THE GREEN WAVE

The spectacular upsurge in support for the Green movement recently - and the Establishment's response to this - has important implications for a radical movement for social change, as HOWARD MOSS explains.

COMMON OWNERSHIP

The stale old shibboleths of the Left and the Right have little relevance today, argues KEN SMITH. There is an urgent need for fresh thinking.

THAT FRAME OF MIND

The "principles of a socialist society", suggests GARETH THOMAS, have to be reflected in the movement which aims to bring about that society.

NEO-CONNECTIONISM

Are there any lessons to be learnt from the field of artificial intelligence about how human beings themselves look at the world around them? HARVEY HARWOOD investigates.

THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM

It has been said that radicals differ far more over the means to achieve their ends than over those ends themselves. How to achieve socialism has long been a bone of contention among socialists. In this first issue of Spanner we present one point of view in this very important debate as far as the socialist movement is concerned, to be (hopefully) challenged by alternative viewpoints in subsequent issues.

STANDING MARX ON HIS HEAD

This article was first published in SOLIDARITY FOR WORKERS POWER (see OTHER PUBLICATIONS) vol 7 no 5, under the heading "Political Consequences of a Philosophical Illusion (Marx's theory of "Being and Consciousness").

HATTA SHÜZÖ AND 'PURE ANARCHISM' IN JAPAN

For historical reasons, the concept of a non-market, stateless society, has, unfortunately, tended to be associated with a rather Euro-centric view of the world. Even so, it is a concept that has gained adherents in many parts of the world - though the extent of this dispersion is often not fully appreciated. JOHN CRUMP examines its impact prior to the Second World War in one such part of the world - Japan - and assesses the contribution of a leading Japanese exponent of anarchist/communist thought: Hatta Shüzö.

THE TYRANNY OF ECONOMICS

In this two part series, ROBIN COX attacks the tendency towards economic determinism prevalent among committed radicals as well as defenders of the status quo. Drawing chiefly on the work of anthropologist, Louis Dumont, he traces the historical development of this tendency and its association with an individualistic bourgeois outlook - in contra-distinction to the "holism" of traditional societies. In Part Two, to be published in the next issue of The Spanner, he explores the implications of this for marxist theory, suggesting that classical marxism has "painted itself into a corner". If it is to be salvaged as a viable theory of social change it must jettison the illusion entertained by some marxists that society can be understood by means of the methodology of the natural sciences.
Welcome to the first issue of The Spanner! And may this be the beginning of a long and fruitful association.

There is, we believe, a vital need for a journal such as this — a "forum for discussing the creation of a new society free from domination by the market". What one calls this new society matters not a jot. It is not the label on the bottle, but its contents, that count.

While we have a particular focus, a particular direction along which we would like to move, this should not be interpreted in a too limited sense. Ideas do not exist in isolation. They have a history, have a network of implications that ramify outwards and in many directions. Part of the purpose of this journal is to explore such implications and to discover where these lead to with a view to refining our theory of practice.

Necessary to this process of exploration is the stimulus and challenge of ideas different from those we may hold. No one has privileged access to THE TRUTH. We are duty bound, if that is not too pompous a way of putting it, to open ourselves up to new ideas if we are to grow and develop. In a world that is constantly changing there is something strangely away about that conservative cast of mind that sees as a matter of "principle" no need whatsoever to modify the patterns of its thinking.

We therefore welcome debate and constructive criticism from all quarters. There is no "Party Line" that is being pushed here. Sectarianism has been the bane of revolutionaries and radicals ever since. Well, who knows when? We need to break out of that Black-or-White mode of thinking that a claustrophobic seclusion in some organisation can sometimes lead to.

In addition to a variety of articles, from the "semi-topical" to the "theoretical", future issues of The Spanner will feature a DEBATE PLATFORM to which readers are invited to contribute. This will be for the longer, more involved type of polemical exchange. Readers’ letters are also welcome for insertion in the LETTERS PAGE.

Those interested may note that we would be happy to receive publications (maybe, on an exchange basis) for mention in our OTHER PUBLICATIONS column. BOOK REVIEWS are likewise invited though it would be appreciated if these were kept reasonably short. For details regarding ADVERTISEMENTS (books, journals, badges etc) please write.

A final item we must mention is our VOLUNTEER NOTICEBOARD — a fitting feature for a journal such as this! Briefly, this column is open to any individual or organisation who would like to offer voluntary help or requires such assistance for a specific project in mind, providing it is not of a commercial nature (e.g. an environmental improvement scheme or a mutual help group). This service is free but messages should be brief. Other possibilities include "skill swap" offers, "working holiday" bargains and penal requests. Let the imagination roam free! But bear in mind that The Spanner will only be published on a half yearly basis to begin with.

Without further ado, we thank our readers for their interest. If you like what you read why not take out a subscription? Or tell a friend about The Spanner? But, most importantly, let us hear your views — whether in agreement or in opposition — on what you find therein.
THE GREEN WAVE

The spectacular upsurge in support for the Green Movement recently - and the Establishment's response to this - has important implications for a radical movement for social change, as HOWARD MOSS explains.

In a meeting last year about Green Politics, a Green Party member explained how his Party was going about raising money to put up a candidate in every seat in the 1989 European elections. He added that they would certainly lose all their deposits, but so what? The important thing was that they would bulk large on the political scene so that they could get their ideas across. He must have been as shocked as most of us were at their subsequent success - 15 per cent of the vote and no deposits lost.

What has brought about this sudden wave of Green support in Britain in literally the last few months? What has now transformed the Greens' image of fringe crankiness to one of seriousness and respectability? No doubt the espousal of Green issues by the establishment parties - especially the Conservatives - has played its part. The considerable increase in exposure of Green matters in the media - through radio and T.V. features, books, newspapers, magazines and publications of all kinds - must also have had a cumulative effect. But over and above all this, the green issue has quite simply come of age. And like other issues it has done so not when first discovered or introduced but quite some time after following the process material reality has opened up to it.

Green issues exploded on the scene in the 60s with the dire warnings contained in such books as Rachel Carson's Silent Spring and the Club of Rome's Limits to Growth. But those who hoped that immediate and drastic action would be taken were disappointed. The attitude of the government and officialdom was that the problem was not so urgent and serious and did not call for drastic and expensive measures. Those who continued to shout loud about it were labelled "idealists" or "extremists" and such people did not need to be listened to. And when the dust had settled on the issue, the Green wave seemed to have receded with its ideas apparently the preserve of a small eccentric fringe lacking any real political support. Even the establishment of a Green Party (initially known as the Ecology Party) in 1974 did little to bring Green ideas to the fore again in the 1970s and most of the 80s.

But nothing forces the issue like material reality. If the Europe of the late 1980s was being poisoned by acid rain, if the destruction of the world's rainforests was shown to be storing up ecological catastrophe, if the earth's ozone layer was being eaten away exposing us to potentially massive doses of radiation, if, if, if... then such material changes could not but bring about changes in ideas - and not only from the eccentric fringe below but also from those above who had to respond to the needs of the system they run to cope and to survive. And this is a phenomenon we have seen not just in Britain but, in varying degrees, in all the other advanced industrial countries including Russia.
And an interesting aspect of the phenomenon in the countries where political parties have risen specifically to voice Green ideas is that they have been parties without clearly recognised leaders. They have been parties that people have voted for exclusively for their ideas not for the particular individuals expressing those ideas or projecting their personalities. Indeed, it would be fair to say that, in the public’s perception, these parties have been leaderless - something which many a seasoned political commentator has expressed puzzlement over. This has got to be a good sign. It shows that people in large numbers are capable of voting for a party which seems to be organised in pretty democratic fashion without leaders and led but with all involved contributing according to their ability. It shows that if people feel the need is great enough, they will take what may once have seemed fairly extreme decisions, regardless of opposition to such by their recognised leaders.

Boundless optimism is not in order of course. In June’s European elections, only 15 not 95 per cent of the electorate turned against the major political parties. And most of those who did so were voting for cleaning up the environment within the framework of the buying and selling system we live in. They were not voting for the more radical step of getting rid of the buying and selling system altogether as a pre-requisite for cleaning up the environment and for solving all the other major problems that competitive society throws up. But perhaps the lesson to be drawn from the Green vote apart from the evidence it provides of people’s capacity to ignore leaders, is that once an important idea comes of age, it becomes difficult to tame, even if previous opponents adopt it. Indeed, perhaps part of the process whereby a new idea comes to be widely accepted is that the conventional parties take it on board themselves and try to turn it to their own ends, tame it, head it off. This has clearly not worked with environmentalism, since the belated adoption of Green ideas by the Tory Party has not won them more support and the Greens less, but just the other way round.

So maybe before we get widespread acceptance of a society of free access and democratic cooperation, we will see the idea taken up in a limited form by the political parties who at present oppose it or do not even consider it. When the forces of material reality point strongly to people - far more strongly than they do now - to that kind of society as a solution to the problems of the present one, perhaps then those political
The stale old shibboleths of the Left and the Right have little relevance today, argues KEN SMITH. There is an urgent need for fresh thinking.

With the collapse in the Western world of the consensus between social democrats and old fashioned Conservatives over the appropriate measures needed to make the Market guarantee a minimum standard of living for the whole population, the initiative was seized by advocates of the Free Market. The Conservative party was hijacked by a group of second hand car salesmen, estate agents, and life-insurance peddlars, the "gentlemen" and the squires of the shires were elbowed aside and the game became much rougher. New intellectual powerhouses: The Institute of Directors ("a gang of launderette operators"), The Adam Smith Institute, The Centre for Policy Studies, The Institute of Economic Affairs ("a bunch of scrap metal merchants"), have taken the stage and pronounced on the world.

Their message last enjoyed widespread support in the early part of the last century, the World of Dickens. The poor are poor because they are wicked or slothful. Anybody who works hard can become rich. Those who don't work should not eat (this is somehow reconciled with support for inherited wealth). Above all, don't rock the boat. Don't try to change things, or at least, not much.

There are increasing signs that the run is coming to an end for the Freemarket Follies. Things are going wrong, people are forgetting their lines or their lines don't make sense. What began as a happy family show is beginning to turn into comedy-horror. But the previous company, the Tinkerers, have exhausted their repertoire.

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**THE GREEN WAVE**

Parties will start to offer batches of free services, legislation to allow people to take decisions on matters that affect their day-to-day lives, and who knows what else? But, if the example of June 1989 is anything to go by, far from accommodating or stemming the tide of the new idea, this will help to spread it, to make it better known and more sought after.

A nineteenth century thinker said that important ideas in human development go through three stages: when first voiced they are disregarded; when a few people begin to take notice of them they are ridiculed by the majority; and when their validity becomes clear and their application essential they are universally accepted and implemented. If the Green idea is now moving from stage two to three, the cooperative non-market society one has still probably to complete the passage between the first two stages. We are here to help it on that journey - and beyond.
The doleful history of our market based economic system which began to develop at the end of the middle ages can leave us with little optimism about its ability to assure us all a life of modest sufficiency from childhood through health and sickness to old age. The date when the decay set in differed for different social groups and for different countries.

In Britain and for some, disaster struck as early as the Norman Conquest in 1066 when people were driven off the land to provide private estates for Duke William and his thugs. For many it began much later and continued until the Great Enclosures of 1845. In the Third World the process is taking place now. Independent farmers are being driven off the land and the economy turned over to the export market, with malnutrition and famine for the dispossessed as a consequence. War frequently accompanies the upheaval as the interest groups try to ameliorate, or profit from, the situation.

The solution to it all, here and everywhere else in the world is a return to production for use, but not on an individual or family basis as in earlier times. Perhaps even there we misinform ourselves if we neglect the fact that people have always relied upon neighbourliness, clubbing together to make a plough team, lending a hand with barn raising, haymaking and harvesting as group activity, running everybody’s pigs and sheep together. If Little Boy Blue and The Boy Who Looks After The Sheep were falling down on the job there was more than one villager to kick their arse.

Still, we have to acknowledge that the world is a great deal more interdependent today, even if we exclude the huge amount of taking coals to Newcastle that the absurd priorities of the Market create. When we stop shipping cars and TV sets half way round the world, we shall still have to get tin from Malaya and copper from Zambia, be it only one hundredth of the quantity that is used, or rather wasted, today.

But if we return to to total production for need (the greater part has never been anything else, but the sector producing for the Market puts a straitjacket on all other activity), that need can only be defined by people themselves i.e. help yourself, in every sense of the word. If people can help themselves gratis to all the goods and services they want, however, then work can be carried out only on the basis of voluntary cooperation, because sanctions, i.e. unemployment, poverty, hunger etc, are not available to force people to work if they choose not to.
Some work can be carried out individually, i.e. crafts, art, but most work will involve numbers of people, and therefore, co-operation.

Co-operation is likely to work best, and perhaps only, in small groups, that is, at the most a few hundred people, where the participants are known to each other. This tendency is already developing in the Market Economy because of the diseconomies of scale, as Leopold Kohr and Fritz Schumacher pointed out decades ago. The fantastic success of National Freight, where 10,000 workers and managers together own 83 per cent of the business, would tend to contradict this. The company is organised on a bottom-up basis, the workers have the votes to fire the entire board if they wish, but I am inclined to think there is a big element of "us against the world" in their thinking that might not survive into socialism.

Groups can and will need to link to form networks for complex operations of production - like the Japanese car industry, but in this case from the bottom up and not the top down. People who believe that the large scale units of Capitalism can be taken over and utilised for need, have not thought the subject through, are in fact hankering after Capitalism without its contradictions. Few people will volunteer to go and live in a "socialist" ICI.

Workers at Fords of Dagenham co-operate with each other but are not in a co-operative. Members of the SPGB co-operate with each other and are in a co-operative and members of the Socialist Standard production team form a co-operative within a co-operative. The Standard is not a commodity, neither do the services performed by the Party take the form of commodities. Those who would argue that they are not use values of exactly the kind that will be produced under socialism must hold that there is a third alternative, some transitional form of value.

There are many co-operatives within Capitalism which would go unchanged into Socialism: the lifeboat services, mountain rescue, meals-on-wheels, St John's Ambulance etc. A recent handbook lists some 2,000 voluntary societies. Lifeboat men do not own their means of production but supply their services free. The services do not take the form of commodities. Workers in National Freight, on the other hand, do own their means of production, or at least 83 per cent of it, but they do not supply their services for free.

The Co-operative Wholesale society, on the other hand, is a bourgeois institution, with wage labour and production for the Market with a view to profit. The customers are theoretically the owners and receive "dividends" but the fact that Co-op stores have lost ground in the market and are barely competitive with avowedly commercial stores means that either they are not up to the prevailing level of productive efficiency, or that the management are the real beneficiaries, or both. But even if they were so efficient and offered such benefits as to put the competition out of business, their character would still not be affected. The relationships of owner/non-owner, thief/victim, lender/borrower, and the organisation of scarcity, with all the consequences, would continue.
The emphasis which revolutionary organisations have placed on the role of the "working class" in prescriptions for the reorganisation of society have nothing whatever to do with excluding other social groups from participation but with emphasising this lack of sanctions to enforce work and the consequences which follow. Almost all of the great names in revolutionary history are from the top drawer. Marx and Engels, Kropotkin and Tolstoy, Liebnicht and Rosa Luxemburg, were all from the leisureed classes. They could scarcely have been otherwise. It is only in the last generation or two that the working class have emerged from illiteracy or semi-literacy, and many have not done so yet.

Elites, leaders, can only operate if they have sanctions to enforce their leadership. Remove sanctions and all that is left is an appeal for volunteers. Not that there has ever been a lack of those, despite discouragement from the bourgeois system: look after number one, up ladder I'm inboard, I'm alright Jack. The anti-social message of the apologists of capitalism isn't accepted by anybody, still less the myth of the invisible hand which will see that we're alright. The apologists don't even believe it themselves. Fresh from exhorting us to concentrate on feathering our own nests they move in the next breath to urging patriotism, the family, acts of charity, self denial, wage restraint.

Organisations of voluntary cooperation such as those mentioned above, and there are thousands of them, are based on philanthropic, social urges, as opposed to the acquisitive, selfish tendencies which are claimed by the apologists of bourgeois society to be natural to mankind. Yet bourgeois society could not survive without the backup of this alternative economy. The market could never undertake the responsibility of child raising and mother love, of parental concern and concern for the parents. And moving sex, (which produces the workers) onto a commercial basis is a criminal matter, particularly if one takes an entrepreneurial interest. The Market balks at pimping. Why ever so? Everything else is for sale. Or nearly everything. Thatcher herself, fanatical defender of the free market economy, balked at the idea of a poor Turkish man selling his kidney to finance the medical treatment of his daughter.

The path to voluntary co-operation of sovereign workers does not lie through capitalist social organisation. All that capitalist social structures produce is a society of battery hens; not the abolition of the wages system but more wages, more consumerism, more artificial needs - hula hoops, electric toothbrushes and shoe polishers, and exercise machines to replace the lost exertion and keep heart diseases at bay. All of these are created just one jump ahead of production so that there will never be enough of anything and the cry will always be more, more, more.

The philosophers have interpreted the world. The problem is to change it. But we have to change ourselves too, otherwise when the time comes we shall be like animals let out of a zoo. We have to move from the material level to the level of the spirit; from more wages to the abolition of the wages system, from self interest to enlightened self interest, a leap of the imagination from quantity to quality. People make history. We have to. Nobody else is going to do it for us. The idea of a world like a gearbox with wheels driving wheels and no autonomy anywhere finds no justification in logic or science. The world appears to us as an endless junkheap of facts out of which we select those which seem to fit our pre-conceived ideas and only abandon the latter when the contradictions become intolerable. They are clearly not intolerable enough yet. As the medieval peasant could not envisage a world without god, so the proletarian cannot envisage the world without wages.
Yet today God is dead. We wonder how people could have believed such rubbish. When can we anticipate feeling the same about the wages system?

The historian and Labour politician H.A.L. Fisher wrote that he could find no pattern in history. It was, unquestionably a shot at Marx, but the shot backfired. Of course there are no patterns in history; they are in our heads, and enable us to make greater or less sense of the past and anticipate and act upon the future. We have to adapt our patterns, our theories, to accommodate new experiences. Merely to say there are no patterns is to say that one is not going to try to make sense of the past and make predictions about the future. One may legitimately question the motives of people who take up this position without getting into a shouting match about conspiracy theory. After all, Fisher was the man who described the guillotining of some three thousand aristocrats in the French Revolution as a bloodbath, but the killing of thirty thousand Communards as the restoration of law and order.

The guru of the neo-conservatives, Karl Popper, adopts a similar position. We cannot make predictions about society or draw conclusions about the past because such theories are unfalsifiable, and therefore by the same token, unverifiable. They would be metaphysical statements, he says. This would make a prediction that the earth after a nuclear world war would resemble the surface of the moon a metaphysical statement. Of course it is nothing of the sort. There are experiences and experiments which would make the prediction less true or more true. The deciding factor is how great we see our need to make the prediction in the first place. Medical science, doctors, frequently have to put up with the shoddiest, scantiest information, but they have to act upon it. Like the art of criticism, the art of devising scientific theories is the art of knowing when to believe upon insufficient evidence.

The "smelly little orthodoxies" of Left and Right, of the Free-Market and Intervention, offer no solution to the problems that face humanity. They still leave us enslaved to the money system. We must be free to feed, clothe and house ourselves and our neighbours, free of salesmen and employers.

This is not a tract. Free men and women do not need guidance from leaders and gurus. We shall know what to do when we recover control of our lives. The personal growth that is necessary for us to become three-dimensional people again is taking place now. We are getting rid of our hangups - religious, sexual, psychological. Spirituality without Gods, fucking without Freud, Marx without marxism, Kropotkin without dogma. Free from psychobabble and econobabble and politicobabble. Free from our voluntary prisons - the key is on the inside. We must act with others, collaborate, but until we get our own act together we are no use to anybody else.

Catastrophe theory has provided us with the only relevant model of today's world. We must be ready to fend for ourselves - and others. As the Market Economy moves further into the chaos of endemic war, the poisoning of the land and the sea and the air, wiping out whole species of creatures who have shared this planet with us and our forbears for millions of years, we must prepare emergency stations, beginning with our own psyches. The situation does not call for the majority to become politicised. The men who man the lifeboats, the women who prepare and deliver Meals on Wheels are not political, still less class-conscious.

Marx was right in drawing up a family tree of human social arrangements but he did not realise that capitalism was a dead branch, that it could not grow into anything, and that the fruit could only be
rotten. Coming from a Germany that was just emerging from the mists of medievalism he was mesmerised by the scene he found in Britain. Thousands of miles of canal had just been completed; railway engineers were proceeding to cut-and-fill their routes across the country; the night-sky was bright with the glare of foundaries and potteries; the daylight was dulled by the smoke from factory chimneys. Marx was a well educated country boy who fell in love with industrial capitalism.

For him it was the *deux ex machina* that was going to solve the age old problem of human want. It was the nineteenth century version of the God that was lowered onto the stage by means of a winch in Greek tragedies to get the plot out of an impasse. But the impasse was as much the product of people's imagination as the plot of the tragedies. Subsequent research has shown that pre-capitalist societies appeared to have enjoyed almost indecent degrees of material and mental wellbeing. Some have argued that that evidence from May-Day, Bacchic, Dionysian, and other pagan frolics show that they were totally indecent.

From Thomas Hobbes onwards, the bourgeois apologists have got their knickers in a terrible twist over pre-capitalist living standards. The hunter gatherer, the peasant farmer, were always one step from starvation, life a never ending grind, they insist. Yet one of the justifications of enclosure was that it freed the peasant from a life of idleness, drink and lechery. O happy Day. But in recent decades the bourgeois propaganda machine has begun to falter. The Fabians and Keynesians went down the toilet in 1979 and their spiritual kin moved in roughly parallel directions - the Russian equivalent is flushing out a big sector of state control just now: some farming is being returned to the free-market.

With luck, the Russians could end up like us, on a diet of food and drink full of lethal concentrations of all the poisons and bacteria that anybody could wish. The advocates of the free market are trying to drown the misgivings of faint hearts on their own side and scarcely disinterested criticism from the interventionists, the Tinkerers, on the other.

It does not much matter whether they succeed or fail. Neither side has the faintest chance of controlling the apocalyptic scenarios the system is propelling us into. They will be wise to concentrate on groping their sexetaries and booking their bimbos. If they shut up it will give us a chance to think.

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**THE BLANK BANQUET OF NICK THE CHICKEN**  
(Or, We Were Only Toy Brothers)

in the one-eyed hotel
where the creeping clocks sleep,
hungry suns from other worlds
slither up and down the walls
like brief shadows of light
scurrying in search of a space
to exist in;
like microbes of reason
they migrate across long hours of madness
and arrive at the brink of a lying dream,
dumb and confounded,
in a dark and diseased progression
*die Geschichte aller bisherigen Gesellschaft*
*ist die Geschichte von Klasseenkämpfen*
in the shipyard of a shutdown long
the works have ceased
bellowing hopes lie quietly in stacks,
the echoes of aspiring phantoms who rest
lost in a dream-world of three thousand years,
in a forest of bleak and emotionless signs,
the caged germs of fleeting suns
beating in pale rage against their container's walls—
pleading old comets
clutched in a tissue of despair,
speaks of day on a planet of night
*Ihr entsetzet Euch darüber, daß wir das Privateigentum aufheben wollen*
in the famished forest's vanishing memory
moreover
between the dog and the wolf,
bent and twisted images float in a stagnant stare
malign bills poison salt thoughts
noiselessly tracelessly bloodlessly
herds of assets feast dietarily
on corpses of minds,
wallowing in a serum of strangled daylights
while plates of meat make their rendezvous
with the Terrible Turk
clutched in a cluster of glittering hours
*Proletiatier aller Länder vereinigt Euch*

— Ron Elbert
For historical reasons, the concept of a non-market, stateless society, has, unfortunately, tended to be associated with a rather Eurocentric view of the world. Even so, it is a concept that has gained adherents in many parts of the world—though the extent of this dispersion is often not fully appreciated. JOHN CRUMP examines its impact prior to the Second World War in one such part of the world—Japan—and assesses the contribution of a leading Japanese exponent of anarchist/communist thought: Hatta Shūzō.

In his chapter on 'Anarchocommunism' in Non-Market Socialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Alain Pengan wrote: "After Kropotkin's death, the theory of anarchocommunism survived, but was consigned to isolation by the unfolding counter-revolution from the 1920s onwards." (1) He also added that, after the appearance of Alexander Berkman's What Is Communist Anarchism? in 1929, "the critical force that anarchocommunism represented left the anarchist movement". (2) These comments probably require some amendment if we move the focus of our attentions away from Europe to Japan. Hatta Shūzō was an anarchist-communist (3) theoretician who was at his most productive during the very period when Pengan claims that anarchism-communism was being extinguished. Likewise, even if Pengan is right to assert that in Europe by the 1920s the anarchist-communists' "contributions amounted to little more than a formal defense of principles, without any critical depth" (4) it would be difficult to say the same about Hatta. On the contrary, in assessing Hatta's importance as a theoretician of anarchist communism, Ota Ryū has stressed that perhaps it was Hatta alone who pushed the frontiers of anarchist-communist theory beyond the points at which Kropotkin had left them. In an essay 'On Anarchism', Ota wrote:

Hatta Shūzō...was an important anarchist after the murder of Osugi Sakae (in 1923). Basing himself on Kropotkinism, he developed the theory of anarchist-communism one step further. After Kropotkin's death, world anarchism rapidly regressed from the level that Kropotkin had brought it to. It seems to me that, as far as I know, in the midst of these degenerate circumstances (the era of Marxism-Leninism's complete domination) there was nobody other than Hatta (not only in Japan but in the entire world) who took a step forward in this way. (5)
ANARCHISM IN JAPAN

Not only is it important to recognise Hatta's significance as a major theoretician of anarchism-communism, but it is perhaps even more vital to see the 'pure anarchism' movement which emerged in Japan in the 1920s, and of which he was a prominent spokesman, as an authentic variety of non-market socialism. The key principles of non-market socialism (production for use and not for sale; voluntary labour instead of the wages system; a human community without social divisions based on class, nationality, sex or race) were all articulated by the Japanese 'pure anarchists' in a form which reflected both the influence which Kropotkin's theories exerted on them as well as their experience of capitalist exploitation and state oppression in Japan. In addition to adhering to these core principles of non-market socialism, the Japanese 'pure anarchists' also rejected the idea of a transitional society between capitalism and communism and refused to recognise Bolshevik Russia as representing any sort of improvement on Western capitalism. The fact that a movement committed to these principles should have been formed in Japan is confirmation not merely of the argument put forward in Non-Market Socialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries that "as long as capitalism exists, the non-market socialist response to it will continually emerge" (6) but also that "we can be quite confident that throughout the world there are still non-market socialist groups that we have never heard of, and that have never heard of us."(7) At the time that the book Non-Market Socialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries was being written, the ideas of the Japanese 'pure anarchists' were unknown to any of those involved in the project, so it gives considerable satisfaction to me to see our predictions borne out in the shape of Hatta Shūzō and his comrades.

Hatta Shūzō was born in 1886 and died in 1934. His early intellectual development was not promising, in that he was converted to Christianity and became a clergyman after graduating from college in 1912. A developing interest in anarchism coupled with disillusionment with Christianity led to his expulsion from his church and, after moving to Tokyo in 1924, for the next 10 years he devoted himself to anarchist activity and became a prominent speaker and writer in the anarchist movement. A heavy drinker and passionate revolutionary, Hatta created a larger than life impression wherever he was active. Many years after Hatta's death, his comrade Daidōji Saburō remembered two meetings held in Daidōji's home village before an audience of poor peasants. On consecutive nights from early evening until midnight, for 5 to 6 hours without pause, Hatta spoke in a room decorated with pictures of Kropotkin and Nestor Makhno. The audience was riveted. Nobody dozed off and many of the women present were moved to tears. The atmosphere within the room, recalled Daidōji, was "like the eve of the revolution"(8) Burns himself up in a whirl of such activity and sliding into alcoholism, Hatta drank himself to an early death at the age of 48.

Hatta's intensive propaganda and theoretical work took place against the background of a major controversy within the anarchist movement in Japan over the attitude that anarchists should adopt towards day-to-day struggles within capitalism. On the one side there were those who favoured a syndicalist approach and who argued that
anarchists should pursue immediate demands since, to their way of thinking, anarchist revolution would grow out of the class struggle within capitalism. On the other side were those 'pure anarchists' who regarded day-to-day issues as a diversions and who wished to focus all efforts on a revolutionary struggle against capitalism. This controversy led to a split in the anarchist-inclined Zenkoku Jiren (All-Japan Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions) which had been organized on 24 May 1926 when delegates representing 8,400 workers had gathered in Tokyo for its founding conference. In 1928 the minority of anarchists withdrew from Zenkoku Jiren in protest over its 'pure anarchist' orientation and launched their own union federation - the Nihon Jikyo (the Japanese Liberation United Conference of Labour Unions) - the following year. By 1931 Zenkoku Jiren's membership had grown to 15,300 while Nihon Jikyo was a smaller organisation with 1,700 members. In 1931 the 'Manchurian Incident' occurred and by the following year Japan was perceptively sliding into military rule at home and towards full-scale war abroad. All organisations opposed to these trends were under intense pressure and, not surprisingly, both Zenkoku Jiren and Nihon Jikyo saw their membership contract from then on. In a desperate attempt to withstand state oppression, both union federations suppressed their differences sufficiently to re-unite in 1934 behind the Zenkoku Jiren banner, but by 1935 total membership was down to 2,300. As Komatsu Ryuji has put it, "from November 1933, the nationwide arrests of anarchists began" and as "the roundup of the remaining anarchists went ahead" in 1936, Zenkoku Jiren was disbanded (9). By this time, of course, Hatta Shuzo was already dead.

Many of Hatta's writings were published as Zenkoku Jiren pamphlets or else appeared in the organisation's journal, The Libertarian Federation Newspaper. His articles also appeared in other journals of the period, such as Black Youth (the organ of the Black Youth League). Everything he wrote was written under difficult circumstances and for immediate, propagandistic purposes. Yet his development of anarchocommunist theory is of interest even at this distance in time and his scattered writings represent the most coherent and intellectually sophisticated explanation of what the Japanese 'pure anarchists' were struggling for.

Communism

In his writings, Hatta Shuzo tried to give an accurate description of what would be the characteristics of an anarchist-communist society. It went without saying that there would be no state power and that production would be undertaken communally, but Hatta argued forcefully that such a society would also need to embrace other principles if it were to be genuinely anarchist and genuinely communist. For Hatta, perhaps the most fundamental of these principles was that the division of labour had to be eliminated. By 'division of labour' he did not mean a mere division of work, since even in the course of communist production he expected that, at any one time, different people would be engaged in different jobs for which they had a particular liking or aptitude. Rather by 'division of labour' he meant geographical or sectional specialisation. Any society which, let us say, concentrated industry in certain zones and agriculture elsewhere would not be communist, he asserted. Similarly, any society which (again to take random samples) left the production of steel in the hands of one section of society ('steel workers') and the production of timber in the hands of another
('timber workers') would be fatally flawed.

This kind of 'division of labour' was, of course, a feature of capitalism, but Hatta believed it would be equally characteristic of a society organised along syndicalist or soviet (workers' councils) lines. Such methods of political organisation are based on the division of labour that capitalism imposes on the working class, and they seek to carry such divisions into the new society rather than transcend them. Hatta's contention was that any society that tolerated the division of labour would contain within it incipient power relations. Even if all the members of such a society were formally equal, those engaged in vital lines of production would inevitably have more influence on decision-making than those whose activity was less indispensable. In fact, even formal equality would not survive long in a society where there was economic specialisation. This was because, in order to ensure coordination between different branches of the economy, a 'superior coordinating machinery' would be bound to arise. In Hatta's view "it is beyond doubt that power will arise within such a group", with the result that the state will reappear. (10) Hand in hand with the resurrection of the state, there would be the re-establishment of exchange relations, leading to the need for money or, alternatively, labour vouchers:

Where the division of labour occurs, exchange takes place. Where exchange takes place, a medium of exchange - in other words, money (or labour vouchers) - comes into existence. And money stands in need of a basis of centralised power (government). (11)

To avoid the division of labour and its consequences, Hatta maintained that an anarchist-communist society would need to implement decentralised production, with each commune being in large measure self-supporting and self-sufficient. Within each locality, production would be communal and people would relate to one another in a spirit of mutual aid. Hatta often made the point that in a large scale, centralised society based on the division of labour, people who are engaged in one branch of production tend to have "neither understanding of, responsibility for, nor interest in" other branches of production. (12) By way of contrast, it was smallness of scale and the intimacy of social relations that would prevent such attitudes from arising in a society of localised, autonomous communes. The limited scale of each commune would ensure that people would not be alienated from one another even while engaging in different productive activities. Similarly, the need for a 'superior coordinating machinery' would be eliminated since detailed knowledge of local resources and needs would be a common possession, ensuring that all had the necessary know-how to participate in decision-making and coordination at the same time that they took part in production.

Hatta wrote that within the "locally decentralised communist system" that the 'pure anarchists' advocated, consumption would have primacy and would be the motive behind production. (13) This was his way of expressing the familiar communist idea that levels of production would be decided in response to people's self determined needs, rather than production taking on a momentum of its own, as it does within capitalism due to the compulsion to accumulate capital. Familiar though Hatta's ideas were at this level of generalisation, he ventured into less well trodden territory when he tried to think through some of the implications of a system based on production for need. In order to explore the concrete forms that production for
need might take, Hatta found it useful to consider "essential production" separately from "cultural production". As far as "essential production" is concerned, he argued that the entire commune would engage in that production which all its members regarded as essential. An example more or less appropriate in the Japanese context would be the production of the rice crop. Since producing rice is a multifaceted activity involving tending the land, maintaining the irrigation system, servicing machinery and so forth, it could well involve a division of work. However, for Hatta this would be something different from a 'division of labour' because, since everyone would eat rice, everyone would feel a sense of personal involvement in the outcome of the rice crop. Since everyone would regard the rice crop as essential production, everyone would take an interest in it, have a sense of responsibility for it and make it their business to acquaint themselves with the overall production process. Hence no stratum could emerge with a controlling influence over the supply of rice.

On the other hand, articles that an individual alone regarded as essential, only that individual would take steps to produce. Similarly, goods that a section of the commune alone regarded as necessary would be produced by that section alone. Hatta expected much "cultural production to be of this latter type, with like minded individuals spontaneously grouping themselves into publishing associations, scientific associations and so on. (14)

So far I have confined myself to summarising Hatta's 'pure anarchist' views on the nature of communist society. If I were to evaluate his ideas briefly from my own perspective, I would say that his attack on the division of labour is powerful and effective, not merely with reference to conventional forms of capitalism but equally with regard to plans for reorganising society in such a way that production-based unions or workers' councils would serve as the machinery for administration. To transfer the division of labour that capitalism imposes on the working class into the 'new' society would result in the 'old' relationships of alienation, exchange and power rapidly reasserting themselves. As with most of us, however, Hatta is rather better at criticising other's ideas than in devising an entirely satisfactory solution to the problem he poses. In his eagerness to attack the social divisions that are rooted in production, Hatta largely closed his eyes to the dangers inherent in localism. On the positive side, to the extent that we consider each local commune in isolation, it seems to me that his proposed solution is satisfactory. It is true that there are problems connected with the notion that each commune should be largely self-sufficient (not every commune could have its own copper mine, for example!), but to the extent that each commune was self-sustaining, it seems to me that solidarity could be encouraged and an intra-communal division of labour avoided by the methods that Hatta suggests. Yet even if we grant a higher degree of self-sufficiency than could probably be achieved in reality, the fundamental problem associated with expecting each locality to produce largely for itself is that different areas are very differently endowed with natural resources. Not only would this give rise to disparities in standards of living and to different rates of economic and social development, but it is not at all clear that any safeguards would exist to prevent localities with rare resources from developing exploitative relations with other less well endowed localities. If such a train of events were set in motion, it would no doubt be accompanied by the emergence of an ideology of localism that would be every bit as poisonous as existing forms of nationalism.

At best, Hatta supplied us with only half a solution to the problems posed by the division of labour. His "society without the distinction between town and country, without the division of labour; a quiet and peaceful society, an idyllic agricultural society full of poetry and song" might be highly attractive, not least because of the bonds of comradeship and affection that would link one with people in the same locality with
whom one lived and worked. (15) Yet accompanying this in a genuinely communist society there would need to be both an ethical system and a set of social relationships that linked one as firmly with the entire human race and the world as a whole as they did with one's neighbours and one's immediate locality. One would need to be as conscious of one's membership of the global village as of the local village. Similarly, the global network of productive relationships and interdependency would need to be as transparently obvious and open to scrutiny as local arrangements.

In previous eras and perhaps even in Hatta's day, to have talked in terms of such global levels of consciousness might well have struck most people as dealing in abstractions and succumbing to illusions. But with modern communication and information systems, there is no reason why consciousness of one's position within global society should be regarded as utopian. One can even imagine concrete arrangements for bringing this about. It could, for example, be general policy to have each local commune of the type Hatta described permanently and directly linked by modern communications with a variety of other local communes purposely chosen so that their geographical, climatic and cultural locations all contrasted with one another. This is only one of a number of institutional arrangements that could be adopted, but whatever the precise details the aim would be to break down feelings of localism and provide each individual in each commune with a sense of global interdependency that was, at one and the same time, both worldwide and yet highly personal and concrete.

Whatever criticisms one might make of the limitations of some areas of Hatta's thought, I hope sufficient has been said to show clearly that he and other 'pure anarchists' made a positive contribution to communist theory. Lack of space prevents me from giving an account here of other aspects of their theory, even though these are far from being without interest. Other ideas that Hatta Shuzō developed in

his writings range from an analysis of the social system in Bolshevik Russia as capitalism:

The Soviet government is the Communist Party Co. Ltd., and the directors and great stockholders are Lenin, Kamenev and Stalin. Bukharin is the auditor (16):

to the argument that class struggle and revolution are "two entirely different things," the former being fought within capitalism and the latter against capitalism, so that there is no linking mechanism between them:

The class struggle and the revolution are two opposing movements; one does not give birth to the other. (17)

I hope to be able to explore elsewhere some of these other important ideas, but this introductory article will have achieved its purpose if it has demonstrated the genuinely communist/non-market socialist credentials of Japanese 'pure anarchism'.

HATTASHUZO

Continued
HATTA SHUZO

NOTES

1. Edited by Maximilian Ruhel & John Crump (Macmillan 1987) p.77
2. ibid
3. Hatta preferred the term anarchism-communism to anarchocommunism, since for him "anarchocommunist" denoted someone who attempted to synthesize "anarchism" and Bolshevist-style "communism". I shall therefore follow Hatta and employ the term anarchism-communism from here on.
4. Gubel and Crump p.77
6. Ruhel and Crump p.7
7. ibid p.173
8. Daizenji Saburō 'Hakata Tane wa Me o Fuite ('Scattered Seeds Send Forth Shoots') in Ohima Seizaburō op cit p.314
12. See, for example Sanjikari-zumu no Kentō p.14
13. 'Warera no Keizai-gaku o Juritsu Seyo' p.127
14. ibid p.132
15. Hatta Shūzō 'Nōson Kōza' ('Lectures on the Farming Villages') Nōmin Jiyū Ronzāō (The Peasants Libertarian Federation) 2 August 1930. Collected in Ohima Seizaburō op cit p.65-6
16. Hatta Shūzō 'Ichi Mongakan no Miteru Musan Bungei no Mondai' ('The problem of Proletarian art As Seen By an Outsidar') Geneshi (Origins) Vol 3 no 4 April 1927 Collected in Ohima Seizaburō ibid p.35
17. Hatta Shūzō 'Sanjikari-zumu ni tai suru Ichi Kōatsu' ('An Inquiry into Syndicalism') Kokushokukoseinen (Black Youth) nos 12-19 Sept-Nov 1927. Collected in Ohima Seizaburō ibid p.23

Are there any lessons to be learnt from the field of artificial intelligence about how human beings themselves look at the world around them? HARVEY HARWOOD investigates.

Neo-connectionism, Neo-associationism or Massive Parallel Processing Systems (M.P.P.S) as they are variously called, are new approaches within the artificial intelligence community, attempting to model the way the brain achieves it's more complex perceptual tasks. Simply stated, the experimentors involved believe it makes more sense to use many independent processes in a matrix, operating simultaneously, than the more conventional "von Neumann" approach where processing occurs in a serial
manner, which they see as having only a limited usefulness. The multiple connections allow much of the knowledge of the entire system to be applied in any instance of recognition or problem solving. In this society of mind, knowledge inheres in the strength and the appropriateness of the CONNECTIONS between processing units, rather than in a "central control" performing standardized functions.

This is a trend with similarities to work in other areas, at a different level of analysis. Thus, for example, the anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, urges us to view thought as a "collective product" which is coded differently across cultures thanks to historical forces that have exerted their effects over the millennia. He therefore sees little reason to expect that mimicking the approach of the natural or physical sciences will be helpful to our understanding of these concepts. The anthropologist who wants to understand the conceptual structures or categorising practices of a different community may have more in common with the literary critic trying to understand a text, than with the chemist mixing elements in a laboratory. Geertz cautions that we are involved in the pursuit of an understanding of concepts that emerged out of our own philosophical and historical traditions and we make a grave error in assuming that this agenda is THE agenda.

But the similarity goes much deeper than the approach taken - to include also the motivation behind such research. Implicit in these programs is the search for purpose and meaning as opposed to the discovery of abstract laws and principles of limited applicability.

This is interesting demonstrated in the way the computer scientists, for instance, define the criterion on which to base their notion of the intelligibility or otherwise of the systems they create. The concept they use is INTENTIONALITY. This means that a system displaying purposeful or goal-directed behaviour, can be thought of as a "form" of intelligence and that therefore concepts are "abilities" with meanings located in the real world. So it would seem that "intelligence" for man or machine lies not in intellectual potential as such but in the discovery of new areas to which it may be APPLIED.
In this two part series, ROBIN COX attacks the tendency towards economic determinism prevalent among committed radicals as well as defenders of the status quo. Drawing chiefly on the work of anthropologist, Louis Dumont, he traces the historical development of this tendency and its association with an individualistic bourgeois outlook - in contra-distinction to the "holism" of traditional societies. In Part Two, to be published in the next issue of The Spanner, he explores the implications of this for marxist theory, suggesting that classical marxism has "painted itself into a corner". If it is to be salvaged as a viable theory of social change it must jettison the illusion entertained by some marxists that society can be understood by means of the methodology of the natural sciences.

1. Homo Economicus: Stone Age Capitalism?

Ultimately, we cannot separate the "facts" of history from the meanings with which we invest it. As Paul Cardan (Castoriadis) succinctly put it: "The categories through which we approach and apprehend history are themselves real products of historical development. These categories can only become clear and effective methods when they have to some extent become incarnated or fulfilled in real forms of social life" (1)

When, for example, Aristotle declared that "man is by nature a political animal", we need to connect this observation to the context in which it was made: the emergence of Greek polis or city-state. Does this mean that Aristotle's conception of "man" can be construed as simply the "reflection" of this development? Not at all. We can no more assert this than we can determine whether the chicken preceded the egg or the egg, the chicken. Rather, the ontological view of humankind as a political animal both creatively contributed to and drew sustenance from the social construction of historical reality that was Ancient Greece.

Two or three centuries ago a very different view of humankind emerged in Western Europe: Homo Economicus. It is a view that comprehensively pervades social thought today. Before this image of themselves, the more dogmatic marxists along with the theologians of the free market, genuflect in common supplication.

Such a view was, of course, congruent with the development of the capitalist order. According to Pierre Bourdieu, "every established order tends to produce the naturalisation of its own arbitrariness" (2) It does so by projecting across time and space, its own ontological assumptions about the nature of human beings with the result that any society, no matter how distant along these different axes appears to it to somehow represent a pale approximation of itself.

By universalising its own categories of thought, the social order renders them transcendent and impervious to historical development. But there comes a time when the tension between such categories through which the world is conceptually organised and our own experiences of the world, becomes strained. At such a time our comprehension of what Cardan calls the "permanent flux of subject matter"
positively requires that these categories hitherto applied to it, should themselves be transcended. Here we enter the strange world of the dialectic. Indeed, the very discipline of anthropology itself could be said to have been born out of just such a dialectical juncture. In its encounter with the Other across the indeterminate edges of bourgeois society, it is, potentially at least, engaged in the business of subversion. For what could be more subversive than to affirm as arbitrary what the bourgeois insists is natural?

That said, anthropology can as easily be turned to the consolidation of a bourgeois outlook. Long before its institutionalisation as an "organised science of man" in the late 1850s in France and the 1860s in Britain, the existence of so-called "savages" (increasingly encountered by an expansionist European society), posed a growing dilemma for European thinkers. While, as M.T Hodgson points out, "some philosophers and divines declaimed upon the indecorous habits of savages and their shameless moral standards, others looked earnestly about for an intellectual formula which would regularise their existence" (3).

Two alternatives presented themselves. One of these was the view that savages were not truly human, so incomprehensible were their customs and culture to the European traveller. It was suggested that they in fact constituted a number of separate and intermediate species between the apes and true men. Polygenism, as this was called, was a logical elaboration upon the old medieval idea of the Great Chain of Being which fell into disrepute during the 18th century Enlightenment only to re-emerge transmuted into a racial hierarchy in the late 19th century when polygenism had its greatest impact. The second alternative - monogenism - was much more in keeping with traditional Christianity which asserted an unbridgeable gulf between the animal kingdom and humankind by virtue of the latter's spiritual qualities. This view, needless to say, sat uneasily alongside the notion central to the Great Chain that creation consisted in an ascending continuum of contiguous species. With the growth of new sciences such as comparative
anatomy, physiology and paleontology, which tended to lend weight to the "naturalistic" claims of polygenism by reducing the perceived gap between humankind and the animal kingdom, this tension came to a head, precipitating the abandonment by monogenists of the idea of the Great Chain.

Nevertheless, this still left unresolved the problem of how to intellectually accommodate the savage within the European mind. As Hogden observes, "no one said in so many words that it was desirable to make a place for savagery but in essence that was one of the major implications of the interest in comparison and simulacres". (ibid p.387)

It was in this context that the economic category was increasingly applied - most notably by that circle of thinkers associated with the Scottish Enlightenment which included John Millar, David Hume and Adam Smith - precisely to facilitate comparison and the ordering of distinct societies into an ascending series of social stages defined by the complexity of their division of labour. It should be born in mind that up to the Enlightenment, the conventional belief had been that human society had undergone not progress but a slow deterioration. The so called Senescence Theory revived after the Renaissance and underpinned by the Christian dogma of Man's Fall from Eden, held out a vision of a world that was gradually decaying. The accomplishments of Classical Antiquity were viewed as a benchmark from which one might gauge this ineluctable decline.

It was against this pessimistic vision that the thinkers of the Enlightenment battled. In a sense it was they who invented the very notion of progress. In one area after another they began to win the argument for the superiority of the modern world over the ancients. In due course it was more or less generally accepted that at least in respect of its material and technological accomplishments, the modern world had surpassed that of Classical Antiquity. As far as other, less tangible, matters were concerned, however, considerable doubts remained, doubts that were fanned by the writings of Rousseau and were later to find expression in Romanticism.

In the Victorian era this rather sketchy evolutionary model was further embellished and systematised. Naturally, Victorian capitalism was presented as the acme of an inexorable progress that had begun in lower savagery. But herein lay a difficulty. Who was to say that society having evolved thus far would not evolve further? Indeed, for Karl Marx this was more than a distinct possibility. Thus in Capital (vol 1) he wrote, "capitalist production beggets with the inevitability of a law of Nature, its own negation". As the forces of production developed by capitalism came into increasing conflict with the capitalist relationships of production, this, according to Marx, would precipitate a radical transformation of these relationships and thereby initiate a new higher stage of social evolution: communism.

So it was that having triumphed over the past, bourgeois society now had to contend from within, as it were, with the threat of the future. By the 1830s the growth of the labour movement and industrial unrest was already a source of considerable concern in the capitals of Europe. Along with this a still hazy picture of a future society beyond capitalism gradually emerged in the course of the 19th century. Marxism was to gather many of these scattered and partial insights into a much more systematic approach to the transformation of society to which it brought a hard-edged scientism.

Such developments undoubtedly had a profound impact upon the intellectual climate of the time. They helped to shape the agenda of the social sciences. Peter and Brigitte Berger, point out that "much of German sociological thought during the classical period consisted of an ongoing attempt to refute Marx. In fact the very notion of the discipline of sociology became an alternative to the 'science of socialism' as propounded by Marx's
followers"(4) Max Weber, for example, the outstanding figure of the German Sociological school was particularly concerned with the problem of the origins of capitalism. In contrast to Marx's characterisation of the economic processes within society as its driving force, Weber sought to show how such processes themselves are "in turn dependent upon what goes on in the minds of men, more specifically on values and beliefs" (ibid p.30).

Particularly interesting insofar as it relates to certain perspectives in the field of anthropology was Weber's distinction between "formal rationality" and "substantive rationality". According to D. Steele, it was Weber's view that "only the market can permit the achievement of a very high degree of formal rationality" insofar as it enables economic calculations to be made which are necessary for the efficient allocation of resources. Non monetary budgeting may be "rational" according to Weber, under very simple conditions, "so long as the situation does not require a very precise estimate of the comparative utility to be gained from the allocation of the available resources to each of a large number of heterogenous modes of use". But as the division of labour becomes more complex so does the importance of such estimates increase and ipso facto society's dependence upon the market as a means of making such estimates. (5) The so called "economic calculation" argument was, of course, quite clearly intended as a calculated riposte to marxism. It denied the possibility of communism as a practical proposition since communism itself would dispense with the market. Communism as Marx had pointed out depended upon a relatively high level of material output but this only a highly differentiated economic base could provide. And it could only do this through the mediation of the market system itself which in communism would no longer exist.

In fact, the economic calculation argument which was further developed by Ludwig Von Mises and others in the 1920s and decisively exploded by Paul Baran in his The Political Economy of Growth (1957), amounted to little more than a rather elegant tautology. Mises, for example, suggested that in socialism (or communism) a socialist "director" could not "attach to the period of production or to expected useful life (of products) a definite numerical expression. In short, he cannot in comparing costs to be expended and benefits to be gained, resort to any arithmetical operation. The problem of socialist economic calculation is precisely that in the absence of market prices for factors or production no computation of profit or loss is possible" (6).

But on closer inspection the argument proves to be a rather circular one. Thus, in response to the retort that socialism (or communism) would not in any case

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concern itself with computation of "profit" and "loss" in a financial sense, it might be said that "costs" in some other sense would still have to be calculated to ensure the efficient allocation of resources. Only the market system, according to the economic calculation argument could truly reflect such costs. This however suggests a one-to-one correspondence between costs calculated in market prices and these "other costs". But since to demonstrate that such a correspondence did indeed exist would entail a quantitative comparison of one against the other, this would amount to conceding the feasibility of "calculation in kind" - a notion which is precisely what some marxists have advocated. Thus, the economic calculation argument has found itself caught on the horns of a dilemma - either to collapse under the weight of its own evidence or, more usually, to retreat into a tautology, asserting that only the market can do what only the market can do.

Nevertheless, the economism of the formalistic approach was felt far beyond the rarefied reaches of the so called economic calculation argument. Inevitably, it had an impact upon anthropology, extending even to the study of pre-capitalist social formations. According to this approach, "an actor - a single man, a family, a whole society - is seen facing a natural environment that is slow to yield its life-giving elements. Economic action - or more precisely, economising action, the essence of rationality - is, then, regarded as a manner of disposing of time and energy so that a maximum of goals are achieved out of this man-nature relationship" (7) Thus, if bourgeois society could find no refuge in the economic calculation argument, it could at least anchor its claims to permanency in the bedrock of an essentialist dogma.

But as Marshall Sahlins argues, "The attempt of the formalist school to detach the principle of individual maximisation from its bourgeois context and spread it around the world is fatally marked by...confusion." (8) Poverty, according to Sahlins, is a relationship between people. It does not essentially have to do with the amount of wealth at their disposal. It is quite impossible to extract from the complex tissue of social relationships that bind together "primitive" societies, a set of relationships that can be described as "economic" and invest these with independent determination.

The "scarcity postulate" according to Sahlins is basically a myth. Indeed, even on strictly empirical grounds - with all the drawbacks this usually entails - there would appear to be much evidence to support this claim. Thus, for example, the amount of time expended by the average member of a gatherer hunter band to satisfy his or her basic requirements is considerably less than that of a modern industrial worker. True, these requirements are far less than those of an industrial worker but this is precisely the point that Sahlins is intent upon stressing. For the gatherer-hunter the accumulation of wealth beyond a rudimentary level has no real purpose and, indeed, would prove positively dysfunctional to what is a highly mobile way of life. A similar claim has been adduced by marxists for a technologically advanced communist society. Status based upon the conspicuous consumption of wealth would have no meaning where wealth is made freely available for appropriation according to self determined needs. Status differentiation, according to this view, could only express itself through the contributions that individuals made to society.
In short, scarcity is a function not only of supply but also of demand— that is to say, of the relationship between supply and demand. It is only by transposing its own dubious assumption of "infinite demand" that bourgeois ethnocentrism, thus condemned a treadmill of deprivation, discovers in so called primitive society an existence that it deems nasty, brutish and short.

Furthermore, the tendency of the Formalist school to treat the economy as a disembedded isolate, conditions its attitude to other aspects of primitive society. Thus, as Sahlin observes, in their response to Marcel Mauss' classic study of "total prestation" between primitive clans wherein "things are related in some degree as persons and persons in some degree as things" through gift exchange, a "large section of Anglo-American anthropology has seemed instinctively repelled by the commercialisation of persons apparently implied in the Maussian formula" (ibid p.181). But such a reaction was fundamentally misconceived: "Here was Mauss decrying the inhumanity of modern abstract distinctions between real and personal law, calling for a return to the archaic relation between men and things, while the Anglo-Saxons could only congratulate the ancestors for having finally liberated men from a debasing confusion with material objects".

As Jonathan Parry has put it, "Gift exchange - in which persons and things, interest and disinterest, merged - has been fractured, leaving gifts opposed to exchange, persons opposed to things and interest to disinterest. The ideology of the disinterested gift emerges in parallel with an ideology of purely interested exchange. Those who make free and unconstrained contracts in the market also make free and unconstrained gifts outside of it. But these gifts are defined as what market relations are not - altruistic, moral and loaded with emotion"(9) These observations need to be born in mind when in Part Two I shall discuss the revolutionary project as conceived by marxism : the abolition of the market economy. I shall argue that the Gift Economy as distinct from the "ideology of the disinterested gift", provides a key to that social transformation, a means whereby human beings may re-appropriate their full humanity ironically, by returning in Sahlin's words, to that "archaic relation between men and things".

2. From Holism to Individualism

The process whereby the economy became progressively disembedded from the rest of society - and as a consequence, invested with causal significance - paralleled the emergence of individualism. According to Louis Dumont in his From Mandeville to Marx, by individualism is meant that the individual has paramount value in society - above any social group or even society itself. In a sense, the individual thus portrayed is prior to society - that is, issues from nature - being the "embodiment of humanity at large". The individual referred to here is not, of course, the empirical subject, the particular man or woman, but rather an "ideal type" or abstract moral being, as Dumont is careful to point out. Indeed, by conflating one with the other, we miss the whole thrust of his argument with which this essay is centrally concerned.

For him, individualism is egalitarian in orientation. This follows from the premiss that each individual moral being embodies
within himself the essence of humanity. Society in this idealised model is the outcome of individuals coming together to form an association or "societas" based upon consensual contract. In this association, the parts, being the autonomous individuals, determine the whole.

This does not mean that inequality in an empirical sense, cannot exist in an individualistic universe. But such inequalities that exist are held to arise within society which is subordinate in value to the individual who is himself a pre-social being constituted in nature.

There are important implications that flow from this line of thinking. It is Dumont's claim, for example, that individualism furnishes the ontological ground in which racism is able to take root. This is so, in his view, because of the stress it places upon the notion of identity. The cultural homogeneity of the nation which in individualistic terms is the individual "writ large", is challenged by cultural differences which undermine the individual's sense of his own identity. Deviations from this identity which is ideally reflected in the cultural identity of the nation, are seen as "unnatural" - that is, socially induced - since the individual's own identity is perceived in individualist thought to be grounded in nature. Such deviations suggest that somewhere along the line the consensual basis of society has become impaired. Society has, as it were, begun to assume a more autonomous existence, has become more than the sum of its parts, and in consequence, has unleashed forces capable of acting upon the individual and moulding him in ways that radically depart from what nature has ordained. The cultural alien thus attests to the power of society as a transcendent entity and as such, signifies a threat to the individual's own autonomy which such a society presents.

In stark contrast to individualism, the holism of "traditional societies" invests society itself with paramount value. Here, as Bruce Kapferer points out, "the principles that govern the whole determine both the nature of the parts and their interrelation" (10). The individual here is constituted not in nature but in society which, in this holistic or transcendent sense, Dumont calls "universitas". The individual derives his integrity as an individual from society. He is in the full sense of the word, a "social being".

Just as individualism entails egalitarianism, so, according to Dumont, the logical implication of holism is hierarchy of which the caste system of India is a classic example. The notion of hierarchy which is based on the principle of encompassment, can, however, give rise to misunderstanding. It is not essentially to do with power or wealth but rather with status. Power in a caste society is ideally encompassed by status. Of course, in reality this division is not so clear-cut and as Kapferer observes with regard to Sri Lankan caste society, power does to some extent influence status (ibid p.10).

Nor is status to be understood, according to Kapferer, in a Western or Weberian sense as an "individual quality of prestige...which accrues to, or is achieved by the individual, independent of forces in the cosmic whole" (ibid p.10). It is of a religious or ritual nature. Status differentiation according to caste is not socially divisive as, for example, is class. On the contrary, the hierarchisation of castes according to status is a unifying process. And it is upon the unity of the whole that the integrity of the individual fundamentally depends. These two types of social constructions - egalitarian individualism and hierarchical holism - are not necessarily wholly incompatible in Dumont's view. Thus, for example, he suggests that socialism may be a hybrid form, combining elements of individualism and holism (11). This is a suggestion that I shall examine later for it connects with a critique of marxist economism.

It is in relation to the economic dimension that further differences emerge between individualism and
holism. In an individualistic bourgeois world, the relationship between persons and things (commodities) has primacy over the relationship between persons. One person's hold over another is realised through his or her right to things - a point powerfully conveyed in Timon of Athens in which Shakespeare revealed a shrewd grasp of the nature of money:

This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions; bless the accursed;
Make the hoar leprosy adored; place thieves,
And give them title, knee and approval
With Senators on the bench.

Thus, wealth in an individualistic world is primarily movable wealth - commodities, of which money is the universal expression. As Marx pointed out in Capital (Vol 1): There (with commodities) it is a definite social relation between men that assumes in their eyes the fantastic form of a relation between things'. Others as it were fade from sight and the individual confronts alone, a world of things which corresponds to the natural world in which the individual is constituted.

At first sight this appears not dissimilar to the "total prestations" between clans already referred to, whereby "things are related in some degree as persons and persons as things". For Mauss, the essence of the primitive transaction lay in the fact that the gift embodied the "spirit" of the giver. As such it compelled the recipient to reciprocate so that the spirit embodied in the original gift - the Maoris call it the "hau" - might return to its source.

But the comparison on closer scrutiny does not hold - beyond a common anthropomorphism in respect of things, that is. For Marx, what the commodity embodies is value, a certain quantity of socially necessary labour. It is precisely because it embodies only this that commodity exchange is fundamentally dehumanising. Individuals are reduced to so many units of labour and their purchases on the market are not, of course, direct exchanges of commodities but are mediated by money. In contrast to the coercion of the wages system, the "mystic alienation of the donor in primitive reciprocity" is willed and engages a whole complex of meanings.

Further, according to Marx, the fundamental transaction upon which commodity society turns, consists in the purchase of the labour power of the worker by the capitalist in return for a wage or salary. This, for Marx, obscures a basic non-equivalence. For the value of what the worker produces in the form of commodities far exceeds the value...
of his wage. This, for the capitalist, constitutes the source of his surplus value and signifies for the worker, his exploitation. Again, in contrast, gift exchange is necessarily based upon equivalence and powerful social pressures work to ensure that it remains so.

Such pressures apply precisely because in traditional holistic societies, as Dumont suggests, "relations between men are more important, more highly valued, than the relations between men and things" (ibid p.106) Gift exchange tends to occur at the periphery of the social unit or clan. According to Sahlin,"reciprocity is a 'between' relation. It does not dissolve the separate parties within a higher unity but on the contrary, in correlating their unity, perpetuates it". (12) In short, the gift is the "primitive way of achieving the peace that in civil society is secured by the state".

In traditional societies, Dumont goes on to argue, wealth primarily takes the form of immovable wealth - that is land. Rights in land are "enmeshed in the social organisation in such a manner that superior rights accompany power over men. Such rights or wealth appearing essentially as a matter of relations between men are intrinsically superior to movable wealth, which is disparaged as is natural in such a system, for a mere relation between men and things". (13) In modern society, by contrast, the close connection between immovable wealth and power is largely severed. Movable wealth which in traditional society is viewed as potentially subversive in respect of the social order and has on that account to be ritually subordinated or incorporated into it, emerges in modern society as the supreme form of wealth, mediating in the dialectics of social power.

Yet Dumont's characterisation of traditional society as based upon immovable wealth brings into focus a problematical aspect of his thesis. It suggests a sedentary and agricultural mode of subsistence. As such it precludes one based upon gathering and hunting.

Furthermore, equality and hierarchy must combine in some manner in any social system as the ranking of social groups entails equality within each of them. Thus, it is possible for equality to be valued, even to a great extent, without it being an entailment of individualism. In such cases, however, it will not attain the status of an overall valuation.

This suggests the possibility that hierarchy, whether or not it was present to begin with, became under certain circumstances, more pronounced within holistic societies. What those circumstances were is a problematic matter. The temptation in Western social thinking, however, is to resort to one or other form of reductionism - particularly economic reductionism - in order to account for such a development.
Thus, for example a number of rival theories have been formulated to account for the development of the caste system in India which Dumont holds up as the quintessential example of holism. These range from voluntarist (that it was imposed upon the population by early legislators), historical (that it was, for example, the outcome of conquest by one ethnic group of others) and, above all, economic, explanations such as that it was a development out of the division of labour, grounded in the sectional interests of specialised professions. In each case there is an attempt to "derive the whole from the part". This is typical of Western rationalist thinking which, as it were, seizes upon the part and promotes it in a totalising fashion regardless of the intentionality and outlook of those subjects whose actions it purports to explain. While, of course, every social group shares with every other, a common humanity, it is a moot question how far we can usefully apply a methodology that originated in one social universe to an understanding of another.

As Dumont explains:

"As soon as we hear of human groups which separate themselves, distinguish themselves, isolate themselves fiercely from one another, we believe we know what we have to deal with; very well, we think, we know about this, it is rather like what we do as individuals, these castes resemble our precious modern persons, they are just so many little societies and juxtaposed as we are juxtaposed to our fellow men in modern society. Well, nothing is more false. The caste isolates itself by submission to the whole like an arm which does not wish to marry its cells to those of the stomach." (16)

In short, according to the modern "substantialist" way of thinking, individuals are analytically separated from their relations with others and invested with a substance or essence that determines how they interact with others. In the traditional or "structuralist" approach, by contrast, as Dumont points out, the elements in themselves of which the system seems to be composed are disregarded and only considered as the product of the network of relations that constitute the system (ibid p.40). These two ways of thinking are clearly incompatible. That is why the application of a methodology originating in one social universe to the understanding of another is questionable.

How do hierarchical holistic societies conceive of the "whole", or system, in their terms. Once again, Dumont:

"Generalising perhaps rashly from India, I posit that in most societies the configuration of values has a hierarchical form where the all embracing normative considerations which we usually call religion contains and limits whatever other social considerations are recognised." (17)

According to him, Western Europe in the early Christian era was characterised by a somewhat similar configuration of values. Further, it had another institution also present in post Vedic Hindu religion: the "world renouncer". This institution is vital to an understanding of the genesis of individualistic thought.

The world renouncer or "outworldly individual" renounces the world in order to seek salvation beyond it. He is in Christian thought an individual-in-relation-to-God. But Christianity differs from Hinduism in one important respect which is that it stresses also the notion of a community or brotherhood of souls. These different concepts have made for a certain underlying tension in Christian thinking:

"Outworldliness which encompasses the world implies an absolute individualism. In contrast, life in the world is relativised as summed up in the phrase "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's". Things of the world are "hierarchised according to their relative import for salvation". This connects with what was said earlier about the primacy of relations between persons in traditional society - encoded in the Christian notion of
brotherhood - over relations between things. In Christian thought, the individual's relation to God enjoins him to participate in the lives of others - a view which taken to its logical extreme by certain Christian millenarian sects, entailed the complete renunciation of private property.

Dumont's thesis is that the outworldliness of early Christianity gradually penetrated worldly life and in the process, incarnated within the world itself, the absolute individualism that had hitherto been the province of the outworldly individual. This is not, however, to succumb to an idealist interpretation of history as the outcome of the independent development of ideas. Nor, for that matter, does it mean that the ideas themselves can be simply construed as the epiphenomenal by-products of "material forces". On the contrary, the thrust of this essay is to emphasise that one inextricably engages the other in its elaboration and development.

According to Dumont, it was the Church that served as the institutional link between the outworldly individual and the inworldly individualism that was to come. The Church could be seen "as a sort of foothold or bridgehead of the divine" in the life of the world (18). Through it Christianity began in fact to accommodate itself to the world.

A major impetus towards the Church becoming as it were, a conduit for outworldly individualism to enter the world, came with the conversion of Constantine in the 4th century A.D. This brought into being the complex problem of what constitutes a Christian state. How was such a Christian state to be run? For the Church could no longer devalue and distance itself from the state as it had hitherto done - at any rate, not to the same extent. As Dumont puts it, "The state had after all taken one step out of the world and toward the Church but by the same token the Church was made more worldly than she had ever been." (ibid p.44)

Thus began a protracted search for some sort of modus vivendi between Church and State. Initially, the formula adopted was that proposed by Pope Gelasius around 500 A.D.: a "hierarchical dyarchy". The Church would defer to the State in worldly matters but the State would be ruled by the Church where spiritual matters were concerned - a formula that had built into it the structural inferiority of the State by virtue of the superiority of the spiritual realm over the mundane. In due course, however, this hierarchical dyarchy was undermined as the Church increasingly appropriated for itself, the powers of the State. In consequence, the State itself began to resonate to the absolute values that had previously belonged to religion.

Hobbes

From having been encompassed by religion, and subsequently united with it, the political realm strove to detach itself from it altogether. Several milestones mark this counter-movement. The Protestant Reformation while itself a religious protest, weakened the power of the Church. To some extent it liberated the individual from the need to have the Church intercede in his
In the mercantilist period, as Dumont points out (ibid p.107), there was a partial systematisation of economics. Complete unification of the field was hampered by the differential treatment accorded to international and intra-national trade. The former which dominated the latter in mercantilist thinking was viewed essentially from the perspective of the state. This corresponded to the subordination of economics to the political sphere. Thus, the political sphere furnished the ends to be pursued - the advancement of the power of the state vis-a-vis other states - while the economic constituted the means to those ends. This furtherance of the state's power required the application of economic policies that restricted free trade in order to ensure a favourable balance of trade upon which the wealth of the nation and hence, the power of the state, was deemed to be founded. The more favourable the balance of trade, the stronger the state in relation to other states.

However, from the late 17th century mercantilist statism encountered increasing opposition from advocates of free trade. Foremost among these voices of dissent was the Physiocrat, Francois Quesnay. Quesnay held that the basis of true wealth lay not in trade but in agriculture, in the natural productivity of the land. Indeed, for him the productivity of labour was secondary. His pre-occupation with land, with immovable wealth, hints at his commitment to a holistic paradigm. Yet he perceived free trade within this framework as being vital to its health rather like the circulation of blood in the body. He thus combined within his perspective, elements of holism and individualism. Indeed, he went further than all his predecessors in systematising the field of economics into an inter-related whole, imparting to it a distinct though not yet separate existence. Paradoxically, as Dumont suggests, he was able to present an holistic view of the economy by projecting onto the economic plane his general conception of the universe as a whole.
It was the publication of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776 that truly marked the birth of economics as an essentially separate and self-sufficient realm of thought. Smith's originality lay not so much in the production of new insights as in his powerful synthesis of old. Of the many thinkers who had a formative influence upon him, two stand out in particular: John Locke and Bernard de Mandeville.

Locke's contribution to the genesis of economic thought centred on his elaboration of the theory of natural law as a theoretical justification of private property. We can delineate two varieties of natural law—one ancient, the other modern. In the former, nature is the basis of the social order in which the individual is constituted. This, of course, corresponds to the holistic view of society—*or universitas*—according to which society is prior to the individual. The modern theory of natural law, by contrast, precludes the notion of social beings. It is the individual instead, as indicated earlier, who is grounded in nature. Society or societas is an artificial construction constituted by individuals for pragmatic reasons. This is not to be seen, nor was it intended as an empirical proposition, for clearly on empirical grounds it is a nonsense. Rather is it to be understood as a rationalisation, an appeal to a particular ontological view of individuals that is ingrained in a particular social reality from which it draws sustenance and reciprocally sustains.

It is to this particular ontological view of the individual which Locke appealed and upon which he constructed his theory of private property. Since, for Locke, the individual has proprietorial ownership of his person, then by extension, he has the right to claim that which is produced by his own labour as an expression of himself. In this view, the individual confronts nature alone and wrests from it what he requires by his own labour. Insofar as others threaten to impinge upon this basic property relationship and diminish his freedom of action, he is obliged to associate with his fellows in order that each may regulate their interrelations. The association thus constituted through a social contract is ideally nothing more than the sum of its parts. It is, in short, a means to their private ends. Relations between persons and things—which correspond to nature—assume, in Locke, priority over relations between persons which is more characteristic of holism.

In positing society as no more than the sum of its parts, Locke departed from Hobbes who maintained that social order could only be secured through the subordination of many wills to one supreme will: the monarch. Thus Hobbes, starting off from the same premise as Locke—the pre-social individual—arrived at a conclusion significantly different from him—that is, society in a transcendent relation to the individual. But while Hobbes, like Quesnay, was still tied to a holistic mode of thinking, Locke went beyond it.

This, however, still left the problem of power and how to justify its use. By and large, it was a problem that Locke evaded. He readily conceded the empirical reality of political subordination and hence the transcendent character of society which his idealised model denied. But within that model itself was to be found a disconcerting difficulty—how to accommodate the egotistic impulses of individuals to the existence of others similarly inclined. To resolve this he found it necessary to fall back upon religion as the guarantor of morality. It was religion, he argued, that imbued the individual with a sense of moral obligation towards others. Thus, morality inspired by religion preempted and, in a sense, substituted for, political subordination which though evident at an empirical level remained only a contingent possibility at the level of the ideal.

Mandeville, for his part, went one step further. Morality, he argued, was a social institution "intended to make men sociable". But there was a sense in which the economy itself independently of the intent-
ions of individuals, manifested a moral order. It was inherently geared to the public good despite—or rather, because of—the selfish pursuit of private ends. With Mandevelle, therefore, a utilitarian ethics replaced the traditional notion of morality which was cut adrift from the economy.

Further, such a view decisively overturned the older theory of trade which underpinned mercantilist thinking—namely, that it was, essentially a "zero sum game". On the contrary, both parties to a transaction, according to Mandevelle, benefited from it. This was why each in the pursuit of his own interests inadvertently promoted the welfare of all.

By thus asserting the immanence of "economic laws", the economy could be effectively separated from both traditional morality and the political sphere. It could be portrayed as a complex automatic mechanism that functioned effectively without the need for conscious intervention. Hence Adam Smith's reference to the "invisible hand of the market". Such a view suggested the pervasive influence of Newton's mechanistic model of the universe prompting one observer to comment upon its inappropriateness in an age when "we are now rapidly moving into the relativistic universe of Einstein" (19). Nevertheless, it was to set the stage for a more illustrious successor: Marxism.

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The "principles of a socialist society", suggests GARETH THOMAS, have to be reflected in the movement which aims to bring about that society.

Years ago a college tutor introduced me to a vision of a just future. I had been searching for a political direction at the time but the politics of the main parties seemed so pessimistic and aimless. Suddenly it was presented to me on a plate. A moneyless world, free from nationalism, poverty and war. A united world where people co-operated to produce wealth for all and freely took from the common store. Joy! Bowled over I did not need much persuading. I grabbed the vision and happily involved myself with like-minded people to attempt to spread the idea. It was going to be so easy. Why didn't people just imagine how great life could be?

Well, we made a little progress but not much. Most people seemed to have empty heads and the more I talked about our ideas, the emptier their heads seemed to get. Naïve, of course, but more than that. I had given no thought to how socialist ideas would grow in people. Since I myself accepted them as the answer to our troubles I assumed that if we simply put forward our arguments for socialism in a rational way to people then that would start it all off. Clearly it does not work like that. The difference between today's society and the projected socialist future seemed so great that, I believe, most are unable to make in one attempt, the leap of thought required to accept as practical the socialist alternative. Too many see it as remote, a nice idea but a thousand years away. The gulf between what people experience today and what we present to them is perceived as being too wide. For reasons unknown it is easier for us to make the practical connections between society today and the socialist future. The possibilities for change inherent in our society and in the natural adaptability of human beings to fulfil these possibilities were readily apparent to yet not others.

I came to the conclusion that merely describing what socialism would be like was not enough. It left things too much up in the air. What our arguments lacked was a concrete real-life base to serve as an example. We cannot show socialism in action but we can attempt to demonstrate examples of activities that are more in tune with the principles of a socialist society than the accepted values of...
like to take this opportunity to discuss one way in which we might popularize socialist practices. It does not involve actual work activities but rather is concerned with the manner in which we relate to, and treat, one another and the way in which we greet new ideas and new thinking. Before we can get involved in any practical work activities it is vital that we take on personal characteristics that suit such activities. However, society today often encourages conformist thinking and discourages progressive ideas. Those in power at present welcome submissive minds, not least because it cuts down on the state's policing bills. On top of this we may have been involved in the past in political movements ourselves that, for all their pronouncements, often put cold water on fresh and progressive thinking. Socialism itself should be a society where people feel able to try out new ideas without fear of being dismissed as cranks. Indeed, criticizing accepted practices and creating and debating new ideas is of considerable value and will be crucial for a progressive and efficient socialist society. So one way in which we could popularize socialism today is to take on, as far as possible, that frame of mind that welcomes creative thinking as a value in itself and for what it can lead to. If we are able to popularize socialistic activities we must also support critical thinking and, just as importantly, an atmosphere that allows individuals to express results of that process without fear of rejection.

The move towards more critical minds that question even our long held positions must be accompanied by an atmosphere of trust amongst ourselves, with the knowledge that if any individual produces an original idea he or she will be given a fair hearing. However, this may not be easy. There seems to be a conservative tendency within many of us that acts as an obstacle to new ways of doing things. On top of
this many of us may have been involved in political movements that for all their progressive aims have been quite regressive in the way they conduct their affairs. The weakness of long established political movements is that they sometimes succumb to the dead weight of their own arguments. Old ideas become stale, hold our thinking down and prevent us from producing new ideas.

Even in political movements where there is no established power structure or leadership, the dominant and accepted ideas that are never seriously questioned become sources of power. Those that seek to uphold those ideas, come what may, may seek power for themselves, putting people down who criticise these dominant ideas. New exciting ideas can rarely be defeated by debating them but they can be defeated if you ignore them. By deliberately choosing not to acknowledge their existence, or to seriously consider them, you refuse to change, and thus limit, the scope of your thinking. Dominant and established ideas are not powerful themselves but they become sources of power and strength for those who accept them and are too lazy, or feel too comfortable with those ideas, to change them. It is afterall often easier to accept things as they have always been. As Bedap, one of Ursula Le Guin's characters in her anarcho/communist novel "The Dispossessed" (Panther 1975), points out:

"Find a nice safe hierarchy, and settle in. Don't make changes - don't risk disapproval...It's always easier to let yourself be governed." (p144)

We are all guilty of these tendencies but it's also clear that some people exhibit them more than others. We must always try to make ourselves aware of the motivations of our actions even if this means delving deep into ourselves - often an unpleasant activity.

This may appear as an unnecessary digression but it is important that we learn from past experiences. We must be careful to create an atmosphere that welcomes criticism from all quarters and about all subjects of our concern. We must never allow anything to be regarded as "thought-crime" as George Orwell so aptly put it. If we seek to establish a truly open and free society then we must mirror its existence by assisting the creation of new thinking. We may argue against the conservative face of religion in the way it tells us what to think, as shown by the recent Salman Rushdie "Satanic Verses" Affair, but equally we must never allow our political views to become sacred. We all have a tendency to judge something as unacceptable if it does not fit in with our political views. This tendency should always be fought against because in its extreme it can lead to an Orwellian nightmare where ideas and activities are defined as good or bad depending on their political standpoint. This is the greatest danger to intellectual honesty and far from producing creative independent socialists it will result in followers who parrot political slogans without question.

From the viewpoint of attracting supporters to our cause it also makes sense to be willing to accept criticism. An arrogant dismissive approach to new ideas can be a bit turn-off to "outsiders". Once we believe we are absolutely right with our convictions then there is always the danger that individual who question our positions may be persecuted for posing a threat to our absolute correctness. Intellectual crimes of this nature become acceptable because it is the political cause that counts and other values are sacrificed to that end. Behaviour which we would never tolerate in our own personal lives becomes acceptable in our political activities. Resulting from all this is a hostile intimidating atmosphere that inhibits people from speaking freely and
criticising dominant ideas. It is vital that in our new activities we never allow such an atmosphere to develop. However, this is not always easy since those responsible for an intimidating atmosphere are often the least aware of the intimidating effect they have on others. The hostile atmosphere often found in political circles may be a big kick to those individuals who enjoy that sort of thing but to people not used to political discussion it is about as welcome as a dose of Karl Marx's "Capital".

Much of what has been said is linked to a truly democratic view of society. Democracy is much more than majority rule and the absence of established leaders. It should also include a frame of mind that allows differences of opinion and critical questioning of all aspects of life. It should be a society where there is not always conformity to usual patterns of behaviour and thinking. In short, where people do not fear to be different. Democracy, in this respect, starts as soon as we accept that we may be wrong and, conversely, undemocratic behaviour will occur when individuals and groups start to act as if they are the sole guardians of the truth.

The development of socialist ideas is a complex and slow learning process but we may assist that process through our behaviour to one another. We should always welcome new and critical thinking because it is this process itself that will result in socialist ideas. Above all, we should never punish people for thinking "unacceptable" thoughts. The argument that society today encourages us to be anti-social to each other is a feeble excuse. We have a responsibility to develop patterns of behaviour that are a pre-condition of the future society we seek to establish. If we can popularize socialist activities and attitudes as an example to others in today's society then we each have a responsibility to do so.

ON THE MARGIN
Out there
On the landing, grubby children
Play at life
Learn to push, pull, punch and kick
And so survive.
Their parents can't, don't want to hear.
They've had enough.
Beneath the blare and glare of T.V.
They're making love.
Out there
The dark, dank, concrete stair.
No scent of roses
Graffiti clings its grey walls.
Misspelt obscenities
Mark the site of midnight fumblings
And forced transactions.
Down below
A derelict square, bordered by
A motorway
A gang of youths kick at a can
The aimless clatter
Drowned by the roar of heavy traffic
Along with their voices.
And beyond?
Beyond the motorway, the next block
And the next?
Deserted factories,
The municipal tip, a scrap metal yard
And the cemetery.

Louise Cox
Socialists have always differed among themselves over how they envisage a socialist society emerging. One school of thought, for example, adheres to a particular theory of social change which can perhaps best be described as "millenarian" - that is, the view that the entire "economic basis" of society can be transformed more or less at a stroke by means of a "legal enactment", creating IN TO TO a completely different form of society to that just abolished. This is not to say that millenarians in the socialist movement do not recognise the possibility of other (non-economic) social changes coming into effect, prior to and in anticipation of, this apocalyptic event. But when it comes to the "essential structure" of capitalist economic relations - wage labour, commodity production and so on - they are adamant. This structure, they insist, is bound to remain more or less intact and unaltered in scope right up to the very moment that an overwhelming majority captures political power to enact socialism.

Economic relationships are thus held to exist in a fundamentally "objective" sense which makes them IMPERVIOUS to the gradual change in social outlook that a growing socialist movement would bring about - unlike other types of relations, like the family, which are relegated to the marxist "superstructure". This is indicative of the historical roots of this school of thought in a 19th century outlook which emphasises economic determinism.

However, socialist millenarianism and what has been dubbed its BIG BANG theory of social revolution has not been without its critics within the socialist movement itself. One such critique was elaborated in a lengthy document published in October 1987 entitled The Road to Socialism (TRTS) which called for the construction of a "more sophisticated multi-dimensional model of socialist transformation which nevertheless incorporates the more useful insights of the old theory" (p.3).

While recognising that you could not have "islands of socialism"
The transformation of communes and co-operatives into "socialistic" units. These would NECESSARILY have to be linked together through a network of mutual support in order to reduce reliance upon capitalist markets and suppliers and to facilitate increasing interaction with one another through the mediation of the "Gift Economy".

Vital to this whole alternative scenario is the growth of socialist consciousness itself. Without it, it could not reach fruition. This stress on the creative role of consciousness in the making of history marks a significant break from the more traditional economic outlook of the socialist millenarians who tend to attach overwhelming, if not exclusive, importance to "abstract economic forces".

Indeed, this was apparent in the response that the TRTS document encountered. It was argued, for example, that "capitalism cannot be transcended from within" and that "capitalism cannot allow more than the slightest and most insignificant room for relationships which transcended wage labour and capital". Likewise it was suggested that whatever might be the possible effects of a growing socialist movement, "what is out of the question" was the argument that an "increase in the numbers of socialists will result in a corresponding...change in economic relationships between people prior to the formal enactment of socialism". To argue this is to concede the reformist claim that the capitalist system is adaptable to political will". Such statements amount to a forthright and vigorous defence of the BIG BANG theory.
This debate has ramifications that extend far beyond the confines of the socialist movement itself. It touches upon some pretty fundamental issues of relevance to anyone interested in the dynamics of social change. For this reason we publish here an edited version of a "Clarification Statement" which followed publication of The Road to Socialism summarising some of the arguments contained in that original document.

It is very unfortunate that much of the controversy surrounding our circular The Road to Socialism since its publication in October 1987, has been based on serious misunderstandings. Assertions have been made about the contents of that circular which do not tally with what was stated in it.

Our original circular consisted of two parts. The first part was an analysis of the "big bang"scenario. In rejecting this scenario as millenarian, it is not to be supposed that we have therefore rejected the specific route to the establishment of socialism which other socialists have advocated—that is, the democratic capture of state power. It is simply that we believe that this cannot possibly explain all the enormous complexity of social change accompanying the growth of the socialist movement. We believe it is absolutely essential for our credibility as a movement to give some indication of what this process will involve. Otherwise we will appear simplistic and naive.

The second part of our circular, therefore, consisted of a tentative analysis of the process of social change leading to the establishment of a socialist society. We do emphasise the word "tentative". Unfortunately, some have not taken what we tentatively suggested about this process of social change in conjunction with our premise that the big bang scenario fails to convince. The problem, in other words, is that these individuals have criticised the second part of our circular but have said little or nothing about the first. In short, their approach is the wrong way round. They should have started by looking at what we said in Part One. Had they shown that what we said there was incorrect, then and only then could they legitimately attack what we said in Part Two.

So what did we mean by the "big bang scenario"? It is clear to us that this term has been misunderstood. One critic, for example, expressed the view that the "so called big bang theory was a complete non-issue" and that "the Party has always seen socialism as developing in the womb of capitalism in the sense that we have always said that capitalism makes socialism possible by developing the productive forces and by socialising labour". This, however, is not what we meant by the big bang at all.

What we are talking about is the notion that the prevailing system of economic relations will remain unaffected by the growth of the socialist movement right up until the "enactment of socialism". At this point, a whole new system of economic relationships, based upon voluntary labour and free access will, according to this argument, be brought into being more or less at a stroke. Classical Marxism has, of course, traditionally postulated a "contradiction" between the development of the productive forces, on the one hand, and the economic relations of a given society on the other. As the tension between these grows it reaches a crisis point which is resolved by a revolutionary change in society, altering the nature of society's economic relationships and bringing them into line with the developing productive forces.

This is fine as far as it goes. But it most certainly does not mean that the structure of economic relationships could not be altered to any extent prior to the establishment of socialism and in line with the direction in which society is heading. Indeed, this will, we maintain, hasten the onset of the crisis point at which the social revolution is consolidated.

No social system in history has ever existed as a pure example of its type. At any point in time, human society has contained an admixture of different types of social relations, some originating
THE SOCIALIZISTIC TRANSITION: A CASE STUDY?

For an example of how this exchange would work, Nordan Akerman describes a system originating in Quebec which was introduced some years ago in Sweden: a union of local co-ops, bringing together an ever widening range of products and services, and entitling all its members to the equivalent of the hours they have given the community in the form of goods and services. The union will provide, for example, a voucher for holiday accommodation, the services of painters and plasterers, consumer goods or materials, in exchange for a given number of hours' work for the co-op or community. These hours can be worked by individuals, groups or families intermittently or occasionally according to respective needs and opportunities. Monetary relations are thus abolished: exchange assumes a non-market form. And the old marxist maxim becomes everyday reality: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs".

What needs to be done, or what the community or its individual members deem desirable, thus no longer relies on uncertain public or private financing. And most things which could not be done before, because of the high hourly labour costs involved, become possible once again: the provision, maintenance, embellishment and improvement of public facilities, neighbourhoods and buildings; forest clearance; neighbourhood services; running repairs to items in daily use; local science shops and medical centres to investigate particular health and scientific problems brought up by neighbourhoods or communities; assistance for the sick or the handicapped etc.

from Andre Gorz Paths to Paradise; on the liberation from work (1983) p.62

in previous social systems, some prefiguring future social systems. This happened in the case of capitalist social relations which developed in the womb of feudal society along with the productive forces themselves until they gained the upper hand in the famous capitalist revolutions of the past. And as we showed in our circular, in society today there exists types of economic relationships which by no stretch of the imagination can be called capitalist.

So it is at least possible that new socio-economic relations which are not capitalist in nature could develop in line with the growth of the socialistic movement. We would go further and state emphatically that not only is this possible but that it is necessary. Why?

We can cite six main arguments in support of this claim:

1. Self Sacrifice We argued in our circular that if the socialistic movement is to grow then it must take into account the short term interests of the working class. Unfortunately, many socialists tend to present socialism as being purely in the long term interests of this class. This is one reason why the movement has failed to grow. But as a famous economist once put it, in the long run we are all dead. Whether we like it or not, most individuals do not seem to be primarily motivated by what is going to happen in the long run. We therefore make things infinitely more difficult for ourselves by portraying socialism as some distant objective beyond the political horizon, the details of which need not concern us today. What we should be doing instead is to constantly relate existing possibilities to a future socialistic society showing specifically how such a society could harness these possibilities in a practical way.

But more than that - and this is the real point - we should be trying to formulate and foster the appearance of, material links between the capitalist present and the socialistic future which connect directly with the short term needs of workers. By building these links, socialism will no longer appear to be so disembodied, so discontinuous
with the present as it does now. We must emphasise, however, that this does not entail succumbing to a reformist strategy which can only perpetuate capitalism. What it does mean is helping to promote the types of socio-economic relations that we have been talking about which pre-figure socialism and are characterised by being outside the market. It is through these relations that workers will be able progressively to meet their short term needs in ways that connect with the socialist objective and show it to be feasible in a practical sense. This will help to break down the dichotomy between the short term interests (usually interpreted as meaning the advocacy of reformism) and the long term interests of the working class. But as long as we see the former as an obstacle to the latter we will in effect be urging workers to adopt an ideology of self-sacrifice in the meantime. Self-sacrifice, however, cannot possibly provide a firm foundation upon which we hope to attract workers to our cause.

2. Building Confidence "It is people's attitudes that sanction the powers of money" (Socialist Standard Sept 1988 p.163). Historically, it took a long time for people unused to it to gain sufficient confidence in the reliability of money for it to enter into general use. Likewise, a people inured to the "powers of money" will need time and experience to regain the confidence to do without it.

3. Revolutionary Restraint? In the event that we obtained a sizeable minority of socialists - say 1 billion out of a total world population of 5 billion - we would argue that it would be inconceivable that such a minority would want to exercise "revolutionary restraint" and not take practical steps to organise social life as far as possible along lines consistent with their outlook. Remember the millenarian position within the socialist movement is that only when an overwhelming majority of the population - say 80% or 4 billion people - are socialist, then and only then will the existing structure of socio-economic relations be acted upon and altered through the political enactment of socialism.

But one billion socialists is an awful lot of people! The sheer weight of numbers will profoundly shape the mental environment, creating conditions in which socialists could not fail to feel a surging confidence. They will permeate every walk of life, every part of the world, every industry. They will be in a position to make a significant difference to the way society is run. Would people in Africa be allowed to starve for lack of money? Would people in urgent need be denied medical attention because they could not afford it? Of course not. There will be plenty of socialist doctors and other medical workers who would willingly undertake such work free, and if necessary in their spare time because they will want to do it. Indeed, without this willingness, socialism itself would not be possible. As for capitalist governments, they will be forced to bend their priorities more and more in the face of this massive socialist constituency - if only in the hope of buying it off.

4. Socialist Government? This leads to another problem with the big bang scenario? What is to happen in the period between the socialist movement having obtained a simple majority (51%) and an overwhelming majority (80%)? What are socialist delegates who in this period would be a majority in parliament, going to do there? Is it conceivable that they would allow the priorities of capitalism to hold sway until the necessary "overwhelming majority" is reached, for socialism to be "enacted"? We think not.

5. Profitable Prospects? Connected with this is the problem of the profit motive. Under capitalism, as we constantly point out, production only takes place when there is the prospect of profit. What we do not point out, however, is what is to become of the profit motive when the prospect of socialism is looming ahead. The impending enactment of socialism will self-evidently destroy the hopes of capitalists of realising profit because it will mean the destruction of the profit system itself. On
It is quite true that millenarian socialists recognize that prior to the enactment of socialism, the socialist movement will have drawn up numerous plans for implementation once socialism is established. But because it is proposed that socialism should be established in one fell swoop this means that all these plans would have to be coordinated - that is, as different parts of a single global plan. Given the complexity and interdependence of modern production this is absolutely impossible to achieve. It presupposes the concept of central planning which socialists have decisively rejected.

Each of these arguments individually, knocks a huge hole in the big bang scenario. Taken together, they constitute an overwhelming rebuttal of such a scenario. There can be no grounds for holding or implying such a view if you accept any one of these arguments.

So what are we left with if we reject the big bang scenario? We are left with what our circular has suggested all along: an alternative scenario that presupposes the progressive erosion of capitalist relations and capitalist values in line with the growth of the socialist movement itself, prior to the enactment of socialism - that is the only answer that makes any sense. And it does not mean abandoning the traditional socialist theory of revolution - the need to capture state power - but rather, supplementing it.

How these "socialistic relations" express themselves, what form they take is something we can all argue and debate about. We most certainly did not wish to dogmatically adhere to any particular form. They could express themselves at an individual level such as through "skill swapping", voluntary work and self-provisioning through the domestic economy. They could express themselves in more collective forms such as socialist educational establishments, communal lifestyles and producer co-ops. What all these have in common is that they represent a particular opening through which new social relations can emerge in the spaces between existing capitalist units.
Do not misunderstand what we are saying here. It is noticeable, for example, that we came in for a lot of flak for mentioning co-ops. Did we not realise, said our critics, that the co-operative movement associated with people like Robert Owen had failed to bring about socialism? Of course we realised this. But what our critics have failed to realise is that we simply see co-ops as one particular form in which socialistic relations can invade the capitalist economy. We did not state that these forms in themselves would lead to socialism. The development of a socialist movement requires a political organisation that actively disseminates socialist ideas. 19th century co-ops could not possibly have led to the establishment of socialism as the conditions for this to happen - a substantial socialist movement - simply did not exist. The objection that our critics make is therefore based upon a non sequitur. As a particular form through which socialistic relations can invade capitalism, co-ops themselves have to be invaded by a socialist consciousness. That did not happen in the 19th century. And it still has not happened today. But under the very different circumstances where there is a mass socialist movement we are talking about a very different proposition indeed. Then such forms will be able to feed upon and contribute to the growth of the socialist movement and through them we shall be able to orient production more and more along "socialistic lines" - that is to say, through a self expanding gift economy based on mutual aid among cooperating units which relate to each other through a non-market network even if they remain partially dependent on the market "outside".

There is much more that could be said about this alternative scenario which space prevents us from doing. We urge comrades to think again about what we are saying. Don’t just reject it because of the associations that words like "co-ops" may have. Consider the context in which we are using these words. And then if you think our analysis of the big bang scenario is wrong, tell us why. Because that is the key to it all.

WHAT IS WORK ANYWAY?

As the future of paid employment has become more problematical, sociologists have taken a new interest in what has been termed the "informal economy". The informal economy covers work done which is not traditional paid employment and consists of two main areas:

* The "grey" economy of work done free at home (including housework) and voluntarily in the community. Do-it-yourself and the use of new home and garden gadgetry are part of the grey economy.

* The "black" economy, or hidden economy, of work which should be part of the formal economy but is done for cash on the side or "off the books" (that is, without the Inland Revenue knowing about it).

The black economy is small and illegal while the grey economy of the household and the community is legal and large, involving almost all adults. Richard Rose estimated that the grey economy might account for 51 per cent of all labour hours, compared with 46 per cent in the formal economy and 3 per cent in the black economy....

Not only is the grey economy of household and community work bigger, it may have a much longer term significance for the future of paid employment. For example, in his book, After Industrial Society? The emerging self service economy (1978), Jonathan Gershuny pointed out that capital goods in the home like washing machines, micro-wave ovens, hover-mowers and videos were being substituted for services purchased outside the home from laundries, cafes, gardeners and cinemas.

(from 'Society Today' New Society 8 November 1985)
Anti-Parliamentary Communism: The Movement for Worker's Councils in Britain 1917-1945 by Mark Shipway (Macmillan, 1988, 239pp., £29.50)

What sort of books should communists write? Firstly, they should locate their writings within the intellectual territory of communism. That is, they should address the type of questions which are vital for the achievement of communism and, through their writings, engage intellectually, politically and even emotionally with other communists. Secondly, and just as important, they should write in a style which is accessible to any thoughtful member of the wage earning class, irrespective of the level of education which he or she has received or of previous exposure to communist ideas. In other words, a communist book is one in which which any wage earner who happens to open it can immediately recognise is speaking to him or her, both in terms of the issues which are being discussed and the straight forward language which the writer employs. A third feature of communist literature at least within liberal capitalist states, is that communist authors should attempt to use whatever resources capitalism puts at their disposal for the benefit of communism. Capitalist publishers regard books as commodities, as sources of profit, but the communist writer grasps any opportunity to use such such a commodity as a vehicle for expressing the communist alternative to commodity relationships. Similarly, if the communist author can hive off capitalist funds (for example, in the form of a student grant) while writing a communist book, that becomes another means to turn the resources of the capitalist class against the capitalist system.

However, before we all start enrolling as PhD students to write communist tomes at capitalism's expense, a few words of caution are needed. Obviously, not everyone is cut out to be an author, and writing is only one form of activity for communists to engage in, not intrinsically superior or inferior to any other. In addition, no communist should underestimate the difficulties of ploughing a communist furrow within the stony soil of academia. Not only do the universities offer an artificial and enervating setting from which to observe the workings of capitalism, but they also provide an intellectual environment where communism is habitually distorted as yet another project for reforming capitalism and where communists find themselves under an unrelenting pressure to divert their attention to the latest fads provided by a panoply of currently fashionable ideologues. Within such an environment, it takes enormous commitment and strength of mind to stick to one's communist guns and not be diverted.

Against this background, it is hardly surprising that precious little emerges from academic sources that has any bearing on communism. All the more reason, then, that on the rare occasions when a worthwhile book does appear, communists should recognise the achievements of its author.
Mark Shipway's Anti-Parliamentary Communism is based on a PhD thesis which he wrote as a postgraduate student at the University of Manchester. In examining the ideas and the activity of the anti-parliamentary communists in Britain during the period 1917-1945, he has chosen a theme which cannot fail to interest those of us who are already committed communists. Yet, at the same time, his book can also serve as excellent introduction to what communism genuinely means for any wage earner who has previously been hooked on capitalism's ideological bait. Clearly written in straightforward but elegant English, without a trace of academic jargon, here is a book which anyone who approaches it with an open mind can read, understand and be inspired by.

The book is an account of two currents of all but forgotten revolutionaries. On the one hand, there is the Workers' Socialist Federation of 1918-24 and on the other, the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation of 1921-41, as well as its various precursors and offshoots. Shipway tackles the account of these two currents by splitting his book into three parts. Part one, which is arguably the most important section of the entire book is on "Basic Principles". Here Shipway is concerned to show not merely how the WSF and the APCF emerged historically, but to demonstrate theoretically how they arrived at coherent communist positions by answering the key questions confronting the wage-earning class in the aftermath of the First World War (not to mention today, of course). Obviously,"anti-parliamentarianism" and "communism" are at the head of the list of Shipway's "Basic Principles" and he provides clear descriptions of the anti-parliamentarians grasp of of these vital concepts. For example, on communism he writes that this was envisaged as a "classless, stateless human community based on common ownership of the means of production (which) would also involve production for use, democratic control and free access (pp.25-6). Other "Basic principles" were hammered out as the anti-parliamentarians analysed the Russian Revolution, the Labour Party and the Trade Union form of organisation. Concerning Russia, the anti-parliamentarians perceived that the regime "was not communist but state capitalist and that when the communist revolution did arrive the ruling class in Russia would have to be swept aside with all the rest of the world's capitalists" (p.56). With regard to the Labour Party, the WSF's Workers' Dreadnought warned that "the Labour Party cannot emancipate them (the workers), because it is merely reformist and will not sweep away the capitalist system when it gets into power" (pp.69-70), while as Shipway explains:

The basis of the anti-parliamentary critique of trade unionism was that trade unions organised workers within the capitalist system, as 'The Pimps of Labour' bargaining with the capitalists over the sale of the commodity labour power.(p.79)

Part two deals with the bleak years from 1925 to 1935 during which the wage earning class experienced numerous setbacks and the anti-parliamentarians suffered defections and splits. Notwithstanding the difficulties posed by this period, however, the anti-parliamentarians refused to compromise with the forces of capitalism and maintained their commitment to communism. Shipway pays them the deservedly handsome comment that:

To their credit...they did not become disillusioned and drop out of the struggle. To the best of their abilities they carried out the essential tasks of keeping the idea of communism alive, and nurturing the basic principles born from previous periods of struggle (p.126)
finally, in Part Three, Shipway shows how the anti-parliamentarians relied on their principles and experience to denounce the lies of the capitalists and their lackeys when another generation of wage earners was marched into the slaughter-house of the Second World War. While the Labour Party, Communist Party and trade unions, as well as the avowed supporters of capitalism, urged workers to murder one another, the APCF appealed:

Workers! The Capitalist system production for Profit instead of for use - is the cause of War!...ALL the Capitalists are aggressors from the workers' point of view. They rob you until you are industrial 'scrap', and will sacrifice you 'to the last of man' to defend their imperial interest. (p.169)

Some readers of this review may form the impression that the story that Shipway has to tell in Anti-Parliamentary Communism is an essentially depressing one. After all here is an account of an entire generation of revolutionaries who, despite their best efforts, were unable to defeat capitalism. The mass of wage earners remained indifferent to their "Basic Principles" preferring to slaughter one another in war rather than join in a common effort to destroy the capitalist system. Paradoxically, however, the cumulative impact of Shipway's account is an inspiring one. Among the anti-parliamentary communists, the most famous individual was Sylvia Pankhurst. With an eye to their profits, Macmillan have seen to it that Pankhurst's photograph appears on the dust cover. Yet the Pankhurst who appears in these pages is not the famous suffragette or anti-fascist, but the unfashionable communist Pankhurst of the period 1918-24. Even during this period, however, it is the less well known Aldred rather than Pankhurst who is the more consistent and clear sighted articulator of communist ideas. In later years, isolation and disappointment took their toll of Aldred, so that towards the end of his life he became, to put it charitably, not a little eccentric. Yet, again, the good sense of communist ideas ensured that there would be ordinary working man and women in the ranks of the APCF and elsewhere to articulate them coherently and impressively. The overall moral of Shipway's account is that anti-parliamentary communism is not an episode in the history of the wage earning class that belongs to the period 1917-45. Rather, since it is a reaction to capitalist irrationality and inhumanity, for as long as capitalism lasts it is bound to occur and re-occur as a protest within the wage earning class and as a vision of a better world.

The John Ball Press

Wealth/Health/Ecology.

FREE IS CHEAPER by Ken Smith

It takes longer today for a carpenter or bricklayer to earn the price of a pound of meat or a housebrick than it did five centuries ago. Where has the money gone? The rich are still rich but not as rich as they were, so they haven't got it. The poor are not so much better off as to account for the loss. The answer says Ken Smith in Free is Cheaper lies in our economic system.

From small beginnings at the end of the Middle Ages, the Market Economy has come to dominate life in every corner of the world. But it has brought with it increasingly unacceptable costs. The crime industry, war preparation, bureaucracy, the "sales effort", these and other non-productive activities absorb about nine-tenths of the working population and are growing faster than productivity itself. The only answer to such profligate, environmentally-destructive and im-
overwhelming waste, argues Ken Smith, is production for need not for sale, the extension of this principle from those sectors of the economy - like health care and street lighting - already supplied on the basis of need, to the entire economy itself.

Ken Smith has been newsboy, dental-technician, railway clerk, demolition-contractor, supermarket operator and land developer. This is a book for disaffected Rightists, disillusioned Leftists, disenchanted Centrists, Believers seeking rationality, Atheists seeking spiritual fulfillment, the environmentally worried and the politically perplexed.

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This article was first published in SOLIDARITY FOR WORKERS' POWER (see OTHER PUBLICATIONS) vol 7 no 6, under the heading "Political Consequences of Philosophical Illusion (Marx's theory of 'Being and Consciousness')."

One of Marx's most complete and definitive statements concerning his philosophical assumptions and their application to the problem of social change (both evolution and revolution) appears in the famous preface to his 'Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy'. Owing to its importance and clarity, we shall quote it here at some length:

The general result at which I arrived, and which, once won, served as a guiding thread for my studies, can be briefly formulated as follows:

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life, conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or - what is but a legal expression for the same thing - with the property relations within which they had been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic - in short, ideological - forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production (Marx-Engels, Selected Works Moscow 1955 Vol 1 p.362)

This definitive and self-contained statement was written by Marx in 1859, eleven years after he wrote the Communist Manifesto and eight years before the publication of Vol 1 of Capital. In other words, it is well embedded in Marx's mature and creative period, and forms a logical link between the Manifesto and Capital. It explains why Marx considered it necessary to proceed from a political analysis (like the Manifesto) to an economic analysis (like Capital). Moreover, this
It is not the change in consciousness of men that determines the change in their being but, on the contrary, the change in their social being that determines the change in their consciousness.

QUESTION: Where does the change in social being originate?

ANSWER: From changes in the material productive forces.

FURTHER QUESTION: Where do these changes in the material productive forces originate?

To this question Marx has no answer. Or if he has one, he never states it explicitly. Marx is, of course, aware that changes occur in the material productive forces themselves, because these changes are, in his view, the source of all other changes in social life. But he never attributes significance to the source of changes in the material productive forces. In the quoted Preface he mentions the 'development of the material productive forces', the 'change of the economic foundation', the material transformation of the economic conditions of production'. But nowhere in the Preface or in any other of his writings does he answer the question: what generates this development/change/ transformation of the material productive forces? And what is the social significance of the factors which generate this change?

To many people this may appear as a pseudo-problem. They would argue that all one has to do is to observe what is actually taking place in real life. A change in the material forces of production is brought about by the implementation of some technological invention. This requires a) a new invention b) an investment to transform the invention into an economic reality. Does this not resolve the problem?

Not at all. It merely raises a lot of further questions. What, throughout history, has motivated inventors to invent new technologies? And what has motivated those who had means to select and choose a
particular invention and incur the risk of investing in its practical implementation?

To argue that many inventions are accidental is not good enough, unless one accepts that accidents are the generators of social change. To say that, although individual inventions may be accidental yet on a statistical scale they exhibit an overall, non-accidental pattern, is little more than rephrasing the problem. For what then is this pattern? We know, for example, that the ancient Greeks had sufficient scientific and technological know-how to improve their agricultural production significantly. Instead, all this know-how was applied to warfare and temple building.

To say that throughout history most inventors and investors, whether as individuals or as social groups (the investors - even as a class), were impelled by the 'profit motive' is to retroject onto the whole history of all known societies typically capitalist motives and a specifically capitalist ethos. Moreover, what is this 'profit motive'? Is it simply greed or the need to accumulate? To assume this is to accept the naive (bourgeois) assumption that human beings are inherently competitive and that this inexplicable characteristic of the individual is the generator of social change. This type of explanation which embeds the problem in 'human nature', is more than just a logical trick, which transforms a problem which cannot be answered into an assumption which requires no explanation. It is an acceptance of the capitalist ethic. To accept this ethic is to accept the most fundamental assumption of capitalism about human beings, and thus to be trapped ideologically within the bourgeois system. A more sophisticated analysis of the 'profit motive' would interpret it as a class mentality, and as the urge of members of a given class to sustain their decision-making role in society. However, if one accepts this interpretation, one is forced to conclude that it is class conscious

Some marxists try to evade the whole problem by arguing that the whole process of social change must be grasped as an evolving totality, where 'social being' influences 'social consciousness' while being itself influenced by it. In other words, they will claim that society is a totality in which every element is both influencing and influenced by every other. They argue that 'being' and 'consciousness' are abstractions, describing partial aspects of a total social organism which can be grasped 'correctly' only when considered as a whole, and that these abstractions themselves only obscure the dynamic of change. We can reply that it was Marx, not us, who posed the problem in these terms. Moreover, with all his firm grasp of Hegel's dialectics, Marx still found it relevant to cast the problem in terms of 'Being' and 'Consciousness', and to attribute to them a dominant role. Marx was, of course, fully aware that class consciousness plays a role both in invention and implementation of new technologies. Yet he found it necessary to emphasise that it was the change in the material forces of production which dominated the change in social consciousness. In other words, the mutual relations between the two was not symmetric: one aspect was dominant, the other subordinate.
In short, viewing the social organism as an evolving totality fails to resolve the problem in terms of which Marx himself posed it. Even if one manages to extricate one's own version of 'marxism' from being cracked by Marx's formulation of the relation between 'Being' and 'Consciousness' one is still left with the basic problem itself: what generates social change?

Perhaps there is no particular segment of social life (i.e. either 'consciousness' or 'being'....or anything else) that plays a dominant role in generating social change? Perhaps the whole problem is just a lot of hot air? To say so is more than to reject Marx's view on the matter. It is to accept a passive role in effecting social change. If one has no answer to the problem of social change, one is unable to contribute consciously towards it. How can one act to bring about desirable social transformations (including revolution) without some answer to the question of the dynamics of social change?

The answer (or absence of answer) which people give (consciously or unconsciously) to this question shapes the outcome of their activity (or inactivity) in struggles to effect such change. For example, we know that many ex-members of the Communist Parties in Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary etc who sacrificed a lot in order to establish these regimes now recoil in horror when facing what they helped to create. However, a significant part of the blame is to be put down to their acceptance of Marx's view of social change. It is not too difficult to outline the relation between Marx's view of an objective dynamic of social change and the rise of a political bureaucracy to a dominant role in society. One could almost say, metaphorically, that Marx was the prophet of a new deity, namely the development of the productive material forces of society. The political bureaucracy which emerges in all organisations which define themselves as marxist is the priesthood of this faith; the power of any priesthood is based on the general acceptance of the faith.

The fact that Marx's answer was an illusion which transformed the problem into a mystery (the mystery of a self-transforming material productive basis of society - or, in other words, of an autonomously developing technology) is another example indicating that social illusions can become tremendous social forces. The irony of this, namely that social illusions themselves can become a force for social change, must not distract us from the problem of the relation between the nature of the illusion and the quality of the social change which it helps to bring about.

The relation between Marx's views on social change and the nature of the regimes his ideas helped to create, regimes which find it essential to uphold marxism as their official philosophy, ought to serve as a warning: those who fail to provide their own answer to this problem will one day find themselves entangled in the political consequences of somebody else's answer.

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