

SPECIAL POLAND ISSUE

PEOPLE: the forgotten factor

THERE is one factor that all governments, especially totalitarian governments and more especially totalitarian 'workers' governments, fail to take into account in any real or significant sense. That factor is: the workers.

The workers are so much an essential part of the fabric of society—in fact, the essential part—that, like the bricks in a house, they are simply taken for granted. In every 'developed' country there are token organisations which 'represent' the workers - both where they work and where they live. And by the very fact of the existence of these representational organisations the workers themselves can be forgotten.

Authority speaks to authority, so the official trade union leadership meets at 'top' level with representatives of the employers, while in Parliament their counterparts, the so-called socialists, come to terms with the organised ruling class and all its defence mechanisms, even,

from time to time, taking over control of some of them.

The difference in a totalitarian regime is that one organisation takes over control of all the organs of power and, making no bones about it, suppresses everybody else. The interesting thing, however, is that they still have to go through the motions of allowing 'representation'. They have elections where you can vote 'yes' or 'yes' for one party - and they have trade unions where your actual working class is represented in discussions with the party bosses.

The fact that the trade union leaders are party members and are appointed by the party does rather simplify the discussions, of course. For in those circumstances there is only one set of interests to satisfy: the party's. And since the party is the ruling class, that is the end of class struggle.

So, the essential authoritarianism operates in all countries, with variations which are relatively small considering the massive similarities. Dictatorships rule by coercion; democracies by coercion disguised by

deceit. And they all forget the workers - as long as they do as they are told.

The grandiose schemes—at present being aired with offensive confidence by the so-called world powers—for the launching and waging of World War Three, are all based on the assumption that the peoples of the world are ready to be incinerated at the push of a button, happy at the thought that 'our' bit of the radioactive desert will continue to be ruled by 'our' leaders throughout the desolate, unforeseeable future.

Because we, in Britain, live in a democracy, we are allowed to make our protests—in responsible and legal fashion, of course—but what of the people 'protected' by the Warsaw Pact? Do we assume that they are equally happy, with the people of the West, to embark upon this lunacy? Do we believe that the people of Hungary, of Czechoslovakia, of Poland, are ready to die for the way of life imposed upon them by Russian force?

This month's events in Poland underline, we would think, that not only are the Polish people not prepared to die for the Russian empire—they are not prepared to work for it either. For every one of the satellite states of Eastern Europe works, in part, for the Soviet Union. Imperialism was ever thus; it is what it was all about. Eastern Europe is not just a buffer zone for Russia, it is a rich source of wealth, which Mother Russia sorely needs.

Why? Because the workers of the Soviet Union have been disillusioned for decades. How come Ukraine—once 'the breadbasket of Europe'—suffers crop failure after crop failure? Could it be because the peasants have never forgiven Stalin - or his successors?

Why does the Soviet government have to invite Levi-Strauss to come in and set up a factory to make blue jeans? Is it because the Soviet clothing technicians will not give their intelligence

continued on page 7



Poles apart

HAPPY the country which has no history - and no country has a history as unhappy as Poland, or has a past which weighs so heavily on the present and the future. Once again we see the Poles coming on to the world stage but looking over their shoulders for fear that the scenery will fall on them.

Like most European countries, Poland emerged from the collapse of the Roman Empire. When the Teutonic tribes invaded southern and western Europe, eastern Europe was invaded behind them by Slavonic tribes, which settled as far south as the Mediterranean and as far west as the Elbe. The political history of Europe during the subsequent 1500 years may be seen as a continual conflict between the Teutonic West and the Slavonic East, and the worst victims of this process have been the people in the middle, among whom are the Poles.

The Poles settled in the grassy plains ('polje' - a field, clearing) between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathian Mountains, between the forests and the marshes, and developed a stable feudal society based on agriculture, which eventually came under the double influence of the German Empire in the west and the Roman Papacy in the south. In the tenth century the ruling class became Christian and the little country became part of the European community. It belonged to the Latin rather than the Greek world, and was therefore separated from Russia by religion and from Germany by language, becoming a buffer between the two.

For several centuries Poland enjoyed political independence and economic prosperity. The Mongols who destroyed Russia in the thirteenth century reached Poland but soon retreated. For a couple of centuries Poland was united with Lithuania, and their joint empire briefly stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Meanwhile the Poles achieved a level of political liberty and social equality rare in medieval Europe. The landed gentry won from the monarchy personal privileges and parliamentary representation, rather as in England and Iceland, and then won the right to elect the monarch and control his or her activity, rather as in the German

Empire or Hungary. By the sixteenth century Poland was virtually a constitutional republic, the king being the president of a senate, and economic prosperity and social progress being guaranteed by the racial toleration of Jews coming from Germany and the religious toleration of heretics coming from all over Europe. The university of Krakow had a universal reputation, and one of its graduates, Copernicus (Mikolaj Kopernik) laid the first corner-stone of modern science.

Yet Poland soon declined. Its economic system of landed estates and its political system of landed oligarchy prevented the growth of either a strong monarchy or a strong bourgeoisie of the kind developing elsewhere in Europe. In the seventeenth century the mutual toleration of Catholics and Protestants, which rivalled that of the Netherlands, was replaced by a return to conservative Catholicism which has prevailed until today, with the eventual reward of the first non-Italian pope for four centuries. Poland became an intellectual and economic backwater, and also became famous as a country in which nothing could be done - a European joke which might have been comic if it had been in an isolated Ruritania, but which became tragic when it was surrounded by aggressive empires.

Imperialism was not the last but the first stage of modern capitalism, and in Europe after the Renaissance and Reformation the new commercial and industrial economies dominated the old agricultural economies. Poland became the type of a previously progressive and prosperous country swallowed up by its greedy neighbours. At first threats came from the Swedes in the north and the Turks in the south, but from the seventeenth century the growing pressure came from the Germans in the west (Prussia and Austria) and the Russians in the east. Finally, by the infamous partitions of the late eighteenth century, confirmed by the Vienna Congress of 1815, Poland was carved up between its three great enemies, the central area being absorbed into the Tsarist Empire, and the nation disappearing from the map.

For a century Poland survived as

a subject people. It was Russia's Ireland, its culture driven underground, its leaders driven abroad, its cause driven into despair. Its great men and women - Adam Mickiewicz, Frederic Chopin, Marie Sklodowska Curie, Joseph Conrad, Rosa Luxemburg - had to achieve greatness in exile. There were desperate risings in 1830, 1846 and 1860, followed by terrible repression. The rescue of Poland headed every revolutionary agenda. Symbolically, the man who threw the bomb which killed the Tsar in 1881 was a Pole. Europe could not be free while Poles remained slaves.

Ironically, Poland regained its independence not because it liberated itself or was liberated by anyone else, but because its three great enemies destroyed themselves in the First World War. Prophetically, the new nation was immediately faced with the first war Communist Russia fought with another country, in 1920, and by the implacable hatred of Germany, cut in two to provide a Polish corridor to the Baltic. The liberal republic soon relapsed into the semi-fascist dictatorship of Jozef Pilsudski, who characteristically began as a nationalist socialist and ruled for ten years with the support of Church and Army. Then it became the plaything of the Great Powers once more.

The Second World War began in Poland, immediately preceded by the Hitler-Stalin pact and immediately followed by a new partition between Nazi Germany and Communist Russia. Britain entered the war, with France, to guarantee the independence of Poland, but the war guaranteed its complete subjection. No people - not even the Jews - suffered more in the Second World War than the Poles, despised and destroyed by both Germans and Russians. The Germans killed millions in the concentration camps, the worst of which were on Polish soil; the Russians killed thousands in the Katyn massacre, and never relaxed their grip.

An exile government in London was rivalled by a puppet government in Lublin under Russian control. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, Britain joined the United States in recognising the Lublin government, and also agreed that half of Poland should remain Russian, though in compensation Poland received an equivalent chunk of Germany. The whole country was literally shifted more than a hundred miles west, and millions of people were driven from their homes where their families had lived for generations.

The Russians didn't spare the Poles to the bitter end. In 1938

Stalin had not just purged the Polish Communist Party but dissolved it altogether and murdered nearly all its leaders. In 1944 the advancing Russians called on the people of Warsaw to rise against the Germans; when they did so, in August, the Russians halted for two months to let the Germans do their worst before taking over in their place. Then Poland was sliced up by the Russians according to their standard salami tactics. In May 1945 a formal democracy was established, but the state was controlled by the Communists; in January 1947 a fake election was won by a coalition of Communists and Socialists; in December 1948 the Socialists were forced to join the Communists in a so-called United Workers Party; in July 1952 Poland was proclaimed a so-called People's Republic - a Russian satellite ruled by party dictatorship backed by Russian arms.

But there has been one compensat-

ion. The Russians fear the Poles more than any of their other subject peoples, and have hesitated to bring force in the open. Even in the worst of the Stalinist purges, in 1948, the 'liberal' Communists in Poland were given the rare privilege of prison rather than death. Tsarist Russia was once described as a despotism limited by assassination; Communist Poland since Stalin could be described as a despotism limited by riots. In 1956, in the wave of discontent following the destalinising Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, riots in Poland led to a relaxation of party dictatorship, against Russian disapproval, and the accession to power of Wladyslaw Gomulka, a relatively 'liberal' Communist. The same sort of thing happened in 1968 and again in 1970-71 (when Gomulka was replaced by Edward Gierek), in 1976, and now again in 1980.

But if the Russians hardly dare to

intervene, the West hardly dare to do so either, lest Poland should become the trigger of the Third as well as the Second World War. Within the country the demoralised Communist Party tries to maintain its monopoly of power, while the Marxist dissidents and the Catholic Church try not so much to shake as to share that monopoly. Meanwhile there is the people of Poland which has never quite spoken yet, the workers putting the basic demands of class struggle and the intellectuals putting the basic demands of a free society alongside them. Unlike Hungary in 1956, or Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Communists have no part in events - they don't act, but react. The Poles are not speaking their script any more, but making up their own play. Let us hope that the theatre doesn't collapse on us all, but meanwhile let us applaud their new act.

N.W.

Meanwhile in Britain

A Report on the Solidarity (London) Meeting "Poland: Workers vs The Workers' State", August 26th.

What a sorry mess this was. When I try to describe this meeting, words like pathetic, nauseous, infuriating, futile etcetera come to mind. The publicity advertised "speakers from Poland and the libertarian movement in Britain." The first speaker was Wictor Mszczynski. His claim to

fame is being a Labour councillor in Ipswich, who has visited Poland as recently as a year ago! He gave a general blurb on events so far. Then Philip Sansom of FREEDOM gave an anarchist view, advising the strikers to be wary of leaders and outlining some basic anarchist ideas on organization. Terry Little of Solidarity followed with an impassioned account of how events in Poland confirmed the view of Leninism as a reactionary ideology once and for all. Stanislaw Wasik, a member of the Polish Socialist Party in Exile who left Poland in the 1940s, told us that the workers needed trade unions, not their own workers' councils! We needed to intervene actively in their struggles by...wait for it...sending telegrams! Speakers from Poland! Ha!

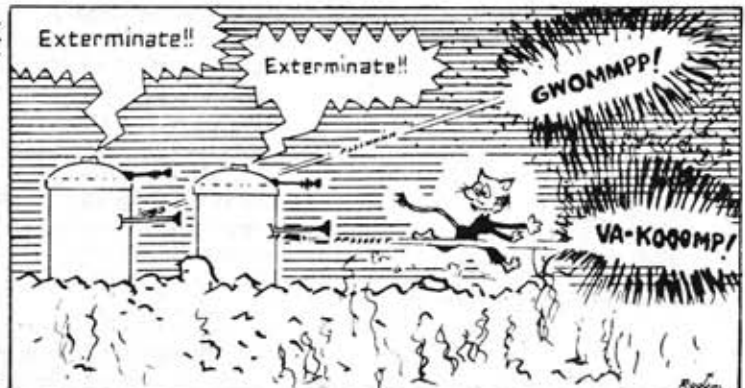
We then had open discussion, controlled ruthlessly from the chair by Robin Blick, in which all manner of

pathetic nauseating lefties attacked/defended Trotsky/Lenin/Labour/TUC etcetra etcetera. Workerism was the order of the day (from teachers, lecturers, doctors etcetera). An anarchist who dared to suggest that Polish strikers on their knees praying to a picture of the Pope was not very desirable was ignored because it was "what the workers themselves want."

Finally a decision was made to send telegrams of support to the strikers at Gdansk and also to a Polish strike leader in exile in Paris, the wording of which was subject to the most nauseating piece of democratic manipulation, by Robin Blick, that it has yet been my privilege to witness.

I just hope the Polish workers have some better friends than the British left.

DSW

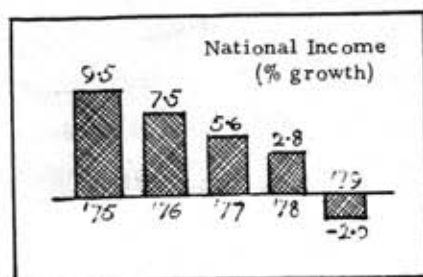


WHILE the scope and duration of the current Polish strike wave has been unexpected, the fact that the strikes themselves have taken place comes as no great surprise. The Polish workers have a history of vehemently fending off ruling class attacks in the form of steep price increases, and there is also the state of the global economy and Poland's position within it. In 1956, 1970/1 and 1976 there were large scale riots and in the last two struggles the strikers forced the government to rescind price increases. The present strike wave carries on that struggle and only a pea-brained and desperate ruling class could have expected the workers' response to have been different. Yet, despite this, economic necessity has forced the Polish government to increase food prices. The Polish economy has been unstable for a long time now and with its dependence on western capital for loans and western markets for exports the present recession has signalled the need for stringent measures by the government. As the strikes in response to these measures are just one moment (and a very telling moment) in the continuing class struggle in Poland, a brief review of the economic policies of the last decade will help define the present context more clearly.

THE ECONOMY

The rioting response to the 1970 increases led to the replacement of Party boss Gomulka by the current leader Gierk. (Gomulka himself had become boss after the 1956 insurrection). Gierk immediately froze food prices and prices of manufactured goods were limited to a 15% increase. A huge investment boom was started during which capital expenditure rose 125% in the years 1971-76. This put the government heavily into debt with western banks.

Basically, Gierk was attempting to create a more consumer-oriented society and this served to heighten the standard of living expectations for most people. Western consumer goods were increasingly imported and these were to be paid for (and loans repaid) by increased exports



Source: Polish Govt.

from the now - it was hoped - improved economy. But the plan depended on continued prosperity in the west, and as this declined throughout the 70s the Polish economy became more and more unstable. There were fewer markets to export to and imports were costing more and more, through inflation. This situation gave rise to the 1976 increases in food prices and the ensuing riots. Since then the story has been more or less the same with the continuing recession, but imports of consumer goods were slashed and investment dropped.

Coupled with this is the structure of Polish agriculture. Eighty per cent of it is in the hands of small private farmers who, with poor equipment and poor prices for their produce, do not make a sufficiently large food surplus. This means Poland is a large food importer - in the first six months of this year 4.7 million tonnes of grain and fodder were imported at a cost of \$1000 million. The crops are bound to be bad because of heavy summer rains. In addition are increased energy costs. While Poland gets its oil from the USSR at a cheaper price than it would from OPEC the USSR, nevertheless, does increase the price it charges roughly on a par with OPEC rises.

Such continued decline has led to the present complex mess. Poland is by far the most indebted of the Comecon countries, its external debt to the west being \$20 billion. The ratio of its debt servicing to hard currency earnings was 54% last year - one of the highest of all industrialised countries. It is now and next year that its debt repayments peak, and this year loan repayments amount to \$7.6 billion, absorbing most of its export revenue. The newly announced \$325 million loan from the Bank of America International-led syndicate is less than asked for and on harder terms than usual. To add to all this is Poland's commitment to the Warsaw Pact and the arms expenditure this involves. Now, to thicken the plot, the strikers are obtaining an average of 15% in wages, which will add hundreds of millions to the wage bill. But enough of the dry bones. What about the living flesh?

NEW HORIZONS

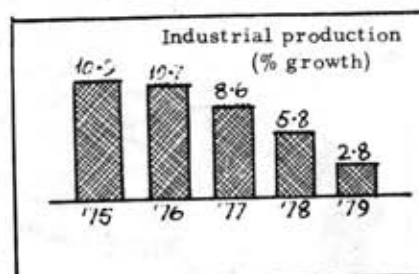
Although strikes in response to food price increases are by now almost a

THE EMPIRE

familiar event, the present struggle has broken entirely new ground in many ways. The most immediately noticeable difference to past strikes has been the lack of violence meted out by the state. Thus far there have been no instances of the extreme brutality of the past such as the 55 strikers shot dead in Gdansk or any use of the savage Golezdzinow squad who, in 1976, were drugged before being unleashed on the workers of Radom. Similarly, there have been no reports by the workers of the tearing up of railway lines or the storming and burning of the Radom regional Communist Party headquarters while singing the Internationale. In fact, at the negotiations with management at the Lenin shipyard at Gdansk this time round some workers sang the national anthem (!) Such a peaceful approach from both sides is unusual but seeing that, ultimately, strikers have the Red Army to confront, the lack of violence is immediately advantageous to the workers. It certainly has given more people the confidence to strike.

The form of stoppages is also new. According to reports, factory strikers have remained within the gates except on one occasion. Perhaps this started as a spontaneous understanding that to take to the streets risked being done over, but it now seems to be the standard tactic asked of strikers by the Self Defence Committee (KOR). A report in KOR's underground paper Robotnik (The Worker) quotes a striker as saying, "The authorities were waiting for us to go on the streets where they could denounce us as hooligans and beat us with truncheons. So instead we just sat quietly by our silent machines".

Staying in the workplace in force has itself led to new developments. Management have found it physically impossible to ignore the rank and file and this has meant the official union structure has been bypassed by directly elected shopfloor representatives. Officially, union representatives are elected when a chapter board resigns.



Source: Polish Govt.

STRIKES BACK



The Silent Docks at Gdansk

On resigning the board nominates three quarters of candidates for the single ballot list for the new board. But the new situation and the growing confidence of the strikers have led to them contemptuously ignoring the state unions.

At the Lenin shipyard at Gdansk an independent All-Poland Trade Union Congress has been elected consisting of representatives of 24 factories in the Gdansk region. (The Paris Commune shipyard in Gdansk has excluded Party members from election to their strike committee). This united front is to date the most coordinated attempt by the strikers at an organisational form with which to confront the party leadership head on. Immediately they issued a 16-point list of demands, many of which are explicitly political - right to strike, press freedom, recognition of unofficial strike committees, direct consultation with the Party leadership, release of political prisoners, access to the media. These demands come on top of the economic grievances which started the strike wave - no food price increases, wage rises, more consumer goods etc. Whilst the government has sent a commission under deputy prime minister Pyka to negotiate, Gierk has announced on national television that such political demands will not be met. At the time of writing this confrontation in Gdansk between organis-

ed labour and the bureaucrats looks like becoming the focal point of the strike wave and in such a test of nerves the odds are ultimately in favour of the government. For a number of days now communications with Gdansk have been cut off in an attempt to isolate the strikers.

However, the strikes are a national phenomenon and encompass virtually all sectors of the economy - manufacture, transport, services, textiles. The latest news is that some of the country's three million peasants are also beginning to organise to join in the protest. With an independent All-Poland TUC already off the ground and with KOR's experience and store of up-to-the-minute information plus the ability of the underground press to secure paper supplies at a time when even the Party publications are reducing circulation due to shortages, the organisation and channels of communication are such as to aid the spread of the protest.

THE PARTY

In such a situation the Party leadership is trying to appear as conciliatory as possible but cannot help but stand firm given their historical role. Some of the high-ups such as chief ideologist Lakaszewicz have given briefings to western correspondents acknowledging the extent of the mess. Others, such as prime minister Babuch, have gone on radio and admitted that strikes are taking place nationally and have promised that there will be no more price rises for at least a year. But it is significant that Gierk, who recently was briefed by Brezhnev in the Crimea and has, at the last minute, postponed a summit meeting with Schmidt, has in his first speech on the situation, been as hard line as can be expected. Even

so, there are pressures from within and outside the leadership which are pushing for greater reforms.

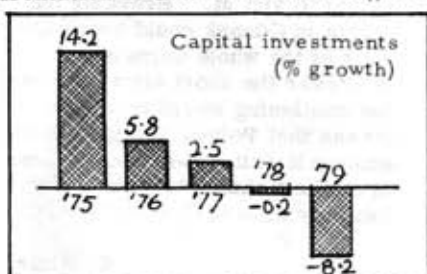
The liberals at the top see the rigidity of the past and the lack of political decentralisation as the cause of the present mess. These would like to see reforms such as the current strike committees becoming a permanent, independent, democratically elected union movement. Recently there was a Yugoslav ministerial delegation in Poland and no doubt the liberals expressed an interest in Yugoslav 'self-management' (so-called). The official Writers' Association published a bulletin earlier this month (August) describing censorship as 'humiliating' and 'contradictory to the basic principles of cultural policy'. On the other hand, conservatives cite a free press as being the one factor which most contributed to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Roman Catholic Church, too, is an influential force since the Pope's visit brought millions on to the streets last year, and although it keeps its mouth shut most of the time it too has hinted that reforms are desirable.

These contradictions in the leadership are another factor advantageous to the confidence of the workers, but as they would also be a prime reason for Soviet intervention should they become too great, Gierk can be expected to get firmer as the strikes drag on and become more organised and articulate.

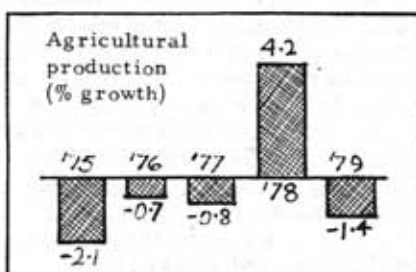
THE IMPERIALISTS

Until now the Kremlin has remained its usual stonily silent self but, obviously, it cannot sit idly by while one of its puppets undergoes its third major upheaval in a decade. At the moment events do not warrant, from an imperialist point of view, an invasion. Even if the situation becomes uncontrollable for the Polish leadership there are various factors which militate against intervention.

All this year there has been a massive ideological assault by the capitalist countries against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, culminating in the Olympic boycott. Relations with the west have not been so



Source: Polish Govt.



Source: Polish Govt.

Poland

bellicose since the Cold War. Also, there is intense nationalistic hatred of Russian imperialism by the Poles, stretching back a couple of hundred years. (This partly explains the singing of the national anthem at the Lenin shipyard). If an invasion took place the Polish army would not be likely to follow orders from Moscow and, in this respect, it is the internal security services which would have to be relied on by the Russians.

The Soviet presence in Poland is relatively small compared to other satellite states - two tank divisions and an 'air army' - but Poland is encircled by 20 Soviet divisions in East Germany, five in Czechoslovakia, 12 just over the border in the USSR itself and naval infantry in the Baltic. Should the Soviet Union intervene, then there would be fierce resistance and they would be likely to find themselves with another Afghanistan on their hands rather than another Czechoslovakia. This would heighten the present state of tension between the competing imperialists.

THE REST OF THE EMPIRE

Another aspect of the present turmoil is the way the Polish instability is affecting the rest of Russia's East European empire. These countries too cannot help but be suffering under the global economic crisis. (Certainly all of Eastern Europe will have poor harvests this year because of the rains). Only last month in East Germany a government economic directive was printed in full in all newspapers warning managers that they would not get away with unambitious economic targets and urging them to clamp down on worker absenteeism, tighten shopfloor discipline and reduce workers' claims for overtime pay. East Germany, like so many other countries, is having export problems.

Also of significance are the increasing defections from Czechoslovakia and Hungary to Austria. In the first seven months of the year 900 Czechs defected to Austria compared to 196 in the same period last year; 98 Hungarians arrived in June compared to 34 in June '79. This suggests increasing pressure in these countries and it will be of interest to see if the Polish workers' actions have set an example. The East German and Hungarian

media have released very little information on the Polish strikes although they have been acknowledged as having taken place.

THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

The attitude shown so far by capitalist governments, with the exception of West Germany, has been one of quietude. American State Department officials have merely said they are keeping an eye on events. But Schmidt of West Germany has been a picture of hypocrisy. Ideologically committed to a position of fundamental opposition to the Eastern Bloc, he has been shedding tears over the present strikes, no doubt worried by the thought that Poland may be forced to default on its repayments of Government-backed West German loans. He has called for more aid for the Polish Government (not a mention, of course, of the strikers' demands) and has just guaranteed a third of the DM 1.2 billion credit which Gierek was due to sign in West Germany this week. So not only are there grey hairs of anxiety sprouting in the Kremlin but also at the Bonn Chancellery, the Dresden Bank and in the City of London.

The trade union movements and political parties of the west are also keeping silent at the moment. To date not one anywhere has announced support for the Polish workers.

THE NEXT STEP

To conclude, it is necessary to ask where is all this leading? Without first hand and accurate information and given the rapidity of events it is difficult to say. By the time you read this the events described herein may have become irrelevant.

The rise of an independent union structure in Gdansk has made it plain to the state that the strikes won't fizzle out in localised inertia. It is this which has got Gierek off his arse and which has led to his firm stand. There is, in his own terms, no way in which he can concede to the political demands without undermining party hegemony, the one thing guaranteed to signal Russian intervention. The recuperative potential of such a rigid form of capitalism is limited and, in the present circumstances calls the bluff of both sides in the struggle. Introducing even minor reforms will set a tempting precedent for the workers who, following the logic of their demands,

would be obliged to push for more thus reproducing in sharper degrees the present struggle. Not introducing reforms will, at best in Gierek's terms, merely stifle the protest temporarily thereby giving the State a longer-term headache. Gierek's present hints at a party reshuffle are well-worn cosmetics and would serve no lasting purpose. He is a rat in a corner.

Keeping him cornered for the moment are the new unions. How far are they conscious that political circumstances limit the scope of reforms and economic circumstances will make any immediately accepted reforms impossible to maintain? That is, how much do they accept the present terms of reference of the negotiations and are they willing (or conscious of the need to) push things further? Even at this stage it is evident that the strike movement has its own contradictions and weaknesses which do not bode well for such a realisation. The Lenin shipyard, where 16,000 people work, started off with 8,000 in occupation. Within days this was reduced to 1,000 and these were mostly young people. On the first Sunday of the occupation the 4,000 who were at that time sitting-in, went to mass. Christ! (sic) This was a couple of days after the singing of the national anthem during negotiations with management. The factory gates are decorated with national flags and a picture of the Pope. Another contradiction can be seen from an incident which could have ended the Gdansk movement before it began. The Lenin shipyard committee, having had their economic demands met, agreed to go back to work and it was solely due to angry demands from the shopfloor that they stay out in solidarity with other Gdansk strikers, that the strike held. That is, the new unions are representational, not delegated, with all the potential for divisions that this entails. Also, the central position that the regional Gdansk movement has now assumed gives the Government its first clear target to aim at. Breaking the strike in Gdansk could break the back of the whole movement. Whatever the short term outcome, the continuing world recession means that Poland will stay in the economic shit and remain an area of explicit class struggle. We can only hope that this spreads.

A. Plier

PEOPLE

continued from page 1

to the Soviet state? (American technicians will sell theirs!)

Why is Poland in hock to American and West German banks? Because the Polish workers will not work for the Polish state. Why is the whole Soviet block rocking with economic chaos and dissent?

In part it is because the Soviets have never come up with the goods - in a capitalist sense. But also because they have never delivered the goods in a socialist sense. The cynical destruction of all the ideals of international communism; the callous tyranny which

has stamped out basic freedoms; the absolutely pointless sacrifice is not going to be continued. It has got to end.

For the Polish workers, the end is nigh. Clearly they are not going to go on working and living on someone else's terms. They are staging now one of the coolest and most intelligent operations against monstrous odds that any working class has ever managed. Every step they have taken - occupation rather than shouting on the streets; careful and steady organisation rather than adventurism; the use of their economic force in making undeniable demands rather than actions which would antagonise their national forces - all these have brought them to a situation where only the state can be seen to

be wrong, and where the state's men have had to come to them.

We write when the situation is still unresolved, and Soviet tanks are still not rolling. Perhaps they will... but the Kremlin has now to think about that massive Western investment in Polish industry.

So the Soviets must still remember the value of the Polish working class. And - dare we say it? - perhaps the Soviets, in these days of dissidents wanting to form 'free' trade unions in the USSR also - perhaps the men in the Kremlin are now looking over their own shoulders too.

For, behind the Polish people stand, maybe, the Soviet peoples - a completely unknown and forgotten factor.

up-date

As our correspondent overpage foresees, the situation in Poland is changing rapidly from day to day. Over the last week, not only has the hard-line Tadeusz Pyka been replaced as strike negotiator by Mieczysław Jagielski, but six other members of the Politburo have been forced to resign. These include Edward Babiuch who was replaced by the more liberal Josef Pinkowski, and the head of television and radio.

Reforms promised include recognition of the principle of free collective bargaining, new union elections by secret ballot, plus rather amusingly, the right to strike (!) Communications meanwhile have been restored between the Gdansk joint strike committee and the rest of the country.

Whether or not the promises will be kept remains to be seen, but British workers would do well to remember, despite the essentially political demands being made, with what enthusiasm news of them was given by the mass media at a time when British 'free' trade unions are themselves coming under increasing attack...

The strikers are meantime treating the government's concessions with justifiable caution; they are not going to be impressed by the sackings in Warsaw and have not yet returned to work. Let us only hope that, if they do manage to obtain their main demand of free trade



unions, they do not base them on the western models but look beyond these to workers' control through genuinely autonomous workers' councils.

LATEST STIRRINGS... The recently appointed head of the official unions has resigned and the strikes are spreading to the textile towns. Keep your ears open.....

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Malicious Hooligans (anti-nuclear), 1110 W 2nd St., Tempe, AZ 85281

California

Autonomia, PO Box 1751, San Francisco, CA 94101.
Libertarian Anarchist Coffeehouse, meets last Sunday each month at Cafe Commons, 3161 Mission St., San Francisco.

Minnesota

Soll of Liberty, Box 7056 Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, Minn. 55407.

Missouri

Columbia Anarchist League, PO Box 380, Columbia, Missouri 65201.

New York

Libertarian Book Club, Box 842, GPO New York, NY 10012.
SRAP/Freespace Alternative U, 339 Lafayette Street, New York City, NY 10012.

Texas

Houston SRAP, South Post Oak Station, PO Box 35253, Houston, TX 77035.

WESTERN EUROPE

Federal Republic of Germany

Baden: Karin Bauer, Info-Büro, Postfach 161, Baden.

Berlin: Anarkistisches Bund (publ. of 'anarkistische t texte', c/o Gebr. Schmeuk; c/o Libertad Verlag, Postfach 153, 1000 Berlin 44.

East Westfalen: (Anarchistische Föderation Ostwestfalen-Lippe): Wolfgang Fabisch, c/o Wohngemeinschaft Schwarzwurzel, Wöhrener Str. 136, 4970 Bad Oeyjhausen 2.

'Gewaltfreie Aktion' groups throughout FRG, assoc. with WRI. For info. write Karl-Heinz Sang, Methfesselstr. 69, 2000 Hamburg 19.

France

Federation anarchiste française, 3 rue Ternaux, 75011 Paris. (Groups throughout France.)

Union Anarchiste, 9 rue de P'Ange, 63000 Clermont Ferrand.

AUSTRALIA

Australian Capital Territory
Research & Resources Centre for
Libertarian Politics and Alternative
Life-Styles, 7/355
Northmore Ave., Lyneham,
A.C.T. 2602

New South Wales

Black Ram, PO Box 238, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010.
Disintegrator! PO Box 290, Bondi Junction, Sydney.
Sydney Anarcho-Syndicalists,
Jura Books Collective,
417 King Street, Newtown,
NSW 2042.

Queensland

Libertarian Socialist Organisation, PO Box 268, Mount Gravatt, Central 4122.
Self-Management Organisation, PO Box 332, North Quay.

South Australia

Adelaide Anarchists, PO Box 67, North Adelaide 5006.

Victoria

La Trobe Libertarian Socialists, c/o SRC, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic.3083.
Monash Anarchist Society, c/o Monash University, Clayton, 3168 Melbourne.
Libertarian Workers for a Self Managed Society, PO Box 20, Parkville 3052.

Western Australia

Freedom Collective, PO Box 14, Mount Hawthorn 6016.
Libertarian Resource Centre, PO Box 203, Fremantle 6160.

Tasmania

c/o 34 Kennedy Street, Launceston 7250.

NEW ZEALAND

PO Box 2042, Auckland.
PO Box 22, 607 Christchurch.
Daybreak Bookshop, PO Box 5424, Dunedin.

CANADA

Open Road, Box 6135, Station G, Vancouver B.C.

Italy

Autogestione, Casella Postale 17127, 1-20100 Milano.

Gruppo Hem Day, c/o Giovanni Trapani, via A. Tittoni 5, 00153 Roma.

The Netherlands

De Vrije Socialist, Postbus 411, Utrecht.

SCANDINAVIA

Denmark

Aarhus: Regnbuen Anarkist Bogcafe, Mejlgade 48, 8000 Aarhus.

Copenhagen: Anarkist Syndicalist Bogcafe, Studiestræde 18, 1455 Copenhagen.
Rainbow Anarchists of the Free City of Christiana, c/o Allan Anarchos, Tinghuset, Fristaden Christiana, 1407 Copenhagen.

Sweden

Syndikalist Forum, Tenstiernas Gata 51, 11631 Stockholm.

Syndikalistiskt Forum (Anarcho-Syndicalist bookshop), Husagatans 5, 41302 Gothenburg (tel. 031-132504).

Norway

ANORG (ANarchist ORGni...) Høxtvedtv. 31B, 1431 As, Norway. Folkebladet (Peoples Paper) four times a year.

FINLAND

Anarkistiryhmä, c/o Terttu Pesonen, Neljas Linja 14 D 83, 00530 Helsinki 53.

Meetings

London Workers' Group Meeting
WORK AVOIDANCE Theory and Practice of Skiving on the Job.
Tuesday 2nd September 8pm
Metropolitan Pub 95 Farringdon Road London.

Solidarity (Manchester) are holding a series of monthly meetings starting in September at the 'Star and Garter' pub Fairfield Street near Picadilly BR Station on the 19th September, 17th October, 14th November and 12th December. Subjects include patriarchy, nuclear energy, African nationalism and microtechnology. For more information write to Solidarity c/o 8a Hector Road Manchester 13.

GRAFFITI
CORNER

THIS BUILDING IS
TESTIMONY TO BRITISH RAIL'S
CORPORATE VANDALISM AND
BOARD COUNCIL'S LACK OF
CARE AND LACK OF VISION

(Seen on Sudbury station
c. 1980)

ANARCHY IS
AGAINST THE LAW

The politics of liberation:



"You watch the pigs while I keep an eye on the Trots"

from class to culture

IT was not so long ago that to pose the question of the nature of 'the libertarian problematic' must have seemed a rather quixotic undertaking. Where could such a 'problematic' be situated? In the dreams of survivors of long-dead labour movements? In the fantasies of concocters of utopian visions? True, libertarian practice had never wholly died, but a once historically momentous movement had certainly dwindled to practical insignificance. The once heroic idea that moved masses seemed relegated to the realm of nostalgia, if not that of science fiction. Anarchism had never been abolished, despite even the efforts of those dictatorial regimes that had striven so hard to annihilate it and all its adherents. Yet, ironically, it certainly seemed well on the road to withering away.

Yet dormant historical forces have to slumber somewhere, and it is perhaps appropriate that this one retreated temporarily into the sphere of the imagination. It is no doubt better to have imagination without a movement than a movement without imagination. Perhaps now we can have both. For to the surprise of practically all observers (excepting the small remnant of believers and visionaries) the movement began its return to the historical stage in the late 60s. It now becomes possible to speculate that anarchism is capable of being much more than a noble dream, and, in fact, that its future role in history will make its past appear to be only faltering first steps, a minor episode in its evolution.

What basis is there for such a hope?

While it is true that only a generation ago anarchism had been (to use the language of bureaucrats) "taken off the agenda", the time may be coming when it is capable of forcing its way back on the agenda, perhaps rewriting it, and maybe even tearing it up. It seems that we are now at a juncture in history in which the relevant problems begin to pose themselves, the concrete historical project begins to take form, and the problematic therefore begins to situate itself in the real world.

The two reigning world ideologies are now definitively revealing their bankruptcy. For the masses, whether they be subjected to capitalist or socialist systems of domination, the old faith is entering a period of deep crisis. The growing mood of these masses is one of cynicism and hopelessness, dangerous dispositions for all ideologies founded on the myth of unlimited progress and worldly messianism. This is not to say that people no longer accept; yet they accept with ill-natured resignation and poorly disguised resentment. They are quickly moving to the point at which a new set of options begins to arise: not capitalism or socialism, but rather fanaticism or rebellion. Either unprecedented depths of bad faith and self-deception, or the recognition of the brokenness of the old symbolic structures. Either the kind of mindless, spiritless dogmatism which is required to perpetuate a dead religion, or the creative negation of illusions which have been revealed for what they are. Perhaps for the first time human beings (and not merely theorists) begin to see the essential opposition not as that between one ideology and another, but between ideology and reality. As Nietzsche prophetically saw, the naked power relationships which underlie all ideologies, no matter how "democratic", "humanist", or "socialist" are finally being revealed, and the terrifying prospect of conscious choice lies before us.

In the context of this decay of traditional ideologies, both of the Right and of the Left, the task of formulating the libertarian problematic takes on increasing urgency. The question is whether the libertarian movement will shake off its own attachment to the remnants of these moribund ideologies, and give some sort of conscious direction to the construction of a new social reality, or whether it will pass up this opportunity for making its contribution to the break with past forms of domination. While we can point to both "objective" and "subjective" factors which constitute the material social and psychological basis for the developing crisis of the dominant world systems

(depletion of resources, ecological stress, economic stagnation resistance to neocolonialism, internal social disintegration, decline of repressive structures of motivation, weakening of institutional legitimacy, etc.), the importance of the emerging struggle cannot be underestimated, since there is no assurance that alternative liberatory possibilities will be developed, except in so far as adequate theoretical and practical agents of social transformation are created. We cannot rely on some inexorable march of history to save us if our own historical self-transformation is a failure. Furthermore, as the prevailing patterns of domination become increasingly threatened by internal disintegration and external challenges, the amount of overt psychological and physical force which will be used to maintain them can only be expanded. For this reason there is growing truth in the old saying that the new society must be created within the shell of the old—both because the old must be transformed as rapidly as possible into a mere shell, which is increasingly perceived as a contrivance, a mechanism, and a barrier to human development; and because this relative unreality must be placed in contrast to the new society's growing fullness and reality.

If this does not occur, we will once again revert to the patterns of the past, although perhaps in even more destructive forms. On the one hand, a critically unconscious and underdeveloped radicalism, which is itself a mere reaction, will generate an entrenched reactionary dogmatism that will secure itself through even greater repression. Or, on the other hand, should such a radicalism succeed in harnessing the energies of fear and frustration, we will see more "revolutions" which themselves turn out to be the most advanced transformations of the old forms of domination. After having observed the history of this century we should not be at all shocked by the idea that underdeveloped and one-sided "revolutionary" activity can be a powerful contributor to the conquest of power by the authoritarian forces of both Right and Left. In fact, we must recognize that the fetishism of "the Revolution" has itself been one of the most powerful mechanisms of domination.

What, then, is the libertarian response to this historical predicament? It seems to me that there are two lines of development within the libertarian left, or, more specifically, the social anarchist movement, which have deep historical roots, and which are presently reemerging as distinct currents. On the one hand there are those who continue to conceive of the project of social emancipation primarily in terms of the mode of production, economic class analysis and class struggle. On the other, there are those whose approach is more multi-dimensional, and might be described as a cultural orientation. Both perspectives find numerous adherents at present within the libertarian political movements of both the United States and Western Europe, although the relative strength of the two factions varies considerably from country to country.

In the United States the libertarian tradition of class-based organization and strategy can be traced back to the European immigrant labor movements of the late 19th century and also to the largely native-American revolutionary syndicalism of the IWW. The ideas of these movements coincided on many major points with the principles of European anarchosyndicalist and revolutionary syndicalist movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The roots of domination are seen to lie above all in capitalism and the state. The essential project is to organize the working class into a force which can successfully overthrow the state, the effective power behind economic exploitation, the paradigm for, and root cause of, all forms of domination. When the workers succeed in fulfilling their historical mission, either through insurrection ("the Revolution") or economic class action ("the General Strike") a new economic order based on self-management can be established, and with it a society of equality, freedom, and justice. The story is quite familiar, for this faith once exerted powerful force in much of Southern Europe and Latin America, in the days before the labor movements in these areas became dominated by Marxism and reformism, or were crushed by Fascism. The unique American contribution was the version presented by the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World), who sought to develop an even more radically

economistic program based entirely on economic class analysis, and in which the religious and political questions so central to European anarcho-syndicalism were rather unrealistically (yet appropriately for an American movement) relegated to the domain of "private opinion". For the Wobblies, the picture presented of the future society was that of a world organized economically by the workers according to the IWW system of industrial unions. Thus there was no antistate line—members were free to participate in political activity, to refrain from it, or to oppose it, so long as their political stance did not intrude into the One Big Union. The IWW thus sought to form a broadly-based class alliance, a kind of radical version of American pragmatism, attained at the expense of coherence and comprehensiveness on the levels of both theory and strategy. Yet despite these problems and ambiguities, for a long time it was, and to an extent still is, within the IWW that numerous libertarians chose to work, especially after the possibilities for organizing large and enduring immigrant anarchosyndicalist movements failed to materialize.

The second current, which I have called the cultural orientation, has always existed as part of the American libertarian tradition, and, given the relative weakness of class-based organizations in the United States, it has been disproportionately strong in comparison to its place in the European movements. Thus in the 19th century the communitarian movement was an important sphere of libertarian activity, in which a myriad of problems of everyday life, including many issues related to sexuality, child-raising, and small group decision-making were confronted. Although the Nineteenth Century communities remained peripheral to American society, they have been a continual source of inspiration for the renewal of the movement for communalism. In the twentieth century, this tradition was carried on by a number of groups which emphasized cooperative production, decentralization, and, often, non-violent patterns of living. Movements like the Catholic Worker and the School of Living were among those that perpetuated such values. But it was in the 1960s, with the emergence of the Counterculture, that this tendency became once again a central focus of libertarian creative activity. The explosive growth of communalism was only one area in which libertarian cultural developments began to take place. For strong libertarian impulses underlay much of the activity in the many movements for liberation which then proliferated—the free school and alternative education movement, children's liberation, women's liberation, gay liberation, radical psychiatry, ecology, black liberation, the Native American movement, the antiwar movement, the student movement, the co-op movement, the alternative media, and the development of neighbourhood organization. Although these movements were diverse in makeup, they all contained significant currents emphasizing participation, decentralization, cooperative modes of interaction, and liberation from entrenched patterns of domination. Furthermore, the Counterculture itself (which might be seen as a more generalized movement for social recreation, only partially overlapping with these more particularized movements) exhibited a strong cultural dimension, stressing the importance of consciousness, values, and personality structure, and raising questions about the repressive/liberatory implications of forms of language, communication, music, art, and the symbolic dimension in general.

In short, a kind of libertarian proto-culture began to develop, and it was in many ways one of the most advanced foreshadowings of what a future libertarian society may be. Yet it was, unfortunately, merely a foreshadowing—more a revelation of possibilities than an achievement of actualities. Its roots were not deep in American society. It was too much a product of fortuitous events and ephemeral conditions. It embodied a positive vision to a degree, but on the whole it was still shaped by immediate negativity, by a largely unreflective, undeveloped (as it said, "gut") reaction against the dominant culture. It lacked a sense of history to the extent of a failure to grasp even the very forces which created it, or those with which it contended. It failed to comprehend the magnitude of the power of commodification, and the dominance of the code of values of the spectacle. It was therefore an easy prey for absorption

into the spectacular system. It was theoretically impoverished and incoherent, as is not surprising given its fragmented, rather than totalistic, nature. It was capable of giving rise to brilliant insights and brave experiments, yet could not reach the needed synthesis that would give it strength and durability. In short, it developed many of the materials necessary to create a libertarian culture, but could not become such a culture.

The result was the 70s, and its disintegration and recuperation. It is possible to argue that many of the gains of the 60s were preserved, or that some of the values which emerged took root and even developed further during the next decade. And it is true that we cannot judge historical evolution by the content of media coverage. Yet for those who saw intimations of a movement toward a culture founded on libertarian and communal values, the 70s could only be pervaded by a sense of failed possibilities. The period of humanization of work, black mayors (and even black Republican mayors!), women executives, 'decriminalization' of marijuana, porno theaters, Gov. Jerry Brown, Quaker natural Cereal, and Friends of the Earth. In short, the confrontation between the old reality and, as it has been aptly put, 'artificial negativity'. If we are fortunate enough to fight off the old patterns of domination - nationalism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc - which seem to be making a powerful comeback lately, we are confronted with the alternative of a perfected society of commodity consumption - one in which all achieve the equal right to be commodity consumers and to offer themselves as commodities to be consumed.

What is the libertarian response to this dilemma? Is it a revival of class politics, a new attempt at cultural transformation, or some synthesis of the two?

First, it should be understood that the traditional politics of class struggle had in its own way a cultural dimension, and, even more, that it embodied an implicit view of humanity and nature. From its perspective, the person is above all a worker, a producer. The great tragedy of history is therefore seen to lie in the fact that the workers, who produce all the goods necessary for life and well-being, and on whose activity the future progress of society depends, are robbed of the benefits of their production. Work is the essential means toward social progress: the liberation of humanity from want, from bondage to nature. Being a worker is therefore a virtue, while being a non-worker is a vice, inseparable from exploitation. The problem is to transform all people into workers, and to gain for these workers control over production - to establish universal self-management. When this is attained the utopia of production will be achieved. As the IWW put it, "all the good things in life" - meaning products and services, the "goods" - will no longer be monopolized by the capitalists, but will be shared by all.

This ideology, while encompassing a bitter attack on capitalism and those who benefit from its system of exploitation, is, in spite of itself, a particular formulation of the productivist ideology of developing capitalism - the version formulated from the perspective of the working class (and it should be remembered that the proletariat, like the bourgeoisie, is an eminently capitalist class). On almost all key points it is identical with the early capitalist project of salvation through material production. In a sense it is the protestant version of the religion of production - the hierarchy is to be overthrown, yet the faith remains firmly embedded in the consciousness, the conscience, and even the unconscious of each believer.

This faith still lives on; yet the irony is that it is an ideology that capitalism is itself in the process of transcending. It should therefore be no surprise that its proletarian version is increasingly confronted with reactions ranging from unclassconscious yawns to class-collaborationist sneers on the part of the toiling masses. For late capitalist society has increasingly passed further into the realm of the values of consumption, and into the sphere of domination by the commodity. The cult of the working class and salvation through labor appears increasingly less appealing in a society in which work becomes more and more fragmented and abstract, in which class membership becomes less clearly defined and less central to social identity, and in which privatized consumption becomes the ultimate refuge for a desocialized individual.



' WE'RE ALL GUILTY! '

In a society in which the will to power is increasingly channeled in the direction of commodity consumption, not only the old class politics but even the most seemingly radical social theories have quickly revealed their impotence. For example, Wilhelm Reich was able to confront capitalism with the explosive issue of instinctual repression, bringing into question not only the reigning economic system, but also the state and patriarchy. Yet, capital has shown itself to be quite capable of moving beyond the stage of instinctual repression, at least on its own terms, and achieving what Marcuse called "repressive desublimation", as has become especially clear in the 70s. So it can sponsor its own versions of sexual revolution, not to mention its own varieties of women's liberation and minority rights. Liberation comes to mean rebellion against all the obsolete social forms which restrain the process of commodification. In its most radical forms it demands equality - the right to consume and be consumed without discrimination.

The prevailing system of domination seems to have almost infinite capacity to recuperate critical thought and practice. Should we therefore fall into the mood of despair and resignation that seems to be so fashionable lately? Should we seek to profit from the current market value of the kind of chastened idealism that can even masquerade as a new 'philosophy'? I believe that before we succumb to disillusionment or begin to market our lost illusions, we should consider the possibility that our critique has often been less than critical, and that our practice has been left lamentably underdeveloped. For the mainstream of the Left, while it challenged the system of domination in many ways, still defined its problematic in terms of the politics of class struggle, and therefore still accepted many of the pre-suppositions of authoritarian society. Thus, even in its best historical moments it remained largely uncritical of the industrial system of technology and the project of human domination of nature.

The libertarian problematic today is, of course, to develop a coherent, systematic and thoroughly critical view of reality, and a practice adequate to transform reality in accord with this vision. If we are successfully to challenge the system of domination, we must achieve an understanding of reality as a whole, including the total symbolic universe by which we interpret and indeed construct reality. Consequently we must confront a multitude of questions of ontology, social theory, and psychology.

Continued on page 15

TOWARDS THE

Foreword

If the country were ever faced with an immediate threat of nuclear war, a copy of this booklet would be distributed to every household as part of a public information campaign which would include announcements on television and radio and in the press. The booklet has been designed for free and general distribution in that event. It is being placed on sale now for those who wish to know what they would be advised to do at such a time.

Protect and Survive. HMSO. 50p. Central office of information 1980.

It is our opinion that people not already converted to Anarchism can become upset when confronted with the States Official Secrets. Therefore non-Anarchists reading this review should perhaps stop reading now or politely avert their eyes when we get down to the nitty gritty bits. For it is essential to breach the Official Secrets Act in reviewing an instruction booklet that omits more than it says. We are told that the booklet has been stockpiled since the early fifties and distribution has been held over in the 'national interest'. But increasing leaks sparked off by the Cruise missile debate have caused the authorities to release the thing. They might have saved their energy. Its authors (and one suspects them of being experts in propaganda rather than nuclear warfare) should be stood up in the public pillories and questioned in depth. In fact it's the one book we've read that seriously poses the question of society's wisdom in abolishing the rack.

But let's start at basics. The only reason that Britain maintains an independent nuclear warforce is that it gives our leaders a place at the top table. That's it. There is no other reason. It's a major bargaining aid that can be traded off in various economic deals, territorial arrangements and forces others to share information with us. Dismiss all this talk about deterrence, SALT, independence and strategy all of which is highly lucrative (and taken over by jobs-for-the-boys).

Throughout the booklet there is the well worn infantile trust in authority that we found most irritating of all: 'Your own local authority will be best able to help', 'If you live in a caravan your local authority will be able to advise you . . .', 'listen to the radio for instructions . . .', and, more ominously, 'if no instructions have been received within five days . . .' (Does this mean they've all been wiped out? Have they all gone at last?)

Anyway let's begin; Or rather where the booklet does not begin. The first part of any nuclear explosion is a huge heat producing FLASH. It has been described as something that lights up the back of your eyelids' by observers protected by a glass screen and with their backs turned away. Thus before you are caught up with the falling masonry and gamma radiation you are going to have a good part of the population staggering about in various states of blindness. Such unfortunate symptoms are naturally exacerbated should the flash occur at night when the pupils of the eyes are dilated.

If there is structural damage from the attack you may have some time before a fall-out warning to do minor jobs to keep out the weather - using curtains or sheets to cover broken windows or holes.

The flash, as a bonus, also generates heat of such intensity that it will toast your bread at ten miles (as the Cruise flies, geddit!). It will light up curtains, trees, grass and if there's a stiff breeze about (which there will be soon afterwards mate) you have a massive firestorm on your hands. All that lot with its implications and the booklet sums it up with the help of three commas in two sentences on page five:

Heat and Blast

The heat and blast are so severe that they can kill, and destroy buildings, for up to five miles from the explosion. Beyond that, there can be severe damage.



Following the flash - and again there is no mention of this - you are in for a blast of such proportions that you will wonder what hit you. In fact there's no need to wonder, you'll be hit by motor cars, buses, trees, people, glass, slates, cows or bits thereof. Speeds in excess of 300 mph have been recorded three miles from the crater lip. Masons amongst you should not despair. The blast creates a form of vacuum and the displaced air rushes back (at a lesser intensity) to the centre picking up the stuff not previously lodged in the side of more solid structures.

And of course what differentiates a nuclear bomb from an ordinary drop and plop, apart from its sheer force, is good old radiation. And here the booklet is at its best, which isn't saying much. We learn that radiation can't be seen, smelt, felt or boiled away. The only defence is to put thick material between yourself and the fall-out. And one can only presume that you don't get thicker protection than a few hundred feet of earth in an underground lead-lined bunker where your local authority is holed up waiting to give you instructions.

One can't help feeling that this little booklet is altogether a little too cosy, almost as if we were being softened up for something. Almost all the information given would have been more applicable to blitz-torn Britain in 1940. It's all too easy to conjure up a mental picture of retired Colonels planning out the spectacle of the results of the ultimate in State barbarism. Little maps underground with radiation scales culled from other bunkers while upstairs there are a handful of slobbering mutants scratching for frogs amongst strange green coloured puddles.

Let's move on with some workpoints that are composed of unstated facts, unanswered questions and items for further research.

1. If another State sees another preparing its population for war, i.e. announcing on TV that you should now start painting your windows and taking off your doors; is it not likely that they will pre-empt your pre-emptive strike with a strike of their own.

2. The whole concept of nuclear warfare is based on SURPRISE. The great mass of Britain, when it comes to the crunch will simply be abandoned by the authorities.

3. Whole areas of the country will be too radioactive to risk entry for anything up to several weeks after the blast. Will the authorities risk sending in whatever rescue teams they may have to patch up trapped pensioners. A procedure far more likely is the setting up of no-go areas where would be escapees are shot.

4. If they do go in, ones morale is not particularly boosted by the fact the only those 'after comparatively simple hospital treatment and can play a part in the survival of the nation will be given priority' (MOD Supplement No3 to Civil First Aid (1962)). Again when you are trapped beneath the remains of a

CRATER LIP

double deck bus and pus from the rotting passengers is seeping down on your chin and you are kicking yourself for not voting for the Peter Shore/George Brown Coalition of 1982 take solace from the knowledge that the authorities have abandoned you.

5. The disposal of millions of overkilled corpses that litter the place up is a real problem for the authorities. After all they have to surface sometime and it wouldn't do for their reconnaissance officers to come back infected with plague would it. About the only other kind of species underground that stand an ongoing chance of survival are the rats in the sewers. At least their intentions are honest. They will not abandon you.

6. The booklet presumes that there will be one single explosion. What ho a further strike after a few hours or days later. One can feel for the poor bastards illustrated on page 23 entombed under their kitchen table for twelve days; 'Only two days to go before the booklet says we can come out and another flash erupts over the hill.

7. Any State planning a nuclear offensive must have a few brigades of mop-up troops whose task it will be to flush out key installations that have been planned to survive the blast. Unused missile silos would be an obvious target that would require neutralising by hand under certain conditions. We are acutely reminded of the Siberian Infantry Divisions that took Berlin at the end of WW11. They were not nice people. Such a force would remain in the occupied state lest they introduce further contamination back home.

8. Why no mention of Chemical Warfare in the booklet? Its results are much cleaner for an enemy intent on territorial gains but its success is much dependent on climatic behaviour. All troops undergoing chemical warfare training are equipped with injectable tablets of Atropine which are pinned to the chest of their rubber monkey suits. Atropine is given in a dose of 2mg. intramuscularly when the first symptoms of Nerve Agent exposure become apparent. These are: running nose, streaming eyes, shivering, abdominal pains, vomiting, loss of bladder control, fits and so on to death from exhaustion from increasingly severe recurring fits.

The Canadian Army developed a small gun that on being punched against the thigh through clothing injected the required dose.

Although the booklet doesn't actually mention it we are certain that your local councillor is ready to distribute Atropine packs geared to adult and child dosages as soon as he gets the nod from Fylingdales Early Warning Station.

9. The symptoms of radiation sickness have been well documented. What has not been emphasised fully has been the feeling of general malaise. One could imagine hunting for frogs with ulcerated arms and the knowledge that your liver has got a half life of two months but not with a feeling of profound malaise. Its something worse than when you were peaking in a bad bout of flu with a temperature of 103 and you just wanted to curl up and die.

At home



All at home must go to the fall-out room and stay inside the inner refuge, keeping the radio tuned for Government advice and instructions.

10. Before your middle class friends invest in a fall out shelter, ask them to imagine the scene after the blast. Other people

who ain't got one may want to pop in for a drink of your water. Such guests may not be nice people. They could have horrid radiation burns and be unwilling to go through your decontamination procedure. They may be armed with clubs or guns. They may even be from the council estate. If you are into fall out shelters make sure they can't be opened from the outside, and that includes the walls and the floor.

So much for humour. Perhaps we can get down to talking about prevention. The Key to it all is contained earlier on where we put forward the real reason for Britain having a mobile Cruise missile force, thus knowingly making the whole country a total target. What we are talking about are people in positions of power from whatever persuasion. If we only throw our energies into anti-nuclear campaigns then we are not attacking the root cause of this sorry mess. The Key to it all must be exposure. We must discover the whereabouts of these underground bunkers, after all it may be you whose mouth is ulcerated from thirst.

As members of a team dedicated to practical action arising out of theory we offer the following story to show what can be done.

Doreen dressed me up as a student of architecture. Pencils and pens in the top pocket, a snuff coloured duffle coat and a folded copy of the Guardian under my arm. I then approached Manchester Central Library with a request that I was researching building materials and could I examine plans of contemporary buildings erected since 1960 in Manchester. It takes time but I was referred to various departments and eventually ended up with a sweet young thing in the Arts Section. I was amused to learn that the Planning Dept. had said that the library must seek permission before showing certain plans to enquirers. 'Do you mean Prisons and Airports?' said I thinking that there was an obvious security reason. But no, the library didn't have plans for those kind of buildings. But by a process of elimination we

Everything within a certain distance of a nuclear explosion will be totally destroyed. Even people living outside this area will be in danger from -

worked out that there are no plans or information whatsoever on Manchester's Crown Court (built in 1964). In a subsequent pose as tourists we were unable to gain any admission to the lower floors at the Crown Court itself.

It wasn't long after that by a curious coincidence that Doreen met (in Dot Perkins of all places) a friend who knew this bloke who had been working on the original foundations and reported a large tunnel that led to the Police Station and had a most elaborate 'air conditioning' system.

Millions marched against the bomb twenty years ago and the only time the authorities were caused alarm was when the Spies for Peace blew their cover in exposing the Regional Seats of Government. The lessons of then stand even stronger today. In fact its your civic duty to go out there and collate as much information as you can and feed the information out. Someday it may be useful to a broken mutant who was perhaps once a proud dignified human being who sought nothing more than to lead a trouble free life.

Meanwhile the Clitheroe (West) Anarchist Group passed a recent resolution on nuclear warfare. Should we survive the initial blast then we are off into the 'ulu', a bottle of Bells finest in each hand, staggering and singing the old songs on a mad reckless journey towards the crater lip, soaking up the gamma rays and sticking two fingers up at the periscopes coming up from under the ground. Perhaps then, when the first symptoms of chronic diarrhoea establish themselves will we find a use for the Governments little booklet.

Doreen Frampton SRN
Peter Good

Further reading

A booklet, *Nuclear Weapons* (ISBN 0 11 340557 X), published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, is also available. It contains detailed information about the effects of nuclear weapons and will be of interest to those who wish to further their knowledge of the subject.

canteen dec. Workers for the use of

There are within these small islands basements, cellars and caverns measureless to the bureaucrats that contain art treasures literally beyond price. Beyond price because it is doubtful that even within our free market of criminal laissez-faire capitalism it would be possible to find a buyer. To quote but one small example and that is the Courtauld Collection that was given to the people two, or over two, years ago by Count Antoine Seilern and can be priced at over £100 million pounds. It contains 23 Rubens, 3 Michaelangelos, and the work of artists ranging from Picasso to Durer. Casson of the Royal Academy has fought to get his foot into Somerset House for his own R. A. 19th and 20th century bumph but Tory Heseltine has now decided that the Count's collection, to we the many headed, shall be housed in Somerset House so Hugh of the R. A. will have to sit and brood among all his Victorian rhubarb.

These paintings held in bondage by the Courtauld are the common property of the common people and men and women could live out their working lives and never know of the existence of these works of art. Already like scavenger dogs the American museums are on the scent and the Getty museum in California has already offered £7 000 000 for a single altar piece and I do not recall anyone asking my permission to sell any of these works of art so we are not talking peanuts man but money man money. One can play the cynic and say that if we do not know if our phone is tapped by the Special Branch, if we could afford a hired phone, or who orders American Trident missiles or even if the Third World War will begin three minutes after reading this line how can we be expected to know that over a £100 000 000 of public property is stored out of public sight and the answer is that with the slightest hint of information to demand to know to demand to know for make no mistake about this comrades every politician in office, every head of every great Establishment institution is no more than a clerk in office. Their pay may be higher than yours and their legally enforceable authority may appear and probably is greater than that of the common people in the short term but like the factory labourer they are disposable by the very authority that gave them their power and if they do not believe me then ask the one-time king of Britain the Duke of Windsor, ask Nixon, ex-president of These United States, ask Edward Heath or ask the brooding heads of London Transport who were sacked by a clownish politician for they will tell you that today the glory tomorrow signing on at the local Labour Exchange. Today was Press day within the National Gallery and we were there, no more than a dozen, to gaze at Lord Leighton's huge 'Perseus on Pegasus' and to drink the wine and to laugh with Molly and to discuss the iniquities of waiting for payment for free-lance work but laughter was the mood of the hour. Lord Leighton was a good, solid Victorian hack who became wealthy through his paintings for his market was the new rich middle class industrialists and both sides were happy in that Lord Leighton rode in his carriage to the bank with their money and they got your actual work of art in a gilded frame to prove its value so noone was harmed, that is of course only the small children who spent their brief lives working in the darkness of the expanding coal mines or were worked to death in the Victorian satanic mills standing shoulder to knee with their mother and their father to provide the wealth to buy all the tasteless bric a brac for a new class seeking a new culture among the decaying refuse of the old. Of Leighton's painting what can one say? It never rises above the level of a well painted cinema poster and like a cinema poster in fantastically reduced reproduction it looks impressive but then so do the posters for Apocalypse Now. Perseus the man is a good solid piece of academic work, Pegasus the horse is shoddily painted over good draftsmanship, but rocks, background, robe and sea are just slack bad painting. The state honoured Leighton by making him me-Lord and planting him complete with angina in St Paul's Cathedral and one would hold that all in all it is a small matter concerning a minor artist who harmed no one and gave pleasure with his small talent but I feel that the error,

and it is a grave error, is this. We in London have a great choice of what is good, bad or indifferent and we are forced to make our own value judgements and this luxury is denied the men and women and children in the provinces and by the nature of the money market they are given only the third rate on which to base and build their standards. Leighton's seven foot diameter happy time daub is but a passing pleasant hour among all the magnificent artistic wealth of the National Gallery. One is interested, one forms a judgement and accepts it as a piece of solid Victorian hack work and is pleased that the National Gallery gives us this opportunity to see it. The worthy burghers of Berlin would probably render us the same thanks if we shipped the Albert Memorial over to them for a month but this huge painting in its great gilded frame is on loan from the Leicestershire City and Art Galleries and on the screen of my memory I see all the walls of all those provincial museums that I have wandered through and all that Victorian dross wall-papering their walls and the tragedy is that it should be so for the people in the provinces are forced by economic reasoning to accept third rate cultural standards and it should not be so and my advice to the politicians of



"What's the SPECIAL today Molly?"

"Egg and Sausage with Chips and a Tomato with a choice of Rubens and Brueghel or a Chardin Still Life."

Leicestershire is to dump this huge daub on one of the London dealers specialising in camp Victoriana and in the name of that minority of your citizens who deserve better try and buy a handful of watercolours or etchings of the eighteenth century honoured by time and the dealers stamp but the Bond Street latrine gossip tells me this very day that another plush London gallery is opening and that it is the Rothschild money that is behind the coming boom in Lord Leighton's paintings so rate-cutting politics is the order of the day, then to hell with art standards and the questing mind and hang on to Pegasus by his badly painted tail. But what about the workers, you cry, raising slightly hysterical laughter in the cricket club or being remembered as the college or university wit of the 1980s and it all ties in, comrades, for one walks from the National Gallery Board Room as Lord Leighton sinks into the sunset on on to view Ruben's 'Samson and Delilah'. Bought by the National Gallery for over £2,000,000 it is a great sombre work and is a fair example of Rubens' obsession with boneless flesh. Is it worth over £2,000,000?

And the answer is yes but bite your knuckles on the £230,000 that Sothebys charged for hawking this Rubens to you. But in that same tourist-packed gallery within the National Gallery is a painting, nay three paintings, that are the property of the British Rail, lads and lasses, and I doubt if they know of them or if they did they would ever see them. The small Chardin is a brilliant small still-life and as an example of craftsmanship is a pure painter's painting but it is the British Rail Superannuation Fund purchase of a small Rubens that had the book-keepers heavy breathing over their ledgers. It is 'Landscape with Pan and Syrinx' and it has little value as a work of art for it is the type of studio work that any competent apprentice should have been capable of. A rush job in a slow season. Its value is historical in that two major painters worked on the same canvas. Breughel with his small brush strokes painted the birds, the bees and the flowers and trees for the background and Rubens with his thicker heavier brush strokes painted his usual rape theme. These three paintings are on loan to the National Gallery but I will swear that the clerks and the rank and file of British Rail will never see them if they never visit London and the National Gallery or have no knowledge of these paintings bought in their name. I hold that it is the

moral duty of those who control the British Rail Superannuation Fund, and I am talking in millions of £££, to have hundreds of well-framed, full-size 22½ x 37½ inches reproductions of these to be hung in every canteen. Works of art should not be allowed to decay in basements and if they are held in the name of the working people then let the working people demand to see what they own if only in reproduction. It can be done. There in the National Gallery hang the mutilated fragments of Manet's 'Execution of the Emperor' and after long years of a single battle I still claim the credit for the reassembling of those fragments within a single frame and I posed before Manet's broken painting and Molly laughed but the point that I am making, comrades, is that you who work on British Rail now know that you own a Rubens, Breughel, Tiepolo and Chardin so demand and demand and demand to see them, if only in well-framed reproductionssssssssssss.

Zauberflote
daubigny
schmuck

ARTHUR MOYSE

THE POLITICS OF LIBERATION

Continued from page 11

Fortunately, libertarian thought has been moving slowly but consistently in the direction of such an all-embracing vision in recent years, especially as it has come to see the ecological perspective as the macroscopic correlate (indeed, the philosophy of nature) of the libertarian conception of a co-operative, voluntarily organized society. It has been moving toward a fully-developed, organic theory of reality, a theory which proposes a distinct view of nature, of human society, of the group, and of the self or person. Further, it points toward a coherent practice which can successfully found a new libertarian culture which challenges the social, political, economic and psychological dominance of the official culture, with its values of atomistic individualism, egoistic consumption, and the will to power. In the place of this view of the world as a collection of fragmented, antagonistic parts (whose metaphysics, ethics, and social philosophy are epitomized in deterrence theory), the organic, ecological worldview delineates a reality in which the whole is a unity-in-diversity, in which the development and fulfillment of the part can only proceed from its complex interrelationship and unfolding within the larger whole. The universe is seen not as a lifeless mechanism but rather as an organic whole, a totality consisting of non-discrete, interpenetrating processes. Society must become, like nature itself, an organic, integrated, community. Human beings can only realize their personhood, their individuality in the fullest sense, through non-dominating interaction, or as Martin Buber put it, in a society which is a community of communities. The existence of such a society depends on the growth of a multitude of small personalistic groups which are the organic fabric of the organic society. These groups must be founded on human social instincts and needs, on the one hand, and offer a framework for the development of creative desire and social imagination on the other. And underlying all must be a new vision of the self - a self which is itself organic, and having the nature of a process. It must be a self which is not objectified, or divided against itself, but rather is a harmonious synthesis of passion, rationality, and imagination. Such a self is a social creation, an embodiment of our common human nature in its process of historical development, yet also the most individualized and unique self-expression of reality, and therefore the most ultimately creative process.

What does this imply on the level of concrete practice? It means that the libertarian problematic in the field of action and organization is above all a problematic of social regeneration. Confronted with the final truths of Western Civilization - disintegration, atomization, egoism, and domination - the libertarian movement must place the highest priority on creating libertarian (and even more,

communitarian) patterns of interaction at the most basic level, the affinity group. This means that organizations like anarchosyndicalist unions and anarchist federations will be, at best, incapable of social transformation, and, at worst, frameworks for reproducing the system of domination, unless they are rooted in a firmly established libertarian culture, in libertarian human relationships, and in a libertarian perception of reality.

The problem is thus in a sense to again take up the task of the Counterculture of the 60s, but this time within the framework of a self-conscious libertarian cultural movement. None of the concerns of the 60s have lost their relevance. Therefore the movement must not only be firmly rooted in the affinity group, and concern itself with the development of libertarian primary relationships, but it must also strive toward building a larger cultural and organizational structure. While discarding the fatal illusion that any mere organizational form can lead to liberatory social transformation, it must regenerate the impulse toward the establishment of cooperatives, collectives and communes as necessary elements in the evolution of a libertarian culture. It will continue the development and application of decentralist, liberatory technology. It will once more grasp the centrality of libertarian education, an area of the most advanced libertarian practice from the time of Tolstol to the most mature and historically conscious experiments of the 60s. And it will never forget the importance of the esthetic dimension, continuing the rich tradition of libertarian self-expression, for anarchism is as much as anything the synthesis of art and life, and as Murray Bookchin has said, the conception of the community as a work of art.

In this confrontation between the values of egoism, commodification, and domination and those of libertarian communalism the struggle is no longer a struggle of classes in the traditional sense. It is rather a struggle of the community against class society, the society of division, the society of domination. It is therefore not the struggle of socialist worker to succeed the bourgeois individual as the subject of history. Rather it is the emergence of the person, the organic social self, who must through social, communal self-realization combat those forces and ideologies which reduce this self to asociality (individualism, privatism) or being a producer (productivism).

Whatever the impression may be that I have given so far, it should be understood that none of the foregoing means that class analysis and class struggle in the broadest sense of these terms have lost their meaning. In fact, one of the key elements of the libertarian problematic is the development of a more adequate analysis of the class structures of both contemporary and past societies. Libertarian theory

continued over

has already begun to show great promise for considerable contributions in this area. Not being tied to the fetishism of the working class, it can show the creative role which peasant societies and tribal cultures have played in history and even prehistory, and their amply manifested potential for the development of libertarian and communitarian social forms. Furthermore, it can continue to document the fact that the working class itself has been most revolutionary, most libertarian, most critical, and most socially creative in its transitional stages, rather than at the points at which it has been most classically "proletarian" and "industrial". This is exemplified in the past by those groups which were torn out of traditional communal society, and were only beginning to be socialized into the industrial system, and can be expected to reoccur in the future only in so far as the classic working class continues to disintegrate and a growing number of its members come under the influence of, or begin to participate in, a developing libertarian communitarian post-industrial culture. Furthermore, recognizing the irreducible reality of political power, libertarian theory can more fully delineate the role of the developing technobureaucratic class in state capitalist and corporate capitalist society. Substituting the more adequate concept of the system of domination in the place of obsolete reductionist, economicist conceptions, it can contribute to understanding the interaction between such forms of domination as patriarchy, political power, technological domination, racism and economic exploitation, thereby showing the interplay - both the contradictions and the mutual reinforcement - within the total system between economic class, sex class, political class and ethnic class. Such a formulation turns out to be especially fruitful in linking the structure of domination in classical capitalist society to that existing in pre-capitalist, late capitalist and post-capitalist societies. Corresponding to this expanded conception of class analysis, there will also be an amplified practice of class struggle, though certainly not in the traditional sense of finding the most suitable present-day strategies for the messianic working class. Rather, the task of the libertarian movement will be to combat the material and ideological power of all dominating classes, whether economic, political, racial, religious, or sexual, with a multidimensional practice of liberation. Such a practice will integrate within the framework of this many-sided fight against domination a variety of sorts of activity. It will certainly include economic actions, like strikes, boycotts, on the job actions, occupations, organization of direct action groups and federations of libertarian workers' groups, and development of workers' assemblies, collectives and cooperatives. It will also entail political activity, including not only anti-electoral activity, but in some cases strategic voting, especially in referenda and local elections. In addition there will be active interference with implementation of repressive governmental policies, like pursuance of imperialistic war policies or dangerous assaults on the biosphere; non-compliance and resistance against regimentation and bureaucratization of society, including technological surveillance and control of the population; and participation in movements for increasing direct participation in decision-making and local control. There must also be ideological struggle, including the development of arts, media, and symbolic structures which expose the forces of domination and counterpose to them a system of values based on freedom and community. And in all cases there must be a practice of psychosocial transformation, in which all groups functioning to combat domination self-consciously seek to maintain their basis in personalistic human relationships, direct participation, non-hierarchical internal structure,

and respect for the integrity and individuality of each member. One lesson of the 60s is the futility of any attempts to submerge the libertarian presence into basically non-libertarian mass organizations or vague ecumenical "Movements". If the libertarian movement is to experience organic growth it must fiercely defend the libertarian character of primary groups, and realize the fundamental nature of all libertarian organization, not as mere forms of mobilization for struggle against any or even all kinds of domination, but above all as elements in the more comprehensive process of cultural recreation.

The libertarian problematic is indeed a problematic which entails negation - the negation of all forms of domination, alienation, and social disintegration. Yet a movement which degenerates into pure negativity - into mere collective resentment on the part of the alienated - is condemned to impotence and lack of creative energy. The revolutionary subject was once described as a class with radical chains - one which says "I am nothing. I should be everything." Yet the attempt to move from total nothingness to a fullness of being is something that might be accomplished by the Absolute Idea, and perhaps even by the Proletariat, but it is beyond the capacities of mere mortals. Our need is therefore not merely a class with radical chains, but a culture with radical freedom.

The most radical bonds are not those of class oppression but those of free community.

JOHN CLARK

The above is the text of a talk given by the author earlier this year in Montpellier, France.

DATE - THIS - QUOTE

WHEN DO YOU THINK THIS WAS WRITTEN?

"Britain has kings, but they are tyrants; she has judges, but they are wicked. They often plunder and terrorize the innocent; they defend and protect the guilty and thieving; they have many wives, whores and adulteresses; they constantly swear false oaths; they make vows, but almost at once tell lies; they wage wars - civil and unjust; they chase thieves energetically all over the country - but love and even reward the thieves who sit with them at table; they distribute alms profusely - but pile up an immense mountain of crime for all to see; they take their seats as judges - but rarely seek out the rules of right judgement; they despise the harmless and humble, but exalt to the stars, so far as they can, their military companions, bloody, proud and murderous men, adulterers and enemies of God - if chance, as they say, so allows: men who should have been rooted out vigorously, name and all; they keep many prisoners in their jails, who are more often loaded with chafing chains because of intrigue than because they deserve punishment. They hang around the altars swearing oaths - then shortly afterwards scorn them as though they were dirty stones."

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