

solidarity

FOR SOCIAL REVOLUTION

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20p



With Special Supplement

about ourselves

SOLIDARITY is a libertarian communist organisation comprising autonomous groups and individuals. The political basis of membership is general agreement with our 'As We See It' and 'As We Don't See It' publications. Members are expected to contribute financially to the organisation and to actively propagate Solidarity politics in the class struggle.

Our organisation is open and democratic and members have full scope to express differing ideas within the agreed political basis of membership.

The editing and production of the magazine is rotated between different, geographically separated groups in line with this approach and in an effort to share skills and develop the strength of the organisation as a whole.

Whilst our members actively intervene, individually and collectively, in areas of the class struggle ranging from sexual liberation to strikes and occupations, our aim is not to impose ourselves as leaders, but to assist in clarifying political issues and strengthening the self-reliance and independence of our fellow workers. We recognise that we also have much to learn in this process.

If you have read 'As We Don't See It', generally agree with the politics outlined there and are interested in joining Solidarity, then write to the Secretary c/o Manchester group, for further details.

PUBLICATION POLICY

Acceptance of articles and letters depends on a variety of factors including their length (they could be too long or too short in relation to the subject they are attempting to cover), clearness of expression, topicality, recent coverage in other editions of the magazine and so on.

We try to avoid publishing articles full of unnecessary jargon, although this consideration is sometimes ignored where we consider that it contains important ideas.

We do accept articles written by sympathetic non-members and writers of long letters are asked to consider writing articles instead. Letters should generally be kept short and precise, otherwise they are likely to be edited.

Articles and letters not published in one edition are passed on to the group producing the next edition, so even if your contribution is not published in the end, it will receive a wide circulation within the group.

NOTE: While the contents of this magazine generally reflect the politics of the group, articles signed by individuals don't necessarily represent the views of all members.

NEW PAMPHLETS

THE KRONSTADT UPRISING
BY IDA METT, with an introduction by Murray Bookchin.
Solidarity(London) £1.00.

THE WORKERS OPPOSITION
BY ALEXANDRA KOLLANTAI.
The anti-bureaucratic struggle inside the Bolshevik Party 1919-1920.
Solidarity(London) 75p.

PERSONS UNKNOWN

The trial of six anarchists on 'conspiracy' charges continues amidst a seemingly deliberate media blackout. They still require assistance financial and otherwise.

The London support group have produced an excellent booklet outlining both the personal traumas involved and the political significance of the case, (price approximately 50p).

Write to: 'Persons Unknown'
c/o Box 123, 182 Upper St,
London, N1.

Appeal

In an effort to realise the age old ideal of socialism - the abolition of money, Solidarity is urging you to send your money to us so that we can finance more pamphlets and supplements! Please send all donations to the Solidarity Treasurer,

John Cowan, (3R)
17 Cheviot Crescent,
Fintry, Dundee,
Scotland.

SOLIDARITY FOR SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

Back issues are available for 25p each or £1.75 for the complete set, including postage.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Main Articles</u>
No 1.	Anarchism and Feminism; Highland Fabricators Strike; Official Secrets.
No 2.	NHS-Planning for Chaos; World of Waste; Gilding the Ghetto.
No 3.	ANL-Anal Fixation; Black Youth in Britain; Lebanon-Looting for Peace!
No 4.	The Miniaturisation of the Proletariat; (micro-chips); The Limits of Permissible Discussion:Kolya.
No 5.	Betrayal of Ideals (RAF); Red Therapy; Genetic Manipulation; Contraceptive Abuse.
No 6.	Economic Crisis? Sexual Revolution Betrayed; Ford Spain.
No 7.	Civil Service Exposed; Jonestown - Suicide For Socialism! We Have Ways!
No 8.	State of Emergency - Ghana; Culture in Politics - Iran; Reminiscences of a Chinese Commune.
No 9.	Torment - Keeping it Clean; In search of Ruling Class; Manifesto for Radical Diplomats.
No 10.	Chrysler - Australia; Youth in China; The Tender Trap; Beyond the Fragments.

Write, enclosing a cheque or PO to London or Manchester Groups.

editorial

CAPITALISM & THE STATE

We do not doubt that the Tories are genuine in their intention to de-nationalise certain parts of British industry as part of their attack on public expenditure. We are witnessing the first throes of a government dressed in the garb of a fanatical free enterprise ideology. In their attacks on public expenditure and the social wage, they are continuing along a path already established by the Labour Party in office, but some of their proposed measures are intended to sustain the fervour of their supporters, as much as to provide financial savings.

Now, in opposition, the Labour Left and its various hangers on in the 'Communist' Party and trotskyist groups will be feverishly trying to re-establish the radical credentials of their policies for 'nationalisation plus workers control'.

It is therefore important to realise that the Tories proposals represent the desperation of a section of the ruling class in decline and that despite their attacks on nationalisation, there is no question of there being any historic reversal in the trend towards increasing state involvement in the economy and society in general, towards what we describe as state capitalism. It is therefore an opportune moment to carefully re-state our understanding of the basic nature of capitalism and the world-wide trend towards state capitalism.

The two major motor forces of capitalism are competition between units of capital and the class struggle between workers and capitalists.

The class struggle has been an important influence in the growth of state intervention in economic and social life, since the increasingly social nature of working class demands have obliged an otherwise divided and disparate ruling class to provide some kind of unified response. The only instrument through which they could achieve this has been the state. The growth

of the so-called welfare state has been an outcome of this struggle - on the one hand by workers seeking to achieve higher standards of health and security and on the other hand by capitalists attempting to channel and control working class discontent.

However, in the absence of the class struggle eliminating competition, workers are forced to operate, as are the capitalists, within a tight framework. In effect, the economy within capitalism has attained a relative autonomy.

Competition between units of capital whether they are companies, nation states, economic blocks or even workers co-ops, obliges those controlling the units to continually attempt to increase the exploitation of their workers, to increase the rate and volume of surplus value produced. Since there are both physical and social limits to an absolute increase in exploitation, this is normally achieved by raising productivity, through increasing the volume of fixed to variable capital, eg. machinery to labour. This involves a relatively smaller and smaller workforce, producing a larger and larger volume of commodities. Since it is only labour which actually adds value in the course of production this trend requires constant checks if it is not to be destructive of the whole economic order.

The need in a competitive economy to 'keep ahead' has obliged employers to gather ever larger volumes of capital under their control. In many cases only the state has been big enough and powerful enough to undertake this task. As the units have become larger the problems of internal control have become greater. We have then seen in both private companies and nationalised industries, the growth of vast hierarchical organisations with powerful bureaucracies at their head.

Whilst the priorities of competition still determine



the overall objectives of these units, the previously sharp effects of competition within the units are now blunted by a mediating bureaucracy. Thus with many companies 'under one roof', so to speak, it may be that only one (usually the marketing company) actually operates directly at a profit. It is still clear in most private companies, how each section contributes to the final profit, but in the heavily bureaucratised state capitalist nations of eastern Europe, especially in Russia, the lines of cause and effect have become accentuated to such an extent, that the motivations of quite large economic groups seem far removed from those of competitive capitalism.

Clearly these countries have not abolished capitalism. The primary relationship of wage-labour and capital is retained, along with production for sale on the home

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consumer, and world markets, supplemented by a thriving black market. But at the same time a fairly major shift has taken place in the constitution of the ruling class and in the decision making machinery. The autonomy of the capitalist economy has been substantially restricted and other problems inherent in capitalism (such as the need to encourage worker participation, without conceding real social control) have become more acute.

The traditional economic problems of competitive capitalism are still powerful influences on the lives of the worlds workers. The basic economic process all-ready referred to - the need to continually increase exploitation, to accumulate larger and larger volumes of capital at an accelerating rate on an ever expanding market, is inherantly unstable. The dominant powers have of course learnt a great deal since the 30's slump and have much more economic control than ever before. But we still see them firstly exporting their own economic problems to weaker economies (by expelling immigrants for instance) and then jumping back in with economic aid when one or more of those economies looks likely to collapse and threaten the whole system.

There is a very real danger of a major economic collapse on a world scale, even if it isn't actually inevitable. The growth of bureaucracy and state control world wide may have enabled the ruling class to ameliorate the effects of the crisis, but they are a long way from the sort of positive (if inefficient) economic planning which only a totally bureaucratised world economy could guarantee.

It is clear then, that the twin dangers of bureaucratic slavery and capitalist competition can only be avoided through the complete abolition of commodity production, wage-labour and the state, and the institution of generalised self-management.

SOLIDARITY(MANCHESTER)

Where Now for the Labour Party?

INTRODUCTION

The following article contains a certain amount of informed speculation. We are publishing it as an introduction to the subject of the open meeting at the next Solidarity conference, to be held in Oxford around the end of January/beginning of February. The title of the meeting is 'The Labour Left, Modern Capitalism and the Libertarian Communist Alternative.' Eds.

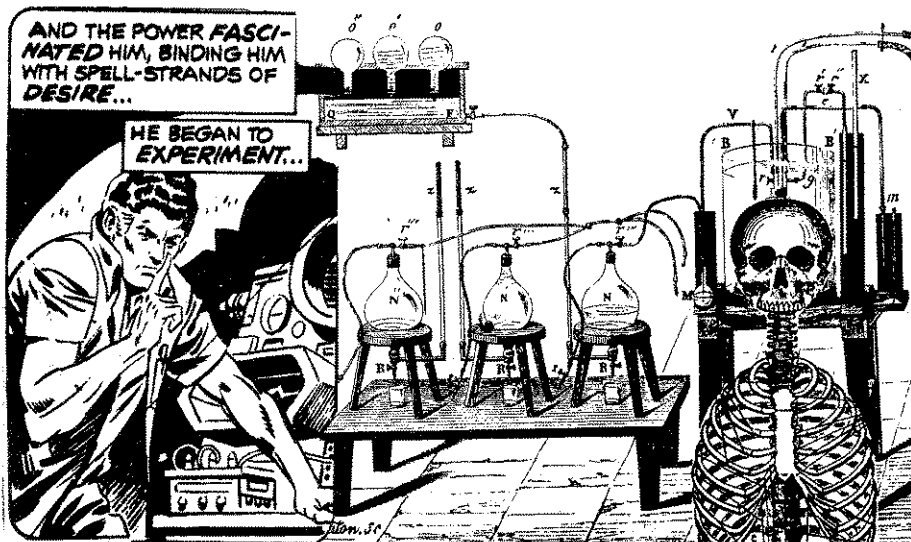
The IRA threats to politicians during the last General Election, helped the two main parties present their campaigns as a media spectacle, more than ever before. Television was the principal presenter of the message, which was, 'parliamentary democracy offers you a real choice'. Vetting of audiences in halls reduced heckling and dissent. The acolytes could acclaim and the cameras could present the politicians unhindered and unchallenged. Radio was also neutral in observing the rules of the two party system, while the newspapers, in the main supporting the Tories, gave the Labour Party full news coverage of their policies, and plenty of favourable comment. Why not, when both parties stand for different ways of doing the same thing. On a sliding scale we were shown the Liberals, glimpses of 'alternatives', (how the 'communists' and WRP would

manage us), and a peep at the lunatic fringe. An increase in the deposit next time will eliminate the poorer among them.

The state, through the post office, enshrined the parliamentary system by distributing all addresses to the electorate in a standard non-distinguishing 'election communication' envelope, (no need for the Party faithful to slog round doors). For those who bothered to open them, the contents matched the outside. By next election Party HQ's may have installed leaflet folding and envelope filling machines. Not only does it expose the irrelevance of this method of putting accross the 'message'; it brings into focus the fact that a powerful political party does not need a very viable constituency membership. ('Militant' and other entrust trotskyists please note!).

More fundamentally it suggests that a so-called 'right' or 'moderate' Labour Party might 'go it alone', when the conditions are favourable, despite the trot' and 'left' verbiage about the neccessity for grass roots constituency involvement.

What are the long term factors which might precipitate a move towards an overt 'Social Democratic' Labour Party, which leaves the trot's with a 'marxoid' Labour Party corpse?



The first possible allies could again be the financiers and large manufacturers fleeing from Thatchers 'radical' economics. Those people who know that capital accumulates more reliably when concentrated in fewer private hands, and when the state intervenes to help manage and control markets. (For example the concentrated capital required for opening up China and the 'communist' bloc has to be unhindered by the vagaries and uncertainties of Thatchers little entrepreneurs and the unreliability of Keith Josephs 'free' market forces.)

Then there is the Trade Union bureaucracy. For them the way to the corridors of power has always been through a Labour Party with a social democratic intent. Placate class confrontation for a slice of the cake and a seat at the table. With control of their members dues and the returns from their investments; (and perhaps on salaries of £40,000 a year which the Confederation of British Industry thinks they should get to keep their members in place), they would continue to make good Labour Party allies. They are unlikely to back a marxist non-runner, since it will lose them their beer and sandwiches at Downing Street.

Finally in Europe there are other powerful allies to be gained by a Labour Party not hamstrung by marxists and nationalisation enthusiasts. Most of the politicians managing the movement of capital are social democratic in inclination if not always in name. So a Labour Party inside a powerful European social democratic amalgam would have no need of the motley marxist bands. Combined with some form of proportional representation, likely to emerge when voting franchise is standardised throughout Europe, with candidates elected on a national or large regional slate as against a constituency one, this would facilitate moves away from constituency accountability and ease the election of a group of national MPs who control a centralised party machine, financed by the aforementioned individuals and perhaps the EEC, none of whom are remotely concerned with resolution-mongering

party members plotting in dark, dingy constituency rooms.

But the right and centre of the Party cannot suddenly desert its 'working constituency' when it has already lost its 'ideological constituency' - its rationale for existence - to Benn, the keeper of the 'ideals' and the 'conscience' of the Party.



In the short term the re-election of a Labour Government is the next step. It must remain to be seen as the sensible, responsible representative of 'labour', to be the buffer and safety-valve against class confrontation. It is in great danger of losing this credibility as last winters events showed. Benn, like Callaghan, knows this. ("He is a man with a lot of right ideas which the Labour Party needs to listen to.", said the moderate Callaghan to the right-wing Shirley Williams, on her TV chat show on the 5th or 6th November.) The Bennites are well aware that their bid for power can only be attempted within the auspices of the Labour Party. So they cannot risk a split. Without its respectable front they are impotent, and will compromise to ensure that they are not dumped with the trots.

Essentially 'Bennism' is a state capitalist programme for the regeneration of the British economy by increased input of government directed finance. (Capitalism for the Bennites is not in a condition of terminal illness.) But given the power of the EEC to direct capital this seems a non-starter. Britain is seen as the power base for this 'socialist' strategy hence the anti-EEC, pro-British nationalist stance of left-labourism, which should be expected to be ideologically 'internationalist'. The muscle for this

programme, in the face of all the economic difficulties and political hostility, is to be a Labour Party, strengthened firstly, by mass recruitment, and then elected on a mandate which offers some form of workers 'participation'.

Benn is offering 'leftists' inside and outside the Party, a break with years of negative, defensive 'oppositionism'. The bait looks like being attractive. His recruiting sergeants will be 'left' union officials, 'broad front' Communists, SWP opportunists, 'critical' trotskyists, marxist academics, confused libertarians, a gamut of 'left' labourists, christian socialists, concerned liberal-democrats and 'one issue' radicals.

These people will offer the Labour shilling at the next election. Meanwhile the action will start now with campaigns aimed at popularising the Labour Party; with uncritical 'Fight against Cuts' and 'Opposition to Redundancies' without a clear perspective on the 'usefulness' of work with the coming of the micro-chip. Workerism and statist politics will be the order of the day.

Full-blown nationalisation would be electoral suicide at present, as well as economically naive so a deal has to be made within the Labour Party, since it is the horse on which they want to ride to power. What Benn would like to offer is the integration of the lower levels of the 'labour movement' bureaucracy (Trade Union branches, shop stewards committees and combines which have ossified) into the management structure of industry and the economy, as the 'true' representatives of the working class. Trying to bring these 'grass roots' elements into the Labour Party 'decision making' processes and then attempting to cross fertilise them with the academic, professional quasi-marxist elite in the Party, which aspires to power, is what the argument in the Labour Party is about. Forget about democratic postures - who picks the leaders - who writes the manifesto - what goes into it. Under the guise of

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"power to the party rank-and-file", the left leadership is manoeuvring for power for itself. Neither the 'right' or the 'left' are interested in direct democracy or immediate accountability of elected representatives or workers management. The Bennites want to show that they have both the farsightedness and the 'bottle' to make the Labour Party the coherent managers of bureaucratic capitalism.

The scenario emerging is of a 'workers party' in power, managing its 'supporters' (the working class). The hope being that there will not be confrontation with the labour and union movement, since their 'interests' are genuinely represented in the Party. The exercising

of power by left labourism would be through their management of the labour force in a partnership with 'free' monopoly capital and state monopoly capital, with the decisive element, government direction of technological development. (See 'Industry, Technology and Democracy' IWC pamphlet by Tony Benn). Their dowry is intended to be a work force delivered into the hands of the state bureaucracy. Management courses for shop stewards, workers in boardrooms and on disciplinary committees, union officials policing the shop floor and office, the exploitation of technological and administrative expertise which emerges from shop stewards (Lucas Aerospace) and the setting up of worker-management consultative committees; would all be

part of the integration.

This is simply a continuation of social democratic policies of the past, with this difference. Previously the Labour Party introduced the union hierarchy as the representatives of labour to the corridors of power. Benn is saying that the lower ranks of union activists, are the 'real' representatives. What we are witnessing through Benn is not just the 'ideological' identification of the workforce with the ruling class, but an attempt at a 'structural' integration as well. Right and Left in the Labour Party need each other. A united party is necessary - not to fight the Tories - but to reduce class tension when the Conservatives are rocking the boat with their overt class hostility.

JF(Leeds).

Review

ECOLOGY AND ANARCHISM No 3. 15p+ post FROM BOX 1000, RISING FREE, 182 UPPER STREET, LONDON N1.

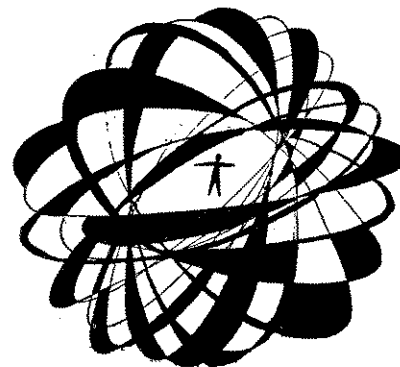
Ecology and Anarchism is well worth reading for its discussion on how we can effectively take action against nuclear power. The paper has three really good articles on the anti-nuclear movement. Two articles draw out the lessons from the May occupation at the Torness reactor site and critically analyze the Torness Alliance, the other examines the violence/non violence controversy. There's also two more general articles, one arguing that the 'ecological movement' is of central importance and the other outlining a 'strategy for social revolution'. I thought these last 2 were a bit simplistic - though their aim of putting our anti-nuke activities in a wider perspective is important.

Ecology and Anarchism argues that the state cannot be persuaded to stop developing nuclear power: the anti nuclear movement must go beyond 'symbolic' protest and take actions which directly prevent the construction of nuclear facilities. This was achieved briefly at Torness in May when hundreds of us occupied the machinery compound and damaged the earth moving equipment. One article describes how exhilarating it was to defy both the police and the Alliance leadership and directly attack nuclear

power. Personally, I derived more inspiration and learnt more from these few hours than from years of regularly attending symbolic demonstrations and protest marches

The article on violence and non-violence was first published in the USA and draws heavily on experiences in the fight against the construction of the Seabrook nuclear power plant. Since Ecology and Anarchism was published there has been an unsuccessful attempted occupation at Seabrook. The police attacked the 2-3000 occupiers with gas and clubs. The demonstrators, being committed to non-violence, didn't fight back but retreated and dispersed, despite sometimes having had an overwhelming numerical superiority.

Contrast this to the events at Whyl, West Germany in 1976, described in Ecology and Anarchism as follows: "28,000 people occupied the Whyl nuclear plant site and they physically drove off the police who came to arrest them. Instead of merely making a



symbolic statement and then accepting arrest, they utilized the strength of their numbers and collective principles to make an even stronger statement by not accepting the state's right to arrest them. They were ultimately successful as the building of the Whyl plant was consequently cancelled by the German Government."

As Ecology and Anarchism says, it's futile to analyze the anti-nukes movement unless we're also involved in practical activity. We want to help create continuing and escalating direct action against nuclear power. Not only at Torness, but in all areas, for example against nuclear power contractors like Sir Robert McAlpine. Some of us in Solidarity are involved in anti nuclear activity and we welcome contact with other activists. Write c/o the Solidarity Aberdeen address. Also available from Aberdeen, for the price of postage, the article 'Torness: keeping it clean' from Solidarity no 8, and a Solidarity leaflet produced for the anti-nukes march in Edinburgh in September.



ALL LIBERATED NOW ?

Is capitalism abolishing oppression on the grounds of sex and sexual orientation? Many would have us believe so. 'There's been the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts.' It's now quite accepted for women to have a career and thus a degree of economic independence. And as for gays, homosexuality for both males and females is now legal and gay clubs, bars and magazines abound'. So the arguments are often put. Even some revolutionaries hold views along these lines. For example a group in Leeds argue, in a discussion paper reprinted in Solidarity for Social Revolution no. 6 ('Anti-sexism: the affirmation of alienation') that 'the ending of oppressive sex roles in many areas of social life is a conscious and major aim of modern capitalism'.

This is by no means an academic argument. On the contrary it has important repercussions for revolutionaries' activity. If capitalism is of itself ending sex roles oppression then, to say the least, this need not be such an important priority for us.

But if capitalism is not of itself ending oppressive sex roles, this throws the onus onto us to end the oppression through our own conscious activity.

Here I want to argue that, on the whole, capitalism is not of itself ending oppressive sex roles.

Before examining what is happening today in various areas where sex roles oppression operates, I think we need to differentiate between two different trends within capitalism. On the one hand there are changes which are wanted by, and are in the interests of, the capitalist class and the state. On the other hand there are developments within capitalism which are taking place due to the activities of working people, or of a section of working people, acting in their own interests. While we would be suspicious of developments of the first kind, we would support developments of the second kind and would probably be involved in working for them.

EQUAL EXPLOITATION FOR WOMEN?

In recent years we have had the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. These were passed through Parliament by the capitalist Labour Party, but during a period when there had been a considerable number of 'equal pay' strikes and a strengthen-

ing of ideas of 'women's rights'. I think there are two possible interpretations of this situation.

Some would argue that the capitalist class and state favour ending discrimination against women at work because it is in the long-term interests of the economy to do so. This would be through women being brought fully into the workforce on an equal basis with men, thereby increasing both the total workforce and the skilled proportion of the workforce (through women engineers, welders, etc.) which would be available for exploitation. It is also argued that higher wages and greater economic independence for women would enlarge the market for many goods and services.



A second interpretation is that the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts (SDA) are attempts by the state to recuperate, through partial concessions, a movement which, at the least, could significantly increase employers costs and, at best, could also increase the general self-confidence and combativity of the workforce. Evidence for this is that the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts are not at present achieving their stated aims. Women's average wages are still only about two-thirds those of men. This is through women being segregated into lower-paying industries and (where men and women work together) into the lower-paid jobs, often through grading schemes specially designed to get round the Equal Pay Act.

Similarly, while the SDA forces employers to change advertising practices (i.e. to advertise for a 'draughtsman/woman') this doesn't stop informal discrimination. It doesn't alter the fact that at school,

generally, it is the boys who are directed towards technical subjects while the girls are expected to do domestic science.

For there to be significant moves towards equality between men and women at work, there would have to be greatly improved pre-school child care facilities. At present such facilities are being cut back rather than extended.

In conditions of a booming economy the ruling class might well consider the cost of real Equal Pay and improved child care facilities worth the benefit they would gain from having more workers to exploit and from boosting market demand. However, in today's conditions of world-wide high unemployment and depression, there is not much incentive for the ruling class to end discrimination against women in employment.

Discrimination against women in employment is only one area of oppression caused by the sex roles attributed to people under capitalism. The ending of this discrimination, while all other areas of oppression based on sex roles remained untouched, would not at all imply that capitalism had in general ended oppression on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation.

KIDS 'n DISHES 'n RELATIONSHIPS

As already mentioned the state in Britain, far from expanding pre-school child care provision (and thus easing the burden of the mother) is on the contrary cutting back on the provision of nurseries, day-care centres, etc. As far as the responsibility for child care and domestic work within the family goes, it is still overwhelmingly regarded as the woman's responsibility. This is apparently as true in state capitalist countries such as the USSR as in the West. In the area of personal relationships it is still 'accepted' that in conventional male-female relationships the man is the dominant partner, the person who takes the initiative and is the chief decision-maker. This ranges from who asks who to dance at the disco to who is 'head of the household'. The oppressive nature of men-women relationships is still widely manifested in extreme forms such as women being attacked by their partners, through street hassles, sexual assaults and rape.

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There is no attempt by the capitalist media or educational system to try and remove these forms of oppression. The set-up where child care and domestic work are 'a woman's job' is very useful to capitalist industry. Its current and future workers are fed and generally cared for by women's unpaid work. Capital is thus spared the cost of having to provide expensive child care facilities, communal laundries and canteens, etc. The oppressive nature of men-women relationships also aids capitalism. Divisions amongst the oppressed can only benefit our rulers.

It is true that men probably do take more responsibility for child care and domestic work now than they did, say, fifteen years ago. There is, on the whole, perhaps less inequality in men-women relationships. This is largely due to the change in climate caused by the growth of the Women's Movement, and is something we should encourage.

An important aspect of sex roles oppression is unsatisfying sexual relationships. In this area both men and women are oppressed. Again, this is obviously something which can only be changed by women and men themselves; there is no way capitalism of itself can end this oppression.

O.K. TO BE GAY?

I see no signs of any dynamic in capitalism working towards ending the oppression of gay people. There is, it is true, what appears to be a fairly flourishing section of the entertainment industry aimed at gays: gay bars, clubs, magazines, pornography etc. This does not necessarily lead to any general acceptance of homosexuality as equally valid to heterosexuality. Often it merely creates a gay ghetto. Moreover the values and attitudes prevalent in these commercial gay enterprises are frequently oppressive and sexist. In both Britain and the USA the last two or three years have seen the oppression of gays worsen in several ways. In Britain there has been the prosecution of Gay News, cases of people being sacked for wearing gay badges at work, and a considerable number of physical attacks on gay people, especially in London. In the USA 'Equal Rights' legislation outlawing discrimination against homosexuals has been repealed in several states, in the context of the active anti-gay campaigning of right-wing groups led by such as Anita Bryant.



Among some sections of young people especially the situation is more encouraging. In the fields of both 'left' politics and the rock music/politics sub-culture there is probably a growing realisation of the importance of gay liberation. More gay people are prepared to stand up against their oppression. This again is a change of attitudes and consciousness in a positive direction. It should be encouraged; it can't be dismissed as just a sinister capitalist plot to co-opt the revolution by getting everyone to spend their money on Tom Robinson Band records.

While it is conceivable that within capitalism there could be considerably greater acceptance of gayness than there is now, I believe that capitalism benefits from anti-gay attitudes and therefore that those in power are unlikely to encourage people to regard homosexuality as being as valid as heterosexuality. Capitalism is bolstered by the belief that the nuclear family is basic to our lives, that the man's role is to go out and be hard and competitive in a tough world and try to climb the ladder to success. While the woman may have a job, she must dedicate herself to bringing up the children and 'homemaking'. The nuclear family also enhances the consumption of the goods which capitalism produces. To every family its washing machine, TV, cooker, spin dryer, etc., etc.

Gay relationships potentially threaten the 'natural' sex roles of men and women and the nuclear family set-up (it is only a potential threat because many gay relationships mimic traditional heterosexual relationships in their role-playing, etc.). This makes it easier for capitalism to label homosexuality as something 'wrong' or as an 'unfortunate illness'.

BE A MAN, IF YOU CAN

Sex roles oppress men through conditioning them to repress their emotions and be aggressive and competitive. This oppression is very much linked to the maintenance of class oppression. If men accept the idea of being tough aggressive competitors in a tough aggressive competitive world, they are not very likely to unite with other men and women to fight against the hierarchical system and its rulers. Thus (and this should cause no surprise), far from developing the means of ending this form of oppression, capitalism continues to promote it. It does so, for instance, through exams, assessments and competitive sports at school, and through the promotion rat race at work.

A challenge to these values has developed in the last few years. This has not come from any agency of capitalism but through men getting together to discuss and try to overcome this oppressive conditioning in groups such as 'Men against Sexism'. Once again, I think this is a positive development which we should support and, where appropriate, get involved in.

WHAT WE GONNA DO ABOUT IT?

Having looked at the different areas of oppression caused by capitalism's sex roles, I would argue that in only one of these (discrimination against women in employment) is there any possibility that capitalism itself is attempting to end the oppression. And even in this case it is highly debatable whether this is in fact happening. In all the other areas - women being burdened with an unfair share of child care and domestic work and oppressed in personal relationships, the oppression of gays, and the oppressive conditioning of men - no significant attempt is being made by any agency of capitalism to end the oppression. In some of these areas there is opposition to the oppression - from the efforts of sections of working people acting in their own interests. These are positive developments which we should welcome and be involved in. We should encourage those involved to oppose all oppressive relationships. As revolutionaries, we need to make the fight against oppressive sex roles one of our major activities. The oppression which people suffer due to their sex, or due to their sexual orientation, is as important as that suffered through their not having

control over society's productive resources. The two oppressions are interlinked.

How we could and should fight oppressive sex roles could be the subject for another article. Independent organising by women, gays and men, and united activity by women and men, and homosexuals and heterosexuals are both important and valuable. Revolutionaries should not hesitate to criticise harmful trends - such as reformism and separatism - in the Women's, Gay and Men's movements. But we must also recognise the need and right of people to get together independently to discuss and act against their particular oppressions. And, perhaps most important, fighting oppressive sex roles should not be just another 'issue' for us to campaign on. We should try to make it integral to how we organise politically, and to how we live our everyday lives and relationships.

Mike V. (Aberdeen)

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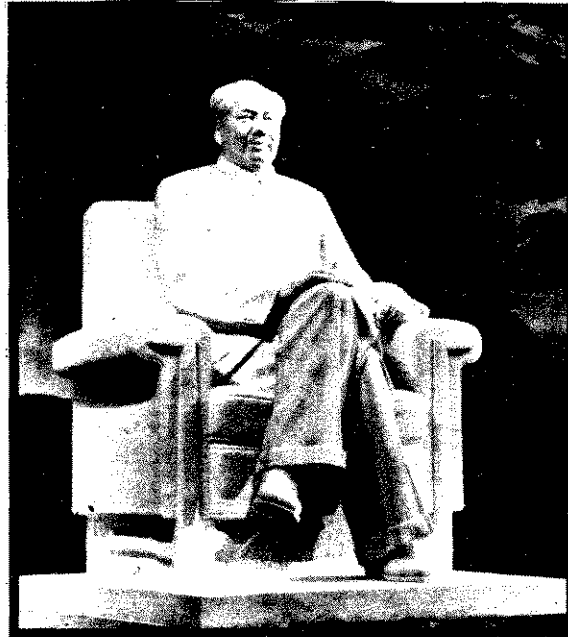
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Longsight, Manchester 13.
(temporary address)

APOLOGY: We apologise for numerous typing errors in this issue. None of us are good typists and we have corrected as many errors as our patience will allow. Solidarity(Manchester).



Cartoon by Walter Crane, political contemporary of William Morris

The Myth of Mao's Self-Management



Mao Tse-tung. Marble. Mao's tomb, Peking.

Anarchists and libertarians have often spoken of libertarian socialism as more or less synonymous with a system of "generalised self-management". (Bertolo, Solidarity etc.). [By 'generalised self-management' we mean the extension of self-managed struggles against capitalism to all areas of social life, eventually involving a revolutionary rupture with the whole of the existing social order on a world scale. The self-managed society we seek can only be achieved by the removal of capitalist economic restraints such as wage labour, commodity production and the market. It is important to stress this since some concepts of self-management in libertarian circles amounts to little more than 'self-managed exploitation'.] E&.

To them the self-management model is one where there has been "a universal socialisation of science conducive to the abolition of hierarchical division of labour." (Berti.), "the overthrow of the social and technical division of labour and the socially equalitarian distribution of work itself under the maximum possible automation of the productive processes." (Guiducci), "collective management by all the personnel of an enterprise, of the activities of the enterprise itself, forward planning, execution, control etc. preceded by the structural transformation of society" (Meister), "the re-establish-

ment of an authentic relationship between the real needs of society and enterprises which would exclude the manipulation of needs by the latter and this mutual authentic relationship would be best generated and attained in the small enterprise" (Prandstraller), "in addition to a libertarian system of industrial management, the development of a new 'self' in a moral cultural and personal sense that stands in harsh contradiction with the hierarchical nature of the factory and the broadening of the locus for self-management to include not just industry but communities and municipalities; in addition to a new, non-hierarchical technology that will replace the factory as a social and economic model and 'already exists as a 'people's technology' in the form of small, human-scaled, easily comprehensible community technologies based on decentralised gardening, solar, and wind-power techniques" (Bookchin.)

MYTHS.

It has often been claimed that Mao Tse-tung tried to build Chinese society into one which has many features similar to those essential elements of the self-management model cited above

On the question of division of labour, it is said that Mao tried to eliminate the three major differences; the differences

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between town and country, between workers and peasants, and the separation between manual and mental labour. In 1958, Mao Tse-tung organised the People's Commune movement and the principle of the people's commune was that agriculture was to be carried on in the cities and industries were to be developed in the countryside. Later when Mao had begun the Cultural Revolution, he made the May 7th Directive in 1966. In the Directive, he called upon all professional and occupational units be turned into big revolutionary schools involving both agriculture and industry, cultural and military activities.

In order to eliminate the separation between manual and mental labour and to train party cadres who would not be separated from the masses, Mao set up the May 7th Cadre Schools to which he sent party cadres, intellectuals, writers, artists and other "mental workers" working in different departments including educational, cultural, hygiene and scientific research units. At the May 7th Cadre Schools, labour education would be carried out and manual work, like participating in agricultural production would be performed. Mao also required that writers, artists and scientific workers constantly go to the countryside or the factories for living experience.

Mao also carried out a revolution in education. This revolution in education is concerned with the number of years in school, policies teaching methods, teaching material, the enrolment system and the remoulding of teachers. First there was a cut of four to five years in schooling from primary school through to university. Book learning became closely integrated with practical production. School education was no longer confined to the classroom. Primary and middle schools in town and country established close links with nearby factories, people's communes and army units. They also opened small workshops and farms and invited workers, peasants and army men to serve as part-time teachers. The universities also instituted a new system of combining teaching with scientific research and productive labour; besides building up regular links with factories and people's communes, they ran their own factories and farms. Teachers and students would go together to a factory, farm or people's commune to take part in collective labour for a given period in accordance with the teaching plan. Also a large number of workers, peasants and soldiers became lecturers.

To further eliminate differentials in Chinese society, Mao Tse-tung and his followers pursued policies to restrict "bourgeois rights". Mao tried to promote an attitude of work "to each according to his capabilities" without consideration of reward. He sought free medicine and labour insurance for all. He argued for the elimination of/closing the gap of wage differentials.



Mao Tse-tung and Hua Kuo-feng, Peking conference.

In the area of industrial management, Mao criticised Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line which used the redtape of one man management. He urged the adherence to the Charter of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company. The Charter laid down the "two participations, one reform and three way alliance to be one of the principles for industrial organisation and management." The two participations refer to cadres participating in labour and workers participating in management. The one reform refers to the reformation of all unreasonable rules and regulations and the three way alliance refers to the alliance of the working masses, leading cadres and the technical personnel. Mao believed that cadre participation in labour would eliminate bureaucracy; work participation in management was based on the fact that the working masses should be the masters of socialist production. Mao wanted unreasonable rules favourable to the protection of bourgeois rights to be changed to become rules advantageous to the masses. And for the three way alliance, in which the working masses, leading cadres and the technical

personnel together study and resolve all important technical questions concerning production, it would be favourable to the development of a 'people's technology, and the narrowing down of the differences between mental labour and manual labour. Following Mao's line, Shanghai Watch factory reported that since the Cultural Revolution, the workers of the factory had well developed the idea of managing their own affairs and practised democracy in management, planning and technology.

Similar to industrial management, in the rural communes, the masses of poor and middle peasants were supposed to be given great say in the running of the communes. Also at the different levels of government, from the municipal to the county and from the county to the provincial level, the administrative organ was the revolutionary committees (since the cultural revolution) which were made up of party cadres, soldiers and representatives of the revolutionary masses. Through these revolutionary committees the masses were to be given the necessary opportunity and power to intervene in the management of their municipalities, counties, etc.

In the development of science and technology, Mao laid down policies requiring the scientific workers no longer to do research behind closed doors. They were supposed to go out of their offices to integrate with the worker-peasant-soldier masses to develop science and technology. The big scientific experiment force was to be found in both urban and rural areas composed mainly of workers, peasants and soldiers. People's communes and production brigades would have their scientific experiment stations and groups actively managing seed-breeding fields, experimental and high-yield plots etc. The workers, peasants and soldiers were to become scientists themselves and were making numerous inventions and innovations. It was reported that the worker-peasant-soldier scientists were writing for the scientific journals which once received the contributions of only specialists.

Other than a firm commitment on mass innovation, an inherent aspect of Mao's technology policy is a commitment to self-reliance and small and medium scale enterprises. Instead of relying on imported technology, Mao advocated a self reliance policy in the use of technology-the development of indigenous techniques specifically suited to

domestic conditions. In medicine and pharmacology for example, medical workers have explored the legacies of traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacology, achieving such notable results as acupuncture and Chinese herb medicine anaesthesia. More importantly, the rejection of imported technology which usually is capital intensive, and the use of indigenous techniques under the circumstances necessarily led to the building of many small and medium sized enterprises involving great masses of people. It was reported that except in some remote areas, most counties have set up their own farm machinery plants and repair works. Eighty percent of China's counties have established their own cement works, which totalled 2800 in 1975. Small hydro-electric power stations provided electricity for many remote regions for the first time. Many small iron and steel works have sprung up. The small enterprises have been set up by provinces, municipalities, administrative regions and counties, and sometimes by the people's communes and neighbourhood communities. In Hunan Province for example, the people's communes and production brigades have opened many small coal pits, turning out more than 3 million tons of coal a year which is more than necessary for the satisfaction of the peasants' needs.(2). These small enterprises, making use of the simpler production techniques appropriate to Chinese/local conditions, are not only more ecologically sound but also in a better position to meet local needs. It was pointed out that the widespread building of small enterprises had helped to improve the geographical distribution of industry in China. While many of China's industries are still found in the big coastal cities, there have not arisen any industrial belts as dreadful as those found in Japan or the West.

In building a Chinese society in accordance with his conception Mao realised that there must be new men and women with a different outlook and a different consciousness corresponding to the new society. So through the various movements that he organised, from the People's Commune Movement (1958) to the Socialist Education Movement (1963), from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1965 to 1969) to the campaign to Restrict Bourgeois Rights (1975), Mao tried to

revolutionize the thoughts of the Chinese people. Mao said and firmly believed, "Before a brand new social system can be built on the site of the old, the site must be swept clean. Invariably, remnants of old ideas reflecting the old system remain in people's minds for a long time and they do not easily give way". Mao in fact wanted a fundamental change in the inner soul of mankind so that old thoughts, old culture, old traditions and old habits would be replaced by new ones. To him, all aspects of the superstructure not corresponding to what he considered to be a socialist economic base must be reformed. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was particularly important as a movement to transform mankind and to reform human behaviour.

REALITY.

Mao's project, sketched above, has been considered exceedingly libertarian by many. Too many an opponent of the capitalist system, China under Mao was a genuinely socialist society. Now when the present rulers of China have reversed much of the Maoist policies - they condemn the present rulers and policies as revisionist and retrogressive. What needs to be pointed out, however, is that the people of China had indicated that they unequivocally rejected Mao's way. In April 1976, at Tienanmen, the people likened Mao to the ruthless Chinese dictator, Shih Huang-ti and on that occasion they called out aloud, "Gone are the days of Shih Huang-ti!" And how the people rejoiced when the most loyal followers of Mao, the Gang of Four, were captured and eliminated! What was wrong with Mao's project? Don't the Chinese people want a libertarian society?

workers were but slaves of the state and party. The masses were never managing their own lives. Rather it was the state, the party that managed. When agriculture was carried out in the cities and industries were run in the countryside, it meant in addition to the work in the fields or factories, the peasants and the workers had to do extra work in the little mines and the little plots of land. When the young educated were dispersed to the countryside against their will and the will of the peasants not only was Mao creating resentment against his own self, he was also bringing clashes and bitterness between the peasants and the young educated. The May 7th Cadre Schools were but forced labour camps and prisons and had not reformed the party cadres who continued to be extremely bureaucratic and corrupt. The few writers who had not been purged and allowed to write no doubt went frequently to the countryside or the factories but they only produced unexciting materials praising the ever greatness of Mao, his thoughts and the Motherland. The revolution in education meant long hours of Mao Tse-tung thoughts in schools and hours of work in either the countryside and/or the factories. Little else was learnt. To gain admission to universities, many were orientated simply to demonstrate their political loyalty to Mao and the Party by being obedient and able to recite Mao's thoughts by heart, and more importantly, to court the favours of those in powerful positions. The worker-peasant-soldier lecturers or teachers in universities were not really people having developed expert knowledge through daily life and practical experience but people picked for their loyalty to Mao. The universities and schools were not actually run by the workers or



Pro-Hua demonstration in Shanghai

photo: Liberation

The rejection by the masses of Mao, his policies and his regime was due to the fact that realities under Maoist China meant that the masses of peasants and

worker-peasants but actually "workers" and "worker-peasants" picked by the party under the direction of the party. The

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restriction of bourgeois rights meant that the people were expected and required to work hard without consideration of reward. Under Mao for years and years wages remained the same.

For years and years under Mao, those who ran factories simply ignored demands for any improvement in working conditions. In the management and organisation of factories in the "three way alliance", the party cadres were always the bosses controlling all powers - their words must always be listened to. It is true that at times the workers were involved in the management of the work process - in developing ways and means to meet targets within a shorter duration or to surpass targets. The workers were encouraged to make innovations and improvements in technical areas in so far as these would speed up the production process. On the other hand, many trained scientists under the Maoist regime were either not given the opportunity or were afraid to continue scientific studies and research (for fear of being condemned as "expert and white") leading to a tremendous wastage in human resources which could have been used for the development of

technology that serves the people and is liberatory. If on the factory floor the workers were the slaves of the Party cadres running the factories, in the countryside, the party secretaries of the communes were the new landlords - they could force peasants to work days or nights, or days and nights. And the party cadres in ruling positions in the countryside never shied away from using their power to secure privileges and tread on the peasants. Both the party bosses in the factories and communes tended to make their own arbitrary rules and so often too they arbitrarily persecuted individuals who would not cooperate. More often, they just received directions from above. Needless to say, the revolutionary committees were controlled by the party. Like a giant octopus, the party controlled everything, the state machine, factories, communes etc.etc. Like a pyramid the Party was also a hierarchical organisation - the lower levels were subordinate to the higher levels. The county committees were subordinate to the provincial committees and so on. The self reliance policy and the promotion of small scale enterprise of Mao was more a result of necessity and nationalistic sentiment (the Russians were withdrawing their aid in 1960

and Mao had already anticipated it when he called for a self-reliance policy in the use of technology in 1958; the lack of capital etc.) than an awareness of the more ecologically sound nature of intermediate technology and small scale enterprises. In the spring of 1957, Mao said, "We must build up a large number of large scale modern enterprises step by step to form the mainstay of our industry, without which we shall not be able to turn our country into a strong modern industrial power within the coming decades". Granted that the self-reliance policy and the emphasis on small and medium sized enterprises have created less deterioration in the environment than many developed countries, the practical implementation of the self-reliance policy had meant a refusal to learn from any new foreign technological knowhow which may be used to further a process of liberation. Also, self-reliantly, China had developed an atomic and nuclear technology, among other things which can hardly be called a technology of a liberatory kind. Finally in his effort to create a new man, Mao turned his thoughts into dogmas of a religion. His followers were urged to be like "screws" to be always faithful to him and the party,



to be selfless.....to be willing slaves of the state!

If one believes in all the Maoist propaganda, then it is not difficult to say that Mao had built a "self-managed" society bearing most if not all of the features attributed to a self managed system listed in the first part of this article. Nevertheless we have presented the realities of Maoist China and we hope that we have demonstrated sufficiently that Maoist propaganda was not to be believed. Our remaining task is to explain why Mao in theory can sound so libertarian at times and in practice, he has created such monstrosities, and such a totalitarian regime. The most important point is that Mao was never a libertarian although his rhetorics made him sound like one at times. Mao was fundamentally a Leninist-Stalinist and he was firmly committed to the Leninist idea of the necessity of the leadership of a vanguard party. The Chinese Communist party must always lead. Or this more often means that he and his faction in the party must always lead. When Mao spoke about the masses managing the factories or the communes or any other social institutions, he was speaking in terms of such activities being carried out under the leadership

and control of the party cadres. Mao spoke often about the creativity of the masses. He constantly called for the mobilisation of the masses and organising mass movements. Indeed Mao was aware of the power of the masses -- ever since his conquest of state power with the aid of the peasant masses. This lesson he held dear to his heart since 1949 and explains why he organised the Great Leap Forward, the People popularly known as the technobureaucracy, Mao did not manage to destroy. After his death and the downfall of the Gang of Four, China is developing into a technobureaucratic system in which there is a fusion of the party bureaucrats and the intellectuals in managerial and administrative positions into a class of technobureaucrats.(3)

In his endeavours, Mao and his propagandists were able to present his policies and practices in libertarian languages and more than a few had been fooled. The fact remains that Mao's goals were not libertarian goals; his ways were not libertarian ways. Mao's system is not a libertarian system. It is one where there is a division between the leaders (Mao, his followers and the Party) and the led (the masses), a system which still has order givers and order takers. It is a system that inevitably arises as a result of following the Leninist ideology of the vanguard party.

Lee Yu See & F. Chan.

Notes.

1. Red Flag pp74-77 1975 no1 Peking.
2. New China's First Quarter Century, pp24-27, Foreign Language Press, 1975, Peking.
3. See essay "The Four Modernisations and the Rise of the Technobureaucracy" - available from Solidarity.

THESES ON THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

by Cao Brendel. How state capitalism (in Bolshevik garb) came to China. The end of the 'Cultural Revolution' and the emergence of the new class. 40p.

Note:

Members of Manchester Solidarity distributed leaflets to passers-by on the official opening day of the China Bank in Manchester, which briefly outlined China's relationship with Britain and explained the opposition movement there.

First Worldism or Libertarianism?

The article on Nicaragua in the issue No 9 of the magazine prompted some questions in my mind about that old source of problems, the third world. The writer seemed to me to have grossly oversimplified what has happened there, and by concluding that basically it's all a fight over access to the Nicaraguan market, to have ignored much more important political issues.

I'll take that point up later. What first struck me was that the article provides a good example of the standard Solidarity attitude towards the third World, and therefore a useful starting point for questioning the limitations of that attitude. Knowing that the reflex reaction among some Solidarity members to such an intention consists of a defensive, "Is this 3rd worldism raising its ugly head?" may I point out that what follows is not another variation on this perennial theme, as I trust readers will agree.

This kind of paranoia by the way is not mere coincidence. The Soly position is contained in "Third - Worldism or Socialism?" and itself is a response to the euphoric support offered since the 60's by much of the left to national liberation movements. "Third-Worldism or Socialism?" argues against the idea that imperialist exploitation of the 3rd World will meet its match at the hands of the various national liberation movements which will institute, or at least pave the way for, socialism in these backward countries.

The implication of the Soly position is basically that the possibility of a socialist revolution is only to be envisaged under the conditions pertaining in advanced capitalist countries (including 'communist' ones). This would seem to be due to factors such as the relative development of absorption into the consumer market of workers in these countries bringing to the fore questions like, "What is the point of consuming? Or, for that matter, working?" Third World dockers, on the other hand, are understood to be too busy

fighting bread-and-butter issues to be able to appreciate such questions.

Overall, such argument seems fair enough. But it is a little too black and white, it seems to invite the blase and dismissive attitude displayed in the piece on Nicaragua. Probably the fault lies in using such an unsatisfactory concept as "3rd World", thus lumping together countries which often have more differences than similarities. While we can accept the improbability of libertarian revolution breaking out in Gabon or Surinam, we should at least appreciate that the development of capitalism in other countries, such as Brazil and Argentina, has created situations that we should keep an eye on. In such countries, the proletariat has a significant social and political presence, if not always a very independent one. The Argentinian working-class, for example, has certainly influenced its country's evolution, and not only through Peronism. The courageous refusal of Argentine workers in the last 3 years to be terrified into line by the barbaric military regime is an example of class solidarity that ought to be better known over here.

The massive revival of the labour movement in Brazil since last year provides a striking rebuttal of the attempts of that country's military regime to depoliticise the working class through violent repression and subtle propaganda. This is not to say that explicitly libertarian ideas and practices were in evidence, but certainly the soil from which they may emerge is being formed.

Other 3rd World countries provide examples of explicit or implicit libertarian action, for example the self-managed industrial and community organisations which arose in Chile prior to the 1973 coup. "Third Worldism or Socialism?" itself quotes approvingly the Saigon Workers' Commune of 1945. And after all, Russia was not exactly an advanced capitalist country in 1917. These occurrences are

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usually isolated, short-lived and pretty hopeless. But that doesn't remove our interest in the reasons for their happening, and for their ending and in their content

With these considerations in mind, let us look again at Nicaragua. What happened there cannot be subsumed under the question of access to the country's market. The fact that a popular insurrection was involved should not be dismissed because it was militarily led by the Sadinistas and identified itself with them. It would be interesting to know how such popular involvement came about, how it organised itself, what ideas it threw up, and so on.

Moreover, the behaviour of key foreign powers is also worthy of study. The US took the unusual step of abandoning one of its puppets whom it would previously have defended by military intervention (as indeed the article in the last issue points out). In fact it was thinking of intervening, but its proposal to do so was overwhelmingly defeated at the Organisation of American states, a body which the US once controlled. Now it no longer does so, but still felt, at least in this case, that any action should be approved by that body.

In fact, the whole of US strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean is apparently changing. A decade ago the watchword was counter-insurgency, the preparation of military readiness to snuff out opposition. It is not to be wondered at that during the 70s the vast majority of Latin American countries were or became dominated by military regimes (though to suggest, as cruder leftists and some Latin American nationalists do, that this situation was entirely engineered by the US, is a ridiculous distortion of reality.)

Now important changes can be seen taking place in this continent. The Brazilian military are well along the path to a return to the barracks, the Bolivian military having gone back tried to return to power and were massively rejected by trade unions and left wing forces. In Peru the military are under pressure from civilian sectors, while in Argentina, it seems unlikely that the military have much basis for staying in power more than a few years now that the threat of 'subversion' has been dealt with. The same may be true in Chile. In Central America, the US has been putting pressure on 'liberated' Nicaragua's dictatorial neighbours, Honduras and Guatemala, to reduce the repression before they provoke a repeat performance, and in El Salvador US strategy is being carried out through a centrist military coup.

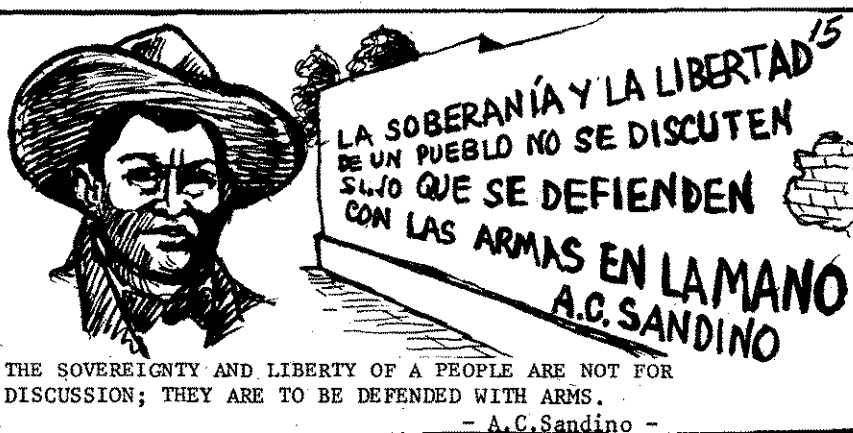
Switching to the left-hand corner Cuba, though not hiding its enthusiasm for the Sadinistas, has remained well to the background. The most it appears to have provided for the insurrection was technical training and military advisors. Whereas ten years ago, Che Guevara would have welcomed US military intervention in Nicaragua as part of the "One, two..... many Vietnams" policy, this time Fidel Castro declared himself "infinitely pleased" that this had not happened, adding, with fraternal concern, that it would have been "a suicidal act for US policy in this hemisphere".

Moreover, the guerrilla left in Latin America, which flourished in the wake of the Cuban revolution, has for sometime been beating a tactical retreat after crushing defeats in Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay, Chile and Argentina. Most of the left now gives priority to political work among the workers, to pushing for the restoration of liberal democracy, and so on.

So, while the US and Cuba seem to have come to some sort of 'rapprochement' and mutual desire to avoid confrontation, both left and right in Latin America seem to be working towards the same goals, the establishment of liberal civilian governments. And such moves have the blessing of the representatives of foreign capital, who have been the great beneficiaries of the various militaries' rule. They seem to feel that the stage has now been reached when with a little planning effort it may be more peaceful and profitable to sell workers food and other items of consumption rather than knock them on the head when they complain of being hungry. Certainly in Brazil, and perhaps in other countries, the more far-sighted capitalists are already glimpsing the possibilities to be offered by developing the domestic market. (there are 120 million Brazilians, the majority of whom are at present either outside or marginal to the market - and in the year 2000, there will be a projected 200 million).

Just to return briefly to Nicaragua, we know that the new regime will be implementing some kind of capitalism, but at present we don't know which. The choice is between the state capitalism of the marxist Sadinistas, or the private capitalism of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. Conflict between these two sides has, however, been carefully avoided so far. The Sadinistas, who militarily control the country, have made great efforts to accommodate private capitalists interests both inside and outside Nicaragua. Of the 5 strong ruling junta, one is a millionaire industrialist, one belongs to the populist group, Los Doce, and only one is a Sadinista. Among the rest of the government, the minister of economic planning is a right of centre economist and lawyer; the finance minister is a banker and Christian Democrat; the industry minister is the conservative president of the chamber of commerce; and the agriculture minister is a conservative Christian Democrat and wealthy livestock rancher.

In other words, a delicate balancing act is underway, which instead of ending in struggle between the two sides, could lead to a successful marriage of interests. And such an unprecedented development would take place under the approving eyes of Washington and Havana. Nicaragua seems to symbolise what is happen-



ing in Latin America as a whole, as the interests of left and right to a certain extent converge. If this occurs on any scale, it will give a big impetus to the libertarian perspective as a means of struggling against both sources of oppression. And especially in countries where capitalism is, as we mentioned above, preparing the ground for libertarian politics anyway.

It would be unfortunate if we let "Third Worldism or Socialism?" lead us into thinking that there is little to interest us in the third World. It is not intended to be a statement of "First Worldism", even if it seems to pull us that way, and the title of this article should not be taken entirely seriously. But certainly we could do with a more positive attitude to the libertarian potentialities which are developing in the 3rd World.

N. T.



Return of: "In Search of the Ruling Class"

(Note: this article has been substantially edited.)

"If we are saying that we have a bureaucratic society and not a bureaucratic capitalist society then we have to locate power in a different way"

JQ(Leeds) Solidarity No9.

My question is, how can we ever say that we have a bureaucratic society full stop, especially here in the advanced western capitalist countries?

"Contemporary society is the society of Bureaucratic Capitalism. In Russia and China and in other so called 'socialist' countries, the most extreme and the clearest form of Bureaucratic Capitalism is being realized." Castoriadis, 1976
'The Hungarian Source'

But even this clear statement by Cardan can be misleading, if bureaucratic capitalism is not understood in terms of the internal dynamic of 'laissez faire' on the one hand, and the substitute ruling class - the representation of the proletariat on the other. It was Marx himself who was able to describe in a limited way the dynamic by which capital and state were fusing together, although he was not able to see that this was to become the most permanent and basic feature

of advanced capitalism in the West, what Cardan calls "partially Bureaucratic Capitalism"

"But the modern state which through mercantilism, began to support the development of the bourgeoisie, and which finally became its state at the time of laissez faire, was to reveal later that it was endowed with a central power in the calculated management of the economic process.... Marx in Bonapartism, was able to describe the outline of the

modern statist bureaucracy, the fusion of capital and state, the formation of a national power of capital over labour, a public force organised for social enslavement, in which the bourgeoisie renounces all historical life which is not its reduction to the economic history of things.." Debord.

The development of bureaucratic capitalism in the East was separate from that in the Western advanced capitalist countries, the reasons for this separation being the socio-economic under-development and the representation of the proletariat in the course of the class struggle. There and only there, in the so-called

'socialist' countries may we talk about the bureaucracy full stop.

"The industrialisation of the Stalin epoch reveals the reality behind the bureaucracy: it is the continuation of the power of the economy, the salvaging of the essential of the commodity society, namely preserving commodity labour. It is the proof of the independent economy, which dominates society to the point of re-creating for its own ends the class domination which is necessary to it.... The totalitarian bureaucracy is not 'the last owning class in history' in the sense of Bruno Rizzi; it is only a substitute ruling class for the commodity economy. In effect capitalist private property is replaced by a simplified subproduct, one which is less diversified, and is concentrated into the collective property of the bureaucratic class. This under-developed form of ruling class is also the expression of economic under-development... It was the workers party organised according to the bourgeois model of separation which provided the hierarchical-statist cadre for this supplementary edition of a ruling class." Debord.

But such considerations are only positive insofar as revolutionaries are working towards a strategy of insurrection in a specific geographical zone, otherwise the attempt to pinpoint the ruling class is a waste of time, an academic exercise. Of course it would be very positive to know who pulls the strings in a pyramid of social enslavement so that you can immobilise the whole fucking thing in time of insurrection. But the point is to be clear as to who the enemy is.

The task of an international revolutionary movement cannot be anything else than the total and intransigent abolition of the historical conditions that determine our every day lives, namely the total abolition of commodity-spectacular production, wage labour, the state, alienation itself.

Those historical conditions must not be separated from the positive project, and the positive project cannot be fragmented into a series of 'campaigns' without any internal coherence, without any perspective of generalisation. The best way to get the most out of the system and also to supersede it, is one single 'campaign' for the abolition of those conditions and the establishment of the generalised self-management of the workers councils.

Needless to say that our organisation in the here and now must reflect the way that the councils will be organised and our rage to live without constraints, and it must also have the qualities which are necessary and desirable for the intervention in the class struggle.

Primarily the enemy is the order of things, specific social relations and of course people, men and women who benefit, man, maintain, reproduce, totally identify with those historical conditions. But the distinction between things and people must be made. Our revolutionary practice must be intransigent against conditions and the social roles that actively reproduce them, and people will be destroyed only to the extent that they actively support their roles against the Social Revolution.

Dimitri (Manchester).

ABORTION WOMEN AND THE LEFT: Oct 28th and after

THE UNIONS (Oh Brother.)

The demo in London on 28th October against the Corrie Bill to 'amend' the 1967 Abortion Act was impressive in its size and in the widespread support it received from all over the country and from all sorts of groups and individuals. The TUC, as organisers, might be expected to be pleased at this; they might even, if we didn't know them better, be expected to welcome the participation of large numbers of women despite the abysmal record of the unions on the question of women's rights. But the welcome was at best qualified: a mass movement is alright as long as it is under control, and women are all right if they know their place. Hence the interminable 'marshalling' in Hyde Park to get everyone neatly pigeon-holed in their designated sections by pre-allocated numbers - male-dominated unions naturally at the head, the National Abortion Campaign itself in Section 4, women's groups as such in Section 5. Militant women who forcibly insisted on leading the march were predictably accused of disrupting the unity of the movement by a plaintiff Len Murray: there we are doing our best for these women, and they won't even unite behind us.

The Women (Oh Sister.)

Although there were numerous leaflets detailing and denouncing the specific provisions of the Corrie Bill, what came over most strongly from the women on the demo. was their absolute rejection of the idea that a bunch of MPs should presume to legislate any further on this question. Corrie's proposals were slightly beside the point - it was simply outrageous that he should presume to put them forward.

The distance women have already travelled in thrashing out this issue was apparent in the predominant slogan 'Not the church, not the state, women shall decide their fate', which has of course been current for years but which was now spread a little further. According to the subsequent report in Freedom, (8.11.79), some anarchists were pleasantly surprised to hear it (and quickly developed it into 'Burn the churches, fuck the state, which in turn was taken up by the women.)

SOLIDARITY.

Since Solidarity has always regarded abortion as a vitally important issue, we have produced leaflets for most of the major demonstrations about it, and this time was no exception. In fact, this time there were 2 of them being a bit different. The London Solidarity group decided to do a factual leaflet on the 'menstrual extraction' technique of early abortion using the Karman-type cannula and self-locking syringe to aspirate the contents of the uterus.

Reference had been made in previous leaflets to the 'minisuction' abortion technique but in very general terms without giving much idea of what was involved either in undergoing or administering it. With legal abortion under attack, we thought it was particularly important for women to be aware of all possible options, and to contemplate them with knowledge of the available facts. It is possible that the leaflet might have been modified in one or two respects if we had known more, but even with hindsight we feel its production was justified.

SOME CRITICISMS CONSIDERED.

Many of the people who received the leaflet reacted very favourably, but it has been criticised on several points which are worth going into further.

1. That it was 'neither one thing or the other'. This was deliberate. We wanted more than an unsatisfying allusion which didn't get anyone anywhere, and definitely less than a step-by-step instruction manual. We were addressing women who were already interested enough to want to read the leaflet, intending to let them judge whether

Well brothers...
and er...sister...



their interest survived a closer look, and suggesting some sources for their own research.

2. That it relied much too uncritically on Harvey Karman, who has come into conflict with sections of the women's movement in the U.S and been accused of being a general rip-off merchant. Whatever the truth of this - and we would be interested to see any hard evidence readers can provide - we felt that the particular article on which the leaflet was based had a lot to recommend it, especially its demystification of the medical profession's monopoly of 'expertise' and its patient-centred attitude whose flexibility and sensitivity contrasted favourably with other medical reports. It seemed a convenient way of showing what could be done.

3. Medical aspects (i.e. Karman's clinical practice) open to question. Certainly the article presented a rosier picture than many others on the subject, e.g. the time of aspiration given is very short, and the complication rate very low. Taking it at face value, the differences might be explained by the assumption that the work was done under near-optimum conditions; unfortunately, the cheerful outlook is also compatible with a campaign to market the instrumentation as widely as possible. In any case, reading the relevant literature will show many discrepancies between accounts of the technique by various practitioners. It must be emphasised that there is no substitute for experience and systematic training.



4. Legal position not spelt out clearly enough. To spell it out now: Section 5(2) Of the 1967 Abortion Act (An Act to amend and clarify the law relating to termination of pregnancy by registered medical practitioners) states that 'For the purposes of the law relating to abortion, anything done with intent to procure the miscarriage of a woman is unlawfully done unless authorised by Section 1 of this Act. Section 6 defines 'the law relating to abortion' as Section

Section 58 and 59 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861, and any rule of law relating to the procurement of abortion.' Sections 58 and 59 of the 1861 Offences against the person Act made it a felony for 'any woman to administer to herself poison or other noxious thing or to use an instrument or other means with intent to procure her miscarriage if she were "with child", or for any other person to do so or to supply the means therefore whether she were with child or not.' The maximum penalty under this Act is said to be life imprisonment.

Thus the prosecution would not need to prove that pregnancy existed; but the defence claiming that a procedure was used with quite a different intent would at least complicate the case.

In Scotland, the 1861 Act did not apply, and abortion was a common law offence, the rule having been established that proof of pregnancy was essential to a conviction for attempted abortion. As the Lane Committee Report pointed out, the 1967 Act, with Section 5(2) specifying intent, can be said to have operated restrictively in Scotland (ironic in view of the calls to defend the Act.)

For all of us the only legal option is to plead our case to two registered medical practitioners. Taking the matter into our own hands we could get life.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.

In view of the above, it is understandable that people have hitherto been extremely cagey about putting anything in writing on the subject of menstrual extraction. Spreading information by word of mouth has advantages for security, but disadvantages for informed discussion - rumour and distortion can substitute for hard facts, and the method is limited to those in the know. Small numbers of articulate, assertive women with the right contacts have always been able to get the easiest, earliest and safest abortions; if this situation is to change, accurate information must be spread more widely.

Of course the printed word is not sacrosanct, but at least it gives us something to go on, to argue with, if necessary to refute point by point. Refutations, arguments and other reactions will be welcome - anonymity and confidentiality of sources respected. Liz W. (London).

REVIEW

THE BUREAUCRACY TREMBLES

"Workers against the Gulag", edited and introduced by Viktor Haynes and Olga Semyonova, Pluto Press, £1.95.

In that it allows workers in struggle to speak for themselves rather than following the traditional left practice of academics and professional revolutionaries speaking about workers as if they were inanimate objects, this book makes a refreshing change. The workers in question are those of the USSR whose combativity and militancy in recent years has sent shivers of fear down the spines of the bureaucracy. Indeed far from being the impregnable, confident monolith of Western Propaganda the Soviet ruling elite is a class of very worried men, so fearful of the workers over whom they rule that they will fall head over heels in their frantic rush to stamp out every and any manifestation of independent self-activity on the part of the working class. This fact is underlined by the fate of the workers whose documents smuggled out to the West in the years 1976 to 1978, make up the bulk of the book. Raids by the secret police, beatings up, interment in so called psychiatric hospitals, long terms of imprisonment and exile, such was the fate of these working men and women whose existence has been reduced by the bureaucracy to a miserable wage slavery, a slavery far more terrible than that experienced by workers in the West.

How the Soviet workers have fought back against the bureaucracy is the subject of this book, and after reading it only the most myopic and intransigent Leninists will still subscribe to the absurd notion that the USSR is a "workers state" (whatever that may be) or in anyway socialist. For if evidence is still needed to combat the mystification and mythology of the trad left this book has more than enough of it to condemn their falsehoods for all eternity.

The first part of the book tells in their own words the story of a group of Soviet workers who, having suffered the common experience of being victimised for complaining against bureaucratic mismanagement, were forced to conclude that the official Soviet trade unions in no way rep-

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resented their interests and therefore resolved to form a Free Trade Union Association of the Soviet Working People. The book's editors describe this Association as, "the first independent workers organisation formed in the Soviet Union since the 1920's." Here one must take issue with them, for although they do not actually say so one nevertheless gains the impression that they subscribe to the Trotskyist article of faith that the USSR was a truly Socialist society until Lenin died, Trotsky was expelled from the Communist Party and the "wicked" Stalin seized power. The truth of the matter is that from the time of their coup d'etat onwards the Bolsheviks constituted a bureaucratic dictatorship over the working class and that by 1918 Lenin was using the terrorists of the Cheka to ruthlessly crush independent working class organisation. Even if the book's editors know no better Eric Heffer, who contributes a preface which, while attacking the Soviet bureaucracy remains silent about the anti-working class activities of every Labour Government, should. His past association with "ultra left" groups should have taught him the truth about Lenin and Leninism if it taught him nothing else.

Although small in numbers (about 400 members) the formation of the Association marked an important stage in the development of the Soviet workers' struggle. Whereas previously Soviet workers had manifested their discontent in spontaneous strikes and riots they were now beginning to set up permanent organisations. The bureaucracy was not slow in recognising the significance of this new development and acted at once to crush the Association before it could gather mass support. The Association's founder Vladimir Klebanov, a Ukrainian miner and many of its members whose biographies are contained in the book found themselves railroaded into psychiatric institutions, for according to official Soviet ideology the desire of workers to organise in opposition to a state which is "theirs" is a symptom of insanity.

The second section of this book deals with two cases of the use of the strike weapon by Soviet workers: the revolt in 1962 in Novocherkassk against massive rises in the prices of meat and dairy produce (always expensive and in short supply) and the strike at Vyshgorod in 1969 against bad housing conditions. At Novocherkassk, in scenes strangely reminiscent of the last days of the

Tsars, troops opened fire on strikers marching beneath red flags. This time, however, it was not the Imperial guard but the Red Army whose bullets found their targets and it was at the feet of a statue of Lenin not a Romanov that the lifeless corpses fell. Solzhenitsyn is right when he calls Novocherkassk a turning point in Russian history, but it is a turn by the workers towards Socialist revolution not in the direction of the feudal past T.L.

which Solzhenitsyn idolises. Those in the West who are fond of celebrating anniversaries (1905, 1917 etc.) would do well to add June 2, 1962 to their list.

The book then goes on to record three letters of protest from Soviet workers who represent three of the ideological trends which are emerging amongst both the dissident intellectuals and the workers - Socialist, slavophil and nationalist. The Socialist worker Nikolay Yevgrafov writes:

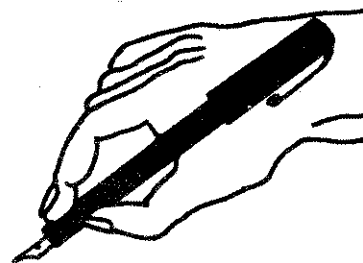
"The aim of Soviet power is to train Soviet people to behave and think mechanically, to organise and stereotype their every thought so that no one will dare cast doubt on the sanctity of the status quo." Anyone who has experienced the internal regime of a Leninist party will know exactly what he means. The plasterer G.A. Bogulyubov states that for him there is no difference between Stalinism and fascism while Bohdan Rebryk complains that the non-Russian republics of the USSR have become colonies of Moscow and their peoples the victims of a vicious campaign of russification. Without doubt these workers are simple, uneducated souls, but they have a far clearer vision of reality in today's Soviet Union than those well qualified apologists for state-capitalism which abound in our centres of higher education.

The fourth part of the book contains the appeals of Soviet workers who have tried to emigrate. What emerges from these appeals is that after 60 years of "communism" the Soviet worker is no better off and in some ways worse off than he/she was in the days of the Tsars, at least the Tsars allowed emigration whereas the Soviet bureaucracy is determined that not one of its citizens shall escape. Only those who have friends in the West who can make a fuss and upset the plans for detente and East-West trade are allowed to leave the Soviet motherland.

The final part of the book is an appeal to workers in the French car industry for help. As the editors point out "it is... essential

that the workers movement in the West should give its support to all those fighting for human rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe." No libertarian would deny this, but if this struggle is to be effective then it must be fought not only against the Soviet bureaucrats but also against all the exponents of state-capitalism in the West who will seek to use it for their own ends.

LETTERS



The second letter has been edited primarily due to lack of space.

ANTI-SEXISM
SOLIDARITY No's 8&9.

Dear All,

I am inspired to write by the general bad temper flying about over the anti-sexist debate, though other things get dragged in along the way.

Some time ago I wrote a piece entitled 'Women's Liberation and Male Sychophancy' which appeared in Solidarity (London). I wrote it with as much cool as I could muster given that a long lasting relationship had broken down taking part of my head with it. I was obsessed with the consequences of the general assumptions of the women's movement of men because I felt that I had myself been double bound and given a good kicking as a result of them. The article, I feel, was worth writing.

But the trouble is, then as now, that in any movement what is generally true of the ideas within it is not necessarily true of the ideas of any individual. The uses to which the ideas are put are many and various and the people involved can be everything from brave as lions with generous hearts and heads to morally shoddy, socially vicious and deeply unhappy. In a recent copy of WIRES (the women's internal news-sheet) there were two highly contrasting pieces. One was a crisp analysis of trot manoeuvres and hypocrisies in the women's movement which would have

done Solidarity credit. The other was a piece whose sense could be summed up by this: Kill men? Why not? They Kill us.'

So what are we going to do with that G.W? Describe the women's movement as anti-trot man killers? Or vegetarian lesbians? Or carnivorous heterosexuals? Or any other position which is a logically possible combination of existing ideas. Are we going to be pleased that two letters in response to your article were perfect examples of the parody you were presenting.

We should own up, you and me, G.W. Human beings, probably because of the long dependence by the child on the parents (and in our culture that means overwhelmingly the mother) are left with a difficult struggle for psychological autonomy long after we are physically capable of looking after ourselves. All of us men grow up wounded with our mothers in our mind trying to go through our private cupboards and us trying to hold them shut. The process is not helped by the structural miseries of the adolescent sexual market place, from which it is very possible that everybody comes out feeling a victim. Some similar process involving a father/mother combination is true for women. Across a battle scarred landscape fraternisation then takes place, truces are established, children are born and the whole damn thing starts off again.

But the male struggle for psychological independence of the mother, with all its guilt, its love, its hostility, is powerfully reawakened by the attacks on men by sections of the women's movement. Men are the heavy father, the rapist, the batterer, the creepy voice down the telephone. But for men who are none of these things accepting guilt by association, by possessing the equipment with intent as it were, is a regressive step to the infantile. Yet an aggressive and hostile response furthers polarisation, increases the potential for male hurtfulness and clenches the head tight shut. The only possible path to liberation is transcendence which is by no means easy. It is a path that some women are after as well as some men. WE SHOULD BE FINDING THEM NOT DRIVING THEM OFF

BY AN INDISCRIMINATE USE OF THE TAR BRUSH.

Can I suggest therefore that we do with the womens movement what we have done with other areas of politics? Use the words written down, the magazine articles the

books and so on, locate the kinds of debate going on and the different factions involved and try and tell the truth to the best of our ability. If condemnation or critique is in order let the words they use be the basis of it. If we wish to attack groups of professional women lobbying for tax advantages over men, or the Society for cutting up men, or women from Trot or Stalinist groups becoming union organisers or the radical lesbian treatment of male children let us say that is what we are attacking not the womens movement. If we wish to condemn a movement as a whole as phallicidal or reformist we have to prove it first. And when some upset and unhappy women manages to kick us in the oedipus we should realise that its natures way of telling us we're not straight yet.

Peace and Quiet,

John Q.

'THE TENDER TRAP' SOLIDARITY No 10.

As to Luciente's proposals, they are as mindless and dogmatic as her/his history.

The couple relationship is private and exclusive, we are told. Well, so are close friendships - so what? What is the alternative to a private relationship? Presumably a public one. And what meaning could a public relationship have except one in which public interference takes place? Such an alternative is worthy of Khmers Rouges, not libertarians. Haven't we a right to a private life, and is it not a characteristic of personal relations that they are private? Aren't personal relations of necessity exclusive, since they can only be formed with a small number of people at a time? Haven't we the right to exclude certain people from our lives - and haven't we the duty to consider our friends' feelings? I don't know what sort of society Luciente wants, but I want one in which I have close friends and a private life, not just comrades and endless political meetings.

What I find particularly repulsive about Luciente's conclusions is that they constitute an attempt to draw up a rational model for personal relations. But relationships have to come not from some idea of what they ought to be, but from our needs. To form them on the basis of an idea of what they ought to be, whatever

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contrast to illusions about Vietnamese "liberation":

"Vietnams invasion was by no means motivated by any concern for the sufferings of the people of Cambodia. The Vietnamese have told us that during 1975-76 they repatriated Cambodian refugees to the Pol Pot regime. Even the most casual observer of Cambodian affairs would have known that this was a certain sentence of death. The Vietnamese concern for human rights violation began in 1978 as part of Vietnam's long and meticulous ideological preparation for the Christmas invasion.

The core of the aim of this invasion was the establishment of a "special relationship" with Cambodia, an aim clearly outlined at the Fourth Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party of 1977. The "special relationship" is the Vietnamese euphemism for the imposition in Cambodia of a Government which was open (as in Laos) to their military, diplomatic and economic predominance.

Such a relationship exists now between Hanoi and the puppet regime of Heng Samrin."

Letter of R. Manne to "The Guardian" (3.3.79)

But what of popular resistance to these "leaders" whose arrogance extends to believing in their right to "punish" whole countries, who "lose face" if their soldiers don't kill in larger quantities than they die? We know just about nothing of any resistance, but that doesn't mean there isn't any. On it depends whether 1984 is already here.

Stefan

'analysis' such an idea proceeds from, is to form them on the basis of morality. It is because they form their relations on such a moral basis that those who try 'multiple relationships' suffer such agonies.

Socialism does not mean cudgelling the emotions into line, and there is no reason (other than a moral reason) why one should control jealousy any more than the lust Luciente writes about. Socialism means creating the social conditions which allow the satisfaction of our needs.

Drawing up schemes of what relationships should be like reflects the inability to let be and the desire always to interfere, to mould, to improve and to correct. It is the essence of authoritarianism.

Yours fraternally,

Marshall Colman

South East Asia: 4 years to 1984

"It became known, with extreme suddenness and everywhere at once, that Eastasia and not Eurasia was the enemy."

-George Orwell, "1984"

In his "1984", written in 1948, Orwell foretold a world divided among three totalitarian States - Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia. These correspond approximately to the West, the USSR and China. Perpetual inconclusive warfare in border areas serves to maintain the war hysteria which cements the power of the ruling Party of each State. Every few years the two-against-one line-up of the powers changes, and the records of the previous alliance rewritten.

Orwell didn't do too badly. For years after World War 2, conflict raged (remember Korea?) between the West and the Russia-China alliance. A politician, now a non-person, recalls of 1957:

"I remember once in Peking, Mao and I were lying next to the swimming pool in our bathing trunks, discussing the problems of war and peace..." "Listen, Comrade Khrushchev" he said, "All you have to do is provoke the Americans into military action, and I'll give you as many divisions as you need to crush them - 100, 200, 1000 divisions." I tried to explain to him that one or two missiles could turn all the divisions in China to dust. But he wouldn't even listen to my arguments and obviously regarded me as a coward."

("Khrushchev Remembers", Andre Deutsch 1971)

But the "comrades" fell out; Oceanians and Eurasians were taught to fear the yellow hordes. No longer, it was said, does a pessimist prepare for the future

by studying Russian - now he studies Chinese. Ky - the American puppet President of Vietnam who admired Hitler - complained in an interview with the journalist Oriana Fallaci: Kissinger felt safe in abandoning his regime because he trusted a Soviet dominated Indochina to contain the USA's main enemy, China.

And now British Colonels tell the Chinese troops that Russia is the common enemy. Through their client States, Russia and China have their first full-scale war - for control of Indochina.

WHY?

The most obvious motives are the strategic calculations which flow from the logic of military confrontation. The Vietnam Government doesn't want enemies on two fronts (Cambodia and China) so they invade Cambodia. But neither does the Chinese Government want enemies on two fronts (Vietnam and Russia), so they invade Vietnam. The best means of defence is attack. One war is fought to be in a stronger position to fight the next war.

A Guardian article points out that, while the war is on land the main object of contention may be the South China Sea between Vietnam and the Philippines. A vast area of this sea, including many islands and valuable oil fields controlled by Vietnam, is marked on Chinese maps as part of China. The disputed area also cuts across key naval and trade routes.

Well, ruling classes have always sent their slaves off to kill one another to defend economic, military and territorial interests of this kind. But this carnage scores one first - all States in-

involved plunder in the name of Socialism! All pay homage to Lenin, who rose to power on the slogan "Turn the Imperialist War into Revolutionary Civil War!". All play "The Internationale" which contains the hopeful threat: "You do not yet know Our bullets are for our own generals."

No wonder the small ads for Central committee Agitprop jobs say: "Only experienced dialecticians need apply".

A glance in light of current events back on the protest movement in the sixties against American occupation of South Vietnam, The "heroic guerrilla fighters against imperialism" are now themselves the troops of an imperialist State. In their takeover of Indochina, as in fact their takeover of South Vietnam, they rely not on the romanticised gore of guerrilla warfare but on the mechanised gore of Soviet tanks and artillery.

The Vietnamese occupation is a "liberation" of a kind for the Cambodian peasants - a relief from the barbaric despotism of the military caste of the Khmers Rouges. In his book "Cambodia Year Zero", Francois Ponchaud summarised the life of the survivors as "unending labour, too little food, wretched sanitary conditions, terror and summary executions." To restore rice exports to finance industrialisation, the Khmers Rouges had turned Cambodia into a single rural concentration camp. Ponchaud explains their policies by referring to doctoral theses submitted to French Universities by students who became Khmer Rouge leaders. The Chairman of the State Presidium, Khieu Samphan, did his on "The Economy of Cambodia and its problems of industrialisation".

The revolting methods of the Cambodian regime should not lead us by

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