag queens parading in traditional flamenco dresses.

As men see women as objects to be owned and used so man sees nature. The movement for a more ecological perspective in Spain is in many ways part of the redefinition of personal relationships. Being older organizationally it is further along, but still actually all part of the same cultural milieu.

#### ELECOLOGISTA FURIOSO

The ecology/anti-nuke/anti-militarism movement is growing larger . . . and more confused. Eco-bureaucrats tried to start a "green" political party last year and were strongly rebuffed by almost everyone. But no-one thinks that they've given up.

Views within the movement range from pacifist to ETA-Military (Basque Nationalist commandos) who have staged three armed attacks on the reactor at Lemoniz (causing substantial damage and killing one worker) and have also kidnapped the director of the nuclear program in Basque country to interrogate him about future plans. Many ecologists think violence might be the only way to change Spain's suicidal policies on nukes and industrialization. Recently the mayor of Asco, a small Catalunan town with a nuke being built literally on top of it, said that the people of Asco will do everything, including violence, to stop the plant from opening. But many other activists don't believe that violence can be effective in what is basically a police state.

There is a widespread distrust of the various parties - especially the Socialists and Communists. This isn't surprising considering their position on nukes and their support of industrialization. Trotskyists and dissident militants from the big parties are active in some federations, which has led to infighting over "dual" membership. The ecologists, acratas, and anarchists who form many of the affinity groups, collectives, and atenos (community centers) active in the grass roots don't trust the party militants with their predetermined positions, party discipline, and over-riding concern for the health of "their" party. . . . after all it is the only hope of the masses.

Many nationalists are also active. Often they act from an ecological perspective, but sometimes it is just "let Catalans build Catalonian nukes for Cataluna." In the Basque country the nationalist-ecologist mixture has spawned a powerful mass movement that has had demonstrations of 200,000, work refusals by stevedores, and numerous local actions.

In Galacia a smaller, but similar, movement has been resisting the Northern Freeway for several years. Similar local struggles are growing all over Spain actually. Nukes are just the most visible part of Spain's wrenching industrialization that has left ruined land, uninhabitable cities, poisonous air, worse water, and multinational companies all over the once beautiful country.

Although it is still mainly a marginal young-persons movement, at least it is the movement for most young activists, and one that is critical of the whole process of capitalism/bureaucratic/industrialization/consumption. And it is growing.

#### Post -Franco Spain

"Our headline tonight, General Francisco Franco is still dead." Jane Curtin of "Saturday Night Live"

"The one thing you must understand now about Spain is that things haven't really changed since Franco died, except maybe to get worse." Jordi.

Again and again people would insist that the liberalization of Spain since Franco's death is a myth. There is ample evidence for this. The continued heavy hand of the police is easy to see. The 'anti-terrorist' laws that allow the authorities to keep all prisoners "incommunicado" for 48 hours without lawyers - is recognized by everyone as "confession" time. (The Communists and Socialists support this law). Militants (usually Basque or Catalan nationalists or anarchists) are arrested daily, tortured, and held under this law for months or years without trial.

Censorship continues, right now several books, magazines, and a comic are banned and their editors charged with either insulting the military, the church, or sedition. A major movie called "The Crime of Cuenca" which is a Sacco/Venzetti type of true story from the turn of the century is outlawed too.

Added to all this "official" repression is the police-connected network of "Ultraderechistas" (far rightists), whose activities range from burning newsstands (for selling a magazine that named several rightists later executed by ETA) to assassination.

If anything the repression is increasing in frequency and efficiency. Police recently shut down all the illegal radio stations in Catalonia. About the same time it was announced that the National Police will be getting a fleet of helicopters, enough for every major city.

The systematic use of violence can be seen in police responses to demos in Madrid. Last summer 80,000 people turned out to demonstrate against nukes. The police randomly beat, busted and fined dozens of people. The last anti-nuke demo in Madrid only had 800 people. There are other reasons for the decline in participation but everyone I met said that last year's violence was the most important factor. Feminist and anti-fascist demos have been attacked as well. Police broke up a recent feminist march by driving buses into it.

Spain has changed since Franco died however. The Communists and Socialists have been brought into the system and have enthusiastically responded in every way they can to help control the workers and the "marginal" movements. And, except for some "technical" criticisms (like calling for more nationalizations), the big parties have supported the present "moderate" government in its attempt to drag the country, kicking and screaming and sick with pollution, into the world of nukes, multinationals, and consumption beyond reason.

The current drive, spearheaded by Germany, to get Spain into the Common Market and Nato is a perfect example of this. The Socialists are said to be against Spain being in Nato, but "open" to various bilateral pacts with Germany and the U.S. "Es igual" as they say. "It's all the same." The U.S., with dozens of bases (including two big bomber bases and a submarine base), 8,000 troops, and millions of dollars (much of the nuclear cycle, from exploration for uranium to power plant construction is financed and/or done by U.S. banks and multinationals like G.E., Westinghouse, Chase Manhattan, and Bank of America) in Spain is already the country's "Big Brother". Germany is anxious to be another "brother."

The Spanish elite is quite aware of their role in *pax americana*. The Spanish navy is building an aircraft carrier (to free U.S. carriers from the Mediterranean),

the army and marines are beefing up their amphibious potential (to free U.S. Marines in the Mediterranean), and the air force is buying lots of new airplanes too. (Guess why).

Meanwhile multinationals are pouring into Spain faster than tourists. Franco was into self-sufficiency for Spain (he didn't trust anyone). The new government has decided to join the west whole-heartedly. So GM will soon build a giant complex in Zaragoza that will dwarf the Ford plants recently opened in Valencia that are turning a beautiful citrus region into a new Los Angeles. Well I won't list all the companies, what's the use. They are there, and new ones each day, U.S., German, Japanese and on down the line. Franco is clearly still dead, but the system continues to devour the land and the people.

#### CONCLUSION

I went to Spain to learn how a mass libertarian movement is organized and co-ordinated. But I didn't. What happened in '36-'39 isn't applicable to the U.S. of today, or to Spain for that matter. It's an inspiration but not a blueprint. But I learned a hell of a lot. Three things especially were striking.

First, there is no lack of theory in Spain. A score of slick magazines have the latest neo-marxist articles from Paris, neo-trotskyism from Belgium, and anarcho-ecology from the U.S. of A. The graphics are almost always extraordinary, and the translated prose (or domestic interpretations written in Castilian or Catalan) sparkles with flexible formulations. Native authors often prefer titles beginning with "notes on..."; "Notes on the Syndicalist Movement in Spain", "Notes on Trotskyism in Galicia" etc. "Notes on..." as if we can never hope to exhaust these fascinating topics.

There seems to be a lot more theorizing than organizing. It is not surprising that a politically sophisticated left like Spain's would want snappy ideas in colorful magazines, but for many "activists" it seems the consumption of theory has become how a revolutionary is defined. "I read, therefore I am." Radical theory, as another commodity, is a big part of Spanish intellectual life. But how much does it have to do with social change.

Theoretical fads sweep Spain like plagues in the bible. Maoism ten years ago, the 60's and the acid counter-culture five years ago.... now it's libertarian marxists (for the academic types) and New Wave Surrealism (for the more emotionally restless). Of course there are also the many leftists living deep in the past, re-fighting the civil war.

This is not just a criticism of the Spanish left. It is something I think applies to the U.S. (and England) as well. It is just that in Spain I could see it more clearly because I became a consumer, par excellence, of radical theories in my attempt to understand what was going on.

But also, in Spain, the fascination with theory has gotten out of control. It is not surprising that many angry people, especially workers and young street people, are disillusioned with all the "leftists" including the anarchists. The workers quit their unions, keep their own counsel, and fight their battles in the factories. Many of the young become "pasotas" (nihilists is the closest definition I can give) or fascists. While they certainly aren't the threat the government and its supporters are, the fascists are growing. And in some places they have struck a responsive cord with the very young people, alienated and furious, that once became anarchists. They can't relate to theory, they want action. Now.

The second thing that struck me very strongly was how much foreign culture dominates the country. On TV it is Charlie's Angels selling Fords and French cosmetics. Among the young it is U.S./English music, U.S./French/Italian movies and books from the beats of San Francisco.

It is a restless life. Hash is terribly expensive, and not very good, but what else is there to do but put some in

your Marlboro and listen to the latest album from London while you read magazines in which hundreds of blondes try to sell you Japanese radios or German calculators. If you can get a job it's 60 hours a week for not very much money (and the cost of living is almost the same as in North America). But since you can't find a job you just scrounge.

It isn't all like this of course by any means. But it is pretty bad. The growth of nationalism is probably very much a response to this "americanization" of the many different cultures we lump together as "Spain".

In Barcelona for example one could hear terrible imitations of U.S./English Rock 'n Roll (around which there is a very real cult) or you could hear a zoot-suited guy called Sisa and his band playing Catalan Rock, strange and angry and as good as any new waves that one can find in the U.S. There are also the half-rock "Orquestras" that are sometimes almost plays, and there is flamenco-rock or even the traditional Catalan dances from the days, four hundred years ago, when Cataluna was an independent

power (actually an empire although the nationalists don't talk a lot about that.)

Anyway, i'd like to see leftist theorists-activists as creative as the Catalan musicians. Why should they be reprinting old Jerry Rubin diatribes in 1979.

The last thing, and most important, i learned in Spain was that there are many wonderful people trying to make a human, natural world. Sounds like a cliché, or worse,, but it is something that is so easy to forget. It is one revolution, even though in each culture it must develop differently. Especially important, or inspiring, for me was to see people living much harder lives than i do, 60 or 70 hours a week for two bucks an hour, fascist attacks on their homes and offices, arrest and torture always a real possibility, and yet hanging in there all the same, holding the same hopes and dreams close that we do. My hopes and dreams are stronger now thanks to them.

Crystal

# Honour vulgarity

I have always felt that the 399 B.C. Greeks had an arguable case against Socrates and his box office suicide, like that of Hitler, was that of a man who loved the applause of the mob but unlike Christ and many a known and unknown revolutionary was not prepared to carry his argument to its logical conclusion before the physical authority of the obverse of the dialogue. To sit in the warm sun surrounded by applauding sycophants, leisure-living intelligensia and pseudo-intellectuals playing the iconoclast with wit and well reasoned argument is pleasure indeed and when the blue shadows move over the white walls then back to the evening meal, the wine and the secure comfort of a society based on a slave economy. We all know our parochial Socrates but there comes that moment in time when the Captain of the Titanic will ask the saloon bar Socrates that having accepted the reiterated statements that the bloody ship is sinking what constructive suggestion would he offer to save their lives. And, to play the devil's advocate, the Socrates of the world do not have to offer a solution.

Within the Tate Gallery is an exhibition of the work and art of the late Marcel Broodthaers and even within the press day there were little ripples of anger from those who felt or believe that they were being mocked by a man with no talent and an art authority wasting valuable space on worth less rubbish and they were right which surely is the whole point of the exercise. Michael Compton the Keeper of Exhibitions at the Tate Gallery has described Broodthaers as "one of the great artists of his period" which of course is just an abuse of language but what Broodthaers did produce was a body of work that was witty, amusing and anger creating for with his use of rubbish he was a master of the double take. His masters, he claimed, were Magritte, Piero Manzoni and Kurt Schwitters and as with them he had almost no creative talent as a sculpture or as a visual artist but like Schwitters he could take the rubbish around him and like Manzoni create an amusing object that, as all art should, produce a violent reaction among the spectators. He scribbled on plywood walls, piled empty egg shells into heaps and painted them dull or shine white. He piled mussel shells in a pot and offered it as a work of art and the spectator either drooled or raved with rage but what must be realised is that these men and women are dadists who smash the dead shroud of academic art by flinging a handful of shit into the prestige art galleries of the world just as the dadists and the concrete poets broke the established form of the Georgian poets.

Broodthaers almost a quarter of a century ago produced his first film *La Clef de L'Horloge* in honour of Kurt Schwitters and that made the international film festival at Knokke le-Zoute and the books of poetry such as *Un Livre d'Ogre* were but minor things for the man who was now the darling of the intellectual elite. In 1968 at the time of the Paris

student revolt when it was the vogue for the worker-student to take over and control their own institutions Broodthaers along with so many of the heavy breathing intelligensia moved into the act and with the aid of those in authority, for the plan was to use the Musée d'Art Moderne and to have the walls of the gallery lined not with the works of the visual arts but the cases in which they were transported. It is all fun and one is amused and would defend to the death etc. but what must be accepted is that without a great body of recognised and accepted works of art you cannot take the piss. It is pleasant to mock but you can only mock that the commands respect rightly or wrongly from others and I write and speak as one who has spent a life time mocking what I hold to be the pretensions and the false ideas of others but like the dadists and the surrealists I accept the mockery from my victims because we both know that we and only we are sane. It is Broodthaers heap of coals that have hit the philistine fan and these three heaps of coal, as with Carl andre's heap of bricks, have been the cause of great rage and great mirth and great explanations. During the press day I stand there with my glass of white wine and an elderly dignified journalist takes my arm and whispers "For Christ's sake old man explain to me what the hell this is supposed to be about" and I go into my spiel and this is good for as in an angry discussion one is forced to clear one's mind of cant. As works of art they are of minor importance but then one could say that of the pyramids, the Whitehall cenotaph or Cleopatra's needle on the Thames embankment yea or Henry moore's sculptures and the difference between them and Broodthaers three heaps of coal and those accept works of art is literally and simply a matter of size. Take those three piles of coal by Broodthaers, hire masons to carve them in black marble house high and place them each on a Welsh hill to the memory of the dead directors of the Coal Board and they would merge into the landscape and the folk culture as acceptable works of art. But the Town and his gas fire (Ed. and her gas fire Mann.) frau will look and stay silent for as with the Nazi book burners the baying of the mob is the howl of the Philistine and the fools.

But for those who seek honest vulgarity raised to High Camp then it is on to the Royal Academy and the wine and the buffet laid on by the front office of Sunlight Soap and why not for sixty years ago I sat in a tin bath before the kitchen fire while my mother scrubbed me and the weekly wash with that same bar of soap. Lord Leverhulme was born in 1851 as William Hesketh Lever and by the use of a talent that has always eluded me became a millionaire and in 1922 Viscount Leverhulme. He was a throwback to the world of Dickens and Mr Pickwick in that having accumulated great economic wealth he did 'good'. There are men such as Ford and the rest of the American millionaires who having spent such a

life in creating universal misery in the accumulation of a great fortune then spend their old age playing God with the aid of their cheque books and I feel that Lever did little harm in his commercial life and a modicum of good in his old age. Port Sunlight was the product of a paternalistic society and one should not condemn it for that for while Owen had the vision Lever and Pickwick had a kind heart and a large bank account. The political argument against a benevolent managerial society is that it destroys the revolutionary fire within the proletariat and I do not believe this for it would be interesting to know how the working class within Port Sunlight reacted to the great social unrest of the inter war years.

Leverhulme wrote that "All tenement dwellings . . . for crowding a maximum of humanity in a minimum of ground space are destructive of healthy life". "A child . . . that knows only the drunkenness prevalent in the hideous slum it is forced to live in, . . . cannot be benefited by education. Such children grow up depraved, and become a danger and terror to the State; wealth-destroyers instead of wealth-producers"

Leverhulme was the master of his estates and he merged his capitalism with Christian charity but the flaw as always is that he denied those he pandered to the freedom of choice. Like Krupps in Germany or the Japanese managerial capitalists they treated their workers with the same care and affection that the squire treated his peasants, his horses and his dogs but only as long as they obeyed his authority. Of Lord Leverhulme's art collection what can one say except that with an open cheque book and finger licking dealers he bought the good the bad and the indifferent and at top market prices and to bring art to the people he used the Victorian and Edwardian daubs that he bought for advertisements for his soap and why not for who in the hell cares whether Frith's little girl in her "New Frock" was used as a street advertisement with the words "Sunlight Soap Gold Medal Paris 1889" above her head and "So Clean" on the child's right. If you have almost unlimited wealth and you buy them by the sheer volume of your purchases you must build up a minority of acceptable works of art and Leverhulme did that. His Chinese porcelain and his Wedgwood are a pleasure to the eye while most of the furniture is no more than ugly museum

pieces. It is interesting to view the soft porn of Alma-Tadema and to re-shy at the ghastly Pre-Raphaelite daubs and to stand in judgement on Augustus Johns 1.9.1920 portrait of Lever. It was foolish of Leverhulme to do a pre-Churchillian by cutting the portrait up, as with the National Gallery's Manet, for I would hold that if John had toned down the small highlight under the chin it could have been acceptable but the Town and his deep in thought frau (Ed. and her deep in thought Mann) now know what Broodthaers was protesting about.

Arthur Moyses



THIS ART OF MINE - Three Piles of Coal, plus the Belgium Flag.

## BOOKSHOP NOTES

In Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1. (Please add postage as in brackets. Titles marked \* are published in the USA).

\* Paul Goodman: The Collected Short Stories (edited by Taylor Stoehr). Volume I, The Breakup of our Camp 1932-35 (289pp) £2.50 (75p)  
Volume II, A Ceremonial. 1936-40 (273pp) £2.50 (75p)  
Volume III, The Facts of Life 1940-49 (329pp) £4.25 (75p)

A beautifully produced series of volumes from Black Sparrow Press.

Emanuel Litvinoff: The Faces of Terror.

Volume I, A Death out of Season (286pp) £1.50 (26p)  
Volume II, Blood on the Snow (352pp) £1.50 (26p)  
Volume III, The Face of Terror (285pp) £1.50 (26p)

This trilogy traces events from the Siege of Sydney Street to the Stalin era in the form of a vast historical novel.

William Morris. Three Works (News from Nowhere, The Pilgrims of Hope, and A Dream of John Ball) 401pp £2.50 (41p). Also The Political Writings (edited by A. L. Morden) 245pp £1.95 (31p)

Bommi Baumann: Terror or Love ? The Personal Account of a West German guerrilla, previously published as Wie Alles An fing - How It All Began. (127pp) £2.50 (26p)

Isaian Berlin: Russian Thinkers (Essays on Herzen, Bakunin and Tolstoy) (312pp) £1.95 (31p).

\*Jim Peck: Underdogs vs Upperdogs. The autobiography of a nonviolent anarchist. (194pp) £1.75 (36p)

William J Fishman: East End Jewish Radicals 1875-1914 (336pp) £6.50 (93p) (Cloth).

Robert Hunter: The Greenpeace Chronicle (443pp) £2.50 (41p)

Peter Laurie: Beneath the City Streets, A Private Enquiry into Government Preparations for National Emergency. (313pp) £1.95 (26p)

\*Murray Bookchin: The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years, 1868-1936. (344pp) £3.50 (41p)

\*Burnett Bolloten: The Spanish Revolution: The Left and the Struggle for power during the Civil War. (664pp) £17.50 (£1.21) (Cloth).

Terry M. Perlin (Editor) Contemporary Anarchism (294pp) £9.50 (75p) (Cloth).

RIPOFF OF THE WEEK\*\*\*\*\*

HMSO: The Interception of Communications in Great Britain\*\* 8pp \*\*\* £1.00 (10p) "Eight pages of generalised evasions, distortions and half-truths from the Government's Stationery Office. Of compulsive interest to all students of the State with a lively, enquiring and masochistic sense of humour, and (perhaps) more money than sense." The Postmaster General.

BARGAIN OF THE WEEK

Jonathan Beecher and Richard Bienvenu (Editors) The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier (427pp) Reduced to 50p (75p). Perhaps the best collection of Fourier's writings currently available in English. Limited supply only.

# Russia: a workers paradise?

## STAGNATION IN THE SLAVIC CITIES

What mother Russia and other State-Socialist regimes best offer to work-shy anarchists such as myself, is a system of lively black markets and opportunities for industrial idleness second to none.

In the same way that soldiers never labour so hard as civilians, so the State employees of Soviet Russia seem to have evolved artful scrounging strategies, which is resulting in millions of hours in lost working time.

Alas, instead of appreciating what's best in the socialist system, the Party leadership is actively inhibiting these developments. It's getting that bad that the Communist Party Central Committee has issued a decree on labour discipline to deal with shopfloor scroungers, drunks, absentees, job swappers, meeting mongers. Soviet sociologists have discovered that people are illegally taking time off work to do their shopping, join queues, and arrange their personal affairs. At the same time workers are adept at calling meetings in working time to fix up sporting competitions, and other social gatherings.

The current concern of the Soviet leadership with labour productivity is that the economy is moving into a period of falling growth caused by labour shortages in a number of important areas.

The fact is the Soviet economic system is weak. Soviet industrial output being less than that of Japan, and less than half that of West Europe or the USA.

There have been growing shortages in the workforce in North West Russia Siberia, Northern Kazakhstan and Belorussia ever since the 1960's. The threat of a decline in the number of people of working age could act as a major constraint on economic expansion in the 1980's.

Some solutions have already been tried. In 1964, the State began encouraging pensioners to re-enter the labour force. As many as 6 to 8 million people of pensionable age were reported to be employed in the public sector, or on collective farms (1) in 1973.

Another problem has been job-swapping. From 1940 until after Stalin's death it was a criminal offence to leave one's place of work without official permission. In 1956 free job mobility was re-introduced.

Labour turnover causes big losses in working time and drops in productivity. In the construction industry alone the labour turnover is as high as 63 %.

The current party decree on labour discipline ordered tough measures against those who frequently change jobs or go absent without leave. Stiff penalties against lazy and drunk workers are also recommended.

Curbs on labour discipline and turnover has been brewing up for years now. A regulation adopted in Leningrad in May 1969 required each person sacked for breaching labour discipline in the city to report to the then new Labour Resources Utilization Administration for assignment to a low-skilled, low-paid job for a 3 month period. People thus disciplined were not entitled to bonuses, and were put lower down on new housing waiting lists.

In cases in which 'unreasonable' job behaviour continues, the person would become liable to legal penalties under the regular 'anti-parasite' laws, which provide for sentences of up to a year of corrective labour or even prison (2). In 1970, these laws were reaffirmed in several republics, and a new USSR Labour Code - effective from January 1971 - reinforced the concept of punishing undisciplined workers. (3)

## SLUMP IN SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

Deportation of Muslim labour from the Central Asian republics to the industrial centres of European USSR offers another alternative.

Unemployment and underemployment are serious growing problems in the Soviet Central Asian Republics. Possibly the invasion of Afghanistan should be seen in the context of unemployment and potential social unrest in Soviet Central Asia.

The invasion will serve as a warning to Russia's own Muslims, and help stabilize the border areas. As Daylight, in The Observer argued "In Soviet eyes an unfriendly, or even uncontrollable Afghanistan was bound to appear as a serious threat to Soviet borders. A longer-term consideration was bound to be the impact on Soviet Muslims."

Competition from the Iranian religious regime and a pro-Chinese republic of Pakistan is a problem for Moscow to reckon with. If ethnic enthusiasms got out of hand, revved up by Muslim fanatics in the surrounding states the unity of the highly centralized Russian State could be threatened.

In crude Marxist terms the whole episode in Afghanistan can even be analysed as an attempt to solve local unemployment and potential social unrest by military mobilization and war.

The prospect of Muslim resistance to their rulers in Moscow, and those Slavs in their midst who dominate all the best jobs is very real.

The average European settlers (themselves often children of deportees from the 1930s) in Central Asia are paid more, have more housing space, better access to higher education for their children, more skills, and better positions than the native Muslims. Also, since Stalin, certain controlling positions in the local party and Government (including security) apparatus have been in the hands of Russians and other Europeans.

Having embraced the Afghan adventure and for the time being postponed the growth of any anti-colonialist or nationalist movements in Soviet Central Asia, what steps can Moscow take to solve the economic problems of the slump in Central Asia, and overcome the labour shortage in European Russia.

In a sense the Afghan adventure by employing thousands of low grade Muslim troops, will help alleviate the unemployment situation in Central Asia.

Reintroduction of Stalinist methods of control and coercion to move Asiatic labour is another possibility. But this policy may create more problems than it solves, producing racial problems and ghettos in the Slavic cities.

The queue - shoppers spend about 2 hours a day queuing just to buy essential goods . . . . .



a ready occurring because of higher Muslim fertility.

It may be that the Russian State is about to enter a post-colonial menopause. It is almost certain that the Soviet economic system is going to be seriously dislocated and unbalanced for years to come. John Besemeres, in the *New Statesman*, warns us of the "fragility beneath the external and domestic policies of the Soviet Union". To cover up this fragility the Soviet leaders may now embark on a series of dangerous adventures like the Afghanistan affair.

#### THE USSR AND THE SYNDICALIST INTERNATIONAL;

The repercussions relating to the Soviet economic problems, and their consequences for workers throughout the Soviet Union requires careful analysis and examination. The British trade unions are continuing to develop their links with the official state controlled unions in the USSR, though they claim this does not imply support for the regime. The IWA (International Workers Association), the organized anarcho-syndicalist movement, should be looking at the possibility of supporting alternative organizations like the 'free trade unions' especially at a time of State pressure to boost productivity, and unemployment in Central Asia.

But if the Central Asians are not forced out of their towns and villages there seems little chance that they will move. Soviet wages and Russian winters and cities have never attracted them in the past.

There are distinct advantages for those living in Central Asia; the cost of living is 16.8% lower than in metropolitan Russia. Central Asia is rich in fruit and vegetables (scarce in most of Russia) and has a climate which requires less outlays for clothing, special heating and covered housing space. Black market opportunities and income from private plots are further attractions. Also family earnings tend to be higher in Central Asia.

Clearly there is a strong incentive for the natives of Soviet Central Asia to stay put.

If the European settlers in Central Asia were induced to move back in big enough numbers, this may ease but not solve the manpower shortages in the European and Siberian towns. But this in turn could undermine Soviet power in Central Asia, and increase the 'Muslimization' process which is

Members of the British Syndicalist Workers Federation have a special responsibility in this respect, as the body which did most to support the election of the Madrid based IWA secretariat they should ensure that it discharges its duties in an international sense rather than as an appendage of the CNT in Spain.

Clearly if there is to be an international syndicalist movement, developments in Russia are an important consideration for it. More so since one of the potentially stronger sections in the IWA, is the Bulgarian section and with Russia entering its post-colonial menopause we need to formulate links and develop a programme to anticipate the opportunities for anarcho-syndicalism in those states controlled by Moscow.

B. B.

\* IWA or AIT is the anarcho-syndicalist international with sections in America and Europe. The IWA secretariat is at present centred in Madrid and is the responsibility of the Spanish trade union confederation the CNT.

1. V. Kogan 'How Over-Aged Persons Relate to Participation in Socialized Production', in D. L. Valentei et al., eds, *Narodonaseienie: i trudovye resursy* (Population and Labour Resources) Moscow

Moscow, Statistika, 1973.

2. A. Soloviev, 'Not Merely by Persuasion', *Sotsialistcheskaia industriia*, March 17, 1970.

3. The new Soviet Labour Code was published in *Osnovy zakonodatelstva Soiuza SSR i soiuznykh*.