

ECHANGES

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ABOUT ECHANGES

Subscription renewal: This issue is the last one sent to subscribers having not renewed for 1984. See conditions in issue n. 39.

International get-together could take place on the 1st of November in Holland. Subjects for the agenda and practical information will be given in the next issues.

GROUPS, PUBLICATIONS, THEORY, STRUGGLES, CORRESPONDENCE

SPAIN

L'Espurna (PPCC Regina Ediciones - Apartat 240 Valencia Spain) Revista anti autoritaria periferica

i mediterranea from the new MOUM: texts in Catalan and Spanish - who could read and review it?

Various papers on ecology (from Colla Ecologista de Castello - C. Denasal, n. 2-7, 27 Castello de la Plana Spain), in Catalan and Spanish.

Centro de Estudios Alternativas (Agusti Chalaux En Blanch 5 Barrio de la Xerea Valencia Spain), a new revolutionary archives center with a library etc. looking for exchange of publications and even some involvement.

Andrés Nin (from L'Espurna - see above), in Spanish biographical essay on the revolutionary syndicalism, the Spanish revolution, the POUM, the Stalinist repression culmination with Andrés Nin's killing.

FRANCE

Courant Alternatif (OCL/Lyregore BP 1213 - 51050 Reims Cedex), in French.

N. 34 - March 1984 - Where has the Spanish CNT gone? (regenerated) Militarism and social struggle - Prisoners and refugees in Italy 1984.

N. 35 - April 1984 - Interview with a member of the local interunion at Vireux (on the common fight of workers against redundancies in the steel industry and the building of a nuclear power station in the north of France)(Ardennes).

N. 36 - May 1984 - Information on the struggles in the steel industry in Lorraine (East of France).

Discussion Bulletin (c/o Eric Durmen, Impasse du Marché 37320 Evvres sur Indre), in French, quarterly 5FF - February 1984, n. 1 presents itself as the result of three statements:

- the crisis still going and deepening
- the difficulties in the coming up of struggles
- an attempt to analyse without prejudice all social actions and to bring the consequent basis for an intervention in the modern class struggle.

It is a call to all people who "consider as certain that the workers' autonomy is the only way to create the conditions for a victorious fight against capital". The bulletin aims at developing an open discussion and will publish all texts agreeing with the above statements. Content of n. 1 - Brésil (The Sao Paulo Commune) Africa (the resurgence of the masses) and various texts (the Barbie affair in France, Law against Institutions, etc. . .) and a "contribution to a project for a common publication".

L'Insécurité Sociale (BP 243 75564 Paris Cedex 12), in French, text written for a debate on the conception of communism (what is communism? - communisation and insurrection - Worldism - on property.) asks for other contributions to the discussion.

Subversion (Groupe Eveil Internationaliste BP 221 44604 Saint Nazaire Cedex), in French n. 6 May 1984 - most of this publication deals with the steel strikes in France. It criticizes the limitations of a fight only devoted to the problems of one industry and so not escaping at all the preoccupations of the capital. It is essential to go further than the industrial particularisms if we want to fight for the real workers interest.

Socialisme Mondial (BP 26 6700 Arlon Belgium) in French, contains a text from Insécurité Sociale on "The tendency to communism in world history".

GREAT BRITAIN

Various texts from UM Combustion (London WC1 N3 XX Great Britain) in English March 1984:

Our Organisation - translation from a text written in 1979 by Barcelona dockers delegates (see Echanges n. 26 May 1981 - The dockers struggles in Barcelona with information, commentaries, and addresses for contacts). Short view on class struggle in Great Britain; A short version of this text is published as a leaflet announcing the publication in May of a "new revolutionary paper - 'Get Fucked'".

Intercom - revolutionary discussion bulletin n. 5 April 1984 (Wildcat c/o Autonomy Center 8-10 Great Ancoat Street Manchester 4 Great Britain) in English, see previous Echanges issues - Gay and the left - Crisis not crisis? - Discussion about the future of Intercom and it's organisation - Texts on peace and nuclear disarmament movement - report of the last Intercom conference - the progression of the movement (a communist effort) - report from Italy - various leaflets - discussions about a statement from the Wildcat group (Manchester) (what distinguishes Wildcat?): Workers' Playtime in a long article questions "the theoretical and political direction adopted by Wildcat". "It appears likely that the forthcoming Intercom conference and a good deal of the space in any (if any) further issues of Intercom will be taken up with debate over the need to centralise and unify the revolutionary movement". Again the everlasting debate on the "revolutionary organisation".

Communication Worker - journal of the rank and file of the Communications industry (Box 15 136 Kingsland High Street London E8 Great Britain), in English, though advocating a "strong union organisation in every workplace" this group does not believe the U.C.W. (Union of Communications Workers) bureaucracy "can simply be reformed or be changed by a process of exchanging "right" wing bureaucrats for "left" wing". But nevertheless, it adds that "we will support the leadership when they fight for our interests, we will organise against them if they attempt to sell us out". If we jump over this confusion on the role of the union, we can find in the two last issues of this workers bulletin valuable information on the "new technology in the post office - automated code sorting" (1st quarter 1984) and the miners' strike (2nd quarter 1984).

In Place of Strife - R. Taylor, in English in Management today (Jan. '84) translated in French in Problèmes Economique with the title "Union and Management resistances to the politics of reshaping the industrial relations in Great Britain. This text gives a lot of information on the evolution of the methods used to settle the exploitation of the workforce. Presently, the discussions are again centered on the factory level following a period where everything was settled at the national level. This evolution has various causes:

- The transformation of the methods of production. The optimum productivity of the automatised factory relies more on the collective achievement than on the individual one. The most important discussions are located at the factory level according to their particular conditions, every team, shift, all the workers have to be involved in these attempts.
- The competition sharpened by the crisis reinforces this tendency: the factory management has to adapt it's politics to the particularities of each factory and to find individualised solutions rather than national collective agreements. We can observe such tendencies in branches as different as steel industry mines, car industry; agreements are now discussed and settled factory by factory, no longer at the general national level of the trust.

The big national union bureaucracy is no longer involved in these discussions; it's power was linked to

barbaining at a national branch/firm level; it's function shifted to the union factory branch. The transformation was so deep that the top union bureaucracy is presently looking for a new definition and reshaping of it's function considering the new structures - perhaps some kind of advisers for the local branches.

The union factory branches have to perform a new function, as well; they are pushed to do so by the industrial transformation and the pressure of the crisis; that means a closer integration with the management, what is called "a more constructive approach".

The present attempt of the Tory government to change the industrial relations laws in order to get a tighter control on unions and strikes at a general national level goes the opposite direction. Managers are very reluctant to use these new laws to disturb a situation they can deal with in using the traditional and well-tested methods.

The content of the article gives a more accurate view on class struggle in England than the usual superficial clichés. But it does not deal at all with the consequences of these technological, structural, and social transformations on workers' struggles. We have to draw the conclusion considering the use of these transformations to break the previous class struggle structure, and to build new more efficient means of domination of the workforce. The management in doing so is rebuilding at the same time a new working force structure dealing with new problems not at all known by the workers when, for example, wages were fixed at a general level. The consequence will be a restructuring of the struggles: on one side these struggles will be individual and collective answers to the new technology (including the new social structures), on the other side they will be enlarged to the capitalist relations of exploitation as a whole inside the unit of production. We have to observe and analyse these new tendencies in the present struggles (copies from Echanges - 6 pages - 40p.

HOLLAND

The Loon Op Zand Exchange (Das
Morrel van Hornerstraat 15 1575
CC Loon Op Zand Holland), in
French, selection of texts translated from Netherland-

ish (Flemish and Dutch). Explanation on the change of the English edition pattern of the same bulletin (see Echanges issues). This issue, n. 4 March 1984, first edition in French contains Crisis in crisis or the impotence of the left (Rudolf de Jong) - A voice from the history dustbin - The communist party of Holland. This bulletin quotes another Netherlandish bulletin Polytour (same address) publishing some extracts of Dialogue on Method (Feyerabend) in English in Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science - Vol LIX 1979; an article on USSR, the army as a power, a new form of domination (Castoriadis) this last text published in French in the Bulletin of Information et de Liaison - Alternative Libertaire n. 56, November 1983 (rue de l'Inquisition 22 Bruxelles 1040 and in Spanish in Comunidad - Sweden).

POLAND

Monograph of a Factory Visited in 1973 and 1981 (Travail n. 1 January 1983 - Nicole Lowit) - in

French. This text gives some idea (though incomplete) on the working conditions in an important Polish factory (4800 workers - 80% women) producing electronic and electrical material. Up to 1980 the working week was 46 hours in two shifts of 8 hours a day: nothing after 1981 to date. Norms were constantly revised before 1973 but lowered 20% in 1981; basic wages were very low with a bonus doubling for the same job. The turnover was very high due to vision fatigue and exhaustion (70% of the workers were mothers with children and had to be in the factory 20 to 45 minutes before time because of the bad organisation inside the building). We can draw comparisons with the conditions of exploitation in the western branch of capital. Some information on the housing conditions: an 1 1/4 hour average to go to work for 50% of the workers, most of them living in one room flat shared by an average of six persons. Solidarity had 3 full-time delegates in the factory, at first paid by the firm, then by the union. Union action was mainly on wages and norms, safety and protection (copies from Echanges: 5 pages 40p).

Self-Management Debate (same review n. 1) and The Self-Management Demand in the Solidarity Poland (Sociologie du Travail third quarter 1983) J. Y. Potel - Two texts in French giving some ideas of the discussions and attempts linked to self-management ideas in 1980-81 - As far as we can see, all the ideas on self-management considered it as a means to be used for a better functioning of the factory and of the capitalist economy, not at all as a means for workers emancipation. Differences were only on tactics not on principles. Even so, it is difficult to tell what a "self-managed", capitalist, Polish economy would have brought: the opposition between capital requests and workers' interests would have without doubt reappeared with new forms; this new conflict would have then lined a new class boundary. Descriptions of some practical attempts are very vague on their origins: every report describes them as promoted by the different levels of the Solidarity union bureaucracy. All that was nipped in the bud by the 13 December coup. The author underlines an important fact; with the state of war, all the social structures built inside Poland after 1980 were forbidden and dismantled, and still are. But the workers' councils settled by a new law on self-management in September 1981 (drawn with Solidarity's advice) are still functioning on the same basis. The government tried only to get them under a tight control. It has to do so because they are management according to the new technology and the new methods of production; it is a well-know situation in the western branch of capital and their need is coming up irresistibly in the eastern branch of capital, mainly in Poland which tried to modernize it's industry according to western patterns. Underground Solidarity (IKK) found itself between two stools considering the workers' councils activity after the coup. Either it can follow it's principles (and self-management ethics) refusing any participation in the councils or it can try to conquer positions in them as a tactic (as some nationalists or Trotskyists or KOR organisation would do). Differences and discussions must not curtail the need of participation organisation between management and workers. The existence of workers' councils escaping the repression is the best example for Poland. (copies from Echanges 10 pages 80p).

Iztok n. 8 gives a review of an underground Polish pamphlet "Self-Management in Real Socialist Economy" (Jan Hartman) only in Polish but soon translated in French. This pamphlet sees the problem in theory and in practice, seeing only the tactical use by groups or workers in using the 1981 law. The idea of using workers' councils settled by a law as a way towards a real workers self-management is not expressly written; but we can think it is the authors' position though he considers it impossible in Poland's present situation. We have only to consider, western countries to understand how such a view is far from the reality. In those countries, legal workers' participation exists for more than 30 years with different forms. Unions are "free" or "indépendant" and there is no conflict between them and central political power: the participation organisations well in the union hand are no more than powerful mechanisms of management and never struggle organisations. They were never used by the workers as means of emancipation. On the contrary, they are seen as working in a management-union consensus as devoted to the domination of labour. Why would it be different in Poland?

Another text Dialogue (Mise à jour n. 1 4th quarter 1982) with Z. Kowalewski - gives more information on what the self-management movement in 1980-81 was. It adds more precise details to the other texts, but still referring only to Solidarity bureaucracy and not at all to the rank and file action. (Copies from Echanges 5p. 40 p).

Agriculture Crisis and Rural Syndicalism - Jean Charles Szurek - Sociologie du Travail n. 3 1982 - (the author wrote a book "The Peasant Causes of the Polish Crisis") in French, Gierak politics aiming at reducing and suppressing the family farms, built up a peasant resistance and the unification in Rural Solidarity of various resistance peasant organisations which fought separately according to their different and particular interests. This movement was always parallel to Solidarity and quite distinct from the workers movement though borrowing it's name, it's vocabulary, and pushed by it's impulse. This pseudo unity was already over before the 13th of December 1981. The article is limited to the period 80-81; it gives nevertheless a lot of use-

ful details helping to understand the evolution of the peasant class from 1970 up to 1981 and the specific role of the Catholic Church in the peasant movements. (copies from Echanges 6 pages 40p).

THIRD WORLD

Farm Animals (Social question and Third World) a book to be published in French. It will study the political and economical structures of Africa, Argentine and Brasil and the recent social movements in the Third World considering the world crisis. (Subscriptions: 31 A. Robic - Revolution Sociale BP 39 37034 Bordeaux Cedex France).

USSR and EASTERN COUNTRIES

Iztok - libertarian review on Eastern countries (26 rue Piat 75020 Paris) in French (see previous Echanges issues) - n. 8 March 1984 - The idea of non-violence (E. Rizia) extracts from a Samizdat published in Moscow (summer 1982) developing anti-nuclear and anti-militarist struggle themes - USSR: Pacifism as a Crime (all these texts published in French in Cahiers du Samizdat 40 rue Tac 1050 Brussel Belgium). Most of this issue concerns Bulgaria: Is Bulgaria an Eastern country (interesting for the political history since the last World War but lacking of economical and social information, mainly on the present class content in this country). The 1300th anniversary of the Bulgarian State (with some official documents). We have given above a short review of N. Trifon's article on self-management in Poland - some thoughts on the evolution of the official conception of the State in USSR.

On the Uses of Disinformation to Legitimize the Revival of the Cold War - Health in the USSR (December 1981) in English - A Szymanski - In Echanges n. 28 - November 1981 - we have quoted a review published in the New York Review of Books with the title "The Health Crisis in the USSR" by Nick Eberstadt of a book published in the U.S.A. "Rising Infant Mortality in the USSR in the 1970's" by Christopher Davis and M. Fishback distributed by the Department of Commerce (1980). This new text is a well documented criticism of the article and

of the book. It is published in Science and Society n. 45 (1981) (copies from Echanges 11). The author explains how the book was used to launch a sensationalist "expose" of the "crisis" of Soviet society. Both of these publications discredit the Soviet Union's health system, the book in a careful, albeit distorted, manner the review taking extreme liberties with the data of the first, in a polemical manner. The criticism shows that although there has been a real problem with infant mortality in the USSR, it has been grossly exaggerated and misinterpreted in order to discredit the Soviet form of social organisation when in fact, the problem has actually been rather minor and has been mostly a result of rapid urbanization, employment of women and expansion of day care facilities. That is, it is a negative (and temporary) result of the rapid progress of the USSR in raising living standards and freeing women from their traditional family roles. In other words, the present period has seen a complete restructuring of the life patterns following a rapid urbanization (from 48% to 56% between 1959 and 1970 for Russia but with a rate of growing of the urban population jumping from 36% to 90% in some rural outskirts regions).

Another article from the Financial Times (2/5/84) "Changing Diseases Boost Soviet Drug Imports" reviews an American Study: The Medical and Pharmaceutical Sectors of the Soviet Union. It deals with other consequences of the transformation of the Russian society. The evolution to a "modern society", i.e. to production and social relations close to western patterns has brought a radical change in the dominant diseases. We can understand how far capital and new technology has spread in Russia with the rising of "western" diseases like cancer or heart diseases. The western branch of capital having followed that way earlier has got a better qualification to fight them, not going to their very cause but alleviating them rather efficiently. Russia still paralysed by the omnipotent bureaucracy and it's inertia is moving presently in a difficult period of adaptation (here is the explanation of the mortality rate rising). So it has to import specific drugs in quantity - a good fortune for the pharmaceutical western industry (drug output in Russia is growing only by 7% per annum and the demand by 10%). The medical organisation is unable to cope with the situa-

tion and the crude death-rate has risen from 7,3% in 1965 to 10,2% in 1982. Infectious diseases have declined marked by the rapid mechanisation of society, combined with excessive consumption of alcohol, has resulted in more accidents. The most important development, however, has been the rising share of degenerative illness, such as heart disease and cancer, caused by the aging population, urbanisation, dietary deficiencies, smoking, and pollution. We can understand what the daily life of workers is in Russia, and how the changing exploitation conditions is presently transforming their way of life.

Some peculiar aspects of the Organisation of Production and of Labour in Some Socialist Countries - Problemes Economiques - n. 1863 2/29/84 - from Economic et Politique (12/83) in French (copies from Echanges 20 p.) Various means are presently experimented in the eastern branch of capital to adapt the general planning and the state controls on the main basic industries, on trade and on banking. Some of these means, mainly in Hungary can be compared with the Israeli kibboutz or the industrial/agricultural sub-contractors in the western branch of capital. It is difficult to tell if the present development (using a direct capitalist competition and production of capital) of small scale private enterprise is only a temporary palliative (similar to NER in Russia in 1921) or a permanent tendency of the eastern branch of capital. Of course, the bureaucracy - the present capitalist class - thinks it will keep under control these adaptations bringing more flexibility in the economic system and it enters that way very reluctantly under the pressure of class struggle. Their aim is to get a kind of self-regulation of the system but they have to resist a double tendency: on one side the rise of a new capitalist class whose wealth and economic power can threaten the positions of the old capitalist class (see for instance the private peasants in Poland), on the other side the appearance of a more direct capitalist accumulation threatening the state control of the economy. Some comparisons can be drawn with the western branch of capitalism: we can see the rise or fall of small contractors according to the interests of big monopolies: this "free" sector is important for the flexibility of the production, as well as for extracting the surplus value. There is only one

evidence: it is the appearance of these situations, though with various forms in all countries like Russia and it's satellite or China; we can get the conclusion that a same answer is given in States with the same system of domination because they face presently the same problems with the world crisis in their very heart. The Hungarian example is very significant though at a small scale; three families out of four are taking part in this "secondary economy", working hard between two to six hours a day, on the whole 18-20% of the total social work corresponding to 10% of the Hungarian workforce working full-time.

USA

Processed World (55 Sutter Street Apt. 829 San Francisco CA 94104 USA) in English n. 10 - The first

article "Talking Heads" explains why Processed World is looking in this tenth issue for workers autonomy (as opposed to trade unionism), sabotage and solidarity between workers and users of certain industries. The Chips of Our Lives (the daily life in Silicone Valley), CLODU speaks (interview with a French group practising sabotage on computers conceived as an ideological campaign against the mystique of computer technology as well as a practical demonstration of it's vulnerability in the face of determined programmers) - Don't PIS on Me (Personal Information System) PIS systems are data base containing work-related and personal information on each employee and their use by both managers and unions' leadership; it has underlined the need and the difficulty for workers to resist "the technological progress" (some attempts are quoted) - Computer Strike in England - Review of the book "Why Work?" (Freedom Press 84h Whitechapel High Street London E1) - collection of essays edited by Vernon Richards.

Anarchy (c/o CAL P.O. Box 380 Columbia MU 65205 USA) n. 5 February 1983 in English - As we see it, ten principles for the Columbia Anarchist League, adaptation of the Solidarity (London) platform in the '60's

Telecommuting from a Flexiplace (Time 1/30/84) in English - Just four years ago Alvin Toffler in a book "The Third Wave" described a halcyon future (for capitalists

of course) where people would work at home connected to the office by inexpensive computers. Presently, this new version of home work, modified and supervised by automation and technocrats is far from the idealised world described previously. The first drawback is that executives fear they will lose control over employees. "Management does not trust the worker at home without closer supervision". If home projects are to succeed, they demand a greater level of cooperation between labour and management than is now found in many US corporations. The technology of teleworking is relatively easy; the management of it will be much more difficult. At the beginning of capitalism, the factory was built because bosses wanted to keep a tight control on workers' time, work at home did not allow such a control; it appears it is still the same though the technology changes a lot (in this remote period this "concentration of workers inside the same building concerned the textile industry).

BOOK REVIEWS

I. Travail bulletin of the association for inquiries and researches on labour organisation n. 2/3 June 1983 (26 Bd Richard Lenoir Paris 75011) in French. Michel Kampe and others - Workers and Robots - Spartacus n. 1250 (5 rue S. Croix de la Bretonnerie 75004 Paris) in French - What is the present and future relationship between the means of production and those working with them? Could workers still use this relationship to revolutionize society when appropriating the means of production and annihilating all value criteria in the same process.

Some basic questions have to be raised:

-either in analysing (and not escaping) the introduction of new technology which has completely transformed the working process. We find it in Michel Kamps book.

-or in trying to define another model of work organization (with the idea to find a different domination of labour in order to push ahead capitalist valorisation while openly hiding the present workers' struggles direct causes (e.g. Talbot). We find it in the

posh bulletin Travail.

It is really amazing to see how Travail succeeds in following this last way. The special issue is devoted to "18 months of conflicts on the line in the French industry", it sees in these struggles only the consequence of the past cycle and does not speak at all of what appears clearly as the logical causes of these conflicts. Speeding up of the line and dead time hunting have attained an ultimate limit; it is impossible for capital to go beyond this limit and to get new progress on any lasting agreement with labour to improve productivity in that direction. All productivity gains got by the management in the old production process can't be pushed ahead. The present situation requires an immediate restructuring. So the car industry has to use other methods to extort the surplus value because the old methods can no longer bring new productivity gains. It has to look for the transformation of the product and quite a new approach of the feeding of the line with parts. The struggles of the past 18 months mixed two kinds of reactions; some demands were directed against the previous methods (e.g. speed control), others against the new situation (e.g. job classification following the restructuring linked to the line automation (computerisation and robots). When reading 'Travail', we can understand from the first pages that there is nothing new under the sun that there are still people to praise work not questioning at all how it's role and function could be completely transformed in ten years (considering the valorisation process). The complete restructuring of the productive to get an intensive valorisation means reducing even more living labour. Capitalism acting as a social brain can adapt and transform the production process in such a way never seen in the past. There is only one thing to delay this progress: the need to pay the part of the proletariat pushed out of work, even if it is questionable. The division of work introduced with the Taylorism ends with the division between what was in the work still too much human (the labour force and it's biological support impossible to be completely dominated by an insatiable productivity) and what was already definitely got by the capital (the total domination on labour through a process more and more external to it). Prolet-Robots (Spartacus) takes the opposite line: it

underlines well the importance of the present disruption. What is said on the details of this disruption (partly fought by the workers) does not bring us to underestimate it's consequences on the content and form of proletarian struggles, how the class structures will move and strengthen. We would have liked to read more on the question of a new relationship between the productive potential built through the systematic automation (more and more intrinsically capitalist) and the workers the one reduced to be only servants of the machines, the others pushed out of the process of production). The crisis is no more than a pre-written scenario in which the economical logic brings a mutation totally escaping human needs. How the dispossessed could escape the capitalist grasp without pulling down a productive potential in which their needs are completely ignored (we have only to consider the armament production). Could they ever use this productive potential to something else than what the capital imposes to it's way existence?

11. Claude Ursini Dissidence - The Ideology of the Soviet Regime and the Dissidence - Ed Nautilus (BP 175 75963 Paris Cedex 20) in French. Iztok revue libertaire de pays de l'Est n. 7 September 1983 (26 rue Piat 75020 Paris) in French. In a world divided in two antagonistic though complementary capitalist zones any analytical and critical one way orientated view is questioned by people wanting to escape the choice between two equally exploiting societies. For 60 years quite a few (individuals, groups, tendencies) have developed this one-way criticism of the Soviet State capitalism (Souvarime, Victor, Sorge Castoriadis, etc.) which leads directly to support the opposite side. Ursini's book and Iztok escape this situation because they have the specific level of the universal social criticism.

It is not at all the same with some vanguard franc-tireurs like Castoriadis (e.g. in his article on Breznev's death published in Liberation 12/11/82 or like some dissidents, Zinoviev for instance in his interview published in Magazine Hebdo 12/30/83. For them the Russian population and the ruling-class are all the same and having the same criticism. The two texts are

in the line of the radical communism of the 20's: the building of the bureaucratic capitalist state has to cope with the proletarian struggle rising from the proletarian specific needs. For the past years all writings on the repression in the Soviet zone has become the massive drug of the democratic spectacle in such a way to bring to "our" democracy as our definitive hope. The dissidence martyrology has replaced the revolutionary cartoons (Che Guevara) and so it is at the same time very easy and very difficult to discuss the reality there. It is very easy because it is sufficient to escape the dilemma democracy - totalitarianism to see exactly what is the difference between two specific ways of social control. It is very difficult because the analysis of this contradictory reality is at the same time itself and something else, always balances between the partial and true idea that nothing is fundamentally different between eastern and western countries (see for instance alcoholism in Russia and drug abuse in the west) and the other partial and true too idea that all the descriptions of western societies are useless to describe the radical and hopeless deprivation of the Soviet social life organisation.

If we could make an objection to Orsoni's text, it would be not to separate the dissidence phenomenon: what is the intellectual dissidence loudly applauded by the western intellectual caste and what is the anonymous social opposition practically not echoed at all in the western world. Contrary to Orsoni whose tendency is to celebrate the dissidence free discussions Iztok tells more on the social opposition even if it is studied through the attempt of small unionist or political groups (E. Goldstein group in Poland or the SPOT in Russia): we can trace the evolution from spontaneous resistance actions up to concerted collective opposition activities (for instance the "wildcat" eastern pacifism spreading out of the State controlled propaganda actions). Orsoni's text helps to understand how the Soviet State can manage to destroy all socialisation escaping the "cold Soviet ideology" (a kind of preventive dissuasion); but we don't understand why the dissidence ideology spread underground would be more a threat than the daily resistance of workers to labour productivity pressure.

The common distinction in the analysis of the Soviet

society derives from the renewed cold war. It consists mainly to oppose the heroic dissidence of the intellectuals to the general conformism of the population as a whole. For instance, Castoriadis reviles the inertia of Soviet society to get rid of totalitarianism; according to him, workers in Russia would be hostile to any move. Zinoviev can write that the Russians are "slaves loving their chains", slaves sentenced to help the Soviet State and Zinoviev to make money with his books. Considering this situation, things could be explained two ways: either the big thinking heads in one of the dominant imperialism think that the population of eastern countries are doomed to live in their oppression and to refuse any move because it would mean something worse to them (because there is no other possibility considering the lack of any social dynamics), or the idea is coming up little by little, louder and louder that the population has the tormentors it deserves; so no distinction is made between victims and accomplices, then the western military strategical projects to crush any Russian in the same imperialist war. We can find here the same way of thinking of the last war jumping from the slogan "Nazis are Germans" to the other one "Germans are Nazis". Any imperialist war requires to be prepared by such an ideology to hide the national reality.

Orsoni theoretical analysis gives a very dangerous way; Iztok escapes it. Orsoni tries to understand how the social movements could become more efficient and why the dissidence is going that way when defying the Russian power. The limit of his essay could be seen in the fact that a Castoriadis could use it to support his position, explaining for instance that the weak Russian productivity is a tactic for the ruling-class (whose care is at first a very efficient military sector); this limit is in the fact that the repression of the social Soviet life would be only the repression on the dissidence and not the permanent daily fight impossible to repress.

Iztok contains a good argument against Castoriadis' last book "Facing War".

sidering the major factors in these struggles as we have just done, we should not overlook the fact that they are an expression of direct and daily confrontation between the two classes; in precise circumstances which, by unifying the action of the proletariat, have brought it to a level of direct attack against capital and capital's political expression. Both in these daily and national confrontations, there exists no necessary unity between the different class elements or between different fronts of the struggle: the '81 riots may be as far from the weekly battles on the football grounds as from the drawn battles between police and pickets; the aggressive proliferation of pickets in the winter of '78-79 may seem far indeed from the well disciplined armies of Grunwick or Warrington, as from the daily refusal to submit to details or work organisation at the job. Despite extremely differing conditions despite differences of place, causes, elements of the proletariat which are unsolved, and differing methods of combat, all of these elements express nonetheless a unique fight wherein those unsolved are often not aware of the unity they form with other forms of proletarian struggle. It is capital which integrates this unity placing it back in the proletarian court, through the global effect of these widespread struggles, on the level of exploitation and extorting the greatest value; through the unity of its repression.

The miners' strike provides a good demonstration of the way the development of the struggle and the determination of the workers forces the conflicting parties backs against the wall, to reveal themselves in such a manner that there finally remains in confrontation only the proletariat on the one side, making indifferent use of all the methods of struggle hitherto fractionised, and on the other side capital's auxiliaries, united in the common objective of smashing down autonomy and putting an end to the struggle which they represent as a "catastrophe".

Two factors in the miners' strike come to the fore; -abandoning the maintenance of striking pits to the extent that some will deteriorate rapidly -the revival of secondary pickets (despite the recent law) aiming not only at closing pits which are still working, but at blocking all movement of coal towards users of it, and blocking alternative products as well.

It is an action which immediately flings itself up against an unprecedented police deployment and into battles where we shall see some thousands of miners ranged against some thousands of policemen. The government will put into use the tactic formulated after the riots of summer '81, with a kind of war ministry and a repression headquarters set up right in the centre of the mining area and units at its disposal stationed at specific points and capable of great mobility: a veritable war has begun. The miners' apparent failure at the moment to widen their struggle can be attributed partly to the miners themselves, partly to the increasingly widening repression, partly to the inefficiency of the union bureaucracies. There can be no doubt but that this action has struck some chords, and there are many examples of solidarity to be found where the movement of combustibles has been stopped. But it is clear, too that the miners' battle against pit closures and restructuring isn't the battle of other fractions of the proletariat including a section of the miners themselves; and that the struggle hasn't accordingly been lifted onto another plane where that unifying force might come into effect.

So the dialectic of the struggle itself has led to changes in methods of action amongst the pickets and the small spontaneous groups. We are witnessing a kind of guerilla war which encompasses sabotage, physical violence, intimidation, etc. This evolution in methods of struggles is more easily grasped when seen in conjunction with the evolution in the methods of repression which have been used. At first capital thought to put the law against secondary picketing into action; the judicial action resulted in a judgement; but the judgement will never be invoked because of necessity it applies to the union and not to the miners. To invoke it could have two results:

- to create the unity of all the miners behind the union in a situation where such a unity fails to exist and it's very absence is a major factor in the repressive control of the struggle.
- to divide the union, which would be more or less forced to submit to it, from the base which wouldn't be at all bound by the judgement, thereby reinforcing autonomy.

It is important to realise, for the sake of struggles to come, that the miners have already demonstrated how the struggle itself and the circumstances have rendered the law inoperable, and that this first rampart fell to leave the miners facing direct police repression. After weeks of charging the miners with "rioting" the evolution of the methods of struggle we have mentioned has led to the same type of indictment as during the riots of summer 1981. We are witnessing a remarkable convergence of repression organised expressly to handle one kind of proletarian struggle, which finds itself in the end facing the very same type of action; but with different characteristics for sure given that the police at this moment are having to form special units equipped with exceptional means for confronting this new kind of guerilla warfare.

Union repression of the movement is more difficult to encompass. The media can throw light on this repression by pinpointing the "radicalism" of Scargill and the majority of miners, opposed to the various union bureaucracies. Exactly as with the police action, working-class autonomy has forced a "union left" to use a different phraseology. Significantly speaking openly on infringing the law in different respects; an implicit recognition of the orientation of the baselevel movement. They need to do this precisely in order to keep control of this baselevel: a historic account of the strike reveals clearly how this N.U.M. "left" entered only into action when pushed by the rising autonomous movement and when conditions for the miners were bad largely because of the union bureaucrats' long-term strategy. In all these grand manoeuvres of generals against yet other generals, the miners are isolated, divided, more or less disarmed, reduced to struggling almost on their own; with their own determination, their organisation of their own lives (the union is distributing no strike benefit and they have to rely on self-organisation in order to survive); their own organisation of the struggle. An example is provided by this whole battle around the question of a national vote for or against the strike. Presented as an affirmation of the miners' will to strike as part of a tactic by N.U.M. bosses to bring down the bastions refusing to strike, it has become a double-edged weapon against the miners themselves:

-by persistently refusing this vote at a time when it would have shown a majority for the strike and created unity within the action the union management maintains any divisions and gives the media and government authority to exploit the situation, thus making unity between all elements of the proletariat even more difficult.

-by keeping this possibility of a national vote in reserve, the union management retains the possibility of breaking the strike by distancing itself from the decision and by throwing it back to the miners themselves under the false label of "democracy". It is too early to say how all this will evolve: if in the autonomous action the strike has reconstituted some elements of the global proletarian action during the early period from the picketing, up to the practice of guerilla warfare, it has not been able to recreate the unity of the proletariat. But perhaps the determination of the miners caught between police repression and union repression, will lead them - not towards despair and discouragement, as the strategists of this battle would hope - but towards further autonomous openings whose effect will maybe determine a reforming of the entire struggle within the proletariat.