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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Several months in the making, Alan Kerr’s questionnaire reflects the thinking of a Marxist of the World Socialist persuasion. I hope respondents to the article will send their answer sheets to Alan and copies of comments to the DB. The letter of the De Leonist Society of Canada relates to an ongoing effort by some DeLeonists to advance DeLeonist social theory beyond 1920 (See back issues of the DB for earlier articles on the subject.) Monroe Frussack’s letter also comments on Irving Silvey’s attempt to update De Leon.

The “Noam Chomsky” section of this issue begins with a poster, the origin of which I can’t recall. It came with some other materials. Perhaps the author will step forward to receive credit. The following exchange between John Zerzan and Chomsky displays the difference in thinking about social

(To p. 21)

ABOUT THE DISCUSSION BULLETIN

The Discussion Bulletin is affiliated with the Industrial Union Caucus in Education (IUCE). It serves as the financially and politically independent forum of a relatively unknown sector of political thought that places the great divide in the “left,” not between Anarchists and Marxists but between capitalism’s statist-left wing of vanguardists and social democrats and the real revolutionaries of our era: the non-market, anti-statist, libertarian socialists. They are organized in small groups of syndicalists, communist anarchists, libertarian municipalists, world socialists, socialist industrial unionists, council communists, and left communists. The perspective of these groups with their rejection of capitalism’s wage, market, and money system as well as capitalist politics and unionism constitutes the only real alternative to capitalism in both its market and statist phases.

In the DB the often antagonistic groups that make up this sector can debate and discuss the issues that divide them, gain some understanding of their history and future possibilities and begin a process, we hope, of at least limited cooperation.

The pages of the DB are open to anyone in this political sector, the only limitation being that submissions be typewritten, single-spaced, and copier ready. We do no editing here. As to content, we assume that submissions will be relevant to the purpose of the DB and will avoid personal attacks.

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*Just as an aside, which cap is used in the title?

Please tick the appropriate box and avoid cross-ticking.

Would you like to receive mailings from the Discussion Bulletin. If so, please fill in the [Unsubscribe]

Naturally, all replies will be kept confidential and will be publicly available.

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Please tick the answer paper, as completely as you can, placing your tick at the spaces which make your answers clear and return it to me.

Alan Kerr

Would your friends/school/college/organisation/trade union members like further copies?

Returned papers will, to some extent, let us know the vitality among organisations and readers.

The answers will help show what you think. I hope that this will help towards the agreement which can, and must, be worked out so we can unite to eliminate exploitation.

Naturally, the plan will not be publically to name unsuspecting individuals in the Discussion Bulletin. But if you yourself prefer to publish your answers through the pages of the Discussion Bulletin, or any other journal, then, by all means, I look forward to that.

This question comes from an application to be considered for membership by the expelled socialists who have, to use their own term; "reconstituted" the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

To join the "r" SPGB require an answer to will Karl Marx's thinking or, as they term it, the "MCH"-materialist conception of history-have a place, after the abolition of exploitation yes or no? The "r" SPGB ban their members from seeing any "place"...i.e. use, for the way of thought after exploitation is abolished. Though this ban is at loggerheads with their own pamphlet quoted below. It says:

"END OF CLASS SOCIETY"

"A further question in concerned with what will happen in Socialist society. The question has been asked what place will the MCH have after the abolition of capitalism? That is, in Socialist society. In Marx's reading of past history, an essential element is the struggle of classes for power. One class with an interest in changing society and another class with an interest in resisting change. The question has been put 'what happens when there is no class struggle?' does this mean society will stagnate?

"Marx's answers would be of course not. Man is always bound by the terms of his existence to engage in production activity. Man will still have to work to secure his livelihood and to solve the problems that will arise out of this, the problem of production and distribution, the struggle to control natural forces will still be there, and therefore there will still be a need for technical and scientific developments, which will go on. Marx's simple answer was this; he pointed out that social evolution will not cease, but it will cease to be political and we quote 'It is only in an order of things in which there will no longer be classes or class antagonisms that social evolution will cease to be political revolutions'. This quotation is from the end of Marx's 'Poverty of Philosophy'. Taken from last page of "MCH"-materialist conception of history-a pamphlet published in 1995.

Questions
A) Could Karl Marx's thinking have a "place"... (any place at all) after the abolition of exploitation?
B) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, in abolishing exploitation, at least a number of the working class need to know what is to be done. Already in 1848 he said: "All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority." Marx and Engels. Part I. The Communist Manifesto. 1848.

History of 1848 and after taught how success would have to wait for two things: 1) A further economic development would be necessary; "History has proved us, and all who thought like us wrong. It has made it clear that the state of economic development on the Continent at that time was not, by a long way, ripe for the elimination of capitalist production..." And: 2) The immense majority needs to know what is to be done: "Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for, body and soul. The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long persistent work is required, and it is just this work that we are now pursuing, and with a success which drives the enemy to despair." Quotations from Engels' 1895 Introduction to Marx's work 'The Class Struggles in France'.

In the same way, history after 1895 taught how conquest of political power by the working class, can be genuine only as the immense majority come to know what is to be done: "...the working class must organise consciously and politically..." Quotation from the Socialist Party of Great Britain Declaration of Principles 1904.

Could, at least, the most elementary ideas of what is to be done have a "place"...after the abolition of exploitation?
C) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that social evolution will continue. Could the idea (social evolution), have a "place"...after the abolition of exploitation?
D) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that what is good for people is
always liable to change with time and circumstance. Could the idea (that what is good, is liable to change with time and circumstances), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? E) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that what is good for people becomes altered (becomes different from what it is now), when the abolition of exploitation takes effect. Could the idea (of new motives and influences), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? F) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that class war dies away, its roots being cut, with the abolition of exploitation. Could the idea (end to class war), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? G) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that the worker is free only when he is the owner of his instruments of labour. Could the idea (that the worker needs to own his instruments of labour), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? H) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that this ownership by the worker can be the case either in individual or in collective form; the individual form of ownership is made obsolete by the economic development, and more so with every day; hence there remains only that of collective ownership. Could the idea (understanding a need for collective ownership), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? I) Production: This may take two forms. Namely; production for sale and production for use. First; for instance, the coat the tailor makes and sells to his customer is put onto a market and sold. That would be; production for "sale". Second; for instance; the coat the tailor makes and wears himself is not put onto a market nor sold. That would be; production for "use". Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that the association formed by the abolition of exploitation is bound unavoidably to involve production for use. Could the idea (production for use), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? J) There again, production for use itself may take two forms. First: Individual production for self use. Such as that of the individual tailor making the coat to wear himself. Second: Combined as in an association of some sort. As for instance, in a factory today. We note that selling and buying do not go on between the operatives there, within the factory at least; precisely because they combine to blend their labour directly. Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, insofar as large (combined), production will of necessity continue and be developed, so, the association formed by the abolition of exploitation is bound unavoidably to involve combined production for use. Could the idea (combined production for use), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? K) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, after the abolition of exploitation, one portion of the collective product of society (the product of collective labour), serves as fresh means of production and forms divided-collective-property. That will be the case, for instance, with the seed corn, that will need to be saved for sowing. Could the idea; this portion of the product, serving as fresh means of production, forming divided-collective-property, have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? L) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, again, after the abolition of exploitation, another portion of the collective product of society (the product of collective labour), is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion amongst them is consequently necessary. That will be the case, for instance, with the corn that is milled and made into bread for eating. Could the idea; a distribution of this other portion to individuals, forming divided-individual-property have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? M) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, after the abolition of exploitation, the mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organisation of the community, and the degree of historical development obtained by the producers. Could the idea (of a mode of distribution, depending on the productive organisation of the community, and the degree of historical development obtained by the producers), have a "place" after the abolition of exploitation? N) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, after the abolition of exploitation, as we have already hinted, the overall production will of necessity need to be planned, not left to chance as happens with a system of production for sale. Could the idea (of planned production), have a "place"...after the abolition of exploitation? O) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that a single producer, for instance a lone handicraftsman, may be his own supervisor. But that as the scale of production grows with more individuals who co-operate and work together (combined labour), so too does the necessity increase for a central directing authority, in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities. A single violin player is his own conductor; an orchestra requires a separate one." (Marx). Could the idea (central directing authority), have a "place"...after the abolition of exploitation? P) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that—under capitalist production—the central directing authority has a second strand to its character: The motive of capitalist production is to exploit. To exploit to the greatest possible extent. A capitalist, or his managers and foremen, must counter resistance. Must be "despotistic". Under the future organisation, yes, direction of production will have a "place"...like an orchestra.
conductors*. But it will not exploit (exploitation having been abolished), it loses its class character.

Could the idea (alteration to the character of directing authority), have a "place" ...after the abolition of exploitation?

Q) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, after the abolition of exploitation, it will be necessary to count how many hours of labour are taken to produce things: "Society will be able to calculate in a simple way how many hours of labour are contained in a steam engine, a bushel of the last crop of wheat, or a hundred square yards of cloth of a specific quality... It will have to arrange its plan of production in accordance with its means of production, which include, in particular, its labour power. The useful effects of the various articles of consumption, compared with one another and with the quantities of labour required for their production, will in the end determine the plan." Page 402. Anti-Dühring (Foreign Languages Press, 1971 edition).

Could the idea (of that comparison and calculation in the end determining the plan), have a "place" ...after the abolition of exploitation?

R) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that the association formed by the abolition of exploitation will need to add to the efficiency of production. Could the idea (adding to the efficiency of production), have a "place" ...after the abolition of exploitation?

S) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that one of the indispensable steps, adding to the efficiency of production, is a steady sweeping away of the old rigid division of labour as we know it. So that, at last, all are enabled sensibly to change places; vary their work; combine mental and manual work; etc., and so to develop all their talents to the full.

Could the idea (varying work), have a "place" ...after the abolition of exploitation?

T) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that after the abolition of exploitation, the education of the future will in the case of every child over a given age combine productive labour with instruction and gymnastics, not only as one of the methods of adding to the efficiency of production, but as the only method of producing fully developed human beings.

Could the idea (of the children combining productive labour with their education), have a "place" ...after the abolition of exploitation?

U) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is that, because the new organisation will involve production for use, as distinct from production for sale, so it will be more easy to understand. So simple and easy to understand that religion will in the end be overcome by the realisation that ideas flow, in the first place, from the real world (material world).

Could religion be overcome by real world ("materialist") view, after the abolition of exploitation? So that Karl Marx's thinking will have a wider "place" and development than hitherto?

V) Part of Karl Marx's thinking is: "...people think they have taken quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they have rid themselves from belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil indemned by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the victorious proletariat, just like the Commune, cannot avoid having to top off at once as much as possible until such time as a generation reared in new, free social conditions is able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap heap." Quotation from the end of Engels' Introduction to Marx's work; "The Civil War in France".

Could the idea, of a gradual decline (and disappearance), of the state machine for the oppression of one class by another, have a "place" ...after the abolition of exploitation?

For more on questions G)H), see Marx's Capital: Chapter XXXII. On I)J)K)J)M)J)N)O(Q), see Section 4 of Chapter I. On O)P), see Chapter XII. On S)T), see Section 9 of Chapter XV. According to English edition of 1887. Alan Kerr 13 Hunttings Farm Green Lane Ilford England IG1 1YE

I think that idea will have a "place"...

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*Enter Party/organisation (if any). THANKYOU for helping with this enquiry. Whether you answered "YES", or "NO", above, have you any other views about these ideas, and about the general way of thought by which Karl Marx arrives at them? Name (address if you wish) ...

*Members of the...*can be free to hold that opinion...

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Further to our thesis, DEMOCRACY--POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL, we were disappointed with Irving Silvey's response (DB 79) to our query (DB 77) as to how what he terms "the principles of basic shop mix" would solve the shortfall of democracy in the existing Socialist Labor Party concept of Socialist Government--the FACT that as it stands the SLP concept would DISFRANCHISE all members of the body politic except those actively engaged in social production, i.e., all except the day-to-day work force of the Socialist Industrial Union (SIU).

Did Silvey try to show how his "basic shop mix" could bring housewives and retirees into the decision-making process of the SIU? Evidence has it that he tried but failed. For how else can be explained his dodge away from the context of an adult population (a population of voting age) to the context of a non-adult population? Vide: "But the De Leonist Society of Canada might well ask, how can these occupations [such as pre-school-age children's occupations and students' occupations] be organized within an industrial context [i.e., within the SIU] so as to provide an equal measure of democratic participation for all? The short answer is that, for non-adults it can't be done..."

So we are back at square one, looking in vain for Silvey's explanation of how adults such as housewives and retirees can participate in self-government under the existing SLP concept--a concept which excludes all but the SIU work force as a governing body. Willy-nilly, Silvey's dismal failure here merely corroborates what was and remains the conclusion of our thesis, to wit and paraphrasing Silvey: The short answer is that, for housewives and retirees, it can't be done!

For the rest, Silvey's "nitty" and "gritty" (his alleged "nuts and bolts"), when not contradicting themselves or misconstruing our thesis, appear as solid and tenable as the vapors of the will-o-the-wisp. To cite just several of the absurdities that riddle his foray against what we hold is a long overdue updating of De Leonism:

* * *

* "...it's difficult to avoid the conclusion that the De Leonist Society of Canada conceives the term 'industrial' in an exclusive and restrictive sense. This allows the De Leonist Society of Canada to toy with the option of birthing a whole host of supposed non-industrial occupations with which it may choose to draw imaginary lines of demarcation separating SIU and non-SIU employment."

Comment: First: In context, "industrial" means those engaged in social production as is clearly shown by the SLP's description of those who will constitute the SIU, i.e., the active workers. Second: We have not "birthed a whole host of supposed non-industrial occupations", we have merely pointed to their existence and to the fact that they are not included in the SIU as envisioned by the SLP. And, in our view, their exclusion is logical because the SIU is obviously designed to administer social production in the interest of society. It is not suited to determine social policy and, in our view, should not be burdened with this task. The body that is suited to determine social policy, because it embraces all adult members of society, is the body politic. Thus our proposal for a political Congress or Parliament elected by and responsible to the people. Such body would determine social policy, policy which
would then be implemented by the industrial branch of government, the SIU.

* "...both [the IUP (The Industrial Union Party) and The De Leonist Society of Canada] have...treated the 'community', or the 'society-as-a-whole' or 'housewives' [housewives], or the 'jobless' or the 'retired' or? as composing lumpy categorical conglomerates disqualified for inclusion in the SIU..."

Comment: Not so fast! While we (The De Leonist Society of Canada) cited housewives and retirees as sizeable segments of society thus disqualified, we omitted the jobless for the good and sufficient reason that this category is a trademark of Capitalism, not Socialism. Worse yet, Silvey also alleges that we disqualified society-as-a-whole! Where did we do this? The work force (i.e., the day-to-day work force occupied in social production is PART of society-as-a-whole! We do not recall having disqualified the work force from inclusion in the SIU.

* "Both the IUP and the De Leonist Society of Canada deserve some credit for pressing their points to the limit..."--a limit which in our own case we spelled out as a necessary addition of Political Democracy to Industrial Democracy. But hold on! In his next breath Silvey claims "...with special reference to the Socialist Society of Canada [The De Leonist Society of Canada], the logic of its thesis runs so counter to its thrust that, out of its own mouth and with its own reasoning it reduces to ruin its very argument, that is, of a marriage between political democracy of 'society-as-a-whole' and the SIU."

Comment: Woeful are we! Having deserved "some credit" are we now to be thoroughly discredited? We read on.

* "In acknowledging this [the reduction of our "very argument" to ruin], there seems no point to further efforts in that direction, except to stoop and clear the debris and then, perhaps, redraw the lines for future dialogue."

Comment: We need sample only a few more Silveyisms to identify the author of the debris. For instance:

* "In committing to the creation of governing bodies apart from or in partnership with the SIU, they [The De Leonist Society of Canada] insist that those bodies be founded on an absolute proprietied relationship based on geography." (Our emphasis,)

Comment: If obfuscation instead of plain talk can win the day then Silvey, not the Canadian De Leonist Society, is the obvious winner. For what on earth is his meaning? Property? Does Silvey not know that the aim of Socialism is to convert private property (i.e., capitalist property) into social property! As to geography, does he not realize that while the geographical constituency appears to be the most practical locus for the exercise of political democracy, and while the industrial (SIU) constituency appears to be the most practical locus for the exercise of industrial democracy, industrial constituencies are nevertheless perfom geographically located!

* "Who is to administer and maintain the property allocated to serve the political appointees?"

Comment: What does this mean? If Silvey is asking who will pay the civil service? we could just as well ask who is to pay the SIU work force? But let's not lose sight of the fact such appointees would be responsible
to elected representatives!

* "Who will be delegated the labor of organizing the balloting and disseminating information vital to the 'social' issues it insists a socialist society must be prepared to deal with...""

Comment: As Silvey appears to be having extraordinary difficulty here, we will help him with the same analogy as above, to wit: Who in the SIU will be delegated the labor of organizing the balloting and disseminating the information vital to the industrial issues the SIU must be prepared to deal with?

* "All the above unanswered questions are preliminary to the following [paradox] which aims at the heart of the [Canadian De Leonist Society's] thesis....Put more simply, 'active' workers are members of the SIU. Members of the SIU are too busy to engage in the making of 'social policy', therefore we need to give 'inactive' persons that authority by creating political machinery. Political machinery requires 'active' workers to run and maintain it. But 'active' workers are members of the SIU. Shall we go round again?"

Comment: There's no need to "go round again" for it should already be obvious to readers who are acquainted with our thesis that the paradox is of Silvey's own making. First, where did we use the term active workers in any sense other than to differentiate between the SIU work force of-the-day and retirees from the said work force? Second, we thought nobody could have misunderstood our clear argument that whereas "The SIU's job will be to conduct production to the end that an abundance is produced with a minimum of labor....it is in their leisure hours, after workers have performed their industrial chores, that they will have the time and be in the necessary relaxed frame of mind to do justice to the aforementioned social questions." (Original emphases.) Silvey, however, misrepresents us for in his hands our position that workers would be too busy WHEN AT WORK! to engage in the making of social policy becomes, merely, "Members of the SIU are too busy to engage in the making of 'social policy'..." (!)

* "As for 'housewives' [housewives], the notion that they are just a bunch of lay-abouts who contribute nothing to the industrial output of society and perform no productive labors on it's [its] behalf is, I stubbornly repeat, sufficient cause for that grin....Frankly, I believe the De Leonist Society of Canada owes housewives [housewives] an apology for its heavy handed libel. Even by the strict interpretation of 'industrial' that the De Leonist Society of Canada employs, the labors of housewives [housewives] are not to be slighted."

Comment: Apparently Silvey still does not get it--the difference between social production and individual production, and that because they are engaged in individual production, housewives perform work outside the perimeter of the Socialist Industrial Union and for this reason are denied an Industrial Vote! Apart from this we take note that Silvey evidently enjoys making a jest but we wonder how amused he will be when he finds the jest bounced back against the jester! Quoting from our letter of August 10, 1994 to Ann Braunstein (a letter which was reproduced in the May-June, 1995 De Leonist Review as well as in DB 74):

"In addition to retirees there is yet another large segment of adult society that stands outside social production, and this is perhaps the most important but least acknowledged of all. We speak of housewives!
In what forums are they to gather to exercise voice and vote?"

Now then, apart from Silvey's "loose cannon" behaviour, was it not utterly careless of him to overlook our declared high regard for the contribution to society made by housewives? We, too, will speak frankly and agree that an apology is due. However, it should obviously be made by Silvey and sent to us to make amends for his "heavy handed" libel against us.

* "Finally... please devote time to an examination of the fertile fields of anthropological research..."

**Comment:** Here, this one time, Silvey offers more than flapdoodle to the socialist cause! From the first, Socialists have delved into the evolution of mankind's social organization the better to educate for the future. In this regard Marx, Engels and De Leon all praised the work of Lewis Henry Morgan, pioneer American anthropologist. Indeed it is largely due to Morgan that we are able to perceive how the pristine migratory tribal society of our ancestors, gradually growing in numbers, finally ceased their migrations and built towns and cities. How the growth of trade and commerce, and with it an influx of aliens into these settled communities, gradually rendered continued tribal democracy (based as it was on kinship relations) virtually impossible. How the early Greeks attempted to solve the problem. How a new form of government—a form based upon representation from geographic constituencies—was finally set on foot by Cleisthenes. In a word, how political democracy replaced the democracy of pre-political society!

* "A real revolution that creates a genuine socialist society is going to be made by real people, and 'natural lore' is more apt to offer them solutions far superior to those imagined by the practitioners of politics."

**Comment:** Really? Down with politics, up with "natural lore"? Early in his diatribe Silvey states: "Some loose material requiring tidying up concerns the definition of 'industrial'." Just so here, let's get a handle on the meaning of POLITICS! According to our Webster, politics means, broadly: "the art or science of government." Well then, will Silvey please describe the politics of "natural lore"?

* * *

To conclude with a comment on Silvey's opening remark: "...I need, at the very beginning, to apologize to the De Leonist Society of Canada for seeming to lump them so uncynemoniously with the IUP [The Industrial Union Party]."

Why should Silvey apologize for placing us in the same category as the IUP? The fact is we were highly gratified when we learned that we do not stand alone, that the IUP and Canadian De Leonist Society positions are basically the same in that both of us offer what amounts to a political solution to what had become a serious breach in democracy in the SLP's Socialist Industrial Union program!

**Sincerely,**

**THE DE LEONIST SOCIETY OF CANADA**

**Postscript:**

Having persuaded himself that our thesis (DEMOCRACY—POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL) lies in ruins, Silvey wants to "redraw the lines for future dialogue"—lines which he suggests are far more promising than "a genuine
socialist society" than the De Leonist Society of Canada's "politicized version of society." Such lines, he submits, would encompass "natural lore." Here, at last, is an obvious parting of the ways!—Silvey to explore natural lore, we too continue our espousal of political and industrial democracy. We bid him adieu.

Dear Readers,

The mind of DeLeon was broad, keen and great but we should not believe that he solved the problems of the working class and society for all time. It is healthy that people revise DeLeon's program for socialism as not long ago the DeLeon Society of Canada and the Industrial Union Party have done in this publication. In DB 79 Irving Silvey goes beyond what he learned from DeLeon to rebut other DeLeonists that the future industrial democracy society will need political democracy as well. So long as some people are open to new ideas on socialism, my idea is that we should abandon much of the program of DeLeon. It has not caught on in recent years although it is simple to comprehend. If socialists were to publicly announce that they abandoned the program of DeLeon to achieve a socialist industrial democracy, even people who know of us would just shrug their shoulders. Instead of scaring people with talk about establishing a new social system, we should declare that with the new social system, we should declare that with the help of the majority we intend to amend the constitution to make private ownership of the means of production illegal. Remember that we amended our constitution to make slavery illegal 130 years ago and slave owners did not get compensated for their valuable property. To assure that we should succeed with the social ownership of the means of wealth creation we must also educate working people to organize to run all industry for the benefit of society instead of for the profit of a capitalist or capitalists in general. We will have work done for society as society decides through constitutional government and workers organized to coordinate production will produce. No longer will wealthy lobbyists or special interest groups tell our elected officials what to vote for. Like in the early days of our republic people will know that the government is ours as is the country.

About one hundred years ago when DeLeon was inspired to write about industrial unionism the union movement in this country was young and becoming more corrupt. Instead of concentrating on improving conditions for all workers, unions divided workers along race and craft lines and locals often worked when other workers were on strike because of contracts with employers. DeLeon rightly thought that when unions have a common goal of socialism the rank and file will be inspired to make their unions honest and active. His tactic was for the Socialist Labor Party to enter every possible election even though they didn't expect many votes so as to spread the message of socialism when people consider voting or not. When DeLeon died in 1914 about twenty thousand were in his funeral procession in Lower Manhattan.
The world today is not the same as it was one hundred years ago when DeLeon was an active socialist editor and writer. International ownership of industry is widespread and tariff barriers virtually broken down. Goods from many countries and businesses compete in a world market and labor must struggle to make their production competitive to stay employed. It is a jungle out there because even profitable and efficient businesses lay off workers in droves. There is no international labor movement to fight for decent conditions for all workers and employers invest where labor is most productive and profitable. China is growing fastest industrially because labor is unorganized and unable to protest bad conditions including pollution. The future is bleak for labor under capitalism because as the world industrializes intensively and extensively employers will seek cheaper places to move capital.

The main reason the people of this country can not stop the on-going deterioration of their conditions of life is because they are not aware that the founders of this country wanted us to always have opportunities to provide the best possible life for all. To create this country through our constitution they adapted ideas from other societies including ancient Greece and Rome. The institution of slavery in ancient civilizations did not blind our founding fathers to the orderly systems of government and law that prevailed there for the citizens who were free. Today socialists reject political government because Marx taught them that the early political states had slavery and that the capitalist class is most powerful and wealthy with the government we have. This country has a small minority of capitalists and an overwhelming majority of workers or wage slaves. Two great founders of this government Jefferson and Madison wrote that this country will change from a country of independent farmers and craftsmen to the conditions of existence prevailing in much of Europe - poverty and wretchedness. They expected the people to make laws to cope with changing conditions. Our constitution is said to be a most revolutionary document because of Article V, the amendment clause. The future of this country is for the working class to take control through political and social means that have been handed down to us by past generations.

Fraternally yours,
Monroe Prussack

Monroe Prussack
SUPPORT OUR GOVERNMENT!
DEFEND THE STATE FROM RIGHT-WING ATTACKS!

Right now, I'd like to strengthen the federal government - Noam Chomsky

ANARCHISTS for a STRONG STATE (A.S.S.) believe Comrade Chomsky is right. Our friend the State is under attack by an unprincipled and authoritarian coalition of anti-tax protesters, militias, Christians, libertarians and other right-wing wackos. We must defend our government, our source of sustenance and liberty from these Fascists. How dare they dismantle OUR State! Who do they think they are turning Federal powers over to local governments? To limit the State is to limit our freedom. Comrades! We must fight back! Return the State its rightful powers! Go on the offensive. Demand higher taxes! Demand more government programs! Let's have the State run everything!

A.S.S. has declared December 8 to be NATIONAL BIG GOVERNMENT DAY. Anarchists and all other supporters of A Strong State should gather in front of Federal buildings in every city in support of OUR GOVERNMENT and its programs.

Suggested slogans for the demonstration include:

* Support OUR Government!
* Right-wing State-smashers Off My Back!
* Have You Hugged A Bureaucrat Today?
* Freedom Means Strong Government!
* Higher Taxes Now!
* All Power To The STATE!
* Everything For the State, Everything By the State, Nothing Against the State!

ANARCHISTS for a STRONG STATE is a coalition of the following groups:

Anarchists For Censorship, Anarchists For Gun Control, the Liberal Anarchists, Anarchists for the New World Order, The War Is Peace, Truth Is Lies Society, Anarchists for Bill Clinton, Anarchists for Political Correctness, the Anarcho-Stalinist Movement and the Society for the Preservation of the Bureaucrat.
To Noam Chomsky, 5-4-82:

In These Times is an amalgam of statism, opportunism and reformism in more or less pure forms. Regarding foreign coverage it opposes all of the new and radical youth disaffection with its embrace of corpses like Stalinism and social democracy.

How can an anarchist be a shill for such garbage? Why is the depth and precision you try to bring to linguistics and analysis of statecraft in abeyance when it comes to your own politics?

Anarchists, seemingly, have so often wanted for autonomy and rigor in their uncritical pan-leftist tolerance. Perhaps much blood could have been spared minus this tolerance; one thinks of Russia, Spain, etc.

This (quite unsolicited) bile obviously reflects my total distaste for ITT, Socialist Review, and Monthly Review—which have nothing in common with any theory or practice of anarchy.

Thanks for your time.

(Signed) A rage for freedom

Chomsky replied:

Your letter raises an important issue, but one that we apparently disagree about. The statement of mine that elicited it is, in my view, quite accurate. ITT offers unusually good coverage of foreign affairs. For example, there is nothing in the mainstream press to compare in accuracy or depth with Diane Johnstone’s European coverage. I do not happen to agree with her politics, but that is quite another matter.

The deeper question is what attitude anarchists should take towards social democratic movements and journals, like ITT. I welcome them, because I think they can contribute to a more healthy political, ideological, economic and social atmosphere-policy, though I am quite critical of them, perhaps for the same reason that you are. This is a long story, and perhaps it would be worth pursuing it. But I think you are quite mistaken in the attitudes you express toward this matter.

To Noam Chomsky, 5-18-82:

ITT stands for virtually every form of modern domination, is totally behind the same sleazy old politicians’ show in all its moral bankruptcy. It would never publish an article informed by the goal of anarchy, any more than would the Stalinists of Monthly Review.

When a well-known anarchist endorses such a publication it has a dispiriting effect, an obvious narrowing of the spectrum of options. How can this contribute to the qualitative change necessary to liberation, the radical break from the world which ITT inhabits so comfortably?

You say you disagree with the politics of such a paper. How would anyone know this? Can such an illusion be “healthy”? The project of anarchy will never be legitimated by compromised activity, by such a gross accommodation to the world of capital.
Dear Comrades:

I've been following the recent discussions in the Discussion Bulletin on Noam Chomsky's politics with some interest. They've proven, if nothing else, uniformly interesting, and have caused me to take another look at my appraisal of Chomsky's politics and contribution to the US left.

First, I have to confess that, while I consider him a principled political person, I, like Frank, find "I come away from a Chomsky tape or book with the feeling one gets from drinking decaffeinated coffee or eating sugar-free ice cream." In part, I suspect it's because I expect that, with his encyclopedic knowledge of what's actually happening in the world, and his self-professed anarchism/libertarian socialism, he could help develop a libertarian socialist perspective for the masses of readers who find a triple espresso of excitement and illumination in his books. With few exceptions, he doesn't. He provides us with the information, and lets us go our merry ways.

That's fine, and even a compliment, up to a point. After all, he's presenting information while apparently making the assumption that people are perfectly capable of making decisions about politics themselves. Amen! Isn't that how we'd all like to see it?

The problem, though, is that the vast majority of people in the United States, at least, are extraordinarily depoliticized—and particularly so regarding the libertarian left. A mass of facts poured in their ear will neither edify them nor point them in liberatory directions. Lacking a framework, they're left where they were before, with one difference: with their heads stuffed with bazillions of factoids regarding imperialist barbarity and the reality of corporate hegemony (what David Gross once called "friendly fascism"), combined with a political rootlessness in terms of perspective, they're ripe pickings for either the social democratic or sectarian left. This is a major flaw, in my mind, in Chomsky's whole approach to political intervention.

In short, he does make a tremendous contribution to the left just by collecting, as it were, masses of evidence regarding domestic and international corporate crimes. But, that evidence is only half the picture. The other half lies in the obligation of a public intellectual in a period where the left is extraordinarily weak to help devise a way to use the information provided.

I don't share John Zerzan's anarcho-primitivism, and I don't share much of his critique of Chomsky, which arises from that perspective. But, his statement that Chomsky "is not an anarchist at all" (DB #79), comes close to the truth. It's my belief that Jeff Stein's cogent formulation, "Chomsky is an anarchist sympathizer, nothing more" in DB #80 is right on. And,
furthermore, that's okay--better that he's an anarchist sympathizer, or an out-and-out libertarian socialist, than that he be a sympathizer of the Socialist Workers Party in either its US or British manifestations!

One last note on Chomsky and anarchism. Much has been made of the "fact" that he's not published much directly on anarchism or libertarian socialism at all. If memory serves me correctly, the introduction to his selected writings includes a good chunk of stuff on anarchism, as does his introduction to Guerin's classic study of the subject (which, I believe, the Discussion Bulletin has reprinted as a buck pamphlet). And, his latest book, Powers & Prospects: Reflections on human nature and the social order (South End, $16), includes a substantial essay on exactly that subject entitled "Goals and Visions."

To sum up: sure, Chomsky's not consistent, and there are serious flaws in his arguments and in his positions (I've spelled out what I consider the most serious of those above). But, he's not an ideological purist, nor does he claim to be. Zerzan writes of Chomsky's advocacy of a "two-state solution" in Palestine; Frank writes of his nostalgia for the "kinder, gentler" capitalism of the New Deal; Larry Gambone rails against everything imaginable, and Chomsky's sympathy for national liberation movements, long anathema to this sector of the left, is well known (the latest case being, of course, East Timor).

One thing you can say for him, though: he sticks up for human beings to the furthest extent his energy and intellect allow him to. He has the courage to stand as the premier spokesperson--the David, as it were--in the face of US imperialism's Goliath. He doesn't draw arbitrary lines in the sand based on ideological purity, but, as Simone Weil might have put it, bows his knee only to the sanctity of human personality. And, he's consumed with the vision of a world where every one of us can walk free and unafraid. Would that we could all say the same.

Paternally,

Chris Faatz
1701 Broadway #211
Vancouver, WA 98663
USA
Dear Comrades,

While I hate to disagree with Comrade Stein, whom I deeply respect, I must point out some very serious errors in his most recent letter to your publication. Comrade Gambone has already pointed out his letter in the same issue. The Spanish Revolution would have been defeated no matter what tactics the anarchists adopted. Stein, however, attributes the CNT-FAI's decision to the Treintistas as "the driving force behind the decision to join the government". The Treintistas were originally expelled from the CNT at the insistence of the FAI who used capture techniques on union branches. They were later reunited at the Congress of Saragossa. The original dispute was between anarchists over the anarchists and non-anarchists, just as the present day dispute in Spain between the CNT and the CGT is an intra-anarchist dispute, whatever the CNT-AIT may say. The FAI and other non-FAI "ultras" used very vicious smear tactics against the Treintistas up until the reunification.

I must admit that despite my personal belief that the Treintistas were right and that the CGT is right in its present dispute with the CNT I would have voted with the FAI in the conditions of Spain at the time of the Treintistas expulsion. I would have been wrong. The historical truth is that many of the Treintistas never rejoined the CNT. Its leader, Angel Pestana formed his own small splinter party, the Syndicalist Party. To my knowledge there was not a single one of the anarchist ministers who joined either the Catalan or Spanish governments who was not a violent "ultra" who had previously been on the same side in their denunciation of the Treintistas. The "driving force" behind the decision to enter into government was the very groupings who had vigorously denounced their opponents as "reformists" and "traitors to anarchism".

The Treintistas and the CGT today promote a form of realism that fosters the sort of cynicism that is necessary to "deal with the devil" in the form of other political groupings. The CNT-FAI, with their ultra-revolutionary position were babes in the woods when the crunch came. They were the perfect victims for a con game. The Treintistas would have done better and made fewer mistakes. Finally, it was NOT the leadership of the anarchists who were the ultimate "driving force" behind the compromises made. It was the Spanish people. The "ultras" responded to public pressure, both anarchist and non-anarchist for unity in the face of a serious military threat (read Gambone's letter again).

Finally, in regards to factional disputes I would like to call Jeff's attention to the disputes that surrounded the breakup of the ACF many years ago. I was privy to information from both sides of the dispute, a dispute that Jeff was part of. I watched from a distance some incredible hair-splitting about whether to promote the IWW or whether to adopt other labor tactics. Jeff is well aware of the subterranean events and the animosity generated.

I'm sorry; I'm an outsider, and as an outsider I can speak for others who might see such disputes from the outside as minor disagreements over tactics that should not destroy an organization. At the same time I watched the ACF agonize endlessly over a group of vicious anti-civilizationalists who had nothing in common with the aims of the ACF. They joined the ACF with the obvious intent of
torturing those whom they considered "fuddy-duddies". They had
great fun doing it, and the ACF could never reach the decision to
deal with them in the swift and effective manner that they should
have been dealt with. Instead they destroyed themselves in
factional disputes with allies over minor tactical matters while
doing nothing but complaining about enemies in their midst.

Chomsky for serious matters. None of them are
infallible anyway, no matter how much we might like to think so.
Which brings us to a final matter. I am not Chomsky's greatest fan.
I am the only one of your correspondants who has ever been involved
in a protracted and vicious printed dispute with him and his ex-
graduate student. The dispute ended on my part due to family
matters intervening. I'm glad they did. Chomsky and Rai decided to
attack me rather than their other critics because at some level
they know I have their number at a deeper level than has been
discussed in your pages. I may think that Chomsky is a total fool
for supporting a ridiculous attempt to promote a social democratic
splinter in the USA. Doomed, doomed, doomed. I have more knowledge
of social democracy and its workings through personal experience in
my little finger than Chomsky has in his entire head.

Yet, I would never renew my attack on Chomsky until I saw him
either entirely abandoning anarchism (he hasn't yet) or becoming a
menace to the movement. That is why I am glad the dispute stopped.
Chomsky still has many good points and he is useful and moral to a
point. May I compliment him on donating money for a computer for
the Seattle group, and may I compliment him on never donating money
to ANY of the publications mentioned by Zerzan as "ours". Chomsky
has donated money and time to vast numbers of real and legitimate
anarchist's below the artillery for serious matters. None of
the publications mentioned by Zerzan are "ours" if "us" is defined
as those who would like to see a real anarchist movement with
actual political effect beyond defaming anarchism.

Anarchist academics and "anarcho-sympathizers" are notoriously
tight when it come to the cash for the activists. In this they
mirror general leftist academics. To my knowledge Chomsky has been
the most generous "sympathizer" on the planet. He should be
complimented rather than smeared. As for the publications mentioned
by Zerzan, I hope for their early demise. Have your fun. Spin your
ridiculous theories. Play act all you want. But in the end call
yourself by some other name than "anarchist" and get out of the
ballpark of those who want something real. I would suggest that any
reader of this Bulletin read Murray Bookchin on the nutbars in the
anarchist movement. He can be a lot more vicious than I can, and
every piece of his viciousness is justified.

In Solidarity,
Pat Murtagh

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Winnipeg, MAN R2K 2J8
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(204)-669-6134
Dear Noam Chomsky,

About a year ago I wrote asking permission to reprint your "Notes on Anarchism." You kindly granted it, and 600 copies have gone into the bloodstream, floating out into the hands of both your fans and those of anarchism. The "Notes" along with your association with the Libertarian Labor Review and membership in the New Union Party and the IWW led me to conclude that privately at least you opposed capitalism and its political state. Then in one of our informal coffee house discussions, a social democratic member of our local broad-church political group, the Society for Economic Equality (SEE), showed me the article "You Say You Want a Devolution" from the July 1996 issue of The Progressive.

I realize that whoever put the article together selected the most reformist and pro-statist passages s/he could find in Class Warfare. I also realize that you are arguing against those who would dismantle the nation state and hand over its responsibilities in the way of welfare programs to the tender mercies of state and local politicians. But even with that understood, the article, coming from an admired figure and valiant combatant in the "class war," does a serious disservice to the cause of revolutionary anti-statism and anti-capitalism. In fact, wouldn't you agree that your idea that a strong national government is more likely to preserve the limited civil rights and social spending capitalism is willing to grant its slaves, could have serious future repercussions if it encourages our class to look to the state for the solution to their problems?

Is it possible that your confidence in the superior humanity of the nation over the local and state government results from accounts of injustice and oppression perpetrated at lower government levels in recent memory and that you have forgotten the long view? I can understand the idea that the state is more likely to ease burden of poverty where the thinking of the corporate rich is ascendant than in places like Alabama and Mississippi and that the same is true of other social programs like Medicare and Social Security. But consider the historical record of nation states in this regard. It begins with that great humanitarian Otto von Bismarck and ends God knows where—perhaps where Orwell expected to find it in 1984. Even your basic political assumption that the nation state is less likely to oppress the poor and helpless than local government, is questionable in the light of the recent decision to put welfare block grants in the hands of the states. Consider also the role of the most liberal political element—the Democratic Party and the union leadership—in passing NAFTA and GATT as well as deflecting economic dissatisfaction by showing us that there is no alternative to them and their leadership. And let's not forget the state as warmaker—ahem hellmaker—for the millions, both combatants and civilians, who must endure their internecine battles for control of the natural resources and the wealth we have created.

And there is another angle. In terms of the outcome in elections it makes no difference how we revolutionaries—nor the "left" in general—vote. There are just not enough of us to affect the results. Under the circumstances named above, doesn't it make good sense to for us, "us" being you (I think) and everyone else who holds the view that the only obstacle to the people's replacing capitalism and the state tomorrow with a new cooperative social system defined by the social ownership of the means of production, absence of the wages system and production to satisfy human needs is their lack of understanding about the system. To begin this new strategy we would stop playing leftwing politics and begin a drive to show the futility of trying to build a
kinder, gentler capitalism -- to show that capitalism is genetically incapable of becoming people-friendly.

Although I have been sending you the DB for a couple of years, I know how hard it is to read everything that comes in the mail, and thus you may have missed the previous issue of the DB (79) which began the debate on "Chomskyism." I am enclosing DB79 as well as the current DB80 in the hope that you will have the time to respond for publication to the comments there as well as to this letter, which I hope to include in the next issue.

Two more things: 1) What is your take on Chomsky's Politics by Milan Rai, which I have ordered and hope to read and review for the next DB? 2) I want to assure you that the last sentence on page 2 (continued on p. 21 of DB80) was not intended as a dig at you personally. All of us who hold dissenting views in this society must limit our exposure just to survive.

With best regards,
Yours for the revolution, Frank Girard

CHOMSKY'S POLITICS by Milan Rai, 1995, Verso, 225 pages, $17.50 from Perennial Books, P.O. Box B 14, Montague, MA 01351.

Noam Chomsky's stature as a critic of capitalism and its political state continues to rise among leftists and the more book-oriented of the workers-in-training at the college level. At the same time he puzzles those of us in the revolutionary wing of anti-capitalism. We would like to see his opposition to capitalism's control of the media and of the political system extended to a forthright opposition to capitalism itself. We are frustrated by what some of us regard as the mixed signals he sends--support simultaneously for both revolutionary groups like the IWW and the New Union Party and for social democratic reform groups like the New Party along with speeches and books that intersperse an occasional anti-capitalist sentiment in his factual descriptions of the course of late global capitalism as led by the U.S. Why can't the political Chomsky be less like Chomsky and more like us?

Milan Rai answers this question through an examination of "Chomskyism" based on two sources. One is the vast body of political writing Chomsky has produced since he found himself becoming a spokesperson for the anti-Vietnam War movement in the Sixties, beginning in 1965 to be exact. Many of his writings over the past thirty years aren't readily available to casual readers, but they voice many of the basic ideas that guide his thinking today. A case in point is the introduction to Daniel Guerin's book Anarchism published in 1973 by Monthly Review Press. The Discussion Bulletin published the essay under its title "Notes on Anarchism" in DB65 (May-June 1994) but not before asking Chomsky whether the sentiments expressed in the essay still reflected his thinking. He answered, "My thinking on these matters hasn't changed in any essential respect. In fact, it seems to me that there are new prospects for anarchism now that the Soviet tyranny has collapsed and with it a major barrier to socialism, particularly the libertarian forms."

In his introduction Rai provides one element needed for understanding the political Chomsky: the experiences of his early life that may have shaped his thought and action. He was brought up in an unconventional family. His father, a pre-WWI immigrant from Czarist Russia was a
secular Hebrew scholar, many of his relatives belonged to radical groups ranging from the CP to anarchist and social democratic organizations. (His father was once a member of the IWW.) His schooling too was unconventional. He didn’t graduate from either high school or college. He obtained his doctorate in linguistics by demonstrating his ability without entering a postgraduate program. His initial radicalization, however, was typical of his generation: Vietnam. And his activity was much more than that of the typical academic. He participated in demonstrations, risked arrest, and generally put his future as a paid scholar on the line. Here we see the beginnings of the mindset that informs Chomsky today.

Rai’s first chapters carry us through Chomsky’s principal preoccupation: the role of language in capitalism’s task of “manufacturing consent.” DB readers, though, will find the meat of the book in two chapters, “Visions” with 12 pages and “Strategies” with 19. Here Rai sets out his understanding of Chomsky’s political objective—or rather “purpose”--and the tactics he endorses for reaching it. He bases them on a careful examination of the vast body of Chomsky’s writings, most of which are not available to those of us whose interest in Chomsky isn’t the overpowering element in our lives. Citing evidence from these sources, Rai shows us Chomsky’s thinking on the possibilities of an alternative society. Those of us who remember his espousal of anarcho-syndicalism in answering a question at one of the speeches recorded in the video Manufacturing Consent will find that his answer was not offhand nor based on a superficial understanding. Rather he has considered the problems of building this version of libertarian socialism, among them one that DeLeonists—to my way of thinking—have not given adequate attention: How can our class build a socialist industrial union system without creating an administrative bureaucracy consisting of experts whose judgment we will always defer to.

This chapter also contains a review of Chomsky’s thinking about anarchism versus Marxism. Unlike most anarchists, he sees something besides Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and Mao standing in the shadow of Marx. Although he speaks of Marx’s bad behavior in the contra-Bakunin factional struggles in the First International, he recognizes his positive theoretical contributions toward emancipation from capital. He also recognizes the existence of a humanitarian, anti-statist marxism—of Gorter, Pannekoek, and their associates and followers.

His frequent use of the term “libertarian socialism” to describe his political philosophy signals, in my opinion, his incorporation of elements of Marxism in his thinking. Consider these quotations: “To libertarian socialists, at least, socialism and freedom are inseparable. There is no socialism possible under a party dictatorship.” and “What attracts me about anarchism personally are the tendencies in it that try to come to grips with the problems of dealing with complex organized industrial societies within a framework of free institutions and structures.” And Rai also quotes him as follows: “One can imagine a network of workers’ councils, and at a higher level, representation across the factories or branches of industry, or across crafts, and on to general assemblies of workers’ councils that can be regional, national and international in character.” Rai goes on to quote him as saying, “[there would be] two modes of immediate organization and control, namely organization and control in the workplace and in the community.” By this I understand him to mean syndicalism or socialist industrial unionism in a context surprisingly like that of two DeLeonist groups, the Industrial Union Party and the DeLeonist Society of Canada. Rai also speaks of Chomsky’s solution to the problem of rise of an administrative bureaucracy through the rotation of such jobs among the population.
The following chapter, "Strategies" explains Chomsky's political practice, which many in our political sector find so at odds with his understanding of capitalism and its horrendous effects on the planet and its inhabitants as well as his libertarian socialist vision of a future society. For him the alternatives "reform" or "revolution" are unrealistic seeing that the rhetoric doesn't match a realistic pair of alternatives. He argues that the best we can hope for in the current political climate is to stem the tide of "devolution"--the loss of the meager gains like welfare, social security, medicare and the like accorded us by capitalism during the New Deal/War on Poverty years. This would seem to explain his message, implicit in "You Say You Want a Devolution," that we should vote for Clinton. (see DB79).

His real strategy, according to Rai, is to support efforts to build a broad-based reform party, perhaps a new version of the Debs-Haywood-Thomas Socialist Party of the early decades of the 1900s. This clarifies his support for the New Party, the Labor Party, and radical--as opposed to revolutionary--journals like Z Magazine. The broad base would have room for a revolutionary wing, and helps explain Chomsky's occasional public support of such groups as the IWW and the New Union Party.

Concentrating on Rai's chapters "Visions" and "Strategies" served my purpose but didn't provide a picture of the breadth of his book. Readers will find other chapters very useful, among them "Rational Suicide," which deals with the capitalist logic of such suicidal activities as armaments and destruction of the environment, as well as other dealing with Chomsky concerns about capitalist foreign policy, control of the media, and the like.

--Frank Girard

(From p. 2)

democracy among people who describe themselves as anarchists. Next Chris Faatz enters the fray with some thoughtful comments which will defuse some of the hostility inherent in this kind of discussion. He also points to a recent book by Chomsky, a chapter of which concerns our interests. Pat Murtagh's letter begins with a rejoinder to Jeff Stein's DB80 letter, but also comments on the social democratic aspect of "Chomskyism." The open letter invites Chomsky to enter the DB 79 and 80 discussion of his thought and actions. A reply from his assistant told me that Chomsky was in South America and that I should resend the letter in mid-December. I have done so and included all the material published so far. Next is a review of Rai's book on Chomsky, very useful to anyone who lacks the time to read the vast body of his work because the chapters constitute a sort of summary along with a discussion and quotations of Chomsky's views on a wide variety of topics.

Our "New Democracy" section begins with David Stratman's response to the review of his book by the Socialist Standard. It continues with Laurens Otter's detailed reply to Stratman and ends with a New Democracy flyer, this one on what the SLP used to call capitalist unionism. As usual we end with some notes, announcements, and short reviews.

BULLETIN MATTERS

Finances

Thanks to continued high contributions and sales of back issues amounting to $36 receipts rose beyond those of the previous two-month period so that even a disparity between the bank's and my bookkeeping as well as the non-profit bulk mailing fee left the DB with a strong balance. We have another extra

(To p. 28)
To the editor:

In his generally very positive review of We CAN Change the World: The Real Meaning of Everyday Life (Socialist Standard, September, 1996), Stan Parker neglects to mention the central thesis of my book.

I argue that capitalism and Marxism are based upon the same paradigm of history and the same view of human beings. In this paradigm, economic forces drive history and economic development is the basis of human development. Self-interest is seen as the primary human motivation. The great mass of people are viewed as either passive victims or beneficiaries of the actions of elites. It is not possible to build a democratic society based on this paradigm.

In my view, Marxism has failed. Communist regimes which, rightly or wrongly, claimed Marx as their progenitor have collapsed. Marxist parties in advanced capitalist countries—that is, operating in those societies which Marxism would lead one to believe would be best suited to the growth of Marxist movements—have become marginalized or reformist or both. The idea of global revolution against capitalism, to create a new society based on cooperation and sharing, is in retreat even while such a transformation is more and more necessary.

In his landmark book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Thomas Kuhn argues that scientists do not abandon a paradigm or model for understanding the world, no matter how much that model may seem to have failed, unless there is a new paradigm to take its place. The purpose of We CAN Change the World is to propose a new way of thinking about people and society, a new paradigm, which makes revolution possible.

I maintain that revolution is possible because most people are already engaged in a struggle against capitalism to create a better world. Most people in their everyday lives struggle against a culture based on inequality, competition, and exploitation to create relationships based on equality and solidarity. This effort is not pure or unmixed in people's lives, and people may not be aware of the meaning of their efforts. But whatever equal and committed relationships people have in their lives, they have created them by struggle against capitalist culture. The smallest acts of kindness and the most collective acts of class struggle are on a continuum of struggle to humanize the world.

The revolutionary transformation of society is the only possible fulfillment of the goals and struggles of the great majority of people. The first condition for success in their effort is that people be aware of the significance of their struggles.

I counterpose my views to Marxism, which accepts the capitalist idea that self-interest is the fundamental human motivation. As Marx put it, "every individual seeks only his particular interest." Marx believed with the capitalists that history is driven by economic development, which in turn is driven by greed. Unlike the capitalists, however, Marx maintained that greed leads not to permanence but to revolution.

Marx's model of history does not see working people as conscious agents of change who act on the basis of anti-capitalist values. Instead Marxism sees working people primarily as dehumanized and passive victims of economic forces who, when they are moved to action, are moved by these same forces. Lenin’s concept of the revolutionary party was his attempt to supply Marx's idea of revolution with a human subject—with disastrous results.

There is one other point on which I would like to comment. I was taken aback by the picture of Mao accompanying the review of my book, and can't imagine what are the "worryingly approving comments about the Cultural Revolution" to which the review refers. In fact I show that the Cultural Revolution was a "pseudo-revolution which triggered a real revolution" against the Communist Party, and that this real revolution was defeated by its ambivalence about Mao and its failure to attack him—until he drowned the revolution in blood. The Mao portrait and caption are very misleading, and marred an otherwise positive review.

Dave Stratman
Dear Mr. Stratman,

I thank you for your letter & enclosure, whether I print them is not entirely my decision, though I do most of the work on S.B., it is primarily a contact journal for British syndicalists active within the wider movement, only about 5% of the mailing list actually pay for their subscriptions, (a far larger percentage are exchange periodicals,) but there is nevertheless an informal membership which also operates as an editorial committee.

I note incidentally that though I sent you a pre-publication copy of my review in March, (& I would have included a reply if you had sent it in time for publication,) though I also sent you a copy of the mailing, (possibly two, I found a fortnight after despatch that I hadn’t recorded sending you a copy, & so sent a further copy in case,) that I did not receive any acknowledgement until Frank Girard decided to reproduce the review in the current D.B. Understandable, there are less than a dozen American addresses on my mailing list, but, in the light of that, the peremptory tones of your covering letter, can be seen for what they are worth.

Do you think that the lives of ordinary Chinese were not under tremendous pressure in the mid-Sixties? or under any less strain? when the "Red" Guard fascist thugs were beating up workers to force them to take lower wages? Unless you would argue that Nazism in Germany & fascism in Italy were "nuanced" "on the one hand... authentic mass revolutionary... On the other " which in one sense might no doubt be technically true; the application of such a description to Fascism is invalid. If on the other hand you do argue that for fascism, then I think you would need to state quite a lot more. The fact is that the Red Guards were ultra-nationalist, Great Han racist, that they demanded cuts in workers' wages, while sanctioning the position of millionaire capitalists, they were ultra militarist, they demanded very puritanical decrees in matters of sex relations & dress codes. The Mao regime while attacking Liberal/Social Democrat societies (Tanzania, India etc.,) were allied to extreme rightist ones like Saudi Arabia, Malawi even had relations with Apartheid South Africa. And so on.

Actually the Cultural Revolution was initially launched by Mao's opponents within the C.P., but he managed to bring in the Red Guards under the cloak of "leftism," - as you say initially university students, but perhaps worse, even the second wave (as by far the majority of subsequent waves,) was drawn from wealthier peasant stock & similar petit bourgeois sources (displaying all the characteristics of fascist) to counter the initial cultural revolution. (Though you were factually wrong in your book as in your letter) I didn't think it worth correcting this minor point in the review.) Yes, later, some Red Guards did become real socialists; but the mass of even "rebel" Red Guards should be regarded as a right-wing force.

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In what way is Marcuse more "elitist" & "anti-democratic" than Lenin? (Are you unaware that Lenin talked of the "aristocracy of labour" & talked about the working class in the imperialist countries as partners
in imperialism? Are you unaware — more particularly — of how Mao said that workers in the West were all "bourgeoisified" & must be written off for consideration as a revolutionary force?) a how many New Leftists in fact wrote about Marcuse? Would you like to substitute for Marcuse the names of Erich Fromm or Wilhelm Reich, (members of the same school of quasi-Marxist, quasi-Freudian, leftist-psychologists, who were much more likely to be quoted by New Leftists,) if not why not?

There is perhaps a generation thing here, Marcuse, Fromm, Reich & others, [you won't have heard of Chatakin - "Rape of the Masses" — no doubt.] who tried to combine Marxism & Freudianism in trying to understand the motives that took so many workers to fascism, [Chatakin somewhat dubiously wanted to devote the insights he gained to re-enlisting the workers for socialism.] played a significant & courageous role in opposing fascism in the Thirties. As dissident communists they were expelled from the party & various front groupings, though at times in Popular Front days the C.P. briefly aimed to re-enlist them. Given that they were after the war neither Stalinists nor pro-NATO Cold Warriors, they were of considerable importance to those of us who in the early Fifties tried to create a Third Camp Movement. People like Raya Dunayevskaya & CLR James, though they regarded them as ex-Marxists, nevertheless saw them as important exponents of Hegelianism (as well as radical psychologism.) & so corresponded with them.

The New Left - originating from post-Hungary dissidents from the Communists - did not in fact at first have any direct interest in them. It was only when Rudi Dutschke became big news in Germany that pressmen quasi-Marxist, him as a "Marcusian." Though he had read Dunayevskaya's "Marxism & Freedom" (which has a foreword by Marcuse) Dutschke didn't in fact know who Marcuse was, until this, & had to look him up in a German equivalent of "Who's Who."

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You do indeed devote a chapter to the miners' strike. While it is possible that American readers were unaware of the facts; if you were here at the time of the strike you can hardly have been unaware how central it was in the lives of Left-Reformists. No doubt there were all sorts of Stalinist & reformist illusions, but every constituency member of the Labour Party, the active members of most trade unions, as of a number of peace movement & similar leftist campaigns tithed themselves to enthrall the miners; there were meetings - mostly but not exclusively organized by Trades Councils (that is local federations of trade unions) in solidarity with the miners; the fact that the Tories - as early as 1978, at their annual conference, - said that they intended to provoke a conflict with a major trade union at the beginning of their second period of government, in order to break the power of the unions, was widely known; there were collections in the streets, at folk/jazz/.. clubs, all over the country; the majority of people at major confrontations, such as the Saltley Works, in fact tended to be workers from other industries.

No doubt there were all sorts of people trying to ride on this, there is fairly definite evidence that some Leninist groups collected money "for the miners" & then kept it for their own groups on the specious
grounds that their papers supported the miners. The Left Reformist
candidates when they paid lip service to the gallant struggle no doubt
thought they were getting reflected glory. But the idea that no one
tried to spread the strike just won't wash. (In fact of all places,
South Wales, where Kim Howells, an ex-Trot turned reformist, managed to
persuade large numbers to go back to work early; was hardly an example
of revolutionary involvement.) There were lots of books on the strike
after it occurred, some of the best produced by local miners' wives'
groups or the miners' lodges, though possibly the one that you would
most be likely to have encountered was that produced by History Workshop
(edited by Raphael Samuel.) Most of which contain considerably more
than 34 miners' accounts.

Your chapter communism & counter-revolution makes no mention of the
fact that during the Stalinist Third Period the Italian Communist Party
(in 1929) supplied Musso!ini with the names & addresses of all members
of rival socialist & dissident communist groups known to the PCI: it
makes no mention of the Bavarian National Communist period — a year
earlier — when in Bavaria there was reciprocal membership of three
communist & Nazi parties, no mention of the 1931 Red-Brown Referendum
when Communists & Nazis in Prussia combined to campaign against the
social democrat government. Only a few of the betrayals of the Popular
Front days are mentioned, & there is no account of the reactionary role
played by the Communist Parties of the allied countries during the war,
either during the Stalin-Hitler Pact or during the accommodation to the
Western Capitalist Governments. (when the CPGB for instance called for
the death penalty for strikers & CP members in the armed forces informed
on any soldiers heard expressing subversive views.)

Claudin's views are quoted as if they are good currency. Too much
importance is put on the fact that communists were dominant in the
underground in occupied countries. (with no mention of the fact that the
reason for this was often that they had collaborated with the Nazis in
the early days and denounced to the latter the leading militants of
rival parties.) I should perhaps mention at this stage that my "good
mother" — though as she & my mother were atheists she'd hardly like that
term — was a heroine of the French Resistance, & I spent quite a lot of
time in the late Forties in the company of former resistance fighters,
who all recounted how the stalinists, even after the invasion of Russia,
still collaborated, and only changed sides, coming over to the Resis-
tance, when it was obvious that Germany was already being defeated.

Certainly the Materialist View of History has a lot to answer for, is
that Mutual Aid is not sufficiently stressed, though in all fairness to
Marx his reason for arguing that the working class is the revolutionary
class is that working class life stresses class solidarity, & the need
for cooperation: but as S.B. is an anarchist contact paper not a marxist
journal (syndicalists are if you like anarcho-Markists in that the early
CGT & IWV were both largely created by Markists who broke with party-
Marxism to become syndicalists,) (even though certainly there are
members of various Marxist groups who are on the mailing list) that is
hardly of any relevance: but given that Tressell's "Ragged Trousered
Philanthropist" has always been by far the most widely read work in the British Labour Movement. Given the continuing popularity of "News from Nowhere" & "Dream of John Ball," I think one can fairly say you over-stress that

"Except to say approvingly ..." That was in the first few lines of the review, (and note that the next few lines also make comparisons with Read, Acland & Ward.) in an anarchist journal you couldn't ask for much more favourable references; you really have no case to complain that that praise was then qualified somewhat.

You talk of the marginalization of the libertarian left, in a sense your argument harks back to your view of Marcuse, when you say that the New Left by referring to him were making it too difficult for ordinary workers to comprehend, are you arguing that the capitalist system, (because it succeeds in marginalizing libertarian leftist critiques,) should be allowed to dictate what its opponents are going to say? That anti-capitalists must confine themselves to quoting those people of whom the capitalists have allowed the workers to hear?

If there is dishonest debate it is not on my part; as for instance the implication that I "play a bizarre game of academic one-upmanship:" I am/ was (I am now in my late 60s, & therefore an old age pensioner,) a print-worker & at other times a very lowly paid clerical worker for various charities (owing to an extensive political prison-record, I have had fairly long periods of unemployment.) I never an academic, unless some part-time teaching kids getting a chance at a second attempt at "O" & "A" level History exams is interpreted as such: oh, & while I was at college in Dublin in the early fifties, I used during my summer vacations to teach (mainly maths & chemistry,) (unpaid of course except for a free bed,) in French lycées, in what was known as the Quatrième Trimestre, a sort of voluntary scheme for students worried about not getting their exams.

Oh, I see the "academic" is a reference to my school-type report at the end, (I fear the exams, for which I have coached, have not been at a level to merit the term academic, I was referring to your own vocation,) this was a broadly favourable report but with criticisms, as in the rest of the review. Obviously you cannot stand criticism, even in the context of a favourable assessment. Hardly a good augury.

faithfully

Laurens Otter
THE LIMITS OF REFORMISM

One thing for certain is that the SPGB folks have a handle on economics like few others. ("The Scargill Labour Party", Adam Buick, DB 76 as a recent example.) Having an understanding of the economy, they knock the stuffing out of all the leftist-reformist pretensions.

It really is quite amazing how economically illiterate most leftists are. People are seemingly attracted to leftism for emotional or psychological reasons. This is the impulse for both the positive and negative aspects of their politics, the striving for justice on the one hand, authoritarianism and self-righteousness on the other. However, being economically (and philosophically) illiterate they propose all sort of wild, unworkable and counter-productive schemes. Putting the cart before the horse, they announce to the world that they have THE solution and all others must follow, and if you don't you must be ignorant, racist, reactionary and a whole list of other leftist swear-words.

Readers can come up with their own leftist-reformist fantasies, but I have a couple to share with you. Bob White, head of the Canadian Labour Congress, and idol of Canuck leftists, once proposed that the province of Ontario deal with its government deficit by defaulting, rather than slightly trimming back his beloved state capitalism. The point is, if Ontario defaulted, no one would invest there for many years and the economy and people would be worse off than ever. Argentine-level cuts to state expenditure would be necessary. How could someone in charge of such an important institution as the CLC make such a stupid statement?

In Quebec, the women's movement has demanded the government raise the minimum wage to $8.50 an hour. I certainly won't complain about the idea of raising wages, but, in the real capitalist world, what would the effect of such a wage-rise be? Marginal, low-wage businesses would go under and many others would move to cheaper-wage areas - unemployment would grow. Furthermore, all other wages would be forced up, all those people presently making $8.50 an hour would be unhappy with their new equal status with the unskilled and inexperienced and demand higher wages. Wages would go up all around. This would make business less competitive, more machinery would replace workers and many business would move elsewhere - the result again, higher unemployment and general impoverishment.

The only fault one can find with the SPGB economics is that they have been announcing the ineffectiveness of reformism for the past 90 years and only during the last couple of decades have reformist plans shown fatal weaknesses. What the SPGB in its theoretical clarity and anti-reformist zeal have overlooked, is that the system was a lot more flexible than they thought. Keynesian deficit spending and welfare statism did "work" for about 40 years, long enough to discredit anti-reformism. But the state-capitalist tower of sand has come tumbling down and the left-soc. dem. answer has been to add more sand. Mainstream social democracy has opted for the market and maintaining a core of welfare-statist programs, thus trying to appear as the kindly face of neo-liberalism.

This little scenario calls to mind the evolution of soc. dem. over the past century. Ninety years ago they believed in full state capitalism, abolition of the market and its replacement by state-planning. By the 1920's this had been modified to allowing markets in consumer goods and nationalization of the "most important" industries. By the 1950's abolition of the market in factor goods had been dropped and
nationalization limited to certain specific industries. Today, social democracy has merged completely with corporate liberalism and any "socialist" pretences dropped. Radicals can be forgiven for seeing this as an example of social democratic sell-out, but the reality is more complex than that.

For the state to grab the economy wholesale requires a revolution, something beyond the pale of soc. dem. parliamentarianism, hence maximalism had to go. As industries became nationalized and statism spread gradually throughout society, whether through social democracy or other ideologies, discontent arose within the population with the statist panacea. Nationalized industries were not an improvement over their so-called private ones. As the reality of statism hit the average person, support for this idea declined and the soc. dems. had to water-down this part of their program or face elections with a platform most people disliked and feared. The social democratic program was a dream, a utopia, (most of us would say a night-ware) an impossible reform, and if the party wanted to achieve power, which of course was its real raison d'etre, it had to progressively drop these fantasies.

While social democracy has joined marxism-leninism on the junk heap of history, (hurray!) and the limits of state-capitalist reformism have been reached, we must pause to ask ourselves a question, Is there any remaining flexibility within the system and are other reforms, of a non-statist variety, possible?

(From p. 21)

Larry Gambone

payment, PO Box rent, in January, but after that, barring possible copier problems, we are in the clear. All this is a far cry from the red ink we were contending with a couple of years ago.

Contributions: Willy Eckert $7; Joseph Tupper $30; Paul Burkett $4; Chris Faatz $1; William Hewitson $7; Par Murtagh $6; Tom Dooley $10; Aaron Fenwick $2; Tony Laffan $5; Harry Wade $20. Total $92. Thank you, comrades.

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| BALANCE | December 21, 1996 | $55.49 |

Fraternally submitted,            Frank Girard
                                      — for the DB
AFL-CIO president John Sweeney, vice-president Richard Trumka, and 18 other labor officials, politicians, and religious leaders, plus two strikers, were arrested for blocking the door of The Detroit News in a media event at a Labor Day weekend rally of 700 strikers and supporters. This staged arrest was the "new" AFL-CIO's response to at least five months of calls by members and officials of the six striking Detroit newspaper unions for a national labor march on Detroit. The week before, Sweeney claimed "a national march would be...impossible to organize by Labor Day [and] we do not see how such an action would have an effect.

The Detroit strike is a "must-win" for the labor movement. So why did "reform president" Sweeney and a handful of VIPs substitute themselves for the mass action of the hundreds of thousands of working people who could well have been organized to converge on Detroit?

The message of this pitiful symbolic action by Sweeney and Trumka was: "Union members should not act collectively to fight the corporations. We the leaders will 'fight' on your behalf and manage things in our own way."

Sweeney's action was designed to demobilize the Detroit strikers, while retaining their faith in his leadership. The Detroit strike has already involved militant mass picketing in the heart of union country, and has the overwhelming support of the Detroit-area populace. The goal of the AFL-CIO is to control the members on behalf of the corporate owners. Sweeney and Trumka are afraid that bringing large numbers of workers together would kindle new self-confidence in millions of working people and create new pressure from the rank-and-file to fight the corporations.

Sweeney's attempts to defuse the Detroit strike are part of a long pattern of AFL-CIO betrayal. PATCO, Local P-9, Staley, Caterpillar: these defeats of workers in the last 25 years could never have occurred without the complicity of the AFL-CIO.

THE REAL STRENGTH OF THE STRIKERS

The real strength of the Detroit strikers does not lie in union officials or the media or religious and political figures. It lies rather in the moral vision of the strikers and their solidarity with each other and with other working people. The strikers are motivated by the bedrock values of unionism. Any one of the strikers would be better off financially by scabbing. Instead they are sacrificing personal economic interests to fight for the values they believe in. Their real strength and their goals are the same: commitment to relationships based on equality and solidarity, and commitment to their class.

The strikers' success depends on their ability to communicate their vision to other working people and to mobilize people on this basis.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?
The real measure of the strike's success toward achieving the deepest goals of the strikers is progress toward building a working class movement. Whatever the outcome regarding contractual issues, if the Detroit newspaper strike results in beginning a self-conscious movement of working people to create a truly democratic society, it will be a significant victory.

SUCCESS DEPENDS ON SELF-RELIANCE

The more profound goals of the strike depend on the strikers themselves and are within their reach. Strikers should go in their dozens and hundreds to auto plants and machine shops and hospitals and offices and shopping malls—wherever people work or shop or live. They should go armed with literature which explains the goals of their strike and the goals of a working class movement. They should call on other workers to help build a general strike centered in Detroit and spreading as far as possible.

The strikers cannot depend on Sweeney or any other labor officials to win their strike or to build a movement. The labor laws and union structures are designed precisely to prevent the emergence of a real working class movement. If the strikers are going to begin to build a movement, they must do it themselves.

Only a revolutionary movement can fight for the goal of working people for a society based on equality, solidarity, and democracy. This movement must challenge capitalism and seek not to negotiate better terms of exploitation but to end exploitation, once and for all.

Please copy this flyer and pass it on.

New Democracy works for democratic revolution. Call Doug Fuda (617)323-7213. For free literature: New Democracy, P.O. Box 427, Boston, MA 02130. E-mail: Newdem@aol.com. Website: http://users.aol.com/newdem.
NOTES, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND SHORT REVIEWS

Letter from India: The DB recently received its copy of the following letter.

Dear Friends,

We are facing a problem. We have things to say. We have written some of it down, formatted it, and it is ready to print. But we don’t know how to distribute it in large numbers among wage workers and activists. The problem is complicated by the fact that because we want to distribute our material free (without price), we cannot avail of the market oriented distribution circuits. We need quick advice and help, and a discussion on alternative non-market channels of distribution of printed words and graphics.

We feel the necessity for non-market distribution channels, not because we are millionaires (which we do not even remotely approximate!) but because we consider the free circulation of things a positive step in confronting the rationale of the market economy.

The two materials that are ready for circulation are:
1) The Bitter Wages of Work dealing with all the pervasive anti-work currents all over the world, and searches for strategies of resistance to latest managerial techniques of control extraction.
2) Reflections on Marx’s Critique of Political Economy (tentatively titled) dealing with some critiques of Marx, which we were compelled to undertake while working with day to day struggles of wage workers.

Please let us know at the earliest:
a) as to how you can help us in distributing our publications,
b) how many copies you require, and
c) other addresses and contacts through which we can distribute these publications.

It goes without saying that we appreciate a non-market distribution channel through which our thoughts and experiences are critically evaluated, commented upon, and expanded.

With greetings,
Sher Singh, Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, N.I.T. Faridabad 121 001, India

Aufheben No. 5, Autumn 1996; L2.00 ($3.00?) from c/o Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY England. Thirty-three of this issues 44 pages are devoted to material dealing with the November-December 1995 French strike against government efforts to cut back on social spending, characterized thus: “An agreement negotiated by the unions. A return to work called by the unions. Central demands not met. And the postponement once more of hopes for real social change... These contradictory appearances of last social upheaval in France make an analysis imperative.” The three major chapters concern “(A) the European Context,” “(B) French Historical Context,” and “(C) The Social Movement of Nov.-Dec. 1995.” Along with this come detailed footnotes and a 13-page section of “Intakes”—documents, flyers, and other material translated from items published by the strikers and organizations. The other main article is “Escape from the Law of Value,” a reply to Aufheben’s review of Midnight Oil: Work, Energy, War, 1973-92. Aufheben criticized the book on the ground that the authors “failed to take sufficient account of the mediations that constitute capital’s operation through the ‘law of value’.”

Collective Action Notes #11/12, Fall/Winter 1996; $1.50/L1.50 from PO Box 22962, Baltimore, MD 21203. In its newest manifestation CAN has been transformed into a 40-page tabloid. The
downside is that it will be issued only twice a year. The introduction to this issue sees signs
"...that CAN is now establishing a niche particularly unfilled in the U.S. For lack of a better
description you could almost describe CAN now as a sort of Ultime Reader of the "ultra-left.""
Although the usual class struggle chronology occupies a significant share of this issue (14
pages), it is interspersed with explanatory material in many cases. A major difference is the 18
pages devoted to a chronology and extended commentary on the Liverpool Dockers' Strike,
which CAN and its writer—an on-the-scene witness—regard as a watershed in the class struggle.
They hold this view primarily because the strike was independent of the official dockers' union
in its inception and strategies and also because of its international support and the primary
concern of the strikers: the "casualization" of labor on the docks. One result of the strike has
been an international dockers conference, the first step perhaps in an international workers
organization outside the capitalist unions. Also included in this issue is an article from Exchanges
#61 (1988), "Is Direct Democracy Really Possible?"

A New Union Vision by Arthur J. Miller is a sixteen-page pamphlet containing a well reasoned
and well organized argument for joining the IWW. Among other points, Miller shows how
superior the IWW could be to capitalist unions in combating capital in the new international
labor market. No price given, from the IWW International Transportation Project, PO Box 5464,
Tacoma, WA 98415.

Fifth Estate Vol. 31, (#54) Fall 1996, $2 from 4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201. Five of
the 32 tabloid pages of this issue are devoted to T. Fulano's well documented article "The
Unabomber And the Future of Industrial Society." A pull-quote expresses the tenor of
the article: "If it takes a madman to tell us in his own mad way that our world is mad, then so be it.
Truth be told, industrial capitalism is tattering the complex web of life to the point of global
collapse, and the legions of functionaries like the last two bureaucrats the Unabomber killed are
reaping lavish benefits from helping the process along." Also in this issue are the review of a
new book by FE staff writer George Watson, Beyond Bookchin: Preface for a Future Social
Ecology, as well as an anti-Bookchin review by Peter Sabatini of Social Anarchism or Lifestyle
Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm by Murray Bookchin. The next issue of DB will review
both of these books as well as Sabatini's article.

"Islamic Fundamentalism — Real Threat or Just Another Capitalist Attack?" The central
point of this 10-page document holds that what we regard as "Islamic fundamentalism" is
actually "Islamic nationalism," and like all nationalism is advanced by the lesser bourgeoisie.
The authors devote much of the document to the effects of this movement in Iran. A quotation
sets the tone: "Our people should not spend as lavishly as they do and stop eating so much....
The conditions brought about by the Islamic Republic are sweet and relaxing for workers, civil
servants and peasants — all the masses of our people." — Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a speech to
the workers, 1 May 1993. Several pages spell out in detail the reaction of workers who would
like to eat more. The authors who describe themselves as "...a group of communists, mostly
from the former Yugoslavia" are interested in readers' comments. No price given -- from
Utvrđivanje, Folder 19, 28 Silver Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2ST England.

Perennial Books #7. The introduction to this 36-page catalog—my source for Milan Rai's
ADAM BUICK
40 GRANVILLE GARDENS
LONDON W5 3PA
ENGLAND,

Chomsky's Politics reviewed above-speaks approvingly of the diversity of anarchist literature and its cultural orientation. The contents--see a sampling below--reflect this approval. Organized by topic--"History & Biography" (Brinton, The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control, $3; Gallagher, All the Right Enemies: The Life and Murder of Carlo Tresca, $17.50 cloth; Serge, Year One of the Russian Revolution, $4.95). "Theory" (Clastres, The Archeology of Violence, $6.00; MacDonald, The Root Is Man, $5.00; Midnight Notes, Midnight Oil: Work, Energy, War 1973-1992, $5). "Classics" (Bakunin, The Basic Bakunin, [17 essays including some that are hard to find] $6.95 and Kropotkin, The Conquest of Bread $19.95). "Cultural Criticism" (Kruger, Remote Control: Power, Cultures, and the World of Appearances, $6.95). "Literature & Art" (Serge, Conquered City, $5.00 and Traven, Rebellion of the Hungry, $6.00. And a selection called "Blue Light Specials" in which out-of-print books go for low low prices. From PO Box B 14, Montague, MA 01351.

Communist Headache: Notes for Working and Living Vol. 5. Autumn 1996. The earlier notice that CH would cease publication with Vol. 4 has obviously been rescinded. This issue takes up the general subject of work. It includes a review in a type size that makes DB’s look gigantic of two novels by [?]. Bukowski, whose writings on the subject are compared to those of Jack London and Upton Sinclair. Along with this is a selection of letters on the subject from Processed World and an essay on wages and wage levels. L3 + L1 postage ($4.50 + $1.50) from C.H., c/o ATX, PO Box 298, Sheffield S10 1YU, England.

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