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ISSUE 11

# THE PROFESSIONAL CONSPIRACY

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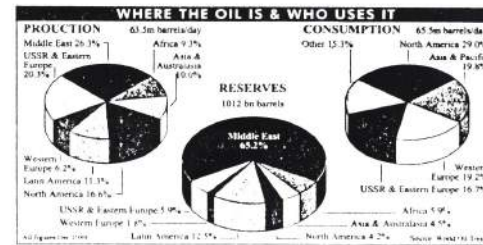
CULTURE



# New for Old

THE IRAQI INVASION OF KUWAIT HAS PROVIDED THE U.S. WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO REASSERT ITS DOMINANT POLITICO-MILITARY 'RIGHT TO INTERVENE'.

The military build-up, the mutual charade of the U.S. led 'Coalition' or the Iraqi State seeking 'Peace', the onset of the 5 week Air War on 16th January, leading to the Ground War on 24th February, and devastating Allied victory by 28th February, were all predictable outcomes of "the ambitions of the U.S. military complex ..... to permanently guarantee the security of the dynasty that rules Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states and with it their vast oil reserves" (The Burning Bush" in C.I. 28, August '90) (1) See Listings



The near destruction of the Iraqi army gave rise to internal insurrection in March, especially in the Shiite south and Kurdish north. Having milked world opinion over the irritation of the Scud attacks, the Israeli state will be attempting to procrastinate and foster armed conflict in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. This would derail any "Land for Peace" formula that the U.S. would find difficult to impose in an election run-up.

With Kuwaiti restoration, Egyptian migrant workers could replace the distrusted Palestinians and Pakistanis in the Gulf, as the essential underclass within the economy of the Gulf States.

The U.S./'Police' role for western capitalism belies the weaknesses of its own economic performance but signals to Germany, Japan and lesser successful economies like Taiwan and South Korea their interdependency with U.S. politico-military hegemony. The German arming of Iraq a 'thing of the past' and the European ideal of (independent) unity temporarily punctured, the U.S., with the U.K. (as faithful bulldog) and France (as less faithful poodle) can be satisfied that they have manipulated the Kuwait adventure successfully in the short term.

The Soviet Government, attempting to appear as last-minute saviour with the mid-February Peace initiatives, is forced to recognise its own powerlessness on the global stage, while China is content to repair its credibility post-Tiananmen Square (and Tibet). Back within its own 1940 borders, the authority of the Soviet Government is contested by the opposition to the Union treaty, and support for glasnost and pluralism within the most liberal sectors of the population. The 'loony Right' may have clamoured for a military show-down over Lithuania and Latvia (which each faced repression in January) but the U.S. recognises no existent oil reserves in the Baltic states or any mileage in the complete erosion of central authority in the Soviet Union. Gorbachov may be another unworthy recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, but the recourse to para-military and KGB activities in the dissident republics (also in Moldova, Georgia and western Ukraine) demonstrates that the Nomenklatura has its 'back to the wall' with Perestroika abandoned and daily life reduced to survivalism. The most

hopeful element lies with the capacity of workers in the massive oil, coal and steel complexes to assert their own autonomy (2), although any importation of the Western model of trade unionism could impair any threat to central authority.

The re-emergence of unresolved ethnic questions through eastern Europe, and the Caucasus/Kurdistan, are a curious reminder of the resilient appeal of nationalism, as the erosion of oppressive Power creates a vacuum and rekindles centuries-old antagonism. While the "new World Order" on a global stage represents a superficial optimism of the triumph of western capitalism and the institutions of liberal democracy, new conflicts are arising that will prove difficult to dowse or reconcile, while few of the emerging mini-states can be incorporated within the Walls around the European (economic) Community.

The emergence of 'Democratic' unrest in Serbia in March intensified the pressure on the centralised army to accede to a confederation of sovereign republics or embark on the suppression of self determination beyond Kosovo to the disintegrating Yugoslav state.

Complex civil wars encompassing ethnic rivalry and secessions from nepotism and authority are raging in parts of Africa such as Rwanda, Chad, Sudan, Liberia, Eritrea, Somalia and Western Sahara. Groundswells of African glasnost (as well as revolts against injustice) have emerged in Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Gabon,

Benin and elsewhere. The collapse of the appeal of State Capitalism has not been matched by any comprehensive 'marshall plan' for Africa, latin America or east Asia. There appears 'no way out' of war, pestilence, disease and famine, especially in Africa, and any hope for 'reconstruction' is defined in green capitalist programmes of encoring energy conservation, the reduction of deforestation and soil erosion, but not at a risk to neocolonialism. Initial US/Soviet rapproachment gave rise to accords in Namibia and seeming lessening of strife in Angola and Mozambique and Nicaragua. However, such a sanitizing of conflict appears threadbare, as war continues to rage in Cambodia, El Salvador, Peru, Mindanao and East Timor. Buttressed by the example of China, the Party and Military clings on to power in North Korea and Burma, and democratic movements from Hong Kong to Mongolia are the prisoners of wider global politics and a limited appeal amongst 'the middle class'.

In South Africa a deft game is underway to consolidate white supremacy through the legitimacy of ending formal apartheid. Meanwhile, the aspirations of the nationalist and stalinist ANC raised by the release of Nelson Mandela have been dashed amidst cleverly manipulated 'tribal' conflict in Natal and Southern Transvaal. Western powers, as with the Israel/Palestine issue, regard the 'settlement' of South African isolation and some concession of political power to the Black middle class, as strategic to the vision of a NEW WORLD ORDER, based on an illusion of legitimate States, with 'democratic rights' and the 'rule of law' not formally circumscribed on grounds of race or ethnicity. The multi national corporations demand that the Politicians manipulate events to that end. The relentless struggles against exploitation and human misery can usually be managed to that end, or at least controlled by political movements which offer no alternative.

Widespread understanding of global interdependence; the rights of self-determination (without pursuing nationalism) for oppressed peoples often struggling against actual or cultural genocide; the recognition of class antagonism and interests antithetical to capitalist domination; and the discarding of the remnants of Socialist (productive forces) ideology, offer in essence what hope exists for the contestation of the "World Order" that buttresses barbarism in the name of 'Freedom'.

(2) E.g., Boris Kagarlitsky reports in Socialist Organiser 14.2.91, that workers struck successfully at a Steel Plant against its privatisation. In March a strikewave erupted amongst Donbass and Kuzbass miners angry at the 'Command system', non-implemented reforms and the 'Union' treaty.

Sim McFarlane

# D-Mark-ation

Paul Woods reports on the way in which the eastern part of Germany was absorbed into the Federal Republic.

At a period in history when so many nations are attempting to secede from larger ones, East Germany acceded of its own free 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 conscription 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 around 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 fuck, 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.

Die Feder der Schnelllinzense werden verkräftigt, um der Luft den geringsten Widerstand zu bieten.



Der Altsonnenrad für einen 2-, 3- und 5-Stunden-Flug von Berlin aus gesehen

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 Eire - an ongoing destabilisation practise 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 hadn't and had to rely on ecologically-ruinous peat and shaky atomic power plants for generating electricity.
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 multis 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 democracy* 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

7. 13th largest employer in the FRG, pumping DM7 billion p.a. into the West German economy. (July 1990 bank report)  
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 out-smarted it. One strategy was to suffocate the Soviet economy under armament costs. A German word encapsulates this concept perfectly: *kaputtrüsten* - as in "*We've re-armed them bust*".

(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 worktime.
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 Honecker per issue.
  9. Being made an artificial part of East European culture.

- whereby one of the ironies in this satire-rich 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 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 disaffected - 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 moratorium on imagery) in case the East German populace, truly shocking, chose their own revamped socialist route to "recovery" - a policy put forward by the various dissident groups such as *Neues Forum*, *Bundnis 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*. Now and then, supposedly objective terminology was borrowed from the world of transport implying a certain efficiency, a certain everydayness and - by extension - naturalness. *The train has departed but we don't yet know its destination* - that sort of stuff, or *The relationship between FRG and the GDR is not a one-way street* - banal everyday traffic images which attempted to promote the idea of East Germany at the steering wheel joining West Germany and not being absorbed by it.

All drivels, 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 ruthlessly 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 pre-empted. 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 a 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 £60 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 waiting 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?

DAS DESIGN BESTIMMT DAS BEWUSSTSEIN  
Graffiti in West Berlin.  
A pun on the Marxist *Das Sein bestimmt das Bewusstsein* (Being determines consciousness)

One theme permanently present in West German media asseverations about the defects of communism was queues and queueing. The theme is worth dwelling on, as it shows how reality (in the shape of newsworthy 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 queueing in the West in 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; or

who queue from 4am to get tickets for a Wimbledon match 12 hours later. In West Germany too queueing 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 requeue for cheese, bread, vegetables, etc. 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-vaunted West German productivity - a real comparison is inadmissible 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 queueing sold as a feature enhancing our daily lives whilst queueing under a communist "regime" is indisputable evidence of socialism's failure? Post-DM-Day news footage of East Germans queueing 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 *Stasi* 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:Ostmark 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 unfailingly 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"* (faber & faber, 1990) - looks at the topic of queueing 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 on 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 attractively packaged but blander tasting West German or Dutch agri-chemical versions.

Incidentally, despite the occasional preciousness (which she herself readily admits to), Chamberlain's account of everyday life under communist governments and the subtle ways that political repression enters into everyday social relationships is preferable to that of the name-dropping superstar sycophant Timothy Garton Ash (*"I telephoned Jacek Kuron"* 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 Autumn 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 *Neues 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 Frederik Pohl's startlingly accurate science fiction short story *"The Midas 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

■ Germany is to increase rents for state-owned homes in the former East Germany by up to 360 per cent from 1 August, the Ministry of Housing announced in Bonn.

Postscript - see P.35



# REPORTS

## Escaping the Single Issue

After Ribble Valley will active protest be sidelined & marginalised ?

Excerpt from an Eye Witness account sent to H. & N. April 1990

As a policewoman 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. And the viciousness of the violence was horrific on both sides. The police were using anything to hand and taking every opportunity to batter and charge. But they were clearly taken aback by the anger of the crowd, and were not prepared for people to start smashing up masonry, digging up pavements, and looking for all 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 unable to leave, and it was a situation in which one could choose a level of involvement. The determination of the crowd was astounding, and everything that happened served only to spur on the demonstrators and offend the police. It was as though every brick magically met its target, bollards and fences were ripped up as though they were feathers, 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 suddenly possible to throw something back and be on the winning side. The fact that this was the last day before the implementation of the poll tax added to the urgency; the legacy of the Peasants 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 where it had all occurred, came the knowledge that something had really happened, and a feeling of "we've really done it now" spread, half in pride, half in trepidation. As 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 seemed 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, on future occasions. There is also talk of wider police powers, and the banning of groups, material, and demonstrations. Arrests and harassment will undoubtedly continue for some time. But the events did not seem to have damaged the anti-poll tax campaign, sterling collapsed, 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 seems at the time that violence and its attendant concerns have been reintroduced onto the political agenda.

by Maisie Dribble

defend non-payers.

Squeezed by less Government revenue, less revenue from Payers (with the wealthy only 'contributing' a fraction of their previous amount) & a steady seepage towards ever more generalised non-payment, Local Authorities have started to cutback on services. Initial

coverage of the non-payment campaign has given way to virtual censorship of news, & the law-abiders surfacing in 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

Town Halls under seige. Riots in Central London as 200,000 march. 1 million+ in Scotland gives way to 11 million nonpayers in Britain. Thatcher undermined & ousted over 'Europe', Poll Tax & Dictatorial style. Hundreds of local anti poll tax groups organise independently to bolster non-payment, organise against Court Summonses & Bailiffs, & defend the imprisoned. A remarkable year of Resistance, has led to a retreat from the Poll Tax that proves how 'pragmatic' the Tory Party is when faced with the possibility of election reverses. The Ribble Valley ByElection (following Eastbourne) victories for the Liberal Democrats persuaded the Government that they had to 'escape' from the single issue of poll tax disaster with escalating bills, mounting difficulties with collection and the continued threat of 'public disorder.

The 'wait n' see' pledges from Heseltine & Major signalled a desperate rearguard action by those "not turning back" to retain elements of universal liability to pay and expose the 'accountability' of Local Government. With VAT hiked up to offset the level of the Poll Tax, the way is clear to phase in a property based tax related to numbers in the house diminish damaging Poll Tax chaos in the year ahead.

### DEFUSE & PERSIST

As the conclusion to my article, written in July 1989, (1) said: "The missing equation....will be the extent & type of opposition that will be generated in England... possibly involving riots". The original focus was the "Shire counties, returning to the zones of deprivation from February 1990 with the Town Halls setting the Poll Tax rates & disturbances marked throughout the South of England. Added to this dimension, we have had the extremely long drawn out process of enforcement & debt recovery both in Scotland & England/Wales. Even in regions or counties with lower levels of non-payment, it has proven nigh impossible to 'mop up' resistance, through threatened use of Sheriffs & Bailiffs, wage arrestments or benefit arrestments. A combination of bureaucratic inertia, the minute number of debt collectors, go-slows at DSS offices, added to the effects of the recession in 1990/1, have acted to encourage others (in Scotland) to become non-payers either out of self-interest, sheer necessity or having more courage to 'see it through'.

With no "amnesty" remotely possible & with wage arrestments/liability orders & sheriff/bailiff action continuing, the "victory" of the anti-poll tax campaign is being converted into an action to

NO  
LOCAL  
INCOME  
TAX

NO  
'FAIR'  
RATES!

create a climate whereby forthright defiance (& occasionally solidarity action) gives way to silent & sullen avoidance. The defeated must stay defeated & not have the audacity to be defiant!

Tory designs to cut Local Government expenditure - with many of the axed or 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 double Paisley By-Elections in 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-registrants, off voters' rolls etc) identify Labour as a collaborationist force to "disorganise the working class" (3). Militants pivotal role as the 'representatives' of the anti poll tax movement (except in the case of solidarity action - 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 as a force more detached from Labour, they engage in direct action led 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', Bogus Groups, Labour & Trade Union delegates, "Youth Rights" affiliates amount to an array of votes based on stifling the unpredictable independent network & restricting the appeal of 'the movement' by its misrepresentation as a front for a monolithic, authoritarian party with an unattractive 'alternative' to capitalism.

The vitality of the independent network isn't directly related to the levels of non-payment. Cities such as Edinburgh, Norwich, Swindon, Reading, Brighton & Nottingham do not immediately spring to mind as centres of resistance.

## REPORTS

NAE  
POLL TAX  
SHETLANDS

NO  
POLL TAX  
WANDSWORTH

However, the strength of independent groups & local networks in these areas points to the strengths & weaknesses 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 neighbourhoods being populated by a transient, crossclass 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/bailiff threat at an earlier stage, often in wards of such diverse responses to payment with Tory councillors etc.. Each of course has had its own trajectory, & 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 they oppose. 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 intermersed with the anti-war campaigns, there exists the hard core of class struggle anarchists & obscure marxist/trotskyite (4) grouplets which seek to influence their pluralist milieu without usually dominating it. The seiges of the town halls led up to the Trafalgar Sq. riot in March 31st '90 & the strategy of the State to detach the polite protestors from the independent activists either drawn into physical confrontation or in response, solidarity campaign for those arrested in the aftermath of the 'iron fist' 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" expose on Class War 2 weeks before Trafalgar Sq. & the attention given to Andy Murphy's celebration of riot, reveals the need of the State to 'scare off' liberal/left opinion, the difficulties of a leaderless network having spokespersons selected by the media, and the manipulated coincidence of promoting a 'notorious' role, and covert plans of the state to

manufacture accounts of actions.

This said, the dedicated & imaginative defence of those charged or imprisoned and the right to demonstrate by the Trafalgar Sq. Defence Committee has enlarged 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-cuts, anti-privatisation agitation is strong possibility, although as the experience of the health service illustrates (5) the complexity of simple defence where an anti-bureaucratism strand is also a necessity. In the example of enlarging resistance to debt collection to beyond the single issue of the poll tax real problems emerge. The 'just' protest relies on recognition that paying for services & goods is justified providing the method is enshrined with a 'fairness' principle. The individualised intention of the poll tax, based on economic selfinterest 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. tends to suggest that any re-discovery of the "impossible class" resolved to pay-for-nothing will be slight, restricted to a handful of ghettoised zones or amongst a sub-strata of transient city or metropolitan refuseniks whose lack of allegiance to anything would include a more organised independent unofficial movement. Nevertheless, in many areas, including cultural contestation 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 untarnished by the failures of socialism.

- (1) Here & now No.9 PP7-8, July 1989.
- (2) See Stand Firm, available 50p+post from TSSD, Room 205, 38 Mt Pleasant, London WC1X.
- (3) See Refuse & Resist No.6 "What will the Tories do..p6/7. Donation for each issue, independent patchwork quarterly from PO Box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA.
- (4) Such as Red Action, Workers Power, Socialist Outlook etc rather than more parasitic SWP line of usual semidetachment from local mobilisation.
- (5) See article in H&N 11.
- (6) See articles on Workers City this issue & copies of "Glasgow Keelie", 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 enterprising 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 ground 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 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 (Sinatra, Pavarotti, 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 *hard copy* (an image on paper) or as a simulation of a three-dimensional space. *Hyper-text* 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.

(Whilst on 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 Baudrillardian 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 their real (and social) context.) [5]

These systems, the intangible technologies which surround us, these features of the non-objective world have been called "*Softtechnica... 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: *Softtechnica-angst* (because it sounds like a plausibly 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 isn't just angst about an intangible, non-material phenomenon but concerns the implications of these new systems within a global capitalist economy.



#### Automation and the "Softening of the Economy"

Both phenomena are related and inter-related to the changes in the economy on a global scale, affecting work practises and future deskilling as the nature of capitalism is shifting (or mutating) into another phase.

The micro-processor, "*a formless representation of the real*", a space "*in which things are stored and transferred [and which] is beginning to determine the real, to be the real*" [7], has enabled the development of Flexible Manufacturing Systems (FMS) within Computer-Aided Manufacture (CAM), assisted of course by CAD (Computer-Aided Design). Flexible Manufacturing Systems are controlled by software written in specialised 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, unlike conventional mass production techniques, are particularly applicable to the production of small batches of varied products. The earliest robots' 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's movements. [8]

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

This in turn increases ability and potential for "niche 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 Tessa Morris-Suzuki points out) of the application of software to manufacturing is that "*the worker's 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 even 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 (its 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 alterative society) reinforce belief in a democracy of opportunity enabled by the experts. Perplexity and frustration result when others don't share those 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 Haugh public land on Glasgow Green was an associated issue. Its proximity to the Peoples' Palace itself and the historic associations of the public land on the Green meant 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 MacCullough's foyer painting (commissioned by the overlapping Strathclyde Regional Council bureaucracy) at the Hall's opening ceremony. This again gave rise to set-piece protest concerning "the artist's 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* plainspeakers 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 samizdat 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 grievance. 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 "sour grapes" articles which began to be borne out as the year ended, and were even semi-legitimised (in their eyes) by a tv documentary. 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 influential friends, it was also a reflection of the way the group gave expression to an unfocussed sense of unease in a much wider swathe of the city." (*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 McLay (published by Clydeside Press, 37 High St, Glasgow)


"Glasgow Keelie" newsheet (PO Box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA)

"GLASGOW 1990: The TRUE Story Behind the Hype" by David Kemp (Famedram Publishers, Gartocharn, Dumbarton)





## THE NHS REFORMS AN INTERNAL EXAMINATION



The NHS reforms place further powers in managements' 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 minder, local left-wing MP John Battle, sought to protect him 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 delivered 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 corporatist / job enrichment schemes 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 provider role and instead become purchasers of health care from a variety of sources: Self-Governing Trust hospitals (opted-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 Practises 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 NHS 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 in his or her 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 practises 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 jobs 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 Cardan 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 inscribed, so that such autonomous activities as knowing the job so well that a worker can secure a bit of time for him/herself 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 or Charge Nurse to 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 disciplinaries) 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 crass enthusiasm and absolute unwillingness to countenance any unpleasant reality in their pages marks them for comparison with Stalinist newspapers of the "Record Beetroot Harvest in the Ukraine" variety! Such Stalino-Capitalism extends to the fascination with symbols and logos. The Leeds General Infirmary was recently kitted out with a whole new corporate image, down to new uniforms for all staff, LGI colours and LGI 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 unpalatable truths that need airing. The corporate image demands a corporate mentality which sanitises potential criticism and conflict by demanding their referral through the interminable machinery of procedural 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" practises 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 in the future between staff?). It's worth quoting some of the propaganda used to sell it to the staff. Conceived 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". Pains are 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 though, that '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 Nurse Managers, for whom, no doubt, perusal of the 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 Discomforting Episode

To explain and expose the development of modern managerial techniques should not, 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 salutes to the indomitable spirit of rebellion, 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 practise. 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 ecology, 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 LGI Management Briefing brashly puts it "High quality management leads to high quality care") makes any full-frontal opposition particularly difficult. Coupled to that the years when management was only a place you kicked incompetent staff upstairs to, the vigorous, "hands-on", New Age types 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

# DISCOURSE, PRACTISE & POWER

H & N 7/8 contained a long article by Frank Dexter, which led to further debate in No. 10.

Tom Jennings takes up the issues.

Frank Dexter should be congratulated for such a thorough debunking of many of the characteristic illusions of the "trendy left" (in *Language, Truth & Violence* (LTV) in H&N7/8). He is also absolutely right to highlight the extent to which the posturing of those middle-class intellectual radicals muddies the water for the rest of us. It drives people away, practically overwhelming them with the dead weight of thinly-disguised bourgeois self-doubt, self-hatred, breast-beating, guilt-tripping and self-justification; making it difficult to retrieve from the morass any useful guides to 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 then presented (pp18-22) uses a completely different level of analysis than the critique it follows, offering little hope of transcending the latter. Finally the conclusions (pp22-23) are very insightful and largely sound, but on a different level again from the two previous analyses.

So after an extended commentary on LTV, I'll propose the kind of analysis which can engage with the arguments the article raised without having to shift around so much. The spirit of this is integrative in the sense of wishing to use what has been constructive from recent Left rhetoric and political practise 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 "career" 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 jostle with one another in the ideological marketplace than it seems important to make the distinction. Being (morally) right is shite - 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 (p9-10) accurately uncovers a network of related positions that crop up throughout the article. The distinction and linkage between the personal and the political is clearest, LTV noting that there has been a decisive skew towards the personal. The political has virtually disappeared from any Left discourses - except as moral

posturing transmitted through the media 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 distaste tips over into hatred 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 their schemas, and conflict is reduced to generational squabbling inside the comfortable sectors of society. Those who last longest in this milieu before returning to their pre-destined middle class existence are those with the deepest personal grudges - not a sound basis for political organisation. The section on hatred (p.11) highlights the important role played by dehumanisation in rendering sections of society identifiable as enemies. The rhetorical manoeuvres carried out when, for example, 'men' are confused with 'male power' are remarkably similar to the psychological techniques of State, and particularly war propaganda. What LTV misses is that, for it to be necessary to indulge in dehumanisation, especially via hatred, the audience for the rhetoric must first be unaware of who or what the enemy is. People from middle class backgrounds 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 stamped down in the mire. 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.

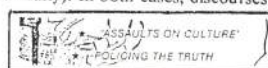
In general, hatred is disabling in particular ways: it facilitates the arrogant moral certainty of the faithful, but renders them passive with respect to the real-world practises holding together oppressive discourses and institutions. It can never be a substitute for the release of anger that enables 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 positive productions include bewilderingly contradictory discourses of mysticism and administration. Just as caring capitalism encourages Quality of Life at Work (QLW) counselling groups, so too the Left can't distinguish between personal help sought for personal pain (i.e. therapy) and the kind of managerial manipulation forced on those in no position to choose it. They share a common use of introspective examination which aims to bolster moral stances rather than produce specific desired outcomes, which, when not explicit, turns out to represent fitting people into discourses and preset patterns of action. The aim is certainly no longer to free people for new possibilities. The significance of the control and power exerted this depends on its relationship to the rest of the lives of those counselled; plus the extent to which the desired effects revolve around the insides of their heads. In the case of radical chic "growth", this usually means strengthening moral convictions irrespective of any effects this might have.

What Joel Kovel describes as "administrative rationality" (trying to outline its phenomenology in ways completely misunderstood in LTV) involves laying stress on techniques of management of people as the paramount social problem. The causes and effects of associated social structures and processes are then ignored in their entirety, even though the interests they serve are followed scrupulously. The discourse underlying these structures do indeed include Christianity, as far as modern capitalism is concerned, and the confessional, caring mentality in the face of overwhelming social forces is not unrelated to the rise of the "psycho-ologisation" many have bemoaned. Likewise, various forms of mysticism and mystification must be brought in to underpin the interests of those who propagate the administratively rational introspection of the personally political Leftists in his or her bureaucratic or professional career path.

In American workplaces, QLW circles avoid confronting the material causes of their distress (and they carry on working normally). In anti-sexist mens' groups, for example, individual personalities are scrutinised instead of collective support offered to womens' 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, of 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 disarray of the Left. Enter the marketing strategies of the single-issue movements, the Labour Party, Leninists, etc., competing for the attention of professionals, bureaucrats, students, etc. - apparently not realising (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* (pp16-17) and the discussion on language and gender that precedes it (p13). "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 ego" range from dismissal to taking offence. The offence may lie in the knowledge (and emotional response to it) that men's patronising sexism is a discursive expression of, and a contribution to, the reproduction of a quite huge social structure constraining women's lives to an overwhelming degree, purely on the basis of their gender.

Of course, taking offence and following it up with moralising 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 in ourselves. But in LTV, bothering to mention the fact that women may whip men occasionally (in pronographic literature) is clearly an example of the notion that women "oppressing" men somehow 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 "oppress" 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 pretend 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 too obvious to require substantiation. That isn't to say that the historical development of culture and social power haven't combined to lead to a link between men's sexuality, violence and domination. The extreme positions of misogyny, maculine suprematism and male fear may, in pure form, represent only a minority of real individual men's bodies. Nevertheless the regulation of women (as women) as a coherent social phenomenon may have resulted from these extreme discourses being welded together into social practises, for particular historical reasons. This question deserves analysis not contempt. Also, the causes of women with power inflicting on other women measures associated with male domination needs close attention. Notions of class or social hierarchy will surely be pertinent in analysing the practise of clitoridectomy; and an analysis of the regulation of British mothers will reveal how middle class women in "social agencies" classify, monitor, politicise and pathologise the parenting practises 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 explained (and very many men constantly and continually deny this) then it is very important that such criticism is ignored. If men feel aggrieved that their pontifications are 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 womens' 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 exuding from the discussion of other topics in LTV), then I conclude that more is going on than appears on the surface.

An example, perhaps, of the uneasiness in this section of LTV: it is asserted that "*sexuality occupies only a small part of the power relationships between men and women*" (p16). Well, the links between sexuality and power are certainly complex, 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 ideology, discourse and social practise) occupies a significant part of these relations. And, as said in LTV (earlier on p16): "*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 no nearer an analysis on power than 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 compared to the pathetic automats of rothodox psychologies), and the sophisticated way individuals are woven together into collectivities. This happens through forms of emotional resonance, described so accurately by Canetti, though he had no way of analysing them, and with historically developing *discourses* which shape and enable individuals and collectivities to grasp and use particular sides of themselves in *practises*. To an extent, the focus on "types" distracts us from approaching a realistic view of power - which works by invoking, mobilising and combining 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 do 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 to people can emerge, given sufficient emotional responses and altered discourses to reflect them. When 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 at stake, collectively, in the status quo) things begin to look really interesting.

For example, we can look at how socialist feminism, despite its hopeless attachment to bureaucracies of one sort or another, offer 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 dismal hordes of careerists and academics bedevilling the theoretical wings of the womens' movement.

Liberal feminists have proved irrelevant to furthering the interests of women as a whole; just as the middle class and business interests of multi-cultural education and "community relations" rhetoric have failed to deliver any tangible advances for black people. But the growing confidence, success and organisational 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



# 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 Sexology* (in H&N6), Alex Richards suggested that "an occult international of child abusers may yet appear". This prophecy has been fulfilled, if only in that world of living phantoms known as the Media. *Satanic Child Abuse* duly came to pass last year as 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 1988, in the aftermath of the Cleveland Affair. Like many such horror stories, there was an American prototype. Between 1984 and 1987 a spate of increasingly lurid tales spread out from California: teachers took children to graveyards 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 anally abused - all this was testified 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 deciphering the signs of satanic abuse in the bodies and the language of children. These experts soon made their way to Britain, offering their services.

What does satanic abuse mean? Is it just a name for acts of such appalling and elaborately sadistic cruelty that its discoverers have been led to designate its perpetrators as "evil"? Evil isn't an inappropriate word for the things some people have done. No, the central contention in the satanic child abuse saga is, on the contrary, the claim that acts of sexual and other forms of abuse of children have been performed as part of a liturgy by cults explicitly devoted to evil and its spiritual personification: Satan. The issue is no less than whether or not a clandestine underworld of devil worshippers exists. The controversy that has raged has been about the origins of these reports and their veracity. What concerns *Here & Now* are the social consequences of this belief and the alarming circumstance that these stories have been accepted by those who themselves have no evidence but the statements of self-proclaimed experts who say they have seen the signs. Our interest in this business is not to find villains to denounce, heroes to applaud, or victims to plead for, but simply to discover the social forces at work which produced the issue in the first place, and to raise the question

which nobody seems prepared to ask about these affairs: *Who is doing what to whom?* In other words, it is the politics of satanic child abuse as a topic which interests us.

What must be resisted above all is the choking-off of any discussion of the politics of the issue by the emotional blackmail of those who hope to gain from it. Nobody should be cowed into silence by the fear that maybe ritual slaughter of children might exist after all. Nothing is so horrible but that somebody somewhere must have done it at some time or another. But *there is far more to be feared from a contrived climate in which it is believed to be widespread than from any actually-existing "satanism" which might be found to exist.*

Sexual abuse and cruelty to children are obscenities which have unhinged many minds into, perversely if predictably, wanting to believe the worst. This loss of proportion is not unconnected with a kind of calculative strategy by a few prolific bigots who need to keep upping the stakes because they have a vested interest in precisely such discrimination. What real children actually suffer from the cruelties of sexual exploitation is bad enough already; but these atrocities have now become a vital ideological resource on which depend a growing number of careers and institutional structures catering to the needs of the forces mobilised under the promise of saving them. These forces hide their own interests, in true substitutionalist fashion, behind the fate of the victims. Their weapon of ultimate deterrence 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 not the existence of the evils but the possibility of anything good coming from the prurient 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 for 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 has a personality; there is a design, there is control, there is intelligence" (BBC interview, 22/7/90). It seems that the real Satanists are those who believe in him, i.e. the Christians, Muslims, etc., rather

than the pagans and occultists who claim no such ideas. Be that as it may, those for whom Satan is real have apparently succeeded in convincing many for whom he isn't of the notion that he has followers nevertheless. This is no small feat.

The fact that a few perverse individuals may well have seen fit to embellish their grotesque practises with costumes gleaned from Dennis Wheatley novels, has provided the occasion for this hitherto marginalised Christian Fundamentalist movement to insert a toe-hold into the edifice of the care and control agencies of the British State.

Inspired no doubt by their American comrades, the *Reachout Trust* (an evangelical group from the lunatic 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 swivel-eyed Torquemadas have not been averse to picketing the houses 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 before 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 entryism been practised with greater success than in this exploitation by an extremist minority of an already deranged profession beyond the reach of common sense.

The work of *Reachout* has received the uncritical backing of several social workers: its advice as been sought and its services advertised in social work journals who have no excuse for being unaware that this organisation discerns the work of Satan not only in 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 Strangeways self-managed prison-demolition, 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 services directors are already redefining satanic abuse as ritual abuse or emotional abuse, degradation, humiliation or merely paedophile rings. However, these circumlocutions will not put the genie back into the bottle. Satanism cannot be reduced back into mere sadism without remainder. Those who have blithely recycled statements that 4,000 babies have been ceremonially slaughtered cannot expect their subsequent clarifications to be listened to quite so readily. One of the most specious recent redefinitions refers to "a framework of ritual activity designed to undermine the integrity and judgement of its subjects, in order to maintain silence about the abuse" (Hazel Wood "Exposing the Secret" in *Social Work Today*, 15/11/90) describes in a nutshell the basic functioning of any bureaucracy.

If fears of a real witch hunt seem exaggerated, we should still ask what will be left when this has been forgotten?

A prophecy might not be out of order. These events may prove to have been more than just another phase in the death agony of the "public sphere". As Neal Ascherson said nearly a year ago, in a prescient article on the spate of simulated outrages connected with food (BSE, Salmonella, Listeria, etc.), these have been "huge, well-packaged spectacles of pseudo-concern, responding to pseudo-threats and worked up to the pitch of hysteria of pseudo-controversies between a large troupe of spokesmen, press officers and politicians. They are little but manipulation. They frighten me because they are substitutes for real inquiry and change, just as their pantomime of public involvement is a substitute for real action by real citizens. Most masques provide a pseudo-culprit, who gets knocked around impressively. But their real victim is always the same: the independent, critical mind." (*The Independent on Sunday*, 20/5/90)

Ascherson was at this stage writing about the bogus social worker epidemic (remember that?) as the final act of the "Masque of Cleveland", when it was but the prelude to the "Satanic Child Abuse Masque". And in his elegy for the demise of what has in fact yet to be created - a rational public - he failed to grasp that the hysteria too is a pseudo one. In this case not even those seeking to promote the panic are scared: it is only vicarious tales of the terror of others that are heard.

What can now look like yet another exposure of the gullibility of social workers and of their vulnerability to entryism by Christian fundamentalists may even turn out to be a significant stage in the enthronement of new Lords of Misrule. What appears 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 institutionalised bigotry is harder to discern behind the smoke and smother of media contro-

versies: the growth of apparatuses of social control only become visible after each particular fuss has died down. Social work as we know it is only one small and 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 its triumph. It will have outgrown the scope of what we call "social work" today.

The social workers who have embraced the idea of a widespread satanist menace hardly possess the social and political clout to mobilise a dangerous new witch-hunt. The attempt to generate a moral panic seems to have misfired due to public derision, especially when the whole affair seemed to culminate in a campaign against Hallowe'en - which somewhat blew the fundamentalists' cover. Both the police and the *Daily Star*, not to mention the *Independent on Sunday* and the DHS have been noticeable for their skepticism. It seems in retrospect more like a desperate and essentially defensive reflex by an already beleaguered profession, attempting to scrape some dregs of social support for their much maligned trade. Look at the balance of forces:

On the one side, social workers themselves - already scorned from 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 managerialism (minus any last vestige of socialism) which makes no bones about upholding decidedly minority values at odds with the wider culture - a male-dominated, racist culture in which injustice, rape and child abuse are rife. 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 doctrines become more and more esoteric, trying to purify themselves anorexically of the last vestiges of white heterosexual, able-bodied, male prejudices. Such power as they can wield derives ultimately from a state which today has many more advanced and sophisticated methods of social policing and moral management than this basically 19th century profession of Christian-Fabian origins.

Aligned with them in this instance is, secondly, a dismal underworld of Christian extremists 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 wields a political force to be reckoned with - from wealthy American televangelism to the Catholic Church in the Third World and Eastern Europe - but in England at least, Christianity in this militant version is as decrepit as its communist equivalent. The crusade against occultism, 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-satanic crusade.

Alone in this corner, the self-appointed child savers have their only sophisticated intellectual defender in the person of Bea Campbell - high priestess of post-socialist Stalinism and TV personality, hunting for a new enemy ever since the signing of the Russo-Marketist pact and the demise of the evil ultra-left. Anxious to find a new Great Socialist Motherland to celebrate, she has found in the likes of Marietta Higgs and Judith Dawson her ego-ideals. Her preferred oppressed categories are now the *professionals* specialising in the management of oppressions (the self-proclaimed defenders of the victims are the victims to be defended: all aspiring persecutors have to believe themselves the victims of persecution); she must perforce take-up the cause of any fellow-female subjected to criticism, regardless of how justifiable the criticism may be: simply to have disagreed with their claims is enough to be accused of a "violent attack" on women and children in general. Her insinuating prose style reeks with the classic tropes of intimidation. Not for nothing was the term "red-baiting" a favourite Stalinist catch-phrase.

The other side in this mock battle seems infinitely more powerful in the long run. The New Age is here to stay. The smart money in the culture industry has already committed itself to a mild green fairy occultism whose institutionalisation as the reigning ideology may well require the extirpation of its hard core of serious sorcerers like Chris Bray. These independent magical artisans will have been the trail-blazers of a new order which has by now far outgrown the orbit of their samizdat networks. A more sophisticated occult hegemony can consign them to the dustbin of history as superstition itself becomes the norm. They at least represent a "radicalism" of sorts, insofar as their practices are directed towards destabilising petrified consciousness and enhancement of individual autonomy. The mass-culture occultism of the New Age, by contrast, is entirely "affirmative" (just scan the big bookshops and then try to call this a "counter" culture): it is all about securing (by seduction and conformism to the lowest common denominator of mystical clichés) compliance with the prevailing social order. England's once and future hippy king Charles will ascend the throne in time to give the royal seal of approval to this general mystification.

An Occult Establishment is already under construction: under its aegis a thousand dogmaticisms would bloom in a free market of the spirit, and the only heresy would be the sin of *criticising* any of them. In such a benign order, naturally, Aleister Crowley and all his works would be likely to be as ubiquitous as were Makhno or Trotsky in Soviet history books of the 1930s. Freedom of religion never includes the right to freedom from religion.

**WITCHES ARE REAL**  
These are real witches in this country today. They don't wear pointed hats and ride broom sticks, but they have been tricked into following Satan. At Halloween they pray to Satan and enjoy evil.  
Satan wants Halloween to be his day. If you get involved with it you could be joining in! Satan is out to trick YOU into worshipping evil at Halloween.

from an evangelical leaflet distributed in schools

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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, focussing 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; bears 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, what 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 careerists inevitably need 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 plights and to alter the world to prevent their re-occurrence, 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 practises which enslaves us and simultaneously bewitches us with its language, truth and violence.

Tom Jennings

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organisations if it were a body, a self-contained organism with "feedback loops" and "equilibrium" (always good) with no contradictions or dilemmas. The 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-rational underworld.

### Opportunities

If managerialism requires oblique and perhaps "homeopathic" critique (see "*Found on St James Noticeboard*" in H&N no.10) 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 negotiators. 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 cartels 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 LGI 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 purchasing 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 tubercular 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 toe-hold 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 "lifestyles" should give cause for concern. In theory it amounts to treating all people who are well as if they were ill. 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, haunts the subjects of an age committed to the beneficence 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 measurement based on surveys of healthy individuals' opinions about the acceptability of one post-operative prognosis compared with another) the vision of a computer democracy, complete with value formation and legitimisation, 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 Bushell

## Dear Here &amp; Now,

On shortening and bowdlerising "Full Time, Part-Time, Paid, Unpaid" (H&N10), *Here & Now* has respected my central argument and missed some meaningful detail which could prompt some comment.

## 1. Higher Education

H&N introduces the report as if the cases of patronage alluded to occurred only in "local government and higher education institutions". However, the characters collectively portrayed in the stories are not a specifically higher education crop. They can be found in extra-mural departments (most of whose work is not "higher"), in some colleges, in LEA centres and in the WEA, in Community, Youth and Unemployed Centres, Day Centres and hospitals and so on, and in a wide variety of offices.

The Accomplished Full-Timer of the example is here working in an unidentified department, where he and some of his fellow workers are crossing the boundaries between education and management. If working for local government or for a voluntary body or a government agency, their circumstances would be similar.

The Full-Time Part-Timer of the story is employed by more than one institution. His course on the "Partially Incorporated" is run by a department, probably in a college, but the "Mining and Quarrying" class he pedals up to somewhere north of Manchester can only be a WEA class, for only there would he consider joining MSF, were MSF interested in his low pay.

The number of part-timers working in such conditions is unknown. Many can and do join a variety of unions: MSF, NALGO, NUPE, NATFHE, AUE, to mention just a few. But it is difficult for unions to obtain data on the non-unionised. Extra-mural departments and WEA districts produce annual reports listing tutors employed; colleges, centres and government agencies do not. Furthermore, union membership secretaries and other officers are full-timers, often unaware of the magnitude of the problem. Not all of them are sympathetic to its victims. Some of the Accomplished Full-Timers, like the Freds of the example, can be found among union officers in all kinds of institutions.

## 2. Sex.

It is intriguing that H&N has chosen to delete the most obviously immoral passages in the examples given, viz:

- What the Accomplished Full-Timer does during part of his timetable (feeling the stress, hangover, swim and squash), without which it is not clear why his mates never ring him at home, as noticed by his wife;
- His intention of doling out jobs for the boys and perhaps for the girls when promoted;
- The double exploitation of secretaries;
- Part-time jobs given to girlfriends;
- The Full-Time Part-Timer's desertion by his girl-friend as a result of her joining a (full-timers') patronage network.

H&N has not had my qualms about the jobs-for-the-boys point. But the jobs-for-the-girls, and indeed all mention of girlfriends, whether as part-time appointees or full-time aspirants or exploited secretaries, have been censored. Who is "protecting the guilty" now?

Among the thirtysomethings and fortysomethings of the new middle class, sex is ubiquitous and less egalitarian than it would appear. It is often, if not usually, enmeshed in the (normally male) networks of power.

It is well-known that most part-timers are women and that fewer women than men reach positions of power and patronage. Women who get there are, for a variety of reasons, less likely to use their status to obtain sexual advantages from subordinates and clients.

The real-life model which inspired the full-time professional sub-contracting the donkey work to an under-paid part-time secretary (in the story told by Claire, the Unpaid Woman) was a woman. Whether she deployed any social graces to obtain cheap labour from another woman I do not know, but I bet the operation did not involve pub-drink-and-sex. In any case, very few women find themselves in control of their own labour to the extent of dumping the work on someone else.

The stories in the article are not about sexism, but about tools and uses of power and patronage which do sometimes include sex, even if patrons and clients are unaware of the connection. Scandals erupt from time to time in the world of education, involving a male lecturer, a female student and exam results. In these cases, it is the *other* students who resent the exercise of arbitrary power and who write the inevitable graffiti on sex and patronage. (Literary versions like these in novels by Malcolm Bradbury or David Lodge have been inspired by real events.) The actors themselves say and may even think that they are equal partners in a disinterested relationship. Motives are complex and self-analysis is not easy.

Educational institutions are not exceptional for this matter. It is the same the whole world over. The bigger the institution - or, in modern jargon, the 'inter-agency network' - the more numerous the tiers of power and the wider the opportunities for patronage.

The stories are mostly about men because they are based on observation of real cases in real working situations, where the most conspicuous characters were men exploiting men as well as women. Why delete precisely the passages about exploited girlfriends? Could it be that only men are qualified to watch men?

## 3. Unpaid Work.

The phrase introducing the Unpaid-Woman's grudges was also deleted from the initial paragraph: "He who is not paid, neither shall he work." It would be surprising if nobody in the Left had yet told *Here & Now* that it should stop doing unpaid work and ought to start employing real paid workers to write and put together the magazine.

The Left opposes voluntary work - "work" being understood as anything from sitting on committees or organising anything to working alongside ordinary paid workers on a similar task. Positions vary, with *Militants* among the most extreme anti-voluntarist. Voluntary activities are shameful because they erode professionals' conditions of service and allow a right-wing government to get away with cuts in the public and public-funded sector. Working without pay is a crime against employment. No employment, no management, no patronage. Hence the battles to exclude the unpaid from all "work" and consequently from representation, organisation and leadership.

Thus the theory. The article attempted to explain how unpaid work is extracted from part-timers by full-timers who object to voluntary work. Part-timers are one of many cases of unpaid work performed for the benefit of "employment givers".

## 4. Some Figures.

It should not be necessary to insist on part-timers' problems. Quite a few books on particular projects employing part-timers express recognition for their dedication to the task. It is occasionally admitted that part of their work is unpaid. That most part-timers are women is also said at many levels. It is less often acknowledged that appointments are made without advertising.

A salary breakdown of an inner city Open Learning Centre (at July 1990) may provide a succinct x-ray of the labour hierarchy:

- Project Leader (probably a man)	£1410 pa
- Project Worker (more likely a man)	£1218 pa
- Part-time tutors (mostly female)	working a full timetable (17 hours per week) £806 pa
- Part-time Clerical Assistants (female)	on half-time £332 pa
- Technician (probably male)	on 10 hours per week £2048 pa
- Creche workers (most certainly female)	on 27 hours per week £484 pa

This particular centre does not appear to employ purely voluntary workers. In some cases, voluntary workers in other organisations may provide hidden subsidy of a centre. It has been pointed out that the purely voluntary University "subsidised" by non-voluntary bodies, but the "subsidy" also works the other way, when inter-institutional co-operation is invoked to obtain grants to pay salaries. I know of no research on such voluntary non-voluntary mutual subsidies - an area worth looking into, but a separate problem and not what Claire the

Unpaid Woman, working for a political party, is complaining of.

## 5. Mistakes.

Certain mistakes could have been avoided if H&N had told me that they had accepted the article for publication. For instance, councillors do not live on expenses, as stated, but on attendance allowances. (Ken Livingstone has taught the method in his *If Voting Changed Anything They'd Abolish It*.) Amounts quoted as membership fees and salaries should have been updated at the time of publication.

Martine Christie

## Dear Here &amp; Now,

The review of my book *Free is Cheaper* by Malcolm Stroud was intriguing and made me curious about the kind of person he is, as he appears to be about me. It is not an author's place to dispute a reviewer's judgements of matters of style but matters of fact are different, especially when the author has written the opposite of that claimed, whatever the reviewer's caveats, and silence, as they say, gives consent.

I did not appeal "for a more pruritanical outlook" (p31) but wrote "This is not an appeal for self-denial, for a more pruritanical outlook".

I did quote Parkinson's Law - on page 150.

The "kind of barrack room irrefutability" for late medieval wages and prices rested not on H. G. Wells, Winston Churchill, et al, but on the standard research work for the subject, i.e. Professors Thorold Rogers, Phelps Brown, and John Burnett, and the research team at Oxford led by Beveridge. Malcolm Stroud is right. I did not do the original research. Rogers had already gone through the accounts of the Oxford colleges and the muniment rooms of the royal palaces; Beveridge's men had abstracted the accounts of the bishops of Winchester; Phelps Brown and Burnett had gone through the household bills of many gentlemen. There was no point in repeating the work, even if I had been equipped to do it.

I leave your readers to judge whether I answer "yes" to the question "If all restraints, like inadequate income, are removed, can the world ever supply all the cars that will be demanded?" The same goes for the reference to the Economist (p220), also how essential to life at our "level of ease" as he puts it, is the Nomenklatura - whether of the West or the East.

As for the Quality of Life, Falling Living Standards, Golden Ageism, or The Fall From Grace, I am afraid I have no knowledge. I wrote only about bricks and meat. You can only compare like with like, and there aren't too many likes around between now and the late Middle Ages. I must still, however, confess to a sneaking sympathy with Christopher Lasch in his *The Culture of Narcissism: Having trivialised the past by equating it with outmoded styles of consumption, discarded fashions and attitudes, people today resent anyone who draws on the past as a standard by which to judge the present. Current critical dogma equates every such reference to the past as itself an expression of nostalgia.*

As for the mysterious "subsequent debates on this issue" of which I am "blissfully unaware" I can only plead ignorance. I don't read the *Daily Mail* very often.

Malcolm Stroud says he is no economist. Perhaps he should try reviewing books on brain surgery or the Stefan / Boltzmann Law. As a humble foot-soldier of the Socialist Party of Great Britain with great regard for anarchists of the Kropotkin persuasion and libertarians everywhere, I am nevertheless grateful for any discussion which might contribute to the end of the Market Economy, whether Free or Fettered.

Ken R. Smith

Note: *Ham & High* is not the "newsletter of a British financial firm" but the *Hampstead and Highgate Express*.

# Artistic Disarmament

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

"Cluster round the jukebox 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&N10 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, practises 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 an spectacular understanding of the totality and the meaninglessness of everyday "life" [2]; going beyond individual isolation and spectacular collectivity into a genuine commonality: 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 of 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.

Contented artists, as much as contented 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 Göteborg in 1961). On that occasion, Attila Kotanyi stated that situationist art was impossible under "*the dominant conditions of artistic inauthenticity*": 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 Gustav 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 that 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** (hooray!) with **ideology** (boo, hiss!), 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 détourned, as we pro-Situs 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 "e" on the end of "Lettrism"? I think we should be told.) Home rejects the SI'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-farming. The SI'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" (boo!) or collective cultural artefact production (hooray!). 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 identifiably "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 Mail Art by Mark Pawson. But material from the Mail 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* decision to divide art into sheep and goats. 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 élitist delusions about "the superiority of their 'creativity' over the leisure and work pursuits 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 spots. If artists are worried about it, 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, élitism is a sign of incipient 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 the idea has made very little headway outside the pages of *Smile* 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 deadpan 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 mean 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.

It 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 this 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 facts 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 supersession" and "reductio ad absurdum": that is, to assume that all previous radical practice can be superseded simply by "taking it further". This generally takes fairly sophisticated forms: talking about "situationist ideology", for example, or alleging that radical art is part of ruling class culture. Latterly though, 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 *opposing* existing society and not merely indulging in *oppositionism* - except perhaps by supporting the Art Strike, reading Richard Allen and slagging 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 not of negation but of abstention: if nothing is authentic **nothing can be done**.

This is the true message of the Art Strike. Ultimately Home, like Baudrillard, is advocating silence and inaction [10]; 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 Baudrillard, as with the "art for art's sake" espoused by aesthetes from Walter Pater to the Neoists [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

#### Notes:

- [1] Damn!
- [2] "Life's about as wonderful as a cold" - Mark Perry, 1977. Perry is not known to have been familiar with the situationists' theses on the banalisation of everyday life, but being a "junk" he was doubtless influenced by them anyway.
- [3] Cf the following comment on the Unification Church mass wedding of a few years back: "A spectacle or pairs, assuredly. Let us not forget, however, that this was also a pair of spectacles." Taken from Alec Douglas H's *The End of Finality* (Inprobable Books, 1989) the situationists, we must conclude, never got much beyond the reversal of terms. It will be for others to create the terms of reversal.
- [4] Partial disproof: "Before Pop and after Abstract Expressionism there was a still-born movement,

based in continental Europe... Called Situationism, this movement expressed a rebellious need to counterpose the creative and irreverent with the anticipated [sic] homogeneity of media society. Essentially a non-starter as art per se the movement had, nonetheless, an influence on French cinema and architecture." - Philip Core reviewing an exhibition at the ICA in *New Statesman and Society* (30/6/89) Of course, the curators invited this kind of misinterpretation by staging the exhibition in an art gallery rather than simply getting out and creating situations.

[5] Not single-handedly, of course! Home's struggles have been shared with the PRAXIS group, a guy called Tony from Cork and numerous magazines from around the world all called *311c*. In addition, many interesting uses have been made of that famous general-purpose pseudonym or "multiple identity", "George Eliot".

[6] Or *dejournaling* it. Next week: *deriving* for beginners.

[7] My knowledge of the originators of the Art Strike - the PRAXIS Group - is woefully inadequate; however, I suspect they actually took the Art Strike seriously (but that's Americans for you). Only on its arrival in England was it transformed by Karen Home's creative genius into the polyvalent multi-media event that we all know so well.

[8] Burroughs half-realised this when he asserted that cut-ups forecast the future: simply rearrange some words to make an unknown phrase or saying and "the future leaks through". Certainly, new meanings could be created by this method: it's a kind of automatic writing. I don't know though - call me old-fashioned but I prefer meanings which have been consciously made

(Concluded on p. 32)

# FEATURES

## SOFTECHNICA

Previous issues of Here & Now have analysed some effects of new technology on working relations. In the following two articles, **Lucy Forsyth** and **Alan Curry** comment on the use and mythology of computers.

The word *softtechnica* 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 airs some 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; it hasn't changed the way people live. But I think its significance 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: to replace men with machines, Machines can work as doctors, dentists, teachers; every 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 recognise 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

Enlightenment project. The ultimate goal of AI research is to close the receding 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 human 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 practises (management theory covers the "humane" 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 mask a reality: *user-friendly* masks 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 HARNESSE, 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 predetermined elements may be used and architects are reduced to operating a sophisticated "lego" set. [3]

Phillippe Lemoine, vice chairman of the French National Committee on Technology, Employment and Work has pointed out that *"There is a whole 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 searches are now being developed to remedy this.

*"Hands-on"* implies some tactile relationship with the object, when in fact on a visual display screen you are in contact 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 rehearse 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 notorious examples of tampering with the "free market" (e.g. past U.S. Governments burning part of the wheat harvest to maintain world prices or the maintenance of EEC food mountains) or by shifting to the State sector the costs of unprofitable economic activities, or by the impact of financial State subsidies (e.g. loans and credits with advantageous conditions or tying public funds to economic ventures 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 organisation. Under the present conditions, Morris-Suzuki says the managers' only solution to the decreasing value of products and profits is *"to pour increasing amounts of capital and labour into the development of better software, new techniques, better products. The fission of labour inherent in the nature of robots, in other words, creates a situation where it is only in the design of new productive information and the initial bringing together of information and machinery that surplus value can be extracted. Unless this process is continually repeated, surplus value cannot be continuously created, and the total mass of profit must ultimately fall. But over 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 sundering the labour process and squeezing out surplus value from the production of material objects, will force capitalist enterprises to become perpetual innovators.

The role of labour in the production of surplus values is increasingly minimised and replaced by the role of innovation. Information which contributes to the productive processes becomes a commodity produced by corporate enterprises as routinely 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 starting a shift in emphasis from goods production to knowledge production.



The declining share of Japan's corporate capital expended 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", those where material goods made up 80% or more of the total value of outputs. In 1980 only 27.3% fell into that category. [15]

#### Structure of the Workforce

One illusion fostered by the ideologues 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 *"telematic nomads... endowed with quasi-divine powers... whose attributes approximate ever 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 labour and growing routinisation and fragmentation of tasks. Complex information network and database systems can be compared to the conveyer 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 deskilled scientist who retains 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 computer terminals continue to be data capture and manipulation, not decision-making. A small minority at the top continue to make all the important decisions and 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 likely, according to Morris-Suzuki, to be characterised by growing insecurity of employment and companies' increased reliance on a pool of part-time temporary and contract labour.

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 one another, because all the information they need about a project is in the computer. [17] The magazine *Processed World*, based in Silicon Valley, California, outlines the 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 Pentagon 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 as harmless as a game of chess, so much the better."* [18]

(Continued 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 not to a low number of incidents but rather to the sensitivity of the issue. Those experiencing problems are reputedly 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 "havoc", "destruction" and "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 CBI, Scotland Yard Fraud Squad, and the Computer Threat Research Association, which was formed by 140 concerned organisations. Nicholson claimed her campaign was representative of public and "business" concerns over computer misuse, concerns centring on the vulnerability of personal information (such as medical records) which is increasingly 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 fall into four main categories [1]:

- 1) 66% 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 their computer systems by disgruntled employees, although damage was generally slight".
- 3) Equally common was the gaining of access by hackers: "...most respondents believed that damage 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 anti-semitic 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 act 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 a vaguer sense. It quotes a Fraud Squad officer 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 Law Commission it will be several years before we get any new legislation. During all that time people may go on hacking into systems, copying files, diverting them, changing them and obliterating them". [2] Readers are told that 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 but 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 as "criminals" despite the dubious grounds for doing so.

"Evidence" of the need for anti-hacking legislation often merely involves traditional offences committed using computers. Thus, in the same *Sunday Times* article, under the heading *Elusive 'Hackers' On-Line to be Outlawed*, the London Business School claims that hacking costs British industry £400m a year. Without a breakdown of this figure it is difficult to contest its reliability, but the corresponding US figure (\$555m) 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 these statutes so that "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 theft or criminal damage occurs. For anti-hacking lobbyists, 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". [3]

The conceptual problems in "computer crime" thus disclose a programme concerned with the "control" of information. Here the debate surrounding "The Information Society" relates to hacking issues. Viruses destroy the public commodity of information, yet hackers gain unauthorised access to something supposedly available to all. But if this information is so sensitive, access is surprisingly easy. Indeed

"hackers" themselves require information (e.g. passwords) which, Hugo Cornwall [4] suggests, can often be obtained simply by eavesdropping. This shatters the computer hacker mystique, showing that their activities require no superhuman powers. Cornwall 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 a 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 sabotaging power cables resulting in a fire causing £500,000 damage to the Daws Hill base. Also, a multinational estimates £3m losses after workmen moved furniture into an office, causing the floor to collapse onto the computer below.

Tapper 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 astute enough to exploit it commercially with offerings of security services and counselling to avert these dangers. It is not uncommon for these ingredients to coalesce into a critical mass, generating pressure for action, and then erupting into the production of such egregious legislation as the Data Protection Act 1984" [5]

The impact of hacking and computer virus stories is illustrated by a survey in Ontario. 648 organisations were asked if they had experienced loss through unauthorised manipulation or abuse of the computer system. Despite getting no chance 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 enigmas 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, 19% reported hacking, and 90% wanted hacking to be made illegal.

### Beneath the Hype

The real significance of hacking and viruses could be the "hysteria" 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 hyping 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 romanticised.

Some came from science fiction [6]: In *When Harlie was One* (1972) "David Gerrald dreamed up the notion of a computer programme called "virus" which rang telephone numbers randomly until it found another computer. It would then spread into that system". John Brunner's *The Shockwave Rider* (1975) "created a free-spirited protagonist in an authoritarian society who maintained his liberty by creating tapeworm programs that threaded their way through the computers that exercised social control, altering records and processes". Similarly, 70s Urban Guerilla groups equated computer with social control.

In the USA, Robert Morris reached folkhero status in the hacking subculture after causing "the most expensive piece of electronic vandalism to date". Of course, anti-hacking campaigners present a different picture, portraying hackers as "malevolent, nasty, evil-doers" [7] Another American hacker, accused of causing \$4m damage, received a sustained 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 bank 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 Cornwall simply views hacking as an everyday pastime. Evidence for each approach can be found. For example, 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 Baird Info-Safeguards Inc., an American systems' security consultancy, who focus on hackers' intellectual capabilities, to perpetuate the mystique to justify the employment of reformed hackers as security experts.

"Computer hacking is no longer a case of teenagers testing systems for kicks. These sort of things are now done by disgruntled employees, malicious hackers and agents for firms. 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 appear 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 wellbeing than that of computers.

#### "New Era Hackers Put Lives at Risk"

Whether human or mechanical, lives are now threatened. "The Black Death is coming, there's nothing you can do about it" [12] Infection of computers 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 halted when administrators and attendants 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 "unauthorised" virus (known as "Brain") began to spread in Britain and America. In less than three years, imaginations have invented more terms in relation to viruses - but imaginations 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 anti-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 metaphors from the human immune system. These theories have been developed by computers security experts such as Charles Wood [13], who describes how military metaphors have fallen into disuse. For example, access control by passwords "used the analogy of a fence or wall protecting a physical asset". The use of reference models now focusses on the human immune system, stimulating security thinking. "Compatible with the traditional military model, this reference model can expand the breadth and depth of systems designers' visions about both 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 sweet you go ahead and do it and you argue about what to do about it only after you have had your technical success" [14] Robert Oppenheimer's statement arouses 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 hysteria 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" [15]; the AIDS epidemic has taken hold before the first infection. Baudrillard would find simulation in this: "To simulate is to feign 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 ailments are psychosomatic? Hacking hysteria, as a form of moral panic, is one of the few airborne mental illnesses. However, like the computer virus it may have been deliberately spread by malicious minds set on portraying computers as vulnerable victims, unlike the image in *The Shockwave Rider*. Robert Morris (et al) is Big Brother, not the Dept. of Defence computers he "harmed" for 48 hours. Computer companies are "not blind to the fact that the industry may be creating an Orwellian society" [16]

#### Conclusions

Robert Morris and some computer systems which he infected have at least one thing in common - both were "fathered" by Robert Morris Sr. Taking the simulation idea a step further, the activities of Morris Jr, inconvenienced 20,000 computer users but also highlighted a hole in computer security which can now be sealed, increasing the complexity which any future dissenters would have to breach. The planting of one computer virus may raise endless issues, but "all the hypotheses of manipulation are reversible in an endless whirligig". In this case, the "simulated" problems have provided a case for both Morris Jr, and Sr. However, following Baudrillard, those controlling and protecting computer systems would have most to gain. "The specific character of every reputation of force is to dissimulate itself as such and to acquire all the force only because it is so dissimulated".

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 mistaken impression that a machine can be 'infected' simply by reading a data file, about as likely as catching a disease by watching a tv programme with pictures of bacteria". [17]

A final point about hackers and "operational security": "It is always a question of proving the real by the imaginary, proving truth by scandal, proving the law by transgression" [18] Or proving the value of computers by highlighting the disservice 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 consultancies than for aspiring politicians.

Alan Curry

## Notes:

- [1] Nicholson "Legal Protection for Computer Systems", 1969, p2
- [2] Det.Supt. Russell Allen in Sunday Times 16/4/89 p A.9
- [3] Law Commission "Computer Misuse" 1988 p81
- [4] Hugo Cornwall "The Hackers Handbook"
- [5] C. Tapper "Computer Crime: Scotch Mist?" 1987 p5
- [6] T. Fainberg "This Night the Network Failed" in New Scientist 4/3/89, p38
- [7] Nicholson, quoted in Sunday Correspondent Magazine 17/12/89, p33
- [8] Computing 21/4/88 p15

- [9] Judith Vincent in Sunday Times 16/4/89, p A.3
- [10] B. I. Baird et al "The Moral Cracker?" in Computers and Security No.6 1987, pp471-478
- [11] J. Weizenbaum "Computer Power and Human Reason (7)"
- [12] Observer 12/3/89 p5
- [13] C.Wood "The Human Immune System as an Information System Security Reference Model" in Computers and Security 6, 1987, pp511-516
- [14] Quoted in above p512
- [15] J. Baudrillard "Simulations"
- [16] Computing 20/4/89, p49
- [17] John Washington, quoted in Simons p109
- [18] Bourdieu quoted in Baudrillard p36

(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 are based, derived from Plato's rule-based system, are to be questioned and need not be rethought. Others argue that a lack of a materialist base to this mode of thought creates a mystical idea about the knowledge capable of reproducing itself, that this is 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 System, 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 codified in symbolic form by "knowledge engineers", rather than acknowledging qualitative leaps, problem-solving in a humane 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 softechnica-angst before we all catch softechnicosis (symptoms extend from being taken-over by total computer-speak to

excessive paranoia about electronic surveillance)!

Lucy Forsyth

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

## Notes:

- [1] See "Softechnica" by John Chris Jones in "Design After Modernism: Beyond the Object", edited by J. Thackara (1988)
- [2] Sunday Correspondent, 1/10/89
- [3] Mike Cooley "Contradictions of Science and Technology in the Productive Process" in "The Political Economy of Science", edited by H & S Rose (1976)
- [4] "The Demise of Classical Rationality" by Philippe Lemoine in "Design After Modernism"
- [5] "From Brunelleschi to CAD-CAM" by Mike Cooley in "Design After Modernism"
- [6] "Softechnica" by John Chris Jones
- [7] "From Socrates to Intel: the Chaos of Micro-Aesthetics" by Thierry Chaput (perhaps suffering from reading too much Baudrillard), secretary-general of ACM Siggraph 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"
- [11] "Robots and Capitalism"
- [12] "Robots and Capitalism"
- [13] For a more detailed discussion of this, see Manuel Castels "The Economic Crisis and American Society" (1980)
- [14] "Robots and Capitalism"
- [15] "Robots and Capitalism"
- [16] "Invisible Design" by Claudia Dona in "Design After Modernism"
- [17] "An Unanswered Question: Automation's Effect on Society" by Fred Guterl in IEEE Spectrum vol.20 no.5 (May 1983)
- [18] Processed World magazine, no.10
- [19] Explained by Mike Cooley in "From Brunelleschi to CAD-CAM"

(Continued from p.25)

to the kind that leak out of the end of a random process. You can't beat a good work of art, that's what I say.

[9] A magazine of radial tyres.

[10] Articles in Smile have advocated "sensual inactivity" for the duration of the Art Strike. Idle buggers!

[11] At the ICA exhibition a couple of copies of Smile were shown, exhibited under glass so that we could appreciate the witty and amusing cover art. Those responsible are believed to fall into both categories at once.

[12] Though, to be fair, this is a difficulty encountered from time to time by the greatest of theorists. "If the element of boredom I have experienced in writing this finds an echo in the reader, what else is this but one more proof of

our failure to live?" as Raoul Vaneigem asked in his foreword to The Kids' Book of How to Do It (or The Revolution of Everyday Life as it's sometimes known). How true that is, how very true. And what a cop-out.

[13] Home once described a reference to "situationist ideology" as a "calculated insult". To judge from Home's account of their activities, describing the Neolists as artists is more in the nature of a calculated compliment.

## REVIEWS

### TOWARDS SCOTLAND'S PARLIAMENT (Scottish Constitutional Convention, £2.50)

The Scottish establishment has become infatuated with constitutionalism (as noted in H&N9). This passion was declared in the 1988 *Claim of Right for Scotland* and in the Constitutional Convention then being concocted by the churches, the established "opposition" parties and those aspiring to be established parties. The Convention crawled along, driven and restrained by the cautious consensus of those who hoped there might be something in it for them. On November 30th 1990 (St. Andrew's Day), they convened again, to present their conclusions under the title *Towards Scotland's Parliament*.

In his commentary, Canon Kenyon Wright announces that the Convention "will give new hope to Scotland, and to many far beyond, of a new form of democracy, which is fully participative and not just representative". But a search of the document for such ideas turns up nothing. Nothing - but a few platitudes about a possible electoral system. These can be listed briefly: "that it produces results in which the number of seats for various parties is broadly related to the numbers of votes cast for them; ...that it ensures, or at least takes effective positive action to bring about, equal representation of men and women, and encourages fair representation of ethnic and other minority groups; ...that it preserves a link between the member and his/her

constituency; ...that the system is designed to place the greatest possible power in the hands of the electorate." (Ah yes, the electorate - almost forgot them!) Months of discussion led to that ragbag of insubstantial house rules for the political class. "Participatory democracy" appears to be just the establishment all getting their snouts in the trough.

Having retreated from organising the intended referendum on their proposals, which might have demolished their representative credentials, the Convention has tried to get back onto the road with the St. Andrew's Day coup.

The credulity of the believers is again evident. Professors (Bernard Crick in *New Statesman & Society*, 7/12/90), exhibit a partisan will-to-believe which they would fail in a student essay, and proclaim the *Claim of Right* to be "truly on a level with the great pamphlets of the American and French revolutions". But this pronouncement, despite its insistence on truth, is sustained by nothing but electoral speculation: Will the SNP gain at Labour's expense or vice versa? Will SNP pressure force a Labour government to implement its promises?

A few Convention supporters are more astute about the social forces involved. In an article

situating disputes within the Scottish Conservative Party hierarchy in a deeper context, Neal Ascherson indicated the role of corporatism in structuring Scottish society: a "densely-woven mat of patronage and clientship whose threads almost all lead directly or indirectly back to the State". (*Independent on Sunday*, 16/9/90) However, the patron-client relation would survive a passage from the older Conservative-dominated corporatism (which Ascherson dislikes) to a modern Keynesian nationalism, whose prospects apparently continue to excite him.

At root, the conventional constitutionalists are a profoundly conservative force, whose common interests demand patron-client relations of various kinds. Their complaint (again summarised by Canon Wright) is against a "contemporary reality of increasingly centralised authority, with its erosion of all alternative bases of community power, and of the traditional institutions which have been the foundations of Scottish identity and values". So these traditional institutions are looking for their nameplate on the pew, their place in the sun. The 1978 Scotland Act plus a little money? That'll do nicely. So insubstantial is their participatory democracy that it may even be outflanked by Conservative politicians counter-proposing an advisory national Senate to replace the regional tier of local government.

Alex Richards

*"The Politics of Whim: A Critique of the Situationist Version of Marxism"* by Chris R. Tame. (Published by the Libertarian Alliance, 1 Russell Chambers, London WC2E 8AA).

It comes as a surprise that a four-page leaflet could give a substantial critique of the Situationist project. It is all the more surprising that it could be based on a reading of *"Leaving the Twentieth Century"* (always a strange and breathless selection) and written by an anarcho-capitalist.

Inevitably, the situationist distaste for the forms in which needs are created and satisfied in modern societies is alien to an anarcho-capitalist: any diagnosis of alienation in labour or in leisure is found suspect. But by raising those very issues Tame presses on weak points in situationism. Did situationism deal in "real analysis, real questions and rational enquiry"? Or did it instead operate an ideology of rhetorical delusion and hide sectional interests under an abstract universalism?

Situationism's proclaimed contempt for consumer goods provides much of its initial resonance for transitional social groups. Those forming their identity through differentiated taste are attracted by patrician distaste: poverty is in everyone else's lives. Washing machine and garbage disposal unit? No problem about rejecting those (although the cassette machine might be more awkward) But if (as Tame suggests) this merely projects feeling of "meaningless and banalisation" onto objects, then that blend of present misery and potential future "satisfaction of the demands of the passions" is ripe for picking by Tame's ally, the advertising industry. The pseudo-useful novelties in the *Innovations* catalogue exist to soak up that excess demand.

Like other renovators, the Situationists

found in the young Marx a vision of a life beyond specialised existence. Tame ridicules the "metaphysical whining against a universe in which individual effort, choice, labour and the division of labour are necessary". In recent years, radical prose has evaporated further. Never, it seems, is one more radical than when spouting on about a "humanity" counterposed to every feature of the current world.

Situationist modernism displayed an untenable fifties' faith in automation and planning. Specialists in revolt - The workers council based apparatus of late Situationism came wholesale from their dalliance with *Socialisme ou Barbarie*. Like a maitre d'hotel, it stood at the grand entrance luring passers-by, but disguising conditions in the kitchen. The proletariat would merely be guarantor of a highly-polished critique whose radicality remained organisationally-based (even in its abolition). But the audience was perceived as coming from the managerial stratum (explicitly so in the opening of Debord's *In Giram Imus Nocte et Consumimur Igni* and *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*). The aristocratic critique denigrates only the rewards which that stratum draws from the system.

The lifestyle can reject everything for re-integration in the beyond; the managerial strata have another tactic for transcending the particular. Aspiring managers preen themselves before a mirror where they see themselves attractively decked out as the goal of evolution. Free from particular duties and responsibilities, free for endless meetings to plan others' actions, free from the burden of expertise required to implement its decisions, their colourless ideas dream furiously. (Here are echoes of the situationists' early sympathy for cultural bureaucracies.) Lacking all practical skill, the aspiring bureaucrat is outraged by any need for dexterity.

Production as a system of "forgetting" the labour in the commodity; leisure as an integral part of that system: criticism in these terms is foreign to Tame. Situationism contributed much to that critique, but contained other elements which neutralised much of its worth (not least the former leaders' subsequent self-historification and projection). Tame's pamphlet will be worthwhile if, despite its own purpose, it assists in a critique which returns to the actual living conditions.

*La Diagonale des Autonomies* (70FF from Pèriscope Transéditions, 41 rue J.P. Timbaud, 75011 Paris).

This 136 page book has been produced by a group of people involved in the "area of autonomy". While considered that Autonomy had great achievements (particularly in France, Germany and Italy) in the 1970s, it recognises that the 1980s took their toll, at least in terms of the participants' resilience. The text therefore tries to situate Autonomy in relation to the changes in the relations and forces of production and consumption over the past 10 years. This proposes that the changes which have taken place open a new area of production for direct social utility and that the supercession of Taylorist production by smaller, computer-based enterprises can carry forward the project of autonomy. Such an analysis may be influenced by the passage of individuals from the political to the entrepreneurial margins, as well as by the desire to avoid entrapment in an outmoded worldview. The decline of mass production and mass consumption is not therefore mourned (or regarded as a trick) in the manner of the sundry left groups. Instead, the new fragmented "personalised and polyphonic activities" are celebrated as the field in which "direct social utility" emerges. In this, it echoes the "New Times" argument, but refuses that attempt to tie down discrete social changes on the back of a particular political bandwagon.

## D.K.'s WEEKLY No. 1 BEHIND ENEMY LINES.

From our War Correspondent.

'DK's Weekly' is convinced that most people are as confused, bewildered and worried as it is itself. When everyone is mouthing their certainties the genuine agnostic can be dismissed by all sides, as weak, stupid, or, secretly, in agreement with the 'other' side. But DK's Weekly really is the paper of the non-combatant bystander, because it's the only paper that won't take sides. Because none of the sides are worth having.

For a start the anti-war movement has been established and sponsored by the professional peace movement. This is a body of the political classes whose job it is to fight for peace, for whom, indeed, the very word 'peace' inspires much the same corporate loyalty as 'freedom' does the risen Right.

The pre-pubescent identification of the tabloids with a trash-mag version of today's fighting man is portrayed by the peace professionals as the dominant mind-set in the country today.

Just as the tabloids wage their war by vicarious imaginings of what the modern military actually do, so the peace professionals project their fantasies onto the non-combatant bystander. They must be 'dupes of the media', 'psychologically damaged', 'timeservers and order-takers', sans sense, sans reason, sans autonomy.

If there's one thing which enriches the legitimacy of those who got us into this war, it's this insistence that the public plays the game of vicarious state-craft. Each democratic individual is 'invited' into the arcane practices of international diplomacy: 'Should sanctions have been given more time to work?' 'What are our 'war aims'?'.

Just answering these questions ensures that the game will go on, that the public takes responsibility for that over which it has no power. If each democratic individual really had such power there would be no nation states left to wage war in the first place. One should simply refuse to be drawn on these questions.

When the military says it is attempting to avoid civilian targets, no one can know whether they are telling the truth. The management of information has been perfected over the ages. What the accusation of 'cover-up' misses is the novelty of this strategy. While it's not doubted that many, many more people have died in this war than anyone, least of all Saddam Hussein, is letting on, it's a mistake to regard this as simply a case of good old-fashioned lies.

In fact these lies are new. Whereas in the past victories were talked up, defeats talked down, almost the opposite is at work here. This is a slightly shame-faced, regretful war, pursued as such in deference to our feelings. More time and care is spent on managing our anxieties, fears etc. than trying to inspire jingoist extremism.

The managers of this war are most concerned that the public is aware of how much they care, both for the civilian dead, and the military dead and wounded. What was once a capital offence in WW1, and came to be known later as 'shell-shock', will now be treated as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and beds have been put aside in psychiatric hospitals for the victims. This war will be a good war - the managers are seeking to exorcise the demons that gave war such a bad name.

At the heart of all this is a self-conscious strategy to ensure business as usual throughout the period of the war. No one is more aware than they are that wars have the habit of leading to very unpredictable conduct - like the mass squatting of land by homeless families after WW2. That is why this war is being fought with such apparent scruple - a different kind of 'new world order'.

But if we haven't the power to determine policy, there is a policy to disrupt that power. By the pursuit of happiness whether or not it upsets the state at war, and refusing the good conduct which is demanded of subjects in wartime, the spurious lines of consent by which the state wages war on our behalf may be fatally subverted.

The paper for people who don't know...

full text from Leeds address (SAE).

## REVIEWS Listings

### IN GIRUM IMBIS NOCTE ET CONSUMIMUR IGNI

by Guy Debord. Forthcoming  
title from Pelagian Press.  
For details write to  
71 Commercial Rd. Leeds LS5 3AT.

### Arcade No 2.

Yearbook of the Academy of  
Ambulant Sciences. Features  
on Rushdie, Virillo, article  
on Neues Slovenische Kunst -  
Beauty is poisonous' the illusory  
nazification of NSK. In Dutch.  
Postbus 76704, 1070 KA Amsterdam.

Yawn - nos 21, 22 and 23 (3 A4 sheets).  
Art Strike, Censorship (Mablethorpe)  
and the "NEA controversy". SAE:  
Pete, c/o Leeds H & N Address.  
Gatevista.

Futurum Forlag a/S -Norwegian-  
Hjelmgate 3, 0355 Oslo 3.

### Schwarzen Faden 3/90.

Postfach 1159  
7043 Grafenau - 1 Germany.

Fifth Estate - 25th Anniv. issue, incl.  
'Detroit Demolishing by Design' \$7  
sub. from 4632 2nd Ave., Detroit, MI  
48201, USA

EAST EUROPEAN NEWS, W.S.A.:  
Charting Workers Struggle in ex peoples  
democracies, USSR, Room 202, 339  
Lafayette St NY, NY 10012.

WORKERS INFO-RAG: No. 8 On U.S.  
Economic Crisis! SAE Zamisadat Press,  
GPO Box 1255, Gracie Station,  
New York NY 10028 U.S.A.

CLASH - Newspaper for the  
Resistance. Red Brigades meets  
the Dutch squatters movement.  
Slagerzicht Overtoom 274  
1054 BJ Amsterdam. NL.  
(with a 2nd envelope inside  
to Clash).

The Cereologist. - Crop circles  
denbated, from 11 Powys Gardens.  
London.

Love and Rage (incl. On Gogol  
Boulevard).  
Box 3 Prince St. Station.  
New York NY 10012

Discussion Bulletin 42 - 45. On  
'Capitalism and its Revolutionary  
Destruction' by MB/MS (ex-'wildcat') and  
letters/debates between respective  
ideologues. Donation/SAE to P.O. Box  
1564, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, U.S.A.

Leisure - Photocopied pro-situ mag.  
60p from P.O. Box 368, Cardiff CF2  
15Q.

Paradise Referred Back ? - A socialist  
review of recent and future events in  
the Green Party. £1.50, from BCM Flame  
Green, London WC1N 3XX.

Confederation of Anarcho-Syndikalists  
(KAS) - Mailing including statement,  
news trans-urals (Siberia) + Ukraine  
confederations. Contact: U.S.S.R. 109462  
Moscow, Volzhsky Boulevard, dom 21,  
kv G2 Mikhail Tsosvna.

Mordicus. is an attractively-designed  
new French Journal, focussing on anti-  
racism, anti-militism & urban revolt,  
Issues 1 & 2 produced Dec. 90 & Jan.  
91 (100FF annual subscription from BP  
11, 75622 Paris Cedex 13, France).

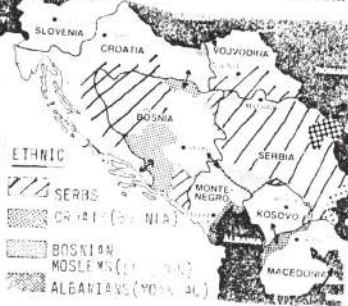
COUNTER INFORMATION: Nos. 26-  
30, on Gulf War, Poll Tax, Autonomous  
Struggles, SAE/Donation: PHCI, 11  
Forth St, Edinburgh

DEMOLITION DERBY: No.2, Large  
SAE/Donation: Typical American  
Native/Anti Militarist but spiced with  
French translations +S.C.U.M. 20 years  
later. CP1554, SUCC "B", Montreal  
Quebec, Canada H5B 3L2.

Bitwet. Foundation for advancement  
of illegal science: Postbus 16729  
'movement Theory' 1001 RE Amsterdam  
(in Dutch)

SOLIDARITY, 123 Lathom Rd, London  
Conviction - latest on the West  
Midlands Serious Crimes Squad  
P.O.Box 522, Sheffield S1 3FF.

POISON PEN: Prolific Local Broadsheet  
Donation: P.O.Box 71, Hastings, East  
Sussex.



YUGOSLAVERY: Donation/SAE from  
BM BLOB, London WC1N 3XX + The  
Daily Horror No.1 (on US bombing of  
Iraq + Press Lies) "Conscript Sun  
Readers" (Graffiti in Kentish Town.)  
ETCETERA: (Correspondencia De La  
Guerre Social) No. 16 & 15 Ap 1363,  
08080 Barcelona, Catalonia, Espania.

ANTI EXCHANGE & MART: Stapled  
Mag. produced 1990, articles on  
Enterprise Swindle, Ireland  
Fragmentation, Rank & Fillis.  
SAE BM Makhno, London WC1N 3XX.

Searchlight South Africa No. 6. Unusual  
as it is to highlight a trotskyite  
publication, this journal has developed  
from profiles of early 20c marxists  
in Southern Africa to focus on the  
presentday reform of apartheid. No.  
6 has editorial articles on "Third  
Worldism: the albatross of socialism",  
highlighting the "Hands off Iraq" tail-  
ending of nationalism  
and subimperialism. The Killing Fields  
of South Africa traces the conflict  
back within Natal and Southern  
Transvaal, and links ANC ideology to  
the increasing tribalism. Like the  
exposure of SWAPO prison camps in  
Angola in No. 4, the journal attacks  
the stalinist and nationalist domination  
of the 'liberation struggle'. £10 sub  
from BCM 7646, London WC1N 3XX.

# REVIEWS

**Shake it and Break it** - (class and politics in Britain) 2 texts. 1 pre- Thatcher downfall by David Brown, one pre 1980 by Henry Simon. Brown focusses on Macro-Economic trend towards privatisation, share ownership, labour mobility and late 80's strikes. Conclusion evaluates State's rule in U.K. Economy and restructuring and "Holding the State expenditure down to a certain % of GDP". £0.90 + Post from BM Box 91, WC1N 3XX.

**Exchanges 59** - Strikes in the car industry 1987-90, Internationalisation of capital, of industrial relations and of class struggle and 63 on Airline Pilots dispute in Australia; UK, recent conflict; rail workers in India; East German disintegration and reviews of publications including H. & N. 9. 64 Contains translation of Daad en Gedachte critique of the GDR United Left Group, UK Ambulance Strike Summary, Spanish Syndicalism, Mexican Auto strikes. £4 sub from BM Box 91, London WC1N 3XX.

**I.e. Frondeur**: BP 105, 94402, Vitry, France, **Temps Critiques**. Issue No.1 'On Germany', Issue No. 2 'Against the Nation State', Anti-Semitism. The Democratic individual, and re-thinking the individual. Issue No.3 'Contra la guerre et la beatitude pacifiste'. From Editions de L'Implicite, BP 331 Grenoble cedex 1, 38013 (in French).

**Anarchy A Journal of Desire Armed** No. 27. Dept HNI c/o CAL. POB 1446 MO 65205 1446 USA

'Address to all those who don't wish to cure the nuisances but suppress them'; "Rapport sur la traitement des ordures a Salzuif", & "Thank you Saddam". Text in French from: Encyclopedie des Nuisances, BP 188 75665 Paris, Cedex 14. **SMALL FREE PRESS**: Yearbook 1991. £6.99 pbk. BM BOZO London WC1N 3XX.

**Variant No. 8**. £3 + post or £10 sub from 1/3, 61 Cecil St., G12 8RW. The Glasgow based visual arts magazine improving rapidly in production terms with each issue. Opening with a snappy News: preview section, action shots of Corduroy Man are interspersed with excerpts of Noam Chomsky's speech at the Self-Determination and Power event in Jan '90. This can be read alongside Jim Kelman's 30 page essay in **Edinburgh Review 84** (available from AK Distribution, see over); Jo Spence's auto-biographical 'theatre of the self' (not minimalist!); The book reviews reveal an underlying interest in comix, Dada turning Red, and that horny of PostModernism. Worth investigating.

**Direct Democracy Network**: This will be an international project with a special interest in mass organisations which use rotation of delegates. Anyone with practical experience or interested in criticisms of texts and translations (Spanish as well as English). Contact: Mick Parkin, 39 Vesta Road, Brockley, London SE4 2NS.

**Chanti Cleer Press** - Send S.A.E. to 18 Brantsfield Ave., Edinburgh EH10 4EW.

**Anti Clock Wise** - issue 11, 12 & 13 (Liverpool): "Why I Hate Cars", "Council House to Cathedrals", "Review of First no.3, etc. Order form for In Your Blood: Football Culture in the late '80s and early '90s: Written by a Stockport County Fan, Richard Turner, and produced out of a sense of frustration at fans having little say in the naming of, what is, after all, the People's Game." £4.95, Working Press (London) or direct from ACW: PO Box 175, Liverpool L69 8DX

**Donations/Publications to**: Budapesti anarchist Csoport, 1399, Budapest, of 701/800, Hungary (this address replaces Autonomia address with group split 3 ways, with Punk & Utopian settlement projects).

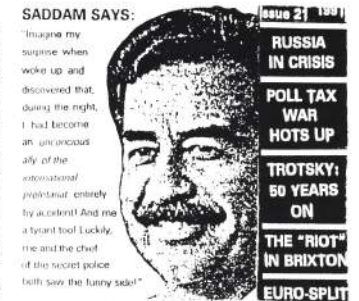
## "D-Markation" Postscript

This article does not seem to have lost any of its immediacy over the last six months. True, a handful of West German companies, especially automobile manufacturers, are beginning to invest in the former GDR but the essential drift of the article - that, despite much rhetoric to the contrary, East Germany has been supermarketised for stocks made elsewhere - still stands. One East German company said to be viable, the airline Interflug, has not been permitted to continue business. It may be assumed, I think, that other air carriers did not relish the idea of competition.

If anything, the picture today is more depressing than suggested in the article. An employment rate of fifty percent is 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 ramp, that a market led revival of low productivity factories

in the East would solve everything. Leading politicians seem to be shy now of visiting their subjects in the East - possibly worried about encountering citizen rage at promises broken and wishes not fulfilled.

PFW - March '91 ctd from page 6

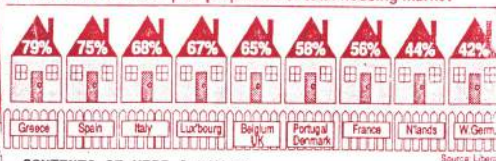


**Organise! Issues 20 and 21**. 40p + post from P.O. Box 97, West PDO, Nottingham NG7 5LQ. Best national magazine in UK within Anarchist milieu at moment. 20 includes assessment of Romania's Miners and State manipulation; a critique of tail-ending Sinn Fein, and the Poll Tax, 21 includes Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) in Peru, and the Kurdish question.

**Bulletin of Anarchist Research 21 and 22**. £5 sub from CGH Services, Cwm Gwen Hall, Pencader, Dyfed SA39 9HA (the address of **Black Chip**). Stapled photocopied journal, featuring in 21, Stimer, Spiritual Anarchism, Auroville (commune in India) and Karen Goaman's essay on the 'cultural current', a self-publishing eclectic range of publications at a tangent to "contemporary anarchism". 22 has more on Chomsky's anarchism; reviews by Goaman of Class Myths and Culture by Stefan Szeclban (Working Press); Hackney-based publications on the Poll Tax riot in Ireland; John Crump on the libertarian trotskyite AWG; and the usual obscure research on Blake, Morris and Nature.

**Green Perspectives** - no. 21, December 1990 ("A Left Green Publication") "Voices of the German Left: On Parliamentarism, Party Formation, and the State" (8 A4 pages). On the German Greens poor showing in December elections (falling below 5% representation figure), their transformation "into a conventional party", having become overwhelmingly parliamentary and electoral in its orientation", with "much" of its program co-opted by the SPD, etc. Contains interview with Jutta Ditfurth. Also excerpts from speeches to the congress of the "Radical Left" in June 1990 (the RL having split from the Greens last year "after acceptance of Red-green governing coalitions", and "consists of ecosocialists, feminists, anarchists, and Autonomes; manifesto is entitled "Force of Negation" (translated and available from Left Green Network P.O. Box 5566, Burlington, VT 05402); "An Anarchist Perspective: Peter Walter" (Schwarzer Faden). Talk of a "leg" outside and the spread of "gangerene" and the poisoning of the "entire body of alternative political life". Interesting. (The eternal recurrence of deja vu?). No. 20 'The meaning of Confederatism' by Murray Bookchin, Address: Green Program Project, P.O. Box 111, Burlington, Vermont 05402, USA





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 Individual USA: Flatland Distribution, P.O. Box 2420 Fort Bragg, CA, 95437  
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