

ANARCHY

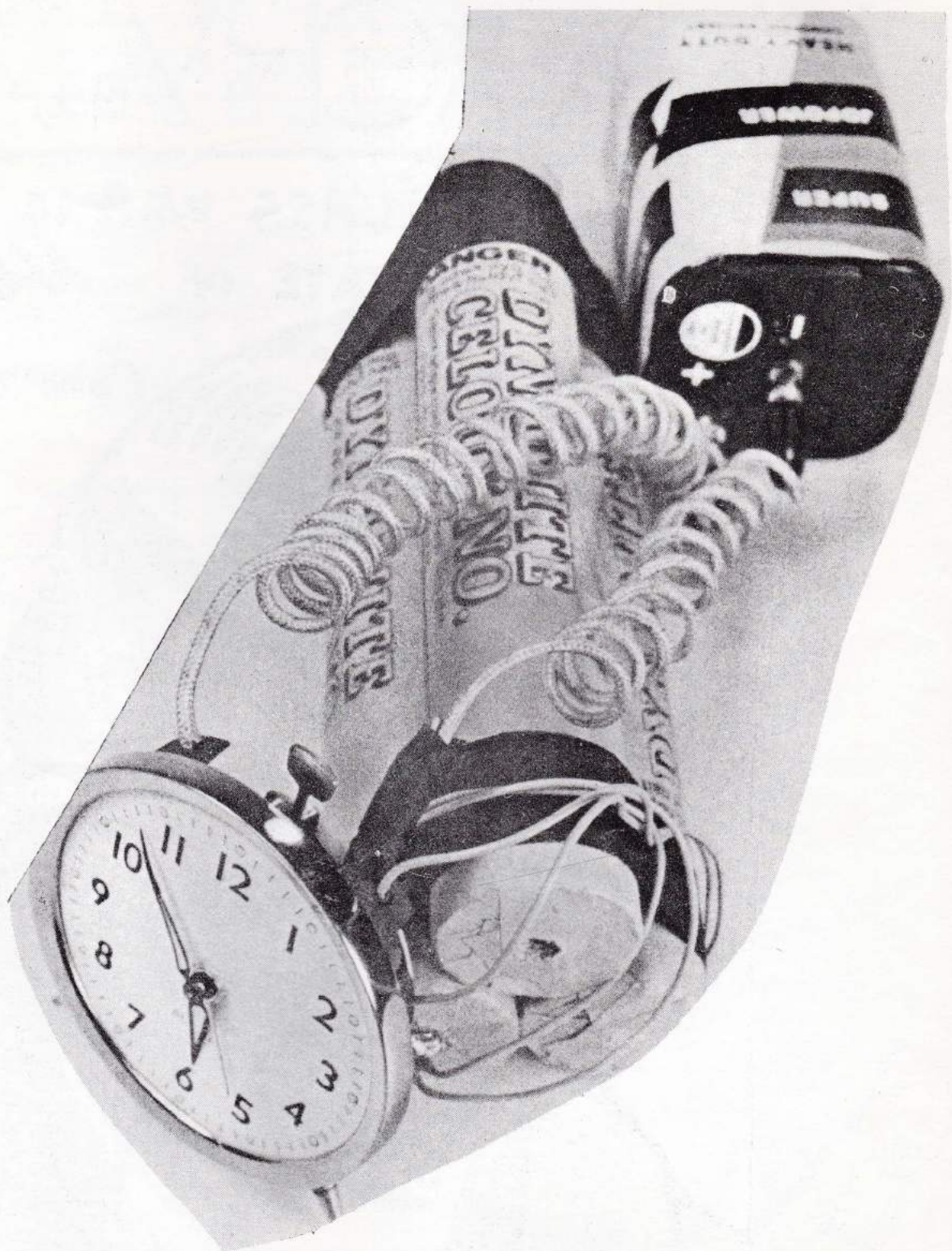
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AHH... *NOW* I'M
ZEROING IN--ON
WHAT SEEMS TO
BE SOME KIND
OF *TROUBLE*
BREWING!

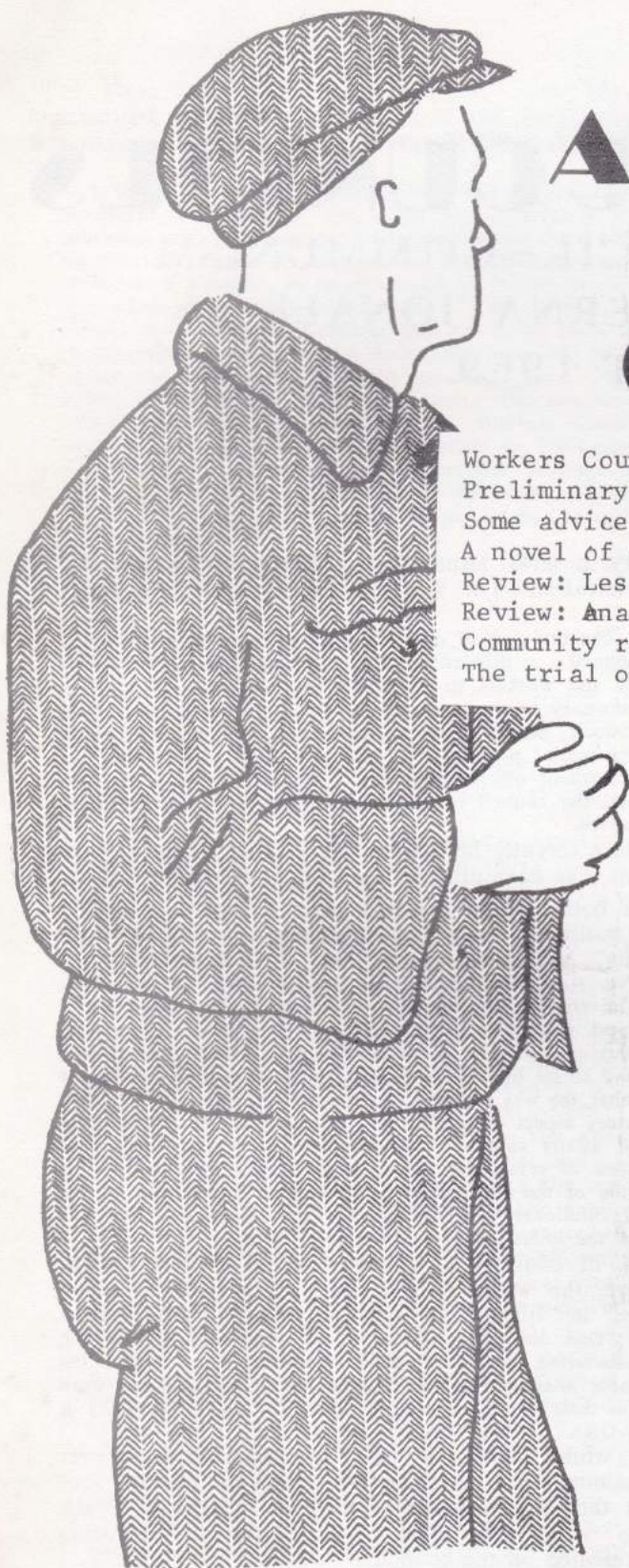
CLASS WAR IS THE
STATE OF *NO*

COMPROMISE





TIME is running out



ANARCHY N°7

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WORKERS COUNCILS

TWO ARTICLES ON COUNCIL-COMMUNISM
TRANSLATED FROM INTERNATIONALE
SITUATIONISTE N°12 SEPT 1969.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

There appears to be considerable confusion about councils amongst libertarians. Nicolas Walter, for example, reviewing Daniel Guérin's "Anarchism" ("New Society", August 1970, and quoted in "Anarchy" 116, pp. 323-324) tries to draw a distinction between anarchism and "council-communism"—the inverted commas are his, and they speak for the scarcity of analysis and open debate on the subject—but he shrugs it off into generalised remarks about the incompatibility of Marxism and anarchism:—

"My chief reservation about the book is that in the end it is not really about anarchism as most anarchists understand it, but about 'council-communism'—which is due to its Marxist provenance. Chomsky indeed suggests that 'some form of council-communism is the natural form of revolutionary socialism'; and Guérin emphasises that in May 1968 anarchists and Marxists fought side by side. This may be the only way forward for both of them, but anarchists can never forget that deep differences still divide them—not just doctrine, but also in the bitter experience of a century during which the state has grown stronger than ever, especially in the hands of Marxists."

Walter doesn't even mention councils in his pamphlet "About Anarchism" ("Anarchy" 100). Similarly George Woodcock's "Anarchism" not only avoids analysis of the experience of the councils but is totally uninformative about them; Irving Horowitz's anthology "The Anarchists" yields nothing on the subject; all Krimmerman and Perry can offer in "Patterns of Anarchy" are brief references in extracts from Berkman and Rocker; and Colin Ward's "Anarchism as a Theory of Organisation" ("Anarchy" 62) ignores councils, just as completely, as does Nicolas Walter's small work of popularisation.

Yet other anarchist writers have made an explicit commitment to councils. Berkman advocates councils in his "A.B.C. of Anarchism" (p. 73)—though he envisages them as bodies of rotating delegates playing a role between the grass roots' shop-committees and the revolutionary unions. Rocker speaks of "organisation of the plants by the producers themselves and direction of the work by labour councils elected by them" ("Anarcho-Syndicalism"—quoted by Krimmerman and

Perry, p. 354). And Phillip Sansom in his pamphlet "Syndicalism—The Workers Next Step" (p. 36), states that:—

The first unit of organisation, then, should be the works council . . . this council would consist of delegates chosen by the workers to do whatever organisational work is necessary in the smooth running of the works. . . . This council must however never be allowed to assume managerial powers. The good syndicalist principle of no permanent officials will guard against that, and the fact that the council is composed of delegates, not representatives.

More recently libertarian groups like Solidarity and Black Flag have also declared for a policy of councils.

And both appear to assign them a greater role than the traditional anarcho-syndicalists. Writing in "Solidarity", Vol. 6, No. 6, pp. 14-15, A.O. declares:

"we stand for Community Councils, Workers' Councils, University Councils, School Councils, etc.—federated at local, regional and national levels—becoming the decision-making authority on every aspect of production, services and social life. It is these councils who must decide the what, the why and how of the working of society, including every aspect of production. Needless to say such a state of affairs cannot be achieved without revolution. Our view of revolution is not merely the replacement of the rule of the representatives of Capital by the rule of the Revolutionary Party. For us the revolution is the rule of the Industrial and Community Councils."

And in contrast to Nicolas Walter's views quoted above, the writer of the article "Anarchist Organisation" in "Black Flag" (February 1971) argues that:—

"One demand unites all those who claim to be both libertarian and revolutionary—whether they accept the label 'anarchist' or not—whether they have their own word for their own philosophy or not. That is in the policy of WORKER COUNCILS."

But, whilst "Solidarity" stress the importance of power remaining with the general assembly of workers (not that they are without wavering on this), the "Black Flag" writer talks explicitly of all the workers being represented on the council.

The English translation of the Situationist pamphlet "Of Student Poverty"—which appeared under the title

"Ten Days that shook the University"—may have familiarised readers with the views of the Situationist International on councils. In it (pp. 21-26) they argue that:—

"It is by its present organisation that a new revolutionary movement will stand or fall. The final criteria of its coherence will be the compatibility of its actual form with its essential project—the international and absolute power of Workers' Councils as foreshadowed by the proletarian revolutions of the last hundred years. . . . All the positive aspects of the Workers' Councils must be already there in an organisation which aims at their realisation. All relics of Leninist theory must be fought and destroyed. . . . **'All Power to the Soviets'** is still the slogan, but this time without the Bolshevik afterthoughts. . . . Workers' control is abolition of all authority: it can abide no limitation, geographical or otherwise: any compromise amounts to surrender. Workers' control must be the means and the end of the struggle; it is at once the goal of that struggle and its adequate form."

Certainly the remarkable persistence of the tendency

towards councils in practice, forces them on our attention. And, in addition to the well known examples of Russia in 1905 and 1917, Germany 1918-23, Turin 1920, Spain 1936-37, and Hungary 1956, should be added such examples as the council movement in Poland in 1956 (whose fate is chronicled in Kuron and Modzelewski's "An Open Letter to the Party"); and the soldiers' councils of such incidents as the Calais Mutiny of 1918 (recorded in A. Killick's "Mutiny—The Story of the Calais Mutiny", a pamphlet produced by SPARK), and the little known Cairo mutiny after the second world war. Nor does Riesel discuss the ambiguities of the forms of organisation that developed during May-June 1968 in France: the Sorbonne Soviet, Nantes "Commune" et al.

This essay as offered here is translated because of the pressing current and continual need: lucid and committed thought.

D.R.R.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES TO VANEIGEM

Raoul Vaneigem, formerly a member of the Situationist International, is known primarily for his book *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes générations* (1967). (A translation of the first part has appeared under the title *'The revolution of everyday life'* — the second part should appear shortly.) The article which follows, like that by Riesel, appeared in no.12 of the Situationist International's journal, published after the May '68 events.

This is not the place for a discussion of the situationist international; but an outline of its history may be useful. It was formed in 1967 by a group which included radical artists. These artists came to realise that art separated from everyday life is a useless activity, that the only worthwhile project is the realisation of art — the overcoming of the distinction between art and 'everyday', ordinary existence, — and the overcoming of the specialisation which produces artist and spectator as separate roles. 'Poetry must be made by all, and not by one,' as Lautreamont said. They realised that what made this project impossible was the capitalist and state capitalist organisation of society; that the original aesthetic project would remain a utopian dream in the absence of a political dimension — the historical destruction of alienating relationships and their transformation into free ones. The artists who rejected this revolutionary project and continued to do 'art' were expelled. The group then developed an analysis of the mechanisms of capitalist society, its organisation of space (urbanism) and time, its transformation of things and men into commod-

ities, which carried on from the Hegelian tradition of Lukacs. Equally they rejected all existing 'revolutionary' organisations and, from about 1960, stated that workers' councils must be the organs both of revolutionary transformation and of the management of a liberated society.

If this were all, their theoretical exploits would be of interest only to the isolated wankers of 'Theoretical Practice'. 'What consciousness does in isolation is not of the slightest interest' (Marx). But the situationists realised that the revolt against domination, alienation, passive consumption and boredom, the revolt of creativity against what stifles it, are present as a continuous and growing undercurrent in the societies we live in. They declared that these these as yet isolated and suppressed revolts were the seeds of the future.

But the situationists never arrived at an adequate practice. Afraid to get their hands dirty in the confusion of radical activity (which they scorned as 'militantism') they confined their interventions to the theoretical level. It is in this way that the present text should be approached — as a contribution to the establishment of an ultimate goal, the revolutionary creation of workers' councils. Obviously an important part of the revolutionary movement is the diffusion of the idea of workers' councils and that this idea should be credible, i.e. coherent. What is also needed, and what the situationists failed to do, is to develop in practice and theory the forms of libertarian organisation and action which will bring about this 'historical construction of free individual relationships'.

C.W.

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON COUNCILS AND ORGANISATION

"The Workers' and Peasants' Government has decreed that Kronstadt and the rebellious ships must immediately submit to the authority of the Soviet Republic. Therefore, I command all who have raised their hand against the socialist fatherland to lay down their arms at once. The obdurate are to be disarmed and turned over to the Soviet authorities. The arrested commissars and other members of the government are to be liberated at once. Only those surrendering unconditionally may count on the mercy of the Soviet Republic.

Simultaneously I am issuing orders to prepare to quell the mutiny and subdue the mutineers by force of arms. Responsibility for the harm that may be suffered by the peaceful population will fall entirely upon the heads of the counter-revolutionary mutineers.

This warning is final."

Trotsky, Kamenev, "Ultimatum to Kronstadt".

"We have only one thing to say in reply to all that: ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS! Take your hands off them - your hands are red with the blood of the martyrs of freedom who fought the white-guards, the land-owners and the bourgeoisie!"

Kronstadt Izvestia No. 6.

FOR THE FIFTY YEARS since the Leninists reduced communism to electrification, the Bolshevik counter-revolution erected the "Soviet" state on the corpse of the power of the Soviets, and the term Soviet ceased to mean "council", revolutions have simply thrown the vindication of Kronstadt in the faces of the Kremlin masters: "ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS, NOT TO THE PARTIES." The remarkable persistence of a real tendency towards the power of Workers' Councils throughout this half century of endeavours and repeated suppressions for the modern proletarian movement, henceforward imposes Councils on the new revolutionary wave as the only form of dictatorship of the proletariat which is anti-state, and as the only court with the capacity to pass judgement on the old world and carry out the sentence personally.

The notion of the "Council" must be specified, not simply to avoid the crude falsifications accumulated

by social-democracy, Russian bureaucracy, Titoism, and even Ben-Bellism; but especially so as to recognise the insufficiencies so far outlined in the brief practical experiences of workers' councils in power, and of course in the conceptions of the revolutionaries who have advocated them. What the "Council" tends to be in totality appears negatively in the limits and illusions which have marked its first manifestations and which, quite as much as the immediate and uncompromising struggle which is normally waged against it by the dominant class, have caused its defeat. The Council is the attempt to find the form of *practical unification* of workers who are creating the material and intellectual means to change all existing conditions, and are making their own sovereign history. It can and must be the organisation in deeds of historical consciousness. Now it has in no way yet succeeded in overcoming the separation which all

specialised political organisations involve and the forms of ideological false consciousness that they produce and defend. Moreover, whilst the Councils as principle acting powers of a revolutionary moment are normally *Councils of delegates*, to the extent that they co-ordinate and federate the decisions of the local Councils, it appears that the general assemblies of the rank-and-file have been almost always considered as simple assemblies of electors, so that the first layer up of the "Council" is situated above them. Here already is one principle of separation, which can only be surmounted by making the local general assemblies of all the workers into *the Council itself*, from which every delegation has to draw its power from it at all times.

Leaving aside the pre-council aspects of the Paris Commune which fired Marx with enthusiasm ("the finally discovered form by which the economic emancipation of work might be realised")—which in any case can be noticed more in the organisation of the Central Committee of the National Guard, which was composed of delegates of the Parisian proletariat in arms, than in the elected Commune—the famous St. Petersburg "Council of Workers' Deputies" was the first rough sketch of an organisation of the working class in a revolutionary moment. According to the figures given by Trotsky in "1905", 200,000 workers had sent their delegates to the St. Petersburg Soviet, but its influence extended far beyond its immediate area, with many other Councils in Russia taking inspiration from its deliberations and decisions. It directly grouped the workers from more than five hundred firms, and received the representatives of sixteen unions which had rallied to it. Its first nucleus was formed on the 13th of October, and from the 17th the Soviet set up over itself an Executive Committee which, says Trotsky, "served it as a government". Out of a total of 562 delegates the Executive Committee comprised only 31 members, of which 22 were actually workers delegated by the whole of the workers in their firms, and 9 represented three revolutionary parties (mensheviks, bolsheviks, and social-revolutionaries). However, "the representatives of the parties were not entitled to speak or vote". Granted that the rank-and-file assemblies were faithfully represented by their revocable delegates, the former had obviously given up a great part of their power, in a very parliamentary way, into the hands of an "Executive Committee" in which the party political "technicians" had an immense influence.

How did this Soviet originate? It appears that this form of organisation had been found by some politically aware elements of the ordinary workers, who for the most part themselves belonged to small socialist groups. It seems really excessive for Trotsky to write: "One of the two social-democratic organisations in St. Petersburg took the initiative of creating an autonomous revolutionary workers' administration" (what's more this one "of the two" social-democratic organisations, which immediately recognised the importance of this workers' initiative, was no less than the mensheviks). But the general strike of October 1905 in fact originated first of all in Moscow on the 19th of September when the printers of the Sytine press came out on strike,

notably because they wanted punctuation marks to be counted among the 1,000 characters which made up their unit of payment. Fifty printing works followed them out, and on the 25th of September the Moscow printers set up a Council. On the 3rd of October "the assembly of workers' deputies of the printers', mechanics', carpenters', and tobacco workers' guilds, and others, adopted the resolution to set up a general council (Soviet) of Moscow workers" (Trotsky op. cit.). So it can be seen that this form appeared spontaneously at the beginning of the strike movement. And this movement which began to fall back in the following days, sprung forward again up to the great historic crisis of the 7th of October, when the railwaymen, in Moscow first, spontaneously began to interrupt the traffic.

The Council movement in Turin, of March and April 1920, originated in the concentrated proletariat of the Fiat factories. Between August and September 1919, new elections for the "internal commissions"—which were a type of collaborationist factory committee, founded by a collective convention in 1906, and aimed at the better integration of the workers—suddenly gave the chance, in the social crisis that was then sweeping Italy, for a complete transformation of the role of these "commissioners". They began to federate themselves, as direct representatives of the workers. In October 1919, 30,000 workers were represented at an assembly of the "executive committees of the workers' councils", which resembled more an assembly of shop stewards than an organisation of Councils in the true sense (on the basis of one commissioner elected by each workshop). But the example acted as a catalyst and the movement radicalised, supported by a fraction of the Socialist Party which was in the majority in Turin (with Gramsci), and by the anarchists of Piedmont (viz. the pamphlet by Pier Carlo Masini, "Anarchici e comunisti nel movimento dei Consigli a Torino"). The movement was opposed by the majority of the Socialist Party and by the unions. On the 15th March 1920 the Councils began a *strike and occupation of the factories*, and restarted production under their own independent control. By the 14th of April the strike was solid in Piedmont; in the following days it affected much of northern Italy, particularly the railwaymen and the dockers. The government had to use warships to land troops at Genoa for the march on Turin. Whilst the programme of the Councils was to be later approved by the Italian Anarchist Union when it met at Boulogne on the 1st of July, it is clear that the Socialist Party and the unions succeeded in sabotaging the strike by keeping it in isolation: when 20,000 soldiers and police entered the town the party newspaper "Avanti" refused to print the appeal of the Turin socialist section (viz. Masini). The strike which evidently would have permitted a victorious proletarian insurrection throughout the country, was defeated on the 24th of April. What happened next is well known.

Despite certain remarkably advanced aspects of this rarely cited experience (masses of leftists seem to think that factory occupations were started in France in 1936), it is advisable to note that it involves deep

ambiguities, even among its partisans and theoreticians. Gramsci wrote in no. 4 of *L'Ordine Nuovo* (second year): "We conceive the factory council as the historic start of a process which must necessarily lead to the foundation of the workers' State." Whereas the anarchists that supported the councils were trying to organise syndicalism and claimed that the Councils would give it a new impetus.

However, the manifesto launched by the Turin Councils on March 27th 1920, "to the workers and peasants of all Italy" for a General Congress of Councils (which did not take place) formulates several essential points of the Councils' programme: "The struggle for victory must be led with weapons of victory, no longer simply those of defence (this is aimed at the unions, 'resistance bodies' . . . crystallised in a bureaucratic form)—S.I. note). A new organisation must develop as a direct antagonist of the organs of the bosses' government; for that task it must spring up spontaneously in the workplace and reunite all workers, because all, as producers, are subjected to an authority that is foreign ('estranea') to them, and must liberate themselves. Here is the origin of liberty for you: the origin of a social formation which by spreading rapidly and universally, will put you in the situation to eliminate the exploiter and the middle-man from the economic field, and to become your own masters, masters of your machines, your work, your life. . . ."

It is known that, in a more simple way, the Councils of workers and soldiers in Germany of 1918-1919 in most cases remained dominated by the social-democratic bureaucracy, or else were victims of its manoeuvres. They tolerated Ebert's "socialist" government, whose main support came from the General Staff and the Freikorps. The "Hamburg seven points" (on the immediate liquidation of the old army) presented by Dorrenbach and passed with a large majority by the Congress of Soldiers' Councils which opened on December 16th in Berlin, was not put into practice by the "people's commissioners". The Councils tolerated this defiance, and the legislative elections which had been quickly fixed for the 19th January, as well as the attack launched against Dorrenbach's sailors, and then the crushing of the Spartakist insurrection on the very eve of these elections. In 1956, the Central Workers' Council of Greater Budapest, set up on November 14th, and declaring itself determined to defend socialism, at the same time as demanding "the withdrawal of all political parties from the factories", pronounced itself in favour of Nagy's return to power and free elections within a short time. Doubtless at that moment it was continuing the general strike when the Russian troops had already crushed armed resistance. But even before the second Russian intervention the Councils had asked for parliamentary elections; i.e. they were seeking to return to a situation of dual power, at a time when they were in fact, in the face of the Russians, the only effective power in Hungary.

Consciousness of what the power of the Councils is, and must be, is born out of the actual practice of that power. But at a stage where this power is hampered,

it may be greatly different from what any individual member or even a whole Council thinks. *Ideology* is opposed to the truth in action which shows itself in the system of Councils; and this ideology manifests itself not only in the form of hostile ideologies, or in the form of ideologies *about Councils* built up by political forces which want to harness them, but also in the form of an ideology favourable to the power of the councils, which restrains and reifies their total theory and practice. Lastly a pure *Council-ism* would itself be a powerful enemy of the Councils in reality. Such an ideology, more or less rationally formulated, carries the risk of being adopted by the revolutionary organisations that are in principle oriented towards Council power. This power, which is itself *the organisation of the revolutionary society*, and whose coherence is objectively defined by the practical necessities of this historical task discovered as a whole, can in no case escape the practical problem of *specialist organisations* which, whether more or less genuinely in favour of the Councils, interfere in every way with their functioning. The masses organised in the Councils must be aware of this problem and overcome it. Here, council-communist theory and the existence of authentic council-communist organisations have a great importance. In them already appear some essential elements which will be at play in the Councils, and in their own interaction with the Councils.

All revolutionary history shows the part played in the defeat of the Councils by the appearance of an ideology advocating Councils. The ease with which the proletariat's spontaneous organisation of its struggle assures its victory, often gives way to a second phase in which the counter-revolution works from the inside, in which the movement sacrifices its reality for the shadow of its defeat. Thus council-ism is the new youth of the old world.

Social-democrats and bolsheviks both wish to see the Councils as just auxiliary bodies of the Party and the State. In 1902, Kautsky, worried because the unions were becoming discredited in the eyes of the workers, wanted the workers in certain branches of industry to elect "delegates who would form a sort of parliament designed to regulate the work and keep a watch over the bureaucratic administration" (*The Social Revolution*). The idea of a hierarchical system of workers' representation culminating in a parliament was to be applied with much conviction by Ebert, Noske, and Scheidemann. The way in which this type of council-ism treats the Councils was authoritatively tested—for the benefit of those whose heads aren't completely full of shit—as early as the 9th of November 1918, when the social-democrats combated the spontaneous organisation of the Workers' Councils on its own ground by founding in the offices of Vorwärts a "Council of the Workers and Soldiers of Berlin", which was made up of twelve men trusted by the manufacturers, the officials, and the social-democratic leaders.

When the Bolsheviks advocate Councils they aren't so naive as Kautsky or so crude as Ebert. They jump from the most radical base, "All Power to the Soviets".

and land on their feet just after Kronstadt. In "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (April 1918) Lenin adds enzymes to Kautsky's washing powder: "Even in the most democratic capitalist republics in the world, the poor never regard the bourgeois parliament as 'their' institutions. It is the closeness of the Soviets to the 'people', to the working people, that creates the special forms of recall and other means of control from below that must be most zealously developed now. For example, the Councils of Public Education, as periodical conferences of Soviet electors and their delegates called to discuss and control the activities of the Soviet authorities in this field, deserve full sympathy and support. Nothing could be sillier than to transform the Soviets into something congealed and self-contained. The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individuals *in executive functions*, the more varied must be the forms *definite processes of work*, in definite aspects of *purely* and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of a possibility of distorting the principles of Soviet government, in order tirelessly and repeatedly to weed out bureaucracy." For Lenin then, the Councils, like leagues of pity, have to become the Councils, like charities of pity, have to become pressure groups correcting the inevitable bureaucracy of the State's political and economic functions, respectively insured by the Party and the unions. Like Descartes' soul, the Councils have to be hooked on

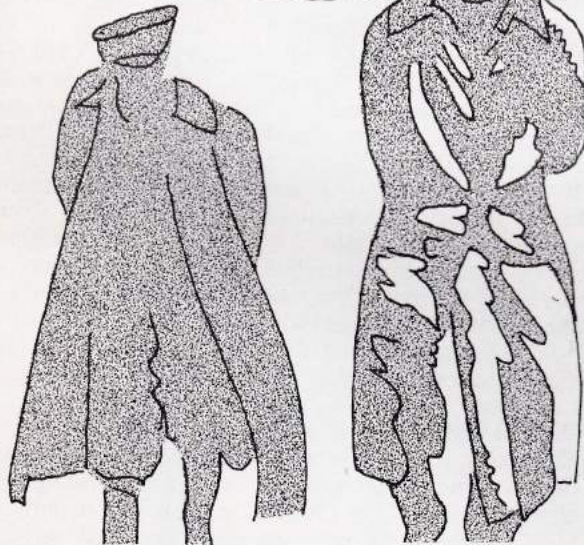
somewhere.

Gramsci himself simply cleaned Lenin up in a bath of democratic niceties: "The factory commissioners are the only true social representatives (economic and political) of the working class, because they are elected under universal suffrage by all the workers in the same workplace. At the different levels of their hierarchy the commissioners represent the united workers to the extent that this unity is realised in the productive units (work gang, factory department, union of factories in an industry, union of the companies in a town, union of the productive units of the mechanical and agricultural industries in a district, a province, the nation, the world) whose Councils and Council system stand for power and the direction of society" (article in *Ordine Nuovo*). Having reduced the Councils to the state of socio-economic fragments, preparing a "future soviet republic", it goes without saying that the Party, that "Modern Prince", appears as the indispensable social bond, as the pre-existing mechanical god taking care to insure its future existence: "The Communist Party is the instrument and historical form of the process of internal liberation by which the workers become not executants but initiators, not masses but leaders and guides, and are transformed from hands into minds and wills" (*Ordine Nuovo*, 1919). The tune may be different but the song is the same: Councils, Party, State. To treat Councils fragmentarily (economic power, social power, political power), as does the Revolution Internationale group of Toulouse, is just cretinous.

Austro-marxism, in keeping with the slow reformist evolution that it advocated, after 1918 also constructed a council-ist ideology of its own. For example, Max Adler, in his book "Democracy and Workers' Councils", sees in the Council the clear instrument of working-class self-education, the possible end of the separation between order-givers and order-takers, and the establishing of a *homogeneous people* who could realise socialist democracy. As Adler is a theoretician of *legalised double power*, that is to say of an absurdity which will be inevitably incapable of lasting, while gradually approaching revolutionary consciousness and wisely preparing a revolution for later on, he is denied the one element that is truly fundamental to the self-education of the working-class: the revolution itself. To replace this irreplaceable land of proletarian homogenisation, and this single mode of selection for the actual formation of the Councils, as well as of ideas and modes of coherent activity within the Councils, Adler just imagines resort to this ridiculous rule: "Voting rights for the elections to the Workers' Councils must be based on membership of a socialist organisation."

It must be stressed that apart from social-democratic or bolshevik ideology about councils, which from Berlin to Kronstadt had always a Noske or a Trotsky too many, Council-ist ideology itself as developed by past Council-ist organisations and by some at present, has always several general assemblies and imperative

All revolutionary history shows the part played in the defeat of the Councils by the appearance of an ideology advocating Councils.



mandates too few: all the Councils that have existed up to now, with the exception of the Aragon agrarian collectives, were in theory just "democratically elected councils"; even when the highest moments of their practice gave the lie to this limitation, and saw all decisions taken by sovereign General Assemblies mandating revocable delegates.

Only historical practice, through which the working class will have to discover and realise all its potentialities, will indicate the precise organisational forms of Council power. On the other hand it is the immediate task of revolutionaries to establish fundamental principles for the Councilist organisations which are going to be born in every country. By formulating some hypotheses and recalling the fundamental requirements of the revolutionary movement, this article—which should be followed by a certain number of others—is intended to open a real egalitarian debate. The only people who will be excluded from it will be those who refuse to pose it in these terms, those who today declare themselves adversaries of any form of organisation, in the name of a quasi-anarchist spontaneism, and simply reproduce the defects and confusions of the old movement; those mystics of non-organisation, workers discouraged by being mixed up with troskyist sects for too long, or students, prisoners of their impoverishment, who are unable to escape bolshevik organisational schemas. The situationists are certainly partisans of organisation—the existence of the situationist organisation bears witness to that. Those who announce their agreement with our theses but credit the S.I. with a vague spontaneism simply don't know how to read.

Organisation is indispensable precisely because it isn't everything and cannot save everything or win everything. Contrary to what butcher Noske (in "Von Kiel bis Kapp") said about the day of January 6th 1919, the crowds did not fail to become "masters of Berlin by noon of that day" because they had "fine talkers" instead of "determined leaders", but because the form of autonomous organisation of the factory councils had not achieved a sufficient level of autonomy for them to do without "determined leaders" and separated organisation to ensure their liaisons. The shameful example of Barcelona in May 1937 is another example of this: that arms come out so quickly in response to the stalinist provocation, but also that the order to withdraw given by the anarchist ministers is so quickly carried out, speaks a lot for the Catalan masses' immense capacities for autonomy, and for the autonomy that they still lacked for victory. Tomorrow too it will be the workers' degree of autonomy that will decide our fate.

So the Councilist organisations which are to be formed will not fail to recognise and adopt on their own account, and effectively as a minimum, the "Minimum definition of Revolutionary Organisations" carried by the 7th Conference of the S.I. (cf. Int. Sit. 11, pp. 54 and 55). Since their task will be to prepare

for Council power, and since this power is incompatible with all other forms of power, they will be aware that an *abstract* agreement with this definition dooms them to non-existence. For this reason their real agreement will be in practice determined in the non-hierarchical relations within the groups or sections which make them up, in the relations between these groups, as well as in relations with other groups or autonomous organisations—in the development of revolutionary theory and the unitary critique of the dominant society, as well as in permanent criticism of their own practice. By refusing the old technique of partitioning off the workers' movement into separated organisations, parties and unions, they will affirm the unity of their programme and practice. For all the fine history of Councils, all the past councilist organisations have sanctified the separation of political, economic and social sectors. One of the few old parties that is worth analysis, the Kommunistische Arbeiter Partei Deutschlands (K.A.P.D., German Communist Workers' Party), adopted Councils as its programme but assigned itself just propaganda and theoretical discussion, "political education of the masses", for its essential tasks, thus leaving the role of federating the revolutionary factory organisations to the "Allgemeine Arbeiter Union Deutschlands" (A.A.U.D., General Workers' Union of Germany), a scheme not far from traditional syndicalism. Even if the K.A.P.D. rejected the Leninist idea of the mass party just as much as the parliamentarianism and trade-unionism of a K.P.D. (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands—German Communist Party), and preferred to gather politically-conscious workers, it remained tied to the old hierarchical model of the avant-garde party: professional revolutionaries and salaried theoreticians. The rejection of this model, principally the rejection of a political organisation separated from the revolutionary factory organisations, led in 1920 to the secession of one faction of the members of the A.A.U.D., who founded the A.A.U.D.-E. (Einheitsorganisation—"United"). By the simple working of its internal democracy the new unitary organisation accomplished the educational work that till then had fallen to the lot of the K.A.P.D., and it assigned itself the co-ordination of struggles as a simultaneous task: the factory organisations that it federated would transform themselves into Councils in the revolutionary moment, and would ensure the administration of society. At this point the modern keynote of Workers' Councils was still mixed with messianic memories of the old syndicalism: the factory organisations would magically become Councils when all the workers took part in them.

All that led where it inevitably would. After the crushing of the 1921 insurrection and the repression of the movement, the workers, who were discouraged by the removal of the prospect of revolution, left the factory organisations in great numbers, and as they ceased to be organs of a real struggle the factory organisations declined. The A.A.U.D. was another

name for the K.A.P.D. and the A.A.U.D.-E. saw the chances of revolution grow fainter at the same rate as the decline of its own strength. Now they were no more than the holders of a *councilist ideology* that was more and more cut off from reality.

The K.A.P.D.'s terrorist evolution, and the support then given by the A.A.U.D. to demands for compensation, led in 1929 to the split between the factory organisation and its party. In 1931 the dead bodies of the A.A.U.D. and the A.A.U.D.-E. took the pitiable and unprincipled step of merging against the rise of nazism. The revolutionary elements of both organisations regrouped to form the K.A.U.D. (Kommunistische Arbeiter Union Deutschlands—German Communist Workers' Union). A self-consciously minority organisation, the K.A.U.D. was also alone amongst the movement for Councils in Germany in that it did not claim to take upon itself society's future economic organisation. It called on the workers to form autonomous groups and to assure for themselves liaison between these groups. But the K.A.U.D. came too late. By 1931 the German revolutionary movement had been dead for almost ten years.

If only to make them start, let us remind the anachronistic devotees of the anarcho-marxist quarrel that the C.N.T.-F.A.I., with its greater practice of liberating imagination, apart from the dead weight of anarchist ideology, rejoins the marxist K.A.P.D.-

A.A.U.D. in its organisational arrangements. In the same way as the German Communist Workers' Party, the Iberian Anarchist Federation wanted to be the *political* organisation of politically conscious Spanish workers, whilst its A.A.U.D., the C.N.T., took charge of the management of the future society. The F.A.I. militants, the elite of the working class, spread the anarchist idea amongst the masses; the C.N.T. did the practical work of organising the workers in its unions. Two essential differences however, the ideological one of which demonstrates what one might have expected: the F.A.I. did not want to take power but only to influence all the C.N.T.'s behaviour; on the other hand the C.N.T. *really* represented the Spanish working class. Adopted on the 1st of May 1936 at the C.N.T. Congress of Zaragoza, two months before the revolutionary explosion, one of the finest programmes ever advanced by a revolutionary organisation of the past was to see itself partially put into practice by the anarcho-syndicalist masses, whilst their leaders foundered in ministerialism and class-collaboration. With the procurers of the masses Garcia Oliver, Segundo Blanco, etc., and the under-mistress Montseny, the anti-state libertarian movement, which had already supported Kropotkin, the trench-anarchist prince, found at last the historical crowning of its historical absolutism: governmental-anarchists. In the *last* battle that it was to join, anarchism was to see all the ideological sauce



Spartacist Insurrectionaries - Berlin, January 1919

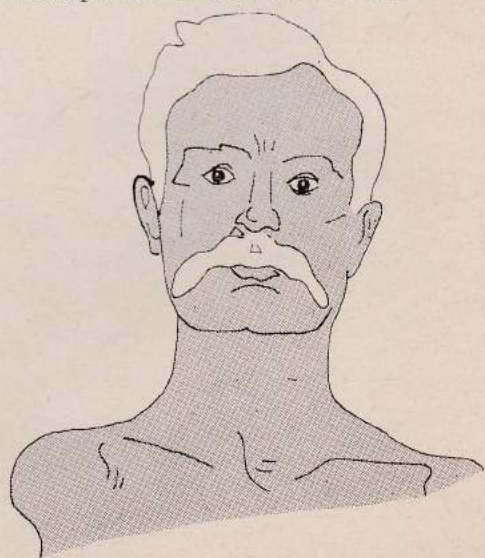
that made up its being fall back in its face: the State, Liberty, the Individual, and other highly musty spices with capital letters; whereas the militia-men, the workers and the libertarian peasants were saving its honour, were supplying the international proletarian movement with *its greatest practical contribution*, were burning the churches, were fighting against the bourgeoisie, fascism and stalinism on all fronts, and were beginning to *make the communist society a reality*.

Some organisations exist today which craftily pretend not to. This godsend allows them not to bother with the simplest clarification of the bases on which they can gather anybody at all (whilst magically labelling them "workers"); to give no account to their semi-members of the *informal leadership* which holds the controls; and to say anything and particularly to condemn in *amalgam* all other possible organisation and every previously anathematised theoretical statement. In this way the "Informations Correspondence Ouvrieres" group writes in a recent bulletin (I.C.O. no. 84, August 1969): "The Councils are the transformation of strike committees under the influence of the situation itself, and in response to the actual necessities of the struggle, within the dialectic of that struggle. All other attempts, at any moment in a struggle, to formulate the necessity of creating workers' councils must depend on a councilist ideology such as can be seen in diverse forms in certain unions, in the P.S.U. and among the situationists. The very concept of the council excludes all ideology." These individuals know nothing of ideology—as might be thought, theirs is distinguished from more full-grown ideologies only by a spineless eclecticism. But they have heard tell (perhaps in Marx, perhaps only from the S.I.), that ideology has become a bad thing. They take advantage of this to try to have it believed that all theoretical work—and they avoid it like the plague—is an ideology, amongst the situationists just as in the P.S.U. But their valiant recourse to the "dialectic" and the "concept" which henceforth decorates their vocabulary, in no way saves them from an imbecile ideology of which the above sentence alone is evidence enough. If one idealistically relies on the "concept" of the council, or, what's even more euphoric, on the practical inactivity of the I.C.O., to "exclude all ideology" in real Councils, one must expect the worst: it has been seen that historical experience justifies no optimism of this kind. The overstepping of the primitive form of Council can only come from struggles becoming more conscious, and from struggles for *higher consciousness*. I.C.O.'s mechanical view of the perfect automatic response of the strike committee to "necessities", which shows that the Council will easily come of its own accord and when it's needed, just so long as it's not talked about, completely ignores the experience of the revolutions of our century, which shows that "the situation itself" is just as ready to make the Councils disappear, or to craftily co-opt and recuperate them, as to make them flourish.

Let us leave this contemplative ideology, and very degraded derivative of the natural sciences, which would observe the appearance of a proletarian revolution almost as though it were a solar eruption,

Councilist organisations will be formed, although they must be quite the opposite of a headquarters designed to make Councils spring up to order. Despite the period of the new open social crisis that we have entered since the movement of the occupations, and the encouragements that the situation lavishes here and there, from Italy to the U.S.S.R., it is very probable that true councilist organisations will still take a long time to form, and that other important revolutionary moments will be produced before they are in a position to intervene in them at an important level. One must not play with councilist organisation, set up or support premature parodies of it. But it is beyond doubt that the Councils will have a much greater chance of maintaining themselves as sole power if they contain conscious councilists, and there is a real possession of councilist theory.

In contrast to the Council as the permanent base unit (ceaselessly setting up and modifying Councils of delegates emanating from itself), and as the assembly in which all the workers of a firm (workshop and factory councils) and all the inhabitants of an urban area that's rejoining the revolution (street councils, neighbourhood councils) have to participate, the councilist organisation, if it is to guarantee its coherence and the effective working of its internal democracy, will have to *choose its members*, in accordance with what they precisely want and with what they can effectively do. The coherence of the Councils is guaranteed by the single fact that they are *the* power; that they eliminate all other power and decide everything. This practical experience is the field in which men acquire intelligence from their own actions—"realise philosophy". It goes without saying that their majorities also run the risk of accumulating momentary mistakes, and then not having the time or the means to rectify them. But they cannot doubt that their own fate is the true product of their decisions, and that their very existence will be forcibly annihilated by the consequences of their unovercome mistakes.



This is not a drawing of Rene Riesel

Within the councilist organisation real equality of all in making decisions and carrying them out will not be an empty slogan or an abstract claim. Of course not all the members of an organisation will have the same talents, and it is obvious that a worker will write better than a student. But because in aggregate the organisation will have all the necessary talents, no hierarchy of individual talents will come and undermine the democracy. Neither adherence to a councilist organisation nor the proclamation of an ideal equality, will allow its members all to be noble and intelligent, and to live well; this will only come by their natural dispositions to become more noble, more intelligent, and to live better, freely developing in the only game that's worth playing: the destruction of the old world.

In the social movements that are going to spread, the councilists will refuse to let themselves be elected onto the strike committees. Their task will be the opposite: to act in such a way that all the workers organise themselves at rank-and-file level into general assemblies that decide how the struggle is carried out. It will be very necessary to understand that the absurd call for a "central strike committee", advanced by some naive individuals during the movement of the occupations, would, if it had succeeded, have sabotaged the movement towards the autonomy of the masses even more quickly, since almost all the strike committees were controlled by the stalinists.

Given that it is not for us to forge a plan for all time, and that one step forward by the real Council movement will be worth more than a dozen councilist programmes, it is difficult to state precise hypotheses about the relationship between the councilist organisations and the Councils in the revolutionary moment. The councilist organisation—which knows itself to be *separated* from the proletariat—will have to cease to exist as a separated organisation at the very moment when separations are abolished; and it will have to do this even if the complete freedom of association guaranteed by the power of the Councils allows various parties and enemies of that power to survive. It may be doubted however that the immediate dissolution of all the councilist organisations *as soon as* the Councils appear, as Pannekoek wished, is a feasible measure. The councilist will speak as councilists within the Council, and will not have to make an example of the dissolution of their organisations so as just to reunite straight off, and play at pressure groups in the general assembly. In this way it will be easier and more legitimate for them to combat and denounce the inevitable presence of bureaucrats, spies and old scabs who will infiltrate here and there. Equally, they will have to struggle against phoney Councils or fundamentally reactionary ones (police Councils) which are bound to appear. They will act in such a way that the unified power of the Councils does not recognise these bodies or their delegates. Because the setting up of other organisations is wholly contrary to the ends they are pursuing, and because they refuse all incoherence within themselves, councilist organisations must forbid double membership. As we have said,

all the workers of a factory must take part in the Council, or at least all those who accept its rules. The solution to the problem of whether to accept participation in the Council by (in Barth's words) "those who yesterday had to be thrown out of the factory at gunpoint", will only be found in practice.

In the end councilist organisation stands or falls by the coherence of its theory and its action, and its struggle for the complete disappearance of all remaining power situated outside the Councils, or trying to make itself independent of them. But to simplify this discussion straight away, by refusing even to take into consideration a crowd of councilist pseudo-organisations which might be simulated by students or people obsessed by professional militancy, let us say that it does not seem to us that an organisation can be recognised as councilist if it is not comprised of at least two-thirds workers. As this proportion might perhaps pass for a concession, let us add that it seems to us indispensable to include this rider: in all delegations to central conferences at which decisions can be taken that have not been previously provided for by a hard mandate, workers ought to make up three-quarters of the participants. In sum, the inverse proportion of the first congress of the "Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Russia".

It is known that we have no inclination towards workerism of any form. That perspective is concerned with workers who have "become dialecticians", as they will have to become en masse in the exercise of the power of the Councils. But on the one hand the workers find themselves the *central* force capable of halting the existing functioning of society, and the *indispensable* force for reinventing all its bases. On the other hand, although councilist organisations obviously must not separate other categories of wage-earners notably intellectuals from itself, it is in all events important that the latter are severely restricted in the doubtful importance they might assume. This can be done by considering all aspects of their lives and checking that they are really councilist revolutionaries, and also by seeing to it that there are as few as possible in the organisation.

The councilist organisation will not agree to speak on equal terms with other organisations unless they are consistent partisans of proletarian autonomy; likewise the Councils will have to rid themselves not only of the grip of the parties and the unions, but also of any tendency towards giving them a recognised place, and to negotiate with them as equal powers. The Councils are the only power, or they are nothing. The means of their victory is already their victory. With the lever of the Councils and the fulcrum of the total negation of the spectacular-commodity society, the Earth can be raised.

The victory of the Councils is not the end but the beginning of the revolution.

Rene RIESEL (from "Internationale Situationniste", No. 12, pp. 64-73) (trans. D.R.).

Some advice concerning generalised self-management

"Never sacrifice a present good to a future good. Enjoy the moment; don't get into anything which doesn't satisfy your passions right away. Why should you work today for jam tomorrow, since you will be loaded down with it anyway, and in fact in the new order you will only have one problem, namely how to find enough time to get through all the pleasures in store for you?"

—Charles Fourier, *Some Advice concerning the Next Social Metamorphosis*.

1

In their failure, the occupations of May 1968 created a confused popular awareness of the need for change. The universal feeling that a total transformation is just round the corner must now find its practice: the move forward to generalised self-management through the setting up of workers' councils. The point to which consciousness has been brought by revolutionary high spirits must now become the point of departure.

2

Today, history is answering the question which Lloyd George asked the workers and the old world's servants have been echoing ever since: "You want to destroy our social organization, what are you going to put in its place?" We know the answer now, thanks to the profusion of little Lloyd Georgies who advocate the State dictatorship of the proletariat of their choice, and then wait for the working class to organize itself in councils, so that they can dissolve it and elect another one.

3

Each time the proletariat takes the risk of changing the world, it rediscovers the memory of history. The reality of the past possibilities of a society of councils, which has been hidden by the history of the repeated suppression of such a society, is revealed by the possibility of its immediate realisation. This was made clear to all workers in May; Stalinism and its Trotskyist droppings showed that, although they wouldn't have had the energy to crush a vigorous council movement, they were still able to hold up its emergence by sheer deadweight. Nevertheless, the workers' council movement discovered itself as the necessary resultant of two opposing forces: the internal logic of the occupations

and the repressive logic of the parties and trade unions. Those who still open their Lenin to find out what is to be done are sticking their head in a dustbin.

4

A great many people rejected any organization which was not the direct creation of the proletariat in the process of destroying itself as proletariat, and this rejection was inseparable from the feeling that a daily life without dead time was possible at last. In this sense the idea of workers' councils is the first principle of generalised self-management.

5

May was an essential step in the long revolution: the *individual* history of millions of people, all looking for an authentic life, joining up with the historical movement of the proletariat fighting against the whole *system* of alienation. This spontaneous unity in action, which was the passionate motor of the occupation movement, can only develop its theory and practice in the same *unity*. What was in everyone's heart will soon be in everyone's head. A lot of people who felt that they "couldn't go on living the same old way, not even if things were a bit better" can remember what it was like to really *live* for a while and to believe that great changes were possible. And this memory would become a revolutionary force with the help of one thing: a greater lucidity about the *historical construction of free individual relationships*, generalised self-management.

6

Only the proletariat can create the project of generalised self-management by refusing to carry on existing as the proletariat. It carries this project in itself objectively and subjectively. So the first steps will come from the merging together of its historical battles and the struggle for everyday life; and from the awareness that all its demands are obtainable right away, but only if it grants them *itself*. In this sense the importance of a revolutionary organization must be measured from now on by its ability to dissolve itself into the reality of the society of workers' councils.

7

Workers' councils constitute a new type of social organization, one by which the proletariat will put an end to the proletarianization of all men. Generalised self-management is simply the totality according to which the councils will create a style of life based on

permanent liberation, which is at once individual and collective.

8

It is clear from the preceding that the project of generalised self-management must involve as many details as each revolutionary has desires, and as many revolutionaries as there are people dissatisfied with their daily life. Spectacular commodity society produces the contradictions which repress subjectivity, but this also leads to the refusal which frees the positivity of subjectivity; in the same way, the formation of councils, which also arises from the struggle against general oppression, is the basis of the conditions for a general realisation of subjectivity, without any limits but its own impatience to make history. So generalised self-management means the ability of workers' councils to historically realise the imagination.

9

Without generalised self-management, workers' councils lose all significance. We must treat as a future bureaucrat, and therefore as a present enemy, anyone who speaks of workers' councils as economic or social organisms, anyone who doesn't put them at the centre of everyday life: with the practice which this involves.

10

One of Fourier's great merits is that he showed us that we must create in the here-and-now—which means, for us, at the beginning of the general insurrection—the objective conditions for individual liberation. For everyone, the beginning of the revolutionary moment must bring an *immediate increase in the pleasure of living*: a consciously lived beginning of totality.

11

The accelerating rate at which reformism, with its tricontinental bellyache, is leaving ridiculous droppings behind it (all those little piles of maoists, trotskyists, guevarists) shows everyone what the right, especially socialists and Stalinists, have suspected for a long time: partial demands contain in themselves the impossibility of a total change. Rather than fighting one reformism to conceal another, the temptation to turn the old trick inside-out like a bureaucrat's skin has all the marks of the final solution to the problem of recuperation. This implies a strategy which arrives at general upheaval through more and more frequent insurrectionary moments; and tactics involving a qualitative break, in which necessarily partial actions each contain, as their necessary and sufficient condition, the liquidation of the commodity world. It is time to begin the *positive sabotage* of spectacular commodity society. As long as our mass tactics are based on the law of immediate pleasure, there will be no need to worry about the consequences.

12

It's easy to write down a few suggestions which the practice of liberated workers will soon show the poverty of: *inaugurating the realm of freeness* at every opportunity—openly during strikes, more or less clandestinely at other times—by giving the products in factories and

warehouses away to friends and to revolutionaries, making presents (radio transmitters, toys, weapons, decorations, all kinds of machines), organising giveaways of the merchandise in department stores; *breaking the laws of exchange and beginning the abolition of wage-labour* by collectively appropriating the products of work, collectively using machines for personal and revolutionary purposes; *devaluing money* by generalised payment strikes (rent, taxes, hire-purchase instalments, fares, etc.); *encouraging everybody's creativity* by starting up the production and distribution sectors, perhaps intermittently, but *only* under workers' control, and looking upon this as a necessarily hesitant but perfectible exercise; *abolishing hierarchies and the spirit of sacrifice*, by treating bosses (and union bosses) as they deserve, and rejecting militantism; *acting together everywhere against all separations*; *getting the theory out of every practice, and vice versa* by the production of handouts, posters, songs, etc.

13

The proletariat has already shown that it knows how to answer the oppressive complexity of capitalist and "socialist" states with the simplicity of organization managed *directly* by everyone and for everyone. In our times, the problems of survival are only asked on condition that they can never be solved; on the other hand, the problems of the history which is to be lived are stated clearly in the project of workers' councils, at once as positivity and as negativity; in other words, as the basis of a unitary-passionate society, and as anti-State.

14

Because they exercise no power separate from the decision of their members, workers' councils cannot tolerate any power other than their own. For this reason, advocating universal demonstrations against the state cannot mean the premature creation of councils, which, without absolute power in their own area, and separated from generalised self-management, would necessarily be empty of content and ready to mess around with all kinds of ideology. Today, the only forces lucid enough to be able to respond to the history that *is made* with the history that is *ready to be made* will be revolutionary organizations which can develop, in the project of workers' councils, an adequate awareness of who are enemies and who are allies. An important aspect of this struggle has already appeared before our eyes: *dual power*. In factories, offices, streets, houses, barracks, schools a new reality is materialising: contempt for bosses, whatever name is on their collar. Now, this contempt must develop until it reaches its logical conclusion: the concerted initiative of workers must discover that the bosses are not only contemptible, but also useless, and, what is more, can be liquidated without any ill effects.

15

Recent history will soon come to be seen by both revolutionaries and bosses in terms of a single alternative: generalised self-management or insurrectionary chaos; the new society of abundance, or "things fall apart",

terrorism, looting, repression. Dual-power situations already illustrate this choice. Coherence demands that the paralysis and destruction of all forms of government must not be distinct from the construction of councils; if the enemy have any sense at all they will have to adapt to the fact that this new organization of everyday relationships is all that will be able to stop the spread of what an American police specialist has already called "our nightmare": little rebel commandos bursting out of subway entrances, shooting from the rooftops, using the mobility and the infinite resources of the urban guerilla to kill policemen, liquidate authority's servants, fan up riots, destroy the economy. But it is not our job to save the bosses against their will. All we have to do is prepare councils and make sure they can defend themselves by all possible means. In a play by Lope de Vega some villagers kill a despotic royal official; when they are hauled before investigating magistrates all that the villagers will say under examination is the name of the village, Fuenteovejuna. The only thing wrong with the Fuenteovejuna plan, beloved of Asturian miners, is that it echoes too much of terrorism and banditry. Generalised self-management will be our Fuenteovejuna. It is not enough for a collective action to avoid repression (imagine the impotence of the forces of law and order if the bank clerks who occupied their banks had appropriated the funds), it must also and in the same movement lead towards a greater revolutionary coherence. Workers' councils are *order* in the face of the decomposition of the state, challenged in its form by the rise of regionalism and in its principle by sectoral demands. The police can only answer its questions with lists of their fatalities. Only workers' councils offer a definitive answer. What will put a stop to looting? The organization of distribution and the end of commodity exchange. What will prevent sabotage and waste? The appropriation of machines by the creativity of the collective. What will put an end to explosions of anger and violence? The abolition of the proletariat by means of the collective construction of everyday life. The only justification for our struggle is the immediate satisfaction of this project: which is whatever satisfies *us* immediately.

16

Generalised self-management will have only one source of support: the exhilaration of universal freedom. This is quite enough to make us absolutely certain about some preliminary matters, which our revolutionary organizations will have to get straight. Likewise, their practice will already involve the experience of direct democracy. This will allow us to pay more attention to certain slogans. For example, "all power to the general assembly" implies that whatever escapes the direct control of the autonomous assembly will recreate, in mediated forms, all the autonomous varieties of oppression. The whole assembly with all its tendencies must be present through its representatives at the moment when decisions are made. Even if the destruction of the State will prevent a revival of the farce of the Supreme Soviet, we must still make sure that our organization is so simple that no neo-bureaucracy

can possibly arise. But the complexity of communication techniques (which might appear to be a pretext for the survival or return of specialists) is just what makes possible the continuous control of delegates by the base—the confirmation/correction/rejection of their decisions at all levels. So base groups must always have teleprinters, televisions, etc.: their ubiquity must be *realised*. It would also be a good idea for local, city, regional and international councils to elect (and remain in control of) a *supply section* to look after supplies and production; an *information council* to keep in continuous and close contact with other councils; a *co-ordinating section* whose job would be (as far as the demands of the struggle will let them) to radicalise the Fourierist project, to take responsibility for the satisfaction of the demands of the passions, to give individual desires whatever they need to use, to make the means available for experiments and adventures, to harmonize playful dispositions with the organization of the jobs that have to be done (cleaning services, looking after kids, education, cooking, etc.); and a *self-defence section*. Each section would be responsible to the full assembly; delegates would be revocable and would regularly meet and report to one another, and their positions would rotate vertically and horizontally.

17

The logic of the commodity system, sustained by alienated practice, must be confronted by the social logic of desires and its immediate practice. The first revolutionary steps will have to involve the reduction of hours of work and the widest possible abolition of forced labour. Workers' councils could distinguish between *priority sectors* (food, transport, communications, engineering, building, clothing, electronics, printing, weapons, medicine, comfort, and in general whatever is necessary for the permanent transformation of historical conditions); *conversion sectors*, whose workers consider that they can divert them to revolutionary purposes, and *parasitical sectors*, whose assemblies decide to simply abolish them. Clearly the workers in the eliminated sectors (administration, offices, spectacular and trading businesses) will prefer to work a few hours a week at whatever job they like in the priority sector, rather than eight hours a day at their old workplace. The councils will have to experiment with attractive forms of work, not to conceal its unpleasantness, but to make up for it by a playful organization and to replace work as far as possible with creativity (following the principle of "work no, fun yes"). As the transformation of the world becomes identified with the construction of life, necessary work will disappear in the pleasure of History-for-itself (for its own sake).

18

To affirm that the councils' organization of distribution and production will prevent looting and wholesale destruction of machinery and stores, is to continue to define oneself solely in terms of the anti-State. The councils, as the organisation of the new society, will do away with all remaining separations by their *collective politics of desire*. Wage-labour can be ended the

moment the councils start functioning—the moment the “equipment and supplies” section of each council has organised production and distribution along the lines desired by the full assembly. At this point, in homage to the best part of bolshevik foresight, urinals made of solid gold and silver can be built, and baptised “lenins”.

19

Generalised self-management entails extension of the councils. Initially, work areas will be taken over by the workers concerned, organised as councils. To get rid of this somewhat corporative structure the workers will, as soon as possible, throw them open to their friends, to people living in the same area, to those freed by the dissolution of the parasitical sectors, so that they rapidly take the form of local councils, parts of the Commune (units of perhaps some 8 to 10,000 people?).

20

The internal growth of the councils must be counter-balanced by their external, geographical growth. Maintaining the total radicality of liberated zones will demand continual attention. One cannot, as Fourier did, rely exclusively on the magnetic quality of the first communes; but, at the same time, one cannot afford to underestimate the power to seduce exercised by every attempt at authentic liberation. The self-

defence of the councils could be summed up by the maxim: “armed truth is revolutionary”.

21

Generalised self-management will soon evolve its own *code of possibilities*, destined to liquidate repressive legislation and its millenary empire. Perhaps it will appear during the period of dual power, before the present legal system has been totally annihilated. The new rights of man—everyone's right to live as they please, to build their own house, to take part in every assembly, to bear arms, to live as a nomad, to publish whatever they see fit (everyone his own wall-newspaper), to love without any sort of restriction; the right to meet everyone, the right to the material equipment necessary for the realisation of their desires, the right to creativity, the right to the conquest of nature; the end of time as a commodity, the end of history-in-itself, the realisation of art and the imaginary, etc.—await their anti-legislators.

RAOUL VANEIGEM.

trans. Chris Whitbread.
(S.I. No. 12, 1969.)

This article will be included in a forthcoming anthology of translations from *Situationiste Internationale*, edited by Chris Grey, due out next year.

A Novel of the General Strike

IN ANARCHY 104 I WROTE, “One of the most interesting things that an anarchist today with literary talent could undertake would be the development of an utopian novel that presents an anarchist society.” Although I have not yet found such a novel, I have found a novel of the turn of the century that should be almost as interesting.

Syndicalism and the Co-operative Commonwealth. How We Shall Bring About the Revolution by Emile Pataud and Emile Pouget¹ presents a history of the revolution as it might have taken place in France, mostly focused on Paris, at the turn of the century. It is so specific that it could have almost been used to carry out the revolution. In addition to this rather unusual, although not quite unique quality,² it seems to touch upon many of the basic problems of an anarchist revolution.

The first problem in any revolution, as Lenin so accurately noted, is the problem of the spark—something that will ignite the workers and start the revolution.

In this case it was violent over-reaction by the police to a demonstration during a normal strike. Due to the murders by the police the strike spread until it became the General Strike.

But the development of the General Strike out of a normal strike was not simply the spontaneous result of the reaction to the spark. Much careful planning had been done to overcome the weaknesses of any strike—even a General Strike. Well before the strike, the workers had gained the necessary knowledge and done the essential planning that would make the strike successful. In particular, they noted the vulnerable points both in their organization and in the industrial system they hoped to take over. When the spark was struck, they were ready to take appropriate action. First, the most active workers helped to make the strike effective by encouraging their weaker brothers in key jobs to join the strike. Second, they made the strike effective by making it impossible for the essential services to work through sabotage. At the same time

they kept the services operating in the working class districts. As the strike spread they encouraged or forced the few remaining workers and scabs to join the strike. It was noted that little force was necessary—they may be overly optimistic.

The government responded first by trying to run the essential services with the army. This failed due to the lack of numbers and sabotage. Second, the government tried to wait out the strike but this failed due to the solidarity of the workers—again perhaps the writers are overly optimistic. The government did not use massive violence against the strike for two reasons. First, the workers stayed home and did not gather in large groups. Second, the army was considered too untrustworthy to use due to years of propaganda work by the anti-militarists. This is probably a key point. Unless the military is rendered ineffective as a force against the strike, it is almost bound to fail. Probably the strike cannot succeed unless the military actively supports it or is at least neutral. In either case the military remains as a key centre of power during and after the revolution. At some point it must be dismantled, and it is unlikely to be happy with the idea. In this novel it is suggested that the disaffection of the common soldier is the key—it is undoubtedly essential, but it may not be enough.

The government is finally overthrown by the simple expedient of invading parliament. The authors note the problem of what to do about the parliamentary supporters of the workers who want to form a new government. The solution proposed of simply telling them that they are out of date and won't be allowed to seems a bit naive. Since the people have a long-standing habit of following governments, it is not going to be so simple to change either that habit or the habit of forming governments.

The government is pictured as composed of bungling fools and the workers make no mistakes. It is dangerous both to underestimate your enemy and overestimate yourself.

A basic problem for the anarchist, or the syndicalist as pictured in this novel, is how is it possible to organize society along non-statist, non-governmental lines and furthermore insure both the acceptance of the new society and its success. Pataud and Pouget spend many pages describing specific changes in various parts of the social system, such as land reform, financial reform, reorganization of newspapers, the railroads, and the post office. But the ability to do all this assumes no significant internal or external opposition. They deal with the external threat by coming up with all sorts of new weapons and defeating the opposition—a bit too simple. They deal with the internal threat by (1) assuming the rapid conversion of most opponents, (2) holding a Trade Union Congress to organize the new society, and (3) arming the workers. The first point is a dangerous assumption. The second point assumes, as they specifically do, that there is no significant disagreement over what is to be done. The third point assumes that the workers support the revolution without major exception.

Although points one and three are highly debatable, point two is particularly troublesome. The assumption that most anarchists or syndicalists can agree without much debate on all the major changes in society seems ridiculous. Although this period of the revolution, the period of consolidation or the like, is rarely discussed by anarchists, it is the key period. It cannot simply be “played by ear” when it comes. Unless the opposition has been suddenly converted and the workers are armed and favour the revolution, there will be civil war which will again raise the problem of the role of the military. Even if civil war is avoided many people will decide to form governments and will be a great bother, if nothing else.

Pataud and Pouget produced a detailed plan for a general strike revolution in a particular setting. They produced an instructive handbook, but as I have pointed out, they tended to be overly optimistic. I think we must be self-consciously pessimistic in such situations. An anarchist society will not be produced by assuming that at every possible crisis the opposition will be stupid and we will be brilliant.

LYMAN TOWER SARGENT

¹The edition I have was translated by Charlotte and Frederic Charles and published by The New International Publishing Company of Oxford in 1913. It has a foreword by Tom Mann, a preface by Kropotkin, and three drawings by Will Dyson. The original edition seems to have been *Comment nous ferons la révolution*. Paris: J. Tallandier, 1909.

²A few novels recently published suggest some revolutionary tactics, but they are not anarchist. An example, about the Black revolution, is Sam Greenlee, *The Spook Who Sat By The Door*. London: Allison & Busby, 1969.



Michael Biro's
Famous Workers Giant Poster

The Question of Power and Anarchism

LES ANARCHISTES ESPAGNOLS ET LE POUVOIR
1869-1969 by César M. Lorenzo (Paris, 1969, 28.00 frs.).

WHEN ANY ANARCHIST IS ASKED that perennial question "Well, when have your ideas ever been put into practice?", the almost equally perennial answer is "Spain 1936". This book, published at the end of 1969 in Paris, written by the son of an exile from the Spanish Civil War, is probably the most important and certainly the most documented book of recent times. The period is now distant enough to be considered as history, an object of research, and is now increasingly less hindered by memories, memoirs and journalism. Thirty years is sufficient for the demythification to begin. There are obvious advantages in this, but Anarchism is a question of personal passion, of the individual, and it must be said from the beginning that this is a dense, extended, doctoral thesis and it can easily happen, as here, that the personal element is lost. The documentation is excellent, the style is tedious.

Spain is the only country in Europe where Anarchism (or to be more correct Anarcho-Syndicalism) has become a mass movement. This is the history of the CNT (Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo), of Anarcho-Syndicalism. Lorenzo often opposes this to "pure" Anarchism. The reader will find little or no details of the many new social forms attempted in this period. Too often, these are dismissed as "utopian" and "idealistic", strange language for these are Marxist epithets and Lorenzo states that he is opposed to Marxist views of history, "The new scholasticism". The introduction consists of polemical attacks upon Social Democracy, Marxism followed by short resums of the ideas of Bakunin and Kropotkin, which seem somewhat out of place with the academic minutiae of the rest of the text.

The point that the author fails to make here (though it is made in a somewhat negative way in the body of the text) is that his study is of Anarcho-Syndicalism and that there are often differences and contradictions between this and "pure" Anarchism. This then is a history of the differing relationships between the CNT and the various Spanish governments, whether it was illegality and gunfights during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship in the 1920's, collaboration during the civil war period or the squalid tale of their relations with the Spanish government in exile.

His first chapter traces the story from 1869. In a still largely rural country, the author concentrates

upon the growing urban proletariat, and especially that of Barcelona. The Anarcho-Communism of Andalusia is dismissed as an "apostolic vision" appealing to "illiterate peasants" and having a programme of "confiscation, church burnings and then the messianic age". The "lumpenproletariat" element of Anarchism is dismissed in the same simplistic fashion. A further indication of the bourgeois leanings of the author can be seen when he dismisses juvenile delinquents as "fascists"; a pure absurdity. Possibly he finds their anonymity tedious, their ideas not sufficiently advanced for a doctoral thesis, but it seems an injustice, to put it mildly, to dismiss these, the lumpenproletariat, most fervent supporters of Anarchism, in this way. They, unlike the "advanced" workers, had nothing to lose and everything to gain.

A series of industrial victories and setbacks, and the interminable conferences that led to the formation of the CNT, is excellently documented. Footnotes, often lengthier than the text to which they refer, abound; there are potted biographies of the leaders. The reader is rarely conscious that he is reading a history of an Anarchist movement; the portrayal of certain figures in relationship to the masses makes it very much like a history of any Socialist party. Unless of course this is all meant as a condemnation of Anarchism. The concept of the "leader" is surely alien to Anarchism, but according to the author, not alien to the CNT.

The chapter ends with the Primo de Rivera dictatorship of 1923, repression and illegality. This period is possibly the high spot of the CNT as an Anarchist group. They do away with strike funds (pointless for a revolutionary group), they are anti-materialistic, anti-bureaucratic and have just left the Comintern. Individualism is abandoned in favour of the proletarian spirit, yet even at this time the author makes clear his contention of the impossibility of preventing a national mass democratic (in the best sense of the word) group from veering to reformism.

The rest of the book deals with the CNT faced with "reality". The meaning of this word is never discussed. The idea of the peasants and workers creating their own reality and not just amending that of the bourgeoisie is never considered. Where "conditions are not ripe" for revolution, the CNT must fight for reforms. Much the same problem has split the left everywhere (e.g. Rosa Luxemburg's struggle with the

leadership of the German Social Democrats). Garcia Oliver suggests an "ad hoc" union with the authoritarian left to defeat the Rivera dictatorship. Disgust with these revisionist trends led to the formation of the FAI (Federación Anárquica Ibérica), a loose formation of small groups all over the peninsula. They refuse to compromise and come to dominate the CNT by 1932. They will naturally make the greatest advances in periods of illegality. There is the problem of deciding what to do with opponents. The FAI tries to suppress them. Throughout, these problems are posed and their consideration is more important to us than any solutions of the period.

The Anarchists abstained massively in the November 1933 elections. The Right was victorious. An abortive Anarchist revolt ensued. Abstentionism alone is seen to be useless. The CNT, in the Asturias, links up with the UGT (the Communist-dominated Union General de Trabajadores). A compromise to prevent Fascism. How far one could compromise Anarchism, and the fact that this was never fully discussed or thought out, led to much vacillation in the Civil War period. The Central CNT rejects the Asturias decision. What price local autonomy?

In October 1934, the uprising in the Asturias forces the Anarchists to adopt an authoritarian rôle in the unsuccessful defence of the area. Throughout, the incompatibility of "pure" Anarchism with the idea of the mass movement in modern industrial society is suggested. What is never suggested is that the dictates of modern industrial society are incompatible with man. In the February 1936 elections, the CNT advises voting to defeat Fascism. The "pure" Anarchist critique of the vote was vindicated a few months later.

The republican government tries to steer a centre course—impossible given the class structure of Spain. At the Saragossa conference (May 1936), both reformists and those wishing for a disciplined line against Fascism are defeated. The stage is set for the military revolt, for the Social Revolution and for the tragic indecisions of the CNT.

There then follows a discussion region by region of the activities of the CNT in the vital first few months of the war. The government is revolutionary, but still a government. Strong in Catalonia, weak in Castile, the CNT maintains parity with other organisations. At times, it seems just like any other political party. At other times, in the rare glimpses of Anarchism in the villages and in the streets that the author allows us, the libertarian concept and the social revolution are seen in their untrammelled glory. In Barcelona, the CNT vies with the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista, an anti-Stalinist party that has fallen out with Trotsky) and the Communists and even has its own secret police. The workers themselves are far ahead of the CNT. They collectivise factories and farms. The CNT always wary of the political game holds back. They enter the Catalan government (the Generalidad) after a secret plenum. The term CNT both in the book and in this review takes on the sense of the leadership of the CNT. The impression given in the book is of a leadership no more aware of

its membership than the Communists. Regrettable if true, treacherous if not. The workers want and create a militia. The parties turn it into an army with ranks and uniforms.

This respectability did not avoid foreign intervention. It was a military mistake to take on the highly trained and well equipped Fascist Army on their terms. Guerrilla warfare and sabotage should have been used **more**, though this last would not have appealed to the Communists (who controlled the distribution of Russian arms), with their policy of a popular front including large elements of the petty bourgeoisie. Good reasons are given for the CNT joining the national republican government. Soviet arms are supplied and the security of the collectives is assured for a time. This move appeals to the masses. But the author does not mention the need for a cultural revolution, a necessity of any social revolution. Many Anarchists feel disappointed, they are being caught in the world of political intrigue that they had hoped to avoid.

This book, unlike most of the outpourings of those associated with the exiled CNT in France, is not a whitewashing attempt. The "Amigos de Durruti" are criticised as indeed is the folk myth himself. The CNT troops had many failings. Excessive regional feeling was one. The most daring troops, those of Aragon (a less industrialised area than Barcelona) alienated other tendencies. The demythification is needed, but in no way detracts anything from the valour and courage of these men. The abolition of money is fully discussed.

The chapter on Euzkadi (the Basque country) shows the pernicious effect of nationalism. The contribution of this area is anti-Fascist only by reason of its desire for separatism. The "pure" Anarchists were strongest in the south. Here apolitical Anarchists have almost a "do your own thing philosophy", though again no details are given except for a liberal condemnation of the bloody class war. Fullest details are given of the Fascist repression. In some places, such as Malaga, town/country relations are strained due to an excessive federalism. There is great collectivisation and confiscation and due to this, the central government cuts off arms. This is just one more aspect of the necessary weakness of Anarchist groups faced with power seeking careerist and opportunist parties. As a defence, the Anarchists had again to reduce themselves to the level of a political party.

In October 1936, the CNT enters the Madrid government. Military needs subordinate Anarchism to the anti-Fascist struggle. No real attempt is made to subjugate the government to the CNT and UGT (the latter still being preferable to any political party). Too much here is made of the activities and personalities of leading CNT members, too much, that is, if the CNT was really a "grass roots" organisation.

The reasons for entry are dealt with sympathetically. Anarchism must be accepted by at least 80% of the population before the revolution is safe internally, but the anti-Fascist struggle is being waged by many tendencies, even including some Carlists. Anarchists will have no success while the State is strong enough to be a reality. They have no support from abroad

(except a little from Mexico). The State will break the CNT (clothing contracts go abroad and not to collectivised Barcelona) unless it joins the government.

Can the equalisation of rich and poor regions be carried on without some coercion? But could not the CNT react to Fascism as they had reacted in the past to other governments? The basic thesis is that entry into the government was necessary and even desirable. The author does not appreciate social change. The rank and file did not approve, but especially in the war situation, they had become powerless.

The situation degenerates further. The CNT loses the power game to the Stalinists (who control the Russian arms) but remains supreme on the streets, though the CNT leadership seems oblivious of this. The position of the CNT varies from week to week, but under pressure of war there is a general movement to the right. Centralisation and bureaucratisation set in, but the reader is never told of their effect on the lives and morale of the workers, though collectivisation remained strong in Catalonia until the region's fall in January 1939.

The story should end here. It does not. Marx said that history repeats itself—the second time as comedy. The political manoeuvrings of 1938 (recounted in tortuous detail) repeat themselves in exile for at least another ten years. This is a squalid tale—government reaching its point of absolute absurdity. “Anarchists” make tentative agreements with Monarchists and even “working class” elements of the Phalange. Mutual recriminations fly between the various groups in exile and still do. This serves no purpose. Given the force of arms ranged against them, military defeat was inevitable. This meant that the Social Revolution was never fully experienced. However, what did happen can never be called a failure.

From an Anarchist point of view, the period of the

exile is sheer farce. However, one has still to admire the scholarship of the book. The activities of the exiles are fully described. During this period, there is one link with reality; the struggle of many exiles in France with the resistance against the Nazis. The one relevant point in the irrelevance of the exile. In treating this period seriously, the author forgets that political reality can only exist with economic reality—nothing can conceal this. There is still a bourgeois liberal Spanish government in exile in Mexico. Their last hope was lost when the Allies did not attack Fascism in the Iberian peninsula.

This is a very dense book. There are hundreds of names and unforgivably no index. The research is unimpeachable. His political analysis is not. Exiles in France have not liked this book. Hardly surprising, for the thesis that entry into the government was correct leads the author to treat the CNT more and more as a political party. This is the fault of emphasis. By ignoring the grass roots of the movement, it is very easy to get this impression. For this impression, the book has been much praised in the bourgeois press.

History for its own sake is curiosity. This book contains much of relevance to us. In a negative way. The book avoids the issues. It avoids the real issue of the cultural revolution as opposed to the purely political one. It avoids discussion of the rôle of the lumpenproletariat, but most importantly, it avoids Anarchism, it betrays the real CNT, those millions of anonymous Spaniards, by giving support to the political machinations of a leadership, that in times of stress acted like any other leadership. The tragedy is that as the history progresses, the anonymous CNT militant fades more and more out of the picture, until finally in the tragi-comedy of exile, he disappears altogether.

TONY LEVENE.

*Now, the whole Catalan
people demands:*

“LLIBERTAT”!



Anarchism, Angst and Max Stirner

(The Ego and His Own: Selections from Max Stirner. Selected and introduced by John Carroll. Jonathan Cape. £2.95. The Egoist Nihilist Max Stirner. By R. W. K. Paterson. Published for The University of Hull by Oxford University Press. £3.50.)

AFTER MANY YEARS OF NEGLECT the philosophy of Max Stirner is at last receiving attention in British academic circles. These two books mark his public début into the world of professional *savants* and it will be very interesting to see what kind of reception this intellectual vagabond will get.

Mr. Carroll's choice of extracts is as good as one can expect another man's to be. He includes many of Stirner's most pungent passages which amply support his claim that "Stirner is the only writer to develop fully the implication of a total rejection of external authority. In his book the anarcho-egoist stands before us in full view". He also contributes a lengthy and valuable introductory essay and a number of informative footnotes.

So far, so good. The question remains, however, what is Max Stirner doing in a series called "Roots of the Right" which is described as "readings in fascist, racist and elitist ideology"?

Mr. Carroll himself seems uneasy at having to justify the inclusion. He confesses that "in the end we have to admit that the case for including Stirner in the 'Roots of the Right' is not watertight" and that "to be fair to him, we accept that his work is categorically anti-authoritarian, that there is no suggestion of racism, and that he had nothing but contempt for German nationalism". He is also severely critical of Hans G. Helms' recent Marxist attempt to represent Stirner as "the first ideologist of the middle class and one of the precursors of fascism".

Nonetheless, Mr. Carroll claims that Stirner "presents himself as an important contributor to the growth of European fascism" and it is necessary to look at his reasons for making such a claim. Just what relationship, if any, has "the philosopher of the self" to the collectivist doctrine of fascism which urges self-sacrifice and the subordination of the individual to the group ideal?

Mr. Carroll's case is a poor one. He gives no clearly delineated causal connection between Stirner's conscious egoism and the altruism of fascism. He can only suggest, for example, that Stirner's ideas had a direct influence on Mussolini and perhaps an indirect in-

fluence on Hitler. Since he admits that Hitler was probably ignorant of Stirner his conjectures about him are too tenuous to consider.

Mussolini is a different matter. He wrote enthusiastically "why shouldn't Stirner become significant again" and praised individualism as late as 1919. But, as Mr. Carroll says, his "notorious exhibitionism made him less a passionate follower of ideas than an intellectual opportunist, freely swapping them to suit the cause of the moment".

True to form, once he was in authority, Mussolini dropped his sympathy for individualism like a hot potato. At the Fascist Party Congress of 1929 he declared that the individual only existed as part of the State and subordinate to its necessities. And in his "The Political and Social Doctrines of Fascism" he wrote: "The foundation of Fascism is the conception of the State. Fascism conceives of the State as an absolute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived of in their relation to the State. . . ." It would take a medieval schoolman or a Marxist theoretician to find any trace of Stirner in such statements as these.

The rest of Mr. Carroll's examples are little more than unsupported insinuations. For instance, when Stirner argues that it is not enough for the press to be free, that it must become his own, and concluded "writing is free only when it is my own, dictated to me by no power or authority, by no faith, no dread: the press must not be free—that is too little—it must be mine—ownness of the press or property in the press, that is what I will take"—Mr. Carroll notes that this is "an anticipation of . . . fascist attitudes to the press"! Such an assertion is frankly absurd. No fascist favours uncontrolled individual ownership of the press, nor believes in the freedom of the writer from authority.

Despite these unconvincing efforts to connect Stirner with fascism, this attractively-produced volume is a useful introduction to the unique world of "The Ego and His Own". The price, however, is extortionate and those who are willing to sample the original without preliminaries can still obtain a hard-backed edition for about the same money.

Mr. Paterson's book is the first full-length critical study of Max Stirner to appear in the English language (apart from Marx and Engels' excruciating "German Ideology"). It deserves attention for this alone.

The author has clearly done a great deal of research on his subject. He makes many interesting suggestions for interpretation and about possible parallels with Nietzsche and existentialism which will be of value to anyone wishing to study Stirner's philosophy. In the end, however, Stirner eludes his grasp and those familiar with "The Ego and His Own" may wonder at times if Mr. Paterson is writing about the same book.

A French critic once remarked that he arose from reading "The Ego and His Own" feeling like a king. Mr. Paterson views Stirner through different lenses. For him, Stirner sombrely describes the landscape of some sterile, metaphysical wasteland where no joy is allowed and one is continually menaced by an eternal Dr. Caligari. The sense of self-liberation that Stirner has stimulated in others, is absent in him. He grants that Stirner's *magnum opus* "remains a profoundly original and a uniquely disturbing book. After a hundred and twenty years Stirner's voice rings no less urgently, and the grim solution which he describes certainly retains its power to fascinate and dismay". But who will find it "grim"? Whom will it "dismay"? Surely only those who cling to the transcendental metaphysical and social fictions Stirner devastates. Mr. Paterson shows no awareness that Stirner's famous dictum "all things are nothing to me" was taken, as William Flygare has pointed out, from the first line of a merry drinking song by Goethe.

In fact, the author's thesis is flawed throughout by his bogey-man approach. According to him the conscious egoist is "predatory", "rapacious, cynical and brazenly indifferent to the interests of others", and should want these others to be "docile, scrupulous, law-abiding" in order to be able to "ruthlessly exploit them". He is plainly scared by the Stirnerian negation of the Kantian ethic of "duty" and paints its author in all the colours of moral obloquy that the Judeo-Christian-humanist tradition can produce. His skeleton-rattling was so well answered by Stirner that he can answer for himself:

"The egoist, before whom the humanist shudders, is a spook as much as the devil is: he exists only as a bogey and phantasm in their brain. If they were not unsophisticatedly drifting back and forth in the antediluvian opposition of good and evil, to which they have given the modern names of 'human' and 'egoistic', they would not have freshened up the hoary 'sinner' into an 'egoist' either, and put a new patch on an old garment. But they could not do otherwise, for they hold it for their task to be 'men'. They are rid of the Good One; good is left!"

Nor does it follow that the egoist must want everyone else to be supine and servile. He might well relish

testing his strength against a worthwhile opponent, or enjoying the company of shrewd and strong friends, recognizing with Stirner that "he who, to hold his own, must count on the absence of will in others is a thing made by these others". Nor must one overlook the importance Stirner gives to *opposition* in the process of calling forth "the unique one".

The bogey-man will get you only if you believe in bogey-men. . . .

Mr. Paterson argues that Stirner's egoism is incompatible with anarchism. He reaches his conclusion by a simple device. Anarchism, according to him, aims at an ideal "of universal love and brotherly co-operation". Stirner, on the other hand, has a programme that "permits the most brutal acts of coercion and deceit, the 'insurrection' in which his Unique One daily engages, far from adumbrating a form of the anarchist social revolution, in reality merely designates the Unique One's chosen course of heartless frivolity and criminal irresponsibility". Anarchists are saints. Stirner is the devil. Ergo, Stirner is not an anarchist.

Of course, if one accepts Mr. Paterson's premiss then his conclusion is valid. By identifying anarchism with the utopianism of evangelical socialism he can logically exclude Stirner. But if one does not accept his premiss his device is useless. This is not the place to give a detailed account of "Stirnerian" anarchism which is clear enough to anyone who is not obsessed by the vision of Stirner as a bogey-man. It is enough to say with Enzo Martucci:

"The question between anarchists and archists has been badly stated from the beginning. We are not concerned with whether anarchy or archy can cement the best social relations, or bring about the most complete understanding and harmony between individuals. We try, instead, to discover which is the most useful for the realization and expression of the individual." (In Defence of Stirner.)

That is why the most thoroughgoing anarchist individualists are "philosophical disciples" of Stirner, despite Mr. Paterson's statement that they do not exist. That is why they regard Stirner's philosophy as anarchism.

One thing is made certain by this book. Stirner will prove a most recalcitrant subject for any homogenizing process designed to turn his ideas into some smooth pabulum for the delectation of academic conformists. Herbert Read once remarked that Stirner's conscious egoism stuck in his gizzard. He could not digest it, nor could he forget it. Stirner belongs among those outsiders, individualists, and lone rebels who have made him *their own*. Any attempt to assimilate him into the Groves of Academe will only lead to more uncomfortable intellectual gizzards. Proxit, Max, let's have another!

Community Relations in Newham

IN 1968 THE RACE RELATIONS ACT set up the Community Relations Commission aimed at "securing the establishment of harmonious community relations" in Britain. One of the ways in which it is supposed to carry out this task is by assisting community relations organisations at the local level, by, among other things providing a grant for a community relations officer.

The life of the Commission has not been a happy one. When Mr. John Reddaway left his post as Senior Administrative Officer, where he had gone from being Deputy Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, the C.R.C. lost its most able administrator. To mark his departure Mr. Reddaway wrote a withering article for the magazine "Race Today" (July 1970).

In this article he wrote:

"The Commission itself has yet to make its mark. No striking initiative, not even a memorable phrase, has yet emerged. . . . The Commission should not take it amiss if people look elsewhere for leadership in community relations. . . . Advice seems rarely to have been sought (of the C.R.C.) by the Government and then only as an after-thought, often when decisions had already been taken. In fairness to the Government Departments concerned it would not appear from what has happened on public record that the Commission has so far had much of significance to contribute by way of advice." Mr. Reddaway then goes on to outline an argument he does not accept himself but which he understands. "Some have interpreted the Commission's failure . . . as confirming their suspicion that the Commission is a stooge body deliberately contrived by the Government . . . to head off the emergence of a genuine, effective, civil rights movement on the American pattern."

Shortly after the publication of this article the Association of Community Relations Officers issued a statement saying "A.C.R.O. is in agreement with the general argument that Mr. John Reddaway has outlined."

Since that time Mr. Frank Cousins has left the chairmanship of the C.R.C. and Mr. Mark Bonham Carter has taken over. In terms of Government departments asking for advice the major example of this *not* happening was over the 1971 Immigration Bill. One might have reasonably supposed that the Home Office would consult the C.R.C. about such a significant piece of legislation in the sphere of community relations, but they did not.

* * *

The local community relations organisation in the London Borough of Newham is Newham International Community (N.I.C.), it had been set up some years prior to the 1968 Race Relations Act. It kept its name when the Commission came into being, received grant aid for a full-time community relations officer and got a sum from the local authority.

I began working as Community Relations Officer employed by Newham International Community on November 30, 1970. Due to differences of opinion over the question of arson attacks on immigrants' houses in East London and my mention of certain organisations that could have been involved, I was suspended on April 21, 1971 by the then Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen. On April 28 I was reinstated as C.R.O. by N.I.C.'s executive committee after I made a full report. The vote was 7 to 1. One of the Vice-Chairmen resigned due to my reinstatement.

On May 20 at the Annual General Meeting of N.I.C. a letter from the General Secretary was delivered which announced that public funds could no longer be allocated for my salary after the end of August 1971. On May 27 the Governing Council of N.I.C. passed a vote of confidence in me by a majority of 18 to 14 and a delegation was appointed to approach the C.R.C. with a view to altering their decision over my salary. On May 28, the newly elected Chairman of N.I.C. gave me three months' notice of termination of employment, pending the result of the delegation's visit to the C.R.C. and "due to circumstances beyond our control".

On June 9 the delegation visited the C.R.C. but did not succeed in changing their mind over my salary. The following day I publicly announced the fact of my dismissal and the "Times" and "Guardian" both carried the story. On June 19 I received a telegram from 26 C.R.O.s which read:

"We the undersigned members of the Association of Community Relations Officers are deeply concerned at the manner in which your dismissal has been engineered through the withdrawal of grant aid by the Commission after your executive committee and your governing council have both given you votes of confidence. We wish to record our appreciation of the efforts you put forth in the fight against racialism on all levels and in the struggle to improve community relations. We are saddened by the personal disappointment this action must have caused you and we are concerned for the shock this must have brought to your family. We view the course of events as being

a black day in the history of community relations. We wish to assure you that you have been struck down, as many before you have been, in the struggle for freedom, liberty and humanity and we your colleagues will ever remember the cause for which you so courageously gave your all and, in the pursuit of which, you suffered such personal loss."

The national press, including the "Times" and "Guardian" were provided with the text of this telegram but did not use it. A C.R.O. wrote a letter of support for me to the "Guardian", but it was not published.

THE ISSUES INVOLVED

Behind this series of events lies, it is generally agreed, a more basic reason than has ever been stated for the action of the C.R.C. Since I began as Newham's C.R.O. I have been involved with a number of issues which the C.R.C. took exception to. Firstly my Governing Council passed a motion requesting the C.R.C. to stop banking with Barclays Bank due to its involvement with racialism. The Co-op Bank was suggested as an alternative. The "Times" carried a story to this effect which displeased the C.R.C. N.I.C. were eventually informed that the Commission did not intend to change its bankers.

Then, when the Government announced it was selling arms to South Africa, N.I.C. passed a motion condemning this. Again N.I.C.'s opinion was made public to the chagrin of an editor in a local newspaper.

The Immigration Bill produced very strong opposition within N.I.C. and I went on a march in East London organised by the West Indian Standing Conference. I spoke at a public meeting following the march and at several other meetings held opposing the Bill. I reported the Home Secretary, Mr. Maudling, to the Race Relations Board for breaking the Race Relations Act by publishing a discriminatory notice. The "Guardian" publicised this fact. It was widely acknowledged that the Bill's patril/non-patril clauses were racially discriminatory and it seemed relevant to point out that a member of the Cabinet, although immune, had contravened a law the department he represented—the Home Office—had drawn up.

Then the census brought a great deal of public disquiet, not least among the immigrant community, due to the question asking for the country of origin of one's parents. The Chairman of the C.R.C. made a public statement emphasising the value of the census for the immigrant community. I wrote to the "Guardian" stating that I thought the Chairman was "a little insensitive" of the fears of immigrants about the census. A motion, passed by my Governing Council, was referred to.

The question of arson attacks on immigrants' homes was the issue which raised the greatest ire—not the attacks, mind you, but my association of them with particular organisations. Analogies have been drawn with pre-war Germany and the attacks on the Jewish community then; it has been pointed out that Jews and liberals failed to respond adequately when these attacks first started. There is an argument for standing up to racialism, not defensively, but positively. As for

naming the organisation that could have been responsible for the organised arson, I believe a bully should be named if there is reason to believe he is responsible for cowardly attacks on defenceless people.

As a result of all this publicity I had a reputation, good or bad, for being radical and outspoken on the question of race relations. Mr. Reg Prentice, former Minister of Overseas Development and Newham M.P., acknowledged this when he wrote to me after the announcement of my dismissal:

"Whatever the outcome, I would like to tell you how much I admire the vigorous work you have carried out for the improvement of race relations."

THE PROBLEMS OF COMMUNITY WORK

I am aware there is an argument that my approach to community relations was fundamentally mistaken and that, to improve community relations, the host community must not be upset by anyone too radical putting forward a definite point of view. There is a view that quiet, unassuming work in the field of community relation is the way to get fruitful results. I know of C.R.O.s who have such views and I respect both their opinions and their work. It could be described as the vicar's tea party approach to community relations, ignoring the status quo and being nice to black people, but I would not dream of questioning the integrity of anyone who holds such views, honestly arrived at. It would seem reasonable therefore to ask others the same of my own views, which see community relations in terms of social equality and justice in all fields but especially in education, housing and employment.

Again in the casework field there is a divergence of views among C.R.O.s which I acknowledge. N.I.C. carries out a great deal of casework but I have every respect for C.R.O.s who keep casework to a minimum. In Newham, the office is a shop and our window is on a busy main street. Thus we attract those with problems and most, but not all, are immigrants. A number of specifically immigrant problems such as entry permits and language/cultural difficulties arise, but N.I.C. deals in a large way with housing, employment and social security problems as well.

Prof. Greve's recently published "Report on Homelessness in London" states:

"Our surveys showed that they (the immigrants) encountered more than average difficulties in their housing. . . . They were at considerable disadvantage in their housing, the majority living in overcrowded conditions in furnished accommodation where they were at high risk of becoming homeless through action taken by a private landlord."

Our experience in Newham certainly indicated that this is an area where the shoe pinches, it gave us a chance to plan our project work on areas of known difficulty. Even if the C.R.C. has had an unfilled vacancy for a Housing Officer for nearly two years this is no need for ignoring the problem at local level. We produced and distributed leaflets on evictions and mortgages and through casework definitely served a felt need for friendly and knowledgeable assistance. I

appreciate that the level of casework needs to be pegged at a certain level in order to have time to develop project work; we were endeavouring to do this in Newham, but our very successes were bringing more and more work.

I was greatly influenced by two programmes on BBC 2 in the "Man Alive" series which I saw shortly after starting as C.R.O. in Newham. Here we saw the lack of casework facilities in some areas by the local C.R.C. being covered by voluntary organisations. "Advise", the organisation set up to help the immigrant community, was started because local C.R.C.s did not give adequate assistance in casework.

THE RACIAL HARMONY SHOW

When the delegation from the N.I.C. went to the Commission in an attempt to change their minds over my salary they found that the C.R.C. had completely shifted its ground over the reasons for withdrawal of grant aid. Originally, they had complained of a split in N.I.C., but, with only one resignation of an individual member, it might have been an argument difficult to sustain, so they complained there was not enough project work in Newham. The fact that there was an education summer project at the C.R.C. for approval was not made known because I had not been allowed on the delegation. (Incidentally, the Urban Aid section of the Home Office funded N.I.C.'s summer project but the C.R.C. did not; a Home Office inspector who visited us remarked how sad it was that such a good project had been inadequately financed.)

The fact that discussions had taken place with Newham's Director of Social Services on a project for a community centre in Newham was not mentioned. Subsequently, a report advocating four community centres and six nursery schools was submitted.

That the Commission dismissed Newham's Racial Harmony Show as unimportant is significant. Perhaps if someone at the C.R.C. had used one of their complimentary tickets to attend the Show they might have felt differently. In fact the Show was a unique contribution towards Racial Harmony Year (the C.R.C. were requested to assist putting on the Show to the tune of £100 but refused, since the C.R.C. returned £22,000 in the last financial year unspent to the Home Office it was perhaps rather mean in Newham's case).

In Newham, there was a celebration of racial harmony at the Theatre Royal, Stratford. Whereas we have worthy examples of the get togethers one associates with multi-racialism such as interdenominational services and seminars on the nature of racial prejudice in many parts of Britain, Newham went for music.

George Melly, Dudu Pukwana's Assegai and Cy Grant were among the performers at the Show. The staff at the Theatre Royal couldn't remember when they had had such a large audience. It is basic to jazz that its history is immersed in the race issue and Mezz Mezzrow, Norman Mailer, Henry Miller, Stanley Dance, Albert Macarthy and many others have commented on this feature of the music. As Stanley Dance wrote in "Concerning Jazz":

"The jazz that emerged from, and with the full support of, the New Orleans coloured location, was faced at the outset with a formidable kind of racial discrimination. Its own gaiety and vitality overcame this to a considerable degree, just as they have steadily continued to do ever since . . . the music clearly made an appeal no less urgent, if less deeply felt, to the many white people who encountered it."

Musical expression can be a valuable means of resisting racial discrimination and the gaiety and vitality of jazz together with what has been called its "hot direct approach" can combine with the latest impatience of the tough urban blues to be a force for change. In Britain the recent emergence of reggae and the introduction of modern African musical sounds, as with Assegai, leads one to hope for a development of our aquarian generation that will break down the colour bar and build a society, in defiance of our elders, that is racially tolerant and gives us a respect, for each other, and our common humanity.

To expect bureaucrats at the C.R.C. to dig this, is perhaps, rather too much! What really disturbs me about the conduct of the C.R.C. in my case is their lack of regard for elementary justice. Here we have an organisation that rightly questions the lack of appeal procedures in the Immigration Bill but hypocritically gives its own salaried C.R.O. no chance to answer, in person, criticism made behind his back.

Also local democracy in my case was simply overruled by people who held the purse strings. At best it was a crude manipulation of financial power, at worst it was blackmail.

To C.R.O.s in the field my treatment must be a warning against being employed by the Commission. The proposed centralisation of community relations will be the death blow to any local independence. Local C.R.C.s and C.R.O.s should resist at every step attempts by the C.R.C. to take over. We have seen that the C.R.C. is part of a Government which has unmistakably shown itself to be reactionary. The deliberate creation of unemployment, the Immigration and Industrial Relations Bills/Acts, the treatment by Mr. Heath of Commonwealth leaders, the defiant sale of arms to South Africa and the moves towards a settlement with Smith in Rhodesia, all lead to this conclusion.

The C.R.C. is part of this Government whether we or they like it or not. But, if they are the instruments of Government policy, there is no need for local C.R.C.s to be the same.

It is on this basis that a number of people are trying to establish an alternative community relations structure in Britain, our declaration asserts we are determined to keep Britain colourful. With the Immigration Bill soon to become an Act, the C.R.C. will be obliged to encourage compliance towards a law that is trying to establish that the colour of a person's skin is going to be a label of second class citizen. We need help in establishing a counter to the racist drift of Establishment behaviour in Britain; that counter cannot come from a State-controlled body, it requires an independent organisation.

JERRY WESTALL.

He was a shotblaster in the engineering factory where I was employed for a time. A shotblaster works in a small compound which is set apart from the rest of the shop-floor. In the compound there's a metal hut with a heavy door but no windows. The shotblaster wears overalls, of course, and also a canvas hood covering his head and shoulders. A perspex sheet set in the front of the hood allows him to see what he's doing. His job is to direct a steady and powerful stream of fine shot at various metal components which are rusty or require smoothing down. You don't have to think about it for long to realise what the atmosphere in the hut is like and even after a few minutes in the compound you can feel your scalp itching and the irritation in your nose and throat. Of the three men who'd done the job before the man I knew, two had died of chest ailments and the third had retired early.

The only way in which the firm could get anyone to take the job was by offering various minor perks - efficiency bonuses and the like - and also turning a blind eye to the piecework booked in by the shotblaster. Most factories limit your earnings on piecework, with the management and union having a tacit agreement as to what the maximum should be. Skilled workers are allowed a higher figure to work to. Whatever your rate, though, if you constantly book above the agreed maximum the ratefixer will come down and re-time the job and you'll find yourself speeding up in order to maintain the wage you've become accustomed to. Within reason the shotblaster was given a certain amount of leeway. Not many people were willing to work in that hut.

I always disliked having to go near the compound early in the morning. The shotblaster would be sitting on an upturned box, coughing and spitting. He was like that every morning for five or ten minutes. I once asked him why he stuck the job and he said it was for the money. If he went back to fettling or one of the other lower-grade, semi-skilled jobs he would lose two or three pounds a week and to a man with several children it was the difference between being able to afford a night out each week or watching TV all the time. He described it as the difference between living and existing.

He wasn't an unfriendly man but working in that hut, and his tendency to cough whenever he spoke for any length of time, had made him taciturn. In the canteen quite a few people disliked sitting next to him because the grains of shot rubbed off his clothes. He hadn't time to change before he ran across the road to the canteen. If you didn't get there early you had to queue and often wasted half the lunch hour before you got your meal. The shotblaster liked to sit outside for a few minutes before going back to his hut.

I didn't think it worth ruining your health for a couple of pounds a week but he just shrugged his shoulders when I put this to him. He was unskilled, badly educated, and the firm wouldn't guarantee him another job if he asked to be taken off this one. And if he went elsewhere it could mean a drop in wages or perhaps increased travelling expenses. He wasn't getting any younger either. So, what could he do, he asked me, and then turned his head to one side and coughed into a dirty, spit-stained handkerchief.

Shotblaster

The trial of politics or the politics of the trial

After the bombing of Robert Carr's house on January 12, the state decided it was an opportune time to announce there was in England a group of people describing themselves as the Angry Brigade who had already been responsible for a number of political bombings and machine gunnings. A supposed public hysteria was created by the press. Heath gave the order to "tear London apart if necessary, but find the Angry Brigade!" And so the raids began. And the paranoia. Though the raids were all conducted under explosives warrants, the police's choice of targets appeared quite random. But it soon became clear who and what they wanted. They were out after the libertarian, non-aligned left. And so they raided communes. They were after members of women's liberation. They showed more than a passing interest in claimants' unions. In fact, wherever there were groups of people organising themselves against the state, the police paid a visit. The raids culminated with the search of a flat down Amhurst Road in Stoke Newington, London, where the police say they found explosives of the type used by the Angry Brigade, the rubber stamp used on all the Angry Brigade communiques, a machine gun that can be positively identified as having been used in two actions and enough documentary evidence to make a trial a little less than a formality. Anyway, after that a period of relatively little police action followed. Then just before the trial, there were raids on the house which was used as the Prescott Purdie Defence Group mailing address and the Grosvenor Avenue collective which was to be portrayed by the prosecution as the centre of the conspiracy. One thing that was clear to all the people involved in the raids was that the police were not really looking for the explosives their warrants said they had come for. They just wanted to get as much information and cause as much trouble

as possible.

At the same time as Jake and Ian's trial was going on in court two of the Old Bailey, the Mangrove Nine were being tried in Court one. Their trial was part of an attack on a community, on a community which is attacked daily by the police and a community which is fighting back daily. And so the origins of both the Jake and Ian and the Mangrove trials had this in common: that they were attacks on members of two groups who were beginning to effectively fight back. Thus in some ways the existence of the Angry Brigade was an irrelevancy, or at least no more than a 'legal' justification to attack what the state saw, correctly, as its enemies. The pre-trial investigations were an attack on a group. The trial was an attack on the politics of self-organisation. Thus the only evidence against Ian was his politics. Melford Stevens' sentence of 15 years on Jake for writing three envelopes was an attack on an individual for his politics. Their 'justice' is organised state vengeance for fighting back. By seeing the trial as an attack, we can see what they are attacking, the way the trial and the state machinery of injustice is used to grind us down and so perhaps can learn how to fight back in this situation and, hopefully, how to ensure we don't get into this shit again.

The trial of Ian and Jake began on November 10, and lasted until December 1st. The defence case lasted two days, the prosecution's nine, longer if you include the judge's summing up. Everybody's strong suspicion that it was to be a political trial was confirmed when the prosecution began its discussion of the evidence by saying: "The allegation in this case is that these young men - self-styled anarchists and revolutionaries - together with others of a similar persuasion, sought to promulgate their ideals in acts of violence by causing serious

explosions aimed at damaging the property of those they considered their political enemies." Yet although the content of the trial was political, the forms of bourgeois justice were kept to, something which did not happen in the investigation. The trial process serves to mystify class conflict through relating the conflict to law, a law and a trial which is supposed to be neutral. It means that human actions have to be changed into legal formulae. It means state murder conducted in nice polite terms in an oak panelled room with a senile fascist pig acting as a 'Neutral' judge. The state was attempting to remove Jake and Ian from circulation by saying that they had committed a 'crime', albeit a crime of a political nature. It is scarce worth saying that all crime is of a political nature. For the state objects to an act not because it is in itself harmful, but because it is harmful to itself, because it endangers the status quo. Jake and Ian were on trial for their politics, but the trial was posed in a possible manifestation of their politics - or, at least, as the prosecution were trying to portray their politics: the use of bombs. They were on trial in the case of Ian for conspiring to cause explosions and in Jake's for conspiring to cause explosions and for actually causing them at the Department of Employment and Productivity and at Carr's house. The aims of these explosions, the prosecution said, was to damage property. But the majority of people are aware of the fact that explosives do have a tendency to damage property. Without now going into what the aims of the Angry Brigade actually were, the real aims of the bombs may be described as political. And it was on this basis that the prosecution was conducted. The politics of Jake and Ian and the Angry Brigade were central to the trial. The prosecution recognised this by reading out every Angry Brigade communique. Nonetheless, the prosecution still made a show of removing politics to the periphery of the conflict, continually emphasising that the only thing with which the jury should be concerned is whether the accused did the acts with which they had been charged. But politics were introduced very directly and consistently first because they provided a motive for the explosions and second as providing a basis for conspiracy. In fact, the separation of the real evidence and politics was, as it had to be, a complete fiction. For the trial proceeded on the basis of showing a particular picture of anarchist bomb throwers living in communes, working in claimants unions, associating with members of women's liberation and so on. All

this should have produced a particular response in the all-male while middle aged property owning jury. Politics thus was directly used as a method of securing a conviction. Which is a separate issue from using the trial to attack the politics of the accused.

What then was the evidence against Jake and Ian? The prosecution set out to establish a long conspiracy starting in 1967 with the machine gunning of the American Embassy and being responsible for a total of 27 actions. True Jake and Ian were inside nick for most of this time, but this did not prevent the prosecution going into each separate action with enormous detail. The basis of the existence of the long conspiracy was in the explosives evidence which showed that the explosions constituted a series. Explosives of the type used in the explosions were found in Amhurst Road. The detonating devices also show the explosions constitute a series and link the early explosions with the Angry Brigade ones. Thus up to explosion 19 an acid delay detonator was used, from 20 onwards a clock device. The first Angry Brigade communique was sent with explosion 16. Further, the machine gun used at the American Embassy in 1967 was the same as that used on the Spanish Embassy in 1970. The machine gun was found at Amhurst Road. Two other facts which would seem to indicate that the people living in Amhurst Road might have been in the long conspiracy were that the stamp used on the Angry Brigade communiques was found there and that the fingerprints of two people living there were found on two of the early bombs. Now how does all this bring Jake and Ian into the conspiracy? The prosecution made it clear: "If you find that friends of his whom he was closely associated with, in particular those at Grosvenor Avenue, if you find that those persons were clearly guilty and if you find that their ideals and beliefs were exactly similar, that is a matter to which you should pay close regard." Why the mention of Grosvenor Avenue? Well, a commune had to be included by the prosecution somewhere, many of the people living there were actively involved in the women's liberation movement, Jake and Ian had both stayed there at times and had met some of the Amhurst Road people there. So it was portrayed as the "centre of the conspiracy". Doubtless, it was further hoped that it would discredit the alibi witnesses all but one of whom lived or had lived there. So the basis of the conspiracy charge was a trial of Amhurst Road in its absence and then setting out to prove that Jake and Ian knew the people there - and they admit-

ted quite freely to knowing some of them. In the conspiracy charge Ian was made to be the wicked man who led Jake into a life of political violence, for when they first met in Albany Prison Ian was supposed to be the already committed anarchist while Jake had no political commitment whatsoever.

The essence of conspiracy is agreement. The prosecution to prove that this agreement took place rested on proving two things. First that Jake and Ian knew the people charged at Amhurst Road. This presented little difficulty since they freely admitted knowing some of them. Second by proving the content of their political views.

The only evidence given about Ian's political views was statements contained in what was described as his blue folder. Since the statements were all given out of context and Ian was given no chance to explain them, they did not amount to a reasonable explanation of his politics. But then the court-room is rarely the best place in which to explain one's politics. Jake's politics and his transition from being a nice respectable criminal, which is something everyone can understand, to being an anarchist - which he denied - were far more thoroughly investigated. Irene Jamieson who knew him while he was in Albany and after he came out, gave evidence as to how he had



SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE,
WANTS A LETTER FROM YOU.

changed. A letter she wrote asking him to 'cool it' was read out. Bits of letters he wrote, both before and after being remanded on the explosions charge were read out. When he was in the witness box he was questioned extensively on such statements as "killing Heath would be no murder" and a letter he wrote saying: "I don't care how they react so long as they do, and if I go to Cambridge and burn a few of the cars belonging to the hierarchy's offspring then I will go there and do it because of a belief, an idea and every other reason why I live." The prosecution had a habit of taking speculative statements literally, and trying to make innocent statements sound very sinister. Passages from documents found in Amhurst Road were read out and Jake was asked whether he agreed with them. Thus we had the following bits of dialogue:

Prosecution: Do you agree with this: "The question is not whether the revolution will be violent. Organised militant tactics and organised terrorism go side by side, These are the tactics of the revolutionary class movement."

Jake: Rubbish

Prosecution: "Just as the structures and programmes of a new revolutionary society must be incorporated into every organised base at every point in the struggle until, armed, the revolutionary working class overthrows the capitalist system." Now if we put the words 'governmental authority' in place of 'capitalist system' there, it is almost precisely what you've been saying to us this afternoon.

Jake: But it doesn't say that.

Prosecution: repeats the question.

Jake: I can't remember what I've been saying.

Prosecution: Can't you remember your beliefs, Mr. Prescott?

Jake: Yea, but not through you, man.

The substitution in the Amhurst Road statement is interesting, since it turns a vaguely marxist view into a vaguely anarchist view. And the prosecution tried to establish continually that Jake was an anarchist, obviously hoping that the popular connection between anarchists and bombs would be made in the jury's mind. Thus he started the examination of Mr. A by asking about Jake's political views. A answers that he was "as far left as he possibly could be." The prosecution asks for further amplification, the sort of things that Jake said. A simply replies that he was an anarchist and the prosecution leaves it at that. Occasionally, though, it came a little unstuck. Prosecution: Tell me, were you and Purdie trying to get hold of anarchist literature in Albany prison?

Jake: No

Prosecution: Did you pass on to Irene Jamieson a message for her to send certain literature

into prison?

Jake: Yes

Prosecution: Did you tell Irene Jamieson what those books were?

Jake: Yes.

Prosecution: Could they in the broadest sense be described as anarchist literature?

Jake: Not in the broadest sense.

Prosecution: What sort of books were they?

Jake: Marx, Engels, Lenin.

What other evidence was there on the conspiracy charge? Well, there was the fact that Jake and Ian were in Edinburgh at the time explosives were stolen 40 miles away, but since they were visiting friends that is not very devastating. Jake did however, send a letter afterwards to the people saying he got what he had come for, which he explained in evidence to be 'Peace of Mind'. Two women who stayed at Grosvenor Avenue gave evidence about 'whispered conversations', which is, of course, very conspiratorial. As the judge pointed out in his summing up, "Conspiracies are hatched in whispers."

The prosecution also tried to prove that Ian went into hiding after Jake's arrest. The main evidence for this was a letter from Ian to Jake saying "You may have heard I am ill and have to stay in just now. All my friends tell me it is better for me and mostly I am taking their advice." This is a clear example of the prosecution turning a harmless statement into something quite sinister. The only really serious evidence in the whole case, and the evidence that got Jake 15 years was that he wrote - and he freely admitted that he had written - three envelopes containing the communique sent after the Carr bombing and he refused to reveal the names of those who had asked him to write them. He denied knowing the contents of the envelopes.

After being released on bail on February 4, Jake was re-arrested on February 11th. He was interviewed by Habershon and these interviews were presented as evidence. Such interviews are known as 'verbals', and are commonly used as evidence. There are significant points about verbals. The person being questioned does not see the pigs' record of the interview. He does not have to sign them, as he does a statement, for them to be used as evidence in court. And obviously the person being questioned does not get a chance to make a note of the questions asked and the answers given. Therefore we just have to assume that what the pig says about verbals is true.....Melford-Stevenson, in his summing up, pointed out that verbals do not add a great deal. In fact, it is difficult to see what they do add other than Jake was not willing to reveal his alibis

before it was necessary. Nonetheless, the prosecution read out the verbals in full in its opening statement and questioned Habershon extensively on them. The one thing the verbals do contain is a lot of political references, mentioning frequently the Grosvenor Avenue collective, Claimants' Unions, the Notting Hill Peoples' Association and Women's Liberation. We must therefore assume that it was for this reason they were read out.

On the two charges of causing explosions the only evidence came from A and B, two prisoners with whom Jake had shared a cell after the Carr bombing, while he was on remand on a cheques charge. The judge in his summing up gave the two alternatives on this evidence: "Can that evidence be the result of a really wicked conspiracy between the police and A and B or is it true? The jury chose the first. Their evidence consists of how Jake confessed to being a member of the Angry Brigade, incidentally mentioning that the Claimants' Unions were part of the same set up. Their evidence contains information which would only be known to the police and to those who did the bombings. Thus they give the dramatic account of how Jake said he, another man and two women arrived at Carr's house in a stolen car, how they split off into couples, the women carrying the bombs, how they wanted to put a bomb under Carr's car but couldn't find it and so on. The same flourishes accompany their account of the DEP bombing. A describes how Jake jumped over the railings into the DEP basement and placed a bomb under the generator. It is interesting to note that in committal he says Jake said he placed the bomb under the stairs. A also gave the impression in committal that Jake claimed responsibility for the Miss World bombing. This allegation did become a little embarrassing to the prosecution when one of their own witnesses established he was in Edinburgh at the time of the bombing. B happened to know a lot about explosives and was able to give correct evidence about explosives used which he said Jake had told him, though of course this information would be known to the police. Why, then, did the jury choose to disbelieve A and B, in spite of what that disbelief meant, and acquit Jake of the bombing charges? We do not know what went on in the jury room, but the most reasonable solution is that the whole story of how they were supposed to have given evidence to the police and their altruistic motives for having given the evidence were totally implausible. A and B said they were friends, yet they say they contacted the police independently, without having discussed the matter at all. They had both been inside before and were aware of the way

grassing was regarded and yet they grassed with the whole of their sentence before them. A even spent time on rule 43 (solitary for his own protection). Yet they asked the jury to believe they gave evidence with no arranged payment. Jake however was always plausible during his testimony, especially with his account of how he came to feel being a criminal was a negative role which he renounced and how he came to align himself with his class. Perhaps if he had defended himself in person he would have got off all the charges.

The defence was not, in fact, the most impressive part of the trial. After the arrest of Jake and Ian a defence group had been set up. It had been thought that at least one of them would defend himself and, in fact, right up to the beginning of the defence Jake was thinking of defending himself. But both of them were defended in a gentlemanly fashion by Q.C.s who treated the whole trial in an apologetic embarrassment at having to even attempt a defence. Ian's barrister hardly opened his mouth until his summing up. He did not call Ian. Jake's barrister contented himself with very mild, though occasionally not bad, cross-examinations. It has been suggested that he followed a deliberate policy of not incurring Melford Stevenson's wrath. But one had the feeling that he would not know how to incur it even if he had wanted to, and if, by some horrible misfortune he had incurred it, he would be the first to apologise. He never attacked when attack would have been worthwhile. Duncan's defence was mainly a plea of mitigation, explaining Jake's deprived childhood in an orphanage, how he had spent so much time in prison and other institutions, his unhappy association with drugs and so on. Because he was a bourgeois lawyer, Duncan was completely unable to see Jake as a person and so had to define him in bourgeois terms - as a 'poor unfortunate', someone we should feel sorry for. He could not understand his politics or feel any sympathy for them for the same reason and so was unable to examine Jake on them. The prosecution, on the other hand, had had the backing of special branch ideologies to explain to it the finer points of anarchist theory. (Assuming anarchism has any finer points of theory). Apparently one pig questioning a suspect was able to give a detailed account of theoretical differences between Solidarity and the Situationists.

It could be argued that their tactics worked - that they secured acquittals on three of the four charges. But they paid no attention to what their clients wanted. The people who were most surprised when Carr was not called were Jake and Ian, but that was

but one of a number of deals the defence had made with the prosecution. Jake wanted to call a number of political witnesses but none were called. The total of his defence consisted of alibi witnesses to account for his whereabouts on the nights of the Carr bombing and the DEP bombing. The conclusion that has to be drawn from the behaviour of the lawyers is that if one wishes to use the courtroom as a place to make political statements then one should defend oneself. Whether or not the courtroom is the place to explain one's politics and whether or not this will secure an acquittal are a different matter altogether.

The Judge in the case was Melford Stevenson, the judge responsible for the vicious sentences in the Cambridge Garden House affair. In a profession not renowned for the liberalism of its members Stevenson is known as a fascist pig. He lived up to his reputation. During the trial all his interventions were directed blatantly against the defence. His summing up speech consisted of going into the prosecution case with as much detail as possible working from the assumption that everything a prosecution witness said was true. The converse of course applied to defence witnesses. He pointed out how easy it was to fix an alibi. In fact his grip on the prosecution evidence was not as good as it could have been. The prosecution had to point out to the biased old bastard that Jake had not written the envelopes for three separate communiques after three separate bombings, but three envelopes for one communique after one bombing. Anyway, it did not deter him from giving Jake fifteen years for them and keeping Ian in prison even though he had been found not guilty.

We started by trying to explain that there was a difference between using politics to secure a conviction at a trial and using it to attack the politics of those on trial - that is, the movement which those on trial are a part of. The first takes place inside the courtroom, the second out of it. What, then, were the politics on trial? Bomb politics - or the libertarian movement which always contains those who use bombs as a tactic? The course of the investigation showed it to be the second of these. The targets of the trial and investigation showed that the movement they were after was the one that constitutes a real threat to the state - the politics of self-organization in and around one's situation, the politics of collectives, of women's liberation, of claimant's unions, the politics of individual liberty, the right to choose one's lifestyle. Bombs were the legal excuse for the trial, the movement

is the real target. A parallel may be drawn with the Haymarket trial where the Haymarket bomb was used to smash the eight hour movement by showing that anarchists were behind the movement and that anarchists throw bombs.

The state has always had difficulties in coping with libertarian movements as opposed to centralist organizations. There are no leaders to pick off, no centre to smash, It therefore attempts to define leaders and so it seems from this trial that the Angry Brigade has been designated as the centre, or at least representative, of the movement. Hence the statement that the Claimants' Unions were part of the Angry Brigade. In the Haymarket Affair the prosecution did not even attempt to prove that those on trial had anything to do with the bomb - they were just a group of anarchists whom the state designated as leaders.

It was through the press that the process

of discrediting at a public level took place, by concentrating on the more spectacular aspects of the trial. Typical headlines were "Drug freakout in Womens Lib commune" and "Killing Heath-No Murder", etc. Throughout the trial was referred to as the "anarchist bomb trial". The point would seem to be to discredit the movement publicly and so cut it off from its base. This was quite successfully done after the Haymarket where the leadership of the eight hour movement became the AFL.

But the new, libertarian movement cannot be contained, cannot be channelled into a centralist organisation. Nobody can take over the demands for us, because we demand everything. The revolution is in our lives, in the way we fight to live instead of submitting to the arduous and boring task for survival. And the struggle continues even when we are in jail - the state has not yet learned the lessons of Attica. Have we, though, learned the lessons of the Angry Brigade saga?

Nick and Bart.

Editorial statement

The last year has been mainly spent by the Anarchy group in learning the ins and outs of printing a journal, doing layout and getting the whole thing together. These problems are not yet behind us. So, we owe our readership an apology for the lateness of delivery and the fact that we have only managed to produce half the number of issues that should have appeared.

A major part of our problems have stemmed from the change in 'line' on our part. We have, we hope, broadened the coverage of "Anarchy" and have deliberately sought to make it more controversial and to provoke thoughts amongst the broad libertarian movement about some of the accepted myths that need to be more closely examined. Some have not understood this and have thought that we have become too pro this or that line of thought. We do not see that as our function. We feel strongly that there is nothing sacred in libertarian thought or history, it is all subject to scrutiny and this process strengthens us in our understanding of ourselves and the kind of society that we are aiming for.

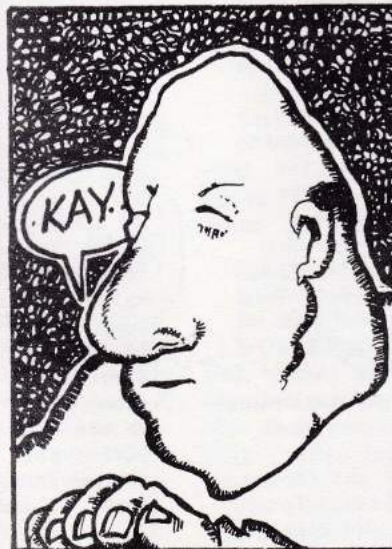
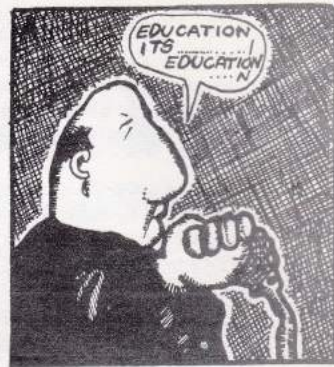
So, an apology to our contributors and those who have worked with us on special issues for the delays. We have it all in hand and hope

that with a little effort the problems of production should soon be overcome. The most encouraging improvement is in our circulation which has exceeded our best hopes and means that we are normally printing twice the number that circulated in the old format.

Our next issue will be the special American number edited by the Friends of Malatesta. Although there are many more people involved in the production of the new 'Anarchy', we are doing much more of the work of producing it ourselves. Thus we are already doing half of the setting and printing, instead of having it done commercially (this also accounts for some of the errors in production that you may have noticed.) We are therefore looking for more people who would like to work on 'Anarchy'. So if any comrades who live near enough, would like to help, please do not wait for us to ask you but come up and see us. But apart from the increase in work we feel that it is undesirable that Anarchy should be produced by a small static group of us who easily could become elite, so we would feel happier if more comrades took an active part in 'Anarchy', either in production or providing contributions (especially if you don't like what we write).

THE EDITORS.

IT'S Education -A SONG-



End



IN THIS ISSUE:— **WORKERS CONTROL,
THE TRIAL & ITS POLITICS, RACISM.**

THEY ATTACK!
THAT
SETTLES
IT! THEY
ARE THE
CONTROLLERS
OF THE
ROBOTS!

WE ARE PEACE-LOVING
PEASANTS, HULK--NOT
USED TO *FIGHTING*--
STRANGE TO THE WAYS
OF VIOLENCE!

CLICK!

