

VERBATIM

"They don't make years like that anymore. If it weren't for our efforts we'd have a president today sending troops off to exotic countries like Lebanon and Grenada and bombing cities like Tripoli".

ABBIE HOFFMAN
on 1968

"The British have never had much time for socialism but they have for most of their history been instinctive collectivists, in the benign sense that they are happiest when they are acting as part of or through groups".

ALAN WATKINS

"Although Solidarity was responsible for introducing 'Paul Cardan' and Socialisme ou Barbarie to British readers in the 1960s, by entirely shunning its Marxist past yet refusing to embrace any form of the anarchist tradition, eschewing it not only in name but also in terms of historical experience or philosophy, I personally do not find it surprising that it has failed to maintain an influentially independent libertarian position and condemned itself to a peripheral existence".

DAVID GOODWAY

"Anarchists in the modern world are about the only people who do not believe in terrorism and throwing large spherical bombs".

ALEX COMFORT

MOVING ON

Human hope or mechanical despair?

From MICHAEL FRIEDJUNG, Paris:

Recent issues have been interesting. The article on China (Solidarity 18) was perceptive. However, the article on the Labour Party in the last issue appeared naive.

The problems of today, as well as the hopes of today, are linked with the collapse of nineteenth-century ideologies. The idea of predictability has taken some hard knocks in the course of the twentieth century, but it has taken a long time for this conclusion to reach left-wing politics. It is for this reason that many debates on marxism are outdated. On the other hand, marxist 'mythology' has become less and less operational over the last few years. This is not the case only in western countries such as France; even the leaderships of the main 'communist' countries can no longer repeat the old propaganda. A vacuum has been created, which often tends to be filled with old nationalist and religious ideas.

The question is, can we fill the vacuum with anything else? Ideas do have a force. People's desire to change or not to change society is not only linked to material needs; it is also linked to their philosophy and what they believe to be the purpose of their lives. People need some understanding also of their social relations with other humans, with nature as well as with their ideals. If people think they are machines in interaction with other machines, the result will certainly not be a free society.

Regards