

Correspondence and payments either to:

France - Echanges et Mouvement, B.P. 241, 75866 Paris Cedex 18
(C.C.P. La Source 31708 - 40 FF) (FF means French Francs)
Great Britain - Simon, 29 Troutbeck, Albany Street, London N.W. 1.
Holland - Daad en Gedachte, Schouw 48-11, Lelystad.

Only articles etc. that are produced by Echanges themselves are available directly from us at the price indicated. The addresses for obtaining all other texts are given.

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NEW MOVEMENT

Various people have proposed that we try and modify and complete the text "The New Movement" (available from Echanges for 1 FF and for 10 p in English from Solidarity London, 123 Lathom Road, London E 6) in the light of struggles in the past few years. An exchange of points of view in which everyone can participate will precede a meeting to discuss present tendencies of struggle in the world today with a view to drafting a new version of this text.

THE BULLETIN "ECHANGES"

From Belgium there is a suggestion that the presentation of the bulletin could be improved with the typescript less bunched up together. Some have also suggested a format similar to the Hong Kong magazine "Minus 7". What do people think? Could anyone offer cheap offset litho printing from already existing typed pieces?

WORK IN PREPARATION

- a pamphlet on "The refusal of work" (in French). It is a group of writings taking up discussions of previous international get-togethers (Boulogne, Paris, Strasbourg) The text of C. Reeve on the subject (published by the review Spartacus) and the replies to this text (notably by the Americans Peter Rachleff and John Zerzan), some direct reporting and eye-witness accounts and a theoretical summary and viewpoint.
- a pamphlet on Spain. A plan is circulating to be discussed and for material to be collected. A meeting is proposed at Toulouse with Spanish participants. If you want to come, write to Echanges, Paris.
- various mostly English texts on class struggle in Nazi Germany are being translated into French
- "Lutte de classe autonome en Grande Bretagne 1945-1977" by Cajo Brendel is being translated into English (French version from Echanges, also available in German, write to Echanges-Holland for details).

NEW PUBLICATIONS

"Borrowed time": an attempt at something similar to Synthesis in the USA, this gives a presentation of various British and other libertarian groupings and their activities (no. 1 for 25 p + 7 p postage in British money, subscription £1.50p, to Box 100, Rising Free, 162 Upper Street, London N 1)

Merger of "Solidarity" and "Social Revolution" in Great Britain to form Solidarity for Social Revolution (new magazine of the National Solidarity Group). The first issue explains the merger and contains articles including one on conflicts at the firm which constructs petrol platforms for North Sea oil drilling - Highland Fabricators Nigg in Scotland - between union leadership and rank and file. It shows the close collaboration between management and unions to increase productivity and the manipulation of shop floor stewards who seemed to support the shop floor movement at the beginning of the strike, but who later took on the policy of the union bureaucracy to impose a final return to work.

For contacts with new group : Box 23, c/o 163 King Street, Aberdeen; EDA books, 34 Cowley Rd, Oxford and Solidarity London.) Solidarity London is temporarily suspending the publication of its magazine "Solidarity for workers' power", but will still be taking subscriptions for the National magazine and for pamphlets including those produced by London alone (£ 2 subscription for Britain, £ 3 for abroad, address see above).

There is a new French version of C. Brendel's "Thesis on the Chinese Revolution" (from Echanges, Paris, 4 FF) with the following additions to the original: some reflections on "revolutionary diplomacy"; the 10th congress of the Chinese Communist Party and its consequences; Confucius and the class struggle; the rising star of Teng Hsiao Ping; the total rehabilitation of Teng. (an English version from Solidarity

London contains all but the last two additions)
This French edition contains a bibliography of
texts written by Cajo Brendel.

Texts on the U.S.A.

Translation into French of selections from
Root and Branch "The rise of the workers' move-
ment" (published in the U.S.A. by Fawcett Books
in 1975). Only the texts referring to struggles
in the U.S.A. are published since the "Workers'
councils" by Pannekoek exists in full in French
(published by Béliaste distributed by Echan-
ges) and the text on May 1968 was originally
written as "La grève généralisée en France" by
ICD (available direct from Echanges in the ori-
ginal version). The new French translation is
by Spartacus and costs 20 FF (5 rue Ste Croix
de la Bretonnerie, 75004 Paris).

Other essential and general texts on the U.S.A.
and already available for some time are:

- J. Zerzan, "A decisive conflict"- Organised
labour versus the revolt against work (from
Black and Red, Solidarity London and from
Echanges in French for 2 FF)
- Wildcat Dodge Truck June 1974 (from Black
and Red, p.o. box 9546 Detroit, Mich. 48202
USA or Solidarity London, in French for 4 FF
from Echanges)
- USA - a changing reality (written by a col-
lective around Echanges) in English or French
(from Echanges Paris or London).

Texts on the USA in preparation are:

- a pamphlet with texts on the New York power
black out, the iron miners strike, the coal
miners strike and the anti-nuclear power
movement .. which should be available soon
from Echanges
- we hope to translate an article by John
Lippert "Fleetwood wildcat - anatomy of a
wildcat strike" published in Radical America,
vol. 11 no.5, (address: p.o. box 8, North
Cambridge, Ma 02140, USA) together with
other articles on present struggles in the
U.S. automobile industry

New French publications

"The roots of October 1917" (Les racines d'
Octobre 1917 - published by Spartacus and
written by the PIC in French), another attempt
to explain the "death" of the Russian Revolu-
tion by a search for "causes ... perceived
from the beginning as being subjective", espe-
cially in the pre-revolutionary period ± 1900-
1917.

The PIC have also produced their own text
"Mise au point sur l'autonomie ouvrière" (sum-
ming up of workers' autonomy) which could pro-
vide a basis for discussion of the theme of
"autonomy" which is becoming fashionable in
France at the moment in imitation of what has
happened in Italy (contact Jeune Taupe Librairie
Parallèles, 47 rue St. Honoré, 75001 Paris)

For those interested: two articles in Le
Monde/Paris of 25th and 26th Jan. 1978
under the heading "La galaxie des autono-
mes".

Also new "autonomous" papers:
"Combat pour l'autonomie ouvrière" (P.S.,
B.P. 3457 Lille Cedex) and
"Bulletin de liaison entre travailleurs"
(Blet, c/o Librairies Parallèles, address
see above).

And last but not least:

"Notes sur les delinquance" (in Lutte de
classe, address R. Togny, B.P. 62009,
75421 Paris Cedex 09), an attempt at a
comparative analysis of the economic func-
tion of delinquance under capitalism.

"Vodka - Cola" by Charles Levinson (in
French published by Stock).

This recent book is relevant to the dis-
cussion already begun in the last issue
of Echanges about Taylorism in Eastern
Europe & Russia. This rather large work
(about 500 pages) is often at the level
of anecdote, but contributes some very
important elements on the types of coope-
ration between multinational corporations
and leaders of Eastern block countries.
The author analyses the different forms
this cooperation takes which is resulting
in an ever greater interpenetration by the
two partners. This cooperation is on an
equal basis as far as profits are concern-
ed. The bargain made goes something like
this: "I bring our technology, you supply
the workforce (cheap and docile), we sell
and divide the profits between us."
This of course is very schematic. This
collaboration varies in form. It can take
the form of intergovernmental economic
agreements, industrial cooperation agree-
ments, sale of patents, rents, leases, but
above all joint production and joint com-
panies etc.

The second part of the book deals with
sales of American wheat to the Soviet
Union with all the financial double deal-
ing with this had involved.

The third part studies the more or less
secret commissions, organs etc. which are
at the origin of such cooperation. Members
of the Rockefeller team and the group
around president Carter are to be found
on these bodies.

In the fourth part of the book the author
analyses the notion of "détente" and he
ends with a heavily documented and tho-
rough study of the relations between the
Italian Communist Party and such multina-
tionals as FIAT.

This work therefore should contribute some
material which partly contradicts the ana-
lysis of the journal "Lutte de classe"
GLAT concerning the development of Eastern
block countries. Especially this coopera-

tion changes significantly our appreciation of the level of organisation of Eastern Europe firms and of the organisation of labour with the appearance of new types of managers.

New German and Dutch publications

"Revolution für die Freiheit" (revolution for liberty) is the title of an interesting book in which Clara and Pavel Thalman tell of the struggles and revolts through which they have lived (Russia, Spain, France) from an internationalist point of view. The book is only available in German (published by Association Verlag - write to Echanges for details. We are also looking for a French translator). There are plans to translate it into Spanish, English and Italian.

"Houses occupation - or - liberation, an account on the Amsterdam squatters", may 1977. A text written by three Amsterdam squatters for a conference of London squatters in may 1977. By giving a description of ways of organisation of the Amsterdam squatters (number estimated between 3000 and 8000) and its different forms, according to specific neighborhoods and character of occupied buildings, the text criticises the aim of certain London squatters from the SAC (Squatters Action Council) to set up a kind of squatters union. Such a union, following the idea of the members of the Trotskyist IMG (International Marxist Group) who are active in the squatters movement, "lends authority to the organization, which can then truthfully claim to represent as many squatters as join". In contrast to this proposal some of the characteristics of the Amsterdam squatters movement are summed up:

- regular house-, street-, block- and neighborhood meetings;
- meetings on town and national level by active members (not so much representatives) of these groups;
- a regular bulletin (17 issues have been published until now) which is distributed to the different squatters all over town and exchanged with other squatter groups in the country;
- in certain neighborhoods the functioning of a communal financial fund on a voluntary base to pay for repairs of houses in bad conditions and for the costs of actions against private owners and city authorities. Irregularly an account of the spending of the money is published and in case of big expenditures special meetings are organised (several thousands of guilders have been available in the last years through this fund).

The text also tries to give an idea of the limitations of this movement and describes the development of a kind of micro-nationalism whereby people only want to be engaged in actions in "their own" neighborhood, street,

house, room ...

The text concludes to say that "the importance of a movement lays in the possibilities it did develop for more personnel independency, for more communal affection and the breaking down of dependency on whatever authorities or authoritarian structures..."

This 11 page pamphlet is in English and can be ordered from the bookshop "Het fort van Sjakoo", Jodenbreestraat 24, Amsterdam, for 2 D.Fl. (postage incl.), request by international money order or - what is the cheapest way - by paying 2 D.Fl. on the postal account of M. Bosshard c/o Het fort van Sjakoo, Amsterdam, accountno. 3932616.

"Christiana - Liefde en geweld" (Christiana love and violence), a pamphlet in Dutch, published in Amsterdam in november 1977 by the Spartacus Groep, R. Claeszenstraat 40, available for 4 D.Fl. (excl. postage).

In this pamphlet a description of the developments in Denmark and especially Copenhagen, that led to the proclaiming of the free town "Christiana", a peninsula next to the innercity of Copenhagen, that has been occupied since 1971. This is followed by an extensive interview with a (spanish) inhabitant of the "free" town, where about 800 people are living (many scandinavians and some foreigners). He criticises several aspects of Christiana:

- the non-violent methods of the "upper-class alternatives who try to deny violence as a social relationship;
- the lack of participation of the inhabitants of Christiana in the decision making within the free town and the failure of "those who know how to say things" to overcome their isolation;
- alternative business and exploitation;
- small hash-dealing as a form of resistance against the existing order and the problems of the dealers with their common enemy the police and their mutual competition;
- the fear to collectivise;
- the attempt by the "Children of God"-organisation to infiltrate and how they were finally chucked out;
- a discussion on selfmanagement of repression in Christiana where attempts are made to resocialize drug addicts and small criminals (some politicians argued that the existence of Christiana was saving the Danish state a lot of money that otherwise would have been used in lunatic asylums, prisons and hospitals.

The interview was made in 1976, during an international support manifestation in Christiana against the plans of the authorities to evict everybody to make plans for plans for luxury flats and some cultural institutions, by someone from Amsterdam who was there with a group of amsterdam squatters to support the Christianites.

The 11 pages with photographs give an idea of the environment of both Christiana and the miserable 19th century neighborhoods of Copenhagen and the almost total alienation of the new suburbs and explain better than words why so many people try to live another kind of life.

The text is not meant as a condemnation of the Christiana movement, but as a discussion paper within this and similar movements.

n.b.: a copy of the tape with the interview (in French) can be got by writing to Tjebbe van Tijen, Nieuwe Amstelstraat 32', Amsterdam.

Exhibition

of the works of the German writer and painter Frans W. Seiwert (1894 - 1933) organised by the Kölner Kunst Verein in Köln till 27th March 1978, afterwards the exhibiton goes to other west-German towns.

Seiwert was a painter, graphic and activist of, among others, the "Antinationalen Sozialisten Partei" (Berlin 1915), the "Kommunistische Arbeiter Partei Deutschland" (KAPD - 1920) and later on of the "Allgemeine Arbeiter Union Einheitsorganisation" (AAU-E, non syndicalist left radicals 1921-1923).

His many writings and visual works are now almost completely published in two catalogues: the writings by Karin Kramer Verlag, Morusstrasse 28, W.-Berlin; the visual works and a biography by the Kölnischen Kunstverein, Josef Haubrich Hof 1, Köln.

The catalogues are rather expensive and too much in the official exclusive cultural tradition, but many of his works are worthwhile to be known outside the German-speaking area. Just to stimulate this the following (rough) translation from parts of an article published in 1923 in "Die Tat" in Jena:

"Art and the proletariat"

There is no such thing as proletarian art. Because art is the expression of a culture, is the visualised forming of a feeling of living. And the proletariat has no culture. It is the suppressed class that puts on the culture of its masters, like the maid-servant the cast-off clothes of her superiors ...

The proletariat will never have a culture of its own, because the conception of proletariat is unbreakably bound to the conception of profit economy. With the fall of the latter the proletariat will stop to exist and a classless society will come into being and create itself an uncomparable culture .. What this culture will look like - we that have risen from perversion - cannot know. But I believe that art and culture will then stay in a close relationship with the mechanics and the technics of labour. The contradiction labour-play will not exist anymore and in its place will come an organisation of conditions for complete human being ...

All that we, as middle class intellectuals can do (and there are no other as middle class intellectuals) we, that have however put our minds on the coming society, is doing demolition work on the building of capitalist society, using the means of this society and its culture against it, and there, where the dialectic development of bourgeois culture, art and science are leading to the destruction of the foundation of the existing order, make these facts publicly known and prevent any attempt to obscure them."

CONFLICTS AND EVENTS

Great Britain

When we produced no. 13 of Echanges, the miners had just rejected a productivity bonus incentive scheme; despite the vote the mine management and the trade unions have succeeded in imposing these regional schemes so as to increase productivity and thus get round having to grant uneconomic wage rises. However there are already some local strikes breaking out about the application of the different bonuses. We shall return to these conflicts and others which have just ended (Leyland car plant at Speke, Liverpool, Ford car plant at Halewood, Liverpool, Firemen's strike and that of petrol tanker truck drivers) in a later issue

Figures on strikes:

	days lost (in thousands)
1970	10.980
1971	13.551
1972	23.909
1973	7.197
1974	14.750
1975	6.012
1976	3.284
1977	9.985

✓Grunwick one

From a Nottingham comrade, we received the following information about a struggle with the same characteristics as the

"Now (late January) in its 28th week, is a struggle at E + H architectural products, Langley Mill, near Nottingham. Basically what has happened is that 17 men (80% of the workforce) decided, during a dispute over health conditions at the plant, that they wished to join the Furniture, Timber and Allied trade union. The union has then given unofficial recognition, and asked to change this to official recognition with a closed shop. A meeting was arranged to sign the agreement for a closed shop (to be held on August 8, 1977). The night before, Hitt

(the director) phones the union, told them the deal was off, and sacked the 17 workers. This despite the fact that the workers had accepted a pay cut.

Mass pickets were called once every two weeks and blacking started. The leftist groups hailed this struggle as "the Grunwick of the East Midlands". Pickets started with about 100 - 130 people, dropping to about 30 just before Christmas. The pickets have been totally peaceful (on the workers' side, a picket was hit by a director's car - no charges were pressed by the police).

To avoid the pickets the management took to smuggling the workers still working into the factory at about (according to a picket) 5.30 a.m. So, by Christmas, the pickets had become two lines of police (on each side of the road), with a line of pickets standing on a grass verge with the two lines of police between them and the factory. The pickets and police assembled at about 7.00 a.m. and dispersed at about 8.00 a.m.

The first picket made headlines on the front page of the Nottingham Evening Post. Today the pickets are not even reported. What the outcome of the dispute is, remains to be seen. The pickets were optimistic about the effectiveness of the blacking. The most staggering thing about the whole situation is the total lack of urgency shown by the trade unions. Despite the fact that their own interests are surely threatened, the trade union "movement" has done so little to force its interests forward, that it almost seems to have abandoned any pretence of representing the workers (a situation which seems to parallel the Grunwick affair).

The whole situation just seems to be a sort of shadowboxing - definitely the feeling I got last time I went up. The mood seemed to be bewilderment at what was NOT happening."

Remarks from another comrade:

"To come back to Langley Mill I might ask you some questions (the same as for Grunwick). What is the interest for the management of very small firms to have a recognised union and a closed shop? What to the interest for the workers and for the union of such issues?

All over England (and elsewhere too) workers are struggling against the organised unions and 95% of the strikes are unofficial; everybody knows there are clashes between the rank and file and the unions (even at the factory level). In such factories like Grunwick or Langley Mill the nature of the factory and of the working conditions give birth to the need of a union - in the old sense of the term -

but for the rest of society the union is no longer that. The union wants no longer a local branch of an old type and it knows that in very small factories, it is very difficult to impose the "bureaucracy" line.

It is the same situation for the management: they know that the bureaucracy line will be a restriction of their possibilities of making profits and even of giving better wages if it is needed to boost sales.

There is a good example of that in the last political battle about the economic sanctions against firms trespassing the 10% guideline. And more, there is no need of shop stewards to know what happens in the factory.

Workers involved in the Grunwick kind of struggle hope to find a better situation with unionization and a closed shop. But this is a situation of their own and not the real situation of workers against the unions in bigger factories. Experience can only teach them and they are learning very quickly that their hopes are very far from the union reality. But nevertheless the feeling of this gap remains unclear because there is not (like Swan hunter or firemen etc.) a direct clash between the rank and file and the union (only a lot of reserves) and because at the same time, the left of the union, of the left of the Labour and leftist groups are trying to use these kinds of struggles as a temporary tactic to show that unions and Labour are the same as before (giving apparently more confidence to the workers' illusions. To sum up, it is exactly what you called 'shadowboxing'.

There were certainly a lot of these struggles in the past and there will be a lot in the future. Capitalism is not, even in a country like Britain, a unified structure. In France, a most backward country in this respect there are numerous small firms and such conflicts are very frequent: they are constantly used by the union to dissimulate their real function.

I do not know if these attempts to exploit such situations are new in Britain, but of course they are motivated by the fact that more and more workers are without illusions on the real role of the union. The evidence of all that is given by the sudden disappearance of the "Grunwick affair" from the news (in the same way as its sudden appearance after the ten months of isolated picketing).

Tunisia

Dozens of dead and hundreds wounded. This was the work of the special militia of the Socialist Party in the brutal repression of workers' demonstrations in Tunis on January 27th, which followed a series of strikes and demonstrations involving young people above all.

There are some political reasons (the succession to president Bourguiba, Lybian intrigues etc.), but it is clear that as in the West and increasingly in underdeveloped countries the impact of economic recession has been felt, especially since the rich countries try and load as much of the effect on the poor ones.

To carry out this repression the young are being sent to forced labour camps under military discipline. Those to be sent are students with irregular class attendance, young workers without regular jobs and those who refuse specific jobs offered to them ...

They will be paid the minimum wage and will be allowed to join a union. The operation is intended to last for fifty years ... In addition those who have recently moved to the city will be sent back to their native country side.

Argentina

The development of industrial capital in Argentina renders it difficult to repeat there what has happened in Chile. The existence of a national bourgeoisie means that the junta is divided into various clans and therefore cannot apply a coherent fascist policy.

The existence of numerous working class /a makes the application of an economic policy directed towards attracting foreign capital difficult. To attract such investment the cost of production must be considerably reduced and especially living standards must fall.

Even more than this the government has suffered a shock ricochet from its own repressive policies. This is explained in the English journal specialising in Latin America "Latin America Political Report" of 4-11-1977.

"Their social policies and the widespread practise of removing the most representative working class leaders made all valid negotiation impossible ... the workers engage in conflicts for economic reasons, although the government searches desperately for the hidden hand of subversion. At the same time, the strikes are decisively carried out and well coordinated, which would suggest that the workers have successfully maintained their secret representative structures in defiance of government efforts to eliminate the leaders." ...

The more autonomous and spontaneous nature of recent strikes (see Echanges no. 13) which in the end forced the government to give in (even while trying to strengthen repression at the same time) seems therefore, as a consequence of the "lack of leaders and unions", an aspect of struggle which has been detected in Spain and Eastern Europe in the past.

France

In Echanges no. 11 - the pamphlet called "In Chile tanks - in Europe unions" - we reproduced a leaflet by the local C.G.T.-union branche members of the electro-mechanical section of the French daily Le Monde (in the main Paris printworks). This leaflet produced in March 1977 explained their conflict with the Communist Party dominated union hierarchy. Their way of going about this was interesting. They took the declared, democratic principles of the C.G.T. literally. They thought that by remaining faithful to their trade union and political commitment it was clear that it was the union members themselves, the workers themselves (which amounts to the same thing as there is a C.G.T. closed shop in the Paris newspaper industry) who should decide themselves upon problems which directly concern them.

Their conflict arose as a result of technical changes in newspaper printing and especially around the long conflict concerning the right-wing tabloid "Le Parisien Libéré" (see Echanges no. 7) which has now been resolved. The conflicts at Le Monde broke out again in the Autumn and then again in February 1978 over the transferring of a worker from Paris to the suburbs at St. Denis. The C.G.T. had suspended the union representatives of the electro-mechanical section to the working party of C.G.T. representatives (the G.I.A.) in October 1977, because they had made representation to the factory inspectorate (who in the end found in their favour) about the transfer to St. Denis of one of their colleagues. The worker in question now finds the absolute choice before him "ordered" by the C.G.T. of either accepting the transfer with the same wages as he earned previously or staying in Paris with his wages cut by half.

This situation had led to a motion of solidarity with this worker being passed by his C.G.T.-section at "Le Monde", which they have reproduced and distributed themselves as a leaflet.

This example, which is not isolated, shows how the transformation of capitalism has led workers to act in the defence of their own interests against the union (and thus to become conscious of the role of the union), everthough until very recently they were one of the strongest bastions of the union.

Switzerland

An extract from "Flash" - the company journal of a Geneva engineering firm: "... the high level of the swiss franc remains a primary problem for our export markets. Because of this an important program for reducing production costs is in

progress ... Unfortunately two main problems are going against this reduction of costs: productivity and absenteeism. On the one hand productivity at Lucifer has fallen rather than risen in the last months. On the other hand absenteeism is a tremendous problem and we have discussed it with the personell commisssons. One way of controlling it will be the introduction of flexi-time for 12 months as an experiment after which a definitive decision will be taken. This decision depends on results for absenteeism. The absenteeism rate will be regularly controlled by our representatives in the commissions. I would like to be sure that you understand these two problems which affect our firm. We need an efficient team, but because of a high rate of absenteeism and low productivity it is not one. I greatly regret that we have not managed to find a field of agreement with the present "workshops" commission to deal with out problems. We observe that instead of a dialogue and common agreement over problems which affect our company, they are looking rather for exacerbation and mistrust ... "

West Germany

As was indicated in Echanges no. 13 struggles are developing in the Federal Republic, forcing unions to develop a harder line and to commit themselves to limited strikes to avoid more serious outbursts (see docks, engineering, printing). It is clear that Germany is joining the circle of struggles waged everywhere in Europe and in the world

Dockers, printers and engineering workers strikes

From the beginning of 1978 the workers in Germany have shown an increased level of combativity. Following on one another, the dockers and the newspaper workers went on strike. At the same time in the state of Baden-Württemberg the engineering workers staged small sudden walk-outs to reinforce their wage claim. In the second week of March a national strike of engineering workers became a strong possibility.

At the last minute the unions involved pledged full support to their members. On the face of it, this contradicted the declaratin made in the weekly "Der Spiegel" according to which

"The union movement is in no way attacking the capitalist system". It also seems at odds with the unions' true nature and their traditional policy. Nevertheless, if certain German unions- at the present time take an apparently militant position, this is explained by two circumstances:

1- The employers' organisation - Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie/B.D.I. - is complaining about the extension of workers' participation in industry. They propose measures similar to those of the British ill-fated Industrial Rela-

tions Act in so far as they are based on an attack on the unions based on a false appreciation of their role. In fact, the "Spiegel" (nr. 2/78) rightly points out that their involvement in participation schemes allowed the unions to deflect interest from the struggle over wages. According to Der Spiegel, the chancellor Helmut Schmidt "has been quick to explaina at the employers the immense stupidity of their complaints."

The comments of Der Spiegel's editorial staff adds that these attacks "take away the unions possibility of turning the workers' attention towards political conquests which could replace their direct and material interests and their strength in fixing all their forces on demands of such a nature".

2. At the same time shop floor pressure has been so strong that the unions have found themselves in a position of being unable to resist.

On January 24th a dock strike was declared. Siegfried Bussjäger, president of the transport workers' union had to admit that the rank and file had already begun striking before this and that could stop them. Nobody nor nothing could stop them. The

ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Brake, Emden, Lübek and Cuxhaven were paralysed. About 20,000 dockers demanded wages rises higher than the port authorities' 5,7%.

The union was asking for 7%, but the rank and file wanted more than that. They won. Two days later the beginning of the strike the Mayor of Hambourg proposed a compromise which was rejected; a few days later he intervened again. The employers accepted 7% and the unions ordered a return to work. The dockers continued. Der Spiegel (6/78) wrote: "The struggle in the ports is now against the employers, against the government (who wanted to limit average wage rises to 4,5%) and against the union as well". All three were defeated by autonomous rank and file action. In addition to the extra 7% they obtained an accross the board payment of 115 D.M. (about £ 25) a month extra.

"These dockers", said Mayor Klose of Hambourg, "should not be underestimated" (der Spiegel 6/78). Der Spiegel spoke of a "weakness of the unions in relation to workers, very conscious of their dignity and their power".

The dockers' success alarmed the unions, the social democrat politicians and industrialists at the same time. "They (the dockers) have put the national economy in danger! They said "to hell with the national economy", replied the dockers. "We know what that means" (from Der Spiegel, 6/78).

In the same issue "Der Spiegel" gave a warning "The results obtained in the ports will sharpen workers' conflicts; the union bureaucracy must envisage strong rank and

file pressure". Resistance was already showing. The article declared "The dock strike is neither exemplary nor is it a model" but management was informed by the shop floor "It has already had the effect of a spark".

After the dockers came the print workers - straight away. Their struggle was half autonomous, half official. The shop floor began wild cat action, the union kept out but was forced to follow the men after a fortnight. The main issue was not wages, but the maintenance of employment in an industry overtaken by new techniques (the replacing of led type by photographic plate making). The newspaper owners refused to guarantee jobs and replied with a lock out. Nearly the entire country has been without papers. It is their absence which prevents us (for the moment = half March) from obtaining further details.

The only thing we can add to this report is on the threatened engineering workers strike.

At the time of writing the union has not yet called an official strike. But the rank and file are already on the move. Autonomous actions have begun here and there. Everyone expects a large scale conflict.

Eastern Europe

The economic crisis has not slowed down the interpretation of the capitalist economies of the East and West. More than 800 English workers are building a factory to produce 200,000 tons of PVC-plastic (140,000 tons will be for export) at Wloclawek 150 km North of Warsaw. The factory will also produce sodium and solvents for a multinational firm Petro-carbon, using a technique given to them by the Japanese. An agreement has been passed by the American Lévi-Strauss company (makers of the famous Lévi jeans) and the "1st May factory" at Marcali in Hungary. Under the agreement the Hungarians will produce 1 million jeans a year with cloth, models and machines all imported from the U.S.A. It now takes the company 50 to 65 minutes to produce a pair of trousers. With the new installation it is hoped to reduce the time to 30 minutes and then 24 minutes (in the San Francisco factory it takes 14 minutes).

Romania has just got credit from a group of American banks to exploit a coal mine in Virginia whose entire production is to be exported to Romania to supply its steelworks.

In the Eastern block countries, economic growth in itself and in response to social pressures, depends for a large part nowadays on foreign trade. An important part of this trade (more than 50%) is carried out with the west.

In Hungary exports form 50% of the national revenue. The division of labour at an international level and the ending of certain products are made according to capitalist criteria of profit; a debate for Hungary concluded that ... "The more prices inside get closer to world market prices, the more company profits

reveal real differences in productivity and the greater will be the encouragement to produce modern and competitive products ..." (Financial Times 23-2-1978).

The alignment of prices inside Eastern Europe with market prices expresses perfectly the interpretation of the two capitalismisms. Russia had had to double the price of petrol to its home buyers and to raise the price paid by other eastern European countries (they supply 80 - 100% of their petrol) by 23% for 1978 i.e. a rise of 300% since 1971.

On the one hand Russia and the eastern block countries are forced to participate in world trade to a greater and greater extent. On the other hand class struggle makes the growth of productivity and the aligning of prices with levels outside very difficult. It is a vicious circle in which each step reinforces the problems which it sought to resolve and forces the toast to get even further involved with intercapitalist ties (see for example the applications of Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to join the international Monetary Fund now that Romania has already been admitted).

In all these countries class struggle continues to prevent adoption of measures required by a planned capitalist economy. Since the revolt of Polish workers (1971, 1970 and 1976 - see the book by ICO and the Echanges pamphlet, both available from Echanges/Paris) and that of the Romanians (we are thinking of a possible pamphlet on this) wages have risen considerably as has the growth of consumer goods demands, which the economies of these countries cannot answer. East Germany has opened its shops to West German goods to soak up its surplus cash, but at the same time has created a dangerous dynamic of "needs" (see Echanges no. 13). Everywhere the price of essential products is blocked: rent, basic foodstuffs, transport. The recent Polish party conference "chose" to put off a rise in retail prices yet again. In Romania complementary investment subsidies have been made for the production of food and certain consumer goods.

The same consequence of the class struggle and the fact that it is impossible for the state capitalists to resolve the problems of distribution and maintenance posed by a modern economy can be seen in the opening up of the rigid state capitalist system towards small retailers and artisans. Poland showed the way with decollectivisation (and she cannot go back on it now) of agriculture and the development of private enterprise.

Hungary is following the same road (in Budapest the number of artisans rose in 1977 from 149 to 15,259) by granting big tax concessions to new concerns. In Poland shop keepers and artisans besides employing their own families can employ up to four other persons (1/3 of the restaurants and

all the car service stations are "private" in addition to the more traditional artisan sectors). In Hungary and East Germany, small private business take account for 63% and 48% of the service industries respectively. The thesis of the party are now brought out to justify the fact that the quality of services can only be maintained by private enterprise. In Russia it is estimated that 50 million individual allotments (3% of the cultivated soil) is responsible for 1/4 of agricultural production; nevertheless here private commerce is hardly known. In principle state capital strictly controls the private sector just as the multinationals control the small firms in western europe. But the development of a traditional middle class or its maintenance results in certain economic and political consequences. It underlies a certain form of "democratisation" where as modern capitalisms own needs could necessitate another form; the middle class could be a support for capital in its domination of the working class, but its existence introduces distortion in the concentration of capital, in its accumulation and in the realisation of profit.

At there are at present no other routes open for capital in Eastern Europe countries.

Fifth Estate (address: 4403 Second Avenue, Detroit Mi 48201) of October-November 1977 published an article by J. and P. Zerzan on "Industrialism and Domestication" with this introduction: "In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the rise of capitalism was met by bitter and intense resistance. Its establishment was only effectuated by the imposition of the factory system as a method of social control. The result was a tamed working class and a degradation of labour which lives to-day at the core of the marxist conception of socialism."

Italy

The Communist Party (PCI) dominated trade union (CGIL) has had a great deal of trouble in Naples recently. One of its provincial secretaries dares not travel to and from work without a body guard of three heavies. His "Camera di lavoro" was invaded by about 200 unemployed on January 24th (there are about 150,000 unemployed in Naples out of a total population of 1,25 million). A journalist from the journal "Repubblica" went to investigate this and discussed matters with the participants and supporters of the unofficial Committee. They considered that if the PCI entered the government:
 "It would be worse, worse even than today, we would lose the right to strike"
 "Nothing has changed since the Red Junta (i.e. the PCI which now governs Naples)

was elected, clientism continues..." On Lama (the General Secretary of the PCI who runs the CGIL): "He is a complete give-away .. we know so because up to 1976, up to then the organised unemployed kept the trade union out of their activity and succeeded in gaining something. But hardly had the CGIL and the CISL infiltrated our movement than nothing was more was won."

"The union today is an enemy to smash. The union and the PCI want only to disunite the organised unemployed and so they call us hooligans"("teppisti").

Since these events the PCI has held a conference of its "workers' base" in Naples as a means to put pressure on the people in the Mezzogiorno where the PCI and its workers' front have little power. (Previously the conference was held in the North of the country). Their main worry was that they had only a 50% worker membership: workers - that is our racket, unemployed - they are all gangsters! (See La Repubblica/Rome of 5/6-2-1878 and Carriere della Sora/Milan of 3.3.78

Last small event in small country:

Holland

During a neighborhood festival in October '77 a new bookshop "Het fort van Sjakoo" was opened on the ground floor of a house which has been squatted since 1975.

It is a bookshop/information centre specialised in past and present attempts at autonomous living, housing, environment, natural food, "soft" technology and resistance to usurping of power by authority. The bookshop want to be international and proposes material in several languages, first of all Dutch, but also a growing selection of English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Scandinavian languages. This list is not definitive.

The collective would welcome enquiries about depositing items in their shop in quantities. They also have photocopying facilities (write to their adress: Jodenbreestraat 24, Amsterdam, take the phone to call their no. 020-225420 or pay a visit, for people who know Amsterdam: it's between Rembrandt's house and the fleemarket, the shop is open from Monday till Saturday from 12 - 6.30 p.m.