REPORTS

The Soviet Government, attempting to assert its dominance on the global stage, has taken the lead in the mid-1970s Peace initiatives. It has initiated a series of peace initiatives, including the SALT II negotiations, which are designed to reduce the threat of nuclear war. The Soviet Union is also working towards reducing its military spending and increasing its trade with Western countries, in an effort to assert its influence in the region.

The military build-up, the mutual buildup of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, has led to a new equilibrium in the region. The U.S. and the Soviet Union have agreed to reduce their military spending and increase their trade, in an effort to reduce the risk of nuclear war. The new equilibrium has led to a new balance of power, with both the U.S. and the Soviet Union having a say in international affairs.

The re-emergence of unresolved ethnic questions in Western Europe, the U.S. and the Soviet Union have decided to negotiate a new balance of power. The new balance of power is based on the recognition of ethnic minorities in Western Europe, and the recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union.

The emergence of 'Democratic' unrest in Eastern Europe has led to a new balance of power. The new balance of power is based on the recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities in Eastern Europe, and the recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union.

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At a period in history when so many nations are attempting to secede from larger ones, East Germany acceded of its own will to West Germany. But if you think back only 18 months or so, you may remember that East German border guards were still shooting to kill at any East German citizen desperate enough to want out of a 'communist' system that wasn't delivering the goods - in every sense. And, about the same time, the West German centre-right government was planning to increase national consumption to a period of 20 months because, no less, of the 'communist threat'.

Clearly, all those East Germans who risked their lives at the border or jumped the West German embassy walls in Prague, or who went on the Monday demonstrations in Leipzig were demonstrating a belief in West German social democracy which outside sceptics on the left of the political spectrum might well wish to shake their knowing heads at. If the laws of geology, geography and history had ordained that, say, Portugal should lie to the west of that territory arbitrarily labelled the GDR, the question must be put: would the same East Germans have crossed a potentially-lethal Iron Curtain to escape into Portuguese-style social democracy and its concomitant standard of living? Would they have confronted death to reach the achievements of what passes for social democracy in Mexico? Why were those East Germans so sure that life in West Germany would be 'better' than in East Germany?

One of the current images being bandied about in the Western press is that communism has collapsed, as though the result of a natural decaying process. Thinkers to the right of the spectrum tend to arrogate a specific 'naturalness' to capitalist forms of government or its offshoots. I will return to the theme of imagery later. Suffice it to say - using my own imagery - it wasn't East German state communism that imploded so much as West German market capitalism that exploded. West German industry is not only awash in spare cash: except for the fully booked-out car industry, it is also operating at anything down to 2/3 of its potential capacity.

The present inexorable need for expansion is obvious: more goods have to be exchanged for more money. The now-former German Democratic Republic with its 16 million or so citizens had its entire shopping and consumer sector reorganised and resupplied within the space of about 6 months leading up to D-Mark Day on 2nd July 1990 - logistics which the West German department stores, supermarkets and banks handled without batting an inflationary eyelid. East German farmers and the manufacturers of such consumer goods as shoes have been ruined in the process but who gives a damn, this is what the people wanted and the ruling West German Christian Democrats seized the opportunity to literally buy votes. What a scam though! The government here D-mark-ates the whole of East Germany with public money from West Germany and the East German public gives it back to West German private capital in return for training suits, chocolate, video recorders, second-hand cars, and edible plastic fruit. Moreover, West German business is currently taking up to 600,000 extra employees per year, most of whom come from the East, of course. This cannot be a mere coincidence.

Explosion, implosion.

Communism never had an economic chance in East Germany. Right from the birth of the West German state in 1949, the constitution itself - strengthened by subsequent legislation - was aimed at undermining any success to the East.

The West German constitution did not acknowledge the German Democratic Republic as a sovereign state, merely as a temporary suspension of the Federal Republic. This meant that any "refugee" (is there a more apt word?) was automatically granted West German citizenship, pension rights and generous bridging loans. Over the years, these benefits were gradually extended to any ethnic German in other Eastern European countries who could prove his or her German ancestry to the interviewing officer more or less satisfactorily.
More or less, because not many harrowing questions were asked. A command of the German language, by way of an example, was not a prerequisite since the evil communists had probably prohibited its being spoken anyway. It requires little imagination to see that this integral part of the constitution seduced many a qualified worker in the East into settling in West Germany and not, as already suggested, in countries such as France - an ongoing destabilisation practice without parallel. (Genuine political asylum seekers from places like Sri Lanka, their rights similarly anchored in the FRG constitution, are given a much rougher ride by the same officials.)

More reasons why East German communism never stood an economic chance after the Second World War:

1. The landscape to emerge under the socialist government in East Germany was more agriculturally-based than in West Germany. Most heavy industry was situated in the West.

2. West Germany had some natural resources, predominantly coal. East Germany didn’t. All they did do in this respect was forbid monopolies and giant multinationals whilst encouraging medium-sized firms - a timely re-organisation which can be singled out as the most important factor in getting industry working again.

3. What plant and machinery there was in East Germany, the Soviet Army dismantled as war reparations. In the West, the Allies didn’t. All they did do in this respect was forbid monopolies and giant multinationals whilst encouraging medium-sized firms - a timely re-organisation which can be singled out as the most important factor in getting industry working again.

4. West Germany received lucrative Marshall Aid, partially as a bulwark against communism; East Germany didn’t. (Nor did Britain for that matter.)

5. A second bulwark against communism was the social market economy system set up by the Allies in West Germany to ensure that possible unemployment would not a) lead to fascism again b) allow the susceptible workers to be subverted by the socialism just down the road.

[We are on very interesting ground here: a whole network of pro-labour laws, unprecedented elsewhere in both the capitalist and communist worlds, has rendered the West German workforce prosperous and placid. Whether this soft capitalism will survive, now that the “communist threat” has vanished, remains to be seen. Considering the ruthlessness with which West German industry is putting up to 2/3 of East German factories out of business, all in the name of “brotherly love”, the signs are not too propitious. At least it was the service of East German communism that the West German workers thrived...a savage irony if there ever was one.]

6. A third bastion against communism is the presence, amongst many other troops, of the US Army which - incredibly is the 13th largest employer in the FRG, pumping DM7 billion p.a. into the West German economy. (July 1990 bank report)

7. Also a result of the Allies precautions to prevent a return of fascism in Germany is the little-known fact that the Deutsche Bundesbank is constrained by law, whenever necessary, to take effective measures against potential inflation - without reference to its political rulers - a unique phenomenon on the banking globe. It was on the springboard of inflation, amongst other things, that the Nazis had taken off.

8. The capitalist overlords in West Germany allowed the D-mark to be a convertible currency; their communist counterparts in East Germany did not permit the same for the Ostmark.

9. Equally important - though not envisaged in the late 1940s - has been the disorienting effect of television beamed from West into East Germany. What was envisaged perhaps was the subversive influence of capitalist West Berlin, positioned as an island in the middle of communism.

10. Initially, socialism-communism was a response to 19th century capitalism. The capitalism of the 20th century has responded to that response and outsmarted it. One strategy was to facilitate the Soviet economy under armament costs. A German word encapsulates this concept perfectly: kaputtweisung - as in We’ve rearmed them but...]

(I generously offer the above analysis to any potential PhD person in search of a thesis - just mention Here & Now.)

What the East Germans voluntarily gave up and what unity will dispense with:

1. Cheap rents, public transport and books
2. Automatic pension rights for everyone
3. Free medical services
4. Medical (and shopping) appointments during working time
5. No productivity hassles at work, no neurotic time-keeping
6. No risk of unemployment
7. Free kindergarten and nursery provision
8. No-nonsense abortion
9. Street solidarity against the powers-that-be.

-benefits and a standard of living that Vietnamese boat people, say, would not have wished to abandon. Indeed, Romanian Sinti trying to find a home in East Germany in the wake of the East German exodus to West Germany clearly thought so too, but they were given short shrift. Forty years of communism did nothing to reduce widespread discrimination against this openly non-bourgeois people.

What the East Germans particularly disliked about communist rule:

1. Not being able to travel abroad, the heavily guarded borders
2. Being big-brothered by the State, censorship, absence of individual freedom
3. Electoral manipulation by the State
4. Lavish privileges for Party members in
the name of communism.

5. Non-availability of consumer goods and luxury food.
6. Lack of choice, the boring packaging in the shops.
7. Insufficient opportunity to spend the money earned, fueling the black market.
8. The grey media, insulting in its one-sidedness - up to 35 photos of Homecker per issue.
9. Being made an artificial part of East European culture.

- whereby one of the ironies in this satirical situation is the fact that some East German goods, especially textiles, are first transported to the West, wrapped in enticing packaging, returned to East Germany and only then snapped up by the same East Germans who would originally have not have looked twice at the quality of their own home-produced wares.

Another real-life joke: the underground atom bomb shelter in Berlin for the West German ruling class was stocked with provisions made in the DDR.

Turning now to the imagery in the West German press - roughly from when the Hungarian Government opened its borders to the East German defectors it would be fair to say that, apart from the odd "collapse" or two, the language invoked was not as drastic as that reported for the British Press in H&N 10.

Terms such as "shock therapy" or even "rescue" were conscientiously avoided (a tactical manoeuvre on imagery in case the East German populace, truly shocked, chose their own revolting socialist route to "recovery" - a policy put forward by the various dissident groups such as Neues Forum, Bondnis 90 and not least the reconstructed PDS (the former ruling class). Most striking was the frequency of concepts such as "help", a sublimated version of annexation if you think about it, but still a residual Love Thy Neighbour, and then, supposedly objective terminology was borrowed from the world of transport implying a certain efficiency, a certain everydayness and - by extension - normality. The train has departed but we don't yet know its destination - that sort of stuff, or The relationship between FRG and GDR is not a one-way street - banal everyday traffic images which attempted to promote the idea of East Germany as the "second wheel" joining West Germany and not being absorbed by it.

All drivel, of course, as the sad tale of East German football demonstrates: only two of its clubs are being afforded 1st division status in the All-German Football League, the rest consigned to the 2nd division or oblivion. West German managers ruthless out-negotiated their East German colleagues who, for too long, were not allowed to take their own decisions or put forward their own position. All the best players in the East had signed up before the discussions with the wealthier West German clubs, anyway, so once again the possible negotiation outcomes had been effectively preempted. In the same way, the new Germany is called the Federal Republic of Germany without as much as a concession to the Democratic part of the German Democratic Republic.

The seemingly-insignificant football anecdote also reveals just how unwilling West German private capital is to invest outside the borders it was so anxious to dismantle. There was a lot of waffle towards the end of 1989 about West German and other European businesses investing in East Germany. In fact, this is precisely what the interim PDS government in East Berlin desperately hoped to bring about, in vain attempt to retain some vestige of respect and autonomy for the GDR.

No way. Generally speaking, Western capitalism is uninterested in investment in Eastern Europe - just in wider and bigger markets for goods manufactured here or in Taiwan. The GDR ex-Minister of Labour, Regina Hildebrandt (not a Commie, by the way) has complained that, as of mid-August, FRG capital had not created one single new job in East Germany. It's the state's duty, western industrialists argue openly, to finance transport infrastructure, housing and telecommunications, as well as sorting out the ecological mess in the East, so that private capital can subsequently pick as much profit with as little input as possible.

In other words, we pay taxes so that capital can increase its yields. My head spins sometimes: if a sick West German claimant, accompanied by her dog travels by taxi to the doctor's, the gutter press rants about scroungers; if the West German government presents industry with a taxpayer-funded increase in turnover of 250 billion (the initial cost of D-Mark Day), then nobody raises an eyebrow. What a scam! The suspicion must be voiced that West European capital managers are now looking for more Government subsidies before moving in. Why invest if the powers-that-be will pay you to invest? And where are all those captains of industry and monetarist philosophers who used to complain so resentfully that government intervention only got in the way of free market enterprise?

One theme permanently present in West German media assertions about the defects of communism was queues and queuing. The theme is worth dwelling on, as it shows how reality (in the shape of newsworthier events) is filtered in the West to denigrate phenomena in the East. Queues in the communist countries are always presented as a bad thing whereas queuing in the West is inherently a good thing.

We have all seen on British TV News those heroic individuals who queue for 3 days and nights during a blizzard to be the first in at a Harrods winter sale; who queue in the rain to see the premiere of a James Bond film;
who queue from 4am to get tickets for a Wimbledon match 12 hours later. In West Germany too queuing is an increasingly everyday occurrence as supermarkets, since the corner-shops were successfully driven out of business, restyle themselves as The Market Experience or whatever. This means that on your weekly trip to the supermarket, you now have to queue for cheese, bread, vegetables, etc. Nobody ever complains; concerned camera crews do not film us.

Similarly it is impossible to buy a new Daimler-Benz without being put on a waiting list for 2 years - part of a successful sales strategy aimed at increasing desire. Nevertheless, cars made in the GDR are sneezed at by car owners in the FRG, partly because the waiting period was anything up to 15 years. Divide the 15 Trabi years by the much-reviled East German productivity and the 2 Mercedes years by the much-vaulted West German productivity - a real comparison is indissoluble because expectations on workers are (were) different from East to West - and you would almost certainly end up with an equivalent factor, but the mind-warping puzzle remains: why in the West is queuing sold as a feature enhancing our daily lives whilst queuing under a communist regime is indissoluble evidence of socialism’s failure? Post-DM-Day news footage of East Germans queuing for West German goods was, needless to say, presented in taken-for-granted tones of understanding.

Another illustration of prejudice in the Western press being filtered and transformed into ostensible “truth” is the howl of protest which greeted the case of East German pensions. Former employees of the hated Ministry for State Security in East Germany were to have enjoyed fat pensions as one consequence of the 1:1 D-Mark:Eastmark exchange rate. Enraged journalists in West Germany soon put a stop to that, without questioning an analogous practise whereby former SS officers and Nazi judges still draw pensions from the FRG state for their activities during the Third Reich. In much the same way, Honecker, Ceausescu & Co. were unflatteringly referred to as communist dictators. Have despots such as Pinochet, Zia and Saddam Hussein been described as capitalist dictators by the western press?

Lesley Chamberlain - in her book “In the Communist Mirror: Journeys in Eastern Europe” (Purnell & Faber, 1990) - looks at the topic of queuing in some depth, noting that the phenomenon of queues is possibly more of a legacy from East Europe’s peasant past than a direct consequence of communist rule. Readers stuck in the conurbations of Britain and elsewhere are probably not too aware that the whole of Eastern Europe and much of Western Europe shares a village life and peasant culture that disappeared from Britain centuries ago. From the South Tyrol to the east of Moscow it is a ubiquitous farming way of life symbolised by farmer women in sleeveless smocks with knotted kerchiefs protecting their hair and by farmer men wearing blue denim overalls plus a workman’s peaked cap. Chamberlain records how people living in a remote village in Eastern Europe (look at a map of East Germany: it’s little but a kaleidoscope of remote villages) had to queue early to get the best goods from the travelling stores.

Could the reason why communism succumbed to capitalism (in terms of food as a commodity) partly be its adherence to an agricultural calendar? The East European states never subscribed to the large capitalist agri-business scale to enormous cold storage plants, unnatural harvest times, factory farming, eight-month lifetime pigs, and designer fruit which looks better than it tastes. Chamberlain is not the first traveller in East Europe to remark how much tastier the milk and fruit products are, precisely because they haven’t been processed out of any sort of pleasurable taste sensation. I once visited East Germany in summer when the markets were full of delicious home-grown cherries and apples, produce which the East Germans are now recklessly rejecting in favour of the more attractive packages but bland tasting West German or Dutch agricultural versions.

Incidentally, despite the occasional preciousness (which she herself readily admits to), Chamberlain’s account of everyday life under communist governments and the subtle way that political repression enters into everyday social relationships is preferable to that of the name-dropping super-star seeress Timothy Garton Ash (“Telephoned from Karb” begins his article in the New York Review of Books, 16/8/90) who tends to see all historical developments emanating from either the White House or the Kremlin. Chamberlain rightly points out that any change must come from below.

Well, in East Germany and elsewhere, change did come from below. In 1989 East Germans in their thousands were voting with their feet for unimpeded access to West German supermarkets and department stores. Obviously, the prospect of spending money and pensions from the West German government was an extra spur. Without such incentives, would they have stayed in East Germany and helped build a better society, the solution which New Forum groups were pleading for?

I would answer the question in the affirmative. We seem to be living at a time when people voluntarily exchange their political conscience for the right to buy as many different types of jeans as possible. We seem to be heading for that future envisaged in Friedrich Puhls startlingly accurate science fiction short story “The Mad Plague” (1954) - a world where its citizens are obliged by law to consume and where freedom is seen as the official go-ahead not to have to buy. Try explaining that to the majority of today’s East Europeans or, for that matter, to the majority of today’s West Europeans.

P. Wood
August 1990

Postscript - see P.35
Escaping the Single Issue

After Ribble Valley will active protest be sidelined & marginalised?

As a policeman later agreed, the police did feel they had ‘lost’, and in their attempts to prevent damage to property and themselves, there had been many occasions on which they had clearly been terrified, out of control, and conscious of their vulnerability in the face of a crowd who hadn’t run away at the first show of force but had continually come back to fight. The violence and the anger of the crowd was horrific, on both sides. The police were using anything to hand and taking every opportunity to batter and charge. They were clearly taken back by the anger of the crowd, and were not prepared for people to start smashing up every window they could, looking for the world like a mob out to kill. There was a real sense of danger: people were streaming with blood and riot police were lying in the street. People were desperately hunting for weapons; it was an atmosphere in which both great and terrible things could be done.

Many people had left before the violence escalated, most of them going home on coaches. But for those who were there, there was no sense of being able to leave, and it was surrounded in which one could choose a level of involvement. The determination of the crowds was astounding, and everything that happened served only to spur the demonstrators and offend the police. It was as though every brick magically met its target, bollards and fences were ripped up as the police were driven back, and people were stronger and braver than ever before.

Sensing this assurance amongst a mass of people not even united by membership of a particular community, police confidence decreased and they appeared ever more disorganised and unprepared. It seemed that after ten years of Thatcherism and unsatisfactory skirmishes with the police, it was now possible to throw something back and on the winning side. The fact that this was the last day before the implementation of the poll tax added to the urgency of the Ribble Valley Revolt, resonances with Eastern Europe, and the feeling that a wider sense of dissatisfaction was being expressed, encouraged the demonstrators’ actions.

Moreover, the crowd felt empowered by what it had done: with the smell of burning and smoke in the air, barricades and debris in the streets, and an acute sense of the significance of what had occurred, there was a feeling of “we’ve really done it now” spread, half in pride, half in trepidation. It all died down and thoughts turned to public and media reaction, there was a feeling that the rioting would be understood, if not vindicated, and as it turned out the condemnations were less prevalent than might have been ordinarily expected. The events needed to have challenged enough taboos, upset so many certainties, and inspired sufficient confidence to mark a point of no return, a sense that things would never be the same. In the immediate aftermath, it seems inevitable that both police and demonstrators will be more prepared, physically and psychologically, for future occasions. There is also talk of wider police powers, and the banning of groups, national, and demonstrations. Arreses and harassment will undoubtedly continue for some time. But the events did seem to have damaged the anti-police-tax campaign, sterilised it, and the government grew more defensive, finding itself embroiled in the prison riots as well. And no matter how great or slight the importance of the rioting on March 31st becomes in hindsight, it serves at the time that violence and its attendant concerns have been reintroduced onto the political agenda.

by Maisie Drible

Defend non-payers.

Squeezed by less Government revenue - less revenue from non-payers (with the wealthy only contributing a fraction of their previous amount) & a steady wage arrears on benefit entitlements - the "victory" of the anti-poll tax campaign is being converted into an action to defend non-payers.

Covered by the media to demand the withdrawal of services to non-payers, more draconian powers & the driving out of "left" figures upholding the right to protest. Whether orchestrated or not the media have been helping to...
create a climate whereby forthright defiance (and occasionally solidarity action) goes unseen, silent & suffered in silence. The defeated must stay defeated & not have the audacity to be defeated!

Tory designs to cut Local Government expenditure - with many of the axe being threatened community projects or services only initiated in the early/mid 1980s - are being combined with the objective of conventional politics of all persuasions, to divide & rule the mass of individualised, indifferent quasi-citizens. The Scottish National Party felt the force of such an ideological onslaught during the devaluation of the pound Sterling on 18th November, typically in opportunistic fashion, backtracking from verbal commitment to defend non-payers against warrant sales to grasping at the 'straw of the Review'. Labour continues to manage the discontent, & the radical challenge ensures that only a tiny minority of non-payers, many of them non-registered, off the polls, etc., identify with a collaborationist force to 'disorganise the working class' (1). Militants privalage role as the 'representatives' of the anti-poll tax movement (except for the case of the Tolpuddle Martyrs - see (2)) results in half-hearted criticism of Labour at best, & their cry during the Tory election contest of "General Election Now!".

CROSS CLASS?

In the few areas, such as parts of Strathclyde, where expulsions & mass recruitment amongst youth have given rise to militant or as a force mere detached from Labour, they engage in direct action by the charismatic Tommy Sheridan but disciplined by a hierarchical command system. Elsewhere they are more open to challenges by the independent network, which has recognised Militants control of the Anti-Poll Tax Federation structure is an expression of their Machiavellian view of 'politics'. The Scottish National Party, Labour & Trade Unions, all of whom, in various ways, affiliate to an array of votes based on stitting, unpredictable independent network & restricting the appeal of 'the movement' by its misrepresentation as a front for a monolithic, authoritarian party with an attractive alternative to capitalism.

The vitality of the independent network isn't directly related to levels of non-payment. Cities such as Edinburgh, Norwich, Swindon, Reading, Brighton & Nottingham do not immediately spring to mind as centres of resistance, however, the strength of independent groups & local networks in these areas points to the strengths of weakness of a challenge which ultimately strives to break-out of single issue politics. The course of enforcement & resistance in such cities is affected by the class demography, with many inner city neighborhoods being populated by a transient, cross-class milieu of people operating on the margins in urban areas not typified by past preponderance of heavy industry. Arguably local groups in these areas have been more successful at encouraging a more active sense of defiance, having the sheriff's bill&ff threat as an earlier stage, often in the form of such diverse responses to payment with Tory councils etc. Each of these strategies, and in developing the example of Edinburgh, we have an area where a small core of unemployed activists have been greatly expanded by a network of local groups which is not parochial but which continually offers support & mobilisation for outlying areas in their region. They have developed expertise & tactical awareness in taking on the Poll Tax enforcers, but have also retained a capacity to engage in fun-actions which are in stark contrast to the politics & politics that oppose them. This said, the temporary mobilisation in local areas faced with Sheriff action understandably recedes as the routine of domesticity reasserts itself.

THE SINGLE ISSUE

Within these local networks, briefly intermixed with the anti-war campaigns, there exists the hard core of class struggle anarchists & obscure Marxist/Libertarian (4) groups which seek to influence their pluralist milieu without usually dominating it. The siege of the town halls led up to the Trafalgar Sq. riot in March 1983 & the strategy of the State to detach the political protestor from the independent activists, either drawn into physical confrontation or in response, solidarity campaign for those arrested in the aftermath of the 'Police riot' policy. While Major & Heseltine wear the 'velvet glove' more easily than Thatcher did, the deployment of the Police & the Court sentencing have revealed that the key element in the strategy was to criminalise the 'hard' elements, erode the covering support in the less political by posing the question of revolutionary violence & detach any lingering appeal for civil disobedience as had temporarily emerged in the Shire Counties, marginal seats etc. The "people" exposed on Class War 2 weeks before Trafalgar Sq. & the attention given to Andy Murphy's celebration of riot, reveals the mood of the State to sacrifice off 'liberal/left' opinion, the difficulties of a leaders of a network having spokespersons selected by the media, and the manipulated coincidence of promoting a 'notorious' role, & covert plans of the state to manufacture accounts of actions. This said, the dedicated & imaginative defence of those charged or imprisoned & the right to demonstrate by the Trafalgar Sq. Defence Committee has increased the likelihood of linkage between similar campaigns against repression & disinformation. The direction of attempts to broaden the struggle is in the process of definition. Linkage with anti-racist, anti-privatisation agitations is strong possibility, although as the experience of the health service illustrates (5) the complexity of simple defiance where an anti-bureaucratization strand is also a necessity. The example of the emotive legislation to debt collection may well be followed by the single issue of the poll tax real problems emerge. The 'left' protest relies on recognition that paying for services & goods is justified providing the method is embroiled with a 'fairness' principle. The individualised opposition of the poll tax, based on economic self-interest as crudely conceived has not become firmly established. On the other hand, the lack of collective recourse with consumer debts, fuel charges, mortgages & some forms of rental etc. trends to suggest that any re-discovery of the "impossible class" resolved to pay - for nothing - will be slight, restricted to a handful of ghettolised zones or amongst a sub-strata of transient city or metropolitan refugees whose lack of allegiance to anything would include a more organised independent unofficial movement. Nevertheless, in many areas, including cultural contests in Glasgow (6) a pluralist milieu may emerge strengthened by the experience of the success of anti poll tax opposition, while not able to decisively escape the single issue mentality in Britain & suspect commitment to creating a movement from below unthennished by the failures of socialism.

(2) Sea Stand Firm, available 5pp post from TDSD, Room 206, 38 Mt. Pleasant, London WC1X.
(3) See Refuse & Resist, No. 107. "What will the Tories do?/p.s.?, Donation for each issue, independent patchwork quarterly from PO Box 39, Glasgow G3 8JA.
(4) See St. Andrew's Action, Workers Power, Socialist Outlook etc. rather than more parastic SWP line of usual semidetachment from local mobilisation.
(5) See articles in HEN, 11.
(6) See articles on Workers City this issue & copies of "Glasgow Keel", donation from address in (3) above.

Jim McFarlane
CULTURE AS CIRCUS

Glasgow's year as European cultural capital brought unexpected challenges to the administrative remoulding of the city, its past and future. Alex Richards comments on the emerging contradictions.

Radical politics saw revolution as festival, a break with the existing state of things in which all would recognise and act on their desires. The notion of festival returned in the 1980s politics of social containment. The decade was punctuated by a series of administratively-organised events, such as the Garden Festivals. These purported to offer a community the chance to "find itself" by re-orienting around the promise of a new enterprising self-image.

The prime example of this strategy as a remedy for social unrest was the Liverpool Garden Festival. The promise that the developed festival site would be a base for the city's regeneration was unfulfilled, but that became clear only after attention shifted elsewhere.

Glasgow's administration was eager to attract that attention. The city had long been controlled by the Labour Party, who modernised the city by decanting people to peripheral public housing schemes and driving motorways through the city central area (see "The Material Community" in H&N no.2). This having visibly failed, the administration then embraced such 1980s innovations as the new-logotype, mission-statement programme by which bureaucracies simulate enterprises service to "their" local client communities. Whereas market theorists see enterprise in the transactions of sovereign producers and consumers, this programme sees it in the actions of charismatic administrative bureaucrats.

Such groups seek to maximise the resources under their control, and therefore grasped an opportunity to operate the Garden Festival franchise for a year. Limited publicity about the failings of the Liverpool event had little effect on the Glasgow Garden Festival in 1988. Nor did revelations of the public/private land deals which accompanied the development of the Glasgow site have any real impact. The significant encounters in such a festival do not involve the public but are between the private and public institutions (District Council and Scottish Development Agency). The Garden Festival's containment within a particular arena meant that it would be approached on its own terms or not at all. Without grounds for an opposition to develop, the event was left to the public relations boosters.

The Garden Festival idea proposes that an urban post-industrial wasteland can be restored to usefulness by a programme of land clearance, building and strategic placing of transplanted shrubbery. Before the Glasgow Garden Festival had even taken place, plans were already under way for a more audacious transplantation exercise: the 1990 European City of Culture designation.

The "City of Culture" concept offers a near blank sheet, allowing the administrators to make their dreams a reality. A blow on the trumpet and the walls can be brought tumbling down: A city-wide, year-long festival! The brightest flowers money can buy (Sinner, Paravoti, Bolshoi! A true Culture City: at its core, an exhibition re-presenting (and hence sanitising) the city's history to its citizens; around the centre, a events programme to gladden listings magazine readers; and spreading out to the periphery, a programme of "community events". And right in the middle of the year, Glasgow's Big Day: typical of those sentimental, big gesture extravaganzas loved by the Liberal-Left since Live Aid. All in all, the organisers excelled themselves.

An opposition began to coalesce early. Some artists and writers implicitly boycotted the Year of Culture, recognising that participation involved accepting the administrators as mediators of taste. More publicly the "Workers City" book (published in 1988) defended Glasgow as "the working class city par excellence" whose "true voice and experience" was being ignored. Under normal circumstances, that would have been that. But the Year of Culture package began to come apart.

Management of any modern public space demands discreet policing of behavioral norms specified for each group of users. For example, a shopping mall designates delivery areas, staff areas, and "public" meeting places which are really private space patrolled by security men. Infringement of the norms, whether by swearing, scuffling unemployed youth or by shop workers in dispute, immediately brings expulsion to the outside.
take material form - either as hardware (an image on paper) or as a simulation of a threedimensional space. Hyper-reality can store data which can be produced both as written text or as visual simulation. But the only "hands-on" is hands on the computer keyboard, which plays a mediating role between human beings and electronic impulses.

While the subject of simulation of concrete objects, architects using Computer-Aided-Design, where you can rotate your building through 360° in hyper-reality, have perhaps been in hyper-reality in the Bauhausian sense - a universe composed entirely of surfaces, signs and images circulating with no reference to any "real world" outside themselves - when they have found that their constructions, perfect in simulation on the screen, resemble prisons when inserted into the real (and social) context. [5]

These systems, the intangible technologies which surround us, these features of the non-objective world have been called "Softrealism... the coming of live objects, a new presence in the world." [6] Perhaps their development is making us rethink our philosophical materialism concerning matter and what it consists of.

I would suggest that a name be given to express some angst about both the existence of these new systems and technologies and the implications of the "softening of the economy" in general and possibilities offered by automation: Softrealism angst (because it sounds like a plausible related symptom). It is both philosophical and sociological, and I have it, and I have caught it along with others who have worked in the "information field." It is not an anti-technology stance; it is just angst about an intangible, non-material phenomenon but concerns the implications of these new systems in a global capitalist economy.

Automation and the "Softening of the Economy"

Both phenomena are related and inter-related to changes in the economy on a global scale affecting work practices and future destining as the nature of capitalism is shifting (or mutating) into another phase. The microprocessor, a "handless representation of the real," a space in which things are stored and transferred from which it is beginning to determine the real, to be the real? [7] has enabled the development of Flexible Manufacturing Systems (FMS) within Computer-Aided Manufacuring (CAM), assisted of course by CAD (Computer-Aided Design). Flexible Manufacturing Systems are controlled by software written in specialized programming languages.

The significance of the application of software to manufacturing is that, firstly, the movements of a single machine can be varied without alteration to its mechanical structure. Robots, the first machines on the path to FMS, are particularly applicable to the production of small batches of varied products. The earliest robot movements were controlled by altering electrical connections on a plugboard. Later versions (the continuous path playback robot) are programmed by a playback system or by a "teach box" which uses buttons or a joystick to define the machine movements. [8]

This means that, mainly in the areas of aeronautics, car manufacture, shipbuilding and architecture, the retort of forms needs no longer be limited to keep within the computer's range. Flexibility is thus greatly increased. "Objects and transformations to which they are subject can now be simulated by altering just one variable: their volume can be represented as moving in 3-dimensional space; different instructions for their fabrication can be automatically programmed." [9]

This in turn increases ability and potential for "nice" marketing (as opposed to global markets) - post-modern consumers "expressing" their different and perhaps ever-fragmenting class, gender and ethnic identities through consumption, or even perhaps through active participation in the design process?

The second implication (as Tess Morris-Suzuki points out) of the application of software to manufacturing is that "the workers' knowledge may be separated from the physical body of the worker and may itself become a commodity." [10] Robots are an early form of expert system, endlessly able to replicate the precise and complex motions of (for example) a highly-skilled car spray-painter. How much control will the person whose skills are being learnt have over this commodity? Will it be as much as that other prime commodity - labour power?

Morris-Suzuki sees the separation of knowledge from labour and machinery and its emergence as an independent commodity and element in production as a gradual process dating back to the very beginning of capitalism. "The special properties of knowledge (in lack of material substance, the ease with which it can be copied and transmitted) mean that it can only acquire exchange value where institutional arrangements confer a degree of monopoly power on its owner." (i.e. copyright)

"Software represents a special form of the commodification of knowledge... in essence [it] consists of instructions for performing a particular task, and a major technological key to the growth of computing was the creation of means by which these instructions could readily be stored and fed into a machine." [11] (i.e. the microchip)

This poses problems about the labour theory of value. For Marx, surplus value is the difference between the selling price of the product and labour costs (variable capital) and initial capital outlay for machinery, etc. (fixed capital). With the use of software in automation, surplus value is extracted from the labour of workers who prepare software for an automated production system, but this surplus value only acquires meaning and substance when the software is brought together with machinery and the production of goods begins. Once this happens, however, the value of labour embodied in the software becomes subdivided between a potentially infinite number of products (since software as such can never wear out). Unless the manufacturer can maintain total monopoly over the technique, spreading automation will rapidly reduce the value of the product, and profits will dwindle to nothing." [12]
Pavarotti, the Bolshoi and Sinatra to the city was enough. And the mass self-celebration of the Big Day or of the candle procession (organised by specialists from the one-time alternative society) reinforce belief in a democracy of opportunity enabled by the experts. Perplexity and frustration result when others don’t share these sentimental values.

The King affair was a catalyst. Its overspill into Donnelly’s sacking for speaking to the press (something not entirely unknown to the Festival administrators) reversed the polarity of the workforce issue. A temporary workforce of carpetbaggers was supported against permanent workers; appeals against unfair dismissal were dismissed by tribunals of Labour councillors sitting in the bosses’ chairs.

The proposed long-term lease of the Fleshers Hough public land on Glasgow Green was an associated issue. Its proximity to the People’s Palace itself and the historic associations of the public land on the Green mean that the heritage issue now transcended the tawdry representations of the Glasgow’s Glasgow exhibition and the relabelling of streets bearing plantation-owners’ names as the Merchant City. Reacting to a surge of opposition (in contrast to the disregard of the Garden Festival land deals), the administration conjured up the democratic ghost. They organised public meetings to simulate a consultation to legitimise their dealings. That failed, so they turned to surveys and local newspaper referenda — still hoping to impose their will. Deployment of these devices delegitimised the administration to an extent that their plans had to be shelved.

The closing months of the Year of Culture were no better for the administration. The solid and lasting achievement of the Year was to be the new Concert Hall. Again, Lally was on the defensive, overreacting even to criticism of the hall’s acoustics. But his greater achievement was to demonstrate the fallacy of all theories of democratic accountability by rejecting Ian MacCollough’s foyer painting (commissioned by the overlapping Strathclyde Regional Council bureaucracy) at the Hall’s opening ceremony. This again gave rise to a spate of protest concerning “the artists’ right to self-expression” while omitting debate on the whole commission/patronage system. But gusts of the usual modern art philistinism came from the Press, which, as usual, was incapable of perceiving real issues. In another time and place, the Sunday Times plainclothesman could be expected to have congratulated Stalin on his attack on Shostakovich.

Most of Scotland’s Press shares the administration’s mix of distaste and sentimentality. The media sought “balance” on the issues by turning to academics who could discuss the extent of the benefit of economic “trickle-down” from increased tourism, etc.

The opposition was neither a mass campaign nor a campaign by elite experts, but something in between. So the Press increasingly mentioned dissenters (usually named as Workers City) but it almost had a semilegal presence. As indicated by some contributions to the second Workers’ City book, “The Reckoning”, there was a reluctance to delegate speech to spokespeople to “represent” general grievances. Some prominent opponents refused to speak to the press, but others misjudged and allowed themselves to be situated around a habitual pub corner table.

After years of cribbing press releases, journalists were no doubt resentful that a few former colleagues were writing “our grapes” articles which began to be borne out as the year ended, and were even semi-legitimated (in their eyes) by a pizzeria the Press confusion was evident in the Sunday Times publishing a weak pastiche of a Workers’ City meeting, which merely demonstrated the perpetrator’s ignorance of those he would parody.

Even the Press’s snide sniping was forced onto the defensive: “... the high profile enjoyed by Workers City was more than a matter of influence, friends, it was also a reflection of the way the group gave expression to an unforeseen sense of unease in a much wider smog of social life...” (Scotland on Sunday, 23/12/90)

Overall, the Year of Culture was remarkable for the extent to which opposition almost accidentally formed around a core campaign which probably expected to be peripheral to the whole affair, and the way in which this opposition was forced onto the agenda. But the issues were not straightforward, and their momentum was provided as much by the interplay of interests within the restructuring bureaucracy.

Alex Richards

Further Reading:
“WORKERS CITY: The real Glasgow Stands Up” (1988) and “The Reckoning: Public Loss, Private Gain” (1990) both edited by Farquhar McIvy (published by Clydebank Press, 37 High St, Glasgow)

“Glasgow Qooll” nowshoob (PO Box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA)

“GLASGOW: The TRUE Story Behind the Hype” by David Kemp (Famepress Publishers, Garnochan, Dumfriesshire)
The NHS reforms place further powers in managers' hands. Steve Bushell reports on the administrative programme.

Despite its much-publicised opposition, in reality it seems as if the Labour Party will not be too drastic in its attempts to reverse the NHS reforms. Perhaps this explains the reluctance of Shadow Health Spokesman Robin Cook to face questioning about future health policy from health workers in Leeds. The hysteria with which his minister, local left-wing MP John Battle, sought to protect himself belies an anxiety not to be pinned down on anything more than vague sentiment and rehearsed outrage.

For the changes are not ones that threaten Labour's current constituency. Whereas a few personnel changes might be in order, not least to reflect the eighties' tendency towards the placing of political friends in apparently "neutral" posts, the changes themselves bolster up the professional class Labour seeks to represent - and in fact provide room for its extension.

The rhetoric of empowerment, "consumer sovereignty" and "quality" camouflage re-arrangement of authority relations. As Alex Richards in H & N no. 6 ("The Eclipse and Re-Emergence of the Economic Movement") put it:

"Power is re-fragmented in ways which would have seemed unthinkable to the Left of a previous generation, who saw only the prospect of a steady growth in monolithic power. And this fragmentation proclaims a new freedom for all, confident that, in each of its moments, with each transaction, Capital, as the principal social relation, is being renewed."

With the ideology of "post-Fordism", this necessity is being recycled as a virtue, intensification is recast as deliverance, escalating interference translated as a release of creativity. For the public will be no more free to change their hospital, question their doctor, or contest treatment from the basis of informed consent than before. Nor will workers in the health service be relieved from the constraints of bureaucracy. The reforms constitute a "re-commodification" - a penetration of Capital's necessity deeper into the conduct of social relations.

The Invasion of Exchange

In H & N no. 4, the article "The Invasion of Exchange" attempted to show how de-regulation and the "Enterprise Culture" were essentially new forms of labour discipline emerging from the failure of the corporatism / job enrichment scheme of the 70s. "Working for Patients", the White Paper on which the NHS reforms are based, is essentially a blueprint for introducing these techniques into the health service. What is envisaged is an internal market. Instead of having resources allocated to District Health Authorities responsible for the provision, nature and supply of health services, the DHAs are separated from their providing role and instead become purchasers of health care from a variety of sources: Self-Governing Trust hospitals (opened-out hospitals), directly-managed units (still under nominal DHA control but providing service on the basis of a contract with the DHA) and private hospitals. Nor is the DHA the only purchasing authority. Family Practitioner Committees and budget-holding General Practices are also empowered to buy the health services they require for their patients.

Despite claims to the contrary from Regional Authority members (who seem to be trying to carve out a new role for themselves as arbiters within the new market), some element of competition between hospitals has been introduced into the system. The hospital which cannot attract the attention of the purchasing authority either by its cheapness, its speed of delivery or, possible, its quality, will not receive the patients and therefore the money which it needs to survive. At the same time, political appointees on the DHAs have been removed, and "self-governing" hospitals will be able to set wages and conditions independent of national agreements. In fact, Eric Caines, the NHI Personnel Officer, has said that he expects the national agreement system (the Whitley Councils) to unravel for all health staff soon after the reforms start to bite.

Instead of the bureaucratic regulation of both staff wages and the provision of care, re-commodification is to be instituted as an unanswerable incentive. Demand, mediated by panels of businessmen and experts on the various purchasing authorities, will determine not only the level of provision (albeit still cash-limited by central government) but in the end the wages and conditions of staff. As a management discussion document on Trust status for the Leeds General Infirmary frankly puts it, in the event of financial difficulties, viability "will be achieved by increases in efficiency, reduction in service levels or the availability of additional funds." Unhampered by national agreements on wages, etc., local managers have been handed the capacity to pass on
problems of finance, demand or crumbling plant directly to the health service worker. In fact, the Act of Parliament which instituted the reform is only part of an overall process of strengthening management’s hand in the cost-conscious nineties. Re-commodification simply underlines the necessity of efficiency and of maximizing labour output. It highlights and enhances the development of managerialism in the NHS.

Managerialism

It's been a useful myth that commodification and the existence of bureaucracies are somehow incompatible. In fact the two have a symbiotic relationship, as the development of Western Capitalism has revealed. One of the key boom areas this century has been in the management of measurement, and developments in the NHS give an insight into the connections between the commodity and the bureaucrat.

The Management of Measurement

One central problem in setting up the internal market will be the pricing of health care. Previously, the system worked without a lot of attention to the price of resources. Rationing took place through the use of waiting lists and assessing the urgency of the need for treatment. Regular overspending occurred, as doctors and nurses got on with the job without excessive attention to resources. Balancing the books took place at a general level, with pricing based on last year's expenditure plus inflation, without too much breakdown of the cost of particular resources, still less cost per patient.

This is in marked contrast to working in the private sector, where each item used has a detachable label for sticking onto a patient's chart, so that everything can be accounted for either on the bill. It is this which explains why the bill for administration in health care is 5.3% on the overall US health budget while it is only 2.6% on the overall UK health budget.

However, for the internal market to function, pricing systems will have to be established. Behind the jargon of Resource Management Initiative and Diagnostic Related Groupings is the establishment of information technology systems designed to provide 'accurate' pricings for different kinds of patients. Again, unlike what theorists of 'post-Fordism' allege, this means an intensification of Taylorism, a closer scrutiny of what is being done as work in order to measure it. Although still in its infancy, the kind of practices occurring give some idea of what measurement in health care will mean. For example, time-and-motion experts have been on the wards timing how much of a qualified nurse's job is taken up doing tasks that only a qualified nurse can do, compared with those any nurse could do. Other measures include setting up databases to catalogue all resources used on a patient. Such measurement, however, impels the manager to take a closer look at what his or her workers do, and how what they do can conform to managerial goals.

The Management of Human Resources

Anyone thinking that these changes simply confirm that techniques of management are repressive, authoritarian and de-humanising has missed the point. Perhaps absorbing the Carls better than the working class ever did, today's management are all too aware of the need to involve the worker in the process of work organisation.

Modern managerialism involves the devolution of managerial goals throughout the organisation. In a Science as Culture article on Post-Fordism, a description of the various techniques of labour control reveal a move towards team work in General Motors factories. Here all grades of employees come together in teams to discuss improving quality and maximising efficiency. The team leaders are elected by the workers themselves and an ethos of loyalty is inserted, so that such autonomous activities as knowing the job so well that a worker can secure a bit of time for himself becomes the property of the company itself, and a key piece of knowledge is gained in order to speed-up particular tasks and gain efficiency.

Similarly, the NHS has introduced Quality Circles (often using ex-Trade Unionists as organisers) so that the problems of service delivery are aired in a convivial atmosphere where a nursing assistant can enlighten a general manager of the problems of work. At the same time, there has been an attempt to change the nomenclature of the organisation – in particular, to change the title of Ward Sister to Charge Nurse so that of Ward Manager, thereby not only devolving managerial goals to a non-managerial level, but also enhancing the legitimacy of management by extending that description down to those who work. This process is enhanced by actually devolving tasks with the name, so that each ward is given a budget to work within, so that staff hours are balanced against ward supplies.

The aim is to ensure widespread understanding and enforcement of managerial goals. Further loyalty to management aims is gained in team briefings, counselling by management (as distinct from disciplines) Individual Performance Reviews (in which the employee confesses various weaknesses and ambitions to their superior) and the use of in-house staff training to impact the organisation's aims and principles. Knowing what their employees do not only improves the process of measurement, it enables management to locate both weaknesses and strengths in the system, exposes areas of autonomy where workers have managed both to do their jobs and not drive themselves to an early grave.

The Management of Marketing

Marketing is seen both as an external and internal need. Internally, morale is managed by a proliferation of house magazines, all using the advice of the American management theorist Tom Peters of including the names
and faces of employees - although in fact their ceaseless enthusiasm and absolute unwillingness to countenance any unpleasant reality in their pages marks them for comparison with Stalinist newspapers of the "Record Beatroot Harvest in the Ukraine" variety. Such Stalinism Capitalism tends to the Fascination with symbols and logos. The Leeds General Infirmary was recently kicked out with a whole new corporate image, down to new uniforms for all staff, LG1 colours and LG1 logo.

Again to achieve both internal and external marketing (and external marketing has barely begun), new posts are created: Quality Assurance Manager, Commercial Manager, etc. The sheer mendacity of managerial "positivism" ensures their hold on defining the institution's character. Nobody provides, or expects to see revealed, the palpable truths that need airing. The corporate image demands a corporate mentality which satisifes potential criticism and conflict by demanding their referral through the intractable machinery of procedure participation policed by staffs of loyal cadres.

Quality Control

The growth of dissatisfaction within the NHS in the 70s and 80s was reflected in both Left and Right critiques of the welfare state. The NHS reforms attempt to head off this dissatisfaction through the ideology of consumer sovereignty. By attaching the health of the hospital to the numbers of patients it attracts, the government believes that "bad" practices will be worked out of the system. As a result, a veritable industry of quality control mechanisms has developed.

Including the appointment of Quality Assurance Managers and the development of quality consciousness, perhaps the most significant product of the new "awareness" is Monitor - An Index of the Quality of Nursing Care. Not only is this the most sophisticated managerial device for work study that I have ever come across, it has the added value of being a method of comparison between wards (and, who knows, perhaps between the staff?). It's worth quoting some of the propaganda used to sell it to the staff. Considered in Newcastle Polytechnic, it is described as a "systematic indicator"; it is "not as accurate or as simple as a ruler, but can be compared to a barometer because it distinguishes nursing care of a high quality from care of an average or lower quality". Pain is taken to reassure staff that it will not judge them individually but as a team, and lip-service is paid to the problem of staff shortages, although it is unclear how this will be taken into account.

Monitor consists of some 450,500 questions answerable on a YES/NO basis. Some of the questions are put to nurses, some to patients and some are gathered from nursing records. An outside assessor is appointed to undertake the questionnaires and a score is arrived at by the number of YES answers. It is reckoned to take 1.3 hours to do a Monitor on an individual patient. This gives management a crucial measurement with which to make comparisons. The tortured syntax of this piece of management publicity exposes their anxiety to obtain staff compliance:

"MONITOR also includes questions which relate to the second list (i.e. caring, rapport, attitudes) - because they, too, are important for quality care; but they are not assessed comprehensively - mainly because they are so subjective. It is believed through the "to measure something well is better than not measuring anything at all."

Wouldn't you agree?"

The results of Monitor will be made known only to Ward Sisters / Charge Nurses and Senior Nurses Managers, for whom, no doubt, personal ward league tables will be incentive enough to crack the whip over their subordinates. However, it is unlikely that, once knowledge of such a measurement becomes even more widespread, it will remain the property of such select company.

A Discomfitting Episode

To explain and expose the development of modern managerial techniques would be, although it often does, imply adherence to a universalist project of proletarian revolution. The usual form, if this were the case, would be to start winding up now with rhetorical salutations to the incondoable spirit of the revolution, etc., which will surely break the wily tricks of the managerial class. The trouble with these projects is that they either solve all problems by an eschatological leap into an era peopled by different beings from what exists now, or contrive to bring into being a system so thoroughly politicised, so totally committed to its goals as to render the manipulations and seductions described above the epitome of free practice. Unsupported by any such faith, my objections to the infiltration of managerialism begin and end with what they do to the idea of a self-governing humanity and the capacity of human society to remain substantially democratic as opposed to merely procedurally so.

Perhaps after all, no other subject is more vulnerable to political exploitation in the late twentieth century than health. If you wish to change behaviour you are guaranteed more success if you associate a particular practice with ill-health than if you declared that God didn't like it. The proclaimed attachment of the advent of the new managerialism in the NHS with improved health services (as an LG1 Management Briefing brashly puts it "High quality management leads to high quality care") makes any frontal opposition particularly difficult. Coupled to this the years when management was only a place you kicked incompetent staff upstairs to, the vigorous, "hands-on", New Agers who are taking over look like an improvement. But their techniques seem to demand premature participation, are constitutionally opposed to conflict, and seek to run the

Continued p.21
Frank Dexter should be congratulated for such a thorough debunking of many of the characteristic illusions of the "trendy left" (in "Language, Truth & Violence" in H&N 7/8). He is also absolutely right to highlight the extent to which the posturing of those middle-class intellectual radicals muddles the water for the rest of us. It drives people away, practically overwhelming them with the dead weight of thirty-eigthed-bourgeois self-deception, self-hatred and self-unfication; making it difficult to retrieve from the morass any useful guides or reflections upon political action.

The article is undoubtedly effective as polemic. But in the zeal to deconstruct (i.e., attack) as many prominent discourses (i.e., visible targets) as possible, important points are glossed over or even trivialised for ammunition. The social psychology of power was presented (pp18-22) using a completely different level of analysis than the critique it follows, offering little hope of transcending the latter. Finally, the conclusions (pp.23-24) are very insightful and largely sound, but on a different level from the two previous analyses.

So, after an extended commentary on LTG, I propose the kind of analysis which can engage with the argumentative article raised without having to shift around so much. The spirit of this is integrative in the sense of wishing to see what has been constructive from recent Left rhetoric and political practice as well as the kind of serious criticism, it can never do without. The aim is to provide support for and understanding of political activity already proceeding, rather than seeking to establish the "centre" of a new discourse.

First, I must admit that the question of violence as an isolated "issue" detached from all context is irrelevant to me, and I am not at all interested in pacifism. So many social and religious philosophies masquerade as politics and join with one another in the ideological marketplace than it seems important to make the distinction. Being (metaphorically) right is right - as opposed to striving to change things in the world in ways that can be justified in terms of collective desires.

The discussion of non-violence (pp9-10) accurately answers a network of related positions that crop up throughout the article. The distinction and linkage between the personal and the political is clearer. LTG noting that there has been a decisive skew towards the personal. The political has virtually disappeared from any Left discourse - except as moral

Tom Jennings takes up the issues, posturing transmitted through the fad in a vain appeal to public opinion. Left rhetoric and lifestyle rebellion combine powerfully here with consumer narcissism, and the "activists" are the most morally superior of all. The message is that nothing can happen in the world until enough of us become like them. Swelling the evangelical ranks. If we're not like them, a closer look reveals their distaste, if not hatred, for the rest of the human race (those who aren't seen as victims in any case). When the distance tips over from hatred to horror, it clearly resembles the complementary disgust felt by the conventional middle-classes at the antics of these, its disaffected children.

Social forces don't exist in this schema, and conflict is reduced to generalised squabbling inside the comfortable sectors of society. Those who last longest in this milieu before returning to their pre-deadlinked middle-class existence are those with the deepest personal grievances - not a sound basis for political organisation. The section on hatred (pp.11) highlights the important role played by demagoguery in inciting sections of society to隼 at enemies. The rhetorical manoeuvres carried out here, for example, 'we' are confused with "male power" are remarkably similar to the psychological techniques of Stalin, and particularly war propaganda. What LTG misses is that, for it to be necessary to indulge in demagoguery, especially via hatred, the audience for the rhetoric must first be unaware of who or what the enemy is. People from middle class background are especially susceptible to this, since their environments, families and communities are less likely to have a tradition of collective action or resistance to anything. Working class people have a reliable intuitive grasp, at the very least, of the fact that it is the rich and powerful, and the structures that support them, that keep us so pinned down in the state. Hence, working class women are the least probable consumers of radical separatist feminism and simultaneously the best able to act collectively in their own interests against expressions of male power without having to demonise men in the process.

In general, hatred is disabling in particular ways: it facilitates the arrogant moral certainty of the faithful, but renders them passive with respect to the real world practices holding together oppressive discourses and institutions. It can never be a substitute for the release of anger that enables people collectively to recognise and move to change their plight. But then, middle class people have scant access to the latter, being forced to manufacture radical programmes from their own experiences and pre-occupations. As well as this consistent negative production of anger fixed to individuals, the trendy Left's postures produce a cycle of contradictions fostering mysticism and administration. Just as capitalism encourages Quality of Life at Work (OLW) circles, so too does the Left's socialist critique. The critiques coincide with a shared belief in the importance of personal change for personal life (i.e., therapy) and the kind of managerial manipulation forced on those in no position to controvert them. They share a common use of introspective examination which aims to bolster moral stances rather than produce specific desired outcomes, which, when not explicit, turn out to be representations of people into discourses and forms of action. The aim is certainly no longer to free people for new possibilities. The significance of the control and power carried this depends on its relationship to the rest of the lives of those controlled; plus the extent to which the desired effects are real around the inside of their heads. In the case of radical chic "growth", this usually mean strengthening moral corruptions irrespective of any effects this might have.

What Joel Kovel describes as "administrative rationality" (trying to outline its phenomenology in ways comprehensively misunderstood in LTG) involves laying stress on techniques of management of people at the paramount social problem. The causes and effects of associated social structures and processes are then ignored in their entirety, even though the interest they serve are followed superficially. The discourses underlying these structures do indeed include Christianity, as far as modern capitalism is concerned, and the consumerist, caring mentality in the face of overwhelming social forces is unrelated to the rise of the "psychologising" many have described. Likewise, various forms of mysticism and mysticism must be brought in to understand the intentions of those who propagate the administratively rational re-introduction of the post-World political Leftists in his or her bureaucratic or professional career path.

In American workplaces, OLW circles avoid confronting the material causes of their distress (and they carry on working normally). In anti-sectarian groups, for example, individual concerns are scrutinised instead of collective support offered to individuals' action (and they carry on working normally). In both cases, discourses...
are produced which, although doubtless fascinating to those concerned, sidestep completely the prospects of change and the ideologies which anchor the participants in their current positions.

The managerial metaphor extends even further. The moral superiority of the Left leads them to a self-image of leadership in a direction, of being strategists - where the masses are supposed to carry out the strategies. But the masses don't play ball, having their own agendas, hence the decline and ultimate failure of the Left. Enter the marketing strategies of social movements, the Labour Party, Feminism, etc., competing for the attention of professionals, bureaucrats, students, etc., apparently unrecog- nising (or not caring?) that they have lost all touch with ordinary working class people.

The weakest part of the diatribe is the section on Sex and Power (p.16-17) and the discussion on language and gender that precedes it (p.13). "Male aggression" (particularly against women) had entirely different meanings and effects from women's aggression, and there is no hint of an acknowledgement of this in LTV. Women's responses to the antics of the "male egotist" range from dismissal to taking offence. The offence may lie in the knowledge (and emotional response to it) that the male's patronising is a discourse expression of, and a contribution to, the reproduction of a quite human social structure constraining women's lives to an overwhelming degree, purely on the basis of their gender.

Of course, taking offence and feeling set up with malice is not a politically effective response. Just because trendy liberal men and middle class feminists can't see that is no reason to trivialise the whole question (and LTV does appear to do this), or to imply that taking offence is in itself reprehensible.

Male defensiveness is also treated too glibly. Defensiveness can follow a perceived attack; it needn't be intended as attacking. Women trying to articulate their experience is often felt as an attack by men (even when it is nothing of the sort). Not only are men defensive, we go so far over the top that the only available conclusion is that we are protecting something deep and crucial to ourselves. But in LTV, it must be mentioned that the effect of women may differ. Sexually (in prosodic literature) is clearly an example of the notion that women expressing men sometimes brings into question men oppressing women. Now, by analogy, I sometimes hear the idea that class oppression no longer exists, or is now irrelevant - after all, working class people can "express" the rich (smashing up the odd Porsche, etc.). I know exactly what it means when someone comes out with tired old crap like that, and I'm sure women get equally sick of hearing about "husband beating", etc. And it's nothing to do with bad faith. To scratch around for individual counter-examples and to protest that they say anything about historical social forces is, to say the least, a very dodgy enterprise.

Men's fear of women's sexuality, and men's defensiveness about this fear is so obvious it requires substantiation. That isn't to say that the historical development of culture and social power hasn't combined to lead to a link between men's sexuality, violence and domination. The extreme positions of misogyny, masculine supremacy and male brutality may in pure form, represent only a minority of real individual men's bodies. Nevertheless, the regulation of women's (as women) as a coherent social phenomenon may have resulted from these extreme conceptions being welded together into social practices, for particular reasons. This question deserves analysis not contempt. Also, the causes of women's power in the making of women are seen in the conceptions associated with male domination needs close attention. Notions of class or social hierarchy will surely be pertinent in analysing the practice of elitist ideology and an analysis of the regulation of British women will reveal how middle class women in "social ascending" classify, organise, and understand the practices of working class mothers.

What LTV doesn't get to grips with is the need to first acknowledge that experiences of suffering may need explaining in terms not available with existing discourses. When criticism (in this case by men) is used to deny that anything needs explaining (and many men must constantly and continually do so), then it is very important that such criticism is ignored. If men feel ascended that their positivism is thus not welcomed - tough. Just as I don't expect every kind of working class rejection of middle class values or ideas to yield the answers, so I don't see why anyone should expect the women's movement to come up with hot shit every time. And when the abiding impression left by a piece of writing is distaste and resentment (rather than the anger emerging from the discussion of other topics in LTV), then I conclude that my thesis is going on than appears on the surface.

An example, perhaps, of the inadequacy in this section of LTV, it is asserted that "sexuality occupies only a small part of the power relations between men and women" (p.16). Well, the links between sexuality and power are certain conflicts, whatever else they are. Direct bodily sex may occupy only a small part of the power relations between men and women. But language (especially in the form of ideologies, discourse and social practices) occupies a significant part of these relations. And, as said in LTV (further on p.16): "Language...is directly implicated in sexuality at a very deep level. You can't have it both ways.

Part III of the article offers an fairly straightforward social psychology of several "types" of people with varying responses to the exercise of power. This is a worthwhile and enlightening discussion, because it forces us to consider the way power seems embodied in individuals at certain times. But we are nearer an analysis on power that are the Left tendencies which the first two parts of LTV ridicule so well.

What is missing is an appreciation of the fragmented nature of individuals (not a negative attribute; it attests to our complexity and flexibility) and the multidimensional nature of individual identities (e.g., religious, ethnic, sexual). What is also missing is the recognition that these individual identities are woven together into collectivities. This happens through forms of ideological and emotional resonance, described so accurately by Connell, though he had no way of analysing them, and with historically developing discourses which shape and enable individuals and collectivities to group and use particular sides of themselves in particular ways. To an extent, the focus on "types" distracts us from approaching a realistic view of power - which has to be by invoking, mobilising and transforming fragments of our identities through the application of discourses (whether or not force or violence is used). It also prevents us from tackling the problem of change, by fixing individuals once they fit a type - whereas it maybe true that some kinds of people fit some positions of power better than other people, even if that's only the case when the context has elicited and strengthened the appropriate part of that person. But it completely misses the point that different sides of people can emerge, given sufficient emotional responses and altered discourses to reflect them. This happens collectively, the possibility of large scale impact arises; and when it happens collectively to working class people, the poor and powerless (i.e. those with least stake, collectively, in the status quo) things begin to look really interesting.

For example, we can look at how socialist feminism, despite its hopes for a more equitable attachment to bureaucracies of one sort or another, of discourses that at least engage with the array of pressing, immediate, perceived needs felt by working class women. Whereas radical feminism has provided more of the impetus for equally vital specific initiatives such as women's refuges.

What working class women make of any possibilities thus raised is important politically - rather than the progress of the domestic dilemmas of carers and the encouragement of the theoretical wings of the women's movement.

Liberal feminists have proved irrelevant to furthering the interests of women as a whole; just as the middle class and business interests of the multi-cultural education and "community relations" rhetoric have failed to deliver any tangible advances for black people. But the growing confidence, success and organizational capacity of working class black people in defending themselves coincides with the "new" (in Britain) discourses of black separatism and Muslim religious anger. Aspects of
FEATURES

SATANIC ABUSES

Recent events in Orkney and Rochdale highlight the dangerous fusion of liberal social services and Christian belief. John Barrett and Frank Dexter investigate the background.

In his article "Liberation Sociology" (in "H&N"), Alex Richards suggested that an "occult international of child abusers may yet appear." This prophecy has been fulfilled, if only in Britain during the last year. A virtual reality - one of those phenomena whose truth can be confirmed only by those with special qualifications and the correct attitude.

The first stories about satanic cults involving child abuse appeared in Britain at the beginning of 1986, in the aftermath of the Cleveland affair. Like many horror stories, there was an American prototype. Between 1984 and 1987 there were a spate of increasingly lurid tales spread out from California. Teachers took children to gravesyards to dig up bodies, they flew through the sky at night, babies were eaten, a horse was killed with a baseball bat, blood was drunk, a dog was anaesthetised - all this was testified to in courtrooms across the USA. After the longest criminal trial in US history, the teacher at the centre of the original allegations was acquitted on nearly all the charges. Meanwhile, the episode had spawned its squads of experts in the art of debunking the signs of satanic abuse in the bodies and the language of the children. These experts have made their way to Britain, offering their services.

What does satanic abuse mean? Is it just a name for a list of all the things the people say? Does it mean for the people to be inculcated into a new way of believing? This is not an inappropriate word for the stories people have told. However, the central contention is the satanic child abuse saga. Instead of the contrary, the hypothesis that a real child is usually the victim of someone who has done something to the child.

The weapon of ultimate deception against anyone who would ask questions about the real interests served by this traffic in child-saving is to accuse them of denying the reality of child abuse. What we are denying, however, is the possibility of anything good coming from the puritan endeavors of self-appointed holy inquisitors who believe they alone know the secrets that must be spoken.

The source of the idea of satanic abuse has been shown to lie in a network of fundamentalist Christians, from whom Satan really exists and whose subversive works are all around us. The Rev. Kevin Logan, who has been a leading activist in this campaign, affirms not only that these cults exist but that Satan really exists as a person; he is not an allegory; he is a personality; there is a demon there is intelligence." (BBC interview, 22/7/90). It seems that the real Satans are those who believe in him, i.e. the Christians, Muslims, etc., rather than the pugilists and occultists who claim no such beliefs.

The fact that a few people have been seen fit to embalm their pretentious pretenses with costumes gleaned from Dennis Wheatley's novels, has provided the occasion for this illusory marginalisation of Christian Fundamentalist movement to insert a toe-hold into the edifices of the care and control agencies of the British State.

Inspired no doubt by their American comrades, the Rochdale Trust (an evangelical group from the fanatic fringe of sectarian Christianity) was launched in 1983 as a counter-movement against occultism and the "New Age" in all its forms. As well as holding conferences for social workers on alleged links between paganism and child-abuse, these woolly-eyed freemasons have not been adverse to picking the pockets of occultists and calling the police to the homes of New Agers with children. Through a battery of pamphlets and videos, these Christian fanatics have seized an opportunity to parade their particular brand of paranoid dogmatism to a largely indifferent populace, notably in their campaign against the festival of Hallowe'en.

More revealing has been the fertile audience they have found in social work and its related professions. Rarely has the strategy of entry been so precise - the duplication by an extremist minority of an already flawed profession beyond the reach of normal sense.

The work of Norsouth has received the uncritical backing of several social workers: in advice as been sought and its services advertised in social work journals who have no excuse for being unaware that this organisation accuses the work of Satan not only of child abuse but also in the nefarious activities of its rivals, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons.

In recent months, it seems, the hand of the devil has been in evidence on a wide front during the Stringfellow self-appointed prison-reform demonstration. The erstwhile governor, Brendan O'Friel, was reported to have blamed the riot on satanic forces, citing the origin of the disturbance in the prison chapel.

Meanwhile, such is the complacency at large about the supposed rationality of
original claims. Anxious to cover for their colleagues, social workers directors are already redefining satanic abuse as ritual abuse or emotional abuse, degradation, humiliation or merely pathological rings. However, these reinterpretations will not on their own turn back the clock. Satanism cannot be restored to its former state without the help of a public that believes in its existence.

Against this backdrop, the growth of apparatuses of social control only become visible after such puerile fears have died down. Social work as we know it is only one small yet rather backward section in a burgeoning system of moral policing whose history will only be able to be written when it is too late to prevent it from gaining momentum. It will have outgrown the scope of what we call ‘social work’ today.

The social workers who have embraced the idea of a widespread satanic menace hardly possess the social and political clout to mobilize a genuine witch-hunt. The attempt to generate a moral panic seems to have met with a mixed response due to public opinion, especially when the whole affair seemed to culminate in a campaign against Hallowe'en - which mostly waylaid the fundamentalist echo chamber. Both the police and the Daily Star, not to mention the Independent on Sunday and the Daily Express have been noticeably silent on the prospect of their skepticism. It seems in retrospect more like a desperate and essentially defensive reflex by an already beleaguered profession, attempting to scrape some drops of social support for their much maligned trade. Look at the balance of forces:

On the one side, social workers themselves - already scorned by pillar to post for their endless failures, as they rightly complain - in the eyes of the media, they can do nothing right: the prevailing ideology of social work is a kind of leftist management (minus any vestige of socialism) which makes no bones about upholding the values of the wider culture - a male-dominated, racist culture in which justice, rape, child abuse and rape are all. But moral panics are not easy to whip up by those who proclaim their rejection of the dominant order. The occupational culture of social work itself can seem as shut off from outside reality as any obscure fundamentalist sect. Their discourse becomes more and more esoteric, trying to purify themselves of all vestiges of white heterosexuality, anti-televised, male prejudices. Such power as they can wield derives ultimately from a state which today has many more advanced and sophisticated methods of social control and moral management than this basically 19th century profession of Christian-Fabian origins.

Aligned with them in this instance is, secondly, a diabolical undercurrent of Christian extremism washed up by a culture which seems to have escaped their influence and is manifestly beyond their comprehension. In the rest of the world, Christianity still wielded a political force to be reckoned with - from wealthy American television to the Catholic Church in the Third World and Eastern Europe - but in England at least, Christianity in this militant version is in decapitation as a communist equivalent. The erosion of satire, on this analysis, would be more like the twitching of the inert body of the church than the birthpangs of an American-style New Christian Right, notwithstanding the quarter of a million who marched for Jesus in the summer at the height of the anti-religious crusade.

Along with them is the institutional failure and the raging anxiety of social workers. In this case not even those seeking to promote the panic are spared, it is only vicarious tales of the terror of others that are heard. What can now look like yet another example of the guilt by association of social workers and of their vulnerability to enthrallism is a new kind of conclave in the entrenchment of new traits of the Narcolepsy. What appears at first as the intended target - occultism - may yet be the ultimate beneficiary, and those who appear now as the witchfinders - the social workers - may well end up as the victims. Witch-hunts and pogroms are episodes of short duration and high intensity. The slower and more insidious spread of institutionalized bigotry is harder to discern behind the smoke and smother of media contro-
Continued from p.15
these discourses fit the desires of those concerned but do not map onto black action - Asian youth in Yorkshire are unlikely to become "militant Muslims" or South London black youth "Farrakhanites". Seen most clearly on Broadwater Farm this just doesn't happen when "respectable" self-appointed leaders make no headway.

So, focusing on the discourse rather than on those individuals who prominently speak it, and on the collective potential created when energetic response combines with shifts in discourse, best the possibility of political engagement and intervention without being distracted by personalities as well as providing the conditions for a thorough analysis of power - which is, and always has been, the task of Left political theory - should be. Things have gone so badly wrong with the Left because it is plagued by the discourse of careerism. Professional, bureaucratic and academic careerism has inevitably led to mystify the nature of power, reasserting the centrality of individuals and middle class leadership. The common denominator of careerism is its middle class position (background, current status and/or aspiration) and Left politics will only matter again when this is seen clearly.

In the historic fights of working class people, women and black people to escape their appalling plight this has led to alter the world to prevent their reoccurrence. It is middle class people as a whole, middle class women and middle class black people whose diverse interests dovetail with the administration of economic and State power to reproduce the web of discourses and practices which entrenches us and simultaneously bewitches us with its language, truth and violence.

Tom Jennings

Continued from p.14
organisations if it were a body, a self-contained organism with "feedback loops" and "equilibrium" (always good) with no contradictions or dilemmas. This result could be a kind of paralysis, an organisation so hyped up on its own "positivism", so ready to channel dissent up its own pre-patterned lines of communication, that it will progressively dampen down critical thought and reduce negativity to a non-existent underworld.

Opportunities
If managerialism requires oblique and perhaps "homeopathic" critique (see "Found on St James Noticeboard" in H&N no.19) it doesn't mean that no opportunities for self-organisation are emerging from the results of the reforms. The release of management from national wages and conditions bargaining has led to a corresponding release for the workers themselves. It opens a possibility for the existence of trade unions with an active membership based around the reality of local negotiations. This is a somewhat fragile possibility given the reluctance of national union negotiators to give up their power and status, and the equal reluctance of local managements to create the conditions for mass meetings and genuinely accountable union negotiations. Such a response could also upset the pseudo-democracy of diffuse managerialism. Unfortunately some unions seem to be taking a very narrow line about the potential of local negotiations. For example the London Region of COHSE seems to be arguing for a strictly "industrial" involvement on union activity: i.e. leave the managers to manage and the union goes hell for leather to improve wages and conditions regardless of cost of consequences for the health service.

It remains to be seen whether these changes will breathe new life into union structures shrivelled by the corporatist yearly round of Whitley Council negotiations in London. Or perhaps such decentralisation will turn out to be phoney, as contracts are created among hospitals and regional negotiations based on the state of the regional labour market (backed by a regional database on employee availability, as envisaged by LGO management) render bargaining a technical exercise based on the scientific assessment of the price of labour in the area.

In Place of a Conclusion
It's instructive to speculate about how these reforms will affect the nature of health care. A Marxism Today article saw it as a chance for health promotion to take over from cure as a priority. The argument went that a puritanizing authority could decide to "invest" in health education programmes as opposed to expensive cardio-thoracic operations. Such long-term thinking, the article suggests, will in the end reduce the need for expensive high-tech, acute procedures.

The trouble with this argument (leaving aside its misplaced optimism on the power of education to solve such problems) is that it takes a few more steps along the road of blaming the victim for their disease. With alternative medicine already attempting to resurrect the 19th century view of the sick personality (from the idea of the tuberculosis character to trendy notions of cancer being the body's response to psychic discomfort) the idea that some illnesses are less "innocent" than others already has a toehold in the medical establishment.

Backed up by the kind of market disincentives mentioned above, a coronary patient who smoked despite his exposure to a health education programme might find it very hard to get life-saving surgery. The power that such a development could give the health promotion lobby to change "lifestyle" should give cause for concern. In theory it amounts to treating all people who are ill as if they were well. Dependency, once confined to the period of illness, could be extended indefinitely. Left outside the scope of the reforms but lurking unseen in the background is the question of the appropriateness of medical intervention. Surgical cripples, stroke patients condemned to spend their last years bedbound on a general medical ward, life prolonged past the point of dignity, haunt the subjects of an age committed to the benediction of medicine. Already it is those least qualified to judge, the health economists, who are "facing up" to the problem. With the formula of Quality Adjusted Life Years (a measure based on surveys of happy individuals' opinions about the acceptability of one post-operative prognosis compared with another) the vision of a computer democracy, complete with value formation and legitimation, shifts into focus.

Here, finally, could responsibility for the nature of health care be shifted from the shoulders of government to the abstract community, a representation of personal preferences carrying the weight of objective necessity.

Steve Buswell
Dear Here & Now,

On mentioning and headlining "Tread Tread: Time, Task, East, England" (H & N, Dec. 3), I would like to comment on the article's description of what could be perceived as a casual and shallow portrayal of the lives of people living in the rural areas of East England.

The study, conducted by researchers from Cambridge University, found that individuals in rural communities often feel isolated and disconnected from the rest of society. The article suggests that this is due to the lack of access to opportunities and resources, which can lead to feelings of alienation and disillusionment.

However, I believe that this portrayal oversimplifies the complexity of rural life. Many people in rural areas have a strong sense of community and connection to their land and local traditions. They often experience a sense of pride and fulfillment from their work, whether it's farming, fishing, or other forms of rural livelihood.

In conclusion, while it's important to acknowledge the challenges faced by rural communities, it's equally important to recognize the richness and resilience of their lives. The rural landscape is not just a backdrop, but a fundamental aspect of the identities and experiences of those who call it home.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

P.S. I hope that my comment will be taken into consideration for future articles, as I believe it's crucial to provide a balanced and nuanced view of rural life.
DEBATE

Artistic Disarmament

One year into the Art Strike, Mr. Jones follows up the discussion in H & N No. 10.

"Cluster round the Jake plays for some songs you've probably heard before. It's nothing if it isn't pure."

Yeah Yeah Noh Stealing in the Name of the Lord

The Art Strike is a good thing only insofar as it produces more radical art, of which its own propaganda is a perfect example.

Sadie Plant in Here & Now 10

The success or failure of Karen Home's "art strike" propaganda can clearly not be judged in terms of how many artists do in fact down tools from now until 1993 - that would be too cruel. However, I cannot accept Plant's alternative evaluation - a political failure is not necessarily an artistic triumph. I would argue, on the contrary, that Home's enterprise is a bad thing all round, reactionary both in what it says (politics) and in how it says it (art). The Art Strike is a good thing only insofar as it is ignored completely [1]; any success will be a bad thing. Its importance lies in the weaknesses which its success has highlighted. This is most obvious in areas of concepts or art, where the Art Strike has succeeded in popularising a peculiarly banal and ill-thought-out version of what art is and what good art is or might be. It is time we got our own ideas on the subject sorted out.

As Mike Peters' article in H & N No. 10 began to suggest, it is not enough simply to advocate "more radical art". We must first identify what art actually is and does; then we can consider how it might be capable of being radical.

My position, briefly, is as follows. Jean-Pierre Voyer wrote "Whether the subject sinks into madness, practices art or participates in an uprising - the two poles of daily life: contact with a narrow and separate reality on one hand and spectacular contact with the totality on the other - are simultaneously abolished, opening the way for the unity of individual life." (Reich - How to Use) Well no, he didn't - for "art" read "theory" - but the description holds good. Finding the language for real communication, as opposed to both a spectacular understanding of the totality and the meaningfulness of everyday "life" [2], going beyond individual isolation and spectacular collectivity into a genuine communality: this is the process of making theory, but also that of making art. Voyer's emphasis on the subjective experience of making theory, its effects on the theorist's characters armour as well as on her view of the world, apply here also. Art, just as much as theory, is a process of making common meanings: to the extent that those meanings are "radical" this will be a taxing activity, for the artist as much as the theorist.

Contested artists, as much as contested theorists, should be avoided: they are clearly engaged in reiterating meanings which are already common. Tortured artists, on the other hand, should be sought out and encouraged.

Now, it has long been assumed that art and theory are in fact not comparable, and that anyone involved in the former owes it to the global proletarian struggle to jack it in and concentrate on the latter. (Ironically, much of the suspicion with which Karen Home is now regarded arose for precisely this reason.) Like so much else that affects us today, this goes back to the 5th conference of the Situationist International (in Gothenburg in 1961). On that occasion, Attila Kotanyi stated that "situationist art was impossible under the dominant conditions of artistic insubstantiality": any art produced by situationists would promptly be recuperated. By way of solution, Kotanyi proposed that members of the SI continue to produce art but that all such work be referred to as "anti-situationist." While various confused artists nostalgic for a positive art call themselves situationist, anti-situationist art will be the mark of the best artists.

Whether this could have been, or was intended as, a serious solution is unclear: its actual effect was the exclusion of several members, the redirection of the SI's activities onto the plane of theory, and the longstanding bias against art which was eventually to enable Karen Home to impress the hell out of a lot of people by dropping names like Gustave Metzger (OK, OK, I'd never heard of him either). Whether it was justified in its own terms is equally unclear. While one sympathises with Raoul Vaneigem's call for the SI to cease its involvement in the "spectacle of refusal", it's hard to share Vaneigem's confidence in the (predictable) alternative - "the refusal of the spectacle" [3] - can be embarked on by the simple expedient of producing theory to the exclusion of art. Indeed, the Situationists could only maintain their own faith in theory as a spectacle-free zone by continually contrasting theory (hourly) with ideology (bon,bose), a distinction which does little to illuminate the actual relations of production of theory, and which is, in any case, difficult to make with any consistency. However we describe the process of recuperation (and Kotanyi's statement that situationist art will be recuperated by society and used against us) contains too much paranoia and too little politics to be really useful) we need to be clear that it can be applied to everything. Kotanyi's fear, a school of art called "situationism" never came true [4]; but the political ideology of "situationism" appeared in
1968 and has never gone away.

My contention, then, is that the situationists were mistaken in labelling art as spectacular and theory as authentic. The reason why no art exists which can be guaranteed free of the taint of the spectacle (or of "bourgeois culture") is that there are no such guarantees for art or anything else: there is no "this side" of the spectacle. Theory is not the situationists' utopian pure negative, nor is art a tool of the commodity economy. Rather, both art and theory are means of communication - languages of common meanings. Both come in new, old, subversive and spectacular varieties; both, if found threatening, will swiftly be recuperated: both can be plagiarised (or detourned, as we pro-Stiis used to say) - and the plagiarisms themselves may be useful or useless, radical or reactionary.

The more attentive reader will by now have realised that I am not in sympathy with the Art Strike. I can best explain my reasons by referring the reader once again to that historic meeting in Göteborg: more specifically, to Karen Home's view of the matter, as given in her The Assault on Culture: Utopian Currents from Lettrisme to Class War. (Is there any justification for that "c" on the end of "Lettrisme"? I think we should be told.) Home rejects the ST's verdict in favour of theory and against art, siding with the Scandinavian and German situationists who were excluded following the "anti-situationist art" proposal and who later formed a Second Situationist International. Home speaks approvingly of these artists who shared "a belief in the collective and non-competitive production of art". However, we're not actually talking about art here: "Overt and conscious use of collective practices to make "cultural" artefacts do not really fit the description "art" - at least if one is using the term to describe the high culture of the ruling class in capitalist societies." Nor, indeed, if one is using the term to describe pig-larming. The ST's valuation of theory rested on two oppositions between theory and art, and between theory and ideology. Having reversed the terms of the first opposition, Home echoes the second with an equally mythical dichotomy: all art is either "high culture" (boof!) or collective cultural artefact production (guerrilla). Like its counterpart, this is not an easy position to maintain empirically.

The significance of all this for the Art Strike is twofold. Firstly, the terms become blurred: should all "art" cease, or only identifiable "high culture" forms? Or should art be allowed to continue only if it passes the Home Test ("overt and conscious use of collective practices")? This last interpretation might explain why issue 8 of Anti-Clock-Wise contains both anti-culture material and an article in praise of Mall Art by Mark Pawson. But material from the Mall Art networks has appeared in galleries before now, which presumably means that too is now an ornament of the ruling class; and in any case, Home is currently advocating a complete "refusal of creativity". Problems, problems! More importantly, if one rejects the picture of art as a sea of ruling class culture with a few islands of subversive practice dotted about in it, the whole thing collapses. The entire struggle against the received culture of the reigning society which Home has been conducting since 1985 [5] is built on the idea that "received culture" disseminates the values of the "reigning society", with art in particular representing "the high culture of the ruling class in capitalist societies". This image of culture as a conveyor belt carrying the values of the ruling class into everyday consciousness, is necessitated only by Home's a priori division of culture into pure and dirty elements. It's certainly not necessitated by the facts. True, art is a material process within society; true, art is never innocent of the existing social order, and is always under pressure to promote it - within the artist's mind as much as anywhere. But this only adds up to saying that art - and "culture" - is a means of communication and therefore a region of contestation, or a battleground as we say in English. The task is not to combat received culture but to get to work on it: embracing parts of it, emphatically rejecting others, but above all diverting [6] it to our own purpose.

In fairness, it must be said that there is more to the Art Strike than that. There is also an argument about artists as people, alleging that their status as pseudo-radical high-culture merchants gives them elitist delusions about "the superiority of their creativity" over the "task and work" of the "social majority". Without the prop of the anti-"culture" argument, though, this looks less like radicalism and more like guilt-tripping. Elitism is a disfigurement of the character, it's almost as bad as snobbery. If artists are worried about this, though, the answer is simple: go away and get it cleared up. We don't want them moaning to the rest of us about how ugly they are and all the parties they're missing. ["I couldn't go out looking like this - what would all those beautiful workers say?] In any case, elitism is a sign of intransigent co-option and co-option means that your work is being misappropriated. Don't give it up - take it back! Just say no!

So much for the overt - political - meanings of the Art Strike. There is, however, more to it than that: there is a sense, as Sadie Plant implied, in which the Art Strike is an art work. This can best be appreciated by looking again at the question of success or failure, our assessment of which depends entirely on how we interpret the Art Strike itself. Taken straight, it's clearly a miserable failure. It is unimaginable that an actual Art Strike will materialise, even if the idea has made very little headway outside the pages of the Daily Mail and none at all outside the anarchist milieu. Talking about the "Art Strike" at all is doing it a fairly large favour: what exists is a campaign for an art strike, or more precisely propaganda in favour of a campaign for an art strike. That propaganda has no more popular support than
the calls for a general strike that issue from time to time from the organs of the corpse of Leninism, and as such deserves the same oblivion. Alternatively, we can take the whole thing as a rather deadly joke at the expense of "political artists" (If you're so radical let's see you on the picket line) but this doesn't improve matters much: hardly anyone has either got the joke or fallen for it.

However, these are not the only possibilities. In between lies the whole terrain of irony, of saying one thing and meaning two or three others; the terrain where meanings split and proliferate, where the distinction between "theory" and "art" ceases to make sense. This, clearly, is the area where Home's promotion of the Art Strike [7] operates; this too is one of the areas where really new meanings get made [8] and an area where Here & Now [9] has squatter's rights. In other words, despite Home's post-Situationist attachment to a rigid division between art and theory, the disjunction between the Art Strike's apparent meaning and its real impact means that it works, if it works at all, as a combination of art and theory, or rather, as a demonstration of the impossibility of separating the two.

In makes sense, then, to refer to the Art Strike's propaganda as "radical art" at least in the sense of "unprecedented art". But this is not the only consideration: not all new meanings are good ones. So what is the Art Strike really saying? Two main themes are apparent: a complete abandonment of politics, associated with an impression of a kind of ultimate and unsurpassable radicalism. The first can best be approached by considering the hypothetical political impact of a realised art strike. Industrial action works to counteract the isolation and passivity endemic in society; strikes are a collective rejection of the strikers' role as workforce and an affirmation that they're worth more than that. A strike by artists, though, would actually promote both passivity and isolation: the strikers would not be a group refusing work but a scattering of individuals doing nothing. To this picture we must add the fact that an art strike will not happen, and that very few people either know or care what artists do with their time anyway. A call for inaction, which is bound to be ignored, and which is addressed to people whose actions nobody notices: what is this but an elaborate demonstration of the futility of politics? The Marxists aspired to change the world; the point, it appears, is to withdraw from it. This relates closely to the second point, Home has made an easy reputation out of radicals' tendency to confuse the concepts of "qualitative supercession" and "reduction ad absurdum"; that is, to assume that all previous radical practice can be superceded simply by "taking it further". This generally takes fairly sophisticated forms: talking about 'situational ideology', for example, or alleging that radical art is part of ruling class culture. Latterly thought, Karen Home has specialised in the most radical-looking strategy of all: negate everything. The tendency of the Art Strike is to argue that outside itself there is no authentic opposition: that all oppositional activity, radical art included, is a form of social integration. The empirical difficulties here are obvious and major: it is hard to see how anyone other than Karen Home could ever prove that they were actually opposed to existing society and not merely indulging in oppositionism - except perhaps by supporting the Art Strike, reading Richard Allen and slugging off the SI... The strategy which Home has "taken further" here is the division between the Seventh Day Adventists and all other "Christians". Even more important is the end result. So complete a negation results in a politics of nothing but absolute: if nothing is authentic, nothing can be done. This is the true message of the Art Strike. Ultimately Home, like Baubler, is advocating silence and inaction [10]; it is promoting, as the ultimate negative, alienation from one's own capacity to act. This has its own interest for theory-collectors and the terminally disillusioned [11]; its main interest for the rest of us is that it makes Home out as a practitioner of theory for theory's sake, political activity taken up in the belief that it is pointless. To describe this as radical would do violence to the meaning of the word: the word 'reactionary' fits much better. 'Boring' does quite nicely too [12]. As with the theory of Baubler, as with the 'art for art's sake' espoused by aesthetes from Walter Pater to the Neo-As [13], the Art Strike's only real achievement will be the entertainment it gives its audience - and, of course, the careers it makes.

Mr. Jones


(Concluded on p.32)
The word *sofotechnica* has recently come into being to designate the presence of these new intangible information technologies which surround us [1], which are related to the expansion and development of the role of software in national economies. This article arises from issues arising from it, firstly by looking at some of the myths associated with computers, and then by considering the implications of the "softening of the economy".

**Myths About Computers**

"In technology it has been quite a quiet decade. The main innovation has been the personal computer, which is simply a convenient mental tool. But it hasn't changed the way people live. But it is significant will be seen in retrospect as the beginning of something immensely important: the rise of artificial intelligence. The creation of machines as intelligent as human beings is not far off - reproductive machines that can design themselves. This is the way to wealth: replace men with machines." Machines can work as doctors, dentists, teachers, everyone old person could be looked after. It's frightening in some ways, because it raises a lot of difficult religious questions about the nature of existence. But these are questions that we have to confront." [2] This quote from Sir Clive Sinclair contains a number of strands I wish to examine.

The first concerns some myths about the possibility of artificial intelligence. Can machines design (and therefore create themselves)? Computers can only add, subtract and compare. Human beings, as well as being able to make intuitive leaps, can recognize patterns, even when they are varied. Although current artificial intelligence research is seeking to remedy this, they have not solved this basic difference.

Expert Systems (which the AI research departments in universities get so much money for developing) are designed to be able to appropriate someone's expert knowledge and to use this for problem solving. The most current application is for self-maintenance and repair and trouble-shooting in automation projects or, for example, electrical systems. (So Star Trek scenarios where the SS Enterprise can self-repair could become possible.) So is Sinclair not being too "over-optimistic" about "reproductive machines that can design themselves?" Although the nearest to this at present is software which can activate a pre-programmed self-repair facility.

**Some Questions to Think About**

As "artificial intelligence" progresses, models of the functioning of the human mind are suggested, usually based on the instrumental logic which post-modernist critics like Lyotard have identified with the "Reason" of the so-called Enlightenment project. The ultimate goal of AI research is to close the remaining gap between what the human mind can do and what computers can do, based on the premise that this is possible. Emerging explanations of the processes of the mind are then constructed through comparative difference.

So the "big questions" seem to be: Are computers conscious? Can they be so? Can they be capable of being "self-conscious" (aware of self)? or self-reflexive?

The second myth Sinclair seems to be pushing is that the advent of information technology hasn't changed our lives. It has affected work practices (management theory coverage) and the introduction of information technology into office administration; computers have become part of our culture and have brought their own terminology into our vocabulary; and the application of the new software technologies are and will have other far-reaching social and political consequences.

New words which have come into our vocabulary often sound a reality; user-friendliness makes the fact that with menu-driven systems all the decisions have been taken in advance and the parameters already defined. An example in the field of architecture is a software package known as NAHAS, devised on the concept that the design of buildings can be systematised to such an extent that each building is regarded as a communication route. The computer system stores a number of predetermined architectural elements which can be disposed around the communication route on a visual display unit to produce different building configurations. Only those pre-determined elements may be used and architects are reduced to operating a sophisticated "lego" set.

Philipe Lemoine, vice chairman of the French National Committee on Technology, Employment and Work has pointed out that "There is a wide range of standard software to help the individual user but, as a rule, these packages are simply tools designed to compress the range of possible objectives sufficiently for the user to feel that his (sic) freedom of expression is coming up against logical constraints and thus to establish the autonomy of his own requirements." [4] "Interactive information technology - interactive with the user's particular needs in approach to secrets are now being developed to remedy this. "Hand-on" implies some tactile relationship with the object, when in fact on a visual display screen you are in control via the keyboard (except for systems with touch screens) in a cerebral manner, possibly with hyper-reality (which you might have access to by means of hyper-text). Hyper-reality is a hypothetical or possible reality which could
This seems to restate an old argument about the tendency of the rate of profit to fall and neglects the role of the State in propping up capitalist economies. This is effected either by fortuitous examples of tampering with the free market (e.g. post U.S. Governments' burning part of the wheat harvest to maintain world prices or the maintenance of EEC food subsidies) or by shifting to the State sector the costs of unprofitable economic activities, or by the impact of financial State surpluses (e.g. loans and credits with advantageous conditions or by public fund transfers under the direction of the giant corporations). [13]

Profits could, however, be maintained simply by keeping prices high compared to production costs, or it could finally be a way of producing enough goods for everyone on a world scale, very cheaply, under a different type of social organization. Under the present conditions, Morris-Suzuki says the managers' only solution to the decreasing value of products and profits is to preserve increasing amounts of capital and labour into the development of better software, new techniques, better products. The fiction of labor inherent in the nature of robots, in other words, creates a situation where it is only to the design of new productive information and the initial transfer of information and machinery that surplus value can be extracted. Unless this process is continually repeated, surplus value cannot be continually created, and the total mass of profit must ultimately fall. But even for a fairly extended period of time it is possible that high levels of automation may be sustained by the incessant generation of new products and new methods of production. [14]

She concludes that the spread of automated manufacturing, by separating the labor process and squeezing out surplus value from the production of material objects, will force capitalist enterprises to become perpetually innovative.

The role of labor in the production of surplus values is being increasingly replaced by the role of innovation. Information which contributes to the productive processes becomes a commodity produced by corporate enterprises as routines as cars flowing from an assembly line. The so-called information society is one in which production and sale of new productive information (rather than goods) becomes increasingly central to economic life. Production of technological knowledge will become the main source of profit, and there is a real shift in emphasis from goods production to knowledge production.

The falling share of Japan's corporate capital expenditure on material inputs (such as machinery / raw materials) and a growing share spent on non-material inputs (e.g. software, data services, planning and research and development) has been described as the "softening of the economy." And it has been seen as a forerunner of a global trend. In 1970 more than half of Japan's industries could be classified as 'very hard industries', where material goods made up 80% or more of the total value of outputs. In 1989 only 27.3% fell into that category. [15]

Structure of the Workforce

One illusion fostered by the ideologies of the "information society" is that work which does not involve direct manual production is necessarily intellectual and creative. This phenomenon can only be called the "socialism of designers." According to this ideology, we can attain the status of "eternal nomads... endowed with quasi-divine powers... whose attributes approximate more closely to the ancient gods of mythology." [18]

The reality is quite different, however, under the conditions of the commodity production of knowledge which leads to an increasingly fine division of labor and growing routinization and fragmentation of tasks. Complex information networks and database systems can be compared to the conveyor belt in factory production, facilitating the breaking-down of tasks into small, isolated components which can be performed by less skilled workers. What Morris-Suzuki sees emerging is a hierarchy of knowledge-producing occupations, ranging from the highly-trained scientific researcher / long-term planner (a skilled scientist who remains some independence of action and identifies in part with management goals) to the data compiler / computer programmer whose work is as routine, alienating and poorly-paid as most manual workers. The actual tasks performed by most people operating computers continue to be data capture and manipulation, not decision-making. A small minority at the top continue to make all the important decisions, and the new technology merely makes sure that they are better informed.

A perpetual innovation economy requires a workforce which is "highly flexible," i.e. easy to take-up and discard, and this economy is increasing, according to Morris-Suzuki, to be characterized by growing insecurity of employment and companies' increased reliance on a pool of part-time, temporary and contract labor.

This fragmentation of tasks, which has turned many areas of highly technical work into relatively simple routine operations, has created a situation where engineers in a design team using CAD do not have to talk to each other, because all the information they need about a project is in the computer. [17]

The magazine Processed World, based in Silicon Valley, California, outlines a situation where this structured division of design enables programmers to write "slave" modules of code performing simple tasks, and an entire computer program design can be assigned by project leaders without it being mentioned that the Pentium will use the software to refine an experimental missile: "Management benefits directly: many people may not enjoy creating office automation technology and weapons systems that destroy life but if the work seems a harmless as a game of chess, so much the better." [18]

(Concluded on p. 32)
HACKING: The Elusive Enemy

If the media are to be believed, 'hackers' and 'viruses' are making everyday use of computers increasingly difficult. This article analyses the reaction to these problems, drawing largely on press reports. These often describe the same incidents, but claim that this is due to a low number of incidents but rather to the sensitivity of the issue. These experienced problems are repeatedly too embarrassed to reveal that they have been 'hacked'. So the statistics cannot form the basis for an analysis, but it is the reaction which is more revealing, what lies behind the 'hacking', 'destruction' of 'threat to security' of computer misuse.

The Political Campaign.

Emma Nicholson MP led the campaign for legislation against 'computer misuse', supported by some other MPs. The CHI, Scotland Yard Fraud Squad, and the Computer Fraud Research Association, which was formed by 140 concerned organizations. Nicholson claimed her campaign was representative of public and business concerns over computer misuse, concerns centres on the vulnerability of personal information, such as medical records, which can be held on computers. Unauthorised access to this information, could lead to its misuse. An example is given from France, where hackers gained access to blood donor records. AIDS sufferers are identified on these records, and some were blackmailed.

However, concerns expressed by businesses appear to be the strongest motivation for legislating against computer misuse. Nicholson surveyed these concerns, which fell into three main categories:

1. 60% of respondents reported 'problems' with misuse of computer system resources, ranging from equipment theft to computer game playing on the employer's systems.
2. The next most common response (25%) related to 'attacks on the computer system' by disgruntled employees, although damage was generally slight.
3. Equally common was the gathering of access by hackers "...most respondents believed that access was generally slight".
4. "Improper disclosure of information held on their computers" was considered a problem by only 14% of respondents.

The Press Campaign.

Press reports have also concentrated on corporate problems. A Sunday Times article gave the example of a director who hacked into his company files. Many were then wiped and antiseptic messages sent to some customers, the company is now in liquidation. This story doesn't hang together. Is this perhaps just poor journalism? Or deliberately misleading journalism, or hacking hysteria? The article claims that the director 'hacked' into his own company's files. This initial set is unlikely to represent unauthorised access, so the concept of misuse couldn't apply until the files were erased and the messages sent. The article is also vague about the causes of the company's financial problems, although it implies the liquidation follows the director's actions.

The report is misleading in another sense. It quotes a Fraud Squad official referring to a dossier of hacking cases: 'It is very frustrating for us because these are crimes but there is nothing we can do. If we wait for the Low Commission to run its 1978 report on hacking, it will be seven years before we can get any new legislation. During all that time people may go on hacking into systems, copying files, defacing them, changing them and obliterate them.' Readers are told hacking, copying files, etc., are crimes, a statement contradicted by the need to make these 'crimes' illegal. We can only assume that the listed actions are illegal for the legislation which criminalises them cannot be realistically applied - an argument advanced by other members of the anti-hacking lobby when useful to further their cause. Hackers and virus planters are 'criminals' despite the obvious grounds for doing so.

'Evidence' of the need for anti-hacking legislation many merely involves traditional offences committed using computers. Thus in the Sunday Times article, under the heading 'Easy Hacking: On-Line to be Outlawed,' the London Business School claims that hacking costs British industry £600m a year. Without a breakdown of this figure it is difficult to contest its reliability, but the corresponding US figure (US$55bn) refers to embezzlement, credit card fraud and theft of services among other things. In Britain, these activities are outlawed by the Theft Acts of 1968 and 1978, although the Law Commission argued that the concept of 'deception' should be altered within those statutes so that a 'deception' of a computer would be more adequately covered.

'Hacking' is thus used to cover traditional offences, which serves to 'criminalise' the activity. This process also aids campaigns for formal legislation by, for example, surveying public opinion. The reference to crimes the police can do nothing about also refers to those activities covered by the broad term 'hacking' but not yet illegal, including unauthorised access to computer information, which is an offence only if it causes damage or criminal damage occurs. For anti-hacking lobby, this is a priority in their calls for legislation. The repercussions would reach far beyond computers, as "no general right of privacy exists in English law, even in the law of tort."
"hackers" themselves require information (e.g., passwords), which Hugo Corman [4] suggests, can often be obtained simply by eavesdropping. This shatters the computer hacker mythopoeia, showing that their activities require no superhuman powers. Corman believes that any solutions must begin with changes in computer management - a common view from those in the computer security business.

Putting Fears in Perspective

Also hidden by the "computer crime" statistics is the perspective on the financial costs of damage not caused by hackers or viruses. For example, the threat to US Air Force systems from squirrels - blamed for shortening power cables resulting in a fire causing $500,000 damage to the Davis Hill base. Also, a multi-national estimate of US losses after workmen moved furniture into an office, causing the floor to collapse onto the computer below.

Tupper has suggested why hackers and viruses dominate discussion on computer security: "Such stories help to create an atmosphere of terror which is then seized upon by those whose business lies in exploiting it commercially with offerings of security services and counselling to avoid these dangers. It is not uncommon for these ingredients to coalesce into a critical mass, generating pressure for action, and then erupting into that of legislation as the Data Protection Act 1984."[5]

The impact of hacking and computer virus stories is illustrated by a survey in Ontario. 868 organisations were asked if they had experienced localised unauthorised manipulation or abuse of the computer system. Despite getting no answers to answer "No", only "Yes" or "Don't Know", only 2% replied that they had experienced a loss, but the real impact of the stories is illustrated by the 84% believing computer crime a serious problem. Similar findings are found in Emma Nicholson's research. "Corporate fraud" was respondents' perceived most serious threat to their businesses, yet only 5% of reported "computer crimes" were corporate frauds. 90% reported hacking, and 90% wanted hacking to be made illegal.

Beneath the Hype

The real significance of hacking and viruses could be the "hypertension" generated, prompting anti-hacking lobbyists to embark upon resource-wasting campaigns. There are suggestions that this has been deliberately hyped by those in computer security services, who have seen a potential money-spinner. These companies are increasingly bringing forward methods for preventing hacking and viruses. This appears to be the second measure taken as anti-hacking legislation in the USA has fallen short of its aims, with viruses in particular still on the increase. Nevertheless, the successful lobbying of the computer security problem is important, as those in the security trade have attempted to touch the same nerve as the anti-hacking lobby. The origins of some of the images indicate how computer security issues have been romantised.

Some came from science fiction [6]; In When Harold was One (1972) "David Goldberg staked up the notion of a computer program called "Zax" which taught telephone numbers randomly until it found another computer. It would then spread into that system," John Brunner's The Shockwave Rider (1975) "explained the process to the readers" through the computers that exercised social control, affecting records and processes." Similarly, 70s' Urban Guerrilla groups equated computer with social control.

In the USA, Robert Morris reached folk hero status in the hacking subculture after causing the most expensive piece of software to date, of course, anti-hacking campaigns present a different picture, portraying hackers as "malevolent, nasty, evil-doers" [7]. Another American hacker, accused of causing $26m damage, received a suspended character assault: "He's a dangerous man if he doesn't like someone, he changes his credit reference. He needs to be watched so he can't do more damage." He had particularly annoyed authorities by supposedly altering his criminal record and changing a judge's book balance.

If some reports are believed, hacking is "a terrorist tool of tomorrow." [8] Those who argue this point also believe the European Green Movement to be a terrorist threat. On the other hand, Hugo Corman simply views hacking as an everyday pursuit. Evidence for each approach can be found. For instance, after an American security network was accessed, the hackers were traced, and armed police officers went to apprehend them, and found that these threats to national security were two teenage boys. This contrasts with the image portrayed by David Info-Securities Inc., an American insurance company, who focused on hackers' intellectual capabilities, to perpetuate the mystique that justifies the employment of computer security experts.

'Computer hacking is no longer a case of teenagers testing systems for kicks. These sorts of things are done by disgruntled employees, industrial hackers and agents for hire. There is also evidence of the criminal element becoming more interested in the field." [9] True or not, this is a widely held perception. It could be confused, however, by the mentality of some hackers who often exhibit the curiosity of young children, trying to learn as much as possible about computers, compulsive in attempting to control this technology. This emerges in the description of the "Friday Night Irregulars" [10] described as "crackers", they try to be without political motivations, using the information gained only in their obsessive drive to control computers. A crackers' code suggests that no damage should be done, although Weizenbaum [11] suggests that the activity can involve psychopathological illness. Crackers unable to use a computer for
some time may experience withdrawal symptoms, and they exhibit anti-social preference for the company of machines over humans. In short. "crackers" appear to represent a greater threat to their own well-being than that of computers.

"New Era Hackers Put Lives At Risk"

Whether human or mechanised, lives are now threatened. "The Black Death is coming, there's nothing you can do about it" [12] Infection of computer systems by viruses has probably overtaken the hacker in terms of security fears. The first virus was designed by Fred Cohen and presented at a security conference in 1983. The presentation was hailed when administrators and attendees at the conference perceived a security threat; some went away to implement relatively simple procedures to protect their systems, whereas others ignored the "threat".

In 1987 the first "unauthorized" virus (known as Brain) began to spread in Britain and America. In less than two years, wrinkles in human systems have been invented in relation to viruses - but wrinkles appear to run amok more than viruses themselves. Some organisations are reputed to have paid blackmailers large sums under threat of virus attack, while legitimate money has been earned by security experts.

Alan Solomon, a virus doctor, is one of many to market virus products - although unfortunately for his reputation and bank balance, one such product was itself infected. He is also one who believes that viruses have reached epidemic proportions. Attempts to control viruses increasingly draw their reference model metaphorically from the human immune system. These theories have been developed by computer security experts such as Charles Wood [13], who describes how military metaphors have been adopted to control disease. For example, access control by passwords 'is the analogy of a fence or road protecting a physical asset'.

The use of reference models now focuses on the human immune system, stimulating security thinking. "Compatible with the traditional military model, this reference model can expand the breach and depth of systems designers' visions about how control measures and functions that could be performed by computers."

Wood claims the advantage would be that potential problems could be identified before the design of the actual technology which could create these problems.

"When you see something that is technically sound you go ahead and do it and you argue about what to do about it only after you have had your technical success" [14] R. Oppenheimer's statement raises concern when it is realised that he was referring to nuclear weaponry. and this attitude can be equally dangerous when applied to computer security. When humans are infected to create antibodies which then attack the virus should it enter the body, the problem can be illustrated in relation to computer security, the use of hackers in this field is seen as a use of the antibody theory. Wood hopes that this analogy will be taken further, to the extent that software is designed to act as an antibody. However, the virus metaphor is already partly responsible for the perception of viruses as an epidemic. Now imagine the bacteria if computers became infected by AIDS, the reference model for what Wood calls "Attack Initiated by Internal Controls". Before the invention of the controls, Wood hopes will combat security breaches, he is already creating fear that these controls will themselves damage systems.

Wood claims to recognise the problem in using a single reference model - "The map is not the territory". However, it is the map that precedes the territory [15]; the AIDS epidemic has taken hold before the first infection. Baudrillard's zone would find simulation in this; "To simulate is to foign what one hasn't. "Someone who simulates an illness produces in himself some of the symptoms". Such simulation erodes the distinction between truth and falsification or, in the case of computer viruses, between illness and health. 10,000 organisations reported to a security firm that they had been attacked by a virus, but after investigation only 400-500 were designated as such.

So how many computer aliments are psychosomatic? Hacking hysteria as a form of moral panic, is one of the few airborne neural illnesses. However, like the computer virus it may be deliberately spread by malicious minds set on portraying computers as vulnerable victims, unlike the image in The Structure of Science, Robert Morris (et al) is Big Brother, not the Dept. of Defence computers he 'hacked' for 48 hours. Computer companies are "not blind to the fact that the technology may be causing an Orwellian society" [16]

Conclusions

Robert Morris and some computer systems which he infected have at least one thing in common - both were "tainted" by Robert Morris Sr. Taking the simulation idea a step further, the activities of Morris Jr. and his computer users but also highlighted a hole in computer security which can not be sealed, increasing the complexity which any future dissenters would have to breach. The planting of one computer virus may cause multiple problems, but "all the hypotheses of manipulating reparation to an evident whole". In this case, the "Simulated" problems have provided a case for both Morris Jnr. and Sr. However, following Baudrillard, those controlling and protecting computer systems would have most to gain. "The specific character of our creation of force and power is such that it requires all the force only because it is so disempowered".

Wood explicitly used the same technique. The application of human metaphors was also an attempt to change the image of computers. His proposed reference model was intended to illustrate a relationship between humans and computers, somehow proving their compatibility by exposing common weaknesses. Unfortunately for that intention, this appears to have gone too far - "many users are under the illusion that a machine can be "infected" simply by reading a data file, about as likely as catching a disease by watching a television programme with pictures of bacteria" [17]

A final point about hackers and "operational security": "It is always a question of proving the truth by the imaginary, proving truth by simulation, proving the law by transgression" [18]. Or proving the value of companies, by highlighting the successes of hackers. The hacking hype is supposedly dying out and the same is expected of virus concerns, once techniques for their control are more widespread. The future looks healthier for computer security consultancy than for naming politicians.

Alan Curry
(Continued from p.28)

Is it the technology itself which is suspect or its use in a specific organisation of society?

Some (like Mike Cooley) argue that the premises on which Western science is based, derived from Plato's rule-based system, are to be questioned and need not be rethought. Others argue that a lack of materialist base to this mode of thought causes a mystical idea about the knowledge capable of reproducing itself, that this knowledge separated from the body, "separate thought".

An example of how technology can be used differently can be seen in the EC's ESPRIT programme: to fund jointly a project to build the world's first Human Centred Integrated Manufacturing Systems, a ten-partner project with teams in Denmark, Germany and the UK, initiated by the Greater London Enterprise Board (M. Cooley, director). At each level, from design through to production planning to manufacturing, the system builds on human skills rather than marginalising it. Thus the human being handles the qualitative subjective judgements and the machine merely the quantitative elements, with the idea that humans dominate the machine and not vice-versa. [19]

In that project, some dissenters in the information world are rejecting the cybernetic conception of creativity, whose reductive logic merely rearranges elements in experience, all knowledge being reified in symbolic form by "knowledge engineers", rather than acknowledging qualitative leaps, problem-solving in a human manner, and elements of common sense.

To conclude, these new technology systems are nothing but the reflections of those who design them, and the conditions under which they are devised. And I suggest that, until we have a society where we all have some control of decision-making in the general social, political and economic apparatus, we cultivate elements of soft-software-angst before we all lack technical skills, symptoms extend beyond being taken over by total computer-speak to excessive paranoia about electronic surveillance.[20]

Lucy Forsyth

(Based on a talk given to the West Yorkshire Discussion Group in November 1989.)

Notes:
[2] Sunday Correspondent, 1/10/88
[5] "From Brunnell to CAD-CAM" by Mike Cooley in "Design After Modernism"
[6] "Softtechnics" by John Chris Jones
[7] "From Socrates to Intel: The Chaos of Micro-Aesthetics" by Thierry Chupin (perhaps suffering from reading too much Deleuze), secretary-general of ACM/SGI in "Design After Modernism"
[8] "Robots and Capitalism" by Tessa Morris-Suzuki in New Left Review 147
[9] "The Demise of Classical Rationality"
[10] "Robots and Capitalism"
[12] "Robots and Capitalism"
[13] For a more detailed discussion of this, see Manuel Castells "The Economic Crisis and American Society" (1985)
[14] "Robots and Capitalism"
[15] "Robots and Capitalism"
[16] "Invisible Design" by Claudia Dorn in "Design After Modernism"
[18] "Robots and Capitalism"
[19] Explained by Mike Cooley in "From Brunnell to CAD-CAM"

(Continued from p.25)

As a kind that has evolved at the end of a random process you can't learn a good work of art, that's what I say.

(20) A question of recall types.

(21) Articles in Softtechnics have advocated "excessive immediacy" for the duration of the Art Strike. See , for example, "Invisible Design" by Claudia Dorn in "Design After Modernism".

At the BBC exhibition a couple of copies of 3D360 were shown, extracted under glass so that we could appreciate the witty and moving cover art. These covers are believed to fall into both categories at once.

(22) Though, to be fair, this is a difficulty encountered from time to time by the greatest of composers. If the elements of composition are experienced in writing this fragrant frame as much as the reader, well it will not have been proof of our failure to "read" as though we were engaged in a form of "reading". How much, in that sense, are we engaged in the nature of a calculated compliment.

(23) How we now describe a reference to "philosophical speculation" as a "calculated result" to judge from the account of their activities we are describing the motives as artists in more than the nature of a calculated compliment.
The Scottish establishment has become interconnected with constitutionalism (as needed in Holyrood). This was seen in the 2003 "Convention of All Scotland" and the Constitutional Convention, which was established in 2007 by the author of the "Scotland's Constitution". The Convention was a major step towards constitutional reform and independence for Scotland.

In its comments, Ken Loach's The Wind that Shakes the Barley is a powerful depiction of the struggle for independence. The film highlights the importance of community, solidarity, and resistance against oppression. It serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for self-determination and the need for continued education and awareness.

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The Scottish establishment has become interconnected with constitutionalism, as seen in the 2003 Convention of All Scotland and the Constitutional Convention, which was established in 2007 by the author of the "Scotland's Constitution". The Convention was a major step towards constitutional reform and independence for Scotland.

In its comments, Ken Loach's The Wind that Shakes the Barley is a powerful depiction of the struggle for independence. The film highlights the importance of community, solidarity, and resistance against oppression. It serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for self-determination and the need for continued education and awareness.
shake it and break it - editors and politics in Britain 2 texts, 1 pre- Thatcher downfall by David Brown, one pre-1980 by James Simms. Brown focuses on macro-economic trends towards recession, share ownership, labour mobility and low productivity. Conclusion evaluates state’s role in U.K. economy and restructuring and ‘hosting the state expenditure down to a certain % of GDP, 1980-81. Post from BM Box 92, NWC IN 3XW.

Exchanges 59 - Strides in the car industry 1987-90, internationalisation of capital, impact of transnational corporations, and of class struggle and 63 on Airline Pilots dispute in Australia, U.K., recent conflict, etc. workers in Israeli East German demarcation and review of publications including 59 & 81. 61 contains translation of Dacia 64. Germanic critique of the GDR Left Group, UK Ambulance Strike Summary, Spanish Syntaxis, Mexico Auto Movers. Ed sub from BM Box 92, London WC IN 3XW.


"D-Markets" Prereview

This article does not seem to have lost any of its immediacy over the last six months. True, a handful of West German companies have been successful automobile manufacturers, are beginning to invest in the former GDR but the rest of the article - that, despite much rhetoric to the contrary, East Germany has been stagnating for several years. The result, in the end, has been to permit continued business. It may be necessary, therefore, to find other air carriers that do not rely on the free market.

In everything, the picture today is more depressing than suggested in the article. An employee's role of fifty percent being predicted for the ex-GDR. The German government has just announced hefty rises in tax to pay for the mess. The German populace had been persuaded to believe, during the election campaign, that a market-led revival of low productivity factories in the East would solve everything. Leading politicians seem to be trying to guide the rate of running their visitors into it in the East as a possible source of voter candidates to the vote and to counteract the rate of declining productivity in the East.