Industry versus Labour

Noam Chomsky

Introduction

The following letter/article by Noam Chomsky, one of America's leading anarchists, was published in Lies of Our Times, July 1994. We have decided to reprint it in Scottish Anarchist as it is a clear and concise analysis of the social and economic developments occurring in the world. Developments which we would be stupid to ignore.

Takethe May 23 issue of Business Week, the article headed: "Why America The articlereports that "Over the past dozen years, in fact, U.S. industry has conducted one of the most successful union wars ever" with a "chilling effect". Why to which the journal, along with authority to sell us out (see issue 1 of Scottish Anarchist).

In union there is strength. However, as long as trade unionism dominates the working class movement this strength will be sapped by bureaucrats in their and capital's interests, not ours. While this is not clearly seen yet by most of our class it is by the bosses.

In the late seventies, US coal workers defied the bosses, government and their own union and by rank and file struggle won a substantially better deal than the union backed one. The Business Magazine "Fortune" understandably viewed the miners' actions with alarm:

"Bad as union dictatorship undoubtedly is, union activity is potentially more destructive. Unfortunately the miners have just shown that anarchy pays. They have demonstrated that a rabble-rousing rank and file can get a better deal by spurning the settlement made by their elected leaders and defying court back-to-work orders" (Fortune, April 24, 1978, page 65).

Similar statements issued forth from the media concerning the picketing lines at Times or any other form of direct action.

Until such time as we organise ourselves and take direct control of our own struggles, organisations and fate ("union" and "one") we will never become full people. Just "factors of production", playing the role assigned to us by the system.

A role Chomsky notes is and never will be in our interests as individuals, or as part of a community, to accept.

Industry versus Labour

Credit where credit is due. Often there is a lot to learn from the mainstream press. Take the May 23 issue of Business Week, which features a study on "The Workplace" headed: "Why America Needs Unions, But Not The Kind It Has Now."

The article reports that "Over the past dozen years, in fact, U.S. industry has conducted one of the most successful union wars ever" with a "chilling effect". Why? The article concludes that unions are more destructive than workers. Unfortunately the miners have just shown that anarchy pays. They have demonstrated that a rabble-rousing rank and file can get a better deal by spurning the settlement made by their elected leaders and defying court back-to-work orders" (Fortune, April 24, 1978, page 65).

The article is framed with the purpose and nature of the bitter and one-sided class war. Management's basic goal has been to undermine the rights "guaranteed by the 1935 Wagner Act". In fact, that has been a basic goal since the tragedy occurred 60 years ago, and although the prequel of reversing the victory for democracy and working people was put on hold during the World War, it was taken up again when peace arrived, with great vigour and considerable success.

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labour market.

In pre-capitalist days, Adam Smith, like other founders of classical liberalism, stressed values such as sympathy and the right of creative work, offering nuanced arguments for markets on the grounds that under "pegs" et al., Feb. 1966, there could be a natural tendency towards equality, a condition for efficient market function. Such ideas had to be developed both in practice and in the ideological sphere. It is interesting to trace the treatment of "freedom" and "capital" in modern, in which a very different concept of human nature has been crafted, one better suited to rule the economy and social life by the absolutist, unaccountable, totalitarian institution of the corporate world. For example, the cheap "freedom" is often expressed by Nobel laureate in economics James Buchanan, who insists that in "any person's ideal situation, each person seeks mastery over a world of slaves" (The Limits of Liberty, Chicago, 1975, p. 92).

That is an idea that Smith would have considered pathologically, as did the working people who were beaten into submission as instated by the modern, capitalism gained power.

These are large and important questions, very much alive, indeed a major preoccupation of the human ecology industry that seeks to shape human beings into the desired form; separate atoms of consumption, tools of production, and docile servants of power.

The Business Week review advises labour to "adopt a 'we're-in-this-together' messianic attitude of thieving, where one that has characterized both sides of the industrial divide for decades," But their notion of "we're in this together" is radically different from the sense of solidarity and cooperation that animated the labour movement, and non-pathological awareness that grounded the earlier movement. And they understand very well that "one-man tsunami" as a strategy is to persist in an unremitting class war, "accepting" organized labour (as they nicely put it) only if unions subscribe to working people, to proper goals of profit and efficiency.

Thatcher's Britain

The Reagant class war - criminal, as Business Week casually mentions - was matched in Thatcher's Britain, which achieved even more satisfactory results. British democracy, freedom, and elementary human rights. To cite merely an illustration of the success, the attainable, the corporate action

21: Dana Milbank, WSJ, March 28, 1994).

During this wondrous decade, Reaganites were racing Thatcher to see who could best subordinate the worker to a new definition of "labor relations" as "a well-developed relationship", the reduction of U.S. labour by 8 million, and the "right to work" legislation. "Thatcher's revolution" gave England first place again, and now the U.S. ranks only second in declining rates of union density, a rate that can only go down as long as employers can see that it is to their advantage to do so (Financial Times, Feb. 25, 1994).

Thatcher's reforms offer some guidelines for U.S. business. Thus in Britain, "If an employer wishes to end collective bargaining and move to personal contracts, then it is up to the workers to pay rises to those wishing to accept them and deny pay rises to those wishing to retain union and collective bargaining rights," one of many devices used to regain Victorian standards (Harper). Another useful idea, now being applied, is to force the unions to "re-recruit the membership, where a member number required to confirm in writing, every three years, his desire to remain a union dues checked off from pay packets.

The point is to impose an extraordinary burden on "the thousands of unionists who act out of commitment rather than for reward" and who must seek out six million potential new members. The factory orders and debt arrangements must be renegotiated to secure the financial system, "for the trade union movement, that is almost exactly what is lacking in the United States" (Allan Milne) (Guardian, May 24, 1994).

The United States has already been censured by the International Labour Organization for allowing scabs ("permanent replacements") as "scabs for hire" in the industrial world apart from South Africa at the time. (In 1992) - and soon, perhaps, losing its partner, though the idea is spreading elsewhere. But there is much progress to be made so that labour is taught to justify its existence by showing a proper understanding of the "we're-in-this-together" solidarity that the masters of the world prescribe.

The future

The U.S. and Britain are leading the industrial world towards sharply two-tiered societies on the Third World model, with islands of wealth and poverty, the latter free of cost to the world, as a new form of misery and despair. The increasing mobility of capital and immobility of labour — exactly the opposite of the assumptions on which classical economics is based — draws others along in obvious ways.

All of this is part of broader tendencies in the global economy, which have, among other effects, brought about "the worst global employment crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s," Indeed, the International Labour Organization, with only the Japanese-based East Asia region exempted. The huge unemployment figures reflect an immense resources to economic systems and causes a disturbing degree of social distress", OECD reported in June. We are witnessing only the beginning of the real catastrophe, in its traditional domains (Vancouver Sun, March 7; Third World Resurgence, No. 44; Financial Times, June 8, 1994).

Wherever one turns there is a desperate need for work to be done, and the unemployed would be delighted to do it, if they had a chance. The work would be highly beneficial to them and their communities — beneficial to people, not profits, and therefore no contribution to economic health, in the technical sense. It is important to master the distinction between the "health of the economy" and human welfare, notions that can be virtually uncorrelated. All of this is part of a catastrophic failure of the economic system, which is incapable of bringing together needed work and idle hands of suffering people. Of course, this catastrophic failure is hared as a great success, as indeed it is a narrow sector of privilege — which happens to include the people who give the speeches, write the articles, and sing the ode to our magnificent industrial order.

These developments are commonly attributed to inexorable market forces, immutable, like the principles of gravitation, as David Ricardo argued during an earlier exercise of ideological warfare. Analysis now divides the contribution of international trade, automation, and other factors. Putting aside the absurdity of comparing human institutions, with their specific values and choices, to technology, there is this unitary reduction in all of the workers, their alleged efficiencies of trade and automation are hardly attributable to the market. Huge state subsidy and intervention has always been required, and still is, to make trade appear efficient, not to speak of costs imposed on future generations who do not "vote" in the market ("externalities"). And while automation contributes to profit at some point, that point was reached by decades of protectionism within the state sector, as David Noble has shown. Furthermore, the specific forms of automation, the technology driven by power rather than profit or efficiency; it was designed to deskil labour and subordinate them to management, not because of market failure, but for reasons of domination and control (Noble, Forces of Production, Knopf 1984; Progress without People, Charles Kerr 1993).

Freedom and democracy are even less tolerable in the workplace than outside. The British, as John Dewey observed, echoed pre-capitalist classical liberal ideas, if workers are "not the masters of their own industrial fate" and if "the means of production" — industrial organization and collective action — are in the hands of private power, freedom and democracy remain largely illusory and politics will be "the shadow cast on society by the twin monsters of nationalism and communism," that is what they are — an unending war, with defeats and victories. The British "revolving" story told by Business Week is one of many serious defeats, which must be changed to a new dawn if still greater human catastrophes are to be averted.

June 14, 1994

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In pre-capitalist days, Adam Smith, like other founders of classical liberalism, stressed such values as sympathy and the right of creative work, offering nuanced arguments for markets on the grounds that under "free" Feh. benefits and natural progression in the economy would result in the "natural" market developing. In the modern era, in which a very different conception of human nature has been crafted, one better suited to rule the economy and social life by the absolutist, unaccountable, totalitarian institutions of the corporate world. For example, the clearest expression can be Nobel laureate in economics James Buchanan, who instructs us that "in any person’s ideal society, each person seeks mastery over a world of slaves" (The Limits of Liberty, Chicago, 1975, p. 92).

That is an idea that Smith would have considered pathologically racist, but as the working people who were beaten into submission in order to rule the system (in the guise of capitalism) gained power.

These are large and important questions, very much alive, indeed a major preoccupation of the human condition, that is radically different from the sentiment of solidarity and cooperation that animated the labour movement, and non-pathological decentred democratization. And they understand very well that "one person's fence is another person's freedom," that we must insist in an unrelenting class war, "accepting" organised labour (as they nicely put it) only if unions serve to advance working people to proper goals of profit and efficiency.

Thatcher's Britain

The Reaganite class war — criminal, as Business

Week casually mentions — was watched in Thatcher's Britain, which achieved even greater satisfaction of the capitalist goals of the American model. As John Dewey observed, echoing pre-capitalist classical liberal ideas, if workers are "not the masters of their own industrial fate" and if "the means of production and control" are "in the hands of private power, freedom and democracy remain largely illusory and will powerless to be "the shadow cast on society" and to "the thousand of workplace victories" that is what they are — an unsurmountable one, with defeats and victories. The "law of the jungle" theory by Business Week is one manifestation of the severe disasters, which must be changed to a new dawn if still great human catastrophes are to be averted.

June 14, 1994
Or an Anaicha-feminist? Or feminist-anarchist? Or a woman anarchist? What, are you nuts?

That's how you get to feel after a while anyway, in my experience. Although there is a famous saying that Feminism practises what it preaches, it seems to me recent behaviour of women anarchists is so wonderful, why should women need to explore politics that are of a feminist nature? A lot of the die-hard anarchists seem to think that a feminist is someone like Germaine Greer and those middle-class matrons that appear on late night TV discussions. That, plus the fact that there are so many men in the movement, women issues then this hideous Oxford educated harpy will burn Alien-like out of your chest and bite off your balls. Don't get me wrong, I do have a large alien Queen that lives inside that likes to chew bubblegum, to be truth, I think the lot of them have been sharpened on the N-I. I was attacked by the upper-class monster who has had her teeth sharpened on the N-I, I've probably skipped it and gone onto the serious stuff.

On a more positive note, there is a lot out there for the budding feminist-anarchist. There are a lot of women out there. For example, if you start talking about women anarchism, there are loads of books, pamphlets and magazines that have been written and edited by women anarchists. Try asking your anarchist bookstall organiser or bookshop assistant to look around the shelf. You might want to contact other women who are not necessarily anarchists and find out what they are up to.

My experience of being a woman in an anarchist group has been one of frustration and anger. I find that as long as you are "one of the guys" you are considered to be part of the macho shit that seems to come with the territory then you are OK, but if you start to question the tactics or methods then you had better be prepared for a lot of guff coming at you. For example, if your group is planning a direct action or planning for a demo, the boys will be dead intotalking about who is going to be in the front line or to do if the action or march is attacked by the fash or the pigs, which fair enough, are important. Try asking, however, what people do if they don't want to fight and how do they stop it if you want to be a steward. I haven't done that myself but I think that would be interesting. For a touch of humour why not suggest that there is a chinese organised and then try to find volunteers to run it.

I find that political issues of specific interest to women are often met with a lot of dismissal and at worst derision by anarchist men that I have met. They drift off mentally if you mention something of interest to women in a meeting. Within the group here in Glasgow the women have tried to organise events and actions that are open to women and the boys and the girls although they are supported by a number of the girls, most of them stay away because "it's women's stuff" or "I thought it was only for women only", which proves my point about not paying any attention to you. I sincerely hope that with the ongoing growth and development of the Solidarity Centre that women and the girls are far more readily and have a solid group of anarchist women in this city from which we may activate a network of women in Scotland.

I know that I have been very negative but that is how I feel. I know there will be a lot of us who are man anarchists. You may, like me, be pig sick of your fellow [and I mean fellow] anarchists quoting you on about old dead guys like Bakunin, Proudhon, Malatesta, et al. There are plenty of old dead gits out there for you to receive your kick and not get their stupid right back at them. Women like, Emma Goldman, Voltairine de Cleyre, Lucy Parsons, Ethel McDonald, Louise Michel and Lucy Swank, there are loads of books, pamphlets and magazines that have been written and edited by women anarchists. Try asking your anarchist bookstall organiser or bookshop assistant to look around the shelf. You might want to contact other women who are not necessarily anarchists and find out what they are up to.

In Scotland will start coming out of the woodwork and feeling less isolated and begin to be a powerful force in the anarchist world.

The second of these myths was demolished in issue 2 of Scottish Anarchist, where the power of international capital and the non-neutrality of the state was discussed in great detail [15]. Now we will deal with the first point.

To suggest that the struggle for independence is a key to socialism within Scotland implies that, in the words of Bakunin, "a political revolution should precede a social revolution... [this] is a great and fatal error, because every political revolution taking place prior to and consequently without a social revolution must necessarily be a bourgeois revolution, and a bourgeois revolution can only be instrumental in bringing about bourgeois Socialism", in State Capitalism [15].

From the speeches by SML members at the Scottish Socialist Forum this conclusion can easily be drawn. Instead of arguing that socialism means the abolition of the wages system, the end of "jobs" by the revolution of work by self-management, the communisation and decentralisation of the "economy" and the creation of a federal/confederation of communes, based on community and workplace assemblies, speakers at the Forum talked about universality, equality and diversity in the workplace, "training" for young people, "mini- nations" and "self-management", "internationalism of the working class"... This is state capitalism, the creation of a big boss, the state - "socialism".

Socialism was seen by most people at the Forum as something which the party "delivers" or somehow "stands up to". The class struggle is pushed down by the actions of leaders, once in a while but she is a working-class menator who has had her teeth sharpened on the N-I. I believe that it is possible to be an anarchist and a feminist and a trade unionist. Surely one of the points of Anarchism is to re-claim our politics from the middle-class and find our own independent politics in the environment, collectivism, cultural and co-operation and other issues.

I do not believe that a woman cannot be a feminist - I am a WOMAN - that term will serve for the purpose of this piece. I reckon that I was a feminist before I was an anarchist and that my anarchism stemmed from my experiences as a woman. If you start talking about women anarchism, there are loads of books, pamphlets and magazines that have been written and edited by women anarchists. Try asking your anarchist bookstall organiser or bookshop assistant to look around the shelf. You might want to contact other women who are not necessarily anarchists and find out what they are up to.

Hopefully, women anarchists in Scotland will start coming out of the woodwork and feeling less isolated and begin to be a powerful force in the anarchist world. If you want to discuss things or maybe if you are getting ready for a meeting, or even a conference, please get in touch with the Solidarity Centre in Glasgow.

Cheers, Jeanne

Groups you might want to contact:

Rude Girls, c/o Glasgow Solidarity Centre
Anarchist Women's Newsletter, Box 51, c/o Greenleaf Bookshop, 52 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB
Lesbian Avengers, c/o Glasgow Women's Library, 4th floor, 109 Trongate, Glasgow G1 5HD [please respect that they are a lesbian only direct action group - although they have stated that they wish to work with other women and groups]

RECOMMENDED READING:
Emma Goldman Living My Life [autobiography]
Red Emma Speaks [speeches]
John Taylor Caldwell Come Dungeons Dark [about Guy Aldred - with a chapter on Ethel McDonnel]
Quiet Rumours [anarchist-feminist anthology]

Bad Attitude, 121 Railton road, London, SE24 GLR
Subversive Sister, Dept 33, 1 Newton street, Picadilly, Manchester, M1 1FW
From The Flames, c/o 42 Mapleray Road, London SE24 5AS

These should be available from your local alternative bookshop or bookstall. If not, ask them to get them.

The struggle against imperialism cannot be separated from the struggle against capitalism

These ideas imply two things, firstly a "stages" approach to the social struggle, the first stage being to demand a Scottish nation-state and secondly, that such a nation-state would "neutral" universal. This approach could be used to "deliver" important reforms and even bring about socialism.
Or an Anaicha—feminist? Or feminist-anarchist? Or a woman anarchist? What, are you nuts?

That's how you get to feel after a while anyway, in my experience. Although there is a famous saying that Feminism practices what it preaches, it is also an unspoken opinion that since there is so much sexism and racism within it, it is striving to do away with women issues. There are issues then this hideous Oxford educated harpy will hurl Alien-like out of your chest and bite off your balls. Don't get me wrong. I do have a large alien Queen that lives inside that likes to be pig sick of your (and I mean fellow) anarchists quoting or going on about old dead guys like Bakunin, Proudhon, Malatesta, et al. There are plenty of old dead gals out there for you to recover and start chucking right back at them. Women like, Emma Goldman, Voltairine de Cleyre, Lucy Parsons, Ethel McDonald, Louise Michel and Lucy Swank, there are loads of books, pamphlets and magazines that have been written and written by women anarchists. Try asking your anarchist bookshop owner or book seller what they have to say, or what they might want to contact other women who are not necessarily anarchists and find out what they are up to.

I believe it is possible in an anarchist and a feminist. Surely one of the points of Anarchism is to re-claim our politics from the middle-class nonsense. They like to imagine that if you start talking about stuff like feminism, environment, collectives and workplaces, you are upto something. My experience of being a woman in anarchism has been one of frustration and rage. I find that as long as you are one "of the guys" and not one of the macho shit that seems to come with the territory then you are OK, but if you start to question the tactics or methods then you had better be prepared for a lot of golf coming at you. For example, if your group is planning a direct action or planning for a demo, the boys will be dead into talking about who is going to do it, if the action or march is attacked by the bashes or the pigs, which fair enough, are important. Try asking, however, what people do if they don't want to fight and how do they stand up to the boys and these "feminists". I haven't done that myself but I think that would be interesting. For a touch of humour why not suggest that there is a colhe organised and then try to find volunteers to run it.

I find that political issues of specific interest to women are often met with at best, dismissal and at worst derision by anarchist men that I know. They drift off mentally if you mention something of interest to women in a meeting. Within the group here in Glasgow the women have tried to organise events and actions that are open to women and the men. In fact although they are supported by a number of the boys, most of them stay away because "it's women's stuff" or "it was thought it was only for women only". This proves my point about them not paying any attention to you. I sincerely hope that with the ongoing growth and development of the Solidarity Centre that works with women, the macho men and women probably read and have a gristly group of anarchst women in this city from which we may activate a network of women in Scotland.

I know that I have been very negative but that is how I feel it. I know there will be some men anarchist. You may, like me, come across a "I'm not interested in that". Well fella, what do you want, a medal, or a chocolate watch? Don't send me any whinging letters telling me how wonderful you are - I will just spit acid on them - tell the women anarchists in your group. Of course, I am assuming that men are reading this - they've probably skipped it and gone on to the "serious" stuff.

On a more positive note there is a lot out there for the building of women's networks. There are also some middle-class issues that appear on late night TV discussions. They like to imagine that if you start talking about stuff like feminism, they are the undisputed and consistent enemies of all oppression [12]. Ignoring the most obvious contradiction in this sentence, namely how can the "consistent enemies of all oppression" support the class that oppresses the working class, we have to wonder if Lenin is serious in suggesting that socialists support cross-class alliances against one form of oppression and ignore all others, particularly class oppression, and that national liberation struggles come before the class struggle. Elsewhere, he makes this suggestion clearly by stating that "It would be sufficient to think that for democracy the proletariat will be victorious over the bourgeoisie" [13].

Lenin's ideas still hold relevance for much of the socialist movement in Scotland. The same point, namely that independence would be a step towards creating socialism, was made by Scottish Militant Labour (SML) and Liberation members at the recent Scottish Socialist Forum, recently held in Glasgow. Hopefully, women anarchists in Scotland will start coming out of the woodwork and feeling less isolated and begin to be a powerful force in the anarchist world. If you want to discuss things or maybe if you are getting ready for a meeting, or even a conference, please get in touch with the Clyde Solidarity Centre in Glasgow.

Cheers, Jeannie

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These ideas imply two things, firstly a "stage" approach to the social struggle, the first stage being to demand a Scottish nation-state and secondly, that such a nation-state would "inevitably" be neutral and could be used to "deliver" important reforms and even bring about socialism.

The second of these myths was demolished in issue 2 of Scottish Anarchist, where the power of international capital and the non-neutrality of the state was discussed in great detail [15]. Now we will deal with the first point.

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From the speeches by SML members at the Scottish Socialist Forum this conclusion can easily be drawn. Instead of arguing that socialism means the abolition of the wages system, the end of "jobs" by the revolution of work by self-management, the communisation and decentralisation of the "economy" and the creation of a federation of communities, based on community and workplace assemblies, speakers at the forum talked about national liberation, "training" for young people, "minimum wages" and the "internationalisation of the class struggle".

This is state capitalism, the creation of one big, the state - socialism.

Socialism was seen as most people at the Forum as something which the party "delivers" for people, as people are never asked if they want it. The work of creating self-managed alternatives in our communities and workplaces, socialist activity is constrained and forced into the individualistic and atomising mould of capitalist politics. Utilising electricity in the "democracies", only leads to one thing, the "subordination of the movement for economic emancipation to an exclusively political movement... They [the Marxists] have tied the working class to the bourgeois toil" [16]. That this is the result of electorionising can be seen from the history of the German Social Democracy, the British Labour Party and (more recently) the German Greens and should leave everyone in any doubt.

Socialism, for anarchists, is the self-liberation of working class people, by their own efforts, creating and using their own organisations. There can be no separation of political, social and economic struggles. The struggle against capitalism cannot be separated from the struggle against capitalism. In response to national oppression, the anarchism programme is clear, "it must not be divorced from an international social revolution through the formation of new national States. Anarchists refuse to participate in adversarial competition in class/struggles with other forces which may or may not be involved in national liberation struggles. The struggle must spread to establish economic, political and social structures in the liberated territories, based on federalist and libertarian organisations" [17].

That this approach can be successful is indicated by the actions of Nestor Makhno in the Ukraine during the Russian Civil War, to take just one example. Makhno was both Red and White dictator, also resisted the Ukrainian nationalists. In opposition to the call for "national self-determination" i.e., a new Ukrainian state, Makhno called for working class self-determination in the Ukraine and across the world. In the areas protected by the Paris Commune, workers' councils, which actively resisted the state, actioned their own lives, directly, based on their own ideas and needs. True, social, self-determination [18].

Until such time as a film about Makhno is made, Braveheart will have been the most influential film to date.

(continued from page $4$)

September 1992
"Create... or be enslav'd": William Blake - Poet and Anarchist

"I must Create a System or be enslav'd by another Man's"

When I first read Blake, it was simple. I understood every word; it was just the sentences I had problems with. There can be no doubt, Blake is difficult to read - occulted, esoteric, obscurantistic and awkward... so deep it can be hard to hold the bottom at times. But from the sweat of the heat of the effort comes the light of the epiphany of understanding and the prize is worth the race. For present purposes I shall just scratch the surface of his existentialist anarchism but it is a topic which latches to be scratched. And although I do not cleave to the acceptance of ideas as sanctified simply by virtue of age I do think that we all stand to learn much by a re-examination of Blake's words and works.

First of all, let me be quite clear what I mean by 'existentialist anarchism'. In his epic poem JERUSALEM (which is not to be confused with the hymn of the same name, the latter being in fact an

lunatory War was seriously flawed but it was sincere for all that. And despite that flawed grasp of history as it unfolded around him, his core argument remains compelling. He knew them, as we must now remember now, that "Men pass on, but states remain for ever" [p. 487][2] and, more importantly, he knew that states consumed by the ideology of perpetuating their own existence will sacrifice or see sacrificed any and all individuals for that perpetuation.

But what, if any, is the contemporary relevance of this? Afterall, we have already said that Blake had a limited grasp of the true facts of the politics of his own time - he is not much less likely to have anything of use to tell us today? Well, before passing judgement, consider these lines from [the 'real'] JERUSALEM:

"Scotland pours out his Sons to labour at the Furnaces; England nurses Mothers/Gives to the Children of Albion and to the Children of Jerusalem" [pp. 463-4]

True enough, much to the chagrin of the incumbent government, England is indeed still producing nursing mothers... for who's off-spring its only goal seems to be... but can we any longer say that "Scotland pours out his Sons to labour at the Furnaces" or "Wales; his Daughters to the Looms"? Clearly we cannot. But it is precisely this fact which makes Blake relevant. His analyses transcends specific of economic and social circumstances and, when it is at its most powerful, speaks directly to questions of existence. Thus, it is all the more necessary now - with the harsh sense of liability assessed by many which was so long bound up with heavy industry utterly eroded -to engage with Blake and pursue the withdrawal of personal intellectual and moral consent which is the ultimate revolution. Now this is a plea in praise of the "stokes counsellors" being parachuted into the peripheral inner cities, inner city minimalism on the part of communities and elsewhere in an effort to persuade those living there that they can relax their way out of debt and despair - and learn how to give 120% in the modern business environment in the process [3]. On the contrary, Blake himself often seems to have found that "Anansi, the spider" [p. 759]. Rather what I want to say is simply this. If we seek to put an end to the alienated and alienating practices of 'representative government' [sic - sick?] and to see a world where each enjoys as much freedom as is compatible with an equivalent degree for all; a world where consensus is as much the rule as the exception and where nobody's fate depends on the curves of supply and demand, then we can do far worse than following Blake's one central dictum:

"Only Believe! Believe and Try!"

Forear


2. As elsewhere in his work, the language here is gender specific, but Blake's vision never was; his was always

3. For the record, the "dark Satanic Mills" are actually churches and not factories - but that is another story.

Notes

“Scotland pours out his Sons to labour at the Furnaces Wales gives his Daughters to the Looms; England nursing Mothers gives to the Children of Albion and to the Children of Jerusalem” (pp. 463/4).

It is a fact that 47 of the world’s largest 100 companies are companies rather than countries. This number has increased by 10 since 1980 and 40% of world trade is now conducted between branches of the same transnational company. While fighting against oppression and wrong-doing. The world in which we all act, think for ourselves but act for eachother and where each of us answers for ourselves but act for each other and where each of us answers for thatperpetuation.

Scotland and Capitalism

When I first read Blake, it was simple. I understood every word; it was just the sentences I had problems with. There can be no doubt, Blake is difficult to read - occulted, esoteric, obfuscating and awkward... so deep it can be hard to fathom at times. But from the swet of the heat of the effort comes the light of the epiphany of understanding and the prize is worth the race. For present purposes I shall just scratch the surface of his existentialist anarchism but it is a topic which is to be scratched. And although I do not cleave to the acceptance of ideas as sanctified simply by virtue of age I do think that we all stand to learn much by a re-examination of Blake’s words and works.

First of all, let me be clear quite what I mean by ‘existentialist anarchism’. In his epic poem *JERUSALEM* (which is not to be confused with the hymn of the same name, the latter being in fact an

lunatory War was seriously flawed but it was sincere for all that. And despite that flawed grasp of history as it unfolded around him, his core argument remains compelling. He knew then, as we must now remember now, that “Men pass on, but states remain for ever” (p. 487) [2] and, more importantly, he knew that states consumed by the ideology of perpetuating their own existence will sacrifice or see sacrificed any and all individuals for that perpetuation. But what, if any, is the contemporary relevance of this? Afterall, we have already said that Blake had a limited grasp of the true facts of the politics of his own time - he not much less likely to have anything of use to tell us today? Well, before passing judgement, consider these lines from ‘the real’ JERUSALEM:

“Scotland pours out his Sons to labour at the Furnaces
Wales gives his Daughters to the Looms;
England nursing Mothers gives to the Children of Albion and to the Children of Jerusalem” (pp. 463/4).

True enough, much to the chagrin of the incoming government, England is indeed still producing nursing mothers... for who’s off-selling its own goods seems to be good... but can we any longer say that “Scotland pours out his Sons to labour at the Furnaces” or “Wales... his Daughters to the Looms”? Clearly we cannot. But it is precisely this fact which makes Blake relevant. His analytical approach transcends specific of economic and social circumstances and, when it is at its most powerful, speaks directly to questions of existence. Thus, it is all the more necessary now - with that sense of loss assessed by many which was so long bound up with heavy industry utterly eroded - to engage with Blake and pursue the withdrawal of personal intellectual and moral consent which is the ultimate revolution.

Note.

This is not a paean in praise of the “stress counsellors” being parachuted into the peripheral inner cities, inner cities, erstwhile communities and elsewhere in an effort to persuade those living there that they can relax their way out of debt and despair - and learn how to give 120% in the modern business environment - in the process [3]. On the contrary, Blake himself often seems to have found that “Anon counsellor” or “Anon counsellor” was often as much a problem as the problem itself and where nobody’s fate depends on the curves of supply and demand, then we can do far worse than following Blake’s one central dictum:

“Only Believe! Believe and Try”

Forog

1. The works published in many editions but I quote here from what I take to be the most easily available, THE PENGUIN PORTABLE BLAKE, Alfred Kazin [ed.]; (London, Penguin Books, 1949). Spell- ing and punctuation here are as in the original.

2. As elsewhere in his work, the language here is gender specific, but Blake’s vision never was; his was always a land of Men

A Land of Men and Wives too” (p. 145).

3. For the record, the “dark Satanic Mills” are actually churches and not factories - but that is quite another story.
Is There an Anarchist Alternative to the State Education System? (Part 1)

Historically the anarchist writer Fernand de Lamis, a century ago wrote:

"Historically the anarchist writer Fernand de Lamis, a century ago wrote:"

"In a revolutionary society we would totally scrap the education system. School buildings would only be reopened as centres to be used by the whole revolutionary community. Today liberal education is possible because those involved are conscious of the need to be a part of a movement that will get rid of the inequalities of the class system and capitalism."

Some libertarians do not send their children to school at all. The organisation Education Otherwise, model that could create self-regulated free schools that went beyond liberal education in the scientific and rational which meant in his case a corresponding lack of interest in the imaginary and fantastic. He had a dogmatic attitude to some social issues for example alcoholism and he always noted down his criticisms and tried to avoid his mistakes. Between 1919 and 1936 Informal athenaeums were created which consciously rejected any concept of academic levels or group work. Athenaeums' were workers' meeting places and they broke down the artificial exclusion of schools from the rest of the community.

From 1919 the Modern Schools were funded by the CNT in the most democratic way. Anarchist education was through an individual and independent line of thought. The anarchists had the greatest influence also run along libertarian lines. There was also provision made for parents who wished to teach their children at home or who wished to form co-operative groups of their own.

The most well-known Free School in Britain still in existence is the New School for Children. Established in 1909 by Kropotkin, it was founded on the ideas of Ivan Pavlovich Pavlov for which he has seen this school as an alternative. The school was based on the principles of: self-government, voluntary attendance at lessons and freedom from adult morality. The daily school is organised through direct democratic meetings of the school community on a one person/one vote/majority rule system. A timetable is set after the children pick from a list of options. This is all very nice but at around £5000 a year it is mostly just an option for the privileged few.

Land and Freedom is the new Ken Loach film. Its story of a Liverpool community who get to Spain to fight fascism during the Spanish Civil War. Once there, he joins the POUM militia and discovers the revolution at the heart of it all. As an anarchist, the nature of the revolution is subtle, but strongly, this film is an excellent contribution to the discussion of the Spanish Civil War. The film shows us a revolution that is in the process of being born.

The film shows us that the issues of the Spanish Revolution and its legacy are relevant today more than ever. It is fitting that the film ends with a message that says: "We are the Durruti Column, we're the best!" There is no space in a review to address all the aspects of the Spanish Revolution and its lessons for the anarchist movement. For those interested, there are many books and articles that discuss this topic in depth. One of the "actors" at the meeting was an anarchist who criticised the revolution and the passion in his speeches is so strong and moving. With the collapse of the Spanish Republic in 1936, the film shows the importance of freedom for all, including the importance of free speech.

Loach makes it clear that the struggle against fascism could not be separated from the revolution. The film shows us that the struggle against fascism is not just about winning the war, but about changing the world. The film shows the importance of freedom for all, including the importance of free speech. A critical point to note is that the POUM were CNT members (see George Orwell's Homage to Catalonia for evidence of this). The film shows the importance of freedom for all, including the importance of free speech.

For those interested, there are many books and articles that discuss this topic in depth. One of the "actors" at the meeting was an anarchist who criticised the revolution and the passion in his speeches is so strong and moving. With the collapse of the Spanish Republic in 1936, the film shows the importance of freedom for all, including the importance of free speech.

As for the "official" Trotskyists in Spain, their one claim to fame (beyond being the smallest political party in Spain) is that, like Trotskyists today, they don't have instincts during the May Days telling working class people to do what they were already doing.

So go and see Land and Freedom. It truly is a finely crafted version of Homage to Catalonia. Ken Loach must be congratulated on producing such a beautiful moving, exciting and political film. It is truly amazing. In a very moving celebration of the anarchist ideas which inspired it. It is fitting that the film ends with a message: "We will conquer. But we will not conquer in order to repeat the errors of the past years, but in order to prevent our future from being the same as the past."

Is There an Anarchist Alternative to the State Education System? Continued from page 20

opposite of current moral, who was the most radical of the group, would be preach- ing. So socialist education is possible through theCNT. If it is impossible through the family of work or the Modern Schools. In a revolutionary society, one arm of capitalism can be liquidated with the rest left in place. A free and equal education can only be achieved at Movement like the CNT. They use social as social art where we could learn a lot from their teach-

For children to de- velop as equals they must be able to start as equals. This means the end of class privileges and in effect the abolition of the class system. One arm of capitalism can not be liquidated with the rest left in place. A free and equal education can only be achieved at Movement like the CNT. They use social as social art where we could learn a lot from their teach-

Land and Freedom
Land and Freedom is the new Ken Loach film. In the story of a Liverpool Communist Party member who goes to Spain to fight fascism during the Spanish Civil War. Once there, he joins the POUM militia and discovers the revolution at the heart of traditional Spain against Fascism.

The film is excellent, exciting, moving, very accurate and very political. The Stalinist betrayal of the workers' alliance in their line and resistance against the anarchists and POUM is graphically drawn.

More importantly, the social revolution which swept Spain and inspired the fight against Franco is shown. When the militia liberate a village, the villagers gather in a meeting to discuss what to do next. After a heated discussion, they agree that they will take the land and work it in common. One of the “actors” at the meeting was an anarchist who was then during the revolution and the passion in his speeches is so strong and moving. A vividly shown image of what Spain was like after July 13th, 1936.

Of course, the movie does have its flaws. For example, in the collectivisation debate the solution decided upon, village wide collectivisation by majority vote, was not the “normal” solution. The anarchists in Spain realised the importance of voluntary collectivisation, with those peasants who wanted to work their own land, by their own labour, being allowed to do so. The actual practice and spirit of libertariand decision making is vividly shown in the film, but the importance of free agreement is downplayed.

Also, equally important, the difference between national revolution and international revolution is not clearly shown. At the start of the film, a Spanish showing communications minister, talking about how this industry had been “nationalised.” It had not, but the minister was simply requesting workers self-management. This is fundamentally different from France, where democracy is on the ballot box. Ken Loach, as a Trotskyist, may not see the difference in principle, but in practice, nationalisation soon led to the creation of a new elite (as can be seen in Russia, under Lenin, or Labour Party nationalisation).

Loach does make it clear that the anarchists played an important part in the struggle, with black and red flags flying side by side. The anarchist nature of the revolution is subtle, but strongly, shown in the film, and this is particularly well done, with the hero finally meeting Stalinism in what is the most moving scene also provides one of the best lines, when

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Land and Freedom

For children to develop as equals they must be able to start as equals. This means the end of class privileges and in effect the end of the mansion class system. One arm of capitalism can not be placed on the table with the rest left in place. A free and equal education can only be achieved at the end of the movement like the CNT. They were civil servants as social experience where we could learn a lot from their teaching methods. Free schools are not as necessary as they were in Ferrer's time when there was no teaching of reading and writing to working class children at all.

As for the “official” Trotskyists in Spain, their one claim to fame (beyond being the least political movement of the three), their numbers being estimated at 200,000 is that, like Trotskyists today, they were out instigators during the May Days telling working class people to do what they were already doing.

So go and see Land and Freedom. It truly is a filmed version of Homage to Catalonia. Ken Loach must be congratulated for producing such a moving, exciting, and political film. It really is amazing. In a very moving celebration of the Spanish Revolution and its lessons for the anarchist movement. For those interested, these issues have been discussed in depth in issues 1 and 2 of the anarchist communist magazine Freedom. Ken Loach does make it clear that the struggle against fascism could not be separated from the revolution. The many political debates in the film drive home this truth.

The film shows clearly the importance and power of organisation, and victory... the POUM militiamen were CNT members (see George Orwell's Homage to Catalonia for evidence of this). The socialists in the film are then building a new society.

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Is There an Anarchist Alternative to the State Education System? (Part 1)

Historically the anarchist writer of a century ago like Bakunin, Kropotkin and Emma Goldman advocated ideas like co-education and education models which were revolutionary in their time, in apparently more liberal times today they don't seem so radical. It would be very easy now to take an idea like the Venezuelan school model for churches have seen this school as an alternative as it is run in a libertarian way. Summerhill is based on the principles of pupil self-government, voluntary attendance at lessons and freedom from adult morality.

The daily school is organised through direct democratic meetings of the school community on one person/per vote/majority rule system. A timetable is set after the children pick from a list of options. This is all very nice but at around £2000 a year it is mostly just an option for the privileged few.

Some libertarians do not send their children to school at all. The organisation Education Otherwise is a self-help organisation for home based education set up in Britain in 1997 with a membership of 2100. Obviously parents will have all sorts of reasons for not sending their children to school. This is particularly true for anarchists where you are taught to work with either your hands or brain to produce tomorrow's workers and managers.

A criticism of Ferrer was that he implicitly accepted the school as an institution. He had an approach of faith in the scientific and rational which meant in his case a corresponding lack of interest in the imaginative and fantastic. He had a dogmatic attitude to some social issues for example alcohol. He also kept notes on children's academic performance. Other Spanish libertarians who came after him were working-class collectivist organisation was introduced into the classroom as well as teaching through questions rather than answering them. There were no classes of factory, research centres, the mountains and forests became the classrooms. Working class children having classes as adults for well recognising education as a life-long process not confined to children in school. There were no punishments or rewards. There were pupils assemblies and weekly discussions. A continuation page 21
Join the Fightback

Although the Tupiza people Dean spoke to were delighted at the advances of the Croats in Kninjia and the military reverses for the Chetnik forces (and after he left, he would have welcomed an Allied bombing/heliborne lancet of Chetnik positions around Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia) they were apprehensive about the coming "peace" moves which would force the Bosnian Government to accept the partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines and a map which would make the Bosnian rump state a puppet of Crotian power.

The discussion which followed showed enthusiasm for the "anti-fascist aid" idea, and illustrated the drift of the Left. Left groups such as the R.C.P.S. and W.P. have sought to identify the Bosnian territory & rump state as the targets of/refugees from a new conflict. It is only in the light of this that the voice of Tommy Sheridan / Militant as active in fighting the "white power" regime in Yugoslavia is well worth the £1.50 price. The fact OpenEye is available for £1.70 from OpenEye, BM OpenEye, London, WC1N 3XX - ha - "I quote -":

Open Eye has now reached its third issue. For those who have not seen this excellent magazine, it’s 52 pages cover a wide range of subjects on many burning issues. This issue discusses the "Globalisation" of the West and that of the working classes. As the success of the Workers of the World Federation campaign, the open up the discussion on the continuing war against the state and big business for privacy on the internet. All this, plus interviews, books and reviews and strange going on which are usually called "conspiracy" theories, make it well worth the £1.50 price. The fact they have good taste is not only indicated by the excellent articles it contains, it is confirmed when you see they list Scottish Anarchist in their "Alternative Press Update"!

Open Eye is available for £1.70 from Open Eye, BM Open Eye, London, WC1N 3XX, England (it’s e-mail address is an74570@arom.pen.net). Make Postal Orders/payable to "Open Eye".

Join the Fightback

I have recently joined the Glas-

grow when Shelley's Labour and anarchist outburst was in issue 2 of Scottish Anarchist, I was not surprised at the reaction it created. However, many connected to the Glasgow Anarchist Group were.

Much of the article I stand by, and perhaps in my sense of mischief (humour) didn't go down well. For example, "It (Liberalism) doesn't drink or smoke, its reputation is intact!" I did feel we had let ourselves down in the past, such as our "twinned" group in Tyne-side, by not briefing properly about the situation in Clyde-side, the distinctive approach of Militant Labour here, and his "folk hero" status... and that we were a "cultural" group that would not promote ourselves to the public. This is a fact, a fact that the article cannot get away from. Can you really be sure that if anything happened at the Pollack/M77 demo that over-shadowed the bounds of the Manchester polls of direct action, we would have re-emerged from its outburst in 1990? The article tries to say that, "It's certainly true that few anarchists can match the militant single people from Pollack and elsewhere for their direct action". This is not true.

In 1992 (Red Action 63) Sheridan was instrumental in one of the most successful pieces of direct action in England - Pollack was a direct action between the Police and anarchists, and it was a direct action which was sparked by the Police and the "P" in return.

I do accept that my depictions of anarchism as I presided to the "twinned" group in Tyne-side, involving people temporarily repelling against the system lack of commitment in terms of the work they do, is reactive, and eschews any reason for us to be more interesting than the majority of the people involved in it.

I also fully accept that I owe an apology to anyone who has been involved in direct action for many years, and that I should have known better. Our "twinned" group, "Twisted Bryn" (Tai-Wan Bypass) to anti fascist work. TAG and the groups only good friends of us, and who have physically confronted fascists and have been successful in stopping them from their work in Neweater for over 2 years.

In the face of information that they have been involved in direct action for many years, and that I should have known better. Our "twinned" group, "Twisted Bryn" (Tai-Wan Bypass) to anti fascist work. TAG and the groups only good friends of us, and who have physically confronted fascists and have been successful in stopping them from their work in Neweater for over 2 years.

Even more demanding was the fact that it was confirmed by us to suggest that Scottish Anarchists as a whole and the working class on the International Anarchist. The Spectator's London 1st July 1995 illustrates a high degree of organisation and commitment among the Working class communist opposed to dogma, in favour of...
Dear comrades,

It is always useful to overturn sacred cows, and Black Sheep's article on Tommy Sheridan certainly did that.

However, I feel they missed the point.

Sheridan may be an admirable activist, committed to his politics and at the forefront of many apologies for the uncharismatic Nally, who probably deserves to be in Pollok.

Firstly TAG thought it very offensive that it was suggested that we found Glasgow "a culture shock", we just don't know the people and as people we had little connection to them very much in common. The main thrust of the article was to try and get across the narrative that the people who were connected to the Poll Tax did not Sheridan was a系统 error message and the article was not included.

Much of the article I stand by, and perhaps I have missed a democratic culture shock. The article was meant to be provocative, and although I contained a grain of truth, there are much class struggle (and environmental) anarchists who display an incredible amount of enthusiasm for direct action. The distinctive approach of Militant Labour here, and their "folk hero" status....

I do accept that my depiction of anarchists as submissive to the "real" left - involving people temporarily rebelling against capitalist domination - was over the top. It was meant to be provocative, and although it contained a grain of truth, there are much class struggle (and environmental) anarchists who display an incredible amount of enthusiasm for direct action. The distinctive approach of Militant Labour here, and their "folk hero" status....

I have found it very interesting. I can see what a mess the country's in and how we all need to get together to do something about it. I've become involved in fighting the poll tax and helping people out against Sheriff Officers. I've also been in solidarity with anarchists from Scottish Militant and have supported them during court appearances.

Because of my involvement, I've seen what happens after Sheriff Officers break into peoples houses and take their belongings. So far as I am concerned, becoming actively involved in fighting against them has opened up things that ever happened to me.

I feel proud of myself for deciding to fight back and I would encourage everyone out there to start to take an interest in what is happening around them and to join in to the Glasgow Anarchist Group and try to change things for the better.

Jim, Glasgow

Returning solidarity to Tuzla miners (ctd)

Although the Tuzla people Dean spoke to were delighted at the advances of the Croats in Knjazina and the military reverses for the Chechnik forces (and after the left, we have welcomed the allied bombing/shelling of Chechnik positions around Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia) they were apprehensive about the coming "peace" moves which would force the Bosnian Government to accept the partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines and a map which would make the Bosnian rump state a puppet of Croation power.

The direction which followed showed enthusiasm for the "anti-fascist aid" idea, and illustrated the drift of the Left. Left groups such as the NCP and S.W.P. have sought to identify the Bosnian territory & rump state as "anti-fascistic" - they have sought to suggest that Workers Aid (which includes the participation of the R.P., W.R. (“That Workers Aid Group”) may be prepared to smuggle in to Bosnia via Croatian territory, with the explicitly fascist "White Power" insignia everywhere.

Open Eye Magazine

Open Eye has now reached its third issue. For those who have not seen this excellent magazine, it's 52 pages cover a wide range of subjects on many burning issues. Issues include, "Disertori, Edizioni Alfabeta, Italy" in Counter Information 44. As the Croat Government starts the expulsion of Bosnian refugees from Zagreb back to liberated western Bosnia, the Bosnian Government has stated it wants to conscript all of those who are of "fighting age".

"Anti-fascist Aid" would sharply distinguish between the interests of the Bosnian State (and other States) and that of the working class: for whom the cliché: the working class has no country has a certain meaning given the subordination of class interests to the design of any nation state and the tendency for dominant ethnic/linguistic/religious groupings of the country's identity.

Jim McFarlane.
MELT DOWN THE FRENCH CONSULATE

VIVA TAHITI!

Within minutes of the French government exploding their first nuclear bomb in the south Pacific, protesters converged on the French Consulate in Edinburgh’s Randolph Crescent. By 1 a.m. on 6th September, all three consulate doors were chained and padlocked shut, radiation tape and anti nuclear banners were plastered on the railings in front of the building. Daylight saw more demonstrators arriving and the demonstration continued for 24 hours.

Daylight saw more demonstrators and the action continued for 24 hours. The action had the effect of keeping the consulate closed to the public for the whole period and some courageous protesters, [anarchists from Glasgow] occupied the roof, locking themselves to a chimney stack.

A reasonable response to an horrific act of state terrorism you might say - but shouldn’t we be trying to do more? When the police cut the chains and opened one of the three doors, calls to blockade the door were rejected. There was only verbal opposition when, in the afternoon, the police cut the chains on the other two doors. There were only ever a few police present at any one time and if everyone had linked arms in front of the doors they couldn’t have got through.

Only macho fools actually like violence, but acting like we’re at a New Town cocktail party isn’t going to worry the state much. The most effective resistance to the nuclear tests has been the mass uprising in Tahiti, where symbols of French state power and capitalism burnt beautifully! In some countries demonstrators have occupied French embassies and consulates. Media coverage is good but direct action is what can really change things.

The French state aims to explode nuclear bombs at regular intervals right through until May 1996. Protest is not enough. Let’s get 100’s to the consulate next time and do our bit to stop them. The French consulate is at 11 Randolph Crescent, off Queenferry Street, near the west end. TEL: 0131 225 7954

Note: More anarchists from Glasgow occupied the consulate roof for a few hours on the 29th September - to show solidarity with Polynesian peoples and to protest against the French tests. Although threatened with arrest for Breach of the Peace, they were cautioned and released. It seems the French do not want people arrested from their roof! So go to it folks!

SCOTTISH ANARCHIST

Number 3, £1

The Inspiration of “Land & Freedom” depicting the Spanish Revolution 60 years ago.

Chomsky on Unions & Business
Braveheart & igniting Nationalism in Scotland
Local reports from around Scotland
McLibel & Global McDonaldisation
Women and anarchist appeal
We aint’ got no Education!
and much, much more........