

solidarity

FOR WORKERS' POWER

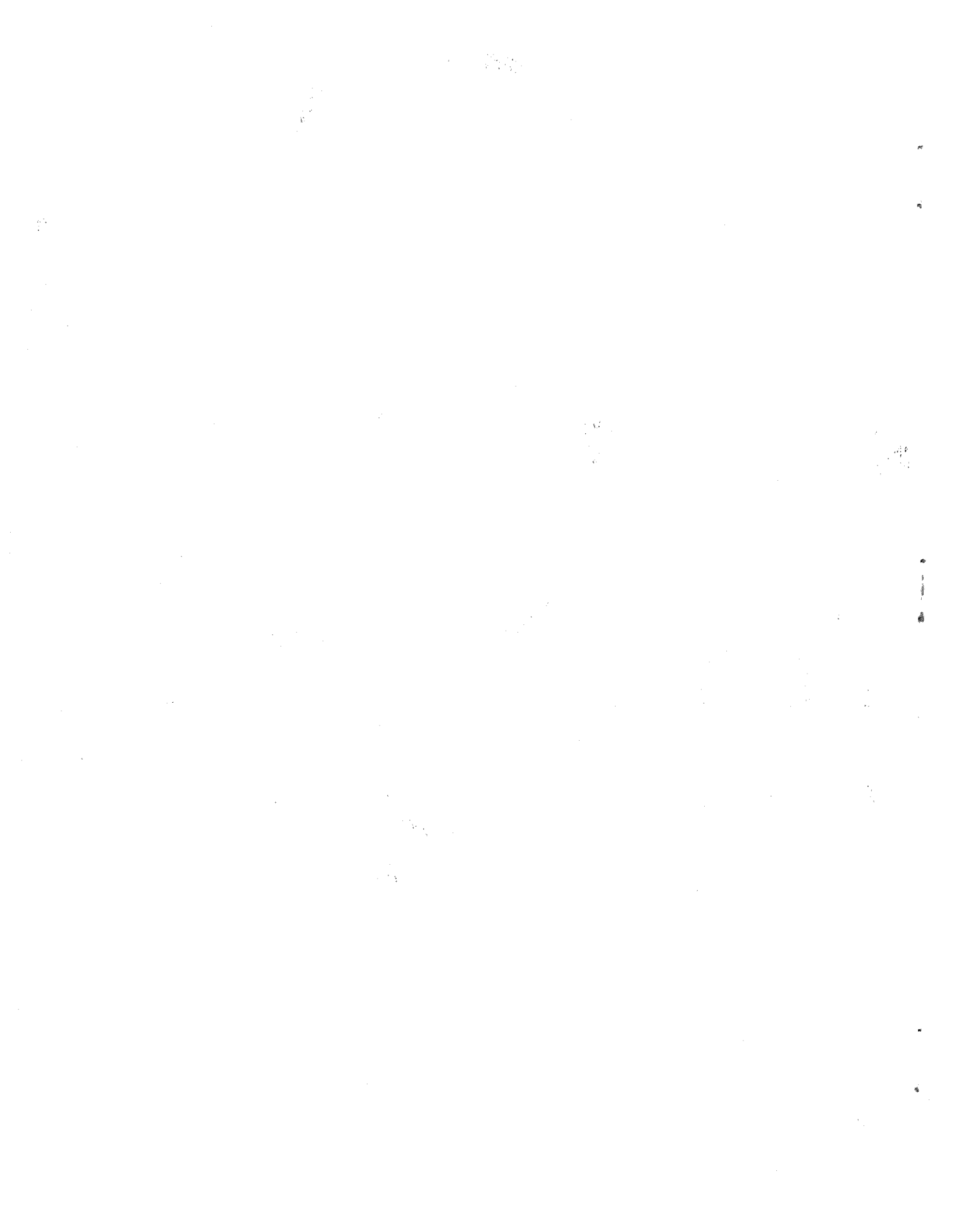
VOLUME 6 NUMBER 5



youth culture

'listen marxist' (review)

vauxhall follow-up



- 1 -

YOUTH CULTURE and the NEW REVOLUTIONARIES

We here publish excerpts of a forthcoming pamphlet which Tom Fawthrop and others are jointly writing on 'Youth Culture'. We are pleased to bring this text to our readers, not because we necessarily agree with all of it, but because we feel the issues dealt with deserve far more attention than they usually receive. Just as we have sought to politicise the sexual revolution of our time (see 'The Irrational in Politics', Solidarity Pamphlet No.33), Tom here attempts to render explicit the revolutionary implications of what is usually called the 'youth revolt'. We hope his article will initiate a wide debate. We welcome contributions - whether in agreement or otherwise.

The 'don'ts' and 'buts' of our fathers, who parrot the age-old idioms of repression, have made us what we are. But what we are in the context of the 1970s is a far different score from the traditional young rebels of the 30s, the 20s, the 10s - right back to the Roman Empire - that our parents and mentors were (or so they claim) until they sold out.

Parents, teachers, social workers, etc., think, hope (and if they are bourgeois enough, demand) that we do, or will do, or should do, the same. But we ain't and the reaction of the older generation confirms a revolutionary analysis about the direction youth is going. Our elders fear the worst because they see something desperately sinister in our tendencies to break-away from adult society, in our procrastination in 'sowing wild oats', and in our lack of commitment to a sometime parenthood and to 'settling down' (the perennial return of the prematurely middle-aged to the fireside embers and the Union Jack).

YOUTH CULTURE

All this has found expression in a rejection of adult norms, and in a pulling away from the conventional life of capitalism, which is universally experienced by us as a world-wide system of aggressive incompatibility with life. The film 'Easy Rider' portrayed this same theme - confrontation of youth against the society of death and destruction. But this life was first affirmed in a massive surge of youth, not in any overt political sphere, but in morality, in music, and in drugs.

The sexual revolution - a term used by the bourgeoisie to play down any relationship with a general social upheaval, or to suppress by semantics any identification between personal problems and social problems - is here to stay. With or without the consent of the bourgeoisie. No sooner had the movement broken down the traditional restraints of 'not before marriage' and the whole fornication taboo than in practice it had moved far beyond the unending and unerring drivel from the jet set of commentators about the 'permissive society'. While Muggeridge and Co. expended months of verbal masturbation on sex, 'to fuck or not to fuck' (hence releasing decades of pent-up frustration based on not mentioning the taboo subject), young people had been developing new forms of personal relationships. Girls were refusing to fuck with blokes out of rational choice, instead of being driven by the compulsive fears or threats of traditional morality. The release of girls from the kitchen sink and male domination now finds organised expression in Women's Liberation Groups* which have recently started in England.

The power of youth had been demonstrated. Attitudes of the entire society had been liberalised in spite of rearguard action by the 'keep-Britain-pure-white-and-clean' brigade, the moralisers, the puritans and the Church. Youth as a new, active, social force came to dominate C.N.D. which was after all an extension of the new morality, and a dramatic expression of thorough and deep-going revulsion with the adult world and for its system of built-in terror and destruction.

But there's been a deep disillusionment and a partial withdrawal from the politics of C.N.D. 'Flower-power' comes to exercise a certain fascination, and unemployed Yogis from the somewhere East of Notting Hill cash in on a groovy scene. This is the era of the new teenage market. The exploitation X-ray lowers its sights to focus on us - to flatter, beguile, persuade and con us. At this stage revolution is a still small voice drowned by a prevailing pacifism, partly fed and nourished by the hangovers of the Cold War. If youth was in a state of contagious and self-assertive rebellion, most of us were still far from seeing precisely where we were going, although much of what's happened is a logical progression, including the new parasites of the consumer world.

Meanwhile working class youth had been asserting itself through various violence cults. 'Mods' and 'rockers' have been followed by skin-heads and Hell's Angels, all of them both rejecting and rejected by society (i.e. capitalist society). Of course, most conventional socialists took no other interest than to condemn these important strivings of working class youth. The scenario of the beach at Clacton fails to stimulate the same interest as the factory floor. The traditional left walks by, on the other side, narcissistically attached to its ideological problems, blissfully separated from the everyday troubles experienced by the very mass of people they eternally talk about, but rarely talk to.

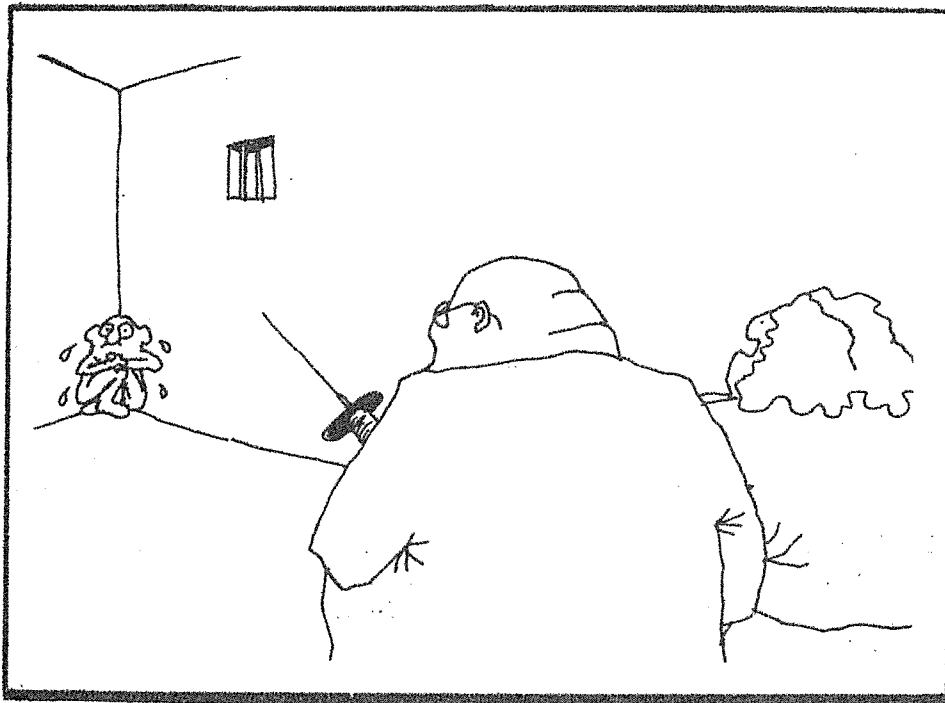
* Women's Liberation Workshop, 154 Barnsbury Road, London N.1. - 278 1791.
See latest issue of SHREW.

OUR BURIED DREAMS

Folkestone somehow had to crawl into the centre of things. Despite the sneers about 'bloody seaside thugs' or 'what's that got to do with politics?' there is much that the politicians* could learn from the High St. scene in Folkestone.

Young workers - seamen, building workers, car-workers, drop-outs and unemployed youth who once joined in the Clacton stuff - smash this and smash that, blind rage and frustration with the system - are no longer mods and rockers, or anything equivalent. Changes, big changes, have occurred in their lives. A whole group of them have literally turned-on to revolution, via cannabis, LSD, and the underground movement. Rejecting and rejected by the ultra-reactionary adult society, we came together in the High Street (a narrow, winding, pedestrians-only street with two coffee bars) to define ourselves in opposition to official society.

* 'Politicos' are that select group of brilliant ideological minds who inflict on others a painstaking analysis of what is and what is not 'political', which results in all departures from traditional left politics being labelled non-political. The High Street, Folkestone, is a perfect example of such short-sightedness.



A few comrades were politically conscious anyway. But we were mere tiddlers in the ocean. The occasional demo, the occasional meeting - but it was the High St. scene, the police repression, the use of marijuana and more fuzz repression which changed the dimension of experience, giving people a vision of future possibilities scarcely dreamt of in routine life. Capitalism screws up the mind. It buries our dreams of a future socialist reality beneath the dull grey mass of everyday experience. Hemmed in by the wall of greed and exploitation we no longer dare to hope. As for those who left school early, their minds have been hemmed in that much more - hence the release achieved by certain drugs (not any drug) in illuminating the bitter experiences of the past - the exchange of an authentic stimulus for the drugs of official society, the soporific telly, or working it all out on the sports field.

How ironic that the society that lives on drugs (a pill for almost every purpose) should get so uptight about cannabis, one of the least harmful drugs of all time, widely agreed as less dangerous than alcohol. Of course, why capitalism is worried about cannabis is because of its alleged 'anti-social effects',* repeated ad nauseam in the courts. Cannabis leads to a lack of enthusiasm for work. In other words through smoking it many young workers have lost the appetite for performing, machine-wise, the same old boring job. The world of the 'Underground', its media (International Times, Oz, Rolling Stone) and its music have penetrated deeply into the wandering soul of discontented youth.

The result has been the rending of the family (most 'divorces' these days are from young parents - including so-called lefty parents who practice socialism everywhere except in the home), a crisis of authority in the schools, and then the final breakaway into the arms of the state - which is the final line of defence of bourgeois respectable man and his society.

Those who reject the bourgeois home, and the bourgeois school, and all the indoctrination and values that go with it, inevitably fall foul of the law (as in Folkestone). Cannabis may be the excuse, but the deeper reason for repression of breakaway youth is the universal threat to all forms of authority.

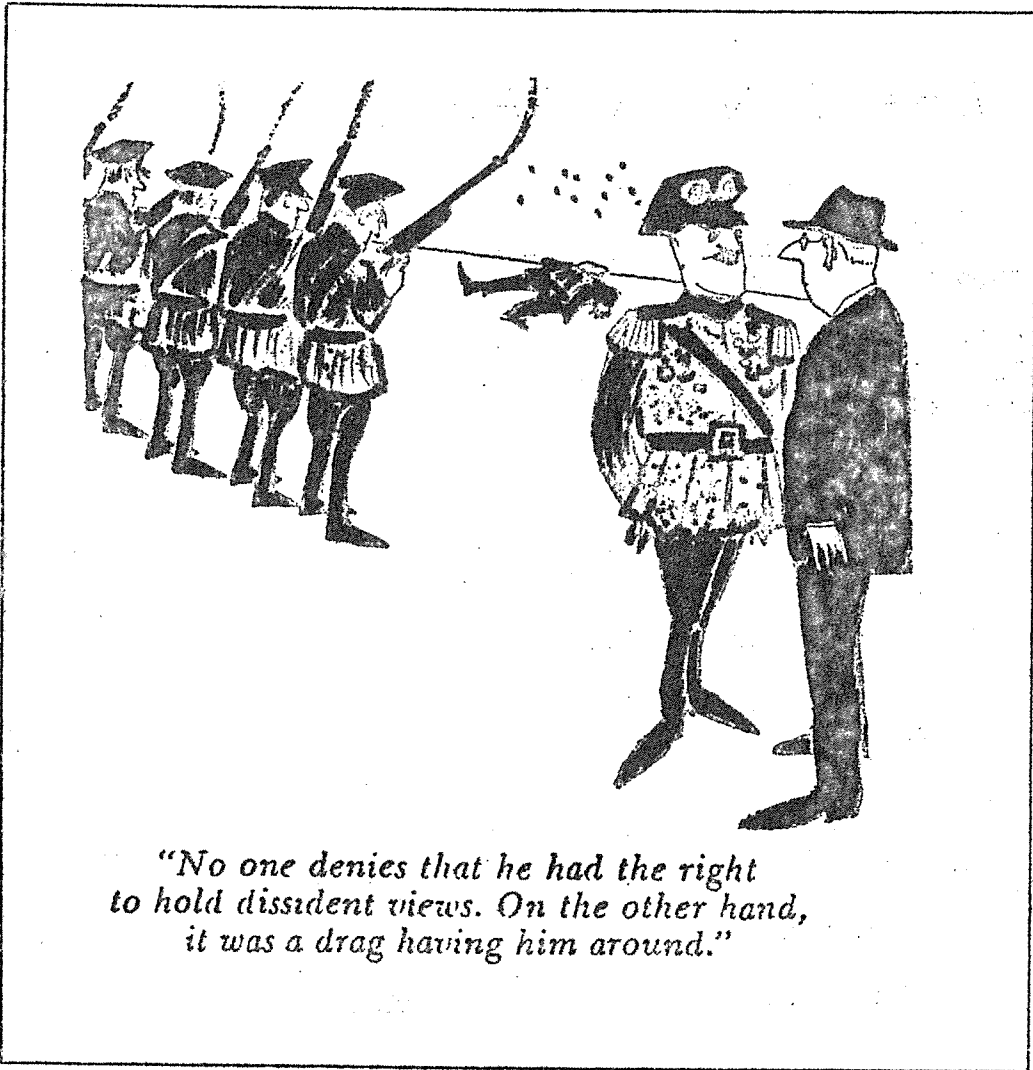
* In fact, one of the 'anti-social' effects of cannabis is to bring people together in a communal way, in the intensely social act of passing the joint on to each other, unlike smoking cigarettes.

The distinction between 'soft drugs' and 'hard drugs' is crucial. Opium, heroin, etc., kill. One of the problems of any youth scene is to wage war on the latter, while exercising self-discipline in the use of psychedelic stimulants - cannabis and LSD.

REVOLUTION AND 'ADVENTURISM'

In revolutions, youth has always played a prominent part (as well as the fuzz!). But never so much as in France, in May 1968, when the spontaneous alliance of students, young workers and the rest - the floating youth, unemployed and resentful - burst through the flood-gates of modern capitalism. The system is still reeling from the blow.

This is to some extent the new proletariat, trained in school to be enemies of authority. Their revolutionary minds advance in theory at university, factory and sometimes on the street. Then the explosion. The dynamite is there. The liberated minds and the counter-institutions and communities of youth confront the apparatus of repression. Brutal police action lights the fuse. C.R.S. or C.O.s (British riot squad), National Guard (U.S.A.) or Riot Police (à l'italienne) - the results are the same. Subversive youth is everywhere their target.



The French events highlighted the role of the young workers, whose minds were particularly sensitive to the arsing about and vacillations of trade unions in relation to the student revolt. They formed action committees in the factories in solidarity with their student comrades, whilst many older workers harboured some of the bourgeois prejudices against students, fostered by the usual channels.

Of course youth can't win on its own. Of course it's not an age war. But it is a fact that youth has seized the post-war initiative and has become the standard-bearer of international socialism - imagination seizing power. And it is only youth that has the imagination because their minds have not yet been conditioned to the comforts of the consumer society. The fridge, the car, the telly and all the rest of it, the worries about the H.P., the mortgage and the family tend to take the edge off one's revolutionary feelings. But as in France, the rest of the working people will join in, once the initial breakthrough has been achieved by some 'adventurist' action of youth. To the disciples of Lenin let us proclaim that revolutionary youth is incurably 'adventurist'. We may increasingly feel the need for organisation, but we never feel the need for THEIR organisers or their kind of organisation.

A GENERATION IN REVOLT

The revolutionary era found a ready response in pop music. The protest era of Dylan partly gave way to the rhythmic violence of the Rolling Stones - the Street-Fighting Man L.P. - and the obvious political comment of such groups as the Fugs and Edgar Broughton Blues Band.

In spite of the commercial exploitation, the message is coming through, always loud and sometimes clear - in music, art, poetry, theatre, in every arena of life, the youthful arses are moving in a style more diverse and total than any movement in the past.

A driving thirst for an authentic freedom to live in a new way, a contempt for the bribes of the affluent society to play it cool and keep out of trouble, and a rejection of the all-consuming search for security and compromise with an impossible world characterise the collective consciousness of a generation in revolt.

In September 1969 the funniest family of all time found its way into one of the old forgotten mansions of the bourgeoisie, at 144 Piccadilly, a mere stone's throw from super-fed diabetic American tourists gawping at queen liz's pad. We had committed the great sin. We had declared a dead mansion rapidly accumulating in market value while empty to be the living home of revolution, the headquarters of the London Street Commune, and a fighting base for all refugees from the sick society. Heads and Hell's Angels, communards and revolutionaries of all descriptions shared a collective stand here. Strangely, they succeeded in living together, in spite of the motley collection of beliefs and hang-ups. There

was solidarity - and it was unmistakably solidarity against the capitalist concept of housing, the family and living together.

Official society and its mouthpieces were outraged: the dirt, the filth and the squalor of it all! Every news headline was filled with scorn. Editorials reeked with disgust, businessmen choked with indignation on the way to work. The cheeky bastards - in the centre of London too. Not even the decency to hide themselves in the suburbs. And not a homeless family among them.

Like most attacking episodes in revolutionary history it has its shortcomings, serious ones at that. But this is hardly surprising when so many fucked-up kids have only just run away from home, from borstals, schools, mental hospitals, prisons, universities and all the rest of Her Majesty's centres of conditioning, where young minds are taught to conform, adapt, adjust, to this awful society.

The 144 spirit of vengeful escape from and combative rejection of capitalist society is best expressed by a Schools Action piece (to the Hokey-Cokey tune):

You pump your facts straight in, you take your questions out,
You take all their young minds, and you twist 'em all about,
You give them competition so they all hate each other,
That's what we're all about - UGH!

a little ditty dedicated to the unswerving efforts of teachers, parents, social workers, psychiatrists, magistrates and fuzz to plonk our minds on their straight and narrow.

The London Street Commune was not an organisation of student rebels, or even of 'middle class' youth. Most of the communards had never seen the inside of a college, and had become pissed off with their authoritarian environment at an early age. Some of us can take so much of society eating away at our minds, and so, without a convincing political alternative, we drop out. And others drop out. And soon you and me can be counted in thousands. There are even communities of drop-outs, which have now begun to erode the fabric of normal society in the U.S.A.

Of course it would be nice if all these thousands of young people, desperately trying to keep hold of what's left of their humanity, were to form jolly 'Solidarity' groups all over the place. But the fact that they don't does not disqualify them from making their own political scene, in their own way, on their own terms. Even if 144 Piccadilly and later the Endell Street Commune were not full of factory workers or revolutionary intellectuals they still offered themselves up as target practice and easy prey for Britain's Anguilla-trained riot squads.

Above all the role of the London Street Commune has been to promote the self-activity and organisation of the drop-outs, the beatniks, the raving revolutionaries, and those striving for a more communal way of life. It has succeeded in extolling the virtues of the Commune as the centre of

revolutionary life in opposition to the bourgeois family, with parents believing they have rights of possession over their kids, with its inherent absurdity of compulsive monogamy (love by obligation instead of desire) and with all its hypocrisy about the conventional matrimonial hearth.*

This is what the traditional left is afraid to talk about. And yet it is this - the millions of fucked-up marriages, and the repressive families (which includes comrades as well) that have been responsible for driving an entire generation of youth beyond the respectable boundaries of capitalist life. We are now moving into the era of the politically conscious drop-out. We should perhaps be termed 'break-outs' because we can clearly understand the chains that are binding us down, and are determined to break them.

Hence some young schizophrenics no longer cower passively in awe at the pseudo-wisdom of their head-shrinkers. They quote 'The Politics of Experience' and 'The Bird of Paradise', and other Ronnie Laing insights.** They affirm a positive value to themselves in opposition to the capitalist values of most psychiatrists ('fit in with society', 'behave normally', i.e. ignore most of the suffering around you, that way you don't get emotionally disturbed). They refuse to destroy themselves in order to make 'normal', 9-to-5 boring shits out of themselves. The authorities react. They drug you, and sedate you, and study you, until they've analysed you out of existence. Youth culture has generated an ultra-sensitivity to something worse than physical exploitation in the West - it's called the management of minds or 'brainwashing'. To upset your conditioning process is to risk insanity - it's great to be mad.

CRIME AND REVOLUTION

The laws that keep them up KEEP US DOWN.

Young comrades don't steal our needs from the supermarket chains, overflowing with their abundance of goods. We liberate stuff for ourselves and our comrades. This is happening all over Western Europe. Crime is not consciously identified as the unexplored dimension of the class struggle in which in everyday life the 'haves' clash with the 'have-nots'.

The first point about revolution is that it's illegal, just like a hell of a lot of other things that can assist a redirection of power, knowledge, money, etc., into the hands of the working people (if we are forced to work for capitalism, let's do it by not working in the way they want us to work).

* The whole subject of 'communes' and the domestic bases of revolution needs to be discussed in much greater detail - Berlin comrades founded kindergartens run on a socialist basis for their kids years ago.

** We are all mad if we are sane enough to read R.D. Laing's 'Divided Self', 'Politics of Experience' and 'Bird of Paradise'.

To an extent every act of crime is a protest against society, and increasingly every act of protest is becoming a crime. Fulham squatters have been arrested, and one anarchist comrade was still being held in custody many months later. Comrades arrested in Folkestone are invariably barred from entering the High Street as a condition of bail, whilst other comrades are barred from attending demonstrations or taking part in political activity, as a condition of being 'free' men!

This repression has left an indelible print on the minds of many youths from Folkestone High Street. One comrade when charged with 'incitement to obstruction' answered the questions of the prosecution with questions and corrections of his own. When asked whether he urged comrades to disobey police instructions to 'move on', 'go down the High St.', 'go home', Harry Brunt replied, 'But why did the police push people down the High Street?'. (Folkestone Revolt No.1, May 16, 1969).

Prosecutor: 'They were dealing with a noisy mob'.

Harry Brunt: 'Not a mob, the people'. (with special emphasis)

Prosecutor: 'Stop interrupting me, and answer my question'.

Harry Brunt: 'But why can't you answer my question?'.

Prosecutor: 'I'm the prosecutor, remember you're the defendant'.

At this point, gasping with obvious exasperation which fed on the cheers for Harry from comrades in the public gallery (Folkestone Quarter Sessions), the judge too decided he had had enough. He cleared the public gallery. (The public is only tolerated, not welcomed under bourgeois law.)

Eventually Harry was convicted for having uttered the words, 'Solidarity, solidarity, the public must stick together'. He was fined £100. The Folkestone comrades organised a revolutionary concert at which the 'Fat Mattress' played for Harry's benefit, and we were able to pay off most of the fine. (Incidentally it is working class youth who are the revolutionaries in Folkestone.)

Clearly crime now covers the entire spectrum of politics. Any offence may be more or less political depending mainly on the circumstances (with the exception of crimes that are committed against people - theft from old ladies, etc., rape, indiscriminate violence.) Somehow it seems rather astute of a Deputy Attorney General of U.S. government, Kleindienst, to describe us as 'ideological criminals' although Edward Short ran him very close for the award of label-of-the-year with his flattering 'Brand X revolutionaries'.

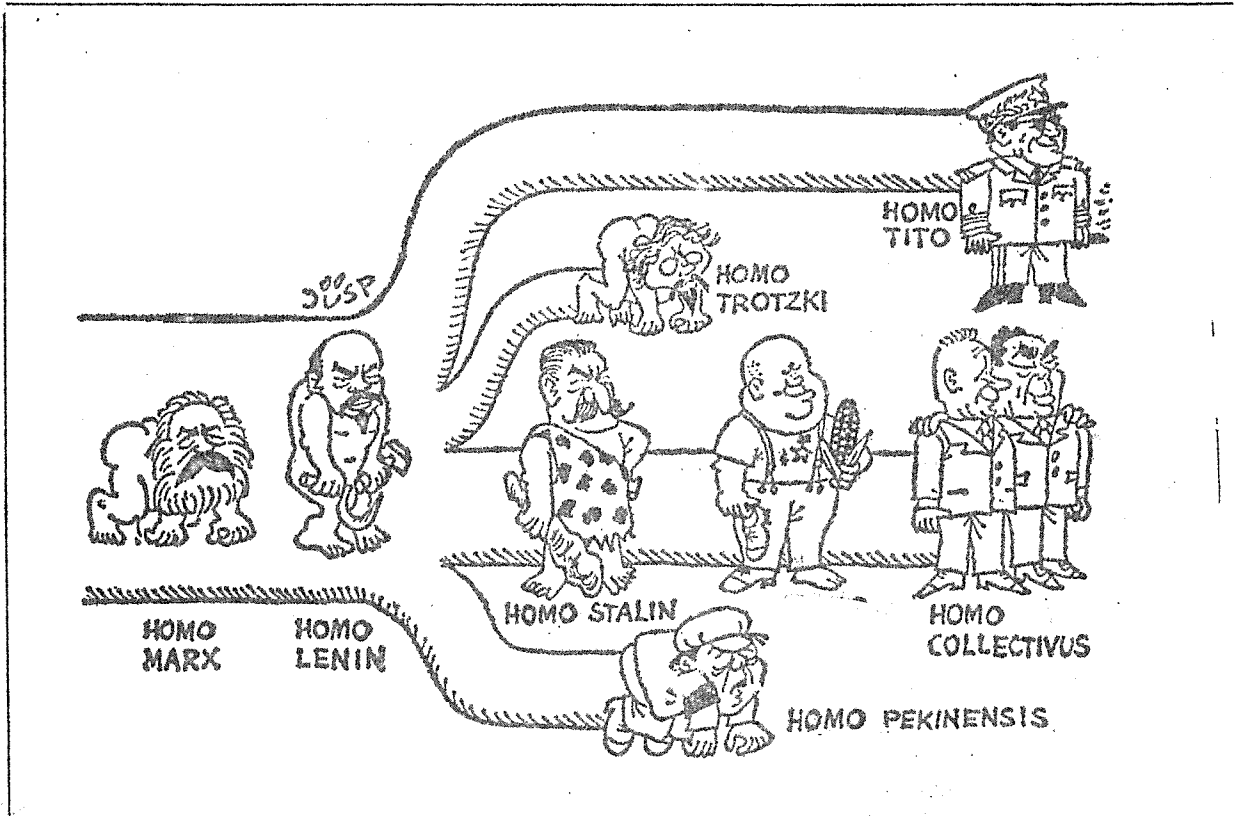
WE ARE NOT RESPECTABLE MARXISTS

Certainly we are not respectable. Perhaps we are not even Marxists. Who really cares? The working class? Or the respectable Marxists? The hard-core of 'left' academics, who have for years been harbouring their extremism in the sheltered waters of the campus are now finding their tranquil scene disrupted by 'student power' - a threat not only to the teaching

of bourgeois ideology but of left-wing pedagogy as well (i.e. the use of status or authority to dictate to students the means and ends of learning and knowledge.)

Education and its official perversions in school and university are the crucial catalysts of youth revolt. This 'education' creates a mighty void between expectation and reality. Before we end up in the borstals, etc., our minds have been got at in the schools, trained into mindless conformity to pedagogic whims, the hopeless objects and helpless vessels through which knowledge is painfully passed. We never recover from some of these authoritarian experiences. Some comrades have converted their past misfortunes into a contemporary 'virtue' - hence the proliferation of authoritarian brands of socialism, of various makes of Marxism-Leninism, etc. The habit of pushing people around can easily develop, either to satisfy one's own egotistical purposes, or in the belief that the Central Committee knows best, and in their own interests the masses have to be 'educated', 'politicised', and ultimately told what to do.

Leila Berg's book about 'Risinghill' excellently expresses the spirit of capitalist education. 'So the teachers told themselves that children should be quiet, that they should be afraid of you, that you should be able to hear a pin drop when you crossed the playground, that children were naturally bad and needed crushing down by will power and that there was satisfaction in this, and that God would reward people who kept their desks tidy, their lines straight, and never splashed outside the lavatory bowl. Such teachers do not make schools into joyous places bubbling over with the vitality of life and youth and if you hint



at such possibilities they will say contemptuously, well if you think that school is a place where you enjoy yourself ...'. And so officialdom ordains the crushing of young spontaneous minds at a tender age until all love for learning is drained away, and replaced by fear and competition for marks, approval (from peers, teachers, etc.), status and good exam results. Cynicism inevitably creeps in, and idealism gets kicked out. Every girl and bloke at the last Free Pop Concert had been through all this bullshit in the classroom.

We have good reason to scream to the heavens: 'What have you done to our minds?', and we don't wait for the answer. Our 'stuff your system' says it all. So after years of educational boredom, of killing our minds in the background to the pop scene, comes out own cultural revolution where lights and sounds have transcended the double-think of mere words.

No revolutionary message can adequately be conveyed by an article. The emotive content is seldom convincing, and the visual arts are totally ignored by such a one-dimensional medium. Everything that has been said here is a second-rate reflection on revolutionary phenomena which find their natural expression in art, music, poetry and drama - in fact in the complete life style of youth.

The pop scene is becoming increasingly subversive. The kaleidoscopic sounds produced by the 'psychedelic' groups - Pink Floyd, Blind Faith, The Incredible String Band and a hundred others - convey a continuous pounding beat of change, and triumphantly proclaim youth as the dynamic social force in society. The music captures the mood, reflects the thinking, and conveys the scent of revolution - the demand for social change here and now.

We reject the refrigerator-cool calculations of the revolutionary party, its hack slogans, its cliché-ridden ideology. They play revolution whilst standing still, but have little appeal to the majority of anti-authoritarian youth.

A new balance is being attempted and explored by the forces of reason and emotion. Libertarian theory must articulate the blinding necessity of refining such a synthesis of revolutionary thought and feeling; anti-authoritarianism must find its logical home in some form of organised socialist expression.

And if we are more militant than the youth of 20 years ago* don't forget that the primary school kids of today will be condemning us for our pious bullshitting and staid conservatism in ten years' time ... youth can no longer be contained by the adult society. It no longer craves the adult rewards for servitude and slavery. The notion of 'adult' does not here relate to age (i.e. to the bourgeois theory of the 'generation gap')

* Schools Action Union promotes militancy in schools. 160 Gower Street, London NW1.

but to certain values and to the upholding of a certain type of society. For every system and every society to survive it must perpetuate itself through the minds of the young. Capitalism always needs new recruits. But if the conditioning process breaks down and if the great fraud of 'education' is seen through, then the supply of recruits to all the crucial echelons of society is threatened. That threat is posed by the youth culture now.

Education is a tug-of-war between defending the old world and creating the new - and we are winning. Freedom has got the better of discipline and its allies (restraint, prohibition, coercion, restriction, containment, inhibition, etc., all values that the employing class finds charming and invaluable). The liberation of young minds from the constraints of 'Free World' style brainwashing augurs ill for the future of our masters, wherever we may find the ruling class.

TWO NEW PAMPHLETS

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SEXUAL REPRESSION AND THE
IRRATIONAL IN POLITICS.

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VAUXHALL FOLLOW-UP

Since our last report from Vauxhall ('Solidarity', vol.V, no.12) the struggle has continued with some minor successes.

On December 1st, 1969 an agreement was formally signed between the Company and the three negotiating unions (AEF, EETU/PTU and NUVB). This became known in the plant as the 'November Agreement' and grew out of the July proposals (see 'Solidarity', vol.V, no.10) which had been thrown out by production workers after several angry demonstrations (see 'Solidarity', vol.V, no.12) and a ballot of members - and despite the efforts of certain union 'leaders', notably those of the EETU/PTU and AEF.

The timing of the Company's July proposals - made in June - had been catastrophic. They had clashed with the annual holiday period and seemed only to be rushing things, as the previous (1967) Agreement was due to run on until October 1969.

The November proposals were negotiated during the period when Ellesmere Port and most Luton production areas were locked out through the action of AEF members at Ellesmere Port. (These workers were NOT striking over the wage offer. Their dispute was about the use of press operators as setters without extra payment.) Many reputations were damaged during this period but one thing did improve. The 'penal clauses' of the July proposals (on time-keeping and absenteeism) were dropped, after the second ballot.

The militants, who were bitterly opposed to both sets of proposals (but found the 'November' proposals an improvement) had taken a knock, but the unions did not get it all their own way. Flaws were discovered in the Agreement and Vauxfam was reorganised as a pressure group. It held meetings, spread ideas and pressurised stewards and others to exploit the weaknesses in the document. Pamphlets and leaflets were published by several organisations. The workers began to see they had been 'conned'. Shop stewards spread the word. 'Solidarity' and other similar journals with accurate and reliable documentation became 'collectors' items'. The demand was PARITY and the voice was loud enough for the Company to agree to an Appendix committing future negotiations to a policy of wage parity with the Rootes/Chrysler plant at Boscombe Road, Dunstable. It remains a mystery why our negotiators should only aim at achieving parity with a plant which pays far and away the lowest rate within the Rootes/Chrysler combine.*

<u>Basic rate</u> (per hour)	<u>Vauxhall</u>	<u>Rootes/Dunstable</u>	<u>Stoke</u>	<u>Ryton</u>
Production Operators	13/1	13/5	18/9½	19/1 **

* After all Stoke and Ryton are not on the moon... they are only an hour's run up the M1.

** Since July 11, following a 2-week strike.

Problems arising from the November Agreement have beset the Company from the first. These were fully exploited by the shop stewards. Despite the 'huge' increase (10d, 9d, and 8d per hour!) male labour was still not being attracted to Vauxhall Motors. Some directors blamed the recent bad labour relations, others the better rates available in many local factories. In sheer desperation more women than originally intended were taken on at a higher rate, in areas where the Company would have preferred not to employ them.

The 'woman question' is a thorny problem at Vauxhall where women have now rightly achieved equal pay and are being employed in increasing numbers. A leaflet produced by the Luton District NUVB in January 1970 states:

'£21.10.0. is a very attractive wage for a woman, but it is a very poor wage for a married man with a family. Vauxhall Motors know that the upward trend in the employment of women will eventually leave them with a large labour force that would be more than satisfied with a wage packet of around £20.'

Another problem is that when women are introduced into a shop they are automatically given all the lighter and easier jobs, thus displacing the older or slightly disabled men doing them previously. (These jobs were often regarded as the 'perks' of longer service.) In effect the work load of the men is thereby increased and tensions are created which are quite wrongly directed at the women.

This is not an argument against the employment of women or against the demand for equal pay. It is simply an attempt to raise some of the real problems which tend to be swept under the carpet. Militants at Vauxhall must concentrate on drawing the women into shop floor organisation. More women stewards could be an obvious first step. We must not allow ourselves to be divided.

At that point workers had the bit between their teeth and looked for new areas on which to force the issue of PARITY NOT POVERTY. The word was everywhere. It was even a more popular topic of conversation in the Luton plant than Luton Town Football Club's fight for promotion to the Second Division. The field was open and the assault on the 'job evaluation' section (para 2, section c) was successfully fought in many areas. A.C. Body Shop (Gate line), as well as many other groups, achieved a further 3d per hour and the Company had little idea of how to stop the rot. Many skilled men achieved a rise of 5d per hour in the service increment (extra payment to workers after 2 years' service). But one group in particular made no progress despite a 2 year old promise. These were the 'batch-viewers' at Ellesmere Port, who were previously production workers who had taken a drop in earnings on the promise that, after training, they would be upgraded to 'inspection' rates. But more of this later.

The workers' attack on the Agreement resulted in the complete removal from the 'Grading Scheme' of 'Special Grade' operators. Amongst other 'duties' these workers were required to 'instruct and assist new employees and personnel transferred from other areas' into 'the intricacies of the

operation'. The weapon chosen for this attack by the workers was point blank refusal. Thus 'supervisors' (foremen) or 'Group Utility Leaders' (charge hands) had themselves to show the 'new' workers how to do the job. They didn't enjoy this 'indignity' and therefore 'pressurised' their superiors. The latter both threatened and cajoled the workers but failed completely to alter their determination. Thus 'efficiency' fell to catastrophically low 'norms'.

While these pressures were being applied by the workers, the shop stewards and the works convenors kept the heat on in the drive to implement the 100% trade unionism clause of the Agreement. (There did not seem to be the same urgency about this in the view of the full-time officials.) Throughout this period 'weary Leary' - Area Organiser, NUVB - was locked in legal battle with his Executive who had removed him from office for allegedly not paying his dues! There was therefore no paid official in the East Midlands area of the NUVB. (It's an ill wind that blows no one any good!)

Then came the 1970 Ford Agreement. While Vauxhall Motors were fighting a desperate rearguard action, here was the Ford Motor Company 'surrendering' the biggest ever pay award to its workers. Vauxhall was now smack on the bottom of the pay league, nationally as well as locally. No one knows how hot the 'hot line' between Luton and Detroit became, but it was obvious that the full 12 month term of the Agreement could not run if Vauxhall was to stay in business! The Company would have to open negotiations immediately with a similar offer - and try to sort out all the problems of the 1969 Agreement at the same time.

Sensing the change in the mood of the Company, and realising that any further delay would lessen the strength of their claim, the 'batch viewers' at Ellesmere Port walked out. They refused to go back despite all the threats of the sack, no-negotiations-on-the-new-deal, etc., etc. Once again the jobs of the workers at all three plants were jeopardised. Ellesmere Port and Luton (passenger vehicle production areas) workers were quickly on the stones. The strikers did not return. So desperate was the Company's position that they had to climb down. The Joint Negotiating Committee met and reached agreement. The union side would recommend the acceptance of the Company's offer to a joint meeting of shop stewards from Luton and Dunstable.

The District Committee of the AEF and the NUVB met and supported the JNC's recommendation to the stewards. At the stewards' meeting those present were given the usual self-congratulatory guff by some members of the JNC. 'Take it, it's now or never' type of chat spewed over the floor of the meeting. Opposing voices were crushed from the platform. The promises of 1969 ('no deals without referring the issues to the members') were ignored. (It is only fair to state that, due to members being locked out at this time, a ballot would have delayed the issue, thus causing further hardship, and that in any case the award would definitely have been accepted by an overwhelming majority.) No mention was made of any harmful clauses in the deal. 'It's a straight across the board deal with no strings attached' said H.Horne,

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

	<u>Number of employees</u> (in thousands)	<u>Vehicles produced</u> (per employee)	<u>Sales</u> (per employee)	<u>Trading profits</u> (per employee)
BLMC 1967/8	188	5.6	£ 4,820	£ 461
1968/9	196	5.5	£ 4,950	£ 437
ROOFS 1967/8	24	8.9	£ 7,240	£ 379
CHRYSLER 1968/9	25	8.3	£ 6,600	£ 212
VAUXHALL 1968	37	8.9	£ 5,840	£ 837
1969	35	8.2	£ 5,830	£ 434
FORD 1967	60	9.6	£ 6,760	£ 550
1968	61	11.7	£ 8,000	£1233
1969*	65	10.5	£ 8,270	£1086

* In February 1969 there was a 3½ week strike. According to the Company this 'threatened the very existence of Ford'. In fact sales per employee actually rose during that year! Everything points to an even wider discrepancy in 1970 between Ford (the car firm with the lowest paid employees) and its higher paid competitors.

Source of statistics: 'Labour Research', July 1970.

GENERAL MOTORS IN EUROPE: On July 23, 1970 Opel (the West German subsidiary of G.M.) published its accounts for 1969. It declared record profits of £48 million. Its production figures were 801,205 units, a rise of 22% over the previous year. (It is estimated production will rise to 830,000 units in 1970.) The Company will invest another £45 million this year, mainly on a new 'family sports car' to compete with the Ford Capri. This gigantic expansion is largely due to exports sales (54% of production). G.M.'s policy seems to be to give its German subsidiary the plums of the international market and to restrict Vauxhall's sales in many areas. One wonders just how many of Vauxhall's 'problems' are being artificially created in Detroit.

Dunstable AEF convenor, and a prominent member of the C.P.* A vote was taken. Only 5 votes were cast against acceptance - at least 3 of them from stewards representing Paint Shops. The motion was carried. Jubilation from the platform and a vote of thanks to the JNC. The job was done. All that remained was to force the batch viewers back to work. High level, unofficial, off-the-record meetings took place between top level management and national officers of the AEF (one known case was at the opening of the new AEF building at Luton - where Hopkins, Director of Personnel and Welfare at Vauxhall met 'lefty' Scanlon of the AEF). In a few days the men were back at work.

Shortly after production was resumed the workers in some areas began to realise that others had done better than them in the deal. 'Two bob across the board' really meant 1/7 if one had been employed less than two years ... or 2/3 if one had a clean job in a 'good' area. Thus the differential achieved by long struggle in the militant areas was wiped out by a stroke of the pen. However the workers didn't feel the same animosity towards the 1970 agreement as they had towards the 1969 agreement.

Discussions are on with regard to 'lay off' payment. The militants will press that it be for a guaranteed year's income, under the control of the JNC. (This is necessary at Vauxhall because the operation of the current 'guaranteed 40 hour week' is under the authority of the Management Advisory Committee (a puppet organisation of the Company) and designed to stem the growth of militancy within the plants.) The struggle will go on until PARITY with the Midlands is achieved. Meetings are taking place on a regular basis and plans are being drawn up.

One of the many weaknesses of job organisation at Vauxhall is the lack of contact between shop floor organisation in the various parts of the General Motors empire in Britain. Workers at Frigidaire, A.C.Delco, and G.M.'s Earth Moving subsidiary Euclid (based in Scotland) all get different rates. At Ford, the nearest equivalent, workers at its electrical components subsidiary Autolite get exactly the same rates.

It is about time that serious efforts were made by the shop stewards to get together to discuss united action, and the establishment of parity for all G.M. workers. This would be of concrete advantage for Vauxhall workers in at least two main ways. Firstly it would stop the arbitrary transfer of sub-assemblies to the lower paid A.C.Delco plants. Secondly Vauxhall workers are not the highest paid in the group! Following a 3-day unofficial strike at Frigidaire in June, the men won increases of the order of 20% which brings their rate on the average about 2d higher than Vauxhall workers (there must be a lesson here somewhere). Frigidaire is now entirely given over to the manufacture of motor components.

Taurus.

* In fact there are a considerable number of strings to the Agreement, even if some of them are wearing a bit thin. At an unpublicised meeting on April 15, 1970 the convenors and representatives of management agreed to a broad outline policy for disciplinary procedures, work study, the introduction of continuous shift working, etc. (known as Clause 10). All this seems a high price to pay for a wageincrease which still leaves Vauxhall workers well down the wage league table. And they were kept in the dark about it.

reviews

WARWICK UNIVERSITY LTD. Edited by E.P.Thompson. Penguin Educational
Special, 1970. 6/-

The cat is out of the tool bag. Warwick University turns out to be the educational section of Rootes Motors with tailgates to Hawker-Siddeley and Courtaulds, and a bevy of labour spies to check up on unruly staff and student workers.

Among the dirt dug out of the Warwick Registry by the authors are the now well-known headmaster's report on the political activity of a Schools' Action Union student who applied to work at Warwick Ltd., a discussion by a Rootes investigator on whether a mild speech by an American lecturer to a local Labour Party gathering justified his prosecution under the 1919 Aliens' Restriction Act; a letter from the factory's Vice-Chancellor to Oxford and Encounter magazine's top counter-insurgent, Professor Max Beloff, suggesting more efficient ways of sacking politically unreliable senior staff; and the howls from university administrations, education authorities and MPs that followed the circulation by Warwick students of an 'outrageous' leaflet calling for freedom of speech and assembly in British secondary schools! All is here. And so is a full description of the University's interlocking directorate with the world of big business, the new specifications for the cogs (i.e. staff and students) in the educational industry, the latest games by which modern university bureaucrats bamboozle their academic vineyards, and the details of how the national press suppressed almost all information about those embarrassing Warwick files.

Inevitable questions arise: are the atrocities of the Warwick factory the work of its particularly hawk-brained set of managing directors? Or do they just represent the latest symptoms of the copulation between university and industry in the Managerial Age?

The authors don't seem entirely consistent in their answers. On the one hand we are told that the bumbling of Warwick administrators, their 'peculiarly' subordinate relationship with industry, their 'apparent attempt' to limit democratic processes, and the degree of power exerted by a few industrialists on the University Council, 'may indicate a situation in Warwick which is, in some ways, unique'. On the other hand: 'The poetic logic by which Mr Gilbert Hunt, Managing Director of Rootes, was simultaneously Chairman of the Building Committee (whose policies on a student union social building provoked the occupation of the Registry), and author of political surveillance of academic staff, is too neat...'

'Nor can the malaise of Warwick be diagnosed in the single personality of its Vice-Chancellor. His policies of ever closer relationships with "industry" have been staunchly supported at different times by government, by the University Grants Committee, and by Science and Social Science Research Councils, as well as by the industrialists on his Council'. Or again: 'We were nose-to-nose not only with Rootes but with directors of Courtaulds, Hawker-Siddeley and Barclays Bank. In the conflict it became apparent that what was wrong was not a close relationship with "industry" but a particular kind of subordinate relationship with industrial capitalism - with an industrial capitalism, moreover, which exerts its influence not only directly in the councils of the University but also within the educational organs of the State, and which, from both directions, is demanding, for its better service, an approved educational product.'

If you are a student that 'product' is you. If you are an industrial worker the 'product' is likely to be your new manager, psychologist, industrial relations expert or brainwasher. Or, as former LSE director Sir Sidney Caine (who is also trustee of the right-wing Institute of Economic Affairs and former Vice-Chairman of the 'Independent' Television Authority) puts it: 'The market for graduates is still good and there is no ground for regarding this as one of the causes of unrest in this country'. No right at all. Particularly when we realise that for every student revolutionary you may find 50 of his graduate classmates manning the top managerial positions in, say, the police force, the army, the South African plantations, or the other nooks and crannies of capitalist business in 1970. That's what educational production is for.

But however much he may tell us of Warwick's Brave New World of managerial efficiency, E.P. Thompson never quite get around to telling us how or why we should halt production in the educational factories. In fact, in his personal editorial comment at the end of the book, Thompson rambles on in almost counter-insurgent style about how the authorities could have avoided a confrontation if only they weren't such heavy-handed apes. He sees the solution for students and staff in an improved 'democratic' University constitution, and calls the revolutionaries hypocritical for advocating free speech and impartial justice while not believing these things were realisable under capitalism. Thus we read such profundities as: 'In the end, there can be only one effective defence against the holding or use of such extraneous political information: and this, quite simply, must be that it is an outrage to universities and public opinion to do so.' Wrong. Only when the mass of people both in universities and society control their institutions will the abolition of 'political' files be possible and will the sentiments of 'public opinion' cut any ice.

Paul Hoch.

LISTEN, MARXIST. Available from Committee for a Libertarian Students Federation, c/o K. Nathan, Vanbrugh College, Heslington, York. 1/- (plus postage).

This is undoubtedly the best anarchist pamphlet for years. Not that we agree with its every thesis or idea. Far from it. But at least the work has a respect for reality, an awareness of its complexity and a concern for its interpretation unusual in anarchist circles. Needless to say, it is the work of an ex-marxist.

The text originated in the debate in the American S.D.S. (Students for a Democratic Society) which last year split that organisation into its constituent Leninist and libertarian atoms. The pamphlet is a sustained attack on the ideas of the Progressive Labor (a Maoist) tendency. This debate has wider relevance for all seeking to 'develop beyond the stage of piecemeal opposition and Third World voyeurism'. Its main concern is with the future, a future to be created in its own image - not in that of the past. The author's motto is Marx's phrase that 'the traditions of the dead generations weigh like a nightmare on the mind of the living' - only this time turned against Marxism itself. All this is a refreshing change from the 'Politics Out!' brand of anarchism, and from the anarcho-liberalism, anarcho-maoism and general anarcho-confusionism so prevalent in libertarian circles today.

The author makes a critique of marxist ideology and bolshevik practice which we would almost entirely endorse. This critique goes beyond the usual anarchist simplicism for it looks at specific strands of marxist doctrine in relation to the social conditions which gave rise to them. In addition the author recognises that 'the marxian dialectic, historical materialism, the critique of the commodity relationship, the theory of alienation, and above all the notion that freedom has material pre-conditions - all these are lasting contributions to revolutionary thought'.

The pamphlet adds a new dimension to the understanding of the Russian revolution when it documents Lenin's pathetic efforts, in the last year of his life, to limit the growth of the Russian bureaucracy through recourse to exclusively bureaucratic means. Some of the author's analyses here echo those made by Paul Cardan in 'The Fate of Marxism' and in 'From Bolshevism to the Bureaucracy'.*

Other fruitful new ideas are contributed. For example the author sees the 'centralist' tendency in the ideas of Marx and Engels as arising from the tactical problems of the bourgeois revolutions of the 19th century. He outlines the liberatory potentialities of modern technology - a technology of abundance which traditional marxists only conceive as possible under socialism.

* Available as Solidarity (North London) Pamphlets (10d. each, post free) from H. Russell, 53A Westmoreland Road, Bromley, Kent.

He emphasises the new areas of struggle opening up in modern society, among white-collar workers, against a wide variety of authoritarian relations and discusses such issues as the fight against sexual repression, over ecology, etc.

The author deals hammer blows at the way most marxists (and the P.L. in particular) look at the worker. They see something intrinsically virtuous about the proletarian, something good about his work-ethic and self-abnegation. The logic of this attitude is obvious: 'One tries to use the discipline inculcated by the factory milieu to discipline the worker to the Party milieu. One tries to use the workers' respect for the industrial hierarchy to wed the worker to the Party hierarchy'.

The pamphlet correctly points out that the internalisation of the pressures which capitalism places upon the worker are psychically harmful and that their destruction should be part of any revolutionary strategy. This is an area in which Solidarity has missed out. The compulsion to work, the work ethic is, just like the sexual repression to which it is related, one of the sources of the irrational behaviour of groups and individuals. Revolutionaries should clearly concern themselves more with all this.

A very important fact, ignored by many socialists, is highlighted in this pamphlet. Traditional marxism saw that capitalist production was 'socialised'. Thousands of workers were organised into industrial armies, in vast productive units. The conflict between the socialised nature of production and the individual method of appropriation was explosive. The author of 'Listen, Marxist' shows that this socialisation does not have only positive aspects. 'The factory milieu is one of the most entrenched areas of the work ethic, of hierarchical systems of management, of obedience to leaders and in recent times of production committed to superfluous commodities and armaments. The factory serves not only to "discipline", "unite" and "organise" the workers but to achieve this in a thoroughly bourgeois fashion ... capitalist production not only renews the social relations of capitalism with each working day ... but it also renews the psyche, values and ideology of capitalism'.(p.9)

This is where our disagreements begin. Although the author is familiar with dialectical thinking this view is undialectical. It presupposes the total domination of man by his environment and sees him as capable of being totally reified. What is the real state of affairs?

Inside the factory the struggle over wages and hours (which the author dismisses as remaining 'entirely within the bourgeois dimension') and, more significantly, over the conditions of production tends to produce a collective solidarity among workers, and necessitates the adoption of forms of struggle and organisation which challenge hierarchy and inequality, and implicitly pose their alternative. As we pointed out in 'Working Class Consciousness': 'What the struggle in production challenges are the relations of production in the capitalist factory, i.e. the relationships of men to other groups of men in the process of producing wealth ... these new relationships often ...

challenge the capitalist morality of maximum individual gain. They even tend to replace it with a new morality, based on solidarity and equality'.*

In production the worker leads - both in thought and in action - a schizophrenic existence. He has internalised the norms of the bourgeois socialisation of production. But in order to survive he must also struggle against them. He thus believes in the work ethic and shirks work whenever possible. He accepts hierarchy as natural and subverts it in practice. He thinks in terms of bourgeois individualism, but tends to act in collective class terms. It is in this tension, this dual aspect of life in production, that we see hope.

Despite the changing structure of the working class** and the growing importance of other strata and issues under modern capitalism, the proletariat remains the largest, most exploited and most active single class. Its specific weight in the revolutionary perspective is greatest. The author's rejection of the working class as a revolutionary force is no new idea. It has been a constant strand in anarchist thought for over 100 years. Anarchists, doubting the revolutionary potential of the proletariat, have often sought to base themselves on other strata: peasants, déclassés, youth, artisans. From this has followed the substitution of the category 'people' (used by the bourgeoisie in their own revolutions) for that of the 'proletariat'.

If the working class is no longer a revolutionary force, whence the revolutionary perspective? The author rightly points out that the transition from capitalism to socialism will be different from the transition from feudalism to capitalism. In his opinion it will not be a struggle between classes but result from a 'decomposition of classes'. He points out that revolutionaries are now appearing in all strata of society, particularly among the young. In his view this decomposition is the precondition for revolution.

There are various criticisms one can make of all this. At a purely doctrinal level one could counter the anarchist 'argument' with a marxist 'argument'. The difference in transition from, on the one hand, one form of class society to another and, on the other hand, from a class society to a classless society is not that the former transition is a class struggle and the latter the result of a decomposition of classes. The difference is in the specific form of the class struggle. When the working class takes social power, it not only suppresses the bourgeoisie, but also 'abolishes itself as a class, and with this all forms of class domination', a phenomenon unique in history.

A more telling criticism of the 'decomposition of classes' theory would however be that insofar as this process of decomposition takes place, there is no guarantee that it is taking on, or will take on, a revolutionary form. Moreover, positing 'youth' as a category is dangerous. It glosses

* Solidarity (North London) vol.V, No.12.

** Solidarity (North London) vol.VI, No.1, 'The New Proletariat'.

over the fact that although most youth in advanced capitalist countries today has never known gross poverty, there are nevertheless cultural and class differences between young people which are at least as great as those between the older members of various classes and cultures.

The author fails finally even to mention the ability of modern capitalism to recuperate these 'phenomena of decomposition' and to use them for its own social and commercial purposes. Unfortunately it is just not true that 'the worker begins to become a revolutionary when he undoes his "work-erness" and begins to disgorge exactly those features which the Marxists most prize in him: his work ethic ... his respect for hierarchy, his consumerism, his vestiges of puritanism'. Or that 'the worker becomes a revolutionary to the degree that he sheds his class status and achieves an un-class consciousness'. Although these attitudes are necessary pre-requisites for any complete break with bourgeois society, it remains true that a worker only becomes a revolutionary when in addition he develops a coherent consciousness of an alternative to the present system. It is precisely this emphasis on explicit revolutionary consciousness which is lacking in this pamphlet.

In moving to anarchism the author of 'Listen, Marxist' has unfortunately assimilated some of the negative aspects of the anarchist outlook. There is an identification with the great figures of the past: Anarchist Gods replace Marxist ones on the revolutionary Olympus. There is moreover an uncritical attitude towards anarchist movements in history. Thus we find him defending Bakunin against the attacks of Marx, and making none of the obvious criticisms of the rôle of the anarchists in Spain when mentioning the Spanish revolution. This is to substitute an uncritical identification with the past for a process of learning from it. It is not only that many of the ideas of Bakunin (on the post-revolutionary dictatorship for instance) and of Kropotkin (a consistent supporter of French Imperialism) were completely reactionary. It is, more importantly, that someone (as the author claims he is) seeking to create 'a movement which looks to the future instead of to the past' should not need this kind of support from retrospective identification.

He also deludes himself if he thinks that 'the difference between anarchist communists and reformist or individualist anarchists is as sharp as that between reformist socialists and revolutionary communists'. This is wishful thinking, as a casual perusal of any issue of 'Freedom' will readily show. So great is the attachment of most anarchists to the romance of their past, and to their label of 'anarchist' that they will side with anyone who shares the label, even though he shares none of their ideas. Semantics thus becomes a substitute for politics. There is no need to think, only to use the right incantations. The absolute refusal of the anarchists to split their movement means that it remains forever paralysed by contradictory tendencies and that it will never develop a dynamic of its own.

But despite these criticisms we welcome the appearance of this pamphlet. Does it represent a mere aberration into the realm of ideas? This will be decided by its reception in the anarchist movement. We can be forgiven for thinking that discussion of its ideas will be greatest outside, and that inside it will merely be reprinted. When the author finally realises that both Marxism and Anarchism are of the past, the way will be open for a movement which really looks to the future and towards a meaningful praxis.

Ian Mitchell.

THE LONELY HOURS

It's so lonely when the television
goes off

At one a.m.

What do they expect us to do then:
Think? Remember all that? Sleep?
We've been sleeping all day, all life.

Do they really expect us to remember
All the empty togethernesses, the
studies of studies,
The decisions all made for us like
cut-outs?

How do they expect us to remember
What we saw on the early early show
Unless we see it again on a too-late
show?

Why won't they serve us more more
more decisions

(Or revisions of decisions)
To supplant our former visions?
At least we've still got our health.
It's enough to make you think.
Almost.

Eugene Nelson.

AUTONOMOUS SOLIDARITY GROUPS

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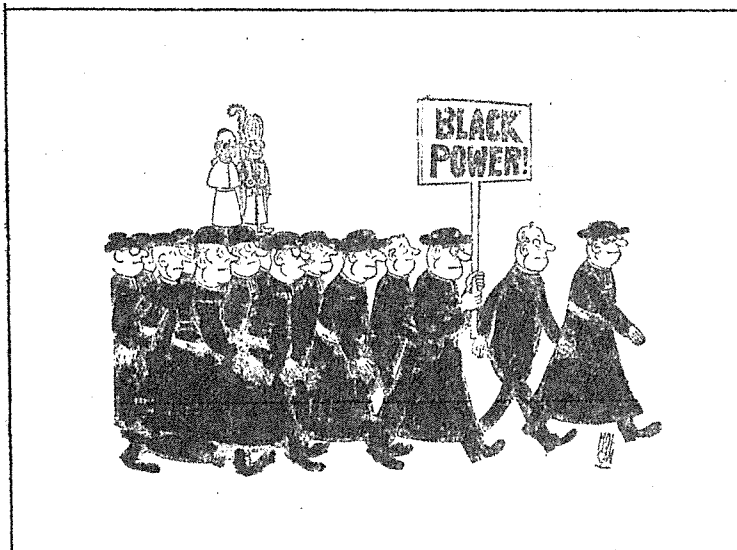
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KEEP THE TORIES OUT

The International Socialists have made it clear in recent weeks that the slogan 'Keep the Tories out - vote Labour' also means 'Prepare to fight'.

This must be the last election in which, for lack of a credible mass socialist alternative, we have to 'keep the Tories out'.
 'Vote Labour - and prepare to fight!'

Vote Labour - and prepare to fight

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 October 1966 Lab maj 1534
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 G C NICHAM (Lab) 12876
 I Szemery (C) 6601
 A Louisa (Liberal Party New Policy) 1161
 Mrs M Betheridge (Comm) 509
 maj 6275
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 1966 C maj 14,631
 March 1966 C maj 13,777
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 M Goldman (Comm) 793
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A REVOLUTION IS NOT A SPECTACLE!

THERE ARE NO SPECTATORS!

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES!

THEY KNOW



Serious revolutionaries, however, who know where the real enemy lies and who have grasped the method of Marxism, will not be confused or distracted by sectarian diversions, but will vote Labour today.

This election is unlike a General Election since 1945 said Gerry Healy, nation secretary of the Social Labour League. No one is talking about floating voters. No one is listening much to the electorates. There is a deep polarization of forces.

OUT AT LAST!

Readers will be pleased to hear that after a very long gestation - complicated by a number of financial difficulties and other minor mishaps - our magnum opus 'THE BOLSHEVIKS AND WORKERS' CONTROL 1917-1921' (The State and Counter-Revolution) is at last out.

Copies can now be ordered (soft cover 5/-, hard cover 25/-, postage 1/-). We count on all friends and supporters to make a sustained effort to see that this book is massively distributed, read and discussed. (Make sure your Public Library orders a hard-back copy!) The text should be seen as the specific contribution of libertarian revolutionaries to the Lenin Centenary Year! The systematic destruction of Bolshevik mythology is an essential prerequisite to the creation of any genuinely revolutionary movement, capable of growth in an advanced capitalist country.

Few will understand the sort of effort that has been necessary for a minute group like Solidarity (North London) to produce this book - and at a cost of 5/-! There have been innumerable headaches, collectively overcome: problems of costing, of the choice, purchase, transport and cutting of paper, of type-setting and proof-reading, of finding a printer who would be sufficiently in sympathy with us to do the job at cost price (or below) and help (without extra charge) with the layout and design. Then there were problems of folding and collating (done entirely by a handful of comrades), and problems related to the covers and to binding.

We have so far raised £260 in donations (London area: £104; USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa: £40; elsewhere in the UK: £116) and nearly £160 in loans. This is still substantially less than our production costs and we need a lot more help. Nearly a hundred complimentary and review copies will have to be sent out and bookshops - where we expect sales to be substantial - will be wanting their cut. Each book handled and distributed by our readers will represent a great deal of sweat and many hours of voluntarily donated labour time. The decision to keep the cost down to 5/- (so as to ensure a really wide distribution) was one consciously taken in the light of the rumpus we expect the book to provoke.

French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German, Dutch, Swedish and Japanese translations of the book are being arranged or are already under way - and we would welcome further offers of help in this field.

We have been criticised - and from within the Solidarity movement itself - for devoting so much of our time and energy to the task of documenting and interpreting what, to some, may appear an obscure and esoteric corner of history. But for us the subject matter of this book represents one of the cardinal phenomena of our epoch: how a bureaucracy emerged and developed in the wake of a proletarian revolution. We are confident that our efforts will be vindicated, and convinced that the book will have a lasting impact, helping the development of that revolutionary knowledge and insight without which there can be no meaningful revolutionary practice.