

A
CRITIQUE OF "CALL IT SLEEP"
TO WAKE YOU
UP!



If you are left completely bemused by this video, don't worry. Call it Confusion has had this effect on quite a few people already. And if you are fed up with the tiny stocks of soiled learning they dish out to you second-hand at University, you might recognise the like in this pedagogic monologue from Cronin and Seltzer.

What they have done in this video is to produce a vulgarisation of what has already been better said by others, and muddled it all up.

Before you go home and have nightmares about the alien menace from Outer Space - the spectacle - that is "everpresent. Its strength comes from its existence everywhere and at all times... it lives in the flesh of men and women, adopting all the guises of human communication." -it is worth pointing out that spectacular commodity society is a phase in modern capitalism and it is more a misery than a conspiracy. Some omnipotent Power out there is not running the whole show for its own fabulous ends, but all human activity has become subordinate to the production and consumption of commodities.

Cronin and Seltzer forget to mention when they speak of Ulrike Meinhof of the horrific way in which U. Meinhof, Andreas Baader and Gudrun Enslin were murdered in the Stammheim prison. These murders showed up the "democratic" nature of the W. German State. Cronin and Seltzer's critique of U. Meinhof is thus one-sided. As for Bolshevism (I prefer to call it Marxist-Leninism to be more precise as Bolshevism still has the ring about it of the old Upper Class stigma of anyone who is revolutionary - hence the public schoolboys favourite word 'bolshie' for 'angry' .) it wasn't the Bolsheviks who overthrew the Tsarist regime in 1917, and created the revolution. They took power through control of the Soviets which the Russian workers had set up themselves, consolidating it by the creation of a secret police (with Lenin's blessing) and forcefully liquidating any dissent like the massacre of the soldiers and sailors of Kronstadt in 1921 (under Trotsky's orders).

C & S assert that "terrorism, no matter who undertakes it, is always counter-revolutionary" without developing any of the nuances between State terrorism (the forms that are used to uphold the State as practised by the Red Brigade in Italy and those who use terrorism in order to set up their own State like the IRA, the PLO, and ETA) and those with more anti-hierarchical perspectives like some of the autonomous groups in Spain (since Franco's death) and the recent Vancouver 5.

The cadre in the modern economy is quite distinct from the political cadres or party cadres of the old sense, C and S fail to point this out. Also neither are cadres just all ex-radicals (C & S say "The cadre is the answer to the question: "where are all the radicals gone") . The majority of cadres never were radicals, but

but just the petty-bourgeoisie become wage-earning. What a put down to call the ordinary worker "crude, physical and immediate" "the body of humanity" whereas the cadre is the "mind".

Just as the spectacle is portrayed as a scenario from the Outer Limits so the New Revolt is fairly tenuous. The aim is we are told to "abolish the world of hierarchical power". By magic presumably, since that is how it got here: "To postpone disaster, the spectacle has disguised itself as the consumer society."

"Gentlemen we ought not to defend shaky doctrines." Dialogue from this video, it applies to those who made it and to those who distribute it.

Here are some books, pamphlets and posters they would not like you to read:

The Society of the spectacle by Guy Debord.

* Preface to the Fourth Italian Edition of "The Society of the Spectacle" by G. Debord.

*On Terrorism and the State by Gianfranco Sanguinetti.

The Veritable Split in the International -public circular of the Situationist International. (Paris 1972), translated and published in London in 1974.

The last three mentioned works are available from BM CHRONOS LONDON WC1 3 XX.

Also the French publisher Gérard Lebovici who published many situationist texts and other materials was assassinated last March (1984) in Paris, probably by one of the agencies of those in power. The distributor of this video considers that it is unimportant. A pamphlet in English relating this bestiality has recently been published by the Tocsin Press.