About This Issue

DB114 begins with Louis Prisco’s article in the Anarcho-Syndicalist Review on primitivism and leftism. I agree with his view that primitivism goes nowhere as a revolutionary movement. It’s solution to destruction of the environment by our species seems to be that we humans should simply
remove ourselves from the scene and vacate the planet. On the face of it, mass suicide of our species or—what amounts to the same thing—abandoning the technology that makes existence possible for all but a few hunter-gatherers is not the sort of group objective likely to win many adherents. But it is Louis's take on leftism that raises my hackles. His failure to see any alternative to the existing system except the different versions of a reformed and improved capitalism that will presumably set up a more just and equitable kind of wage slavery boggles the mind. And I reply to Louis in the next essay.

(To p. 12)
Is post-leftist anarchism primitivism a cure for political pessimism? Or is it a symptom?

BY LOUIS PRISCO

"A leftist is a person who thinks that at least the major instruments of production and all of the natural bounty of God's creation should be owned in common." -from the Anderson Valley Advertiser (Not a bad definition, except that how many leftists believe in God?)

With the publication in 1997 of Bob Black's book, Anarchy After Leftism, the term post-leftism became intelligible. Those who may be identified with this term are anti-Establishment, yet they've also disassociated themselves from the left. They seem to think the left has become so corrupt and ineffective that it no longer has anything to offer. Both the Marxist and the traditional anarchist left are in their eyes discredited. While I appreciate their reasoning, I don't believe that the time to stop calling ourselves leftist has arrived yet. Other members of my union, the Industrial Workers of the World, may feel differently, but that is how I see it.

Anarchy After Leftism was a heated response to Murray Bookchin's controversial 1995 book, Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: an Unbridgeable Chasm, in which a number of anarchists of the post-leftist tendency are taken to task. If there were nothing to Bookchin's targets but consumerism in bohemian disguise, he would have won the argument hands down. Instead, the post-leftists are more or less the same as or overlap with anarchist-primitivists, whose movement seems to combine the deep ecology of Earth First! with the anti-organizational anarchist-individualism of Max Stirner. Among other names that have been used for them are fashion anarchist, Green Anarchist and technophobe. I like to think of them as devolutionists, or advocates of social evolution in reverse.

Bookchin had of course realized way back in the 1960s that radicals would have to become what is now called Green as well as red and black, or else risk being irrelevant. His adversaries have sought to minimize his contributions, however. Their ideas can be found in such publications as The Fifth Estate newspaper and Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed. John Zerzan is perhaps their most significant author.

In this article I will use "primitivism," "anarchist-primitivism" and "post-leftism" as synonyms (1) for what Bookchin has categorized as lifestyleism, while remaining open to the possibility of other types of primitivism that won't be discussed here. I will also focus on what most of the post-leftist primitivists appear to have in common, even if they don't all agree on every point. The article is divided into five sections, but first there's an introduction, which you are now reading, and which ends with a series of brief comments that prefigure each of the sections:

Post-left shares with postmodern the mood of pessimism about a workers' Revolution that set in after 1968. In the words of a French forerunner of American post-leftism, Jacques Camatte: "The proletariat ... is superfluous." Yet who else would have more to gain from an egalitarian society than the lower classes of the present one? A "Revolution" that doesn't establish equality with liberty, as Orwell in his 1984 said, only elevates one of the middle classes to power, while keeping everyone else down.

I am neither a technie nor a Luddite. Post-leftists are correct in warning that technology has an inherent tendency to enslave us: "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind," as Ralph Waldo Emerson put it. However, their contention that the machine can never be tamed is only an hypothesis, not certainty. But even if it were true, injustice would still prevail unless the will to power in each human being is tempered with a sense of solidarity. If that is not done, merely returning to lower stage of technical development would be insufficient.
On the Other Side of Left is Right. Postmodern is temporal designation while post-left is a spatial one. Thus in leaving the modern behind, one moves forward in time. But it is logically impossible to leave the left behind without moving the center or to the right. If one goes far enough towards the ultra-left, space according to Einstein being curved, one eventually returns full circle to the starting point. Some post-leftist ideas have great value, but only as updates and refinements to the left, not as separations in kind from it.

Wanted: a Radical Demography. If the ideal post-leftist world is a wilderness, one with many fewer people than there are now, how could it be made attractive to the average Jill and Jack? They might fear that they would only be working towards their own elimination. Young African-American males, a group with proven insurrectionary capacity, are apt to be repelled by a vagueness in this area. Other people of color and Jews and gay people might be put off too.

The Counterfeit Left. There is a fake left (a term I found the Anderson Valley Advertiser), and the owners of the capitalist media have been happy to confuse it with the authentic one. Some of what appears to be wrong with leftist may in actuality be attributed to reformism or reaction hiding behind the red flag.

After discussing some possible causes of fake leftism, the final section ends by summarizing the article’s conclusions. If the basis of true leftist could be reduced to single phrase, it would perhaps be the collective defense of individual rights, which has also been expressed as “an injury to one is an injury to all. Whenever that hoary but sage IWW maxim is forgotten, the left becomes unreal.

Post-left and Postmodern

Postmodernism, is related to the flow of time. Whether they’re artists or academics, postmodernists agree that the modern is out of date. What they haven’t found yet is a new name to describe what has replaced it. In politics, however, what we call left and right are geographical metaphors. They illustrate the contrasts between the many different political positions, in an arc from one extreme to the other. The left can and I hope will improve its understanding of what is required for socialism. If it does so, it will still be the left.

In 1968, major protests erupted in several parts of the world, raising hopes that the workers’ movement would rise from past defeats and this time go on to victory. But alas, insurgencies of 1968 all faded out. The climate of disappointment that followed thereafter had a certain effect on postmodernism. Po-mo, as it’s been called, is many things, one of them being a kind of wariness about any socialist plans for remaking the world. If some po-mo thinkers have retained a lucid irony vis-a-vis capitalism as an unsavory system, many of them have lost the passion and the hope that characterizes leftist of the best kind.

Post-leftists for their part have the conviction that change is possible, and they’re willing to confront authority in the street. At least some of the “black-clad anarchists” at Seattle in November 1999 and subsequent events might accept a post-leftist or a primitivist designation. But in spite of the differences between them, post-leftists and po-mos have one thing in common: They’ve both turned skeptical about the revolutionary abilities of the working class, In this they’re not so far from Bookchin, whose theory of “libertarian municipalism” assumes that workers are no more revolutionary than other citizens. Since the Middle Ages the lower classes of Europe have risen up again and again in rebellion, the most significant of these occurrences being the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolution of 1917. Both began with real victories by the downtrodden, whose actions destroyed the oppressive Bourbon and Romanov regimes. Middle class intellectuals and even a few aristocrats helped, but it was the plebeians; in the street and in the workplace who provided the essential force for change.

Eventually there were backlashes that ended in the bogus revolutionary dictatorships of Napoleon and
Stalin respectively. Then in 1989 the Berlin Wall came down, thus providing a dramatic symbol for the collapse of fake leftism in the USSR and its satellites. The demise of the successor-regime to Stalin has allegedly proved that socialism is not possible, i.e., that the system of unequal private ownership is invincible, if not eternal.

Po-mos as a result have made their not always easy accommodation to that system, often accepting comfortable Establishment positions, while post-leftists have searched for other ways to resist. Both are critical of the 18th century Enlightenment. The rational, progressive and anti-clerical philosophy of the Enlightenment helped to overcome feudalism, and since 1789 it's influenced both the left and the bourgeois center. Hitler and other rightists have by contrast always despised the Enlightenment, because among other things it proclaimed at least in theory that all men are equal.

Now that some 200 years have passed, our Enlightenment heritage could stand to be updated a bit in response to new conditions. Post-leftists have gone farther than po-mos in that direction, having seriously tried to avoid the leftist errors of the past, but in so doing they may have made some new ones of their own. While there is no guarantee that an egalitarian and libertarian socialism is attainable, what does seem true is that those below the middle would have to play a major role in creating it. Others would have to help the lower classes, but that would be possible only up to a certain point. If equality were bestowed as a gift, the recipients would be dependent on their benefactors and therefore not equal.

For many of the post-leftist primitivists, however, it is not equality but wild nature that is most wanted. They reject science, technology, rationalism, optimism, the idea of progress, the division of labor, any type of representation and even civilization itself. If optimistic about humanity in the long run, they're pessimistic regarding the leftist dream of a classless society, in which work as well as power would be shared and some advanced technology retained. There are primitivists who would like to abandon the cities altogether and return to a Stone Age economy in the wilderness, thus nullifying 10,000 years of human development since the Neolithic era.

As an hyperbole or exaggeration to emphasize what has been denied or not noticed, a position so absolute might be justified. Whether a great many people will interpret it literally remains to be seen. Even if the human race did take a wrong turn when the first villages were built and agricultural surpluses accumulated, that in itself would not prove that the remedy - as Zerzan suggests - is to return to the time before humans learned to speak. Once Pandora's box was open, our primeval innocence may have been lost forever. We can only go forward with what we have, and it seems to me that the leftist social project is a human asset that is too valuable to throw away.

I would like to believe that a high priority for anarchists and libertarian socialists, if we ever become strong enough to implement our ideals, will be to repair the environmental damage that has been done. Re-entering the Paleolithic era - if it were indeed desirable - should morally be lower on the list than restoring the ecosystem wherever it's been injured. Whatever technology is needed for this purpose should be utilized. "Nature will heal itself" some primitivists have said, but it's hard to see how we humans as a species can heal ourselves unless we clean up our own planetary mess.

**Neither Techie Nor Luddite**

For a long time the left had mostly followed Marx in expecting machinery to liberate us from unnecessary work. By so-called vulgar Marxists, the application of science to mechanical problems was seen almost as an elixir. If science could be freed from its bondage to capitalism, all would be well. But science has all too often been the willing if junior partner of corporate capital in the West and of state capital in the East. As a result, the growth of industry for power and for profit continues unabated and the generous bounty of Mother Nature is being despoiled.

Post-leftist anarchists, in the belief that science and technology are to blame, have relegated the
question of ownership to secondary importance. For them an egalitarian society must necessarily be a primitive one. They can truthfully say that Stalin sacrificed the health and safety of his workers for industrial progress, just as Rockefeller and other Western capitalists have done. Yet it's untrue to say that leftists have always applauded such a scenario. In 1873 Bakunin said, "The domination of life by science can have no other result than the brutalization of mankind." His answer - the opposite of returning to the wilds - was to establish a new order in which science would "become the property of everybody."

Camus in his 1957 book, The Rebel, said the idea of progress is a bourgeois myth which Marx had uncritically accepted: Progress paradoxically, can be used to justify conservatism. A draft drawn on confidence in the future, it allows the master to have a clear conscience. The slave and those whose present life is miserable and who can find no consolation in the heavens are assured that at least the future belongs to them. The future is the only kind of property that masters willingly concede to their slaves. In the same book, Camus argued against the Marxist-Leninist movement of his day and was friendly towards revolutionary syndicalism. "Can it even be said," he asked, "that this syndicalism has been ineffective? The answer is simple. It is this movement alone which, in one century, has tremendously improved the condition of the workers from the 16-hour day to the 40-hour week." To post-leftist anarchist-primitivists, Camus' words are probably phony-baloney because he did not condemn industry altogether. They think that unions - even revolutionary ones like the IWW - are in favor of work and production for their own sake. On the contrary, for most Wobblies the greater goal has been the sharing of a better life.

The IWW slogan, "Production for use instead of profit," implies limiting output to what is suitable for well-being. It means making industry compatible with the needs of people and the earth. In the early IWW there was an astounding cultural efflorescence, with such artists as Joe Hill, T-Bone Slim and the "Mr. Block" cartoonist. Neither the Protestant work ethic nor any technocrats or Leninist commissars could have made that happen. In his 1923 "Recipes for Health," T-Bone Slim advises: "Do not work too hard... Hurry is unnatural - a form of insanity." An eloquent and more recent statement is in C.C. Redcloud's column for the IWW newspaper, dated May 1991, in which the term "post-industrial" seems to be refuted:

Whether you work in a factory, plow potatoes in the fields, sweep the barroom floor, flip hamburgers or merely keep the shanty where you live nice and clean for your wage-working mate to come home to, your sweat contributes to keeping a minuscule portion of our fellow creatures in undeserved leisure, and you are still a goddamned 'industrial worker.' Eventually when enough of humanity takes our message to heart and the classless society becomes more than a visionary dream,... and the factories shall have disappeared from all over the world, we will still have to be 'industrious' in order for this better society to function.

Wobblies with those points of view were by no means the only of groups of workers over the past two centuries worth remembering. Workers of every race, color and gender have set admirable examples for us to follow. Even if they didn't quite achieve a true and lasting socialism, they nevertheless made real gains as Camus noted. Post-leftist anarchist-primitivists, however, don't seem to be impressed by that. It's as if the post-leftists have forgotten the victories that workers have won, and only remember the defeats and the treachery of certain leaders.

Instead of the Paris Commune or a general strike, the newer post-leftist model is the foraging band of hunters and gatherers in a pre-agricultural state. Although the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins is not an anarchist himself, his findings appeal to anarchist-primitivists. According to Sahlins and his colleague Richard Lee, in Africa and elsewhere there are foragers leading enviable lives in the forest even now. These groups are said to enjoy liberty, equality and a relative abundance, while working fewer hours than
most employed workers in the US do. If Sahlin is correct, the Enlightenment ideal of a "Noble Savage" has some basis in fact.

As Westerners we have a lot to learn from the surviving primitive peoples, whose intimacy with nature is something we've lost and could benefit from regaining. Yet they've never faced the unique problems we do; therefore they're not equipped to teach us everything. Furthermore, such peoples are everywhere beset by governments, corporations and entrepreneurs that are greedy for the available resources. Being still in the Stone Age, they're not able to defend themselves or their land against intruders from the 21st century, unless Western radicals and liberals help them. But exactly who or what is it that they have to be defended from?

The anarchist-primitivist analysis focuses heavily on science and technology, while the capitalists who own the technology and who hire and fire the scientists and technicians are emphasized less. At the same time, workers are sometimes dismissed as being equally responsible with their corporate bosses for damage to the environment. Post-leftism has in effect replaced the hope of a working class social Revolution with nostalgia for a semi-mythical Garden of Eden. In my opinion that's a very iffy proposition.

It is possible that civilization will someday be destroyed in a natural or a man-made catastrophe. If that happens, and if the human race is not wiped out, what would prevent a new state oppression from growing out of the ashes of the old. Nothing, except what we do to stop it. The traditional anarchist and left socialist goal is collective ownership, in which the appropriate level of technological development would be consensual or voted on. If industry is demolished but belief in the privileges of unlimited ownership remains, the state is sure to rise again.

On the Other Side of Left Is Right

If post-leftists are no longer leftist themselves, then it's logical to either invent a new system of classification or conclude that they've become right wing or centrist. These terms come from the French Revolution. Conservatives in the Assembly sat to the right of the president's chair, while radicals sat to the left. The leftist bloc was known as the Mountain or the Jacobins, with the Enrages-Jean-Paul Marat among them - at the era's extreme left. On the right was the bourgeois and constitutional-monarchist Gironde; in the center was the Plain, or Marsh, whose members were also bourgeois and who held the swing vote. Their respective programs can be illustrated on: [the chart below]:

**FRENCH ASSEMBLY & CONVENTION 1789-1794**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King or Executive</th>
<th>Left: Jacobins, or the Mountain</th>
<th>Center: Plain, or Marsh</th>
<th>Right: Girondine &amp; Moderate Royalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No veto</td>
<td>Supersede veto Could delay but not prevent legislation</td>
<td>Absolute veto Could override legislation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislature</td>
<td>unicameral &amp; independent of the king</td>
<td>bicameral with separation of powers (checks &amp; balances)</td>
<td>bicameral and subordinate to the king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td>Elected and subordinate to the legislature</td>
<td>Elected or appointed compt with the other branches (separation of powers)</td>
<td>Appointed &amp; subordinate to the king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franchise</td>
<td>Extreme left position; all (male) citizens could vote</td>
<td>Tax requirement and other restrictions on voting</td>
<td>Tax requirement and other restrictions on voting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This chart is based on information from David Caute's book *The Left in Europe since 1789*. It shows that the French revolutionary right would have concentrated power in the hands of the king, while the left wanted a one-house legislature to be supreme. What the center advocated was something like the U.S. government today, except that fewer people would have been allowed to vote. Kropotkin in his history of the French Revolution said there were still other people involved - he called them "the anarchists" (he used quotes because anarchist theory in the 18th century was just beginning to be formulated).

The "anarchists" of the period 1789 to 1795 or so wanted more freedom and power for the lower classes than anyone else did, i.e., they were leftists. Some of them had begun to question the legitimacy of private property and the state. But since the "anarchists" were mostly outside of the Assembly, they did not sit as a bloc at the Mountain's left. Their *milieux* were the 48 neighborhood sections of the Paris Commune and the street. Yet they were able to make their presence felt in the Assembly from the spectator's gallery up above.

So maybe the post-leftists are right (oops, correct) in saying that the *real* radicals are not leftist. They are merely higher than everyone else. That would give us a new classification, not right vs. left but high vs. low. Hitler would be the lowest of the low and the black-clad people at Seattle and similar demonstrations would be among the most high.

In Russia between 1905 and 1917 the largest party was the centrist and bourgeois Kadets. On the left were the Marxist Social-Democrats (Lenin's party) and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. According to the anarchist historian Voline, each party took a different position on the agrarian question. The Kadets would have transferred land from the wealthy owners to the peasants, at a "fair price" that the peasants would have had to pay. The leftist parties wanted the government to transfer the land to the peasants for free.

The Russian anarchists urged the peasants to simply take possession of the land, but anarchism didn't have a lot of influence then (it would later on, in Ukraine). Because the anarchists were outside of the legislature, the standard instead of left vs. right could have been in vs. out. Kadets would be the "in" group, Marxists were in and out at different times and anarchists to the left of the Marxists were far out. Other possible dichotomies could be wet vs. dry (it's already been used in Great Britain), or hard vs. soft - in the US even bourgeois Democrats are accused of being soft-hearted, as in "bleeding heart liberal."

In trying to define the left, Caute listed various criteria but found that its essence is popular sovereignty. As the chart showed us, the right of universal suffrage was in the 18th century a leftist demand. But today, when almost everyone in the Western democracies can vote (the Florida fiasco in 2000 notwithstanding), political popular sovereignty is widely accepted in principle. The leftist of today may therefore be tomorrow's rightism: in the 17th century even Puritanism was left. Caute said that leftists must now demand economic popular sovereignty, or the right of electing the top managers of agriculture and industry - to which I would add the directors of the media. This comes close to communism, or the mass ownership of the most important kinds of property.(6)

If the best of leftist thinking from 1789 to now could be reduced to a common denominator, with all the errors deleted, the sum I think would be this: Equalization, to the extent possible, of the ownership and control of major property. Of course, we know now that it is impossible to disregard the environmental factor. Yet it still comes down to *who decides* what will be done with the land, the air, the waters and the earth. Any political group can therefore be judged by how much it would share the responsibilities, as well as the benefits, of ownership. On the present scene in America, we have this line-up:

*Ku Klux kooks on the far right* under the illusion that a Jewish conspiracy rules the world.

*Right wing libertarians* under the illusion that the government favors welfare recipients.

*Republican and Democrat politicians* in the center who understand that the government's most important concern is to safeguard the property of the few.

*Electoral Greens* on the left trying to mitigate the impact of the private ownership of industry on the
environment.

Marxists left of the Greens with programs of state ownership and control.

Traditional anarchists on the far left calling for the sharing of property and the abolition of the state.

So where do the post-leftist anarchist-primitivists fit in? I'm not sure. If they want more freedom and power for those who have little, then they're leftists. But if they distance themselves too far from people of lower income, or if they decide that human life can be easily sacrificed for a pristine environment, then they may end up in the center or on the right - even if they intend to be radical.

A parallel can be drawn with something that happened almost a hundred years ago. Italian syndicalists and Futurists got tired of waiting for the non-Marxist proletarian upsurge that the philosopher Georges Sorel had theorized about. Wanting to free themselves from the left and still oppose the bourgeoisie, they joined up with Mussolini, who had himself been influenced by Sorel and Stirner. The result when those folks grew impatient with the working class was something new, but it wasn't pretty - it was fascism. The trajectory of fascism's Italian founders went 180 degrees beyond the leftist end of the arc and stopped on the extreme right.

Post-leftists are not fascists, nor do they even seem to be terribly elitist, but they too are pessimistic about the viability of a blue collar base. The differences are that while fascism misdirected the revolutionary instinct into the channels of nationalism, racism and war, and university po-mos as well as Bookchin have obtained tenure, the stated destination of post-leftists is the forest. But even if they remain free from the desire to dominate others, these primitives may find that other people will have survived in the forest with them - people who may be both unfriendly and better armed and organized. Attractive though it may sound, a low-tech life has few defenses against a higher-tech weaponry.

**Wanted: A Radical Demography**

What I find most nebulous about post-leftists is their stance on population. A case can be made that overpopulation benefits the ruling class, providing the owners of industry with cannon fodder for wars, consumers to buy their products and an 'underclass' or 'industrial reserve army' of surplus workers, who can be drawn on as scabs during a strike. On the other hand, a case can also be made for reducing population through the elimination of poverty and homophobia, and by ensuring full reproductive rights to women. As to what the ideal world population would be, and how it could be achieved, there is no consensus. Until now the left probably hasn't paid enough attention to the matter, except for defending the rights of immigrants.

Almost the only relevant statement I could find is from the beat and Buddhist poet Gary Snyder. A son and grandson of IWW members, Snyder himself is a primitivist. Bookchin called him "the poet-laureate of the deep ecology movement." In his "Revolution in the Revolution in the Revolution," Snyder wrote: "Revolutionary consciousness is to be found/ Among the most ruthlessly exploited classes:/ Animals, trees, water, air, grasses. -

I am not sure, however, if Snyder thinks of himself as a post-leftist or even as an anarchist. He has at any rate contributed these thoughts about demography:

There are criteria for discussing the carrying capacity of the planet. Proposing an ecologically optimal number of humans is not an automatic demand that some be killed or that abortion become mandatory, as some people seem to think. It is a proposal for discussion. If acted on, the reduction of numbers would be accomplished by a lower birthrate over decades or even centuries.
The position Snyder here expresses is reasonable and I would call it "leftist" in the best sense. It is conceivable, however, that it will be bypassed in favor of some quicker and more harsh way of bringing the numbers down. I am not saying that any of the post-leftists would go that far, but with such a controversial issue there is always the danger of being misunderstood. Thus the need for transparency and precision. Ted Kaczynski, known as the Unabomber, was convicted of killing three persons and injuring more than twenty others. Zerzan, who has visited Kaczynski in prison and written letters to him, was interviewed in such media as the New York Times. In the May 2000 issue of Harpers magazine, David Samuels quoted Zerzan as follows, "They ain't innocent," he [Zerzan] says of Kaczynski's victims "Which isn't to say that that I am totally at ease with blowing them into pieces. Part of me is. And part of me isn't."

In the Unabomber's defense, he has raised some important questions about the nature of industrial society and the role of science therein. His remarks about leftist may also be true regarding a part of the fake left. Unfortunately, the Unabomber's methods were, well, unfortunate. Like the Weathermen and the SLA, he did attract attention, but so far not enough to have threatened the ruling class very much. I'm sure that the series of demonstrations against global capitalism that began in Seattle has had a more positive effect.

The tendency to which I adhere is not attached exclusively to violence or to pacifism. Revolutionary labor groups have used a variety of tactics, from armed combat against the fascist General Franco to nonviolent passive resistance. Victory when it came was not simply attributable to violence or to its absence. A more important factor seems to have been the number of people who took part in militant actions together.

Kaczynski, acting from his reclusive hideaway, allegedly selected only one or a handful of human targets at a time. Timothy McVeigh's toll was higher: 168 fatalities in one explosion. In 1995 the Aum Shinrikyo group introduced nerve gas into the Tokyo subway system, resulting in 12 dead and thousands more injured. How long before someone else devises a way of killing people by the millions? As the degree of tension and social stress increases, we can't assume that generals and heads of state are the only ones capable of such destructiveness.

A distinction should here be made between revolutionary warfare that is just and mass murder. The two are not the same, however hard the murderers may try to blur the line between them. Hitler, Stalin and Pol Pot were not revolutionists. They were murderers, not dissimilar to the American frontiersmen who felt that "The only good Injun is a dead Injun." It is one thing to acknowledge that violence may sometimes be unavoidable; it is something else to be heedless of the point when we become as evil as the enemy we are fighting.

The post-leftist and primitivist critique of civilized society implies a world with a drastically reduced population. It would be well for primitivists and leftists alike to discuss openly - as Snyder has already undertaken - to what extent such an epochal reduction is feasible, and the exact ways in which it might be accomplished.

The Counterfeit Left

In their rejection of the left, primitivists will with reason say that leftist governments in power have been awful. Once they were seated at the control panel, leftists have contradicted their own ideals and surrounded themselves with guards. if Stalin is an obvious example, even such revered idols as Franklin Roosevelt have managed to strengthen the state and make it more centralized. Of course, they always claimed that extraordinary measures were necessary because of some threat, like the Great Depression or a War. But whatever the emergency was, it would end with the government holding on to most of the "temporary" powers it had borrowed. In Spain during the 1930s, a few anarcho-syndicalist leaders even
accepted high positions in the government. They justified this breach of anarchist principle as necessary because of the revolutionary war against Franco. Although the crisis they faced was real, we can now see that they made the wrong choice. Post-leftists are also wrong, however, if they think the Spanish debacle proves that anarchists should abstain from any attempts at mass organizing.

Perhaps following Stirner, many post-leftists appear to distrust any large formation other than a loose network of affinity groups. To which I'd reply that if anarchists refuse to participate in any radical labor unions, councils or assemblies that may appear, an authoritarian character to these bodies will be all the more likely.

There is, to be sure, a negative side that is hard to deny. A little bit of belladonna is said to be an aphrodisiac; a little bit more will kill you. While indispensable for contesting capitalism, organizations can also erode the, freedom of their members, if they allow it. If we've learned anything it should be that fake leftism, when it arises, will often try to get control of the organization. The most authentically leftist organization is one in which power and responsibility are shared. But if an organization proclaims leftist ideals while hoarding power in the hands of a few, it is fraudulent. It remains to consider why that would happen.

If the "anarchist" cabinet ministers put a brake on the Spanish Revolution, it wasn't because they were leftists. They did it because they had lost their bearings and drifted towards the center. Lenin's and Mussolini's cases were similar. Such people may have deliberately chosen to disguise themselves as leftist in order to gain power, or they may have sincerely thought they were left - but in the pressure of events were swept in the wrong direction.

Leftism in other words is not bad in itself. What is bad is our tardiness in recognizing right wing or reformist behavior when they appear to be radical. Fake leftism knows how to disguise itself, maybe even from those who have succumbed to it. Let us hope that in the future we will be more savvy.

In Conclusion

The anarchist-primitivist critique of civilization is accurate enough to be paid attention to, but not enough to be accepted 100 percent. Their critique of leftism has merit as well, except that they haven't adequately distinguished between the genuine article and its counterfeit. To recapitulate:

What often caused past revolutions to fail was the ascendancy of one minority or another that used leftist rhetoric but was not leftist in fact. So instead of losing faith in the lower classes as post-leftists and postmoderns are doing, we must build institutional and personal ties that will facilitate majority control over the leadership.

The choice does not have to be limited to either something like the life of Native Americans before Columbus, or the "air-conditioned nightmare" plus "rat-race" of contemporary capitalism. In a revolutionary society, other options would be available (including a primitivist one for those who want it).

Real leftism defends the earth as much as it does human rights, but it also holds on to the best of its radical plebeian tradition in the real as opposed to a partially mythical world. Whatever is not left is either center or right.

Any radical movement to be successful needs widespread support, especially from workers and people of color, two groups which are not mutually exclusive. In the absence of such support, the movement will either be ineffective or it will not be radical. The problem is how to reconcile the need for a smaller population with a mass base.

The temptation to be a fake leftist, i.e., to usurp power, can present itself to anyone. For that reason, the rank and file of any organization must exert effort to keep their leaders in line.

As far as terminology is concerned, the choice is not easy. The word "left" is tainted because it's been misused. So if we continue calling ourselves leftist, we sound to some like apparatchiks of the USSR. But
on the other hand, as post-leftists we could be misconstrued as yuppies or neo-Nazis or postmodern academics. Since most people probably think of us as leftists anyway, a new name could be confusing. Another reason is that post-left is just as susceptible of being stolen as left was, so why get ripped off twice? Hence my decision: If some new vocabulary like wet vs. dry or something else catches on in a big way, and if it may help to win actual struggles, I'll be sure to adopt it. But until then - call me Lefty.

Notes:
1. "Radical" will likewise be a synonym for socialist, communist, leftist and revolutionary.
2. From an undated leaflet entitled "Long Live Green Anarchy!" that was distributed at the Bay Area Anarchist Conference in San Francisco, March 2001.
3. In the Knopf edition translated as "revolutionary trade unionism." The original French is le syndicalisme révolutionnaire.
4. Between Redcloud and Slim there is not any contradiction. It is possible to be industrious without overworking or jeopardizing one's health.
5. Blaming wage slaves for the sins of their bosses has provided a tacit justification for tree-spiking, which practice the late Judi Bari spoke out against. Bari, an Earth First! and IWW activist, showed that while tree-spiking has exerted only minimal pressure on the owners, it is a great source of danger for the people they employ.
6. A state monopoly of ownership as in the former Soviet Union is not communism. It is state capitalism.
7. Walter Benjamin: "Mankind's self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order."

(From ASR (Anarcho-Syndicalist Review) Spring 2002, PO Box 2824, Champaign, IL 61825)

(From p. 2)

Several readers took issue with articles in DB113. Rado Mijanovich responded to Perry Sanders' article on the Kroustadt Revolt, most especially with Sanders' assertion that the socialist revolution must involve an armed revolt. I have always blamed this particular irrationality on a romantic streak in revolutionaries who have watched too many movies of the Bolshevik insurrection in Petersburg with armored cars filled with soldiers racing around with red flags waving. Somehow these romantic fantasies seem to omit the probable consequences of an armed revolt on civilian populations. Is there any reason not to believe that the political state can't outgun and slaughter a working class militia?

Kevin Carson replies to my review of his pamphlet, The Iron Fist. He raises an interesting point about the possible alternatives to the evolutionary track that led to the rise of industrial capitalism. Unfortunately we must live and struggle with the hand history has dealt us.

Pieter Lawrence's Socialist Standard article in DB113 brought two responses. Richard Lloyd objects to Lawrence's remark that the Communist Manifesto was "fatally flawed." He quotes a passage from a Socialist Party of Great Britain pamphlet on the Manifesto which argues that the measures Marx and Engels advocated were not aimed at nationalization but rather at the development of capitalism to the point that would make socialism possible. Charmian Skelton concentrates on Lawrence's characterization of the Russian Revolution as an example of "a sudden and far-reaching change in social relationships," adding evidence that the change in the rural areas, through land seizures, was already well under way before the October revolution and that it was this fact that encouraged Lenin to call for the insurrection.

Skelton also takes me to task for what she perceives as my failure in DB113 to understand the

(TO p. 14)
I agree with Louis Prisco that primitivism is irrelevant except perhaps to anarchists who see this political aberration as an impediment to the spread of a more rational communist or syndicalist anarchism. But his thinking on post-modernism and its political extension post-leftism are a different matter, mainly because of the word leftism. I can't think of a term that has created more confusion among well-meaning people who want to end oppression, injustice, and economic exploitation than this essentially meaningless word. From Bob Black, to whom leftism is synonymous with Marxism, to Rush Limbaugh, who sees the labor unions and the Democratic Party as "left," the word means nothing more than a sort of "nice" liberalism.

And consider the Anderson Valley Advertiser's ambiguous definition: Do leftists believe that "at least the major instruments of production should be owned in common."? But what about the "minor" instruments of production, and the banks, and the wages system, and the political system? Take special note of Louis' definition in the penultimate sentence of his intro: "If the basis of true leftism could be reduced to a single phrase, it would perhaps be the collective defense of individual rights, which has been expressed as 'an injury to one is an injury to all.'" In fact, what Louis has reduced leftism to is a sort of niceness, worthy of the IWW, faculty wives and the Revolutionary Communist Party. Nothing here about revolution, capitalism, social ownership of the means of production.

The source of the problem, as Louis inadvertently shows in the xx he includes, is its origin in the French version of the capitalist revolution. The left was the most anti-monarchist political element in the Assembly. But it was part of the Assembly. It supported the republic and its opposition to the right was carried on within the framework of the new government. Its sought to influence its policies, unlike--as Louis points out--the revolutionaries up in the galleries. This is the way I see the contemporary left. It consists today of academics ideologically orphaned by the collapse of the USSR, the radicals of the issue-oriented movements of the sixties and seventies: anti-war, anti racism, environmental, etc. Consider their publications: Z Magazine, In These Times, The Nation. They have no difficulty seeing what's wrong with the world, but like the leftwing of the French Assembly 200 years ago, they are convinced that they can solve society's problems within the system.

Even the most rhetorically revolutionary groups like the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Spartacists, and the ultra-left Trotskyists call for reforms of capitalism, supposedly in an effort to gain mass support before the revolution. It is these groups and publications that are popularly labeled "left," and I think properly so. For they are the leftwing of capitalism's political spectrum--the loyal opposition who are working for a more user-friendly capitalism by reforming it so that it will end war, poverty, and . Political experts determine their position in capitalism's leftwing by the radicalness of the reforms they advocate. Is the Green Party left of the Socialist Party of America? Is the Communist Party left of the Labor Party? Where does the Socialist Workers Party fit in? And then there are the individual politicians: Where do Gehlert, Barry fit into the left?

Like the French revolutionaries who did not fit into right-left seating arrangement in the French National Assembly but sat in the visitors' gallery, today's tiny minority of actual revolutionaries do not fit into the conventional arrangement of capitalism's leftwing. Groups calling for the immediate abolition of the wages system and its political state have no place in the spectrum of capitalism's political parities. They constitute an entirely separate political division. Unfortunately during the century and a half that capitalism has had organized opposition groups, terms like socialism and communism that once denoted the movement calling for the revolutionary abolition of capitalism have been appropriated by the much larger and influential reform movement of the social democracy and their linde descendants, the
communist parties of the Third International and their descendants.

Like Louis I see a problem with terminology, one that is much more serious than his, for I think the term left is a perfect match for the various shades of pink that make up the reformist movement he is concerned about. But what do we name the grouping that the Page 2 notice in the Discussion Bulletin calls "...the relatively unknown sector of political thought that places the great divide on the 'left,' not between anarchists and Marxists, but between capitalism's statist leftwing of vanguardists and social democrats and the real revolutionaries of our era: the non-market, anti-statist, libertarian socialists...."

Worthy of note is the fact that in this discussion of the opposition to capitalism, Louis simply ignores the existence of this grouping—except for what he calls the "[t]raditional anarchists of the far left..." —Frank Girard

(From p. 12)

difference between Marx's comment on strikes and that of De Leon. It seems to me, though, that in the context of the article both Marx and De Leon are referring, not to strikes as such, but rather to the rebellious spirit in workers that makes them willing to engage in the class struggle, the struggle with their masters for a greater share of the wealth their labor has created. Neither Marx nor De Leon regarded strikes as preludes to revolution. Rather, as the quotations in the article point out (DB113, pp. 24 and 25), they saw the combative ness and presumably the solidarity workers exhibit in strikes as encouraging evidence of their revolutionary potential. Certainly De Leon can not be faulted for opposing political action. It was his advocacy of political action that ended his and the SLP's association with the IWW.

Adam Buick's "Who Are 'we'" should be read by everyone on the "left," for it is leftists who tend to identify with our masters and their political system. You constantly hear it at demonstrations: Why don't we lift the sanctions on Iraq? We must devote more money to education. We must stop supporting Israel. Nothing so completely confirms the success of capitalist propaganda and their lack of class consciousness as their failure to see our rulers as them.

The French group Mouvement Communiste recognizes the anti-globalization movement for what it is: one more side issue to distract our class from the task at hand: the abolition of the root cause of all social evils – capitalism. As usual we end with some notes, announcements and short reviews.

Finances

Despite a decline in business activity we have ended this two month period in the black. As a result we see no need to downsize our operations or move them to Mainland China. As usual the cost of postage is rising, so I may be singing a different song in September.

Contributions: Earl Gilman $14; Joseph Tupper (for the abolition of capitalism) $20; Louis Prisco $7; Glenn Morrison $2; Anthony Burdua $17. Total $60. Thank you, comrades.

BALANCE

April 22, 2002

280.46

RECEIPTS

Contributions $ 60.00
Subs and Sales 86.00
Total $ 146.00

(TO p. 20)
RESPONSE TO PERRY SANDERS

This is not a review or commentary on the whole of the "Forum" talk by Perry Sanders in Discussion Bulletin No. 113. Rather, its major concern is the last paragraph of the article, to wit, "Finally, the fifth question, what are the practical, revolutionary lessons for the international working class struggle for revolutionary, international socialism as the transition to world-wide communism? First there is no revolutionary need for political parties[?] since this implies: participating in the capitalist electoral charade.... A KEY function of the socialist revolution is to: smash/abolish the capitalist state... and, instead set up a transitional[?], revolutionary government... such as a massive I.W.W., with workers militias[?]... This international class struggle process culminates—when the revolutionary situation is ripe—by issuing the "call" for the MASSIVE armed General Strike[?] and/or seizure of the means of production & distribution...[?]"

It is absolutely amazing that one, particularly one, with an apparent awareness of the history of the IWW would propose the abandonment of the open forum of political discourse. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights did not come about as the result of an historical accident. They followed on centuries of struggle to achieve a degree of political rights. A brief historical review will help to make the point.

As mankind learned to domesticate plants and animals, the advantages of using slaves to do the work of providing food and other necessities was quickly realized. Also, the resulting freedom from labor and the benefits of leisure time led, ultimately, to the development of mass slavery. This destroyed primitive communism and gave birth to the private property societies of absolute slavery typified by ancient Greece and Rome. It should be remembered that, the glory of the golden age of Athens was made possible only because of its overwhelmingly larger population of slaves than of freemen.

Thus was marked the transition [revolution] to a class divided society, which prevails to the present day. As described by Jared Diamond in his recent book, GUNS GERMS and STEEL, "... all centrally governed, nonegalitarian [class divided] societies... [a]lt best, do good by providing expensive services impossible to contract for on an individual basis. At worst, they function unabashedly as kleptocracies, transferring net wealth from commoners to upper classes." He goes on to ask: "...why do the commoners [slaves, serfs, wage-workers] tolerate the transfer of the fruits of their hard labor to kleptocrats." In answer to his own question he writes, "Kleptocrats throughout the ages have resorted to a mixture of four solutions... to gain support while still maintaining a more comfortable lifestyle than commoners.

"1. Disarm the populace, and arm the elite....

"2. Make the masses happy by redistributing much of the tribute received....

"3. Use the monopoly of force to promote happiness, by maintaining public order and curbing violence....

"4. The remaining way for kleptocrats to gain public support is to construct an ideology or religion justifying kleptocracy...."

There is one other inescapable characteristic of class divided societies. That is international warfare, which is and has been carried out largely by the commoners [slaves, serfs, and wage workers in our world] in the economic interests of and for the benefit of the kleptocrats [slave holders, medieval royalty, and
capitalists, in our world].

Though the novelty of referring to capitalism as a system of kleptocracy is interesting, the term, capitalism, is more appropriate. It includes the economic analysis of the relationship of the kleptocrats, (capitalists) to the commoners, (wage, workers) as well as the value relationships in a society devoted to commodity production ...

The above enumerated solutions, which have evolved through centuries in which the control of society was exercised by a succession of class conscious ruling classes, should make us aware of the resourcefulness of those ruling classes. The modern capitalist ruling class, which we must confront, is no less capable, and has the precedent of all that history to draw upon. A word about class consciousness: were that the working class would be half as class conscious as is the capitalist class we would, if not already there, be soon enjoying socialism.

In light of this realization, and the obvious fact that the workers, in general are not interested in supporting a revolutionary political program, as long as capitalism can continue to provide for the "general welfare", however inadequate that may be, our task remains one of providing education for our fellow workers.

As a minimum the education must include:

- A description and explanation of the process of capitalist exploitation through the system of wage slavery;
- The capitalist competition, for markets and natural resources and its consequence, i.e., war;
- The continuing pattern of reactionary threats and assaults on civil liberties and the Bill of Rights;
- And most important, that the working class, through its total operation of all aspects of the production facilities, is in a position to set up a system of social organization through socialist industrial unions, that would replace political government with an economic bottom-up democracy. No longer would society be committed to the production of commodities, rather goods would be produced for use as required by human need. This, incidentally, was an integral objective of the original IWW.

Fortunately, under the umbrella of the system of political democracy guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the Constitution we can carry out this education relatively free of government interference.

The concept of the socialist industrial union reorganization of society was first enunciated by Daniel De Leon of the Socialist Labor Party, whose ideas were the driving force behind the organization of the IWW in 1905. The constitution of that original organization included in its preamble the recognition of the need for a political expression of the objectives of the union.

That original IWW was seen as the means for marshalling the only power the working class can command in the class struggle, i.e., its position in running industry from top to bottom. This power would back up the working class demand for the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a society of socialist industrial unionism.

Unfortunately, when, in its third convention in 1908, the IWW abandoned the political provision in its constitution, it opened itself up to government attack as an unlawful organization. This led, ultimately to its destruction as a revolutionary organization.
So, what are we to think of a position which advocates that we abandon the right of political discourse that was achieved only after many centuries of struggle? Isn't that discourse something the ruling class would be happy to eliminate? Isn't that among the first acts that an incoming dictator carries out?

Or, what are we to think of a position which proposes that in a revolutionary situation a call be issued for a MASSIVE armed[?] General Strike? Wouldn't this effectively separate the working class from its only source of power, i.e., its role of running industry?

Also, what is to be the role of "workers' militias" which are called for in the same final paragraph? Are they to challenge the might of the world's mightiest military machine? Doesn't it make more sense to concentrate on the thorough organization of socialist industrial unions and by this means deny access to the huge backup of industrial production that the military needs to function?

Finally, what is the role and need for a "transition stage to world wide communism"? Wouldn't the immediate establishment of a Socialist Industrial Union Society represent that ultimate stage that Sanders labels communism? Or, does he believe that the working class lacks the intelligence to implement a program which conforms essentially, to their daily relationship to the means of production, and, therefore, must be led by a special agency?

By Rado Mijanovich

Howdy, Frank!

Thanks for the review of "Iron Fist," and for the issue of DB. As for the substance of the review, I probably made my meaning less clear than I intended. I didn't mean to imply some kind of idyllic "Saxon constitution" before the Conquest. Only that (as both Wallerstein and Bello argued) the situation was improving and becoming more egalitarian in the late Middle Ages, and it required dramatic and violent action by the ruling class to abort the process. The situation for the producing classes has varied from bad to worse since the Neolithic--probably since the first Sumerian or Chinese priest-kings figured out they could milk the peasantry of surplus produce like cattle. My use of Marx, like most other non-mutualist sources, was selective and incorporated into my own framework.

Regarding "technical evolution," since I'm not a Marxist, I don't believe in inherent laws of development of class society that result from the technical organization of production. Generally, I think that any new production technology presents a whole range of possibilities for organization, and that the way it is used depends on the system of social control into which it is assimilated. If the state had not been imposed on neolithic peasants, and they had created their own cooperative forms of social organization from the bottom up, they could have integrated technological advance into a libertarian framework. If the guilds and town communes (which had already achieved most of the scientific advances necessary for the steam engine) had persisted as democratic, worker-controlled entities, the industrial revolution could have been integrated into a libertarian framework.

Best wishes, Kevin
From: Richard Lloyd, 32 Derwent Rd, Harpenden, Hertfordshire England

In the last edition of Discussion Bulletin you published an article from the Socialist Standard by Peter Lawrence entitled "Socialism: sudden and gradual change". In his article he made the assertion that the revolutionary programme set out in the Communist Manifesto was "fatally flawed" (p. 12) and "it was in effect, a recipe for state capitalism".

This has never been the position of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

In 1945, the SPGB published a pamphlet "Nationalisation or Socialism?" In Chapter IX, Karl Marx and Nationalisation, a considered view was made on the political programme set out in the Manifesto by Marx and Engels.

The chapter is reprinted below.

Chapter LX

Karl Marx and Nationalisation

Before leaving the subject of nationalisation it will be useful to consider the significance of the fact that Karl Marx, to whom Socialists are so greatly indebted, was responsible for proposals for state control of various industries and services, and some advocates of nationalisation in our own time have tried to find support for their schemes in the writings of Marx.

In 1848 was published the Communist Manifesto, by Karl Marx and his friend and fellow Socialist Frederick Engels. In it, in Section II, Marx and Engels wrote as follows:-

"We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class, to win the battle of democracy. The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.

"Of course, in the beginning this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production; by means of measures, therefore, which appear economically insufficient and untenable, but which, in the course of the movement, outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production" (Communist Manifesto. Marx and Engels, 1848 Reeves Edition. P. 21).

"These measures will, of course, be different in different countries. Nevertheless, in the most advanced countries the following will be pretty generally applicable

Among the list of 10 points that follow are these:-

"Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes."

"Abolition of the.load of the commune and its foundation on that of the nation."

"无偿分配所有土地的租金到公共用途。"
"Abolition of all rights of inheritance.

"Centralisation of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly

"Centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State."

It is only necessary to examine these proposals put forward in 1848 to see that in purpose and in method they have no resemblance, beyond an accidental resemblance of phrases to the nationalisation proposals put forward to-day by those who accept the continuance of State Capitalism, with its property incomes, wages system, buying and selling, and so on. Marx and Engels, since they proposed these measures as methods encroaching on the capitalist class in the period immediately after the workers had gained political supremacy, of course did not contemplate any form of "compensation". They envisaged the advent of Socialism and were therefore not considering (as advocates of nationalisation do to-day) the continuance of class divisions in society and of the existing State power by which the property class protects its privilege and property. The 10 proposals listed by Marx and Engels were immediately followed by a paragraph in which they outlined the socialist view of the abolition of classes:

"When in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organise itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with those conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonism, and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class."

Above all it cannot be emphasized too much that Marx and Engels in 1848, and throughout their lives, perceived that Socialism necessarily involves the abolition of the system of wage-labour: the modern advocates of nationalisation rarely, if ever, even recognise that that step is practicable let alone a necessity. This applies among others to the defenders of the system of State Capitalism that is being developed in Russia, with its permanent features of investment by individual investors in State bonds, its right of inheritance, and its great and growing inequality of income received in the various grades and social strata in the Russian system.

In conclusion it need only to be added that when Marx and Engels published the 1872 preface to the German edition of the Manifesto they wrote:

"... the general principles laid down in the Manifesto are, on the whole, as correct today as ever. Here and there some detail might be improved. The practical application of the principles will depend, as the Manifesto itself states, everywhere and at all times, on the historical conditions for the time being existing, and for that reason, no special stress is laid on the revolutionary measures proposed at the end of Section H. That passage would, in many respects, be very differently worded to-day.

How little Engels shared modern views that nationalisation is Socialism can be seen in his "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" (Allen and Unwin, 1892; pp. 71-2) where he pointed out that "The modern State, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal
personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers - proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with, it is rather brought to a head.

He held the view that the formation of trusts would force the State ultimately "to undertake the direction of production" (p. 69). But he was careful to add that such measures as railway nationalisation by Bismarck, for military and political reasons, or by the Belgium State for ordinary political and financial reasons, were not instances of State intervention considered economically inevitable because the means of production and distribution had actually outgrown the form of management by joint stock companies.

Were Engels alive to-day he would see that the capitalists and the State are trying to solve the problem which he foresaw, by the formation of public utility corporations or private monopolies, more or less under close regulation of the State. As Engels also foresaw, such measures are by their nature only temporary ones, they cannot solve the satisfaction of the majority of the population. They serve to bring the problem to a head, and give us hope that the acceptance of the only solution, Socialism, by the working class, is not far distant.

(From p. 14)

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BALANCE       June 25, 2002       $ 229.61

Fraternally submitted,

Frank Girard

(From p. 32)

wants to be your ally will be." Also in this issue are three pages of letters on anarcho-primitivism. A four issue sub is $16 in the U.S.; $24 outside the U.S. from C.A.L. PO Box 1446, Columbia, MO 65205.

Socialist Studies is the quarterly journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain (Reconstituted). Issue number 44, Summer 2002 contains several articles on current news of interest to workers. These include "The Socialist Challenge to Tony Benn and the Capitalist Left," which points out the difference between the revolutionary SPGB(R) and the host of radical parties in Britain that call for support from the workers. The article describes a meeting addressed by Benn and the intervention by a SPGBer member who listed the political sins of the Labour Party. Unfortunately, as is so often the case, the SPGBer's remarks failed to impress either Benn or his audience. "The United States, Iraq and Oil" sees the current US policy in the Mideast as a reaction to a possible loss of Saudi Arabia as a source of oil. Forty pages, 1.75 for a full set of Socialist Studies (1-44), 50p per copy from 71 Ashbourne Court, Woodside Park Road, London N12 8SB England.
Dear Editor

Re P. Lawrence's article 'Socialism: sudden and gradual change' (DB113, p12-14). As his sole example of "a 'sudden' and far-reaching change in social relationships" he cites that in 1917:

...in the countryside, the Bolsheviks destroyed the landed aristocracy overnight. These feudal relationships had existed for centuries and involved millions of people over the entire land mass.

This destruction of an entire class and its corresponding mode of production was enacted at 2.30 in the morning on 9 November 1917

What a weak example! To assert that a whole class was simply decreed out of existence by a stroke of the pen, at dead of night, is nonsense. It simply did not happen. If it had been done as Lawrence claims, why was it necessary for this land decree to be replaced in February 1918 by the law on the Socialisation of Land?

Moreover, far from the land-owning class's destruction being done overnight, as a sudden, apocalyptic change, as Lawrence asserts, the reality was very different. Lawrence is apparently unaware of the "spontaneous land seizures" by peasants, as they "smoked out" the landowners, prior to the Bolshevik coup. I have not found any historian who supports Lawrence's account, e.g.:-

"Surely, Bolshevism would never have come to power had not a peasant (largely spontaneous) revolution occurred throughout the countryside. Starting early in the year, in region after region the peasants arose, cast out the landlords, burned many of the manorhouses and seized the land." Roy D. and Betty A. Laird, Soviet Communism and Agrarian Revolution, 1970, Pelican, p.33.

"The process of liquidating the landlord and of taking over lands which had belonged to the Crown or to the Church had been going on while the Provisional Government was in office ... The Soviet Decrees on land had little more significance than to legalize these infringements of property rights and to provide a legal title of possession ... to the peasants who had already helped themselves to the land without legal authorisation." H.A. Freund, Russia from A to Z, 1945, Australia, p.333.

"spontaneous land seizures were already occurring on an increasing scale in the summer of 1917, egged on by the militant 'left' Socialist Revolutionaries as well as the Bolsheviks." Alec Nove, An Economic History of the U.S.S.R., 1969, Pelican, p.32.

The significance of these land seizures was confirmed by Lenin himself, notably in his Central Committee resolution on armed insurrection (October 10/23). Among his arguments to persuade his reluctant colleagues that the time was ripe for armed insurrection was "the peasant insurrection". [The text of this resolution was published in facsimile as well as in translation in Robert Payne's book, The Life and Death of Lenin, Pan edition, pp. 355-6. The translation appears in Trotsky's book, The Russian Revolution, and in other sources.]

Clearly the decree of 9 November came after the event. Moreover the Bolsheviks were in no position to enforce it. As Alec Nove wrote, re the land law of Feb. 1918, "all this remained on paper. The Bolsheviks could not even attempt to impose a settlement. They had no administrative apparatus, they had practically no party members in the villages" (p.49).

Lawrence is also off-target with his reference to "feudal relationships (which) had existed for centuries". There is considerable evidence, in the years from 1900-13 that the rural economy was changing. As Nove commented, "the spread of commercialism and of capitalist relations was speeding up" (p.23).

Trotsky made the same point in his book The Russian Revolution: "Agriculture entered upon a state of
indubitable capitalist boom. The export of agricultural products from Russia rose between 1908 and 1912 from 1 billion roubles to 1k billion. This means that the broad masses of the peasantry had been proletarianized ..." (vol.1, chap. III, *The Proletariat and the Peasantry*).

Lawrence also asserted that "the power of the landed aristocracy in Russia had remained barely unaltered for centuries". So the abolition of serfdom (from 1861) had no impact worth mentioning?

Less than a decade after this, in his novel *The Golovlyov Family*, the Russian satirist Shchedrin commented on its effect on a section of the landowning class:

"A kind of doom seems to hang over some families. One notices it particularly among the class of small landowners scattered all over Russia who, having no work, no connection with public life, and no political importance, were at one time sheltered by serfdom, but now, with nothing to shelter them, are spending the remainder of their lives in their tumble-down country houses."

During the following decades, as such people fell on hard times, some of the former peasants grew rich from trade, buying up land from poor peasants and impoverished gentry, and running their land on capitalist lines.

So the "destruction of an entire class and the corresponding mode of agricultural production" as described by Lawrence, is sheer fantasy. It was not the "sudden" event he supposes. So what is left of his argument? His article concludes, lamely and vaguely, that the "change from capitalism to socialism can be seen as combining elements of both short and long-term change".

But, since in his article, he only offered one example of "sudden" or "short-term" change - an example which has no basis in fact - we are left with only "elements of ... long-term change" as Lawrence's view of the change from capitalism to socialism. Presumably that view is endorsed by the Clapham-based Socialist Party since his article was first published in their journal, the 'Socialist* *Standard'.

If it is the case that that Party has now adopted a gradual view of the Socialist revolution, perhaps they should say so, clearly and unambiguously.

One final point: Lawrence wrote that "in practical terms the change from capitalism to socialism will not mean the introduction of anything materially new so much as the immediate removal of redundant features of an existing structure of production and social organisation." *

What sort of "redundant features" does he have in mind? Would these include police, judicial systems and jails? Or does Lawrence still suppose them to be essential in a Socialist society?

Yours for Socialism, Charmian Skelton, SPGB

(* my emphasis)

Dear Editor

Re your article *Denigrating DeLeonism* (DB113) where you quote from Marx and De Leon on the importance of strikes, there is surely a wide difference between them. While Marx emphasized that "these everyday struggles" are not the main struggle, De Leon - in the passage you quoted concluded: I bank my hopes wholly and build entirely upon this sentiment of rebellion within you.

But surely mere "sentiments of rebellion" are not enough. Marx and Engels consistently urged political action and organisation, e.g. Resolution IX, London Conference of the International, 1871:

Comparing, that against this collective power of the propertied
classes the working class cannot act, as a class, except by
constituting itself into a political party, distinct from, and
opposed to, all old parties formed by the propertied classes;
that this constitution of the working class into a political party
is indispensable in order to ensure the triumph of the social
revolution and its ultimate end - the abolition of classes.

Marx's insistence on the need for political organisation was
consistent, from the Communist Manifesto to the 1880 Introduction to the
Programme of the French Workers' Party, which argued.

Considering,
The emancipation of the class of producers involves all
mankind, without distinction of sex or race; that the producers
can only be free when they are in possession of the means of
production; ....

Considering,
That collective appropriation can only proceed from a
revolutionary action of the class of producers - the proletariat -
organised in an independent political party;
That this collective appropriation must be striven for by all
means that are available to the proletariat, including universal
suffrage, which will thus be transformed from the instrument of
fraud that it has been up till now into an instrument of
emancipation...

I am not convinced that a "revolutionary union movement," in the shape
of SIUs, could coerce the capitalist class into surrender. I am also
distinctly unimpressed by the idea of these SIUs being the "the social
organisation necessary to organise production" (DB 113, p. 26). What is
wrong with the SPGB concept of Socialism as being based on "the common
ownership and democratic control of the means of producing and
distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community."
(emphasis added)

Surely that would be more democratic and inclusive. After
all many people are affected by decisions about what is produced other
than those involved directly. Are the non-workers such as students,
no say in decisions which may affect them? Key decisions in a Socialist
world would surely be made as democratically as possible, i.e. by and in the
interest of the whole community. Roll on the day.

Also in DB113 (p.31), you summarised Ron Cook's ideas on education in
his idea of Utopia. Apparently, he would like to see children accompanying
adults at work: "They would be in the factory, office, truck, coalmine ... and in the process learn to be adult human beings."

Has Ron Cook ever had any contact with young children? If he had he
would know that children need to socialise with other children and that much
early learning and development is done through play. Has he any idea how
easily bored a child can be? Imagine a child watching a parent whose work
involves monitoring a computer screen, e.g. in an air traffic control centre.
Education should surely be child-centred, not something merely... in the mass of adult activities.

Has he any understanding of the safety implications of his daft idea? An adult driving a truck or train, while coping with small children, would be a risk to all and sundry. And what of the safety of the children? We know that on farms many children have accidents, e.g. getting run over by farm machines. What of the risks to children on construction sites, down coal mines, on fishing trawlers or oil rigs, or in factories, chemical plants or nuclear plants?

The term 'Utopian' is often used to put down the idea of Socialism as something utterly impractical - "sounds a nice idea but I can't see it working". In Ron Cook's case, I wouldn't say it even sounds nice. What a dreary prospect for children if Ron ruled the world!

Let us hope too that World Socialism will not be prescriptive but will allow for and encourage a diversity of cultures, unlike capitalism.

Yours for a better future'
Charmian Skelton (SPGB)

(From p. 20)

Karl Marx-Frederick Engels Collected Works. Publication of the English translation of the 50 volume series by International Publishers, the Communist Party publishing company, is approaching completion with the issue of Volume 49 (Engels Correspondence 1890-1892) last year. Begun in 1975 with completion projected in ten years, its future has been problematical since the collapse of the Soviet Union and its publishing business in 1989. Readers will have to wait at least two years for the final volume (Engels' Letters October 1892-July 1895) and even longer for a possible unified index for the whole set. Prices are now running from $24.95 to $34.95 with a free volume with the purchase of any two. From International Publishers, 239 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011. Website <www.intpubny.com>
Who are "we"

by Adam Buick

David Blunkett's White Paper on Immigration is part of the ideological battle waged by the ruling class that we should identify our interests with that of the nation.

Somebody once remarked that the most important word in the political vocabulary is "we". It was a shrewd observation, since to get someone to use "we" in relation to some group of people is to get them to identify their interest as the interest of that group.

In the battle for "we", socialists are trying to get all those excluded from ownership and control of means of production to recognise the fact of their common interest as one class within capitalist society, to regard themselves as "we" and to use "our" and "us" only in relation to that class and its interests.

Those who control one or other of the two hundred or so armed states into which the world is divided have to try to prevent this practice emerging, and deliberately seek to undermine it, in the interest of the other main class in capitalist society - those who do own and control means of production and who derive a privileged income from this. They seek to convince the people they rule over that the "we" they should identify with is "the nation" as the nation part of what they call the "nation-state" they rule.

It is in this fight that should be seen David Blunkett's White Paper last month on immigration and nationality, which proposes that people seeking British nationality should be required not just to have a knowledge of "the British way of life" but also to publicly swear allegiance to the queen. It is part of the ideological battle waged by the British ruling class to appropriate the word "we".

Immigration causes a problem for them since immigrants, having been brought up under some other state, have not gone through the same process of brainwashing and conditioning as have the "native" population. Those born and brought up in Britain have been taught, through what's been drummed into them in school and through what they continuously read in the papers or hear on the radio or television, to regard themselves as British. In school they are taught the history of the kings and queens of England, and of the wars in which the British ruling class has been involved in over the centuries, and of the evolution of the British state. The media reinforce this by reporting news from an almost exclusively British angle and encourage identification with "the nation" via identification with "our" sports teams and performers.

It therefore comes almost as a reflex action for people born and brought up in Britain to use "we" in relation to the British state and to regard themselves as part of a British "nation". So people spontaneously say such things as "we beat the French at Waterloo" or "we won the second world war" or "we got five gold medals at the Olympics". Even opponents of particular policies pursued by the British state, yesterday as well as today, fall into the same trap and say such things as "we should never have conquered India" or "we shouldn't join the euro."

Such usage is music to the ears of the ruling class as they know it means they are on top in the battle for "we". They have succeeded in getting their subjects to identify with them and their interests. Wage and salary workers, instead of seeing "we" as their class, have come to see it as "the nation."

Nation-building

It wasn't always so easy. Historians such as Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm have demonstrated that a nation is not a natural community that existed before the state, but that it's the other way round: the state existed first and then proceeded to impose on those it ruled over the idea that they formed a "nation". The longest standing states of Western Europe - England, France and Spain - emerged at the end of the feudal era and then had to create a national feeling amongst the population living within their frontiers. These frontiers were accidental and had been created by a number of key battles amongst dynastic rulers.
in feudal times. Had the outcome of these battles been different, then southern Britain might have been part of the same state as northern France, while northern Britain might have been part of a state with Scandinavia and southern France part of a state with Catalonia and northern Italy. That's not how things turned out, but the point is that they could have done. States pre-existed and in a very real sense created nations. Nations are groups of people ruled by a state or a would-be state.

States that have been formed more recently - and most of the world's states today were only formed in the last 80 or so years, i.e., have only been going for two or three generations - have had, and some still have, a serious problem in convincing all those they rule over that they form part of a single nation with a common interest. It is why their nationalism tends to be more shrill and authoritarian. It has to be, to overcome the tendency of some of their subjects, especially those speaking a minority language within their state, to identify themselves with some other nationalism particularly that of a neighbouring state.

Even a long-established state such as Britain has not solved this problem entirely, as witness Northern Ireland where a considerable proportion of the population use "we" not in relation to Britain but in relation to the Irish State and the "nation" it fosters. On the mainland the British state's problem in this respect has been amongst the immigrants from its former Empire, many of whom, notoriously to Norman Tebbit's annoyance, refuse to support the English cricket team and continue to support that of their country of origin or that of their parents. More seriously, the ruling class were shocked by the number of immigrants from Pakistan and their descendants who supported the Taliban in the most recent Afghan War.

Until recently the dominant opinion amongst those in charge of the British state about how to deal with this was to make a virtue of necessity and pursue a policy of "multiculturalism". It didn't work. In fact, it has encouraged division, by getting people to identify with their "culture" rather than with the British "nation". (Socialists, too, see "multiculturalism" as divisive but for the different reason that it gets workers to identify with some other group over and above their class.) Now a change of policy is under way, as announced in Blankett's White Paper, a swing to "assimilationism".

**Queen Capital**

The first to experience this change of policy are to be applicants for British nationality. Blankett wants them to be able to show some knowledge of the British state, its institutions and the history of its rulers, before being accepted into the British "nation". The expectation is that they will say "we beat the French at Waterloo" and "we should/should not join the euro" as readily as any true-born Briton. Perhaps too they will support England in test matches.

There are also to be required to publicly pledge allegiance to the queen in ceremonies akin to the patriotic flag-worshipping that applicants for US citizenship have to go through. Such a ceremony would be a farcical revival of feudal times, but it brings out the importance of the royal family to the British ruling class. The royal family's role is to act as a focus for loyalty to the British state. The 19th Tory Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, is credited with first having thought this up. The royal family may be a relic from feudalism but it is easier to get people to identify with it than with some abstraction like the constitution. Nor is any superannuated politician dubbed "the president" ever going to be able to act as such a focus.

It is also less hypocritical, because members of the British "nation" are called what they really are -11 subjects", people subjected to the rule of a ruling class. Tony Benn, old-fashioned radical liberal still fighting 19th century battles against Disraeli that he is, finds tl -iis abhorrent. He wants us to be called "citizens" not "subjects", as people are in France. But the people of France are no less subjects of the French ruling class and its state for being called citizens. Let a spade continue to be called a spade. What we should object to is not to being called subjects, but to being subjects. Benn is a dissident member of the ruling class who hasn't understood their interests properly (though
republicanism and "citizenship" could become a useful alternative way of ensuring loyalty to the British capitalist state if ever the royal family becomes too unpopular). But even though royalty is much less popular than it was even 25 years ago, as the media is noting as the queen's golden jubilee celebrations falter, it is still an asset that the British ruling class want to hold on to and use to the full. It serves to get wage and salary workers to be loyal to the British state and to use "we" in relation to the interests of its ruling class. A revealing demonstration of its effectiveness in duping workers can be seen elsewhere in this issue, in the Fifty Years Ago column, where we recall that the print workers - not the printing firm - refused to typeset an article in our March 1952 issue on the death of King George VI which pointed this out.

Perhaps we should have gone to a firm of printers that only employed immigrant workers who had not yet been broken in to considering themselves loyal subjects of the crowned head of the British capitalist state.

(From p. 24)

class is concerned. Other articles in this issue discuss stress, workplace deaths and injuries, the continuing role of the AFL as the labor element in U.S. foreign policy, this time in Venezuela, and the fifth installment in a series titled "The Paterson Silk Workers' Strike of 1911-1912," taken from the Detroit IWW's newspaper, The Industrial Union News. The June editorial, "Another Failed Reform" details the results of environmental reforms dating back to 1970 that set the stage for a Bush administration proposal that will enable energy capitalists to continue the pollution by coal-fired generating plants. A six-month subscription is $2, a one year sub is $5 from The People, PO Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042

New Democracy. The lead article of the May-August issue, Number 23, titled "People, Get Ready," begins with a list of recent demonstrations and mass actions aimed at the ruling classes of Italy (2 million, in Rome in April and 13 million participants in a one-day national general strike), Argentina, where demonstrations "brought down five presidents since December 2001," China ("shaken by the largest labor protests since the Communists took power in 1949") and others in the U.S., Venezuela" -- all these leading New Democracy to conclude that "Forces are assembling around the world for conflicts that will define the fate of the planet for decades, perhaps centuries to come. A new era has begun, an era of mass mobilization, war, and revolution. Are we ready?" The joy with which ND welcomes decades of chaos (with all that means in terms of human suffering) is tempered with cautionary statements about the real power, stability, motivation and leadership of these movements as they stand at the present time. But ND is encouraged in the view that we could be witnessing the beginning of a revolutionary struggle by the disappearance of Soviet communism from the scene, which had left rebellious workers in the Sixties with a choice between communist and capitalist ruling classes. Also in this issue, "Why Is Bill Gates Giving Away Billions?" "How Should the New Leaders be judged?" "Higher Education Free for All?" a flyer titled "Mid-East Elites Foment War to Control the People," and more. Thirty-two pages, $1.50, a one year subscription $7, foreign $15, from New Democracy, PO Box 427, Boston, MA 02130.
Anti-Globalisation: the socialism of the imbeciles

"Communists despise hiding their ideas and aims."

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

What is the real nature of global capitalism for the hundreds of millions of proletarians who, across the planet, from Rio de Janeiro to Shanghai, from Seattle to Johannesburg, from Seoul to Paris, are unemployed, working and struggling? Do they suffer from the dictatorship of "finance", that "bad side of capital" (the money markets, stock exchanges etc.) to which we can oppose the "good side", industrial or possibly commercial capital which creates jobs? Doesn't the capitalist social relation rather constitute an indivisible and united totality? Doesn't the fact of isolating one sector to put it at the centre of critique mean taking up an ultra-simplistic political economy?

To these questions, the anti-globalists give mystifying answers, concentrating the fire of critique on one particular form of capital, finance capital, the better to blot out the critique of capital as a whole.

Putting critique back on its feet

For revolutionary communists the critique of capital is based on the identification of the exploitation of wage labourers by capital as the producer of surplus value, and not on finance capital which only valorises itself on the basis of levies (interest) raised on the social surplus value which comes from the productive sphere. Logically therefore, for those obsessed by the struggle against finance, the strangling of this "diabolic" sphere must begin with the destruction of industrial capital. But the fact is that most "anti-globalists" defend the production of commodities (when it is not "multi-national" and, preferably, when it is carried out in the framework of nationalised industry and/or small units of artisanal production, cooperatives, etc.).

The left and the fascists have always been the professionals when it comes to unequivocally denouncing the variable geometry of capitalism. In France during the Popular Front the left tried to divert the anger of proletarians into denouncing the "200 families". After 1960, the Stalinists made a speciality of defending the small traders and bosses against "big monopoly capital". The fascists, for their part in the 1930s attacked "anonymous" and "vagabond" finance and channelled popular resentment into anti-Semitism, the "socialism of the imbeciles" of that time.

The "anti-globalisation" movement is not a break from these dire traditions.

But who are the anti-globalists?

They are all those who for the last few years, from the big social-democratic and Stalinist parties to various kinds of leftists, have taken up the new battle standard: anti-globalisation. This movement has its heroes, the clown Jose Bove and the masked socialite Marcos; its press, for the francophones, Le Monde Diplomatique; its sacred places, Porto Alegre, San Jose in Chiapas and Millau; its economist, Tobin; its great grandfather, J. M. Keynes; its "glorious" military achievements, Seattle, Nice, Davos and Naples; its newspeak, "neoliberalism", "social forum", "participatory budget", "citizen's economy"; its Great Satan, the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF. Briefly, all the ideological paraphernalia necessary to mobilize the battalions of critical false consciousness.

The ideology of anti-globalisation sets out to denounce:

- a fraction of capital designated under the generic term "financial markets" which is parasitic...
and evil
- the commoditisation of certain "sacred" sectors of productive activity: "culture", agriculture, water...
  but avoids, in the end, the critique of the foundation and the raison d'etre of capitalism, wage
  labour and the productive consumption of the commodity labour power;
- the relocation of production to the lower wage countries by the famous "multinationals".

The solutions put forward by the anti-globalists are the following:
- the introduction of the Tobin tax (at a rate of 0.1% of the total) on financial movements, the
  so-called "0.1% socialism" (although it's far less than for "share trading capital gains" which
  are subject to a "tax withholding with full discharge" of 26%);
- the introduction of new customs barriers to protect national production
- the participation of citizens in city affairs, for example, the municipal self-management of
  Porto Alegre.

Behind this apparently innovative and trendy discourse we can find the most hackneyed themes of
reformism. What, in fact, is the sad pantomime of Porto Alegre if not "municipal socialism" in a modern
 guise? What is the march on Mexico City of the EZLN - organised jointly by the Mexican state and
 Marcos - if not a "modern" application of the old social-democratic reformism from the beginning of the
 20th Century, which explained that the objective of the proletarian movement was no longer the violent
taking of political power but its gradual and peaceful conquest? (2)

How is it possible to imagine fighting an adversary without understanding its functioning and by
only attacking one aspect of its domination? Capital, confronting the proletariat, is a dynamic
interdependent totality.

Global capital against the international proletariat

Contrary to what the anti-globalists say (Cf. Le Monde diplomatique), globalisation didn't begin
with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Since the XIVth Century, with the centralisation by finance and
commercial capital of the gigantic masses of value which allowed the rapid development of industrial
capital, the social relation based on exploitation set out from old Europe, to the Americas, to invade the
planet.

This irresistible movement was described in 1848 by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto:
"The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to
production and consumption in every country. (...) All old-established national industries have been
destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction
becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up
indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are
consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. (...) In place of the old local and national
seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of
nations."

At that time the revolutionaries understood that, despite the enormous suffering and atrocities that
it implied, this movement created the objective bases of a superior mode of production, communism,
carrying by a working class ever more numerous in every part of the world. Marx and Engels, as well,
lambasted the "despair of the reactionaries" of all stripes who, following the example of the anti-globalists
today, longed for the good old days - yesterday the corporations and the immutable order of feudal
society, today the benevolent national state and the "Keynesian" capitalism of the 1960s.

These gentlemen see in misery only misery, without discerning the revolutionary potentialities.
Since 1848, the internationalisation of capital has never stopped deepening. Innumerable new
poles of accumulation have emerged, thus reinforcing the world proletariat and enlarging the objective basis of its revolutionary consciousness. The workers' movement and radical workers' struggles are no longer the prerogative of white and European proletarians. For the last twenty years South Korea, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, China and many other countries have known class confrontations. These have involved millions of proletarians and have enrolled themselves clearly in the historic war against exploitation.

These struggles contribute to the recreation of the foundations of a real proletarian internationalism, a more and more vital necessity for the exploited, including for carrying out their defensive struggles well.

While the trade unionists of the CGT in France and the AFL-CIO in the US moan about relocation and the international division of labour and defend "French" and "American" production, revolutionaries set out the urgency of the international development of the class struggle. This is the case right now at Danone, which delocalised part of its biscuit making activities from Western Europe to Eastern Europe. The same goes for immigration, used to increase the pressure on the wages of "native" workers. Is it necessary to respond to this by pronouncing in favour of closing the frontiers, adopting the policy of quotas, or by defending the free circulation of the exploited so as to work for their growing unity?

Today there are two types of response to the deepening of the planetary domination of capital. The first response - of the reformist type - aims at regulating the impetuous course of the circulation of value by setting up crazy pseudo guarantees (the Tobin tax, protectionism, more secure frontiers, local democracy etc.) against some of its excesses. The second response - the revolutionary communist one - far from lamenting so-called "globalisation", salutes the potential which it unleashes for the struggle of the world proletariat and, far from the reactionary withdrawal into the nation, the region or Roquefort cheese, works for the international unity of the exploited for the abolition of wage labour and the disappearance of value.

*Mouvement Communiste*
20 March 2001
Contact: B.P.1666 Centre Monnaie 1000 Bruxelles 1 BELGIUM

*But, in general, the protective system of our day is conservative, while the free trade system is destructive. It breaks up old nationalities and pushes the antagonism of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to the extreme point. In a word, the free trade system hastens the social revolution. It is in this revolutionary sense alone, gentlemen, that I vote in favour of free trade.*

Karl Marx, *On the Question of Free Trade* (1848)

2. We should note in passing that the nobody Marcos falls short of this ideology, in that social democracy, at least in its discourse, insists on the pursuit of the realisation of socialism whereas Marcos speaks the constitution of local micro-powers and the reform of consciousness.
NOTES, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND SHORT REVIEWS

This edition of "Notes, etc." begins with an apology to the Socialist Party of Great Britain (Reconstituted) and to Adam Buick. In a short note that accompanied her two letters for publication, Charmian Skelton pointed out the contradiction between the "About the Discussion Bulletin" prohibition against personal attacks and the Adam Buick's comment about the SPGB(R) in an e-mail letter published in DB113. About the same time I received a note from Adam informing me that the e-mail had been intended as a personal letter to me and not for publication. I had thought of Adam's characterization of the SPGB(R), not as an attack on the group's legitimacy but rather as a mildly humorous gibe based on the SPGB(R)'s outrage at the characterization of the SLP by Adam and others as their "American cousins." I apologize to everyone and caution all writers to the DB that they are dealing with someone capable of gross errors in judgment.

Another apologetic note: DB113 carried the printed version of a "Forum" speech by Perry Sanders but failed to include the contact information for his group Chirevet. The e-mail address is <diannas@man.com> The website is <http://www.chirevet.org> Phone (773) 294-6780

Imagine is the new "Official Journal of the Socialist Party of Canada," the World Socialist Movement's Canadian affiliate. The eight pages of Volume I, Number 1, contain a questions and answers section, an article on the Twin Towers bombing, an article on new Ontario legislation on overtime and safety, an excellent lead article on the condition of the working class, along with SPC party announcements and addresses. No price given-- from Socialist Party of Canada, Box 4280, Victoria, BC V8X 3X8 Canada. <http://www.worldsocialism.org/canada> e-mail <spc@iname.com>

The Communitarian Anarchist is the 12 page newsletter of the Anarchist Communitarian Network, whose masthead announces, "Social anarchism is our lifestyle." The lead article, "For Community: The Communitarian Anarchism of Gustav Landauer" by Larry Gambone brings to light a figure from the revolutionary past: Landauer was in charge of information in the the shortlived 1919 Bavarian Soviet Republic and was murdered during the rightwing counter revolution. Some readers may remember that B Traven, author of The Treasure of the Sierra Madre and of the Jungle novels about Chiapas, was also a veteran of the Bavarian Soviet. Unlike Landauer, though, he made it out of Bavaria with the German social democratic police at his heels and reached safety in Mexico, which at that time was a haven for outlawed revolutionaries. Gambone's article includes sections on "Landauer as Anarchist," "The State," "Violence and Social Change," "The Alternative to Capitalism," "Marxism," and others. Also in this issue is the "ACN Constitution," "ACN Collectives & Projects," and an ACN Position Paper, "Counter-Institutions" by Howard J. Ehrlich. Frequency of publication is not mentioned. Free (donations are appreciated). From Anarchist Communitarian Network, PO Box 7180, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33338 E-mail <anarchistcommunitariannet@hotmail.com> Website: http://www.anarchistcommunitarian.net>

ASR – Anarcho-Syndicalist Review is a quarterly journal devoted to the ideas and history of the anarcho-syndicalism. Although ASR is not published by an anarcho-syndicalist organization, Number 34 like other issues begins with "Principles of Revolutionary Syndicalism (extracts) Adopted December 1922 by the Berlin Congress of the International Workers Association. Written in the wake of the Russian Revolution, these Principles stand four-square in opposition to the tactics and objectives of the Bolsheviks. The third Principle says in part that the task is "...to achieve independent, self-managed production and distribution by taking possession of the earth and the means of production and distribution."
Instead of the State and political parties, the economic organization of labor. Instead of a government over people, the administration of things."

A focus of this issue is "Syndicalist Responses to Primitivism." Besides Louis Prisco's article on primitivism and the left, printed in this DB, number 34 carries other articles critiquing primitivism from the point of view of anarcho-syndicalism. The contents also include articles on the Enron scandal, Syndicalist News from around the world, Bolivia, Argentina, the Anti-G8 Summit call, and an article on the American colony in post-revolutionary Russia, "The Autonomous Industrial Colony of Kuzbass."

Subscriptions are $15 for a four-issue sub from PO Box 2824, Champaign IL 61825. E-mail <asr@labourstart.zzn.com>

Anarchy* A Journal of Desire Armed. At 82 pages this is probably the largest English language anarchist journal in existence except for its twin the Alternative Press Review. Number 53, Spring-Summer 2002, begins with the results of its readers' survey, which unexpectedly indicated a readership that found its greatest inspiration in rather conventional radical magazines like Z Magazine or non-primitivist anarchist journals like the Industrial Worker and The Match. They chose Noam Chomsky as "the most important or relevant writer or theorist today." Among the essays is "Legend of the Squamish Five," the story of the direct action group that blew up a power transmission substation on Vancouver Island in 1982 and a facility manufacturing guidance system components in Toronto. Eventually the five direct actionists were caught and given long prison sentences. The article, including the review of a memoir by Ann Hansen, one of the group, runs to some 15 pages. "Instead of a Meeting" by Lawrence Jarach, one of the editors concerns a current problem encountered as anarchism recruits youthful rebels who haven't yet been told what anarchism is. Jarach's essay seeks to remedy the problem. Twenty pages are devoted to reviews, among which is a brief examination of Moving Forward: Program for a Participatory Economy by Michael Albert, an editor of Z Magazine. The review ends with Jarach telling what he learned from the book and some e-mail exchanges with Albert: "not everyone who declares herself an anarchist is one; not everyone who declares himself against capitalism is; not everyone who"