

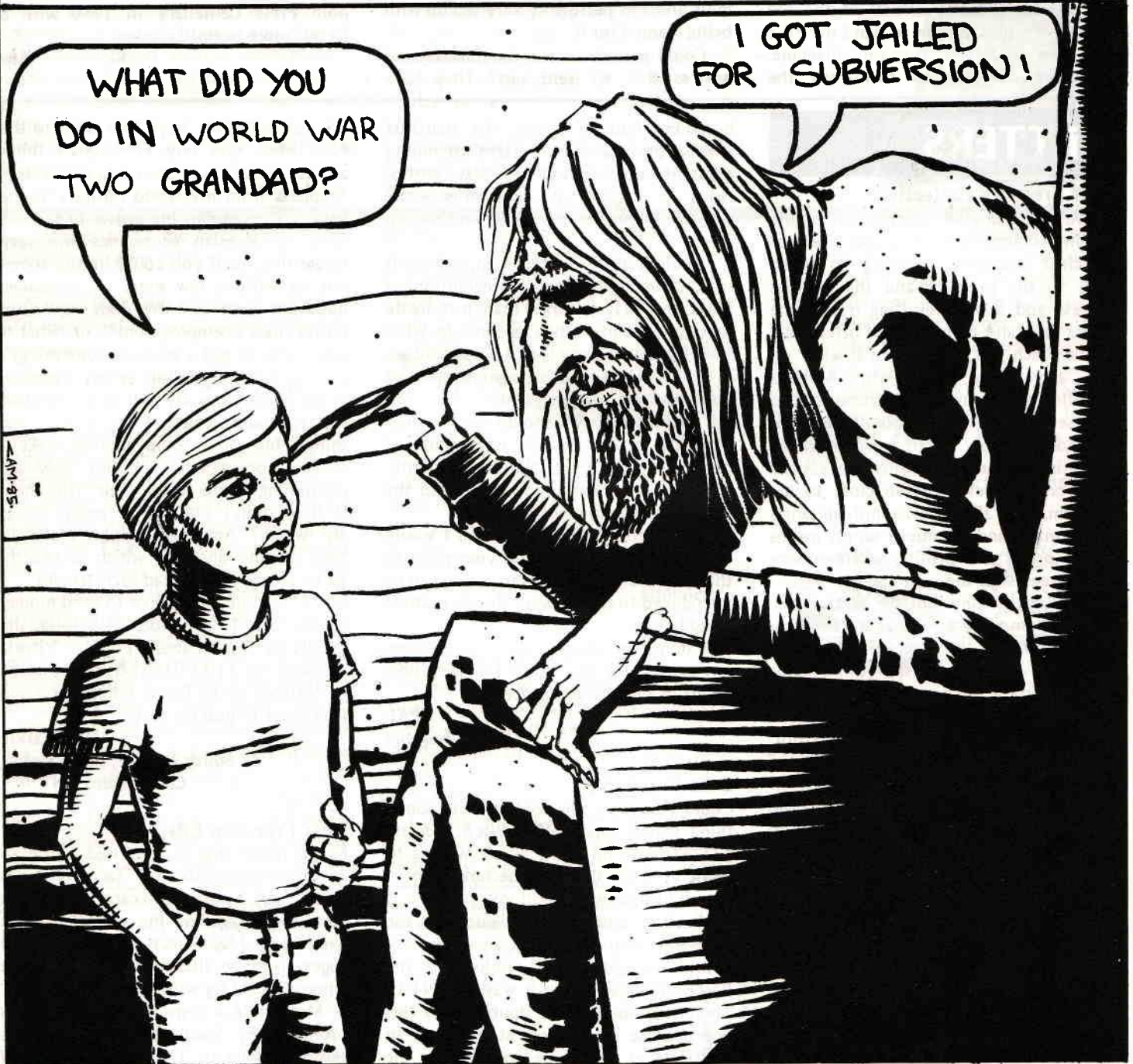
FREEDOM



ANARCHIST MONTHLY

VOL 46 No 6 JUNE 1985 45p

AT THE REST HOME FOR RETIRED FREEDOM EDITORS...



**FASCISM 1945 ~ 1985 CARRARA DAM
SOCIOLOGY ? REFORMA AGRARIA**

First, thanks for all the money, and no, I haven't used it to buy the small yacht I mentioned in the December '84 issue. Secondly, as sole subs person I admit to being a little behind with changes of address, and re-sub requests. This is because there were only two editors for a while. Thus no acknowledgements of subs received have been sent out. Please take the continued arrival of *Freedom* as a sign that your money is safe in our hands.

It should be said that one of the problems the new *Freedom* editors had in '84 was the flat refusal of the old collective's subs person to hand over the subs list and addressograph machine. What we did was to hand-copy the

addresses from a set of wrappers and put that list on to Colin and Arabella's word-processor to print new labels. Many a name (and probably an address) got mangled in the process.

This *undesirable event* has probably lost a few subscribers, who may or may not read this. If a friend of yours complains, explain matters to him/her and get them to write in so we can put matters right.

The new editors have done their level best to honour commitments on both editorial and subs fronts given by the old collective. Frankly, they left a god-awful mess and I'm personally very fed up with being blamed for it.

Could you please *use* the subs renewal notices that we sent out? They have

'hidden' aspects which help us process renewals at this end. Also could you please, please, please write your names and addresses *more clearly*, especially if you're one of our many non-UK subscribers. I'm afraid Finnish, Turkish, etc, addresses are not obvious to us.

UK subscribers, please note. The Post Office now admits that letters *without postcodes* are subject to long delays. 90% of our UK labels don't have postcodes on them, so send it in if this applies to you. You might remember a small extra donation to help us celebrate the Freedom Press Centenary in 1986 with a larger (more pages) *Freedom*.

Stu

LETTERS

Dear Freedom Collective,

I have just read your March article on the heroin problem. It is good to see a serious anarchist magazine devoting so much time to the problem and the obvious distress and misery resulting from trade in the drug and its partners. I offer a few words which you may discard at will!

I agree very much with Arabella Melville's article and its assertion that to impose a ban or heavier punishments on 'offenders' simply is not freedom to the anarchist. I do not see either that restrictions on supplies are even close to the problem. After all, are dealers not capitalists in the main, and a reduced supply means higher prices and profits, where misery just increases for the poor addict.

The article's line "for the average city teenager, smoking a joint is scarcely any more *rebellious* than the fag behind the bikeshed" (my emphasis), I think holds the answer for the anarchists. It suggests that teenagers are after rebellion and a dice with authority. Are anarchists not, therefore, allowing a powerful source of activity to waste away? If drugs and heroin are taken as an expression of rebellion, should we not be tapping that rebellion and using it against the State, rather than leaving it to the drugs promoters.

So, it would be my suggestion that we devote our energies not only to the broadcasting of the horrific effects of addiction but to the advertising of alternatives. After all, an action against a butcher, MacDonalds or an ROC bunker is an expression of rebellion, and in many ways of desperation.

It is possible to use drugs in a recreational way, and drugs such as LSD and the like can be taken without addiction, however dangerous. But it is vital that the user is given alternatives. An unemployed teenager with days of spare time will take to drug abuse and glue in much the same way as

boredom induces hunger. An anarchist with a purpose either listens to music, plays it, does actions, leaflets, writes, reads, or engages in some other social activity to further the cause and use up time.

Would it not be better, then, to present reasonable arguments for revolution of ideas and ways, rather than just incite school riots and the like, as some do. What I am basically saying is that we should get in there and inspire, encourage unemployed co-operatives, new magazines, music and the reasons *why* we should rebel, rather than just promoting the simple idea of rebelling and doing things differently (fashion?) which leads to drugs and the use of violence in revolt.

It is a complex problem and I would welcome further debate on your pages so that positive ideas and even action can be introduced to put forward the alternatives to addiction.

I don't use drugs, I don't need them. Let's make it the same for everyone. Yours in anarchy and peace.

PAL
Liverpool

Dear Freedom,

Could you carry this correction to something which appeared in *Black Flag* no 131? There's no point in me writing to them as I am officially declared a non-person in their world outlook.

A short article by MT said that the CNT-AIT had organised an important strike amongst postal workers in the Barcelona area, in fact it was the CNT-U. There is absolutely no doubt about this one because I was there at the time. In fact, further details are contained in the latest issue of *Sinews*, which is now twice as big but only costs 50p including p&p from the address below.

Mick Larkin

PS Some thoughts on having an 'editorial policy' . . . I think it's good that you have one now, otherwise you don't know what

you're paying for from one issue to the next when you buy *Freedom*. I think articles which cover one issue, rather than 'snippets from my world outlook' is the best. For example, the article in the last issue on Kensian economics was very interesting, so if you could inspire someone to write a few more on economic questions such as 'why does capitalism create mass unemployment?', or 'what is a fair way to put a price on something?', that would be useful in my opinion. Some people may say that in an anarchist society there wouldn't be a price on things, but how could anyone make a decision on whether or not they are consuming more than their fair share if they didn't know how much things are worth? Anyway, I don't claim to have all the answers, which is exactly why I would like to read such articles . . .

PPS If anyone would like to send money to the CNT-U comrades in Vitoria, the details are: Casa Laboral Popular, Vitoria Account no 110.1.01651-6, in the name of Marcelo de la Torre. I hope you can find space to publish that.

Mick Larkin
37 South Terrace, Esh Winning,
Co Durham, DH7 9PS.

Dear Freedom Eds,

For a paper that is supposed to be so *anti anarcho-syndicalist* (according to *Black Flag*), I notice you carry a surprising number of pages on the subject. I think what *Black Flag* objects to are your *open pages* giving an alternative voice to those whom *Black Flag* wish to suppress!

Meanwhile, a copy of the *rule changes* proposed by South London DAM has reached my hands. They include a *Central Committee* with the power to expel individual members and to *ORDER* local DAM papers to print '*corrections*'.

DAM people would get better 'faction-rights' in the Socialist Worker's Party! Ah, well! It should keep us all amused for the rest of the year. I wonder which will

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FREEDOM

LETTERS

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CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE NOTE

Freedom is a professionally typeset
paper, which means that articles for
Freedom need to be typed, on one side
only, triple-spaced with a large margin
down both sides of the page. Neat hand-
written material should be on lined paper
using every other line. Keep your own
copy rather than ask us to return the
original.

The editors

FREEDOM is run as a
forum for the international
anarchist movement.

MEET THE EDITORS

Every Thursday at Angel Alley.
Thursday 6th June: Discussion about
Freedom Press Centenary, 7:00-9:30pm
Thursday 13th June: A Distribution, 6:00-
8:30pm
Thursday 20th June: Freedom Layout
(not a good time for long chats)
Thursday 27th June: A Distribution and
Freedom mail-out. Everybody welcome
(and needed), 6:00-9:30pm and drinks
afterwards

Last copy dates for *Freedom* July issue:
Tuesday 18th June, August issue: Tues-
day 16th July.



be deemed to be the *local* DAM paper,
Black Flag or *Direct Action* ... interesting,
huh?

Since THEY will be very Black Cross
with me indeed, please excuse the protective
pen-name.

Christine Careful
Brixton

Dear Freedom,

In your May number you printed a letter
from Hazel Wilson in support of *Class
War*. In her letter Hazel wrote: "It seems
to me that the only people reaching Joe
Public are *Class War* and other related
groups ... Surely it's time we spent more
time explaining the basic rudiments of
anarchism in readable, intelligible language
... we need to communicate with the
'oppressed masses' with decent, intelli-
gible literature that isn't just negative,
destructive 'Smash the State' crap."

Whilst at the Anarchist Book Fair (which
was great), I was forced into buying some
copies of *Class War* (Talk about *capital-
ism's* high pressure sales techniques!)
and when I got time to read them, I found
out that the *Class War* rag was exactly
what Hazel said it was not: negative,

destructive, mindless, ranting 'Smash
the State' crap in which blind and mean-
ingless violence played more of a part than
Hazel's "basic rudiments of anarchism in
readable intelligible language".

Was it coincidence that the Wildcat
cartoon just underneath had the caption:
"Whether or not you agree with anarchism,
you have to admit it's not a completely
mindless idea. It's just some comrades
act as if it's a completely mindless idea".
Carry on *Class War*, you give us all some-
thing to laugh at.

Yours for a *constructive* alternative to
the State,

David Teacher
Summerhill

Dear Freedom Collective,

Enclosed is a copy of *Anarchist Times*, a
paper two of us have started, could you
give it a plug in the next *Freedom*. Also
could you put us on the contact list.

[Yes]

About *Freedom*:

I think the magazine format was a
good move, hope things are working out.
I also sense a political change in some of

the views expressed as opposed to say 6
or 7 months ago. I still can't swallow the
sort of Anarcho Pacifism and intellectual
articles published from time to time, but
on the whole I find *Freedom* a good read.
It stimulates thought and ideas. Thought
that article on delegate democracy was
good, I agree (I think) that it leads to
bureaucracy on a national level, but is
OK at a local level on a small scale. Any-
way have a hot summer.

Joe (DAM member)



STOP PRESS: Freedom burgled and subs-
system churned into massive mess! Is
there no end to this saga. See next
issue ...



DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT

The Masses Awake?

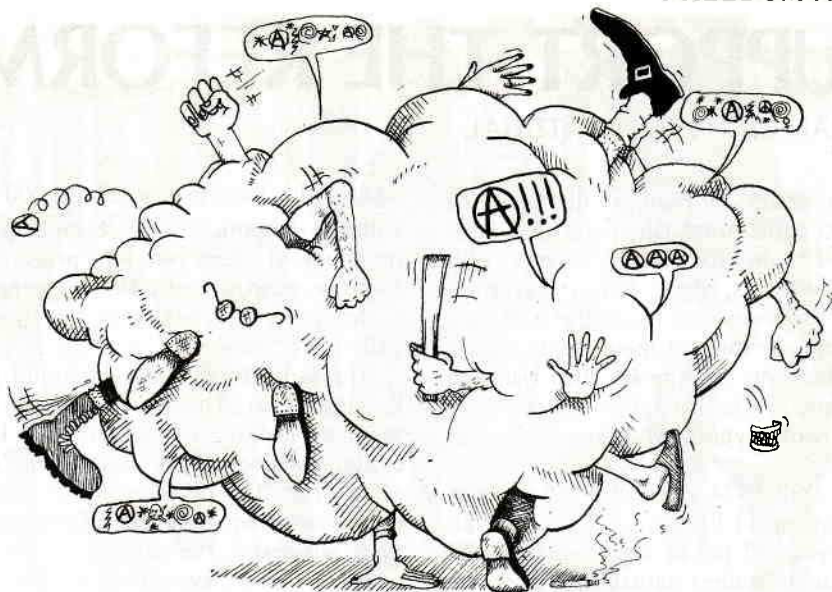
DIRECT ACTION MOVEMENT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

'Regimentation Rejected' was the clear message of the May National DAM Delegate Conference in Bolton.

Although the Conference accepted the idea of forming a National Committee in principle, none of the 'Draconian measures' put up by the South London branch were passed. The National Committee envisaged by South London was a horrid rag-bag with power to rule on instant policies; instant justice; suspension of publications and members; the badgering of publications; debt collecting for members' dues.

This would have produced a delegated dictatorship of the DAM, and it was rightly rebuffed by the vast majority of the members. Feeling at the Conference preferred a looser co-ordinating body, though details have yet to be formulated.

The Conference was concerned about the lack of any consideration, in the proposals, both on how to co-ordinate



the activities of the Movement more efficiently, and about how our policies may best be presented to the general public.

DAM has policies on industry, labour organisation, unemployment and redundancy (with policies on textiles and part-time workers in the pipeline). These policies could appeal to a wider public if only they were presented properly. One would have thought that a committed direct actionist organisation would concentrate on putting over these policies and organising around them, rather than wading into a sea of administrative adventures and constitutional niceties.

This Conference quagmire of legislation and rules revision easily obscured the social realities. Somehow we forgot the people shopping in the Bolton streets; queueing at bus stops; standing in dole queues; sweating in offices and factories. What mattered most was the mechanics

of the Movement.

Items of social importance like Liverpool DAM's revised policy on unemployment and redundancy, and the Policy Committee's proposals for textile workers, were shelved until the next Conference. The only policy matter agreed on was that DAM will fight the 'Sweetheart Agreements' (no-strike deals) promoted by some unions.

What seems to have happened at Bolton is that the 'crime and punishment' character of South London DAM's motion for a National Committee was more than the Movement could stomach. This may now mean that DAM will devote its attention to getting its policies over to the public; planning and organising social movements — like the Kellingley proto-rank and file movement; and generally applying itself to the requirements and realities of British society.

Brian Bamford

Clydeside

THE PRICE OF SUCCESS

The high spot of the recent miners' strike for most UK anarchists was the stirring occupation of the Price Waterhouse offices. This firm of accountants were acting as the government's agent to seize NUM Funds where ever they could.

At first the media reported the occupation as being carried out by ordinary miners, but later it emerged as the work of our excellent comrades from the Clydeside Area (+ friends).

That was the *good* news. This is the *bad* news. Everything has a price and the price of the Price Waterhouse Occupation is as follows: 2 fined £300 each, 7 fined £200, 2 deferred sentences, Grand Total so far £2,000. Did someone say 'L'addition s'il vous plait?' [The bill please?] A fuller account is on its way from Scotland to

Freedom for the next issue.

Meanwhile several Scottish Organisations are setting up a *Clydeside Anarchists Appeal Fund* c/o *Clydeside Press*, 53, *Cochrane St, Glasgow G1*. (Cheques made out to *Autonomy Books*).

WE KNOW THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE BEGGING FOR MONEY BUT FREEDOM FEELS THIS IS VERY MUCH A SPECIAL CASE — DIG DEEP FOLKS.

the editors

HERE & NOW

This is the first issue of *HERE & NOW*, a new magazine aimed at all those interested in developing a theory of the dynamics of modern society.

The magazine, although initiated by a collective in the west of Scotland, is *NOT* a provincial magazine. The concern is to view social change in an inter-national context, and to attract contributors from far afield.

In launching the magazine, our princi-

pal motive isn't to simply add variety to the multitude of publications available for consumption. The creation of a medium for dialogue, controversy and subjecting doctrines to scrutiny, with a view to advancing theory beyond generalised statements is at the centre of our approach.

The collective welcome comments and contributions.

Our address is: **Box 2, 340 West Princes St., Glasgow G4 9HF**. Subscriptions/Donations to GPP, not *Here & Now* please. £2 for 3 issues.

Another new magazine, encompassing the radical arts and its arm of criticism, is *VARIANT*, available for 65p + 17p post from: **2 up r, 45 Cecil St, Glasgow G12**.

Yours in solidarity,

Jim McFarlane

[Eds. Yes indeed. Why should London be the only centre for UK anarchist publications. A good paper (and *Here & Now* is a very good paper) should sell everywhere regardless of where it's produced!]

FREEDOM ANALYSIS FROM PAGE 9

\$1 million for Josef Mengele, bringing the total current offer to nearly \$3.5 million. The British government is refusing to release the contents of its file on him 'for security reasons', provoking speculation that there might have been some deal. Such things are not unknown.

The silliest nazi story is the fuss about whether a member of the Royal family's father was an SS officer and, if so, was he sincere. We can find plenty of reasons for disapproving of Princess Michael of Kent and her relatives, past and present, with-

out this one. The only amusing part of the whole thing is the flurry of well-meaning humanitarians, anxious to save the poor (!) woman from unfair criticism. If the doings of her ancestors are nothing to do with her, how the hell does she get to be a Princess?

The point of all this comes back to that confusion and hypocrisy. Some people find it useful to confuse others. If you are running a third rate power with a crumbling economy and growing discontent it is useful to draw on its resources of nostalgia, forty years of film and comic

book propaganda and a sense of being one of the good guys, especially when they win. It is easier to play down any resemblances, authoritarian policies 'for the war effort', prison camps, class warfare, someone who was (briefly) king who admired the efficiency of fascism and a war fought to protect national, ie economic and imperialist, interests. Out there are demons, fascists, communists, we are democrats.

When someone tells you about national unity, ask whose nation it is.

DP

DIRECT ACTION SOCIOLOGY ?

POWER — LOCATING THE BOSS

What worries most Marxist academics is that their idea of the enemy — the capitalist class as such — is not what the British worker himself sees as his chief tormentor in his own life. Shopfloor workers are often disgruntled with their bosses, but the boss figure for them is usually a real person, not an ideological abstraction; someone who gives them orders, who hires them and fires them. The boss at work, on this scale of reference, may be a foreman, a progress chaser, a supervisor, a personnel officer, or even a general manager. In social terms it may be the rent collector, the landlord, the welfare agent, the DHSS snoop, the policeman, the bailiff, etc.

Thus the average Marxist moans about the inability of the workers to think for themselves of new or alternative ways of living to the way we live now. They insist on the need for outsiders, in a party, to teach the shopfloor what's what.

As I see it the task of direct actionism, as the latest development in British anarcho-syndicalism, is to ground its analysis within the everyday actions of ordinary people. This is what lies behind the calls in the Direct Action Movement for a new rank and file movement dedicated to militant direct action.

Cultural Dopes

Professional social scientists, whether marxist or otherwise, tend to produce theoretical models which treat the worker or the person-in-society as a 'cultural dope'. Man, as studied, is often seen as a social sleepwalker.

Some sociologists, like Parkin, have argued that the lower class, while disgruntled, are primarily passive and that only the 'radical agencies' — the Labour Party and the trade unions — help the underclass '... to make sense of their situation in radical terms'. Hence the lower class person needs the guide dog of the social scientist or the political party to assist their negotiation of life.

This view of the passive person-in-society is being challenged. John Heritage

has pointed out that this kind of wooden approach '... lost its appeal in a decade of libertarian movements and political protest' — the 1960's, and that these found their theoretical expression in sociology within 'frameworks which stressed the analytical primacy of the actors point of view and the social construction of reality'.

Lower Class Attitudes

Michael Mann has argued that while working class militancy does challenge existing social arrangements, it is in itself a reformist challenge. Limited to practical criticisms in 'everyday, concrete' terms and 'vague divisions of society into rich and poor'. Hence the view arises that British workers need the trade unions and the Labour Party to activate the workers towards social change.

Most marxist groupings hold on to this idea of the 'clever dick' ideologist 'wising-up' the culturally incompetent workers. A witless working class led by middle class marxist messiahs is a nice idea, but the witless workers show no sign of following the messiahs and never have done.

On the face of it it's tempting to see humanity as divided into two classes: the self-seeking, hypocritical minority, and the brainless mob whose only destiny is to be led or driven. And yet, the most obvious and reassuring characteristic of the British worker on present evidence is that he has 'sussed out' the party politician and is obstinately refusing to be led by either trade union bosses, party hacks or intellectuals.

Instead of looking for leadership qualities, for a long time we anarcho-syndicalists looked for evidence of underlying methods of control at work by workers themselves. We found this in the restrictive practices and the shopfloor strategies at easing workloads and gaining job control. We found it in the 'Banana Time' culture which prevails on the shop floor and which often perverts management goals and aims. This seemed to us to

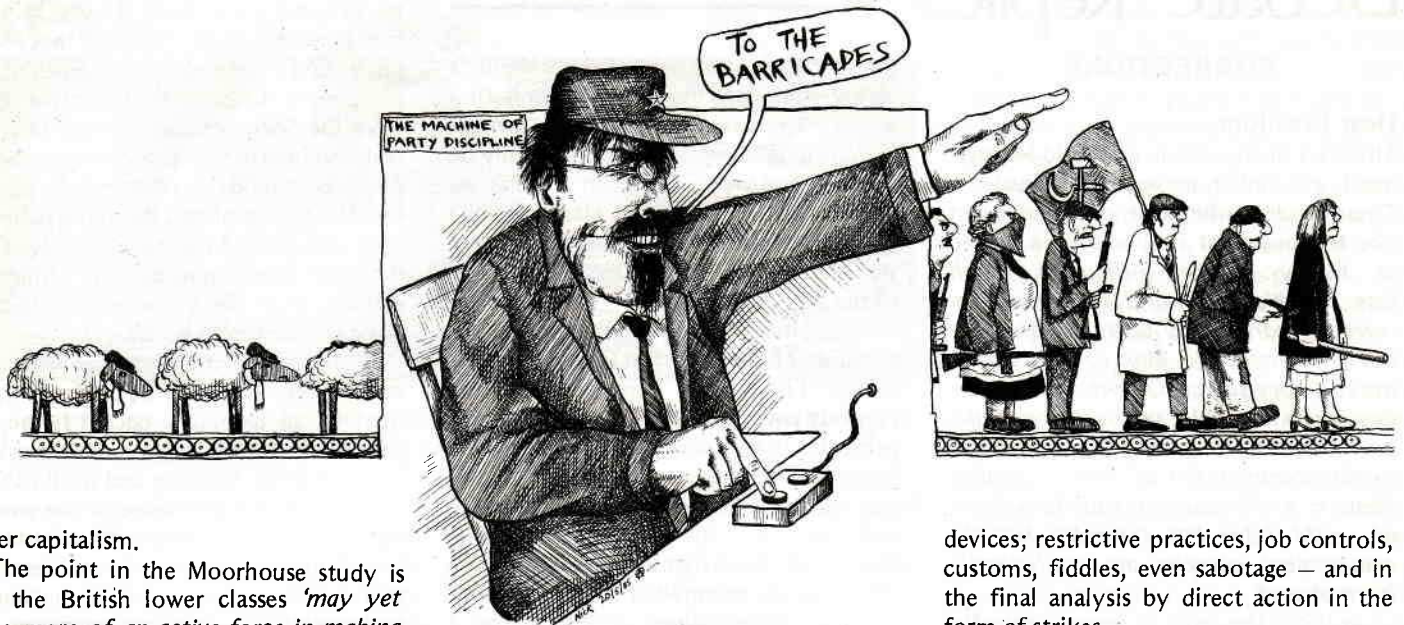
represent a real, but often unstated, syndicalist tradition going back to the 19th century. And to give our arguments a nice exotic twist we would say maybe these shopfloor practices are the forerunner of a British anarcho-syndicalist movement, in the same way that the old free municipalities preceded anarchism in Spain. We saw our job to be to tap this syndicalist tradition and render it more effective.

Barking Rent Strike

Now a study of a rent strike among council tenants in Barking, East London, by Moorhouse and Chamberlain (1972-3) has suggested that: *'future possibilities of radical action by British workers do not solely depend on activation by the Labour Party or the trade unions'*. Thus the lower class person is not the brainless wonder portrayed in much marxist and sociological literature, but that he does possess, as indicated by this study, the basis of a rival vision to that of the bosses. The theme of the Barking study showed: *'Men are right to occupy factories because they need a job just as people should not own a lot of houses because they only need one'*.

Moorhouse and Chamberlain doubt if the critical attitudes of their lower class respondents could have been 'injected' by radical agencies. They argue convincingly that: *'Neither the Labour Party nor the trade unions have recently conducted campaigns advocating sit-ins by workers, the taking over of empty houses by the homeless or limitations on the number of houses which should be owned'*. The study found little sign of any campaigning groups on the estates where they did their interviews.

The study concluded that: *'... the main source of radical ideas is the position of workers as workers in capitalist society'*. Of course people continue to put up with the existing power game, but this seems to be more out of pragmatic compliance than any deep commitment to the bosses values or any genuine acceptance of the rigours of the handicap system involved



under capitalism.

The point in the Moorhouse study is that the British lower classes 'may yet prove more of an active force in making its own future than is often allowed'. Perhaps for too long the role of the party boss and the intellectuals has been over-rated as agents of social change.

Management Attitudes — Where Workers Belong

Managers must manage, and workers must work is the parrot cry of the press barons. Thus it will come as no surprise that the editorial in *The Sunday Times* on March 10th should declare: 'So let us begin by raising a loud cheer that the miners are back where they belong, which is, at work. Let us applaud the fact that the Coal Board has established its proper claim to manage the coal industry in the national interest.'

It reminds me of what the boss used to tell us when I was an apprentice: 'You are not paid to think — you're only paid to work'. Now if we accept this managerial mentality and say 'business is politics by other means', then we'd be spending our lives working in what Hyman calls 'a miniature undemocratic state'. The factory would be a dictatorship, and Orwell's political nightmare — a foot stamping on a human face, forever — would become a real possibility on the shopfloor.

Of course this is not what we, as workers, experience as a 'reality' on the shopfloor. A regime in which the workers just work and management manage them is probably a management 'ideal', dependent more on the wishful thinking of the boss than on the known shopfloor situation. Anyone who has worked on the shopfloor knows that the managerial formal controls on production can be subverted, by-passed and 'fiddled' by workers. This may even be necessary, not just for workers to keep some control of their work, but often in order to overcome management inadequacy.

Donald Roy, who worked as a radical-drill operator in the machine shop of a

steel processing plant in the USA, has suggested that management directives may not be '... the guides to efficient action that they are claimed to be'. The dangerous *Sunday Times* idea that the Coal Board may, in the aftermath of the coal strike, be induced 'to manage the coal industry in the national interest', could well prove to be the most disruptive concept. Every worker knows that the smooth running of the firm and continuity of production, is often only achieved as a consequence of shopfloor workers bending the rules and overcoming management obstacles to production.

One only has to consider what happens when in a 'work-to-rule' the workers follow the directives of the boss to the letter, and the chaos which ensues. Anarchists and direct actionists have long known this, and have developed it as an effective form of industrial action. Fortunately most British managers are aware of the dangers of imposing rigid controls, and they often turn a blind eye to short circuiting of the rules by the shopfloor. However, the signs are that some Coal Board managers, possibly incited by the press, politicians and McGregor, are abandoning this wise stance and adopting a steamroller approach of ignoring the unions and the miners. The slogan 'management must manage' is a reckless exhortation.

Clearly the modern industrial enterprise is not a kind of bossdom in which the shopfloor workers are kicked-into-line. Nor is it, using the analogy of Fox (1966), 'a miniature democratic state'; for workers do not elect their managers and cannot vote them out of office. At least formally the employer alone is vested with the right to govern the firm. What we would say is that this 'divine right to manage' is radically limited by many shopfloor

devices; restrictive practices, job controls, customs, fiddles, even sabotage — and in the final analysis by direct action in the form of strikes.

But if direct action is so deeply rooted in the lives of ordinary workers, why has it not yet been followed to its logical conclusion — workers' control? Hyman (1972) seems to be arguing that for this to happen, some kind of 'openly political movement' would be needed to lift the workers from their day to day industrial struggles into the social and political arena.

However, if Moorhouse and Chamberlain are right in their study of 'lower class attitudes', it may be that the workers are not as sheep-like about politics as some would have us believe. Although many of their respondents did vote, few thought it made any difference who governed, to people like themselves. Many of their respondents 'spontaneously referred to direct action when asked about the most effective means of influencing the government'. These writers thought that insofar as the interests of the lower classes was not met through the 'existing political mechanisms' they are likely to be pursued in 'other, more inventive ways'.

Since the Moorhouse and Chamberlain study in 1974, there has been the 'Winter of Discontent', the urban riots of 1981, and now the coal strike — which involved a thinly disguised challenge to the Coal Board's 'right to manage'. Clearly direct action has taken on important and mass significance, but what should be of more vital concern to anarchists is the accompanying disenchantment of many people with the 'normal' political system.

Curiously, despite the anarchistic findings of the Moorhouse study, neither the British anarchist movement generally nor the Direct Action Movement in particular have yet had any perceptible influence upon the lower classes. In other words, organised anarchism is failing to voice the instinctive apoliticism of many ordinary workers.

Brian Bamford