

Libertarian STRUGGLE

for Workers' Power

LABOURS SOLUTIONS? NO!

DAY BY DAY turmoil inside the Labour Party grows, and day by day the grassroots of the party comes to understand better the nature of its leadership.

The step down over the Shrewsbury pickets and the Clay Cross Councillors, cuts in public expenditure, the attacks on those Labour activists who are campaigning against the more blatantly reactionary MP's, show working class people more clearly the nature of parliamentary democracy and its inability of securing any long term gains for them.

Socialism cannot come by parliamentary means; particularly from a party which right from the start paid only slight lip service to socialist ideas.

The Labour Party was formed from an amalgam of different groupings within the working class, some radical, some unconfessedly gradualist (the Fabians), some concerned with bread and butter issues and with no political perspectives.

As such, it could not develop on socialist lines, the socialist elements already having made the mistake of believing that the abolition of the bosses and all they stood for could be decreed by Parliament.

DIVERSION

The Labour Party could never offer a militant programme to working people. It would not see that the mass self-organisation of the working class to take, hold and run the workplaces and to administer society was necessary, and essential to the meaning of socialism.

Because of the backward ideas expressed within the Labour Party, and through the corruption due to its position of representing working people by entering Parliament it became, like the union bureaucracy, a means of checking any advance towards militancy and revolution.

The Labour Government of 1945-51 was a glaring example of this. Troops were sent in to break strikes by dockers, Smithfield Market porters and gas workers. Striking miners were fined. Attacks on ex-service-men and their families who were squatting unoccupied property: these show the true anti-working class nature of the Labour leadership. See page 8 for a more detailed analysis of the activities of this particular Labour Government.

MISGUIDED

Yet despite these repeated examples of what the Labour Party really stands for, there still remain sincere activists inside the party, who think that they can somehow give it a new and militant direction. You might as well say that a club used to bludgeon a person can be used as a walking stick!

Libertarian Struggle and the Anarchist Workers Association say that the Labour Party is one of the biggest obstacles stopping working class people moving towards a free socialist society.

The stranglehold of the Labour Party must be broken; a strong rank and file movement must be built in the workplace and in the community.

It is conceivable that a split may develop inside the Labour Party, and a new 'left' reformist party may be formed. This will not solve the problems faced by working people as bosses cut back on public spending and production.

Only a strong self-active working class fighting at base level can beat these attacks.

All sincere socialists within the Labour Party must realise the poverty of parliamentarianism and quit the party, to help in building real workers power.

Some Trotskyists now feel they can influence future events by sending large numbers of their members into the Labour Party. To do such a thing at a time when a revolutionary movement has the possibility of growing shows the bankruptcy of their ideas.

What they are doing can only reinforce the illusions that the Labour Party could be a genuine left-wing body.

There is only one road to socialism, and that is the revolutionary road!

We see the following demands as vital in

defending workers against the bosses' Crisis:-

*International links must be built with other workers.

*It is essential that the Labour Party's hold over the working class is broken.

*The union leaders' sell-outs must be fought by a strong rank and file.

*Short-time working must be fought with a slow-down in production.

*Redundancies have to be faced with mass occupations of workplaces. The bosses must not be allowed to move out the machinery.

*We must demand full pay, work or no work.

*Build local delegate rank and file committees.

EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE

When the printworkers of Republica, a Lisbon daily newspaper, took over from their Socialist Party bosses, there was great hue and cry in the British capitalist newspapers about the 'freedom of the press', when what they really meant was the freedom of the wealthy to put over their distortion and lies. In the picture we see the printworkers of Republica setting up the type for the first issue that was put out under workers control. Inside this issue of Libertarian Struggle is a letter from an Irish worker, who has been living in Portugal for a number of years, giving an analysis of events there. (photo Revolucao)



CONFRONTATION OR CAPITULATION

EVERY week throughout Britain thousands of working class people find themselves in the front line of the class war.

Most of these people have probably never been on strike before, but suddenly found themselves in the position of confrontation or capitulation to their capitalist exploiters.

The majority choose to do battle in the class war, recognising that the road of capitulation is an endless road.

HARD TIMES

But confrontation is not an easy road either, and a strike can mean a long drawn out struggle, with real hardship for workers and their families. It can mean lock-outs, sackings, watching scabs cross your picket line, to do your work, and rob your family of their livelihood.

So you sit in to keep them out, and you find hundreds of court orders on the doorstep, ordering you off their property. You resist this, and find yourself facing bailiffs and police. This is a direct threat of physical assault, legal GBH, even imprisonment.

Daunting? Yes, even frightening, but in spite of all this the working class still resist every week in their thousands. They did so for instance in the following disputes in August:-

August 1st — Hull. Ambulancemen decided to continue their strike over disciplinary actions being taken against a man in a dispute over shift-work pay. It involves about 100 men at the city's main depot who have been joined by 25 men from three other depots.

August 5th — London. Sixty-five ASTMS members have entered the second week of their strike for higher pay at the Commercial Cable Co., London.

August 5th — Glasgow. Sixty workers at Arnold Clark Garages are still on strike after over a month. The strike started as a claim for a pay-rise but the workers say they will not now return until all strikers who have been sacked are reinstated. Management offered ½p per hour rise.

August 6th — Dublin. Computer operators at the Electricity Supply Board struck today as part of their campaign to force the Government to pay a productivity deal. They have given a month's notice of a total strike.

August 7th — Glasgow. Ladbroke workers on strike for union recognition occupied the firm's premises yesterday. They refused management appeals to leave and hung placards from the windows. The strike is in its seventh week. Although Ladbroke sacked all 280 workers involved when they applied

for a wage-rise, they are adamant to fight on and gave the local T&GWU district official Hugh Wyper a massive 'no' when he advised all to apply separately for their jobs back, and gave no benefits for the strikers.

August 7th — Mayfair. Painters who are members of UCATT are on strike at a Laing site in Curzon Street, Mayfair after sub-contractor's Caters tries to bring in men who will work a seven day week under any conditions. This is an attempt to break the solidarity of the workers who have gone on strike in the past to defend union rights on the site.

August 8th — Newcastle. Eighty T&GWU labourers supported by UCATT members walked out on strike at a McAlpines site demanding the removal of a ganger for victimising workers. In spite of appeals by union officers to return to work the men refused and McAlpines relieved the ganger of all supervisory duties and accepted a transfer request from him.

Lyn Hurst



photo Workers Press

DEPARTMENT FOR HEADING OFF SOCIAL STRUGGLE

SCOTTISH SCHOOLS— UNREST ON THE WAY

THE Annual General Meeting of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), held at Stirling University on June 5-7, marked a significant step forward for a union which until a few years ago had a record of activity more abysmal than most unions.

This is partly due to the activity of the IS-dominated Rank & File, but more to the radicalisation of the large mass of classroom teachers resulting from the intransigence of the management side over the conditions issue.

First, the AGM had to throw out the concept of 'dirty money'. This was a proposal by a section of the leadership that we accept payment for taking classes above the limits set by the EIS work to rule, and be prepared to lose some of our free periods, for a similar consideration.

This 'dirty money' must be distinguished from the designation scheme, which is roughly similar to the English Social Priority Area payments, and which is currently deadlocked by the refusal of the management to implement a third such scheme in schools where a work to rule is in operation.

'Dirty money' was bombed out, and the idea, which was raised and defeated at the 1974 AGM, should now be dead.

PART-TIME EDUCATION ON THE WAY

The work to rule itself is to be intensified in accordance with an earlier decision of the EIS Council: class maxima are generally reduced, especially in primary and the first two years of secondary (equivalent to years 2 and 3 in England), where the permissible numbers go down from 35 to 30 as from August coming.

Whilst a further reduction might have been wished, and was in fact proposed and defeated, a steady squeeze on the management side has something to be said for it — maxima of 40 for session 1973/4, 35 for the current session, and now 30 for the next session (lower figures pertain for the higher secondary classes).

There will either be widespread part-time education this autumn, or confrontation, and possibly both. The main drawback, which also

makes a confrontation much less likely, is that the work to rule is undertaken by request by individual schools, and only about 15% of Scottish schools (including the author's) are on a work to rule.

However, when the figures were stepped up last August, a large number of schools — over 100 — applied to take part and began working to rule. It is to be hoped that this will happen again next session on the reduced figures. Directors of Education have already been notified of the new figures for this August.

SINGLE SALARY SCALE

Another issue on which significant advance has been made is that of the single salary scale. By a surprisingly large majority (a similar motion was defeated last year) a motion was passed that 'there should be one basic scale for all day school teachers, rewards for qualific actions being given by incremental placing at entry'.

Trade unionists will at once recognise a vagueness, also present in a motion passed for a common maximum, which could easily be misinterpreted by those willing or able to do so. The important thing to recognise, however, is that a point of principle has been made, and that, if the success is repeated next year, it can be built on.

At present under Houghton, there are two scales, one primary and one secondary, with placings for graduates on both, and with an extra increment at the top of the secondary scale for honours graduates only; there are separate scales for further education lecturers.

The trouble in Scottish schools is far from over. The deliberate procrastination of the management side — the local authorities/regions, with Willie Ross pulling the strings — is further fuelling the resentment of Scottish teachers at the way they have been treated for many years.

Certainly the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (about 7,000 members: EIS has about 45,000) may pick up a few disgruntled secondary graduates who cannot face a single salary scale, even granted incremental placing; but the intensification of the work to rule should command widespread support — provided the leadership of EIS does not cave in on the current conditions negotiations.

EIS member

DURING the 1930's when financial social benefit was given as a privilege and not as a right, and when inflation was soaring, the rates of benefit were reduced.

If the working population hadn't been in a state of shell shock from the 1914-18 butchery and the capitulation of the 1926 General Strike, a revolutionary situation may well have been reached.

The spectre of the thirties was raised at a recent Trades Council meeting that I attended when the theory was advanced that, as the number of unemployed passed one million — on the way to three million! — the Government would be forced to reduce benefits. This is a view that recent personal experience does not support.

Instead, the Government seems anxious to use the Department of Health and Social Security to prevent unemployed workers from becoming militant.

BENEFITS UP

This year, the Department of Health and Social Security has increased the rates of benefits twice, and local DHSS offices have been granted extra staff to cope with the work, as well as having some grades of staff re-classified in order to increase their wages, thereby keeping them quiet.

It is ironic that this same Government department has cut hospital expenditure.

DISPARITY

There remains great disparity in wages between the health and social security sectors. A new entrant to DHSS as a clerical assistant (qualification 2 'O' levels) aged 22 or above would start at £31.80 a week. A clerical officer (5 'O' levels, same age) would receive £37.30, and an executive officer (2 'A' levels) £44.20 or, if over 25 years old, £46.84.

All of these grades have guaranteed annual increases to £37.30, £50.76 and £70.57

respectively. This is apart from annual wage negotiation on April 1st.

On the other hand, a trainee entering the health service at pay group 4 on the ancillary scale (as I may soon do with my 2 'A' and 6 'O' levels) starts at £31.68 and has to wait until December for a rise that is negotiated by collective bargaining. This is another indicator of the Government's hypocritical approach.

ACTION

As the next round of wage bargaining approaches, action must be taken to ensure the breaching of the £6 wage limit forced upon us by trade union leaders, the gangster bosses and H. Wilson and his prophets of the mixed economy.

Some unions, including CPSA in the civil service and NUPE in the health service, have already indicated that they will oppose this limit at the Trades Union Congress.

All union members should pass motions through their branches to their executives so that the TUC delegations are aware of the rank and file.

The Government have obviously decided that it is better to mollify the population financially via social security benefits — including the extension of Family Income Supplement — than to stand for socialism (even within their own limited understanding of it).

They have learnt their lesson well. Now is the time to show their inadequacies.

P.B.

~ MONEY ~

THE Government has recently published a very subversive document. Its title is Report No.1 of the Royal Commission in (sic) the Distribution of Income and Wealth¹. The picture which emerges from this report is clear and provocative.

The richest 5% of the population of the UK owns over 50% of the country's personal wealth, and within this richest section is an especially privileged group — the top 1% of the population, which owns no less than 25.6% of the country's wealth. Meanwhile the great majority of the population — the bottom 80% — owns less than 20% of the total personal wealth.

ADMISSIONS

It is not in the interest of the Government to exaggerate the inequalities in present day Britain. What the Government does admit is, if anything, going to be an underestimate of the inequalities which exist: so it is important for once that socialists are aware of the Government's statistics, and are able to use them to convince anyone who may doubt that we live in a grossly unjust society. Likewise with the capitalist press — what they admit in the way of overconcentration of wealth is highly significant as a safe minimum of the evils which really exist.

FINANCIAL TIMES

Here, for instance, is what the *Financial Times* makes of the Government's report:-

'Taxes on incomes have had little effect in reducing the inequalities of earnings in this country, and wealth is highly concentrated despite a fall in the share owned by the richest people.'

The first report (of the Royal Commission) shows that there has not been any very pronounced change in the distribution of income over a 15-year period from 1959 to 1972-3.

One of the most significant conclusions... is that while income tax has some effect in equalising income levels, it is almost completely offset by the counter-effect of indirect taxation. Taxes levied on goods and services hit the lower-paid harder, and balance the benefit they gain from lower income taxes.' - *Financial Times*, 31/7/75.

TOP ONE PER CENT

The Government's figures just published for the distribution of personal wealth in 1972 — the latest year for which information is available — are as follows:-

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Top 1% of population own | 25.6% of wealth |
| Top 5% | 50.1% |
| Top 10% | 63.9% |
| Top 20% | 80.8% |
| Bottom 80% | 19.2% |

The above figures show the total of private wealth owned by individuals at the time of the survey. Here now are the Government's statistics for income during the period 1972/73:-

| | |
|--|-------|
| Share of total income (after tax) in 1972/73 | |
| Top 1% | 4.4% |
| Top 10% | 23.6% |
| Bottom 20% | 6.8% |

EXCUSES

Explaining away figures like these is a hard job for defenders of capitalism. There are, however, various easy and improper techniques which are commonly used to obscure the truth.

Technique 1. Concentrate on the figures for the distribution of income (which are rather less sensational than the figures for wealth), and hide the fact that it's the figures for wealth which matter most.

Technique 2. Better still, don't use figures at all, but claim that the income of the wealthy 'all goes in tax'. This claim is simply untrue. To quote the *Financial Times* again (31/7/75, p.11): 'After tax the share (of income in 1972/73) of the top 10% fell from 26.9% to 23.6% — in other words income tax has little effect on Top People's incomes. This is due in large

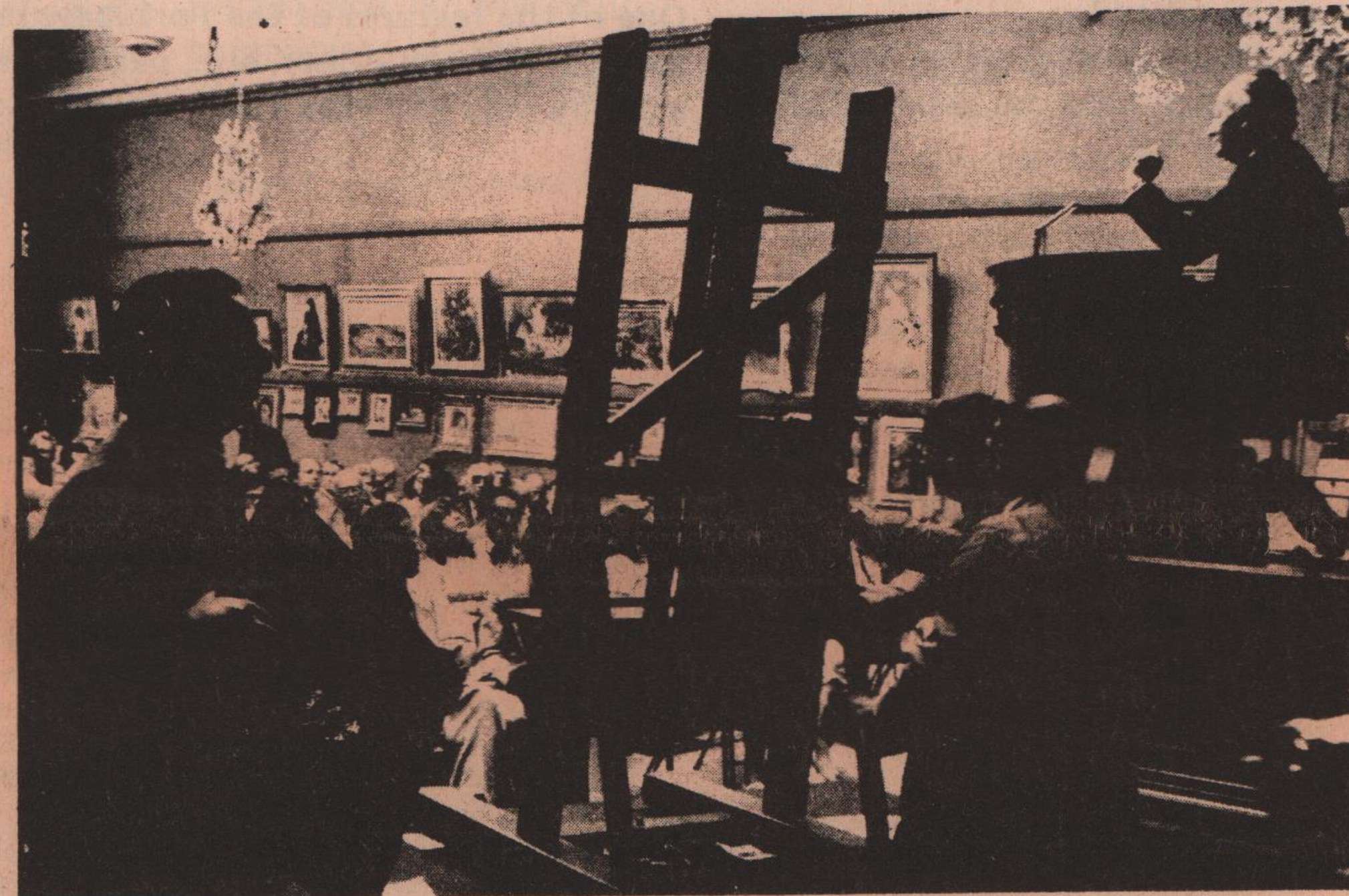
degree to the activities of accountants, hired by the rich to exploit the loopholes in the tax laws.

Technique 3.

Claim that the excess income and wealth of the rich, if redistributed, would only bring a trivial benefit to the rest of the population. This argument is a great favourite with the hired hacks who speak for the enormously rich owners of newspapers. For example, see *The Sun* (31/7/75, p.2). Samuel Brittan (*Financial Times*, 31/7/75 p.15) writes similarly:-

'If the excess share of the top 10% were divided among the remaining 90% they would get an average augmentation of one ninth of their post tax incomes... This augmentation of £4 per week would be the lot, with nothing further to gain from 'redistribution'.'

'Don't be taken in when they pat you paternally on the shoulder and say that there's no more inequality worth speaking of and no more reason for fighting. Because if you believe them they will be completely in charge, in their shiny homes and granite banks from which they rob the people of the world.' — Peter Weiss.



Redistribution of wealth — at Sotheby's

There are two things to notice about this analysis of Brittan's. First, it does not deal with redistribution of wealth, in spite of the fact that the most striking inequalities are in wealth rather than in income. Second, it does not make clear that if the 'excess' gained by the top 10% were redistributed among those who need it most — let us say the lowest 30% of the population — the average short-term increase would be of £12 per person per week. This of course might be a trivial sum in the eyes of an overpaid financial columnist, but for most working people £12 per week would make a very important improvement in their standard of life.

H.M.S.O. AND LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISM

What the Government's figures do not tell us is how much wealth, and what kind of wealth, would be generated in a society in which there was social justice — that is, in a society of libertarian communism. No statistics can be expected from Her Majesty's Stationery Office on the improvements which might be expected if work was done without the alienation which exists in capitalist and 'Communist' economies; if the imagination of working people was given power over production; if production was seen to be done for need rather than profit, and if wealth was created to last rather than to perish through planned obsolescence.

SPANISH LESSON

There is only one region of western Europe in which in recent times something approaching libertarian communism has been put into effect over a wide area, and has lasted for some years. Several provinces of republican Spain were between 1936 and 1938 dominated by libertarian collectivists, and there are some figures on the wealth they produced.

These figures are given by a well-informed and very unfriendly source — the Communist Party controlled Ministry of Agriculture in Madrid; they probably underestimate libertarian success. The figures show that, in those areas in which libertarian principles were predominant, production improved sharply following the revolution of 1936, while in the areas where the (C.P.-backed) private owners were most numerous production fell after 1936. The figures are reprinted and accepted in another unfriendly work; H. Thomas *'The Spanish Civil War'* (in the section on collectives). Professor Thomas also makes the telling admission that life in the collectives was not only more productive but was simply much happier than under the old capitalist regime which had existed until 1936. He talks of a 'perpetual exhilaration' among the collectivists, which resulted in part from the redistribution of wealth, from the emancipation of women and from the disappearance of the old class of bosses.²

IMPROVEMENTS

The great improvements achieved by the libertarian collectivists are worth reflecting on, and worth comparing with the great injustices revealed in our own society by statistics coming from the Government itself. The need for social and economic revolution in the UK will be made clearer still this winter, when the Government and the capitalist press together tell us that in order to be better off we must have more unemployment. Social justice, according to them, can only come when unemployment brings greater social inequalities; and more prosperity can only come when unemployment brings lower production.

However shrill the noises from the right, there are many working people who will never see social iniquity as political sense.

Anton Powell

(Footnotes)

1 Published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Cmnd. 6171, £3.10.

2 For a much more sympathetic and detailed account of the Spanish collectives see *The Spanish Collectives (Black Rose)*, ed. Sam Dolgoff, £2.00.

! free!
! love!

A FULL page in the Observer glossy colour supplement was recently devoted to an advertisement by Dateline, the multi-national computer marriage bureau with branches in France, Germany and Italy.

The company, whose slogan is 'Dateline — leave nothing to chance', heads the advert 'What are your chances of meeting your ideal partner?' You are asked to complete the free test and thereby receive:-

1 The computer's assessment of your chances of meeting your ideal partner.

Even if you ignore the fatuous assumption that an ideal partner exists, it seems preposterous to suppose that a computer is better equipped than you to decide. But, as most of us know, ideal partners exist only in fantasy, or in women's magazines, where beautiful heroines are swept off their feet in clouds of white tulle by ultra-masculine, 'successful' advertising executives, to church bells. From that point we are not invited to follow.

2 A detailed and objective analysis of your colour test.

Dateline back this up by stating 'This will reveal a great deal about the real you — a lot that even you didn't know'. In other words, know yourself, objectively, through the results of a colour test, devised by a psychologist you've never met!

3 Our comprehensive colour brochure which shows how tens of thousands of people, like you, have found happiness through the Dateline system.

This is the hard sell, and the product is human happiness. Sadly, some people, vulnerable and alienated by the way they are forced to live, will fall for the ad-man's (or maybe the ad-woman's) cliché, so urgently desired is happiness!

However, with the current divorce rate at one marriage in five, it would be revealing to see Dateline divorce statistics. Try asking Dateline how many have found misery!

HIERARCHY

'Tell us all about yourself', asks Dateline — under a photograph of a radiantly happy couple, dated and lined up by, guess who? 'All about yourself' means your education and occupation, simply that.

In order of hierarchy are — Public School, Comprehensive and Grammar School, Secondary Modern and should you annoyingly fail to slot neatly into place — Other.

You now become their commodity, strictly defined in their own rigid class terms.

As the customary sexist practice of asking the woman's marital status is used, women are defined as above — only doubly so. For homosexuals it is even simpler, they just don't exist.

Dateline continue by asking for the three most important qualities you would look for in an ideal partner. You have twelve to choose from, again Dateline defined. They are: high-spirited; cheerful; intelligent; honest; thrifty; homely; ambitious; natural; kind; passionate; confident; and, last but not least, romantic.

Dateline then move on to ask about your interests. 'Your ideal partner should, of course, share the same interests'. Singing or playing a musical instrument is listed. The musical genius who could fart out the National Anthem presumably shares a common interest with Sir Adrian Boult.

'Political activity' is another insanely broad category used by Dateline. Had a date with a confident, high-spirited, ambitious National Front member recently?

RIP OFF

All this is free, completely free. The word free appears in this context eight times. Nowhere is the question of payment mentioned. However, full page advertisements do not appear in glossy colour supplements free of charge.

The motives of Dateline are not altruistic. What Dateline are really asking, is for you and me to hand over free choice in this highly personal field of human relations, whilst they cynically claim concern for our happiness.

But make no mistake; the sole concern of big business is profit, and that means profit at the expense of you and me, the working class.

It is a powerful indictment of the system called capitalism that Dateline's profits escalate! Profits based on the exploitation of the loneliness, fear and alienation produced by that same system.

Georgina Lee

no comment

SUCCESSFUL authoritarian right-wing governments tempt investors, but they are getting few and far between. South Africa and Spain, for instance, are not the stable places they once looked. But now a much more attractive proposition has come into the picture. Brazil, which long closed its doors to outside portfolio investment (you could buy car factories but not shares) has had a change of heart. It wants to build up its own stock markets as a source of capital for industry.



In May, the country's regulations were changed to allow foreigners into its fast-growing index-linked economy—but only on complex highly restricted terms. Investment will have to be via investment trust companies and there are rules for buying and selling to stop tides of speculative foreign money washing in and out. This is music in the ears of agents, brokers and investment bankers and some nine funds are already on the way, most originating in the US.

PORTUGAL

The letter we publish below was written by an Irish worker who has been living in Portugal for a few years to a friend. It was written before the reactionaries started attacking the offices of the Communist Party and other left groups, and so lacks somewhat. He is an active member of the group *Combate*, which publishes a newspaper of the same name.

Dear,

I've been in Spain for the last two weeks and came back to Portugal the day before the barricades went up and spent the night manning a barricade the other side of Beja — a communist stronghold. It was one of the most pleasant nights I've spent for a while, drinking wine under the full moon and talking politics with the agricultural workers of that region.

Things are moving quite fast at the moment with the exit of the Social Democrats and liberal capitalists from the Government; the State capitalists will of course hang on for a while yet. Most likely the mini C.P.'s will enter the Government — FSP, MES, UDP and maybe even the Trotskyist LCI.

The initiative for the barricades came primarily from the revolutionary groups, LUAR, PRP-BR, MES and were guarded militarily by soldiers related to 'soldiers committees' and units such as RAL1 (an infantry regiment, eds.).

'Popular Power' is the most common slogan at the moment and the 'factory committees' and 'neighbourhood committees' are gaining in strength all the time.

A lot of the populism, however, is giving way to a more class politics. Not all 'neighbourhood committees' are revolutionary; not even all the factory committees are; some are being taken over by CDS (Christian Democratic Socialists) or PPD (Popular Democratic Party) technocrats, or reformists but there is a definite move in a revolutionary direction.

The Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) continues to manipulate or try to manipulate local government, and through the union structures tries to contain many of the factory committees. The 'workers' committees' in many of the newspapers are predominantly PCP.

However, the papers are much freer than before the revolution, as are the radio stations. The taking over of *Republica* by the workers (who were mainly Socialist Party -PS) from the hands of the PS, and the radio station *Radio Renascença* from the Church were large victories for the left and for the workers.

Farm occupations have reached the extent of 150,000 hectares and occupations of buildings number over 10,000. The movement at the base is quite large.

REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

The principal problem, as before, is the creation of a political organisation which can transcend the various vanguard claims of the Leninist type parties.

The 'Councils' which were a good idea are still seen as a party by the PRP-BR, but created from the top down have not reached very far. In a similar vein, the 'Committees for the Defence of the Revolution' are a PCP creation.

Only *Inter-Empresas* (Inter-Enterprise) and the *Inter-Comissões do Moradores* (Inter Dwellers Committees) continue to be the base and real self-organisation of the workers, and above party struggles.

Everyone claims to be 'above-party', non-partisan, while at the same time many people manipulate the non-party structures for their own partisan ends.

The July 4th non-party demo was led by the MRPP, June 14th by the 'Councils' (PRP-BR), June 19th by the PCP, but all of them without any party banners or flags. But these demos are poor imitations of February 7th (when *Inter-Empresas* marched against NATO) or May 17th (when shanty-town swellers marched into Lisbon supported by building workers).

Now with the open offensive against the Social Democrats the PCP obviously needs the revolutionary left groups — as with the freeing of all the 400 Maoist prisoners, and the wooing by the PCP of the left which not six weeks ago they were calling 'infantile'.

But the other side of the coin is that the PCP have been pushed into taking positions far more to the left than they really want. A real dual power situation is building up with reformist capitalists and state technocrats in power (building agrarian reform, neighbourhood organisation, 'the battle for production' and so on, from the top down) and a good deal of the revolutionary left, workers' committees and neighbourhoods pushing and criticising from below.

STATE BYPASSED

Many of the Government master-plans are in ribbons because of this pressure from below. For example:-

- *There is much criticism of the self-help programme for shanty-dwellers to build their own houses in the evenings with free bricks. They say that with building workers out of work and the dwellers themselves having to work all day, why should they do two jobs?
- *'The Battle for Production' is criticised by workers groups who want to know who they are producing for.
- *The *Servico Codigo* (year's work for students in the countryside teaching peasants, and so on) is being bypassed by student groups organising themselves into revolutionary groups for occupations, and more besides.
- **Republica* and *Radio Renascença* workers are refusing to abide by the Government decisions and have forced the Government to make changes through their direct action.
- *There is a complete division between the union structures and the 'Workers Committees'.

STORM CLOUDS GATHER

The right are also organising, not least in the Socialist Party-Popular Democratic Party offensive. Along with the Church, they represent the main reactionary force in Portugal and claim to be 'anti-communist'. By 'communist' they mean the PCP and everything to the left of it, including any autonomous working class action.

The Socialist Party is also becoming the pole of attraction for Spinolist officers, for escaped PIDE (secret police) and also for help sent by European and US capitalists.

The strategy of certain pro-Maoist groups like PCP(ml) of supporting the Socialist Party against PCP 'social fascism' is ridiculous in this light. The struggle between the reaction and the social reaction — as the MRPP put it — has nothing to do with the workers' struggles which must bypass both.

A civil war would be disastrous before Spain bursts — which certainly must happen soon. When Spain rids itself of Franco the *Junta Democrática* are in the aisles but so are thousands of revolutionaries and workers.

The collapse of Francoism and the ensuing internal struggle in Spain will provide a breathing space, both politically and economically, which the Portuguese revolutionaries badly need.

The chances of a right wing coup on Chilean lines are remote, mainly because of the Armed Forces and the number of weapons which would immediately pass into the hands of workers — something which began to happen on March 11th.

Tremendous resistance would be met everywhere. Economic blockades and CIA manipulation is a problem at the moment, though Portugal in 1975 is not as isolated as Cuba was in 1962.

Something big is in the air okay — the re-emergence of the communist movement after years of decline, perhaps.

P.



One of the features of the Portuguese revolution is that groups of workers, political parties, trade unionists, etc., paste up statements on the walls, and that people actually stop and read them. (photo Combate)

Portugal — La Question de l'Organisation Revolutionnaire

THE most important problem facing the Portuguese revolution at present is the creation of genuine organs of working class power, democratic organs whereby those who produce the wealth can all collectively determine what happens to the product of their labour.

In past revolutions, it is the workers council, formed of delegates from places of work and from the community, which has been the chief means of organisation of a revolutionary proletariat.

The *Councils of Revolutionary Workers, Soldiers and Sailors* (CRT), much vaunted by the International Socialists, and a creation of their erstwhile ally, the Party of the Revolutionary Proletariat (PRP), are the subject of this pamphlet, put out by 'an autonomous group of emigrant workers' in France.

MANIFESTO CRITICISED

Issued in Portuguese with either Italian or French accompanying it, the pamphlet contains the Manifesto and Conclusions of the 1st Congress of Workers Councils, as well as quotations from leading members of the Armed Forces Movement which give some idea of the latter's intentions and the role they expect the CRT's to play.

The pamphlet continues with eight detailed points of criticism, marred a little by the fact that the authors are writing from exile with no direct contact with and therefore no knowledge of the real content of the movement for workers councils.

One of the sections, 'Autonomous organisation and the question of the party' contains many useful insights that would not please those who still call for the 'vanguard party', but fails to discuss one of the great problems that arises from the councilists' worship of spontaneity: the fact that some of the factory committees are controlled by right-wing workers, some by 'communists' and some by 'non-partisan' workers.

In other words, even given the form of proletarian democracy, without a specific libertarian communist current within the working class movement these structures can, and probably will, be co-opted by a new set of rulers.

They finish their criticism with a brief, but valuable, discussion on the meaning of socialism. This is especially valuable in Portugal as now every party from the PPD, the equivalent of the British Tory party, leftwards is talking of socialism — and with a capital S.

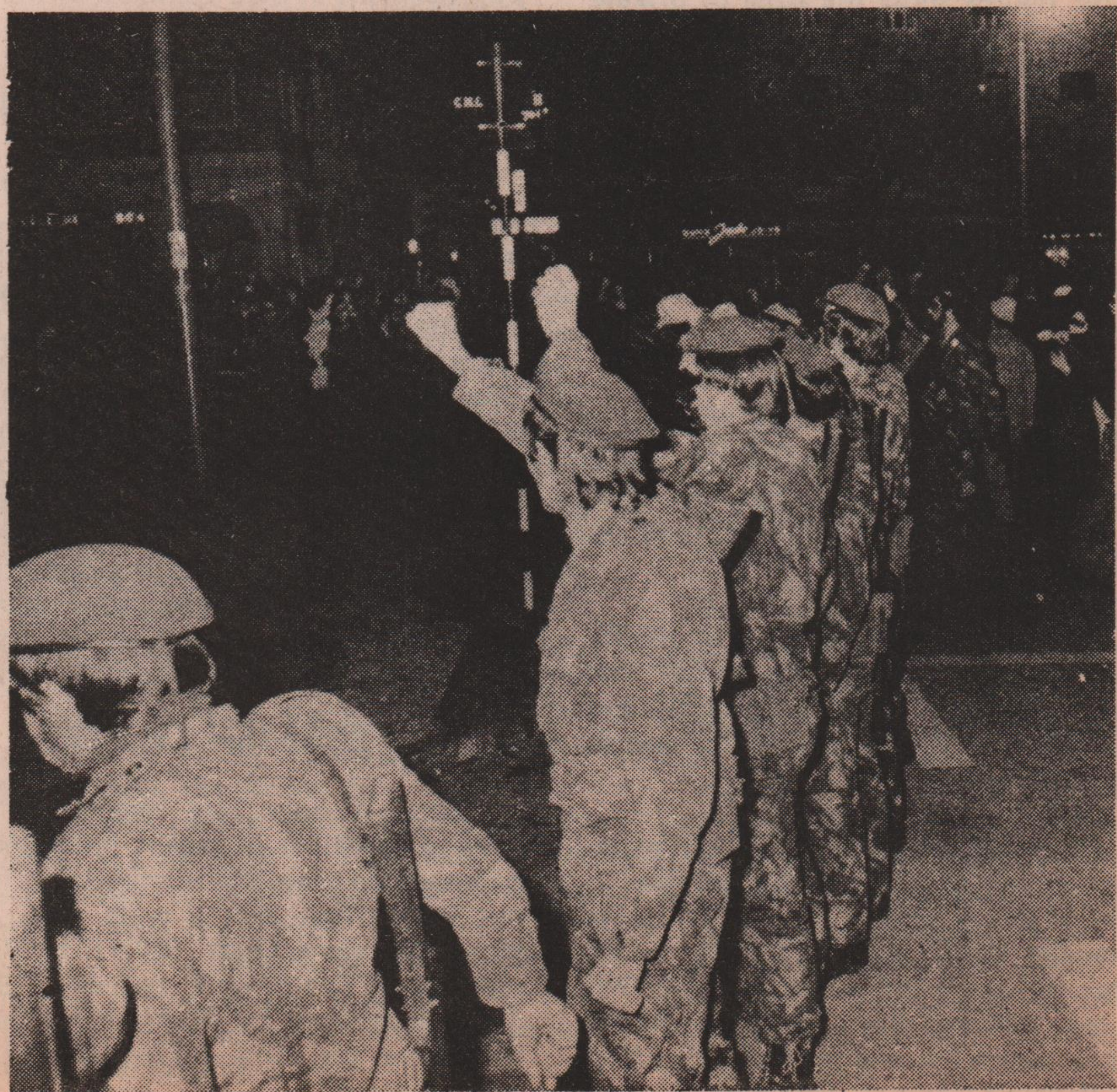
What is more, the parties all talk about socialism as if it were in existence now!

Finally, it must be stressed that, valuable as the campaign for workers councils that is being waged by the PRP may have been, the councils they have created are mere phantoms; when they said they would hand them over to 'the workers' once they were in existence, all this has meant has been handing them over to members of their own party.

This pamphlet is an important document and deserves wider circulation in Britain than it is getting at present.

It is available from:-
Escartin, B.P. 41, 92190 Meudon, France.

R.M.



BOOK REVIEW

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

. ?

WHEN the Labour Government took office following the election of February 1974, many left wing Labour activists in the country thought that their hour had come.

Elected on a radical programme committing them to 'A fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families', the Labour Party seemed to have learned from its mistakes of 1966-70, when they tried to work capitalism and savagely attacked their own working class electorate.

Foot and Benn, the two heroes of the left, held top posts in the Government which repealed much of the worst Tory legislation, began nationalisation plans, and set up a National Enterprise Board (NEB) to take over or indirectly control major industry.

Now, a year and a half later, Benn has been shifted, nationalisation plans 'postponed', the NEB watered down beyond recognition, and an incomes policy prepared as part of a renewed attack on the working class. Despite the hopes of the left, the Government has once again rattled on its promises.

However, the left's reaction has not been as muted as it was in 1966-70, and a split in the Labour Party is widely expected.

Stuart Holland's book, *The Socialist Challenge*, is a powerful weapon in the armoury of the Labour Left as it prepares to fight back. Holland was a leading economic advisor to the Government until recently, when he left in disgust at Wilson's policies, and he provides the main economic arguments for Benn, whose position in the Government has become more strained.

Much of his analysis can be agreed with by any socialist critic of capitalism, but his answers contain many of the weaknesses of the left in general, as well as the Labour Left in particular.

SEEKING A NATIONAL SOLUTION

To Holland, the traditional answers to 'our' — that is, the capitalists' — problems have been made out of date by the multi-nationals; huge companies without any national base and often more powerful than mere governments.

These industrial giants — which have only

emerged since the war — are able to wreck balance of payments policies through their powerful position in the international markets, and are generally able to avoid any mere national control.

Stuart Holland thinks the answer is to use an aggressive National Enterprise Board to increase direct and indirect state control over the economy, with the now trendy demand for some weak form of 'workers participation', which is so associated with Wedgie Benn nowadays.

But Holland seems to feel that such a programme of increased state control can be carried through by a Labour Government.

The fact that he should hold such illusions is touching, but seems to take no notice of the 'treason' of the Labour leadership — which seems to have taken place so many times that it can hardly be put down to accident — or the recent example of Allende's failed attempt at the parliamentary road to socialism in Chile. (Until the coup, Chile was known as 'The Britain of Latin America' because of its respect for parliamentary democracy.)

COMMITTED TO CAPITALISM

The hold of the Labour Right — committed as it is to the capitalist 'mixed economy' — on the parliamentary party is very powerful, and all the means of propaganda — newspapers, TV, etc. — are in the hands of the capitalists. Their power to lie, and to manipulate public opinion in a parliamentary democracy should not be underestimated.

If Benn ever did take power, he would be faced with a social crisis similar to Allende's, with middle class strikes, economic paralysis,

disloyalty of Army officers, and so on. The left's task isn't impossible, but they would have to go beyond the means of normal parliamentary politics to overcome opposition.

But even if the ideas of Benn and Holland were ever put into practice, they would just solve one problem by creating another. The exploitative relations between bosses and workers wouldn't end by replacing one set of bosses for another.

For working people, state capitalism is not the answer to the problems of private capitalism, and won't be free from economic crisis either. Holland's (and Benn's) weak formula of workers' control will soon find itself powerless against the power of a state-owned firm, as was seen in Russia just after the revolution.

The example of West Germany, where workers' representatives usually side with the bosses, shows what a pathetic answer workers' participation is in the capitalist firm.

No, the only real answer to the power of the multi-nationals — and the power of the state — must be the overthrow of the state by the direct democracy of workers' councils and the abolition of the wages system — full workers' management, not shilly shallying workers' participation, doomed as it is to failure.

Such a time may not be far off, and Holland's and Benn's policies must be as vigorously criticised as any alternative.

T.Y.

The Socialist Challenge
by Stuart Holland (*Quartet* £5.95)

prentice sent packing

THE removal of Reg Prentice from his position as the official Labour candidate for Newham North East was used as political capital by the whole of the media, from the most reactionary papers such as the Daily Mail, to the most 'left', the Morning Star, Workers Press, and so on.

The Tory press have of course used the event for yet another 'red scare', branding Tony Kelly (who is in fact a Fabian) and the rest of the Prentice Out campaigners as 'infiltrators', signs of a 'Marxist influence' in the Labour Party.

The most striking aspect of the Tory press's campaign has been their lack of understanding of a process even as superficially democratic as the selection of a constituency candidate. For them 'democracy' is a privilege extended to the populace every five years; the nearest thing to a definition of the word which they have ever formulated is that it is the opposite of communism.

The idea that members of a party can actually register a vote of no confidence in their M.P., simply because he is further right than most Tories horrifies and baffles them.

Being without experience as working class life and ideas has its problems. It can even lead newspapers like the Daily Mail to find it newsworthy that many of the Prentice Out campaigners had beards, and its sister paper, the London Evening

News to state that 'Most Labour voters would not be seen dead with the likes of Mr. Kelly'.

LEFT CONFUSION

The left wing press's interpretation of the event has been less ridiculous, which unfortunately makes it more dangerous.

The Morning Star sees it as proof that the Labour Party is still controlled by the working class, and that consequently more and more right wingers can be ousted, and Wilson's reactionary cabinet replaced by a more left government which will lead us all merrily down the British Road to Socialism.

The Trotskyists differ slightly in their analysis, in so far as they are willing to deceive the working class to an even greater extent than are the Communist Party. At least the CP really believes there is a parliamentary road to socialism.

The Workers Revolutionary Party, the Workers Socialist League, the International Marxist Group and the countless other groups of Trotskyists claim not to believe it at all, but to see it as a 'transitional demand', that is a demand which is in itself impossible, but which taken as part of a transitional programme must precipitate a revolution.

Thus the Trotskyist groups encourage the working class to struggle to replace the 'right' Labour government with a 'left' one after which they will attempt to force the government into implementing their various versions of the transitional programme. In this way the lefts, unable to implement the programme, are exposed.

These groups, by concentrating on the twin objectives of exposing the Labour left wing whilst building their own elite parties, are 'leading' the working class towards defeat and unnecessary bloodshed.

DEAD WOOD

The Labour Party cannot be ignored. The rejection of Prentice is a victory for the working class, but it also contains dangers. With the help of the Morning Star and the Trotskyists, it reinforces the myth that the Labour Party is democratically controlled by the constituencies, unions and the conference.

In reality, of course, the Parliamentary Labour Party is under a far greater degree of control from the City of London and the other sewers of international capitalism than it is from any of these. They frequently and blatantly ignore conference, and have now completely abandoned the manifesto upon which they were elected.

The working class is chained to the Labour Party, a party which has always and will always betray its aspirations.

The important struggle is to break this hold, to turn our backs on those who rule, of whatever political colour, and to take control of our own lives. What is necessary is not to place pressure on our 'leaders' to create socialism for us, but to organise to kick out all leaders — and would-be leaders — and create it for ourselves.

S.McG.

REPRESSION IN GERMANY

14TH April 1975. Four in the morning. The police arrested Ralf Stein, editor of *Befreiung* (Liberation) in his Cologne flat and took him to Ossendorf Prison, Cologne, where he is at present held.

Ralf Stein is a militant member of the Metalworkers union and also a member of a working class action group in the Nippes district of Cologne. He had taken part in the strike at the Ford works in Cologne — the most important strike in post-war Germany — and this had cost him his job.

As an active member of the Black Cross/Red Aid, he has corresponded with imprisoned comrades.

WHAT'S HE ACCUSED OF?

On November 26th 1974, police arrested two young people who had been informed against. These two people had never belonged to any group — libertarian or otherwise — they nevertheless claimed to have been members of a secret group.

In turn, they have accused Ralf Stein of having shown them the location of an arms cache. This arms cache certainly existed, but there is no proof that it was known to Ralf.

WHY THESE ARRESTS?

The arrest of Ralf Stein, who was well-known

for his complete disagreement with the terrorist methods of certain groups in Germany, is a new attack by the bourgeoisie against the anarchist movement and also against the developing organisations of self-management within the working class.

SHOW SOLIDARITY!

Write letters of protest at the arrest of Ralf Stein to the German Embassy, the judge and the prosecutor — letting them know what world opinion thinks of the new Nazi laws that are being used against libertarians in Germany:-

Judge: Amtsgericht Köln, abt 203, zi 47,
Richter Tiepel, 5 Köln 1, Appelloplatz 1.
Prosecutor: Bundesanwaltschaft Karlsruhe,
z — Hrl Herrn Bieger,
Karlsruhe, Postfach.

Trade unionists who can pass resolutions of support, especially metalworkers, should send them to:

I.G. Metall,
Ortsleitung Köln,
5 Köln, Hans Bockler Platz.

The address of the British Liaison Committee is A. McGowan, c/o 83a Haverstock Hill, London N.W. 3.

information from FRONT LIBERTAIRE



Picture: Angela Phillips (IFL)

LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE is a paper through which revolutionary anarchists spread their ideas and share their experiences. Putting out a newspaper is a costly activity and because money from sales does not cover costs we need donations in order to carry on regular publication.

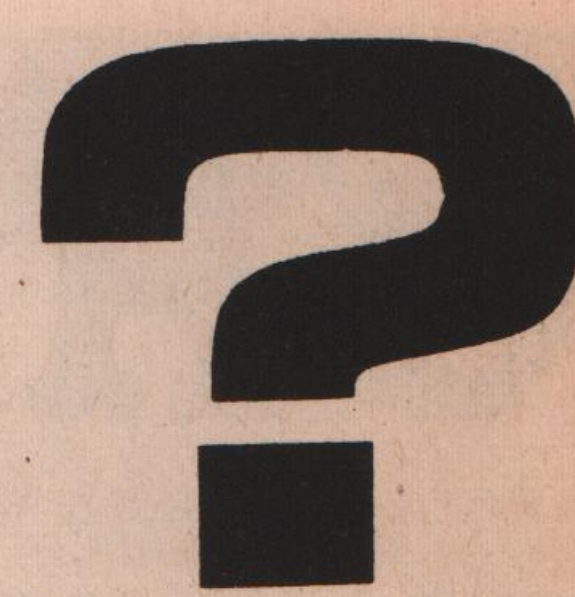
We believe that it is vitally necessary for LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE to continue, helping to build a conscious libertarian communist current within the working class. If you share our views please help LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE to go on and expand by sending any money you can afford or collect to:-

Anarchist Workers Association, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside



are they

REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISTS



OF ALL the 'ultra-left' political groups that claim to be revolutionary socialists the *International Socialists* are probably the best well-known, as well as being the most active and numerous. But are they really revolutionary?

In *What We Stand For*, the IS state: 'We believe in overthrowing capitalism, not patching it up or gradually trying to change it'. They are for a 'Workers' State', and for rank-and-file control of the trade unions, 'and the regular election of all full-time officials'; are also against unemployment, redundancies and lay-offs, and demand 'five days work or five days pay, and the 35-hour week.'

They are for 'nationalisation without compensation under workers' control'. The IS are for 'unconditional support to all genuine national liberation movements', but do not specify which they consider to be 'genuine'.

Such are the 'bones' of what the so-called International Socialists stand for. In an article on 'How socialism would deal with the crisis', in the *Socialist Worker* (16.11.74), Sean Treacy attempts to put some flesh on the bones of IS 'socialism'.

INTO PRINT

POLITICAL and community printers in London have had two large meetings and have begun to develop forms of co-operation to meet our practical needs.

We have exchanged a lot of information about ourselves and also technical tips. Informal links will grow but the process of coming together is difficult. The second meeting was particularly difficult because a lot of new people came who were not printers. The flow of discussion about why we print was held up by a lack of common experience.

However, we will hopefully overcome this and be able to help people who want to start presses by handing to them our experiences and contacts.

Community and small political presses are mainly offset litho or silkscreen. Both are comparatively simple and enable working people to express themselves directly in print. Many people have learnt not only how to lay out and design a newspaper but how to print it as well.

SELF ACTIVITY

In class terms this is very important. The passivity of working class people to the media, and print in general, can only be changed by working people producing their own voice, their own press. Readers must become the producers.

At the meeting, the discussion of the relationship of political printers to the trades unions was touched upon, and the idea of printers having control over the content of their work put forward. These issues, along with the practical problems of printing and our political work, will be discussed at a national meeting that will be held soon.

If you are interested in this, or the London meetings, please write to:-

the political and community printers association, c/o 2A, St. Pauls Road, London, N1.

J.Z.

PRINT: How You Can Do It Yourself
second edition just out!

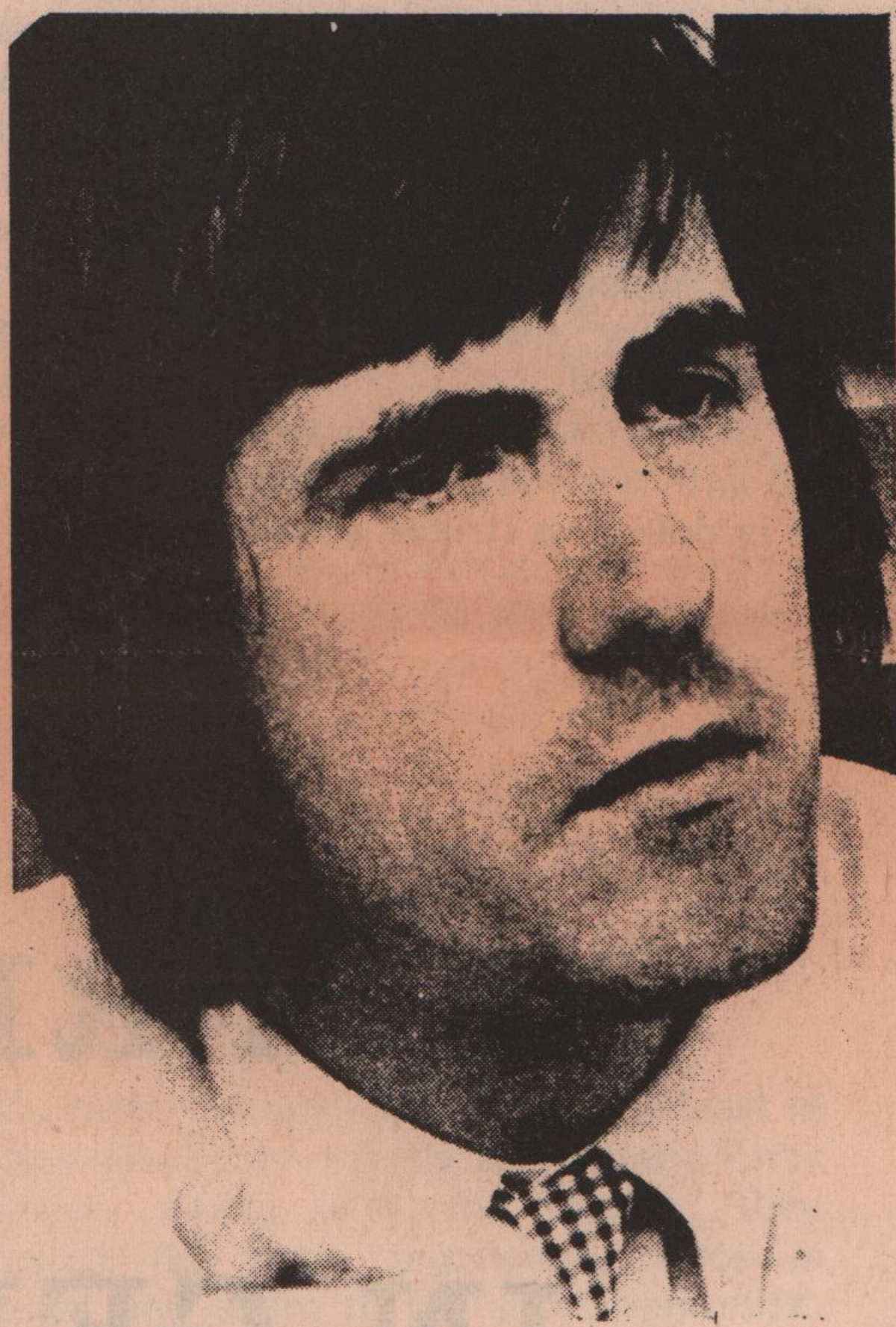
This manual is helpful to anyone trying to start a community press. It contains sections on the different printing methods, and doing artwork.

At 70p it is now in most left bookshops or can be bought from *Rising Free*, 197 Kings Cross Road, London WC1. (Add 10p for postage)

'WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

Treacy argues that 'the first need would be for a workers' government to take control of foreign trade. That means the nationalisation of the banks and major companies'. A 'workers' government would substitute honest rationing', he says, without explaining the need for rationing, or defining 'honest' rationing. Nevertheless, he claims that 'as a result, the price of many goods could be kept down'.

Treacy goes on to say that the rich should not be allowed to take their money out of the country. But in fact the rich should be



Paul Foot — IS Superstar

completely expropriated, and not just subject to a few restrictions. No party which allows rich people to keep their wealth can call itself socialist.

In a revealing passage, Treacy tells his readers that 'a workers' state would also take over the major retailing groups — not the small corner shops, which are more sinned against than sinning when it comes to profiteering'.

But what matters is not whether small shopkeepers are sinners, or sinned against. The important question is this — are supplies of goods best controlled by the community, or by a class of small shopkeepers? Moreover, they only have to read their Marx to see that capital accumulates, that small shopkeepers become big ones!

Treacy continues by demanding that the major industries must be nationalised, but concedes that 'the State will look after any widows or orphans who depend on funds in these firms'. Nothing is said about taking over the innumerable small capitalist firms, which exploit working people as vigorously as any. Evidently these capitalists are to be left alone.

Sean Treacy may be surprised to know that his views are a combination, not of revolution and socialism, but of petit-bourgeois individualism and corporate state-capitalism; he may also be surprised to hear that they have much in common with much of the official programme of the German Nazi Party as formulated by Hitler in 1930, though I would not suggest that he, or IS, accept the racist overtones of that programme.

Nor would I suggest that Treacy or the International Socialists are alone in advocating corporate 'solutions', dressed up in 'revolutionary socialist' clothes. Far from it!

NATIONAL CAPITALISM

Despite their claims, much of the International Socialists' demands over the years have been blatantly reformist. Possibly the most blatant was their demand for a minimum wage of £25 a week — until they belatedly realised that most workers were actually earning over £25.

Demands for 'five days work or five days pay' have much in common with what Marx called the conservative motto of 'A fair day's wages for a fair day's work!'. Instead of such demands, they should, in the words of Marx, inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wages system!' (Value, Price and Profit)

Again, the cry for nationalisation or state ownership of the means of production, with or without compensation and the state looking after all the poor expropriated 'widows and orphans', is not in the least revolutionary. It has nothing in common with socialism.

Indeed, over much of the world, during the last hundred years, more nationalisation has been carried out by professedly anti-socialist governments than by those claiming to be 'socialist'.

The Conservative Party is as much wedded to the idea of nationalisation (for 'lame ducks') as the Labour Party, or even the International Socialists, despite their occasional protestations to the contrary.

We, in the AWA, are not 'marxist-leninists', but it will not come amiss to remind IS that Engels argued — though, unfortunately, did not follow his arguments to their logical conclusions — that

'the modern state, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine; it is the state of the capitalists, the ideal collective body of all capitalists. The more productive forces it takes over as its property, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it

exploits. The workers remain wage-earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; it is rather pushed to an extreme. But at this extreme it is transformed into its opposite. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but it contains within itself the formal means, the key to the solution'. (Anti-Durhing, pp 306-307)

Notwithstanding IS's sop of workers' control — which in reality would be little more than IS control! — nationalisation is merely corporate state-capitalism.

REAL SOLUTION

The International Socialists are not, in fact, international revolutionary socialists. Their 'socialism' still envisages a national state, government over people (instead of an 'administration of things'), and the retention of the 'wages system'.

On the other hand, libertarian communists stand for the self-liberation of the workers and the destruction of the state. Our aim is to assist the working class — our class — for their seizure of power, and the establishment of a libertarian communist society where production is for use.

We hold the view that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way that is of use to the vast majority and, unlike the IS, do not attempt to.

A complete break with capitalist politics and capitalist 'solutions' is necessary. The International Socialists cannot offer this; and are not, in fact, organised for such a break.

To any IS member or supporter who reads this, we suggest a close reading of the *Aims and Principles of the Anarchist Workers Association* as well as the *Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists*. Comparison with IS's 'revolutionary' demands could prove fruitful.

Waste Disposal Engineer (NALGO)

REPRESSION

IN AUSTRALIA

ON AUGUST 14th, the trial began in Brisbane, Queensland of two black activists, Denis Walker and Lionel Lacey, and a white supporter, John Garcia. They were charged with the familiar legal standby — conspiracy.

All three were involved in a campaign to smash the *Queensland Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Acts*. Their arrest and trial is part of systematic repression by the Queensland Government of the militant black movement that has developed since the late sixties.

Under these acts, which can cover any person of Aboriginal descent whether living on a reserve or not, the Director of Aboriginal Affairs or those delegated with his authority have the power to:

- *refuse any person entry to any reserve either as a visitor or for residence. He also has power to revoke permits issued for this purpose at any time;
- *classify any Aborigine working outside a reserve as aged, infirm or slow worker and thereby have him or her paid less than the basic or minimum wage;
- *order an Aborigine on a reserve to per-

form any work deemed suitable. There are no provisions for wages to be paid on the reserve, this is left to the discretion of the manager and refusal to work is punishable by fines and/or imprisonment; *control all property, including bank savings, of all Aborigines under the Acts. An Aborigine cannot enter into a hire purchase agreement or purchase any commodity against the wishes of the Director.

The Director even has the power to determine what an Aborigine can wear when she or he goes swimming and whether or not they can use an electric toaster or other electrical appliances!

Contravention of any of these provisions can lead to fines and/or imprisonment, with little or no right of appeal. All this smacks of the South African system of apartheid.

The struggle against racism in Australia deserves international solidarity.

For further information contact Rosalind Harrison, c/o ABJAB, 17 Aberdeen Road, London NW10.

'Pommie'

AIMS & PRINCIPLES

- 1 Capitalism is a class society.
- 2 The basic irreconcilable contradiction within it is between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, the bourgeoisie, and the class who produce the agricultural and industrial wealth, the working class.
- 3 The social enslavement and exploitation of the working class forms the basis on which modern capitalism stands, without which capitalism could not exist.
- 4 The state is the instrument of the ruling class. To destroy the power of the bourgeoisie, we must destroy the power of the state.
- 5 Russia and China are class societies in each of which a ruling class of administrators collectively owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange, and in which a working class, the sole producer of all wealth, is exploited by that class. These states we define as corporate state capitalist in that the ruling class is totally integrated with the state, as is the trade union structure.
- 6 The class nature of society is reflected in all the dominant philosophies: class, race, sexual, social and personal relationships. The class relationships are expressed through all social relationships and generate attitudes such as sexism and racism.
- 7 The conflict of interest between the two classes generates the class struggle. In the history of society, the class struggle has been the primary factor in the determination of the form and structure of society.
- 8 The day to day struggles of the working class reflect the class struggle. The position of the working class as the collective producer of society's wealth makes it the only force capable of replacing capitalism by a classless society. The existing defensive organisations thrown up by the working class, such as trade unions, whose bureaucracy is increasingly incorporated into capitalism, are not adequate for the smashing of the capitalist system, and the building of a free, classless society. However, the working class rank and file organisations such as democratically controlled shop steward committees, factory committees, strike committees, are developing through the place of work. These organisations are the forerunners of workers councils which are the expression of working class power. Outside of work, the working class has developed other forms of organisation that are potentially revolutionary, such as tenants action committees, rent strike committees, and tenant-worker joint action committees.
- 9 Dual power exists before the power of the bourgeoisie is smashed. If the working class are successful, then the organisation of the needs of society will be firmly based in working class hands. This is the collective working class in power, in which the working class destroys all remnants of bourgeois society, such as racial hatred, the family and hierarchies. This is the period of transition between capitalism and libertarian communism.
- 10 From our analysis we reach the inevitable conclusion that capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way and that the only meaningful transformation of society is through the development of working class organisations and by means of a violent social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the working class to defend themselves against the onslaughts of the dispossessed ruling class.

The role of the AWA

- 1 The task of the AWA is to aid the preparation of the working class for their seizure of power. The establishment of an anarchist society is something that has to be consciously fought for by the working class. The AWA is a conscious organised expression of libertarian communist ideas. Through the shared experience, information and knowledge of the class struggle, AWA must be able to analyse and disseminate the nature of the problems facing the working class, and apply these lessons in the class struggle.
 - 2 The AWA aims to offer a lead within the working class movement by example and explanation; and to build into the movement a high level of political consciousness so that it is capable of defeating capitalism and fighting the creation of a new ruling class. Fundamental to this is the contradiction between the organisation as a tendency within the class and its being in ideological advance of it. This contradiction can only be resolved with the establishment of a libertarian communist society. During the period of transition, the potential basis for the emergence of a new ruling class is progressively removed so that the need for a separately organised libertarianism will decrease.
 - 3 The AWA seeks to develop and support working class organisations which are the forerunners of workers councils and to develop in them revolutionary consciousness. The AWA does not seek independent power for itself but seeks to work through the working class organisations.
 - 4 The AWA seeks to establish international links with libertarian revolutionary organisations and groups with an aim of establishing an international libertarian communist movement.
 - 5 The AWA seeks to combat attitudes of sexism, racism and national chauvinism as attitudes that help maintain class society.
- The form our organisation takes is a realisation of libertarian perspectives in the current situation. We recognise that it is not a social model of a free society and must itself develop in interaction with the developing liberation of society.
- [1] We are a membership organisation.
 - [2] Membership is open to those who agree with our analysis of society and its transformation, and who work towards this end.
 - [3] The main policy making body will be the National Conference. Between National Conferences there will be held bi-monthly Delegate Conferences to co-ordinate and carry out National Conference decisions, to decide interim policy and to initiate activity. Delegates are mandatable and rotated. Delegate Conference decisions can be revoked by National Conference.
 - [4] We seek to establish AWA groups in all areas, not only geographical but also industrial, educational, etc.. Groups interpret National and Delegate Conference decisions to relate tactics to their local experience.

As agreed at the National Conference in London, 31st August - 1st September 1974.

REPRESSION IN BRITAIN

THE TV and daily papers are always on hand to moralise about the imprisonment and torture of intellectuals in the state capitalist countries of Eastern Europe.

They will even condescend to give a certain amount of spectacular coverage to the treatment of the members of the so-called 'Baader-Meinhof' group in West Germany.

But when penal torture occurs too near home - in Ireland or in Britain itself - well, that's a different matter. It's just a bit too embarrassing for the capitalist class to reveal.

The use of 'control units' in this country is an extremely vicious form of prison torture, and its victims have recently suffered in particular from this general conspiracy of silence surrounding ruling class oppression in British prisons.

CAGES WITHIN CAGES

Control Units exist at present at Wakefield and Wormwood Scrubs prisons. A prisoner sent to these units is sentenced to six months sensory deprivation.

This means no-one to talk to, nothing to do, no wireless, no watch, no calendar even! The prisoner suffers solitary confinement for 23 hours of the day during the first ninety days.

If, as the Home Office so tactfully puts it, he is 'quiet, civilised and co-operative', the inmate is then permitted limited association with other prisoners for the further 90 days.

He is not compelled to work, but should the prisoner choose not to do so, the first phase will not end. This means an indefinite period of solitary confinement.

If some whim on the part of the prison authorities should cause them to consider a prisoner's behaviour unsatisfactory, then he is sent back to day one of the first phase.

Only after six months of 'good behaviour' - that is total submission to brutal mental and physical torture - is the prisoner allowed to return to 'normal' prison life. The victim is totally stripped of rights - there is no charge, no hearing and no right of appeal.

PRISONS - WHO SUFFERS?

If it were the likes of Poulson and other ruling class swindlers who suffered from this and other penal methods of subjection, there would be little room for tears on our part.

But this is not the case and, despite the publicity the media give to 'dangerous criminals', 98% of all criminals have been convicted of petty crimes against property.

The law protects, even encourages, capitalists to make anti-social business deals, while sending working class men and women (without money and influence) to prison for 'crimes' they are forced into by the nature of capitalism.

The rich often break even their own laws, but nearly always get away with it - only the stupid few get caught.

Prisons are just one aspect of capitalist oppression of the working class. In control units we can see a more concentrated version of everyday class oppression.

'The purpose of the units will be to provide a strict regime for the control of intractable trouble makers' - such as Michael Williams, one of the three men who have suffered from the control unit in Wakefield.

What had this 'intractable trouble maker' done: he had committed the 'crime' of expressing discontent over the notoriously bad conditions in Hull prison.

He had kicked against the class grain. This is a particularly risky thing for a prisoner to do.

Trade unionists, although the bosses are doing all they can to reverse this situation, have the right to withhold their labour. Prisoners have no such rights. Should they protest over their working conditions (earning from 79p to £1.74 a week, while the prison industries made a profit of over £500,000 in 1972) they risk six months in a control unit.

FIGHTING BACK

The struggle of working class prisoners has often been neglected by British revolutionaries. But such issues as control units cannot be seen in isolation from other repressive techniques being developed by the State.

As the economic, and thus social, crisis of capital deepens, we can expect to see a strengthening of repressive State apparatus in all areas of life.

These moves must be fought wherever they emerge. The Home Office must be forced to abolish control units, before they become a permanent aspect of prison life. Trade union support must be won for this cause.

For more information contact Radical Alternatives to Prison, Eastbourne House, Bullards Place, London E2. (01-981 0041).

R. Williams

JUSTICE

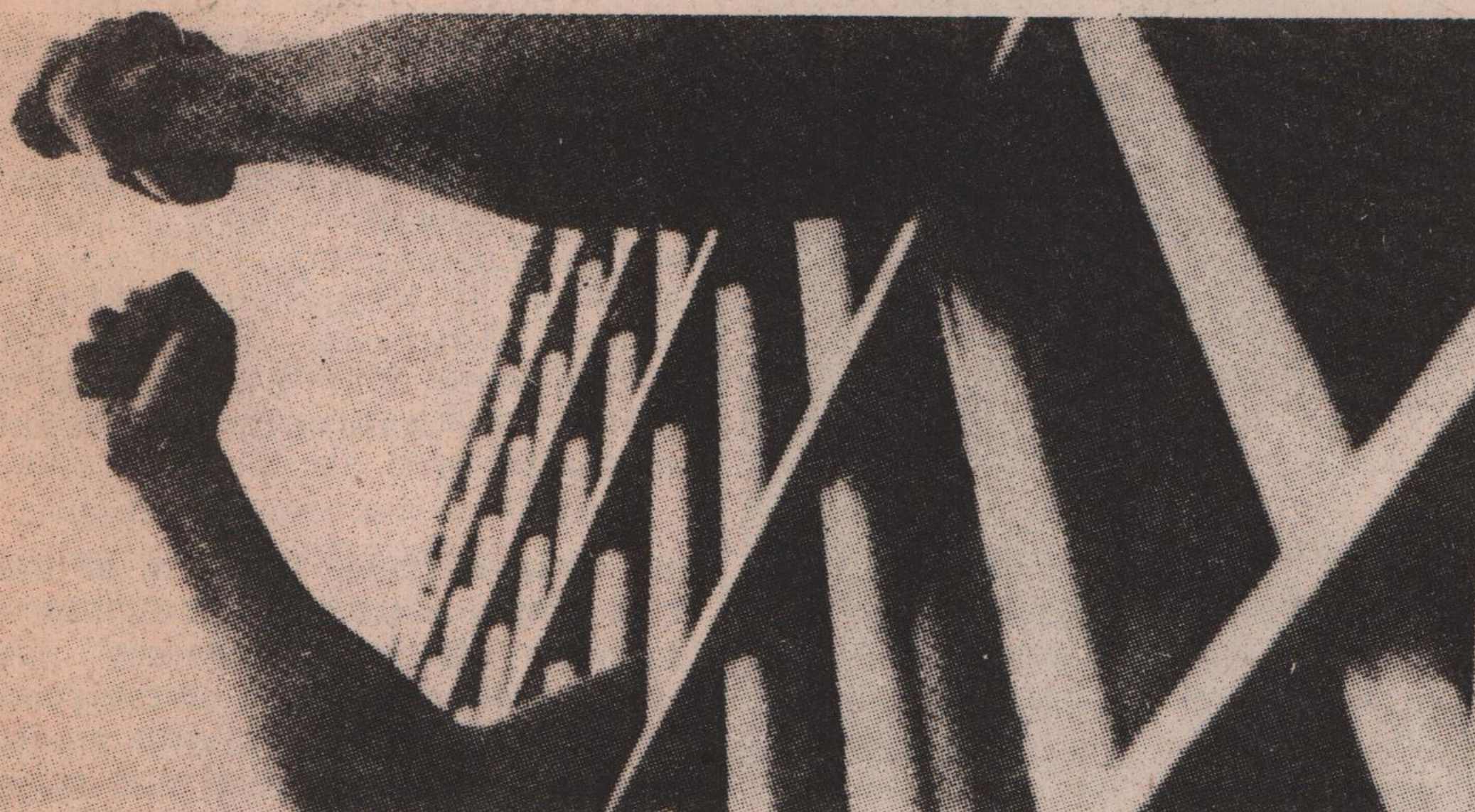


photo Combate

Compare these three recent cases of arson and draw your own conclusions:-

1] In May this year eighteen year old Simon Rhodes, second cousin of the Queen, was given a conditional discharge for 12 months after having set fire to Harrow School, causing £92,000 worth of damage. 'To send you to a borstal institution or prison would serve no purpose,' the judge said.

2] In 1973, Malcolm Bryson, fourteen years old, started a fire at an approved school near York and caused damage worth £20,000. He was ordered to be detained for life.

3] In May 1975, two seventeen year olds were each jailed for 4 years at Durham Crown Court, for starting fires which caused £18,000 worth of damage at a primary school.

What's the difference between the first case and the other two? Yes! You've guessed it! One interpretation of the law for the ruling class, another for the working class.



I enclose for 12 issues of Libertarian Struggle

£2 or 5 dollars UK and seamount abroad

£4 or 10 dollars airmail

£5 or 12 dollars all Institutions

Name

Address

.

.

Please make all cheques/P.O.'s payable to:AWA General Fund, and send them to AWA, 13 Coltman Street, Hull. (Abroad, send IMO's only)

'FAMILIARITY breeds contempt' — and the Labour Party and what it *really* stands for deserve all the contempt workers can heap on them. For every time a 'Labour' Prime Minister has been installed at 'No. 10' it's been a sure sign of more anti-working class measures on the way. All the 'socialist' rhetoric, often used by Labour leaders to get power, disappears in vapour, to be replaced by appeals for sacrifice for the sake of 'the nation'. Then, if that doesn't work, comes out and out economic and political repression.

The 1945-51 Labour Government was no exception. Its battles with the dockers provide many lessons for us today, for the tactics and measures employed by the Government were in many ways similar to those of Wilson's tory set-up today.

The background was the same: capitalism was trying to impose 'wage restraint' on the backs of the working class, that is a wage freeze. This policy had the support of trade union bureaucrats, which meant that because of inflation workers had to take unofficial action if they were to defend their standard of living, let alone improve it.

At successive Trade Union Congresses, union officials and delegates voted for the continuation of Labour's wage freeze. Labour's election manifesto had pledged:-

'Labour will not tolerate freedom to exploit others, to pay poor wages, or to push up prices for private profit.'

In a manner similar to MP's recent salary increases in 1975, April 30th 1946 saw the Labour Government announce its acceptance of recommendations to raise the MP's reward for 'representing the people' from £600 to £1,000 a year. Capitalism always makes sure its faithful stooges make out all right.

Not so the working class though, and this set the stage for bitter class struggle — in which the dockers were prominent. In fact, within only six days of the Labour Government taking office, it sent conscript troops into Surrey Docks, London, to break a ten week old strike against a wage cut.

Those who think that Labour's sending in troops during the Glasgow dustmen's dispute earlier this year was a one-off affair, done for the sake of public health, should take a look back over the years. Using the Army to strike-break is nothing new to Labour politicians.

Three months later, October 1945, saw an unofficial national docks dispute, with 43,000 portworkers out. The Labour Government's response? To bring in 21,000 troops to break the strike, while the Minister of Labour, George Isaacs, raged hysterically against the strikers in best Prentice-style, refusing to meet their leaders.

DOUBLE CROSS

Today, trade union bureaucrats urge workers not to strike for better wages, or in solidarity with other trade unionists, because 'it might mean the return of a Tory Government'.

Similarly, the only port not to support the October/November dock strike was Southampton, because it would 'bring into discredit the Government they helped to elect.'

Just nine months afterwards, troops were used by the Labour Government to break a Strike of the Southampton dockers!

That, though, was not the end of the dockers' story. The next instalment came in June 1948, when London dockers demanded the usual special payment for handling zinc oxide. Eleven workers were suspended for one week, and their 'guaranteed week' for 13 weeks — meaning 14 weeks wages.

This met with a spontaneous protest strike; which ran into freshly-conscripted troops sent into the docks by the Government, who also invoked the Emergency Powers Act. The strike, however, spread to Merseyside — resulting in a 16 day fight by over 31,000 workers.

Just as nowadays, the Labour Government was ever ready to co-operate with international capitalism when transnational workers solidarity appeared.

In May 1949, the Canadian Seamen's Union (CSU) was striking against wage cuts. A Canadian ship arrived in Avonmouth, and the bosses' attempts to unload the cargo brought out all local dockers.

The employers then declared a lock-out, and troops were yet again sent in. The struggle escalated, first to local tug and lock-gate workers, and then to Merseyside when a Canadian cargo was smuggled to Liverpool.

From there it spread to London where two Canadian ships had been switched. The Emergency Powers Act was again invoked by the Labour Government — but the strikes were only ended when the CSU won certain

concessions and asked the British dockers to top their action.

CONSPIRACY

Social Democratic ideology, the Army and Emergency Powers having failed to destroy dockers' militancy, the Labour Government brought Judges and prosecutions into play.

In February 1951 dockers were offered a 2 shillings rise, bringing the minimum to 21 shillings a day. Dockers were angry at this measly offer and the manoeuvring of the T&GWU bureaucrats.

Strikes broke out on Merseyside and in Manchester, with a smaller number of workers coming out in London.

Seven London and Merseyside dockers on Portworkers' Committees were then arrested, their homes were searched without warrants, and they were charged with conspiracy to contravene the infamous 'Order 1305', invented during the war to prohibit strikes.

But even then, the Government couldn't get the seven dockers the heavy sentences it wanted. While fellow dockers held a mass demonstration outside the Old Bailey, the jury inside acquitted the seven on one major count, and a demoralised Attorney-General dropped the remaining charges!

The fight the dockworkers put up against their class enemies, the Atlee Government, showed its fruits in August 1951, when 'Order 1305' was withdrawn — though a somewhat softer 'Industrial Disputes and Compulsory Arbitration Order' was still introduced.

HARD LABOUR

The dockers were not the only section of the working class to feel the brunt of the 1945-51 Labour Government's capitalist policies. Nor were they the only ones to fight back, although they were the most prominent.

Miners, railway, building and gas workers all fell foul of Atlee's 'Socialist' administration, and resisted. Moreover, it was not only in its direct dealings with the trade

LABOUR GOVT.

AGAINST STRIKERS



'The Labour Party has got to understand that it is no longer a street corner mob. It is the governing class of this country. It has got to have the poise and self-assurance of the ruling class.' (Maurice Webb, Labour Minister of Food, 1951)

1945-51

union movement that the Government pursued openly capitalist interests.

In all its dealings, from nationalisation and housing, through the anti-imperialist struggle in the Dutch East Indies and colonialism, to arms expenditure and NATO, Labour **actively** ruled according to the needs of the ruling class.

In fact it openly identified itself with the latter:-

'The Labour Party has got to understand that it is no longer a street-corner mob. It is the governing class of this country. It has got to have the poise and self-assurance of the ruling class.' (Maurice Webb, Labour Minister of Food, 1951)

Like a leopard, the Labour Party cannot change its spots. It is **totally integrated into the capitalist system**. By Labour leaders' appeals to workers to stand by 'their' party, bosses use it as a first defence against rank and file militancy, while Wilson and his kind carry out repressive economic and political measures.

The first step for the working class in this country to take in the struggle for true socialism — that is self-management of our lives — is to realise that the Labour Party is still in 1975 the same one that tried to smash the dockers in 1945-51.

Workers should have no more to do with Wilson, Prentice and Foot, Benn etc.. The 1945-51 Government included such 'left wing' heroes as Aneurin Bevan, but they didn't stop the capitalist policies — in fact they supported them, just as *Tribunes* eventually fall into line today.

WORKERS AUTONOMY

A real alternative must be built — a mass autonomous rank and file movement to combat the bosses, and their allies in the Labour Government and the trade union bureaucracy.

A real libertarian communist presence must be created in the rank and file so that the fight for workers power can start in earnest.

R. Williams

Apologies to Pluto Press for missing off the credits to the back page book review in the last issue which was, of course, *The Occupation of the Factories* by Paolo Spriano.

History Study Group. Any comrades who are interested in forming a study group to look at the development of autonomous rank and file organisation and the growth of revolutionary anarchist ideas please contact HSG, Box 1, c/o Libertarian Struggle, 13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside.

DIRECT ACTION. Paper of the Syndicalist Workers Federation. No 8 contains articles on Rosa Luxembourg, a first-hand report of the sit-in at Magnesium Elektron factory, Clifton, Manchester, pollution and more besides. Send 5p + 5½p postage to Direct Action, c/o Grassroots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester 1.

The Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists by Piotr Arshinov, Nestor Makhno, Ida Mett, Valevsky, Linsky. A critical look at the role of the anarchists in the Russian revolution, with practical conclusions, by a group that was active at the time. An AWA publication. 20p + postage from AWA, 13 Coltman Street, Hull.

Subscribers please note: an X here indicates your subscription needs renewing.

group stamp

Published by the Anarchist Workers Association
13 Coltman Street, Hull, Humberside. Typeset
by Bread & Roses, 16 St Leonards Road,
Surbiton, Surrey. Printed by Prestagat Ltd.,