

libertarian struggle special

subversivity



2p

SO NOW YOU'RE HERE

Most of the people reading this will be students in some form of 'higher education'. If you are fresh to University or college you may have ideas of a thriving intellectual life ahead of you, ideas which will be sadly shattered. If you've been here for a year or two and you have some idea of what is going on, you'll know that there is something badly wrong with the system.

Historically, a university was a finishing school for the children of the rich. Certain features of this still persist; traditional halls of residence, cleaners for students, sherry parties with lecturers, Union Balls and so on. With the growth of capitalism, the universities and specialist colleges developed to satisfy the requirement for an executive class to run the increasingly cumbersome bureaucracy of the State and industry.

THE LIBERAL MYTH

This is still the economic role of higher education today, seen from the State's point of view, but the self-styled liberal university is under attack because of the improving returns from Polytechnics, industrial training, and the ever increasing investment by big business in Business schools and their own research and development departments etc. The social role is to reinforce the myth of the meritocracy. The liberal myth is that higher education places are granted through open competitive examination and that qualifications are given as a reward for hard work and deep thought. In fact the universities in particular are becoming more middle class dominated; the proportion of students from working class backgrounds is less than it was ten to fifteen years ago. Class background before college is the crucial factor in deciding whether a student gets a place and how well he or she 'performs'.

Educationally the hallowed cloisters have become a hollow laugh. The vast majority of lecturers have become more concerned with publications on which their advancement is decided than with teaching. The typical course consists of a huge reading list, set-piece lectures with the infrequent question answered by, 'could you bring that up in a couple of weeks when I get on to that topic?' and tutorials which pass from paralysed embarrassment to stultifying boredom with a brief transitional period of the dictatorship of the egotist.

There are varied attitudes to higher education. On the right are the Black Paper crowd with their rigid competitive examinations and vocational courses. Floundering in the middle as usual are the liberals with their ideas of a community of scholars dedicated solely to the pursuit of 'knowledge' in the heady atmosphere of academic freedom. Among some on the left there exists the idea that universities are a combination of an intellectual forcing house and a critical sanctuary. On your right the applied sciences faculty, in front of you the arts faculty; and on your left the critical faculty.

FRUSTRATION

Without articulating their viewpoint many students are pissed off with the academic circus in which they find themselves. If you happen to be in a teachers' training college all there is to look forward to is hard, boring, underpaid work.

The frustration that many students come to feel stems from their sense of isolation from the rest of society. They can see no way out; the only alternatives seem to be to drop out or to reluctantly accept three years of boredom so that they can end up with a degree and the possibility of what they think will be a comfortable niche in the middle class. However there is a third alternative, which involves breaking down this isolation whilst simultaneously mounting an attack on the bourgeois university. Any real change in the nature of education can only come about in the context of a social revolution.

To raise the consciousness of students and to challenge the practices of capitalism in the areas we are most immediately affected, we propose certain basic demands which while not fully achievable without a change in the class nature of our society, provide in themselves a direction and a strategy upon which a student movement can be built which can link with the working class organisations in a social revolution.

RESISTANCE

1. Rigid pre-set courses must be broken down and replaced by courses which are directed and designed by those participating in them.

2. All educational and recreational facilities, and accommodation, must be open to working class people who wish to use them, at times and places convenient to them.

Certain aspects of these demands are in operation in some places but activities such as workers' education and community involvement are peripheral to university life, we must make them central. These demands are useful in that they can raise the question of power and ultimate control by the working class. Power must lie in the hands of all those who work in these institutions; the fixed categories of academics, students, administrative and domestic staff and the 'public' must be abolished to give free participation in the running of higher education.

Clearly, no individual student can achieve much; the tasks of overcoming student isolation and attacking the elitist nature of higher education requires collective organisation. Students should organise with others to agitate among the mass of students within their own unions and within the NUS, while making and strengthening links with local and national working class organisations, trades councils, tenants association, trade union branches and rank and file groups.

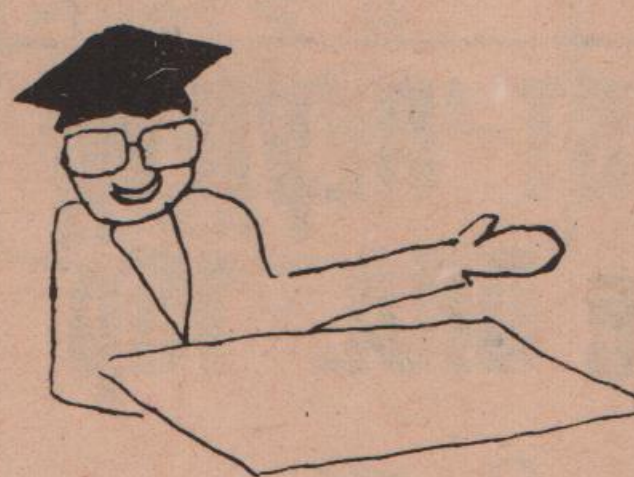
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The trouble with students is that they have no experience outside the educational system.



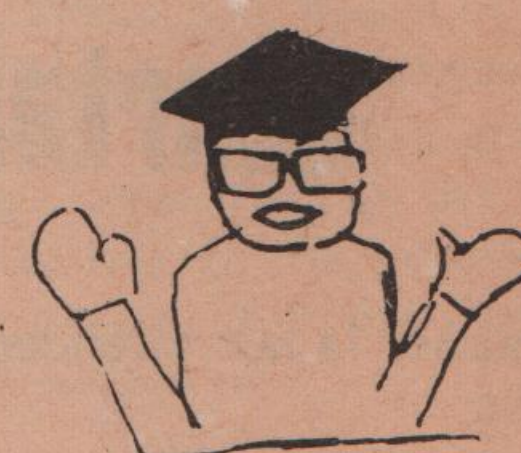
..Never known what it is to labour for bread...



out of touch with reality; cosseted by the university



All their lives they have been protected from the harsh realities of the outside world.....



I should know. I've been here 40 years.

paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists

EDITORIAL :-

STUDENTS & REVOLUTION

Since the days of deep political involvement and commitment around 1968, students have increasingly retreated into a world of drugs, following maharishis of various kinds and generally into an apathetic nihilism which entails wrapping themselves in cotton wool against the harsher realities of life.

This pursuit of a refuge is a symptom of the sickness of present society not a cure for them. The cure can only be worked out by a scientific analysis of the historical and economic development of society.

All existing societies are based on exploitation, inequality, and the exercise of coercive power by the rulers over the working class. The need is to transform this society into one in which there is equality of wealth, where production is for need rather than profit, and where the worker has direct control over his way of life. A social revolution, while not inevitable, is necessary in order to achieve this, since the bourgeoisie who at present possess power will never voluntarily relinquish that power.

The only agent for revolutionary social change is the working class, and it is their historical role to expropriate the property and power of the bourgeoisie as the first step towards creating a liberated egalitarian society. To secure this revolution it is necessary for all sections of the working class to organise themselves in their economic, domestic and social spheres, and to end the ruler inspired divisions in the working class based on job, race or sex.

While the organisation of the working class is necessary, there are clear dangers in the vanguardist type of party advocated by Leninist groups, which seek to interpret events for the working class and to direct their actions. These groups have produced some gains, such as the work of IS in rank and file groups, but this type of operation rapidly becomes a recruitment programme, and history has shown that a party which seeks to create a revolution on behalf of the working class ends up by becoming the new ruling class with many of the features of the old. Thus an organisation of libertarian revolutionaries is needed to show that people can organise themselves without the existence of a centralised elitist hierarchy, besides enabling libertarians to work together and to learn from each other in an atmosphere of mutual dependence.

The great danger facing the student revolutionary is that he may accept the myth that while he (or she of course) is undergoing the process of higher education, he is in some way isolated from the struggles going on in the world outside. In fact the student is affected as much as everyone else by the deepening crisis of international capitalism, by rising prices and by the shortage

of jobs, and he/she is particularly open to the police and state repression of anyone who is not eager to fit in as a cog in the machine of capitalist society. The student has a clear choice; to accept the State prescribed role of embryo rulers, or to begin to question the structure of society and thus join in the continuing struggle to end ruler domination and role designation for ever.

There is a second myth which must be demolished, and that is the idea that universities and colleges can become Red Bases from which shock troops of the revolution can emerge to proselytise among the waiting masses. The main base of the power of the bourgeoisie lies in their control of the means of production, so the most important, though not the only, area of struggle must be economic, and be resolved in the factories and workplaces. For the student to envisage that he or she has a special mission to lead the workers out of wage-slavery is to invite reinforcement of the already existing hostility of many workers towards students.

What then are the possibilities of action open to the student revolutionary? Obviously attempts can be made to radicalise and democratise in educational institutions, by forcing the higher education authorities to open up the institutions to the public, by demanding the devolution of power to all people participating in the educational process and so on. There is the great danger that these relatively minor issues may consume time which would be more productively given to the struggle 'outside'.

The student has two advantages denied to the worker; an amount of free time available, and access to many of the resources such as printing facilities, premises, literature etc. which are not available to the worker. So there is an obvious field in which the student can contribute to the struggle, and that is by offering him or herself and the resources available in the aid of working class organisations. When this was done during the 1972 miners' strike in the form of helping with picketing, producing leaflets, and so on the result was a great improvement in relations and communications between workers and students.

The most important and productive task for the student revolutionary is to go out and become involved in working class organisations such as rank and file groups, tenants associations, and claimants unions, not as a great leader or as an intellectual errand boy, but as a full and equal member of that organisation. In this way the student can contribute his special facilities and in turn gain knowledge of the problems facing the working class, but most importantly he or she is participating in the struggle for economic, social and political liberation.

LIBERTARIAN COMMUNIST REVIEW

quarterly journal of the ORA. 15p

This journal is not intended to be a 'heavy theoretical' in which academics hand down established truths.

It is a journal for the discussion and development of ideas and understanding

It will be able to go into problems which lack of space prevents LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE dealing with.

Having established the newspaper and begun the organisation of a libertarian revolutionary movement involved in everyday struggles the ORA hopes that establishing this journal for the development of ideas will prove to be another useful addition to the development of the revolutionary movement.

Orders, articles and enquiries should be sent to the Convenor of the LCR Board :-

Les Smith, 277 Kingsway Park, Davyhulme, Urmston, Manchester



PARIS : MAY 1988. The student revolt detonated a new stage of working class action, characterised by the great sit-in strikes. All the actual (Communist Party) and would-be leaderships' (maoists, trotskyists) held back the struggle by restricting it to economic demands, calling for a reformist government, or opposing moves to smash the bourgeois State (such as their turning back the attempt to seize the central radio and TV station - ORTF).

Since then, the growth of working class militancy and consciousness, despite the Stalinist and reformist union bureaucracy eg. LIP, in conjunction with the spectacular expansion of the libertarian revolutionary movement within the working class (ORA - France), confirms that many people now understand the need for independent working class organisation opposed to Leninism.

FREE SPEECH

The question of 'free speech' raises itself again in British universities. Students assaulted Professor Eysenck at the LSE in May in protest against his racist theories and a month later Sussex students prevented Professor Huntingdon deliberating on his reactionary role in the administration of the Vietnam war.

It was only three years ago that we saw extreme right-wing MP's such as Enoch Powell, Patrick Wall and Harold Soref being hounded out of universities by students who did not want their creed on campus.

RADICALS

Each time this sort of action occurs, we see a great split amongst the 'radicals' over the question of free speech. Every instance where right-wing academics are forced to shut up we see radical liberals entering from stage centre, bleating 'academic freedom' and 'tolerance'. Revolutionary students are accused by the 'liberals' of being 'like the bourgeoisie' because they inhibit freedom. We are seeing a compounding of this stance as the Communist Party and 'independent socialists' like the incumbent President of NUS, Randall, move in to 'remove student struggles from the hands of the ultra-leftists.'

These liberals, who crawl around the sherry tables of the Universities paving the way to future careers in business, the Labour Party, or the trade union bureaucracy, tell us that universities are the place where 'essential truths are discovered and stored', and that this 'can only occur in an atmosphere of freedom and tolerant debate.' They ignore the very fact that universities are built to equip and train the future technical and managerial elites. They turn a blind eye to big business influence on the controlling bodies, often compounded by 'grants' tied to courses and research programmes tailored to the needs of industry. These middle class defenders of free speech are the first to demand closed campuses and card checks, to prevent the local population from enjoying university facilities paid for out of the taxes lifted from working people's wages. Their tolerance extends only to those with their own 'culture' - bourgeois culture.

INTOLERANCE

The accusations of 'intolerance' were aimed at students at LSE and Sussex when the two professors were prevented from speaking. The attack on Eysenck at LSE was tactically inept but not morally wrong. The mass of students at the LSE had decided to allow him to speak. The left could not persuade the student body otherwise. In this atmosphere the only tactic was to face Eysenck on his platform with clear argument, and a campaign within the

School to expose to the students who was paying for, and who was benefiting from, Eysenck's 'research'. It was the wrong ploy for a small group to split off from the students and physically attack Eysenck. That could only be done when the mass of students thought it necessary. The Communist Party of England (Marxist-Leninist)'s only consideration was to be 'militant'. In a wave of childish 'cowboyism' a few stormed the stage and smacked Eysenck on the nose. It was an adventure.

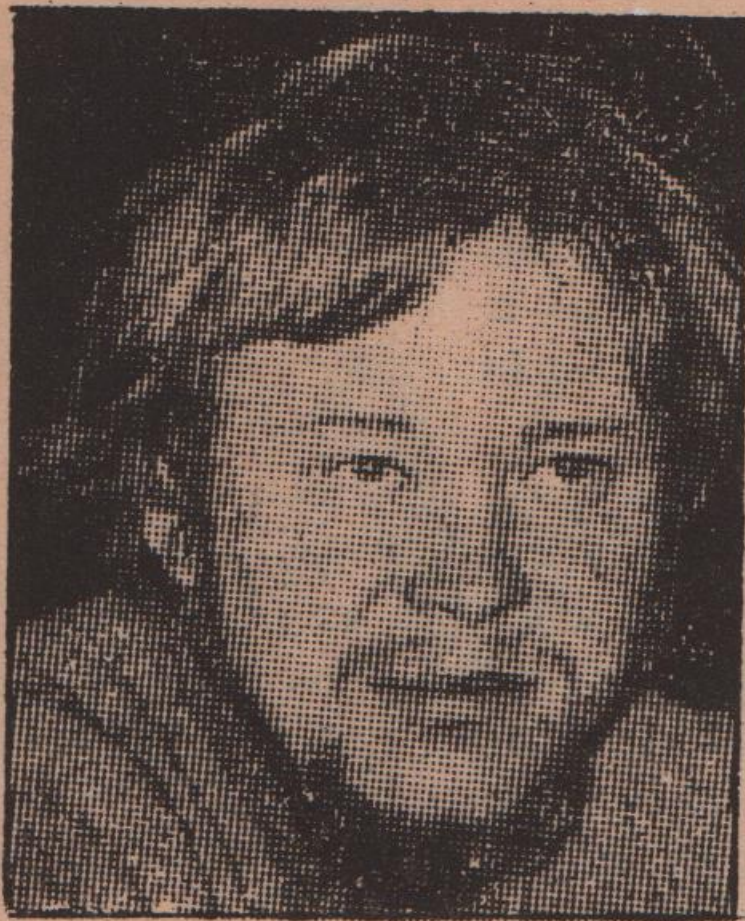
The liberals and Communist Party (GB) were aghast and took their real position to its logical conclusion. They tried to witchhunt the whole left and lined up with the right-wing. The students didn't fall for this attitude and while they voted to apologise to Eysenck, they also pledged to defend the Maoists against victimisation.

At Sussex a month later another academic was prevented from speaking. The situation was totally different from the LSE event. The organisers of the Indochina Solidarity Committee had the backing of the mass of students. 700 students and staff prevented Samuel Huntingdon from speaking on 'The Role of the Military in US Foreign Policy'. Huntingdon had taken part in planning the prosecution of the war in Vietnam until it lost its economic viability for the US. Students made the point that they'd give him more rights than he gave the Vietnamese people - he supported the 'strategic hamlet' ie. concentration camp scheme - but they would not let him speak on their campus. The liberals and the right were soon clamouring that this was 'a blatant example of left-wing totalitarianism' and a breakdown of 'free speech'.

Throughout the world the oppressed find that there is very little 'free speech'. The same liberal papers that attack the students, have attacked workers for defending closed shops against the 'rights' of scabs and bosses arse-lickers. The same papers obeyed - without one exception - the Tory orders to play down the May Day strike. The same papers attacked the Miners, the Hospital workers etc. etc. Liberals forget that we are not all equal, that there is a war on - a class war. This division expresses itself in all sectors of society, even in the universities. Tolerance of bourgeois speakers is a tactical question not a moral one. Free speech for all is a myth when a few can buy all the freedom they like, while others rely on the media owned by the rich few. Free speech is allowed to the left when our rulers think that no one is listening. When people listen they shut down newspapers, jail militants, make up new laws etc.

Free speech within the working class and revolutionary movement is a principle. And we have to fight for this, against the bureaucracies which prevent rank and file communication and who themselves victimise militants. Free speech for the paid intellectual servants of the bourgeoisie is the cry of dreamers, cowards or idiots.

RANDALL



On Tuesday 3rd of April John Randall gained the presidency of the National Union of Students. He takes over from the Stalinist Digby Jacks in September. Randall proclaims himself an 'independent revolutionary socialist'. This new theory of individual revolutionary action needs investigating. Randall has no bright record of revolutionary politics. His proclamation must come as a surprise for the students at York University, who had to suffer his procrastination and sellout politics while he was President of the Student Representative Council 1969-1970.

During that year, students at Warwick University occupied the administration building on discovering that secret files were being kept on students. Letters taken from the Warwick files brought to light a clandestine system of information-gathering by the University authorities. Copies of the letters were sent to many student unions, who acted promptly by occupying in solidarity with Warwick and demanding that files be opened to students in their own universities. Randall refused to publish the letters, claiming they were 'subjudice' pending an enquiry at Warwick, and that money for printing and duplicating copies of the spy letters would be considered 'ultra vires' (i.e. outside the area of concern of the SRC).

In a general meeting of the students, Randall ruled that the calling for the publication of the Warwick files/letters was illegal due to an 'injunction'. The ruling was challenged. To quote from the minutes of the SRC meeting

'Mr. Randall spoke for his ruling saying that when the SRC published some of the letters they did not know about the injunction, and whatever (the challenger) thought about the Constitution it still remained, and so did the law of the land, which was the supreme constitution.'

This from an 'independent revolutionary socialist'!

A group of anarchists, RSSF (Revolutionary Socialist Student Federation), and I.S. members funded the printing of letters to start a campaign to force the administration to condemn the activities of Warwick University and open secret/confidential files on students at York. The campaign lasted three weeks.

During the campaign Randall fought the left by taking a 'responsible moderate position' in that he used every possible tactic to fight the initiation of an occupation, while trying to preserve his post as President. At no time did he ever sanction a move for an occupation, and he covertly fought against it when after three weeks, a General Meeting finally forced the issue and Heslington Hall (administration building) was occupied.

The occupation lasted four days, during which Randall acceded to the calling of three general meetings by the right wing, when the Constitution required a week to legally call one. Randall, backed by right wing members of his executive, slandered the most vocal members of the occupation. He quietly approved motions from his Treasurer Tony Edginton at one of these three meetings. The motions read :-

'The student body instructs the SRC to express its appreciation to the porters working in Heslington Hall during the present difficulties and thanks the administration and porters for the restraint they have shown so far.' Proposed T. Edginton.

'The student body abhors any action which will endanger the employees or the property of the University'. Proposed T. Edginton.

The occupation was finally broken on its fourth day (6th of March 1970) by 499 against and 406 for. Randall had cut the debate at a crucial point for the left at the meeting, and had ensured, through his covert leadership, that a massive anti-occupation campaign was a success. This campaign was led by the Monday Club Vice-President of the SRC and the reactionary Treasurer Edginton. Randall never condemned these two leaders of the right, or even came out against them or their activities.

This is the meaning of 'independent revolutionary socialism'. You sit on the fence and gain ground in personal power while crucial struggles go to the wall. The students who were at York at the time cannot recall Randall involved in any revolutionary socialist activity during his four years there, and amongst the real revolutionaries there was angry resentment at the Randall-backed sellout.

A year of that 'independent revolutionary socialist' leadership is about to take control of the NUS. Students meet your new President.

LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS' FEDERATION?

Anyone interested in "a Student Federation within ORA, mainly those involved in Union work"?

Write to Larry Law, Berks Coll. of Ed. Students' Union, Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue, Earley, Reading. Berkshire. READING 666506.

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO TEACH....

Large sections of the student community are working through a College of Education. This eventually places them on the worst paid rung of the teaching pay scales.

higher wages.

This aspect of their future 'rewarding career' is hardly ever mentioned to students.

These students are the most isolated and handicapped as regards fighting the Government and College authorities on all issues. The ideology of 'professionalism' dominates in the colleges, preparing the students for a 'responsible career' by persuading them that their 'attitudes' as regards 'morality and respect for institutions' must be different from those in the Universities. This will gain them a position in a 'useful and socially rewarding occupation'. It is the power of these ideas that keeps the education student in place. The constant threat of bad reference and confidential minuting of 'deviant behaviour' is the deterrent the authorities use against those who think differently.

The struggles within teaching are kept away from the curricula - no mention of government policies, no mention of union work, no mention of radical alternatives of education technique, no questioning of the authoritarian structure of school organisation except some vague hints of humanising pupil-teacher relationships. All the questions which are developing within the job are conveniently omitted. It is the answers to these questions which decides the future of education.

Vast differences in salaries are used by the Government through the Burnham committee (the Education Pay Board) to divide teachers against each other. Depending on whether you are a 'good graduate' (1st., 2.1, 2.2) or 'bad graduate' (3rd or pass) or not a graduate, you will be paid one of three basic scales which will increase by 17 annual increments. Each scale increment is paid in two parts 5/12 for your first five months and 7/12 following seven months of service in each year. Checking out your salary basic often requires a better computer than the treasury department of your local authority. Any increase in salary within the system can only be obtained by gaining 'promotion' for 'scale posts of responsibility'. Two scales exist, scales A to E and scales 1 to 5. These posts are awarded for 'good service' and are awarded totally at the whim of the headmaster and so perpetuate his control. Altogether there are 3,000 different pay rates and many teachers are forced to fight each other in a rat race to gain

Education is not perfect for the needs of capitalism but it works well enough. Educational reforms occur when past arrangements lie behind the needs of present and predicted developments.

Comprehensives exist to increase the progress of small numbers of individuals into better paid jobs - this is called equality of opportunity. Comprehensives create a competitive situation without segregation. The larger school is cheaper to administer than separate Grammar and Secondary. The flexibility of transference of pupils between streams is relaxed or restricted by the needs of employers via the examination system. Comprehensives exist to train 'wasted talent' in the working class (see Half our Future - the Newsom report).

The result of 'equal opportunity' is not a general betterment of humanity but an increase in the number of technicians. The mass of children (60% considered **unexaminable** by GCE boards, 40% **unexaminable** by CSE boards) leave school with all creative intelligence and imaginative enthusiasm for learning mangled and crushed. Some of these are further 'trained' in day-release courses at colleges of further education.

Learning is not for the individuals' use but to make money for those that own. The teacher has to carry out this plunder in the classroom by disciplining the mass so that a few 'progress'. This activity does not pass unnoticed. The Unions at present feebly fight for change in teacher salaries and educational conditions. Scab unions like the NAS, AMA etc actually enforce the divisions as they represent the interests of Heads of Dept. and the 'career teacher' with talk of 'pupil violence' and 'extending the scale structure'. NAS fights when Deputy Heads are threatened with denotion through reorganisation schemes.

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) backward as it is, contains the only grouping who have the possibility of changing anything - the Rank & File NUT group. This organisation embraces left-wing teachers who militate for change to end the system as it is. The points of view within it are numerous. Within Rank & File, Libertarians are fighting for a programme, the basis of which is the need for a system where self-regulated and self-active learning occurs in a society under the control of the working class. This is the only solution to the contradictions within education. It is necessary that education students prepare for their part in that struggle now.



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THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

In the 1926 General Strike students flooded into the fascist-inspired Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies - the strike breaking agency backed by the then Tory government. It was set up to scab on the trade unionists who were supporting the miners' fight against a direct wage cut. It was a jolly jape and any violence, such as beating up pickets was 'youthful exuberance'.

In 1972 many students involved themselves in strengthening the miners' pickets, providing hospitality for the flying pickets, in arguing the mineworkers case on the streets. Their resistance to police and scab smashing of picket lines was the result of youth "corrupted by TV and film violence" and was evidence of a huge international conspiracy.

The change in the position of students is not at all due to any "democratisation" of higher education (the class composition of the intake has changed very little, and, indeed fewer working class students get in now as compared to the 50's and early 60's), but to the changing situation of the institutions and of capitalist society.

All the bases of middle class ideology (liberalism, professionalism etc) are being eroded. Middle class groups such as teachers, social workers, junior hospital doctors, actors, journalists have had to organise collectively to defend their living standards and to fight all the aspects of job speed-up and exploitation familiar to industrial workers. The fashionable finishing schools of this strata (known as universities of colleges of education) are now subject to modern business methods, cost efficiency etc. Within the academic elite itself supporters of the hoary myth of the "community of scholars" are fighting a desperate rearguard action as business interests demand vocational (job oriented) courses, sandwich courses while in work, and a better all round attention to the demands of the labour market.

Parallel with this the economic and social crisis of capitalist society produces high graduate unemployment, higher chuck-out rates, and close political vetting of applicants.

It is in response to these realities, to the proletarianisation of the middle classes and the introduction of capitalist methods of organisation into higher education, that student radicalisation has come about. Initially this radicalisation was expressed through very middle class and moral issues - such as CND, the movement that brought Wilson to power in 1964 and so on. As the crisis brought the working class movement into a fight to defend its living standards radicalism gave way to revolutionary politics.

The high point of student radicalism occurred after the events in France of May 1968. The example of near revolution accentuated the move to the left although a facile 'interpretation' of May was the basis for a number of lunatic ideas that infected the largely unorganised student 'movement' eg. the IMGs theories of Red Bases and revolutions made by student vanguards.

The result of that period has been the growth of the International Socialists on the left and the recapture of the NUS bureaucracy by the Communist Party after a period of right-wing Labour control (financed by the CIA). It is these twin phenomena and the problems they pose for revolutionary activity by students that must be overcome.

The hopelessness of most of its 'theories' led many of the most serious militants in the student movement towards the International Socialists, who at that time appeared to be a libertarian, non-hierarchical organisation which made the essential point that revolutionary work must be directed primarily into encouraging the self-organisation and self-confidence of the working class. This contrasted favourably with those who totally ignored the hostility of the British working class towards students and lived in dreams of a British May 68.

All the creations of the student movement under the influence of student vanguard ideas such as the Revolutionary Socialist Students Federation, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the paper 'Black Dwarf' soon showed themselves to be internally confused, liable to splits and doomed to swift extinction.

At the same time there was little or no organised anarchist work in the student movement. Libertarians did very little to consider the problems of the movement and there was an understandable tendency (since reversed) for libertarian

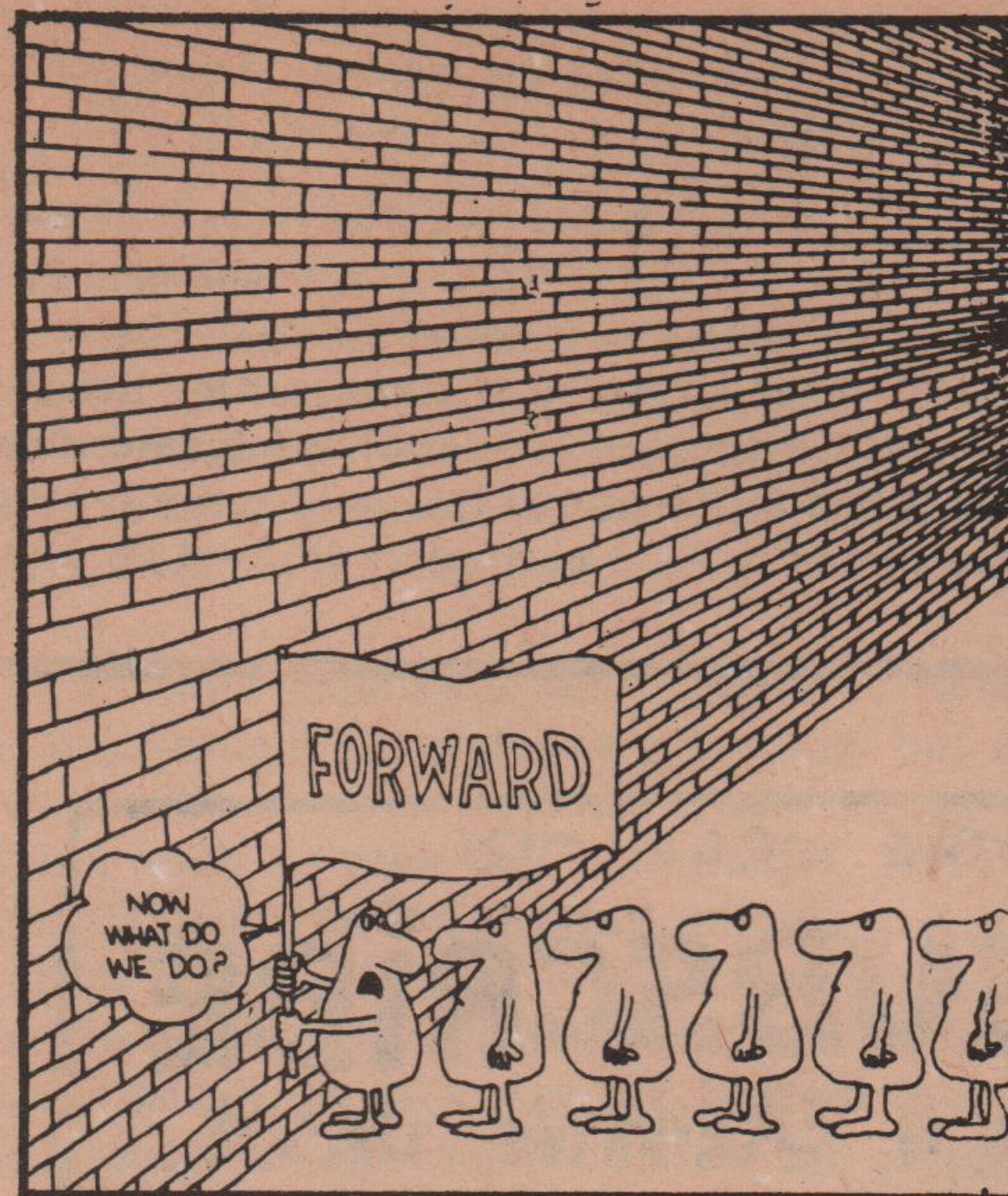
militants to be attracted to the IS whose consistent work compared favourably with the prevalent hopes in 'spontaneous' struggles.

However as IS recruited it turned its back on its previous analysis of the dangers inherent in Leninism - at base the substitution of the Party for the working class, both before the revolution in emphasis on "building the Party" rather than developing consciousness and organisation in the working class, and after the revolution in the dictatorship of the Party over the working class, rather than the rule of the working class itself. In the last two years all rights of internal opposition to the IS leadership have been destroyed, members of rival groups have been beaten up, work in rank and file groups has been subordinated to recruiting to IS and in many cases has led to gerrymandering and unconstitutional 'reorganising' in order to retain IS's diminishing hold on the organisations (see *Libertarian Struggle* May, July, September).

IS has turned students away from consistent work in the colleges and universities towards selling papers outside factories. As it turns to recruit workers through its students' activity, it also turns on those students and intellectuals who built the organisation in the first place but who are now attacked as 'petit bourgeois'. The object is that the leadership will have a new rank and file unfamiliar with its past twists and turns and get rid of those who have seen too much.

This emphasis by IS left the student movement wide open for the CP to regain control of NUS. The CP method of gaining control was through alliances with careerists such as the present President - John Randall (see article). A platform of vague leftism, 'responsibility' and a well-organised bargaining machine fitted the needs of winning support from the confused but 'left' mood of the student movement.

The CPs 'pressure group' mode of operation which involves dismantling mass campaigns at the point when they threaten to go beyond backing up compromise negotiations, has combined with IS's removal of militants to bring about a depoliticisation of the student movement. In fact the two bureaucracies complement each other very well whilst all the time vowing eternal hatred.



Within the N.U.S. the result has been a swing to the right. Careerists such as Randall can now leave the C.P. bandwagon and pursue their own interests without the pretensions of radicalism. Union meetings get smaller, allowing the bureaucracy to operate behind the backs of the students.

Within the student movement itself the solidarity demonstrated over the issues of victimised lecturers at L.S.E. and Lancaster and of the political files on students at Warwick has become weakened.

At a time when working class organisations are becoming more conscious of the need to defend themselves from increasing attack, the Students' Union is in retreat.

Universities and Colleges being important institutions of class society, it is essential to carry out revolutionary work within them in order to undermine the educational bastions of capitalism.

However, over and above individual campaigns, there must be a consistent movement to unify all working class struggles. We cannot

PUBLISHERS BE DAMNED

The public access issue in Hull was raised not as a result of thought about the university as a bastion of elitism but due to the inequalities in the higher education system itself.

The College of Education next door has lived for years in the shadow of the university, and more literally, of the seven-story University Library. Many college students have been accustomed to use this library for reading and working due to the total inadequacy (admitted by all concerned) of their own library. However last year the library authorities, presumably in order to stop such "unauthorised" use, instituted spot checks on the turnstiles and instructed librarians to ask for union cards before signing out a book.

University students without cards were only caused inconvenience, since reference would be made to a list of all members of the university. However although spot checks could not totally exclude college students from the library, it brought home to them that they had no rights even to sit and work there let alone touch any of the books. A campaign was started by the College Union which culminated in a sit-in by 30 students one afternoon.

They left peacefully and of course it resulted in no action at all being taken by the university authorities, except a promise that the university librarian, the 'poet' Philip Larkin, would deign to speak to the president of the College students union. However the sit-in did succeed in waking up the university union, the inevitable petition was made and a motion came before union council condemning Larkin for refusing to allow college students access to the library and instituting a wider campaign aimed at free public access to the library.

The issue was complicated by the fact that it had been discovered by the college students that the publishers association discount on books to libraries was made on condition that the public should have access to them. Apart from making it easier to widen the scope of the campaign, this only proved a dangerous red herring since many people actually believed that the PA could actually force the university to capitulate.

The organisers of the campaign sent out letters to local MPs, TUs, people in education and other student unions. There was, as might be expected, little or no response.

Of course it was the PA who capitulated (probably cursing the fool who included the original public access clause in the original agreement) in face of a solid front of resistance from nearly every university library in the country. Naturally they could not afford to alienate their most important customers (the libraries in fact keep most publishers in business). The campaign having exhausted all responsible and respectable methods and with a marked reluctance to engage in any more militant action petered out in inglorious failure.

Those engaged in the part of the campaign aimed at genuine public access to the library would often be asked whether they really thought that people would want to use the library. They could only reply that it was a question of principle, the principle that it is wrong to have a university library or a whole university as a degree factory for the use of a small elite of the community.

The university were equally firm in their principle, that, as one of them said, "to call us elitist is not an insult, we believe in the necessity of an elite".

The public access campaign at Hull university was not in itself a vital one. But what it showed was that the university authorities are quite adamant that not even the smallest inroad should be made into their stronghold of academic and cultural elitism.

achieve this through the C.P. approach of gaining places within the bureaucracy. We cannot achieve this through the self-flagellation approach of the IS. - continually reproaching themselves for their role as students.

WE CAN achieve this through conscious organisation based on libertarian principles, striving for the defence of working class interests and for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

ORA Publications

Tyranny of Structurelessness by Jo Freeman Obtainable from Leeds Womens ORA, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6. 5p. plus 3p. post. 'Libertarians in all movements should study this pamphlet' because it contains the core of the argument that ORGANISED libertarians have stated'. review in April L.S.

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FOR INFORMATION ON ORA
WRITE TO
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FOR LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE
TO
29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6.

LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elisabeth Square, Glasgow C3.

Hull: Marion McCartney, 21d Pearson Ave., Hull.

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk St.

Leeds: Trevor Bavage, flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6

Manchester: Ron Marsden, 277 Kingsway Park Davyhulme, Urmston, M/c

North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E.17

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

CONTACTS

There are also contacts in Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Leicester, Liverpool, West, East and S. London, Norwich, Oxford, Plymouth, Poole, Reading, and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to the North London group.

LOCAL CONTACT ADDRESS:-

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